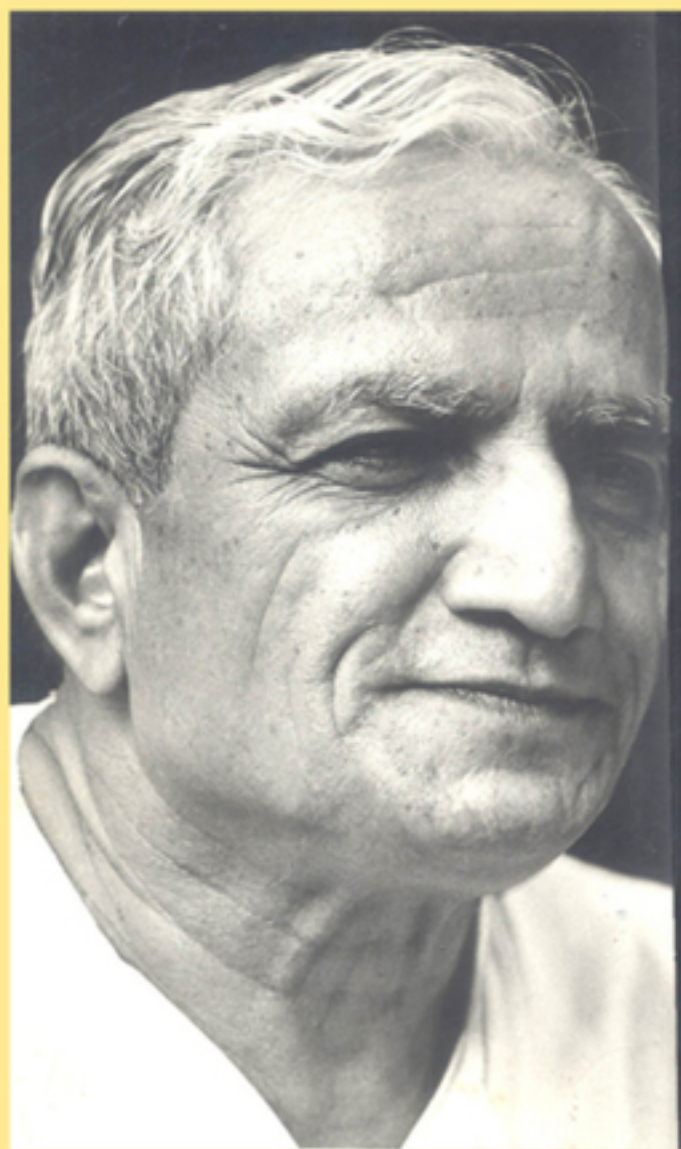




THE STANDARD

D.B.THENGADI

THE STANDARD

There are various values of life in the world. What value we should choose requires careful thought. This is especially so in the prevailing circumstances, because different standards are being used in our public life. In the political field, in particular, there is a race on for position. He who can achieve high office and amass wealth by resorting to trickery, that to in shortest possible time, is considered a clever person!.

Doing anything with devotion and over a long period of time is considered foolish. A clever person does things quickly, but speed does not achieve great things. Constructive work making an impact on social life cannot be done in a hurry. Some people can be fooled for some time, but all people cannot be fooled all the time. So great work needs to be done with patience and perseverance. As saying goes, a short-cut will cut you short. So, if we keep patience, instead of adopting a short-cut, the work in hand will be accomplished in the fullness of time.

Political people rely upon publicity and atmosphere. They have come to believe that publicity is an alternative to organization. They say strong enough propaganda would create an atmosphere in favor of their party, they would win on the strength of this atmosphere, and the need for workers would be automatically fulfilled; so, creating an atmosphere

through a strong publicity campaign is enough for success. Propaganda and publicity are important, but to a very limited extent.

Publicity is like monsoon. An excess of it brings a flood, a shortage of it brings a drought. Propaganda, on the other hand, deludes people into thinking that they have done a lot of work. One comes to genuinely believe that propaganda is an alternative to work. One also comes to believe that building up your base gradually and with patience is a foolish process. Once the desire for publicity grips a group, its willingness to do concrete work comes to an end and its values of life undergo a change. It thinks it has found an easy way to leadership.

It is true that propaganda is necessary for spreading work, but it gradually leads to a desire to see one's own picture in the newspapers and to hear one's own cassette. This is the Narcissus complex, named after a handsome youth from Greek mythology who fell in love with his own beautiful image. This complex gradually makes one forget that the purpose of publicity is growth of work. Then, only that much work is done as is necessary for propaganda. Publishing of statements is the only thing that remains. This change comes about gradually and without our noticing it.

In short, haste is not good for any great work. If we do something happily and patiently we shall get great self-satisfaction. As a Sanskrit saying goes, there are five things that require patience - wending your way, weaving a blanket, climbing a mountain, acquiring learning, and earning wealth. So do not think that political techniques of trickery will produce results. Work is done only with sincerity and patience. Great work calls for patience. But who can have patience? Neither an egoistic person nor a selfish person, only an idealistic person. Perseverance sharpens idealism and increases self-confidence. He who has no self-confidence loses the battle even before joining it.

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In the Sanskrit play Mudra Rakshasa there is a scene showing Arya Chanakya listening to reports of reverses after reverses, of general and warriors deserting him and going over to the enemy's side. Having heard it all he says, Those who wanted to desert me have done so, and those wanting to desert me will do so. I only wish that my intellect does not desert me. My intellect is mightier than armies and the world has seen its prowess in destroying the

Nanda empire. What a tremendous self-confidence! It is a supreme example for a worker devoted to an ideal.

What is happiness and what is grief? Can an ordinary person contemplate the real nature of happiness and unhappiness? Naturally every one wants to be happy. Not only Westerners but even our great sages and seers have said that the end and aim of life is happiness. The important point is how to achieve happiness. That is what our philosophy of life deals with.

Life cannot be divided into bits and pieces. Life is one and integral. It can be viewed from various aspects. One is practical another ideological. Some people say you may be ideologically right, but from the practical point of view this is not acceptable. According to a very simple definition in Sanskrit, happiness is that which creates a pleasurable sensation and grief is that which creates an adverse sensation.

When Stalin's daughter Svetlana came to Bharat (India) and was asked the purpose of her visit she had replied that she wished to spend the last days of her life in a cottage by the holy Ganga. Can any 'progressive' or 'modern' citizen of our society imagine Stalin's daughter expressing such a last desire? About a decade ago Henry Ford's grand-

daughter had come to Bharat and was asked how she got involved with the Hare Krishna movement. She replied that it gave her peace of mind. Then what is the use of all your wealth?, she was asked. She replied that all wealth belonged to Lord Krishna.

A 'progressive' Indian would call this foolish talk. The point is, why do the grand-daughter of a great American industrialist and the daughter of the Russian dictator say so? What is the origin of their feeling?

Mere Artha (wealth) and Kama (pleasures of senses) do not make a man happy. They increase misery. Hence it is said that there should neither be Abhava (absence) nor Prabhava (predominance) of the two; then alone can man become happy, and that happiness would be enduring and intense. It will not be transitory. Our seers call it Moksha. This intense, enduring happiness is the goal of human life. It is for man to strive for it in the light of his capacity, genius, temperament, circumstance as well as his physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual levels.

It is the responsibility of the social structure to ensure that no one lacks Artha and Kama. To prevent the two from dominating person's mind is his/her responsibility. Hence, in our (i.e., Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh) memorandum to the National Labor Commission we not only dealt with such matters as profit-share, dearness allowance, pension, etc., but on the very first page advocated a balance between

absence and excess. When such balance is achieved, Dharma Chakra, the rule of law, begins to revolve.

Success and failure alone cannot be the only test of leadership. At times defeat may be more glorious than victory. A Sanskrit proverb says if an elephant breaks his tusk in trying to demolish a mountain it is a matter of pride for him. Elizabethan times were a golden era in English history. It was a time of great challenges, and the challenges produced great men. It was the same with France in the time of Revolution. Adversities and calamities produced men of heroic proportions who could overcome them and their names were written in golden letters in the pages of history.

At the same time it has also been seen that when such men overcome adversities and achieve a measure of success and things settle down they gradually and imperceptibly begin to deteriorate, as happened in seventeenth-century France or nineteenth-century Italy. This is human nature. The change is so gradual that one has to be extremely vigilant. Another reason is that if we are good, people feel respect for us and naturally come to us. We become the leaders and they become the followers. However, this leads the leaders into the habit of expecting service from the followers. This deterioration comes about very gradually and is very difficult to guard against. Once the leadership is established, a person feels nothing more needs to

be done, and his/her will to work is gradually eroded. He/she begins to look for more and more ways of enjoying the privileges that he/she gets because of his/her status as a leader.

Worldly-wise people have their standards of behavior and those with magnificent idealistic obsessions have their own values of life. For them greatness and consummation of life have different meanings. When Napoleon lost his idealism and began to think only of power and position he once said, Men are like figures. They are valued according to the position that they occupy.

It is the opposite with us. We hold, according to a Sanskrit saying, that a crow does not become an eagle even if he perches on the top of a palace. An eagle will remain an eagle even if it is on the ground, and a crow will remain a crow even at the highest height. We hold that office or position is not an index of greatness. Greatness is an inner value.

We see two different ways of precept and practice in history. We have seen the tussle for power in India. Those who thought position meant greatness looked upon sticking to power as the aim of life. But there are examples to the contrary. When the war of independence of the British colonies in America under the leadership of George Washington was about to reach a successful conclusion, the political leaders grew envious of his spreading fame and began to sabotage his effort.

They even stooped to the level of delaying supplies meant for the front. The armed forces came to know about the dirty game the politicians were playing. They approached Washington and urged him not to hand over power to such petty politicians after the war was won but assume control of government, assuring him that they, the only center of power in the country, were with him. It was a wonderful opportunity for Washington, but he did not accept the suggestion. He set up a constitutional committee and held regular elections. It is a different matter that the people elected him as the first President of the USA. By our current standards this was sheer madness.

Can such a thing conceivably happen in Bharat (India) today? It was not always as it is today. Actually we have a long tradition of noble values of life. There are many instances in point. Once, when Kunti and her sons were living in exile, God appeared before her and granted her a boon. She could have asked that the lost kingdom be restored to the Pandavas. Instead she asked for unending adversity so that they should never forget Him. Again, when the war was won by the Pandavas and Dhritarashtra wanted to retire to the forest, Kunti prepared to accompany him. The Pandavas argued, as she had herself asked them to wage war, how could she now go away? Kunti replied that she had told them to wage war because as Kshatriyas it was their duty, their Dharma, to fight against injustice; on the other hand if her elder brother-in-law was going

to the forest it was her Dharma to go with him and serve him. It was indeed idealistic values of life that made her think like this even after regaining the kingdom.

There are many similar instances in our ancient history. There are examples of Bharata and Chanakya. Even in our modern history we find such examples. After 1916, Tilak was in a way the leader of the whole country. About this time Mahatma Gandhi came to Bharat and his Satyagraha in South Africa became a matter of great discussion. Congressmen thought the Congress should also try his technique of peaceful non-co-operation. When Tilak saw this he said to Gandhiji that although he was the leader he was not conversant with that type of movement, so he (Gandhiji) would have to lead it. It is another matter that Tilak died soon after. But had he lived he was prepared to follow Gandhiji's lead.

This shows that idealistic values of life and selfish values lead to different ways of thinking. If we believe in collective leadership we must pay careful attention to our values of life, to whether our behavior accords with those values, and to our way of thinking, because the quality of our leadership will have an impact on our field of activity as well as our society. The way we think, our mental attitude, is very important.

There is new national awakening in Bharat and a new force is emerging. At this hour what should be

our mental attitude? The first Bajirao Peshwa has provided an example worth emulation. He wanted to conquer the North but Chhatrapati Shivaji declined permission as resources for the expedition were inadequate. So Bajirao wrote to the Chhatrapati, We only need your permission. We shall raise the forces as well as the resources. We must live up to the reputation of our great ancestors. With your blessings we shall conquer the entire Hindustahan. After the conquest, when people in the North called him Swami (master), he said he was not the Swami, the Swami was in Satara (i.e., Shivaji), the seat of Hindavi Swarajya. So long as this attitude remained the Maratha empire expanded; the day it changed the empire began to disintegrate.

When ego is present, unified strength is not possible. When two egoistic people come together they do not compound strength, they fractionate it. An able organizer always keeps this in mind. The life of Prophet Mohammed provides an instance in point. There was unhappiness in his family because he was not amassing wealth. After victory in a battle his commanders used to share the loot among themselves but the Prophet took nothing. So he was poor, while the commanders were rich. He could not even light the lamp in his home and used to eat simple food like dates in the dark. Once, in the battle of Badar, a lot of loot fell in their hands and his wives urged him to take his share at least this time, so that life could become easier for them. He said he would take it and his wives could share it among

themselves - on condition, however, that they would no longer have the right to call themselves the Paigambar's wives. The women realized what he meant.

An idealistic individual does not pay attention to his personal or domestic life. He does not have time for personal work. Nor does he have the inclination for it. He works with all his might for the good of others. He who cares for the sufferings of others is hard upon himself. He is like Vaishnav Jana - caring for the suffering of others, oblivious of his own. Gandhiji had a devoted follower named Parchure Shastri who used to live with him in the Ashram. Parchure was a great scholar but he was a leper. As Gandhiji came to know that massage with a certain oil could alleviate the affliction, he took it upon himself to do the massage. Even when he went to Delhi to discuss transfer of power with Lord Mountbatten he told the Viceroy he would have to return by a certain train, and if the talks could not be conducted by that time they would have to be extended. He did not want to break the regularity of the massage. Could Gandhiji have given so much importance to the massage of a follower if he were hungry for power? Can we see leaders of today behaving like this?

In our history the best example of leadership is provided by Lord Krishna. During the big Rajasooya Yaga of the Pandavas, everyone was allotted the work of his choice. Asked what he would like to look

after, the Lord said he would do the cleaning up after the meal!

We have two different sets of values of life. We have to see which we have to adopt for achieving the broad objective of social upliftment. We have to see that everyone's values of life accord with 'collective leadership'. What type of leadership is expected for any big accomplishment? Greatness that comes with position is not real greatness. Real greatness does not depend upon position. It depends upon inner values of life. Its basis is the inner quality of a person, his/her work, thoughts and behavior. This is the real world.

AUTHOR (D.B.THENGADI)

Sri Dattatreya Bapurao (alias Dattopant) Thengadi (born November 10, 1920) is recognized by scholars as philosopher and visionary. He is a great orator and a learned author. Shri Thengadi has been a Pracharak of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) for nearly five decades and is the founder of the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (the biggest labor union in India today), the Bharatiya Kisan Sangh and the Samajik Samarasata Manch. At the age of fifteen, he was the president of the Vanar Sena at

Arwi in Wardha district of Maharashtra, his birth place. While yet a student of law in 1942, he came under the influence of Shri Guruji Golwalkar. Among the other major influences in his life is his association with Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya.

As Pracharak of RSS, Shri Thengadi spent some years in Kerala, Bengal and Madhya Pradesh and was actively associated with the founding of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) and with the Bharatiya Jana Sangh in its early phase. Shri Thengadi's stint in INTUC (the labor wing of the Congress) and in the Postal and Railway workers' union (under the Communist Party) gave him an opportunity of acquiring first hand knowledge of problems of laborers : experience which culminated in the founding of Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh by him in 1958. He has been considered as the think tank of Sangh Parivar activities. He is well known among karyakartas for his acumen and clarity in thought and action.

Shri Thengadi was a member of Rajya Sabha for a term. In 1969, He visited Soviet Russia and Hungary as member of a parliamentary delegation; in 1977 he went to Switzerland as a delegate to an ILO conference and also to the Second International Anti-apartheid Conference at Geneva. In 1979, he was invited to Yugoslavia by the Trade Union there to study that country's labourization, and also by the USA to study the American trade union movement.

The same year he also visited Canada and Britain on invitation. In 1985, Shri Thengadi led a Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh delegation to china on the invitation of the All- China Federation of Trade Unions. He subsequently attended the Tenth Regional Conference of ILO at Jakarta, Indonesia, the same year, and also visited Bangladesh, Burma, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. More recently he participated in the Fifth European Hindu conference held at Frankfurt, Germany, in August 1992, and World Vision 2000 in USA.