

***The Riddle of the
USA Horoscope***
by Dane Rudhyar

A seemingly endless controversy has been going on for years concerning what should be considered the United States birth-chart. Every year or so some authority comes up with a new chart and claims that historical events fit this chart and its transits and progressions more accurately than any other. Unfortunately few astrologers try to understand what the problem actually is and what the chart they introduce could possibly refer to. The idea that nations are collective persons who are born at a particular time is quite ambiguous; and we find a similar kind of ambiguity prevailing when the "birth-chart" of a social institution or a business organization is being discussed.

Ambiguity is never entirely absent from the astrological field. There is a great deal of uncertainty about most of even the basic tools used in astrology — for instance the zodiac, the houses, progressions, degree symbols — and some astrologers in natal astrology prefer to use charts for the presumed time of conception instead of the time birth. Even what constitutes the exact moment of birth has been discussed; is it when the baby emerges from the mother's body, or when he takes his first breath? In some cases this may involve a difference of several minutes. Likewise, what constitutes the "birth-time" of a corporation? It is usually believed that it should be when the State formally accepts the papers of incorporation; but it is generally difficult to find out the exact moment when this has taken place.

When we deal with the "birth" of a nation the ambiguity is even greater, except perhaps in cases when, in recent times, a new nation has been scheduled officially to begin at, usually, midnight of a particular day. But even this is open to question, for in a sense this is the same situation as when an Obstetrician decides to make a Caesarean operation on an expectant mother, or deliberately induces birth by drugs. I personally believe that in such cases the surgeon's decision is an integral part of the environmental influences which have led to the child's birth and that what matters is the baby's first breath, however **separation from the mother** was induced. The first breath relates the new organism to an open environment in which he henceforth can act more or less as an individual person. On the other hand, the mother's womb is a **closed** environment; the child kicks against its walls, but he is inevitably bound by them and by the source of his nourishment.

It is the new organism's capacity to operate in an open environment, and the fact that a definite interaction has been established between this infinitely varied environment and the baby, which constitute its "individuality" — at least which do so in a concrete, existential and effectual sense. Every thing that occurred before should be considered as a process of preparation; also as a kind of recapitulation of previous states of existence — which refers therefore to the **karma** of the newborn. What happened to his mother during pregnancy represents the newborn's **family karma**. The fact that a surgeon might hasten or delay the birth is related to the **social-national karma** of the child, for it is the result of the peculiar attitude and way of life accepted by the society in which this child will have to live.

The preceding remarks can be most significantly applied to the problem of deciding the time at which the American nation was "born"; but we have to ask, first of all, an absolutely basic question. What does one mean by "American nation"; or, if we seek to be even more specific, the United States as a national organism?

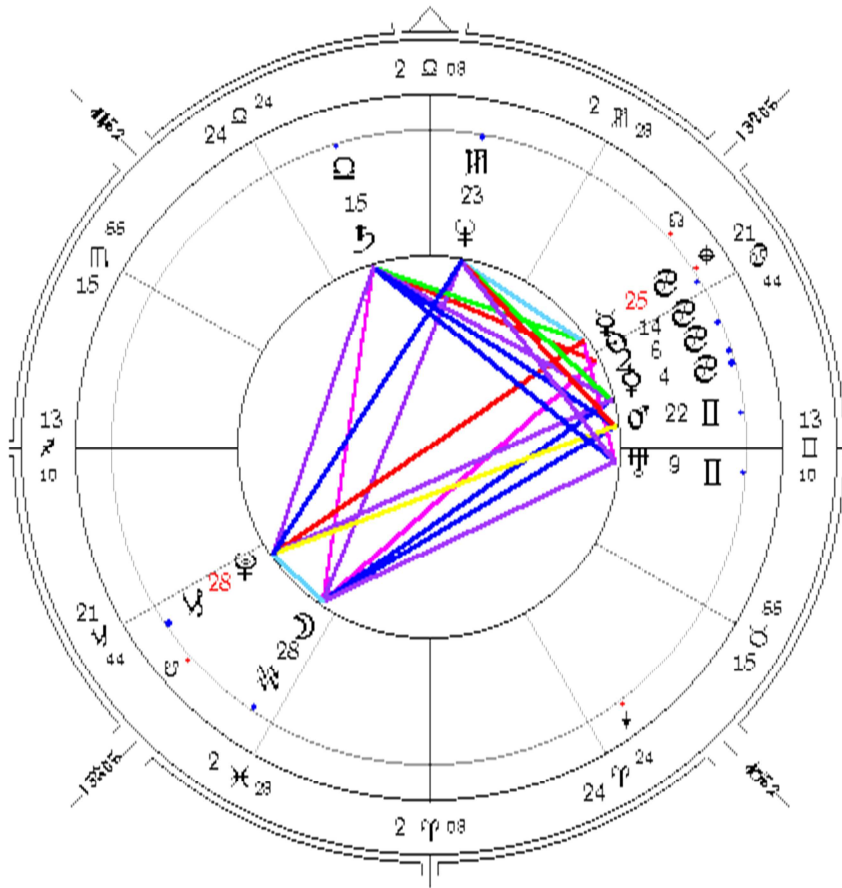
Obviously, the United States was not born operating as a "national organism" on July 4, 1776. The Colonies' Army could have been defeated by the English. The representatives of these Colonies might never have succeeded in establishing a definite Constitution — i.e., a set of by-laws for the operation of the organization of the 13 States. Success was not at all certain in 1776. If we speak of the U.S. as a definite, working organization, it can only be said to have begun when the Constitution was ratified, or proclaimed effective, or when the first President took office in April, 1789. This is so evident that it should hardly have to be mentioned; and yet most astrologers conveniently ignore these facts — and, interestingly enough, charts erected for July 4, 1776 seem to be very significant. But what do they signify?

They cannot logically or astrologically deal with the United States as an operative nation, as a working social organism having, like all organisms, a definite structure. If they refer to anything, it can only be to the fact that, with the Declaration of Independence, the people of the Colonies proclaimed to the world — the international environment — that they had achieved the **consciousness of unity**, a definite individuality.

Note well the words "proclaimed to the world"; for just as child is really "born" only when he relates himself to the world by breathing the air sensitive to myriad cosmic influences — and he announces this fact by a vocal utterance — so the "American people" were "born" when they declared openly to the other nations their will to act as one people and to exert that will. A merely local event, like what happened at Concord, cannot be considered a real expression of the united will to live of the Colonists.

Charts erected for July 2nd and July 4th 1776 can only refer to this united will to live - to the fundamental individuality — of the American people. People, not nation. There was no American national organism before 1789. [See the horoscope for the **US Federal Government**.] And because what is involved is a declaration of purpose, and of the reason for that purpose, to the people at large and to the international environment, it seems better to use the time of the adoption of the Declaration on July 4th than the time of the passage by the Congress of the Resolution for Independence in July, 2nd. Strangely enough, however, there, are conflicting testimonies as to **when** on July 4th the Declaration was adopted. As far as I can see, there is no real evidence that can be given for the time still accepted as valid by the majority of astrologers. Somehow a tradition was established, perhaps fortuitously and since most astrologers are intensely traditional and uncritical, it is being repeated. It seems rather clear, from various historical sources, that the Declaration was adopted "in the evening" and that John Dunlap, printer to Congress, printed the text "during the night of July 4th and that it was ready for distribution on July 5th." It was **not** signed on July 4th. The official document was engrossed later and most of the signatures were affixed early in August, some later.

There are several reasons inclining one to believe that the Declaration was adopted in the late afternoon, which in those days meant "the evening." An at least approximate time was given by Dr. Ebenezer Sibley who was both a physician and an astrologer living in England; and that time of 10:00 p.m. Greenwich Time, ties up with what are said to be records in Philadelphia that the Declaration was signed around 5 p.m. [See the original image of the original, engraved "**Sibley Chart**"]. Many years ago I rectified that time to about 5:13:55 p.m. EST. Libra 2°08' should be on the Midheaven, and Sagittarius 13°10' at the Ascendant, as shown below. [See the full **horoscope**].



I shall not try to list the coincidences between historical events and progressions and transits which could be considered as "proving" the validity of the Sagittarius rising chart, for the simple reason that each astrologer favoring his own chart for the United States can also list many such coincidences. The relative number of these actually proves nothing. I shall only mention one which, when I studied this Sagittarius rising chart in the mid-Thirties, struck me first as most significant: the arc between the Midheaven and Saturn ($14^{\circ}49'$) corresponds to the period of 12 years and several months separating the Declaration from the time the Constitution went in force March 4, 1789. [See the horoscope for the **US Federal Government**.] The exact minute of the Midheaven is questionable; but later on in 1946, I rectified it because the progressed Mars was on that degree of the Midheaven — which refers to the Executive — when F. D. Roosevelt died. Neptune had passed over this U. S. Midheaven during the months the Manhattan Project had been producing the atom bomb; it was reaching Libra 2 degrees when the first man-made nuclear chain reaction had taken place in Chicago. Uranus at its North Node was moving to and fro across the Descendant and Saturn transited the natal Sun on the last day of June near a famous solar eclipse in July, tying in with the fateful Potsdam Conference. Jupiter was transiting the United States Neptune in the House of foreign entanglements. The reason why the coincidence of the Midheaven to Saturn with the period separating the Declaration of Independence from the Constitution is so significant is that Saturn can be said to represent the crystallization of the "will to live as a nation" which was proclaimed to the whole world in July 1776 by the leaders of the united Colonies. If the new-born organism fails to breathe and to proclaim its will to live in a "first cry," it remains still-born; but the weeks after this cry are crucial in many ways. Saturn in the Tenth House fits perfectly the basic structure of the American governmental system in which the Executive

has powers unparalleled in other democratic nations, and the Constitution is the object of an extraordinary worship, also unparalleled anywhere except perhaps in Fundamentalist Churches or in Islam. The usually publicized United States chart with Gemini 7° to 9° Ascendant has the Moon in the Tenth House; but have we had a woman President, and how long did it take for women even the vote or to be given equal civic and business rights with men?

Of course, the Moon in a mundane chart is said to refer also to "the people"; but American democracy certainly was not meant by the American "Fathers" to be a **popular** democracy, and it assuredly is not that today when the real rulers are various kinds of national groups and organizations, especially the Pentagon and the famous industrial-military complex. Again we have only to compare our governmental system with that of other Western democracies, France's, for instance, where the direct plebiscite has been used effectively. Moreover is it not logical to find Libra at the Midheaven of the chart of a people which was a Federation of ideally cooperative States and which so self-consciously tried to "balance" the powers of the three main branches of the government? An Aquarian Midheaven, of course, may seem very satisfying to people haunted with the dream of an Aquarian Age, but I doubt that this dream was in the mind of the Colonists in 1776, while the need to build a strong and concrete sense of collective interests and communal values, distinct from those of the European past, was undoubtedly the main driving force.

The basic grouping of planets in the July 4, 1776 sky was in the signs surrounding the summer solstice, i.e., Gemini and Cancer.

It is therefore important to see where this summer solstice point falls in a chart symbolizing the individuality and will-to-live-as-a-nation of the American people. One can evidently make a good point for placing the six Gemini-Cancer planets below the Ascendant; but if one tries objectively to evaluate what is most characteristic in the American people it is not really a Gemini type of intellect (Ascendant) but rather a very, strong Sagittarian stress on the Puritan religious tradition and equally strong sense of self-righteousness, combined with a deep feeling for fellowship and social functions. Sagittarius is also related to sports, long journeys, and a legalistic mentality — whether one follows or tries to evade the laws! And, if one speaks in terms of symbolism long-legged Uncle Sam surely looks like a typical Sagittarian.

Perhaps more obvious still is the fact that the four planets in the Seventh House (Gemini-Cancer) symbolize perfectly a society in which contractual agreements, installment buying, litigations, marriages and divorces have reached an unparalleled importance. Let us not forget that the Seventh House is the house of wars and divorces as well as of alliances and peaceful relationships. And the presence of Mars above the Descendant in this Seventh House fits very well all the open interpersonal conflicts and the vast conjugal problems so prevalent in America.

It is often said that Mars cannot be in the Seventh House because America "never lost a war." This in my opinion does not make sense; because Mars is in a house does **not** mean that one should experience losses in the affairs related to that house. Mars means activity, and often stressful activity, but it can be a very profitable type of activity. The United States' global power and enormous wealth today has been the direct — and not too moral — result of the two World Wars, during which big business made fantastic profits at the expense of other nations and of the war effort at home. It is true that our country also loaned, gave or lost huge amounts of money during and after these wars, but this simply made business power and prosperity at home greater than ever.

There is an imperialism of business as well as a cruder imperialism of naked political power. And this big business imperialism is well shown in the place of Pluto in the house of money. Pluto retrograde opposes Mercury retrograde in the Eighth House, the house which deals with the fruits of contracts and cooperation — thus with the general business involving the people as a whole. This opposition is the only one in the chart, and it therefore should be given a focal meaning. Indeed the over-all planetary pattern of this American chart belongs

to a see-saw type, at least since the discovery Pluto. There is a basic balancing of planets located within a broad trine of Uranus to Saturn, and the two winter-signs planets, Pluto and the Moon.

At the time of the War of Independence there were no business trusts or the modern type of organization often associated with Pluto; yet there was slavery. It was the power of slave owners who made it impossible to introduce an anti-slavery clause in the Constitution, in spite of Jefferson's efforts. The Pluto factor was still only behind the stage; but it led to the Civil War, to the obstructionist policies of Southern Democrats at crucial times, and to our most critical present situation, particularly with regard to the big cities. As we shall see presently, all the Pluto problems are coming to a head around 1972, and one may wonder what might happen and exactly what *de facto* type of government might develop afterward. [See Rudhyar's 1974 book **The Astrology of America's Destiny** for an update and for material on the Watergate Crisis of 1972-73.]

The position of the Moon at the cusp of the Third House is very logical and instructive; for, if the Moon refers to the "common people," where could it be better found than in the field of short journeys, constant eagerness for new experiences and sensations, and intellectual-analytical technology aiming at the control of the environment? The Moon in this Sagittarius-rising chart forms a trine with the mid-point of the pair, Mars and Venus. We can link this aspect with the tremendous development of interpersonal contacts through the use of commonly owned cars, to the traveling habits of relatively well-to-do youth in search of adventures and love, and to a facile use of the mind which leads to the popularization of great ideas and books, and — to the characteristic phrase "that he who runs may read."

The planetary emphasis on the sign Cancer adds to the fact that the most expansive triple conjunction of Venus, Jupiter and the Sun occurs in the house of relationships. Optimism is the prevalent mood, and often the refusal to face the real facts of a situation. However, the Sun squares Saturn in the Tenth House, and this can lead to deflation. Interestingly enough quite a number of Presidents have had a discordant aspect of the Sun and Saturn in their birth-charts — which may be another indication that Saturn should indeed be in the Tenth House, that house of the executive.

The square of Mars in the Seventh House to Neptune in the Ninth House has a very special significance at this time of unending war in Vietnam — a war which many people consider highly "Neptunian" in that it seems based on misconceptions and a good deal of deceit. In any case, the position of Neptune in the Ninth House, which deals with foreign adventures and diplomacy, is certainly justified considering the awkwardness and confused inadequacy of not only our government's foreign policy, but also of the approach of the American people in general when dealing with foreigners and big international issues. A great deal of idealism has evidently been displayed, but in a rather ineffectual manner. The trine of Neptune to Pluto is also an interesting phenomenon in this respect. It could be linked with the huge investments of American big business in foreign countries.

One of the most significant planetary positions in the Sagittarius rising chart is that of Uranus. If there is a house in which Uranus, symbol of radical change and transformation, should be in the American chart, it is certainly the house of labor and of health-care, the Sixth House. Not to see that is really to refuse to accept the most obvious facts, for Americans, more than any people in the world, have totally transformed the techniques of work and conditions of the laboring classes — mass production, the development of labor unions, etc. America has, moreover, been a fertile field for the discovery of new methods of healing — osteopathy, chiropractice, and all kinds of "spiritual healing" since the beginning of Christian Science. The Sixth House is also the house which deals with the national services — and the Army and the Air Force have brought to America and to the world many new departures, including, of course, the use of the atom bomb made of enriched uranium. To the astrologers who would insist that Uranus should be rising in a U.S. birth-chart, because the American people themselves have manifested such a readiness and eagerness

to devise new ways of living, and accept radical innovations, I would simply answer that this Uranian character, which is evident enough, can be accounted for far better by the fact that the Ascendant at Sagittarius 13° is exactly on the South Node of Uranus. This is a fact which is usually not given enough importance, because people do not really understand what the planets' nodes signify; thus a few words have now to be said concerning these nodes.

The planets' nodes represent the line of intersection of the planes of a planet's orbit and of the plane of the earth's orbit, the ecliptic. The planes formed by the orbital revolutions of the planets are at various angles to one another, as seen from the Sun. They therefore intersect. The lines of intersection of the orbital plane of any planet and the ecliptic (i.e., the earth's orbital plane) can be considered as an astrological indicator of the most basic relationship between that planet and the earth-as-a-whole. It is this relationship which is represented by the nodes of a planet. The north node and south node must always be considered together; they form an axis, just as the Ascendant and the Descendant — the two "ends" of the birth horizon — form an axis. When the nodal axis of a planet coincides, in zodiacal longitude, with the natal horizon of a person - or also the natal meridian (zenith-nadir line) — this person is strongly affected by the typical quality of that planet. The person is more deeply, more compulsively affected than if the planet itself were rising (or setting). In the latter case the effect refers more to conscious and perhaps deliberate actions or events, but when the planets' nodes coincide with the Ascendant of an individual, this individual becomes, **by his very presence**, an "agent" of the planet. In the case of the Uranus nodes, the individual almost inevitably brings change and challenges to transformation wherever he lives — whether he intends to do so or not. The "influence" of the planet acts at the very roots of the individuality, in a more or less instinctive manner. Thus the American people have acted in the world as a Uranian force. This force has been released particularly in terms of the house of labor and health because of the planet's position in that house.

One more point with respect to Uranus in relation to this American people's chart: astrologers often have remarked that each time that Uranus returned to its natal place — which they assume to be practically on the Gemini Ascendant of the more well-known chart — the United States experienced a war: the War of Independence, the Civil War and World War II. There have been other wars also, even if less important; but the point that is so conveniently but forgotten is that the house of war is the Seventh House! Therefore, this tends to prove the validity of a Sagittarius Ascendant.

Let me repeat here that such a chart should not be considered as a basis for determining external **events**, for it refers to the state of consciousness and the individuality of the American **people** and not primarily to what happens to the Government or the institutions of the State. Obviously crucial historical events and political moves will have their reflection in, and often be caused by, changes in the collective mentality and the emotional mood of the American people; but these changes need not coincide precisely with the events. What is important is the relationship which the changes have with the overall pattern of development of the collective destiny (and individuality) of the American people as a whole.

The passage of important planets over the angles and prominent planets of the chart have proven to be quite significant in that sense. When Neptune moved over the Sagittarius Ascendant in 1812, the War with Great Britain began; which, by the way, was certainly not a particularly victorious war and brought a good deal of popular uncertainty. When Neptune crossed the nadir point of the chart, the Civil War was raging. It reached the Descendant in 1895-96, very soon followed by Pluto, and the Cuban situation developed which led to the Spanish-American war. Neptune had been transiting the American Moon during the 1846-48 War with Mexico. This was also the Gold Rush period.

Uranus moved over the American Ascendant in 1817 while the Seminole war went on, and the concern with the West took clearer forms. The conjunction of Uranus and Neptune at Capricorn 3° in opposition to natal Venus (1821) and later their oppositions to the other Cancer planets in the chart increasingly stressed the problem of slavery and the relationship of the U.S. with other nations (the Monroe Doctrine). When the Morse telegraph was successfully tried out in 1844, Uranus was at the nadir point of the chart. This development became essential for the eventual unification of the vast country. As the remotest planets moved through the lower hemisphere of the chart, the process of building the country went on; when Uranus crossed the Descendant the Civil War began, with Neptune at the cusp of the Fourth House.

The passage of Uranus over the Midheaven occurred in 1885 with Grover Cleveland as President. This was a time of labor unrest which led to the formation of the American Federation of Labor. We have recently experienced a recurrence of this transit in the fall of 1968 and through 1969, with Jupiter in conjunction with Uranus. This marked the election of Nixon to the Presidency. The interesting thing about this last transit is that it may be construed as a kind of prelude to the passage of Pluto over the same degree of Libra on September 30, 1972 just before the Presidential Elections. We may also relate these two transits to that of Neptune which I have already connected with the development of the atom bomb (October 4, 1943 to August 2, 1944) and such events of World War II as the Normandy landing.

The Pluto transit, as usual, will be repeated three times, the last time on July 23, 1973, almost exactly 28 years after the first explosion of the atom bomb in New Mexico. I might add that there will be also a conjunction of Mars and Pluto on October 4, 1972 in square to Jupiter in Capricorn and a conjunction of Mercury and Uranus on October 2nd at Libra 18°05', while Saturn will have moved into the Seventh House of the American people's chart during the preceding June and will be stationary at Gemini 13°38' February 14, 1973.

These last-mentioned transits in themselves may not be too important, but because there has been a strong conjunction of Uranus and Pluto in 1965-66 which can be related to the start of some very significant youth protests and rioting in Black communities, the times at which these two planets reach the Midheaven should be considered rather crucial, especially as they coincide with two Presidential Elections. Uranus stirs up action and protest or revolt; and what Uranus begins, Pluto is likely to deepen and make final because irreversible, at least for quite a long time.

Pluto is now moving fast and coming closer to the Sun than Neptune. It symbolically pierces through the sphere of Neptune, in a sense fecundating it, but also tending to make many illusions and Utopian dreams collapse. But all this is further emphasized by the fact that, also in 1972, the progressed Sun of the American chart is reaching the natal Pluto. Pluto was "retrograde" on July 4, 1776; but the progressed Pluto, now "direct," is at about Capricorn 27°50', having reached its "stationary direct" position around the time the Korean war began.

If Pluto is transiting the Midheaven of a chart whose progressed Sun is at the same time reaching a conjunction with the natal Pluto, this indeed emphasizes very strongly this Pluto factor. As the natal Pluto is in the Second House of the American people's chart, the factors of wealth, possessions, and even innate characteristics inherited from the past, are stressed. The Saturn transit early in the Seventh House does not lighten the situation, especially if one remembers what happened in the spring of 1943 and though 1944, the last time Saturn transited this section of the zodiac; and the time before was in 1913, the Balkan prelude to World War I.

Yet, it would be very unwise to jump to the conclusion that we can expect a new global war in 1972 or 1973, for what is at stake is not primarily what happens outwardly in the form of events, but a **collective state of consciousness**. A variety of public events affecting this state of consciousness may trigger the Plutonian process. When Pluto moved across the Descendant of the American chart, President McKinley was nominated, then elected. The

Spanish-American War, it is true, occurred in 1898 under this repeated transit; and later on Pluto transited the American natal Mars during the Russo-Japanese War. However, what is important to consider here is the fact that during the McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt period, the American upper class was developing a policy of world expansion, Transiting Pluto reached the natal Sun of the American people's chart in 1925-26, after having stimulated Venus and Jupiter in that chart during World War I; but here again the basic fact is the tremendous increase in economic and political power this war brought to America, and the deep-seated restlessness which followed the War's end — the so-called Jazz Age and the rise of gangsterism as **the direct result** of Prohibition. And apparently we have not learnt the lesson of Prohibition, for the same pattern is being repeated, with perhaps worse results, with marijuana instead of alcohol. In both cases the collective mind of a large portion of the American people — today mostly, but certainly not only, the youth — is being distorted by the paternalistic and Puritan concept of a large scale prohibition. Thus we see that Pluto moved, by transit, from the Descendant to the Midheaven of the American chart during the period 1897 to 1972. It seems to be evident that what we are facing is the culmination of the fantastic expansion process which took place in the U.S. during these 75 years. The conjunction of the progressed Sun of the chart with the natal Pluto in 1972-73 indicates that **collectively** we have reached a point in the evolution of the American consciousness when we have to decide once and for all what we will do with the Plutonian factor in our midst. Let us hope that the decision will not be imposed upon us by an outside power.

See Rudhyar's 1974 book **The Astrology of America's Destiny** for more on the USA Horoscope and for material on the Watergate Crisis of 1972-72.