

of his life and destiny. The common ground has united us, for nearly a century, not restricting our freedom to explore or to hold to a variety of philosophical and metaphysical positions. This range of freedom has been summarized in the maxim: "Diversity in the creed; unity in the deed."

In our Movement, we do not restrict the name "Humanist" to apply only to those who subscribe to a particular philosophical style or metaphysics dubbed "Humanist", but rather use this term to affirm a broadly defined and commonly held commitment and faith. Neither does the name Humanist signify among us a particular emphasis or position with respect to either the religious or the secular aspects of our philosophy, for attachment to the tradition and name of humanist cuts across these lines.

In identifying ourselves as a Humanist Movement, and in associating with other groups which fit this designation, we hold to the standard of intellectual and spiritual breadth. We stand ready to share with other Humanist bodies in creating a deeper, wider, and more adequate expression of this way of life; but we cannot accept a basis of unity which would be purchased through the surrender of the distinctive values and freedoms which give this Movement its historic significance and potential. All discussions and projects looking toward the creation of a greater instrument for unity among Humanists must bear this purpose in mind. Similarly, we would not seek to curtail or expunge what may be most distinctive and best in the Humanism of a kindred association.

Finally, we would make it clear that our identification as a Humanist Movement is not dependent upon our affiliation with other groups bearing this label. We shall strive in every practicable way to shear with like-minded associations in building a strong, united movement, but our essential character as a Humanist fellowship, and our claim to this designation, is not derivative from such affiliations.

We would reaffirm the term Ethical Humanist, adopted officially in the language of the Declaration of the Amsterdam Congress, which in 1952 established the International Humanist and Ethical Union. (This union brought about a common alignment of existing Humanist bodies and member groups of the earlier International Ethical Union which had been disrupted by World War II.) We find the term "Ethical Humanist" to be a designation which appropriately recognizes our respective organizational histories and tradition, and which aptly and distinctively signifies our shared and corporated endeavor as a united world movement.

Fraternity of Leaders of the American Ethical Union
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¹ Text as it appeared in "Ethical Culture 1876-1966" page 3 with erratum corrected

² Drafted by Edward L. Ericson as part of a special commission chaired by Joseph L. Blau

³ Now known as the National Leaders Council

⁴ Presented to the International Humanist and Ethical Union 4th World Congress, Paris, July 25-30, 1966