

PROGRAM NOTE

WE, THE PEOPLES was written to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter. Programmatic in its conception, the work begins with a chorale symbolizing the strength, peacefulness and continuity of everyday life. This is interrupted by a call to arms from the brass, representing leaders who wish to better conditions for their own particular nation or ethnic group. Coaxed by the brass, the orchestra gradually moves toward war: the snare drum beats on inexorably, the tempo gradually accelerates, fragments of national anthems clamor to be heard above each other. (Since most of my impressions of World War II come from the European Theater, I have included parts of the German, French and Italian anthems as well as the Communist "Internationale" and a three-bar combination of "The Star-Spangled Banner" and the Army-Air Force song.) Orchestral textures thicken, the dynamics build, casualties are suggested by the sound of ambulance sirens in the horns, and finally war disintegrates into chaos---a 30-second aleatoric section that ends with the chorus screaming as if to say enough is enough. In an effort to break the cycle of war, the chorus then sings the Preamble to the UN Charter. The orchestra celebrates this birth of a world community dedicated to "sav(ing) succeeding generations from the scourge of war" and reaffirming "faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small." And that celebration should be the end of the piece. But 50 years have passed, there have been good times and bad, successes and failures. As a postscript, the chorus sings a portion of Dag Hammarskjold's speech of acceptance of a second term as secretary general of the UN:

"The many, who, together, form this Organization--peoples, governments and individuals--share one great responsibility. Future generations may come to say of us that we never achieved what we set out to do. May they never be entitled to say that we failed because we lacked faith or permitted narrow self-interest to distort our efforts."

WE, THE PEOPLES is dedicated to Harold Stassen, last remaining American signer of the UN Charter.

We the peoples / Nous, peuples / Мы, народы / Nosotros los pueblos
determined / résolus / преисполненные решимости / resueltos
to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war,
which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow...,
and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights,
in the dignity and worth of the human person,
in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, ...
and for these ends / et à ces fins / u b эмих целях / y con tales
finalidades

to practice tolerance and (to) live together in peace with one another...,
to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security,
to ensure... that armed force shall not be used, save in the common
interest, ...

(and to promote) the economic and social advancement of all peoples,
have resolved / avons décidé / решили / hemos decidido
to combine / d'associer / объединить / aunar
our efforts to accomplish these aims.

Accordingly, our respective governments... have agreed to the
present Charter... and do hereby establish an international
organization to be known as
les Nations Unies / las Naciones Unidas / Объединенные Нации /
the United Nations.

from the Preamble to the UN Charter

The many who, together, form this Organization - peoples, governments
and individuals - share one great responsibility. Future generations
may come to say of us that we never achieved what we set out
to do. May they never be entitled to say that we failed because
we lacked faith or permitted narrow self-interest to distort our
efforts.

Dag Hammarskjöld, in a statement on his re-election to a second term as Secretary-
General of the United Nations, September 1957.