

DATTOPANT THENGADI

**NATIONALIST**  
**PURSUIT**

SAHITYA SINDHU PRAKASHANA

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# NATIONALIST PURSUIT

*LECTURES BY*  
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SAHITYA SINDHU PRAKASHANA, BANGALORE, INDIA

NATIONALIST PURSUIT. By DATTOPANT THENGADI.

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## *PUBLISHERS' PREFACE*

We consider it a rare privilege and honour to be able to bring out this collection of lectures by Shri Dattopant Thengadi who has distinguished himself as a front-rank thinker and social worker of long standing. There is hardly any aspect of public life which has not engaged his attention at one time or another. A remarkable feature of his personality is that though incessantly occupied with intense organisational activity he has never distanced himself from intellectual endeavour. Vast is his erudition ; and it is the objective and comprehensive perspective born out of this intrinsic nature which has in no small measure contributed to the progress of the various organisations founded and nurtured by him which include the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, the Bharatiya Kisan Sangh and the Samajik Samarasata Manch.

Shri Thengadi has been a prolific writer, with over a hundred books, booklets and articles in English, Hindi and Marathi to his credit. His intimate association with Shri Guruji Golwalkar, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya and other savants and his continuous preoccupation with social work as a Pracharak of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh for half-a-century have enabled him to develop a rare degree of insight into the workings of society and polity not only in Bharat but also in other countries many of which he has visited and studied. Shri Thengadi is thus uniquely qualified to speak about the major problems facing the country and the durable solutions therefor.

Problems are seldom what they appear on the surface, and a proper understanding of the problems can come only from an appreciation of the value-system which has sustained the society for centuries ; and unless the diagnosis of problems is done properly, lasting solutions will prove elusive. It is such breadth of vision which has characterised the presentation of the thoughts contained in this volume. Needless to say, these seminal thoughts and analysis will be found to be invaluable by every student of public affairs, irrespective of the ideological stream to which he might belong.

As is evident, the different chapters in this book are transcripts of lectures delivered by Shri Thengadi on different occasions over a period of almost three decades. Some of these lecturers have had limited

circulation in the original language. Till recently, however, an extensive collection of Shri Thengadi's talks had not been attempted, despite the demand. The circumstances of the Hindi edition (*Sanket Rekha*) forming the basis of this English publication have been detailed by Shri Bhanu Pratap Shukla in the accompanying Introduction.

A principal virtue of this collection is that it is for the most part a verbatim reproduction of the talks in the form in which they were delivered. No attempt has been made to re-shape them to suit the book format, since any such revision would substantially reduce the utility of the presentations. Being addressed to live audiences, the talks necessarily involved elaboration of many relevant details to enable effective communication. There is thus, naturally, occasional repetition. We believe that the retention of the spoken format alone could do justice to the presentations. Hence very little editorial liberty has been exercised except to provide a few helpful links and to rough-hew some edges to facilitate clarity. In any case, the intended recipient of this presentation is an average social activist rather than a scholastic ; though it would not be inappropriate to claim that rarely can so much constructive thought be found within the confines of a single book.

We would be failing in our duty if we did not acknowledge the help of those who have made the publication of this volume possible. We owe the preservation of Shri Thengadi's spoken and written material to the sustained efforts of Shri Ramdas Pande. Imparting the articulateness essential in the book format was the task lovingly undertaken by Shri Bhanu Pratap Shukla. The English rendering has been done with meticulous care by Shri M. K. (alias Bhausahab) Paranjape and Shri Sudhakar Raje. Shri Vasantrao Kelkar evinced keen interest in the preparation of the English version. We are deeply grateful to all these friends.

We owe thanks for the physical production of the book to M/s. Bali Printers who have done the typesetting and M/s. Rashtrrothana Mudranalaya who have executed the printing.

Angirasa Samvatsar

Shaka 1914

Deepavali

26th October 1992

– SAHITYA SINDHU PRAKASHANA

## COMPILER'S INTRODUCTION

(HINDI EDITION)

At the outset I wish to make it clear that the responsibility for any shortcomings in the present book is entirely mine. The book is based on thoughts expressed by Shri Dattopant Thengadi from time to time over a period exceeding a quarter of a century. I made several efforts to persuade Shri Thengadi to go through the compilation and correct whatever errors may have crept in, but could not succeed. All such efforts were turned down with the words : "This vast earth abounds with people who are brilliant thinkers and who are capable of correcting errors. Have faith in the genius of our nation. What we do, what we sacrifice and what we create are but flowers offered at the feet of the Almighty. It is important to have faith. Faith it is that gives meaning to words. I have said nothing original. I have only repeated thoughts that have come down to us by tradition, or those that I have imbibed from the works of our seers and thinkers, or had the good fortune to learn from Shri Guruji or Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya. I am not in a position to either improve upon or criticise these thoughts."

The thoughts that Shri Thengadi has expressed are certainly a reflection of our ancient heritage, and are at the same time in tune with the age-old Hindu practice of restructuring the human society in keeping with changing times without giving up eternal and universal principles.

The object of this collection is basically not to please the progressive intellectual but to indicate to the average activist the starting-point of our life as a nation, to show him where we have to reach in future. The book merely indicates the direction, it does not claim to open up the way in all its fullness.

Saint Tulsidas wrote the *Rama-Charit-Manas* mainly for his own pleasure. I have edited this book for the same reason. The same motive had inspired John Bunyan to write *Pilgrim's Progress* ; I am in good company.

In 1925, Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, a simple and relatively unknown person, launched the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, which

triggered a long and continuing process of national renaissance based on the eternal Dharma of this ancient land. The method he adopted was the continuous building up of a cadre of selfless and tireless workers pledged to the service of the nation and imbued with unshakable faith in their ideal. During the 15 years after the founding of the Sangh – he died in 1940 – Dr. Hedgewar achieved a great deal, but much more remained to be done. Before he left this world he entrusted the RSS to the care of Shri Guruji Golwalkar, who carried the mission from success to success, and by the time it was Shri Guruji's turn to leave the world the Sangh had grown in many dimensions, adding several new but healthy organs of national reconstruction. Through his speeches and writings, precept and practice, Shri Guruji enlarged Dr. Hedgewar's brief ideological enunciation into a comprehensive commentary, at the same time setting in motion the process of building a truly modern nation that would be informed with genuine equality, unity and social harmony.

The ideal is lofty, the method unique, and faith in ultimate achievement unshakable. The principle is eternal, but the path towards it long and arduous. Great changes do not come about by mere talk or wishful thinking. Change takes place only through a clear perception of the goal and unshakable faith in the method of achieving it. Faith in ancient ideals has to be coupled with methods that suit present circumstances before the goal is realised.

Eternal change is the law of nature. "The old order changeth, yielding place to new, and God fulfils Himself in many ways." The Sangh's work is God's work – it is a divine mission. The Sangh welcomes change, not by destruction but by elimination of what has become obsolete and of evil practices that creep in with time. Ancient Hindu thought has the capacity to make timely changes in its external frame, leaving the eternal principles intact.

Resurgence of the ancient Hindu nation, at once powerful, prosperous and united, is the ideal of the RSS. It is in this direction that the present book points a finger. It is not a comprehensive exposition. I am confident that our national genius will synthesize the thoughts and ideas in this book, weeding out redundancies, making up deficiencies and eliminating errors.

A couple of points more.

Had it not been for the efforts of Shri Ramdas Pande in collecting and preserving Shri Thengadi's writings over a period of more than 25 years, this material would probably have been lost and posterity left the poorer for it.

Secondly an effort has been made to present the author's thoughts in their original depth and mode of expression, but they were presented before different age-groups at widely different times. This has led to some inevitable repetition.

- BHANU PRATAP SHUKLA

## *AUTHOR'S NOTE*

I would like to express here a thought that naturally came to my mind on being asked by the publisher to write a preface to this book. It is the recollection of an observation by Prof. Bruce Westley of Wisconsin University, a distinguished writer—“The writer does not exist whose work cannot be improved by the constructive vigilance of an editor.” The meaning here is clear.

– D. B. THENGADI

# CONTENTS

1.	BEFORE THE SUNRISE	1
2.	NAGPUR DURING THE TILAK ERA	12
3.	THE END OF THE TILAK ERA AND THE BEGINNING OF THE GANDHI ERA	17
4.	LEADERSHIP OF THE TILAK AND GANDHI ERAS	22
5.	CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES, UNCHANGING INSPIRATION	29
6.	COMPOSURE AND POISE	39
7.	THE RELEVANCE OF DR. HEDGEWAR	57
8.	EXPECTATIONS OF THE RASHTRIYA SWAYAMSEVAK SANGH	64
9.	SELF-CONTAINED METHOD OF WORK	72
10.	THE STANDARD	79
11.	THE IDEAL HERO	90
12.	CONCEPT OF ONE NATION AS A WHOLE	95
13.	FACTS AND FANCIES	109
14.	SELF-CONFIDENCE OF THE NATION	144
15.	THE BASIS OF NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION	154
16.	THE CONTEXT OF THE HINDU TRADITION	175
17.	WORDS AND MEANINGS	184
18.	IDENTIFICATION AND EQUALITY	194
19.	BACKWARD BRETHREN	232
20.	PROBLEMS OF THE LIBERATED COMMUNITIES	240
21.	MALADY AND TREATMENT	243
22.	THE ALTERNATIVE	249
23.	FUNCTIONAL REPRESENTATION	256
24.	REVOLUTION IN INDIA	266
	INDEX	289

# 1.

## Before the Sunrise

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**T**HE BATTLE of Sitabardi was fought on November 25, 1817. The Union Jack was hoisted on the old palace of the Bhosalas in Nagpur on December 30, 1817. On January 6, 1818 Appasaheb Bhosale signed a treaty with the British. On March 15, 1818 he was arrested on the charge of conspiring against the British. He was being taken to Prayag by an armed contingent when he escaped on the way on the night of May 13, 1818. From then on he travelled incognito from place to place and established contacts with various princes. While in Jodhpur on such a mission he was exposed and arrested by the Jodhpur prince. But Jodhpur rejected the British demand for handing him over and kept him as an honoured captive. Appasaheb Bhosale died in Jodhpur in 1840. On March 13, 1854 the Bhosala territory was annexed to the British empire.

In October of the same year the loot of the Nagpur treasury began. For more than a month the loot was carried away on the backs of beasts of burden. On June 13, 1857 the cavalry at Takli near Nagpur rose in revolt against the British, but the uprising was suppressed. A few months later the Gonds of Chandrapur challenged the British, but they could not give battle for long. Their leaders Bapurao Gond and Vyankatrao Gond were caught and executed on October 20, 1858. With the martyrdom of these two Gond freedom fighters the freedom struggle in this region came to an end.

In the year 1861 the Nagpur and Sagar divisions were merged to form the administrative unit of 'Central Provinces' and the task of consolidating British rule in the region was completed. Those who think cheap popularity is enough to come to power cannot



imagine how difficult it must have been for a handful of people to establish and maintain an empire thousands of miles away from home. It requires advance preparation, much vigilance and foresight. Such an accomplishment is possible only with hard work.

In the Central Provinces the British began by collecting all-round information about the region even from such a great distance. Even before coming to power they had information on such varied matters as the topographical features of the region, the military importance of various divisions, art, literature and science of the area, the local population, its various divisions, castes and sub-castes, religious beliefs, social customs and festivals, names of the leaders of various castes and sub-castes, their temperaments, their strengths and weaknesses, and so on. Even the natives of the area did not have such comprehensive information as the British had collected in their manual. No local individual or group of individuals possessed the comprehensive information on Nagpur of the last century that the British had with them. It was on such a solid basis that they could establish an empire and run it. For this process they had built personal contacts in various fields of activity. They were certainly our enemy, but their method of work was without doubt worthy of emulation by any society with a conquering spirit.

Because of a Gond majority, the area in and around Nagpur was originally known as 'Gondvan'. Today the Gonds are considered backward tribals, but this was not always so. They had big kingdoms of their own. They too had a warrior-class like the Kshatriyas in other parts of the country. They were called Rajgonds. Even today a Gond king's fort stands in Nagpur. The Gonds were as brave as other Kshatriyas of the country. Who does not know of Queen Durgavati's prowess? In those days this region was full of forests. The Gonds lived in cities, villages as well as forests. But there were no distinctions, based on where they lived. It was one brotherhood, wherever they lived. The ruling Gonds and those living in the forests were a single class and they shared the feeling of kinship. Even after the Bhosalas established their kingdom in the region they did not interfere in any way with the autonomous structure of the Gond society. The Gonds lived in friendship with other subjects of the Bhosalas, who were known for their fatherly attitude towards all their subjects. They treated

all equally; as a result there was friendship and amity between different castes and sects.

The main communities of Nagpur were the Mahars, the Gonds, the weaver class ('koshti'), the intellectuals, the artisans, etc. They all had amicable relationships with one another. The Gonds too had a feeling of amity for all of them. The Muslims were a negligible minority.

The British could not tolerate this state of affairs, because it was not conducive to their 'divide and rule' policy. Gradually they chalked out a strategy.

In the times of the Bhosalas the people living in villages bordering the forests could all use the forest produce according to their needs. The forests were common property. Now the British began to tell the Gonds that they should have exclusive rights on the forests and their produce. 'Those who live outside encroach on your rights and harm your interests when they take away timber and other forest produce. It is in your interest to stop this encroachment and reserve the forest produce for yourselves, and the British could make such arrangements.'

After the situation was fully controlled the Government began to gradually curtail the rights of the tribals. But this process was so gradual that at no level did it have a sudden adverse impact. Such 'sandpaper treatment' could be noticed by people only after a long time. This is exactly what happened. Now we have tribal agitations for restoration of their traditional rights over forests, but things were quite different a century and a half ago. They were tempted by the argument of the British, who succeeded in sowing the seeds of dissension.

Prominent castes of the Nagpur society used to include the Mahars and the weaver community. There were not only large numbers of Mahars in the armed forces of the Bhosalas but many of them were officers. The Mahars of Maharashtra have made a significant contribution to the growth of the Hindu empire. Hence, even in the army of the Peshwas they had an important place. Before the Bhosalas, the Mahars had made a name for themselves as conquerors. The military posts set up in the region extending from Nagpur to Orissa and from Nagpur to Bengal to

consolidate the administration in the wake of conquests were mainly manned by Mahars. The Bhosalas gave them due respect; so they too had self-respect, loyalty and affinity for the society at large. The British administration did not give them importance but it took care not to hurt their self-respect.

The cotton and silk textiles of Nagpur had a great demand in Egypt and European markets. As this industry was under royal patronage the weaver class got all necessary facilities. Now this royal patronage came to an end. Destroying local artisanship was the policy of the British. They began to import machine-made British cloth, on which taxes were not imposed. The result was that the weaving industry declined, and with it declined the economic prosperity of the weaver class. Naturally a sense of resentment grew in it, but it did not reach the pitch of revolt.

The Nagpur region had a large number of farmers like everywhere else in the country. Under the Bhosalas the system of revenue collection was simple and humane. While collecting the revenue, care was taken to see that enough would be left with the farmer to feed his family and by way of seed for the next crop. There was a personal relationship between the ruler and the farmer. The British changed this personal relationship into an impersonal one. They created a landlord and a 'malgujar' class in the villages and gave them full property rights, which was against the Hindu tradition. The Hindu tradition had no sanction for private ownership of land. This was the hour of a rural anti-revolution. As the new class of landlords and malgujars began to think of amassing greater and greater wealth by way of revenue collection, they also began to think of increasing oppression of the farmer class. If and when the oppressed farmer raised his voice the Government gave full support to the new oppressor class. The result was that the farming community in the Nagpur region suffered from a sense of utter helplessness.

The process of industrialisation had began but a regular working class had not yet come up. Means of transportation in the region were adequate. The first railway line in Nagpur was laid in 1867. More and more tracks were laid by the beginning of the present century. Five metalled roads were built to join five major centres with Nagpur. Still the means of transportation were

so inadequate that till 1908 there was no good road linking Nagpur with Wardha or Vidarbha. In the year 1870 the Model Mill was set up in Nagpur, and in 1877 the Empress Mill. The work-force of these two mills did not have the modern working-class mentality. There was an organisation or two, set up as a consequence of personal animus, but there was no trade-unionism as such. Even the country as a whole had no trade-unionism till then.

In the times of the Bhosalas Muslims were not a noticeable component of the local population of the region. It is true that the Bhosalas and some of their courtiers had Arab divisions in their armies and they had done good work. In the battle of Sitabardi the Arab soldiers had fought as bravely as the Hindu soldiers. But they were not natives. The number of local Muslims was insignificant. Still the British appointed them to more than fifty per cent positions of officers in the police department and elsewhere. The editorial of '*Barar Mitra*' had asked on July 8, 1879 : "Why is it that only Musalmans are appointed as Tehsil-dars?". A distinct feeling was created in the mind of the police and the bureaucracy that they were superior to the local population and it was in their hands to control them. Both of them were set up against the common citizen.

In those days the condition of the Christians was not worth mention. In 1845 Stephen Hislop had established a Scottish Mission here. This was the beginning of missionary activities. In those days, however, Nagpurians were not 'progressive' or 'liberal' but were 'traditionalists'. They once soundly thrashed a missionary named Mr. Voss, so the others kept a low profile. In 1854 they again raised their head, but so long as their hold on this new region was not consolidated the British did not want any new problem on their hands. Hence a Christian presence at the local level was not felt till 1889.

The Bhosalas were patrons of the arts and scholarship. They were known for this even outside Nagpur. So, talented outsiders were drawn to Nagpur. Many learned Tailang Brahmins from Telangana had settled in the Nagpur region. Dr. S. V. Ketkar, author of the famed '*Gyan Kosh*', has written that Tailang Brahmins were by nature hot-tempered, but during the Bhosala regime the social atmosphere was so congenial that these "foreign" Brahmins

were easily assimilated in the local population. During British times Brahmins from Western Maharashtra also came to Nagpur in search of jobs, but the British did not want them to merge with the locals. During those times Western education mainly prevailed in two communities, the Brahmins and the Chandraseniya Kayastha Prabhus (C.K.P.). Naturally they dominated the services. Very subtly the British sowed the seeds of separation between the locals and the outsiders. They created the feeling among the 'Konkanastha' Brahmins coming from Western Maharashtra that they were superior to the local population and so were holding administrative posts. On the other hand, the feeling was created among the local Brahmins that local people had a right to local jobs and the Konkanastha outsiders were encroaching on this right. The example of Tailang Brahmins and Konkanastha Brahmins underlines the enormous difference between the social integration of the Bhosala times and the differences created by the British policy.

'Brahmin' is the name of a particular caste, but the British administrative policy gave a broader connotation to the term in the public mind. It now included a few non-Brahmin castes that had neither enough land nor a hereditary vocation for their livelihood. These people are now known as the 'middle class', but this term was not current then, although the class, as such, was emerging. It had become a separate social unit. It was natural that in this period of twilight there happened to be no distinction between the Brahmins and the middle class in the public mind. Rather, 'Brahmin' connoted the entire middle class. This was an educated and enlightened class and many of its members held high positions. So it came to appear as if this class was the leader and the representative of enlightened Nagpur. The atmosphere of this class was the atmosphere of Nagpur and the activities of this class were the activities of Nagpur. When men of letters wrote of the mind of Nagpur, they meant the mind of this middle class.

Dr. Ketkar has given a very realistic and interesting description of the domestic and social life of Nagpur's middle class, the individuals that influenced it, its special characteristics and values of life, as well as the traits of 'natives' hobnobbing with British officers. Another honest commentary on the contemporary middle

class of Nagpur is the Marathi novel '*Gondvanatil Priyamvada*'. Its plot begins around 1893-94.

There were also a few Bengali families in Nagpur for administrative purposes, as it was considered the 'Eastern view' (Chhattisgarh, Chhota-Nagpur, Orissa and Bengal).

A new administration required a new type of people. For administrative convenience and in order to Westernize the people it was necessary to replace Sanskrit with English. After 1853 Sanskrit was deliberately relegated to a secondary position. Sagar initiated English education in the Central Provinces. Later, English reached Nagpur. The first English-educated person in Sagar was Krishnrao Ringe. Kinkhede, the first student to take his M.A. from Nagpur, was taken out in a procession on an elephant. English education centres opened in many districts. In spite of all this, there was very little progress in English education by the year 1889. The first Indian college principal of C.P., Keshav Gopal alias Bapuji Taman, principal of Morris College, wore traditional Hindu dress and was counted among reputed Vedic scholars of Nagpur.

A learned author has said that the British introduced the Western educational system in order to mould the natives into Brown Sahibs. The common people gradually came under their influence. But an unexpected result for the British was that this same educational system also produced patriots like Vasudev Balwant Phadke, Ranade, Tilak, Gokhale, Paranjape, etc., in Western Maharashtra. In Nagpur the prominent personalities in this category were Dadasaheb Khaparde, Dr. Munje, Loknayak Anay, 'Tapasvi' Babasaheb Paranjape, Achyut Balwant Kolhatkar, Dr. Paranjape, the founder-editor of '*Hari Kishor*', Prithvigir Gosavi and Shamrao Dada Deshpande. But all this happened much later. Till 1889 such patriots had not actively come on the scene. Even that great man whose activities shook the Nagpur area only a few years before the birth of Dr. Hedgewar, founder of the RSS, was Western-educated. However, he did not belong to the region. His name was Annasaheb Patwardhan.

Annasaheb was a man of many talents, a staunch patriot and a remarkable personality. He was of the view that no conspiracy against the foreign power could succeed so long as the conspira-

tors did not have at least a small piece of land under complete control. Even his close associates thought it an idealistic dream, but Annasaheb was not discouraged. He waited for the right opportunity.

In 1853 Lord Dalhousie had annexed the Vidarbha region of the Nizam's territory as compensation for the loan that the Nizam had taken from the British but was unable to repay. In 1857 South Vidarbha was returned to him as a reward for his loyalty to the British Crown. North Vidarbha was in British hands till 1903. In 1880 Annasaheb came to know that Salar Jung, the Nizam's Dewan, was resentful of the British and wanted to recover Vidarbha, but could not do so for lack of funds. Annasaheb proposed a plan to the Dewan through his lawyers, which was that he (Annasaheb) would deposit the entire loan amount in the French bank in Hyderabad, with which Salar Jung should buy Vidarbha back and hand it over to Annasaheb.

Salar Jung was incredulous. He wondered if any single individual could have the capacity to buy a territory like this. At the same time he saw it as a way to get Vidarbha back from the British. Still he thought it idle to imagine that any individual could collect so much money. So he decided to test Annasaheb and take further steps only if Annasaheb passed in it. He saw no possibility of Annasaheb's succeeding, so he told his lawyers that further talks could be held only if Annasaheb could lend him two crore rupees for a day. He could not believe his eyes when Annasaheb's lawyers produced the amount within the stipulated time. This was a unique feat. Salar Jung now had confidence in Annasaheb and was prepared for further talks. In October 1880 he sent a message that he was in agreement with the general outline of the plan, and called for a secret meeting of the two to work out the details. It was proposed that the meeting should take place while Annasaheb was on his way back from Madras. But destiny willed otherwise. While Annasaheb was still in Madras he got the news of Salar Jung's passing away. It is difficult to imagine how he must have borne this bolt from the blue. Not only did a great plan fail but Annasaheb had to spend the rest of his life repaying the interest on the huge sum.

Although the plan failed, people gradually came to know about it and the public mind was electrified.

As it is, the people of Nagpur have always appreciated the heroic spirit. Even after foreign rule set in, they kept up their interest in many pursuits. Such pastimes as wrestling, Mal-lakhamb, Dandpatta still dominated the atmosphere. In 1857 the Arms Act was passed and in 1878 it was renewed. Still the Nagpurians kept up training in sword-play, stick-play, throwing the spear, etc. Both real weapons and dummies were used during the training. The worship of arms on Vijayadashami Day and the 'Seemollanghan' continued. Collecting arms and proficiency in their use were respected. There were some people in Nagpur who had acquired this proficiency after long practice. One of them was Damodar Balwant alias Bhide Bhat. He later trained Anna Sohani in stick-fight. All in all the atmosphere was influenced by a martial spirit. It was this atmosphere that made a man like Dr. Munje take part in the Boer War instead of living a life of comfort at home.

Information on the various ideologies and activities that arose in the last century kept reaching the people of Nagpur. A contemporary event of far-reaching impact was the establishment of the Indian National Congress. But it did not create the same enthusiastic response in the public mind as was created by such previous events as Umaji Naik's revolt, the 1857 war of independence, the martyrdom of 'go-bhakta' Ramsingh Kuka or Davre, the martyrdom of the Chapekar brothers, or Vasudev Balwant Phadke's heroism.

The common man ignored the establishment of the Congress but the educated middle class took some notice. This class was already thinking of engaging in some social activity. A few of them, like Mr. Bose, attended the Congress session in Calcutta and started some activities on return. Later these educated people launched an institution named Lok Sabha on the pattern of the Sarvajanic Sabha of Pune, but it did not last long. However, a few of them kept up Congress work. It had a limited field and only the upper middle class took interest in it. The seventh Congress session took place in Nagpur (Lalbaug) in 1891. It was presided over by P. Anandacharlu. The work of the Congress continued within this class. It could not take root among the common Nagpurians because it was not in keeping with the temperament of Nagpur.



Just one instance would suffice to show how 'vegetarian' the Congress was in those days. In 1897 the Congress held its session in Amaravati under the presidentship of Sir Shankaran Nair. Dadasaheb Khaparde was chairman of the Reception Committee, and yet a resolution demanding the release of Tilak could not be passed in the session. Even an effort by some young men to hang Tilak's picture at the venue could not succeed. As a matter of fact it was Tilak who had accomplished the task of making the Congress pro-people. He had contributed to public enlightenment through his writings in Shivrampant Paranjape's '*Kal*' and later still more through the '*Kesari*'. All over the Marathi-speaking region, national awakening and '*Kesari*' became interchangeable terms. The two-decade Tilak era in Indian politics began with his article titled 'Punashcha Hari Om' published in the '*Kesari*' on July 4, 1899. However, many years were to elapse before the Congress came under the influence of Tilak's thinking.

The new ideas and activities that emerged during the British period were collectively described by some thinkers as the new awakening. Among them the Theosophical Society was an unknown entity till 1889 so far as the Nagpur region was concerned. The Brahma Samaj was a matter of discussion among the educated sections of the rest of the country. Nagpur was certainly acquainted with the names and work of great men like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Devendra Nath Thakur, Keshav Chandra Sen and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar. But the Brahma Samaj, as an organisation, was not much known. Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda were known as great men, but not for their work. In 1882 Swami Dayananda visited Nagpur. His visit was a source of inspiration and resulted not only in the launching of the Arya Samaj in the area but also in the founding of the 'Gorakshan Sabha' the same year which had 49 branches all over C.P. by the end of 1885. Till that time the Prarthana Samaj of Sir Narayanrao Chandavarkar and others was known only by name in Nagpur. The initial phase of social reform launched in Western Maharashtra by people ranging from 'Lok-hit-wadi' R. B. Gopal Hari Deshmukh to Mahatma Jyotiba Phule came to an end with the death of Phule. (The birth centenaries of Mahatma Phule and RSS founder Dr. K. B. Hedgewar are close to each other.) This social reform movement used to be discussed in the Nagpur region in those days, but the discussion was confined to the educated upper middle class.

By this time Mahatma Phule's Satya Shodhak Samaj had spread considerably in Western Maharashtra. A special characteristic of this movement was that although it was meant for all Marathi-speaking people it remained limited till Phule's death and even after, to those Marathi-speaking areas that were directly under the rule of the Brahmin Peshwas. Till then the Satya Shodhak movement had not been able to enter territories ruled by the Bhosalas or the Nizam.

The British began to divide the society on a caste basis in another way. In Western Maharashtra Brahmin Peshwas were the rulers, so it was easy to create an anti-Brahmin atmosphere in this region. In the Bhosala region an atmosphere of amity prevailed among the subjects because of the sagacious policy of the rulers. All people had affection for the Bhosala family. Many decades after the establishment of the British regime, Dr. Munje's father used to say to him, "Tatya, you may earn your bread anywhere, but remember, your bones belong to the Bhosalas." In his childhood days, Dr. Hedgewar too felt, because of the surrounding atmosphere, that the Bhosalas were still ruling Nagpur.

Taking note of this popularity of the Bhosalas, the British began to say that it was the Brahmins who were responsible for the end of Bhosala rule ; they betrayed the rulers. The historical truth was just the opposite, and as many people or their parents were eye-witness to this history. They were not taken in by such false propaganda. But after they departed from the scene the anti-Brahmin propaganda of the British began to gain strength. Folktales and folk-songs began to be composed on this basis. For instance one such song went – "Raghuji (Bhosale) had many elephants, but curry-eating Brahmins destroyed the Raj." But all this happened much later. Till the end of the last century the people knew the historical truth, so such divisive propaganda had no impact till 1889.

However, the poison-seed had been sown and ensuing generations had to see it grow into a tree.

This was the situation in Nagpur when, at the auspicious moment of sunrise on Varsha Pratipada Day in the year 1889 A.D., the promise of a new India emerged in the form of Keshav Baliram Hedgewar. □

## 2.

# Nagpur during the Tilak Era

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**A** TRUE ASSESSMENT of a great man's achievements calls for varied information about him – such as his hereditary qualities, good as well as not so good, the special characteristics and beliefs of the social group in which he is born, the circumstances through which he had to pass from birth to death, the events with which he was directly or indirectly connected, his special qualities, those individuals with whom he came in contact either as a friend or as an enemy, and so on. If information on such varied aspects is not available a true assessment of his work does not become possible. By and large our biographers are given to deification of their heroes, but their assessment is at best contemporary, not objective.

It is very easy to write the biographies of those who either write autobiographies or themselves publicise, from time to time, the great deeds they do or do not do. Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, founder of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, did not write his life-story. The fine art of self-justification or self-praise in the name of an autobiography had not developed till his time. And even had it been developed, he had no use for it, for he was by nature shy of publicity. In a poem addressed to him Pt. Bachchraj Vyas said, "You led a life that was devoid of wealth and devoid of the limelight."

According to modern customs such a "backward" person cannot be expected to publicise his great achievements. Jesus Christ had said, let not your left-hand know the good work that your right-hand does. Dr. Hedgewar was of this nature.

It has also been a special characteristic of prominent workers of the RSS that Dr. Hedgewar never got a Boswell to his Johnson,

an 'M' to his Ramakrishna Paramahansa, or a Mahadev Desai and Pyarelal to his Gandhiji. Eric Hauffer says in *The Ordeal of Change* : "I have always felt that the world has lost much by not preserving the small talk of its great men."

Further, publicity was anathema to the important work in which Dr. Hedgewar was engaged till the end of the Tilak era. All revolutionaries inevitably become introspective and non-communicative. An instance in point that comes to mind here relates to Swatantrya-veer Savarkar's visit to Arvi during a tour of Vidarbha. In a meeting at the residence of Dr. Apte, the then Sangh-chalok of Arvi, a pensioner curiously asked, "Tatyrao, could you tell us the trick you used to jump in the sea at the French Coast ?" Sarvarkar looked at the questioner and asked in turn, "Why ? Do you propose to repeat the feat ?" Then, without waiting for an answer he added, "Who can say if someone may not have to use the same trick in future ?"

It seems that revolutionary activity and the requirements of image-building are poles apart.

While thinking about the life of such a person, one has either to depend upon available information or to look to the results of his work and go back from there to the source through logical inference. One has to look to the fruit of achievement and infer that it must have had a befitting seed. The life-activity of such a person unfolds itself in progressive stages of development. From the moment of an individual's birth his natural tendencies and surrounding conditions keep reacting on each other and his responses determine the growth of his personality and the development of the stuff of which he is made. We know that Dr. Hedgewar came from a family that was well-versed in Vedic lore and was religious-minded, self-respecting, and short-tempered. If we keep in mind these inherited qualities, it would not be difficult to imagine his response to every situation that confronted him. For instance he lost both his parents in his childhood. This can have two effects – either the child feels helpless and insecure, or its basically self-reliant attitude hardens still further. If we know the natural tendency, we can rightly guess the response.

Dr. Hedgewar's life provides the clue to the process of his mental development, and if we keep in mind the changes in the

circumstances prevailing from day to day we can understand his mind with still greater clarity.

The advent of the Tilak era was accompanied by two natural calamities – the terrible famine in the Bombay Presidency in the last decade of the last century, which affected two crore people in an area of seventy thousand square miles, and the epidemic of plague that spread over a wide area during this period and the beginning of the twentieth century. The Nagpur region was also affected by both. At such a time the Government shamelessly celebrated the diamond jubilee of Queen Victoria's coronation, thus bringing home the imperialists' cruel apathy to the common people. As a reaction, Rand was assassinated in Pune. Against this background it was natural for the people of the Nagpur region to fondly remember Swarajya – the benevolent rule of the Bhosalas. The ideal of Chhatrapati Shivaji was again kindled in the public mind.

A feeling of affection for heroes who sacrificed their lives for the sake of freedom grew in the minds of the Nagpurians. They kept getting to know about such events as the battle of Sitabardi, the unsuccessful conspiracy of Annasaheb Patwardhan, the hoisting of the Union Jack on Shaniwar-wada in Pune, the rebellions of Babasaheb Nargundkar and Umaji Naik, the martyrdom of freedom-fighters and their commanders in the 1857 war of independence, the armed insurrection of Bapurao and Vyankatrao Gond of Chandrapur, the martyrdom of the Chapekar brothers, the heroic endeavour of Vasudev Balwant Phadke and so on.

In those days, means of communication and propaganda were far from adequate, still news from far-away places reached Nagpur, although late. The Nagpurians knew that the final objective of all armed struggles, big and small, made from the very beginning of the British regime, was to drive the British out of the country. The direct motivation of the various Vanvasi and Kisan agitations in the country as well as the activities of Tantya Bhil in Maharashtra was economic, but their ultimate aim was attainment of freedom. The youth of Nagpur had great love for the revolutionaries who embraced the gallows at various places. Prominent among such martyrs till the end of the Tilak era were Ramsingh Kuka (1885), Khudiram Bose (1908), Madanlal Dhin-

gra (1909), Anant Kanhere (1910), Vanchi Aiyar (1911), Avadh Bihari Govindlal, Amir Chandra Hukumchand, Vishnu Ganesh Pinglay, Sarabhai Bagi and Kartar Singh (all 1919), Sohanlal Pathak (1916), Bhai Banta Singh and Sufi Amba Prasad (1917), etc. Stories of heroism inspired the youth. Swami Vivekananda's conquest of the world also gave them courage.

In those days patriotic journalists made a significant contribution to national awakening. The '*Kesari*', '*Kal*', '*Bhala*' and '*Desh Sevak*' were helping the awakening in the Nagpur region. The imprisonment of Tilak for his articles and of journalists like Shivram Mahadev Paranjape, three editors of the '*Vihari*', two editors of '*Hind Swarajya*' of Bombay, B. R. Palvankar of '*Rashtra Mukh*' of Bombay, the editor, assistant editor and printer of '*Vishwa Vritta*' of Kolhapur, Ghorhonath Phadke, editor of '*Arunodaya*' of Bombay etc., created fervour among the people here. There was literature to inspire the youth, like the printing and distribution of 20,000 copies of a Marathi translation of '*Mazzini*' by Ganesh Damodar Savarkar, founder of the Abhinav Bharat Samaj, Swatantrya-veer Savarkar's works like '*The 1857 War of Independence*' and '*Joan of Arc*' in addition to '*Mazzini*', his '*Letters from Andaman*' and his poems, the poems of Govind of Nasik, Sakharam Ganesh Deuskar's '*Deshar Katha*', the article titled "A call to arms" published in the '*Hindustan Review*' at the end of 1903, the article highlighting the failure of the Congress movement led by Hume, Wedderburn, Dadabhai Naoroji and W. C. Bannerjee, the novel '*Anand Math*' by Bankim Chandra, '*Dasboth*' of Samartha Ramdas (Italy's Ramdas is called Mazzini and India's Mazzini is called Ramdas, according to Savarkar), the account of the economic exploitation of India by Britain published by Dadabhai Naoroji, R. C. Dutt and Dinshaw Wacha, the '*Gita Rahasya*' of Tilak, etc.

Body-building has been a long-standing pastime in the Nagpur region. It later developed into Anna Khot's 'Nagpur Vyayamshala' and Dattopant Marudkar's 'Bharat Vyayamshala'. A great desire for body-building encouraged contemporary youth to organise Akharas and Vyayamshalas (gymnasiums). Such activities as patriotic Bhajans and Kirtans and youth clubs also continued. On the occasion of festivals like Ganesh Utsav, Shiv Jayanti, Rama Navami, etc., which Tilak had initiated for the purpose of mass awakening, leaders like Dadasaheb Khaparde,

Bapuji Anay, Achyut Balwant Kolhatkar and 'Tapasvi' Babasaheb Paranjape gave speeches that filled young people's minds with a patriotic spirit. All this scattered atmosphere had to have a focal point. Dr. Balkrishna Shivram Munje fulfilled this need on his return from the Boer War. He was touched by the plight of Indians settled abroad and he had expressed his deep feelings at the Congress session of 1905. Taking inspiration from Tilak, he brought all activities to Nagpur and also established contacts between local youth and the revolutionary Anushilan Samiti of Bengal.

The defeat of Italy by Abyssinia in 1896 and that of European Russia by Japan in 1905 resulted in arousing self-respect and self-confidence among the non-whites. The other events to deeply influence the young people of Nagpur were the assassination of Italian emperors by revolutionary elements, the political assassinations of Austrian empress Elizabeth, the Prime Minister of Spain, the President of France, the Home Minister of Russia and the Governor-General of Finland, the declaration of the partition of Bengal by the British on September 29, 1905, the emergence of the slogan '*Vande Mataram*', Dadabhai Naoroji's justification of 'Swaraj' in the Calcutta Congress session the following year and its espousal of the fourfold programme of Swaraj, Swadeshi, boycott and national education. This was why young men from Nagpur attended the Surat session of the Congress in 1907 in large numbers to lend support to Tilak. When Tilak was assaulted on the dais, those who rushed to his defence included Dr. Munje and Dr. Gadre of Nagpur.

The atmosphere in Nagpur became quite surcharged when Tilak was sent to jail in Mandalay. As an immediate reaction students took out a big procession and stoned the Morris College. A largely-attended protest meeting was held on August 19, 1908 opposite the Vyankatesh Theatre. The same year an industrial exhibition was held in Kasturchand Park. In the meanwhile one Narayan Paranjape was arrested on the charge of defacing the statue of Queen Victoria in Maharaj Bagh with coal-tar. Later Achyut Balwant Kolhatkar was also arrested. Thus the young patriots of Nagpur had girded their loins to back Tilak during the Tilak era. One can imagine the effect that all these events had on the mind of the born patriot Keshav, who was just completing his adolescence and coming of age. □

### 3.

## The End of the Tilak Era and the Beginning of the Gandhi Era

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**A**S THE YOUTH of Nagpur looked upon Tilak as their source of inspiration, guide and ideal leader, they naturally followed his thinking on various aspects of national life. In the economic field Tilak had on the one hand advocated Swadeshi and boycott of foreign goods and on the other tried to promote indigenous industrialisation. In the educational field he favoured research into our ancient sciences and assimilation of Western education and proving our national greatness on the basis of research. In the religious field he was for firmly adhering to all points of reverence but at the same time for bringing about contemporary reform without harming the religious sensibilities of the common man and without confusing him.

In those days, social reform was very much in vogue in Maharashtra. Tilak was in favour of social reform but sided with political reform in the controversy 'Which first? Social reform or political reform?'. He was of the opinion that various reforms should certainly be introduced in the society, but vigilance is necessary while bringing them about. He held that reform must not be blind imitation of the West, its propagation must not create an inferiority complex among the people and make them consider the Westerner superior to them. New things should be introduced gradually and in the course of educating the people so that they would be able to digest the reform, and the alien government should not get an opportunity to interfere with social matters. Thus social reform should be brought about not by legislation but by change of heart. He advocated a 'social convention' as apart from the Congress so that there would be no hindrance in building up a united anti-British front on the Congress platform comprising both pro-reform and anti-reform elements.



He gave first preference to political work. He said all those reforms which our social reformers were discussing were already present in the Burmese society before the British reached there, but they did not rouse in the Burmese people the strong patriotic spirit required to oppose the British. Even today, he said then, the Burmese society has all those reforms but they do not seem to have given them the national inspiration to launch a freedom struggle against the British. What he meant was that on the basis of the societies of Burma and Sri Lanka it could be said that there is no inevitable causal relationship between social reform and an awakening of the national spirit.

All outstanding patriots of the Tilak era were staunch Hindus. Hindutva was the source of inspiration for all movements, armed or non-violent, carried on in those days in various parts of the country, such as Maharashtra, Bengal, Punjab and Madras.

V. D. Mahajan, author of *The Nationalist Movement in India*, writes : "These revolutionaries believed in the philosophy of bomb or pistol in one hand and the Gita in the other. The revolutionary organisation 'Anushilan Samiti' had given firm instructions that no one is to be admitted who is a non-Hindu or who has any spite against the Hindus."

Wolpert writes in his book *Tilak and Gokhale* : "He stimulated the revival of Hindu religious consciousness."

Dr. K. C. Vyas, a secular thinker, wrote in his book *Social Renaissance in India* : "The religious revival and the growth of national consciousness affected each other. The new nationalist movement which developed under the leadership of Aurobindo Ghosh and B. C. Pal had a common basis of thought in Vivekananda's Hindu revivalism. As a matter of fact, in many instances both the movements, the revivalism of Vivekananda and the nationalism of B. C. Pal, and others became one."

Dr. M. A. Buch, the learned author of *Rise and Growth of Indian Militant Nationalism*, writes : "Hence the attempt on the part of the Bangalee nationalists to base the movement for Swaraj on the ancient Upanishadic ideal of the search for the metaphysical absolute in one's own innermost self. Hence, the worship of the mother, the country, symbolised as the Goddess Kali."

Dr. Annie Besant, founder of the Home Rule League, declared : "And if Hindus do not maintain Hinduism, who shall save it ? If India's own children do not cling to her faith, who shall guard it ? India alone can save India, and India and Hinduism are one."

Lala Lajpat Rai, one of the Lal-Bal-Pal trio, said : "As a Hindu it is my devout prayer that I may be born again and again in this Land of the Vedas to contribute my 'Karma' to the corporate 'Karma' of the nation."

Tilak, the visionary of victory, said : "Time will come when we shall see our preachers preaching Sanatana Dharma all over the world. Rise above the Penal Code into the rarefied atmosphere of the sacred Bhagavad-Gita."

Bipin Chandra Pal said : "The ideal of Swarajya that has revealed itself to us is the ideal of divine democracy. The spiritual note of the present national movement is entirely derived from the Vedantic thought."

Barindra Kumar Ghosh wrote : "Sri Krishna had said in the Gita that whenever there is decline of righteousness and rise in unrighteousness, there shall be a reincarnation of God to rescue the good, to destroy the wrongdoer and to establish righteousness. At the present time, righteousness is declining and unrighteousness is springing up in India. . . . God will not remain inactive. He will keep His word. Place firm reliance on the promises of God, invoke His power."

Yogi Aurobindo said : "Nationalism is a religion that has come from God. . . . When it is said that India shall rise, it is the Sanatana Dharma that shall rise. When it is said that India shall be great, it is the Sanatana Dharma that shall be great. It is for the Dharma and by the Dharma that India exists. To magnify the Dharma means to magnify the country."

In his famous Uttarpara speech, he clearly declared : "It is not today that I am saying that nationalism is a faith, it is a 'dharma'. Rather I mean to say that Sanatana Dharma is itself nationalism for us. Hindu nation was born with Sanatana Dharma, it lives with this Dharma, and grows with Dharma. When Sanatana

Dharma degenerates, so also does this nation; and if Sanatana Dharma could die, with it this nation would have died. Sanatana Dharma is nationalism.”

This was the direction of thought in Nagpur during the Tilak era. All its political, social and public activities continued in this ideological atmosphere.

In the political field all activities from the implementation of the national four-point programme to the propagation of the message of the Home Rule League were based on faith in Hindutva, but they were all ‘vegetarian’.

After the Maniktola bomb case the patriots of Nagpur began to feel that they too should have a significant role in the revolutionary activities of the country. But it was a difficult task to conduct an armed struggle. It required a person with a burning heart but with ice-cold intelligence. It is unusual for the two to co-exist. Still, Nagpur’s patriots did not find it difficult to choose a leader. They unanimously and quickly chose Keshav Baliram Hedgewar.

Dr. Hedgewar’s activities after he accepted the responsibility are described by the State Gazetteer as follows on the basis of information collected by the British Government from their own sources :

“Hedgewar, the brain behind the revolutionary movement in Nagpur, had been to Poona to consult Tilak on the matter. Nothing is known about the nature of the advice he received. One Bhauji Kavare was the trusted associate of Hedgewar. Both used to secure pistols and ammunition clandestinely from outside. One Dadasaheb Baksi repaired old pistols and made them serviceable. Hedgewar once unsuccessfully tried to secure arms and ammunition from Goa. Funds were collected for this movement and secret meetings were held at out-of-the-way places like Bardwari, Tulsibag, Songaon Mandir, Kolonelbag, Indira Mandir and Mohite Wada. Life of Mazzini, stories of Bengal revolutionaries, the Alipur and Maniktola bombing cases, and ‘Indian War of Independence’ by Savarkar were widely circulated among the revolutionaries as food for thought. Hedgewar had sent his own trusted persons to Punjab with a view to keeping contact with the

revolutionaries there. One Shri Ganga Prasad was included in this secret deputation. He was accompanied by Appaji Joshi of Wardha and Nanaji Puranik and Baburao Harkare of Nagpur. These revolutionary activities were conducted for nearly 3 years from 1916 onwards. Towards the end of World War I, Hedgewar found that the movement was losing its dynamism and the chances of its success were few. He, therefore, called back his compatriots and systematically disorganised the movement. He then joined the Congress."

The man who did all this was officially evaluated in the State Gazetteer in the following words :

'He [Hedgewar] was a staunch protagonist of the principles and ideals of Hindutva, but this is no indication that he was an antagonist of other religions and faiths. He was the principal pioneer in establishing the organisation known as Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh."

On June 17, 1914 Tilak was released from Mandalay Jail. His return again invigorated the political scene. Dr. Annie Besant had already toured C. P. and Berar in 1917, but Tilak's tour of the region was very effective in spreading the message of the Home Rule League among the masses. All patriotic people of the region endeavoured to make the tour a success. It was used by Tilak to prepare the people for the freedom struggle. As a result it was followed by many successful programmes all over the region, such as public meetings and mass awakening campaigns against the Rowlatt Act and the Jalianwala Bagh massacre and for propagation of the message of the Amritsar Congress. As somebody has rightly said, before his death Tilak had laid a sound foundation for the wide scope that Gandhiji later gave to the freedom struggle.

The Tilak era that began on July 4, 1899 came to an end on August 1, 1920. Against the background of the great legacy of national awakening that he left behind at the end of a life of ceaseless endeavour, the Gandhi era began at the All-India Session of the Congress in Nagpur on December 16, 1924. □

4.

## Leadership of the Tilak and Gandhi Eras

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**T**HE PROBLEM, called 'communalism' after 1920, was actually not 'Hindus *versus* Muslims' but 'national *versus* anti-national'. It is not our intention to analyse it as a principle here. The national leadership's success in solving it on a practical level can be taken as an index of its capability.

It is obvious that any imperialistic power would adopt a 'divide and rule' policy in its colony. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan had once declared, "The Hindus and Muslims are the two eyes of India, and either without the other would deface the mother's countenance". Turning such a man into a rabid communalist was a triumph of the divisive policy of the British. It was also natural that those leaders whose personal ends were served by this policy incited the people within their spheres of influence to oppose the freedom struggle and support the imperial power.

These two factors will always be present. The test of the national leadership is not to lose its mental balance in any such situation, to prevent the masses from being misled and divided by the rulers, select intelligent and capable persons from among them and assimilate them in the national mainstream, and give them status so that they could be helped to increase their influence on their groups. This is the only way to solve this problem, and it was successfully adopted in the Tilak era.

There were two classes of patriots who advocated non-violence. One advocated it as a matter of principle, the other as a matter of strategy. Similarly there were two classes who talked with the Muslims to counter the British tactics. One considered

the process of talks a principle, the other a strategy. The talks at the time of the Lucknow Congress during the Tilak era were a part of strategy. So they did not mean surrender of the Hindus.

Everybody was aware of the clear fact that it was not possible for anybody to go beyond the *fait accompli* Morley-Minto plan, still only such Muslims were chosen for compromise talks as were amenable to Congress nationalism and respected Tilak. The policy of the Gandhi era was exactly the opposite of this. In that era, nationalist Muslim leaders within the Congress were taken for granted and those who were rabidly communal, anti-national and anti-Congress were considered representatives of the Muslims and invited for talks. In spite of Tilak's precautions it was feared that the talks in his times might result in Muslim appeasement, and so Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya had publicly declared in the session that in that event he would raise the banner of revolt. That even he considered the Lucknow Pact acceptable speaks of the nature of the compromise. It also speaks of Tilak's capability.

Like all people with faith in Hindutva, Malaviya felt that the Congress policy vis-a-vis Muslims should be neither to appease them nor to boycott them but to take them along.

Tilak was never in favour of appeasement. He believed in 'Sarva Dharma Sama Bhava' (religious equality) but at the same time had the sense of proportion to prevent it from deteriorating into appeasement. He held that everyone, Hindus, Muslims and others, should have full religious freedom, and time and again expressed this commitment on his part. For instance he certainly wanted that justice should be done to the Muslims in the Khilafat matter, but Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramaya highlighted Tilak's sense of proportion when he commented, "the Lokmanya did not sympathise with this [Khilafat] movement, but he did not oppose it."

In other matters too Tilak showed a unique sense of proportion. During the last phase of his life he told Gandhiji : "I like the programme well enough, but I have my doubts as to the country being with us in the self-denying ordinance which non-co-operation presents to the people. I will do nothing to hinder the progress of the movement, I wish you every success ; and if you gain the popular ear, you will find in me an enthusiastic supporter."

The Chauri Chaura episode showed how accurately Tilak had gauged the public mind.

It would surprise many to learn that in the Tilak era the Muslim League had, like the Congress, accepted Indian Independence as an objective.

In 1888, Lt.-Governor Auckland Calvin actively initiated the divisive policy in the Eastern Provinces. He tried to wean the Muslims away from the Congress. It was natural for some educated Muslims with vested interests to fall a prey to this policy. But there was also another factor at work in those days. While proposing the name of Mr. Yule for the presidentship of the fourth Congress session at Allahabad, Sheikh Raza Hussain had placed before the delegates the fiat of the religious leaders of the Sunni Muslims of Lucknow to support the Congress and stated, "It is not the Muslims but their official masters who are opposed to the Congress."

The Morley-Minto plan had planted the poison-seed of separate constituencies. In the beginning even the Muslims were not in favour of it. In the 25th Congress session held at Allahabad in 1910, Jinnah moved a resolution condemning communal representation for the Muslims, and Maulvi Mazar-ul-Haq seconded it. At a time when the plan to give communal representation to the Muslims in the legislative council was being implemented under the Morley-Minto Reforms, it was a matter of great courage for Jinnah and Mazar-ul-Haq to publicly condemn this special concession being granted to Muslims. In this connection a spokesman of Gandhism says :

"It required an utmost sincerity of purpose and courage of conviction to be able to say, as Mazar-ul-Haq did, to the Muslims who were just then elated with their achievements, that their success was really injurious to the common interests of the two great communities and that what the country wanted was that they should join hands and not remain apart in watertight compartments.

"The Muslims who, ever since the partition days, had remained aloof from national ideals and pinned their faith on the bureaucracy, saw better in 1913, and the Congress, in its Karachi

session in 1913, placed on record that year its warm appreciation of the adoption by the All-India Muslim League of the ideal of self-government for India within the British Empire and of the belief which the League had so emphatically declared at its previous session that the political future of the country depends upon the harmonious working and co-operation of the two great communities."

"The Muslim League expresses hope that the leaders of the different communities would make every endeavour to find a modus operandi for joint and concerted action on all questions of national good and earnestly appeals to all sections to help the object they have at heart."

In 1916-17, Dr. Annie Besant undertook an extensive tour for the propagation of her Home Rule League. The Government interned her. A wave of deep resentment spread all over the country against this. As an expression of his protest, Jinnah himself immediately became a member of the Home Rule League. On July 28, 1917 a joint meeting of the All-India Congress Committee and the All-India Muslim League praised the work of the Home Rule League and condemned the Government's repression.

Lokmanya Tilak was insulted in a special meeting called by the Governor of Bombay for discussions with representatives of the Home Rule League. As a protest against this, a big meeting was held at the Shantaram Chawl in Bombay on June 16, 1918. In the evening a big public meeting was also held under the chairmanship of Gandhiji, in which Jinnah plainly said he had doubts about the bonafides of the Government.

The Montagu-Chelmsford Report was published in June 1918, after which a special session of the Congress was held in Bombay on August 23, 1918 under the presidentship of Hasan Imam. At the same time a special session of the Muslim League was also held under the presidentship of the Nawab of Mehmudabad. The resolutions passed by the Congress and the League were similar.

The 1919 Congress session called attention to the Khilafat problem but also passed a resolution thanking the Muslims for agreeing to discontinuance of cow-slaughter on the occasion of Bakrid.



When Lala Lajpat Rai reached Bombay on February 20, 1920 at the end of six years of exile, the national leaders who welcomed him were Lokmanya Tilak, Jinnah and Annie Besant.

The decision about the non-co-operation movement of the Congress taken in an all-party meeting in Allahabad on June 2, 1920 was supported by the Muslim League session in Calcutta on December 7, 1920.

The psychological atmosphere of the Tilak era can also be gauged from the fact that when Shaukat Ali and Mohammed Ali were released from the Chhindwara jail at the time of the Amristar Congress, they went straight to Amritsar, where they paid their respects to Tilak and publicly supported the Congress stand.

If we compare the behaviour of Jinnah and the Ali brothers during the Tilak era with their behaviour in the Gandhi era, no need remains to comment on the comparative capabilities of the Congress leadership in the two eras.

Tilak's thinking and work were having an impact on his young admirers in Nagpur. Naturally Dr. Hedgewar was not untouched by them.

The British Government had extensive information on Tilak's viewpoint about the armed efforts that were being made for freedom. Hence, in every such event, from the assassination of Rand to the end, the Government always thought that Tilak must have actively participated in it, or aided it, or at least sympathised with it. He had to face penalties for expressing such thoughts as a journalist. Commenting upon Shivaji's assassination of Afzal Khan he had said, "If thieves enter our house and we have no strength to drive them out, should we not without hesitation shut them in and burn them alive? God has conferred on the Mlechhas (foreigners) no grant of Hindusthan inscribed on imperishable brass."

Martyr Damodar Chapekar had said: "Let us take a pledge to fight till the last breath and die bravely but not without painting the earth red with English blood. . . . Is it not shameful that we call our country Hindusthan (the land of Hindus) but let it be ruled over by Englishmen?"

Tilak approved of this sentiment. He said, "If there appeared even a 50 per cent chance for the success of an armed rebellion,

I would resort to it and trust God to give success to the extent of the remaining half.”

The first and most important offering of the heroic atmosphere of the Tilak era was Swatantrya-veer Savarkar. His prowess had an indelible impact on the mind of the youth. News of the work being done in Europe by Madame Cama and Shyamji Krishnavarma was also inspiring them. When Madame Cama accompanied Sardar Singh Rana to the International Socialist Conference in Germany in 1907 and unfurled the flag of independent India in it, the news electrified the youth of India. We now all know these events, but reading the authorized history of the Congress for that period cannot give us a true idea of the mind of contemporary youth. Did Gandhiji advocate the extreme non-violence that Savarkar had ridiculed in his play '*Sanysta Khadga*'? This is a different question, but his disciples made non-violence quite ridiculous. Things went to such extremes that even Pt. Nehru expressed surprise at some Gandhians raising objection to the formation of a volunteer corps for Congress session arrangements in the name of non-violence. It is inconceivable that historians believing in this type of non-violence as a value of life would do justice by those engaged in an armed struggle. As a matter of fact revolutionary activities attracted contemporary youth more than the various activities of the Congress. Some important activities of this nature were as follows :

\* On December 6, 1907 an attempt was made to blow up the train of the Lt.-Governor of Bengal.

\* In December 1907 an unsuccessful attempt was made to shoot dead the former District Magistrate of Dacca.

\* On April 30, 1908 Prafulla Chaki and Khudiram Bose threw a bomb at Presidency Magistrate Kingsford, which killed Mrs. and Miss Kennedy.

\* The Maniktola bomb case of May 1908, followed by revolutionary events in Dacca, Faridpur, Maimensingh and Bakerganj areas.

\* On November 9, 1909 a bomb was thrown at Lord and Lady Minto in Ahmedabad.

\* Revolutionary activities in Pondicherry under the leadership of V. V. S. Aiyar and Thirumal Acharya.

\* On June 17, 1911 Vanchi Aiyar shot at Tirunelveli District Magistrate Ashe. (The Tirunelveli conspiracy case).

\* On December 22, 1912 Ras Bihari Bose threw a bomb at Lord Hardinge in Chandni Chowk, Delhi. (The Delhi conspiracy case).

\* The well-known Komagata-Maru affair of Baba Gurudit Singh of Canada in 1914, arising out of anti-India Canadian laws, ending in the assassination of Hopkins, chief of the Canadian immigration office, by Mewa Singh.

\* Efforts by Taraknath Das and Sohan Singh Bhakna to organise Indians settled on the West Coast of the U.S.A., resulting in the establishment of the Ghadar Party in San Francisco and Central U.S. and in the Far East.

\* The failure of the Ghadar Party's all-India revolt on January 21, 1915 – under the leadership of Baghi Kartar Singh, Bhai Paramanand, Ganesh Pinglay, Jagat Singh and Harnam Singh, which ended with the hanging of Ganesh Pinglay on November 16, 1915 (after the hanging and transportation for life of all his associates).

\* The revolt in Singapore of 700 Jawans of the 5th Light Infantry under the leadership of Jamadar Chistikhan and Subedar Dande Khan.

\* Efforts made during the First World War by Lala Hardayal, Ravindranath Chattopadhyaya, Bhupendranath Dutt and M. N. Roy to secure the help of William Kaiser of Germany and Lenin, and the establishment of independent India's provisional government by Raja Mahendra Pratap in Kabul.

\* The memorable battle of Bagha Jatin (Jatindranath Mukherji) and his four associates with an armed battalion of police in the jungles of Balasore, Orissa, in 1915.

Many such stirring reports reached contemporary Nagpur and were eagerly received by the receptive youth. Prominent among these young men was Keshavrao. □

## 5.

# Changing Circumstances, Unchanging Inspiration

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**S**INCE THE founding of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, there have been two changes in the individual leadership but the quality of leadership has remained the same. The Sanskrit saying 'Vishnu is the heart of Shiva and Shiva the heart of Vishnu' is equally applicable to all three Sar-sanghchalaks of the Sangh. Consequently, each of them can be called the other's alter-ego.

Still the situation keeps changing, so the nature of difficulties the three had to face was naturally somewhat different. Some difficulties can be called common characteristics in the life of the Sangh, but some others were peculiar to their times.

Because of a long lapse of time it is difficult for today's generation to imagine the difficulties that were peculiar to Dr. Hedgewar's times.

The speed of events during the two decades from 1920 to 1940 can be assessed from a number of pointers. The ups and downs in Dr. Munje's life during this period can be considered one such index. The work done by the party of legislators led by him in the C. P. and Berar Council was more effective than that done in any other province of the country. This was the highest point of his public life. On the other hand his defeat by 3,216 votes, even in a limited constituency, as a candidate of the Congress Nationalist Party of Anay and Malaviya on the issue of the Communal Award, was the lowest. However, it was difficult even for contemporary people to really know if the plight of stalwarts like Bipin Chandra Pal, N. C. Kelkar, etc., in those days and the alternative leadership that emerged as a challenge to the established leadership in many regions (S. M. Sengupta in Bengal,

Brijlal Biyani in Vidarbha, Barrister Abhyankar in Marathi-speaking Vidarbha) was the natural culmination of an extensive Congress movement or the outcome of a well-thought-out conspiracy.

Many new forces were emerging in the new situation.

There was of course no question of Congressmen participating in the first election under the Montford reforms in October 1920. Even the Swaraj Party had not been set up by then. This election helped the emergence of non-Brahmins as a force. The spokesmen of this class were Wamanrao Ghorpade and Baburao Bhosale of Nagpur, Pandharinath Patil of Buldhana, Nanasahab Amritkar of Morshi, R. B. Naidu of Wardha, Akarte of Amravati and Gulabrao Naigaonkar of tehsil Chandur.

But in his presidential address at the All-India Depressed Classes Conference in Nagpur in 1920, Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj had confronted non-Brahmin leaders with a question – “You wish to attain the social level of the Brahmins, but are you prepared to accept untouchables as your social equals?”. As a result, and also because of reports of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's activities going on at the time in Western Maharashtra, a new awakening was stirring among the untouchables of the Nagpur region, especially among the Mahars, and a new leadership of this class was emerging. Dalit workers like Dashrath Patil were young then.

The labour class was also waking up. Its main workers were Dhundirajpant Thengdi, Kisan Phagu and Rambhau Ruikar.

At the other end, some patriotic members of the Malgujar community came together now and then in an association humorously called ‘Narendra Mandal’. This included Talatule, Babasaheb Tarodekar and Sami-ulla Khan.

The Congress was not contesting the elections, so the Nationalist Party was active in the field in order to prevent undesirable elements from coming to the fore. Its leaders were Babasaheb Khaparde, Barrister Ramrao Deshmukh, Manoharpant Deshpande, Govindrao Charde (Wardha), Balwantrao Deshmukh (Chanda), etc.

The Hindu Maha Sabha was also in the field. Active in this party were Dr. Munje, Dr. Hedgewar, Raja Laxmanrao Bhosale,

Vishwanathrao Kelkar, Jagannath Prasad Verma, R. B. Mavkar, editor of the weekly '*Savdhan*' and its writers like P. B. Bhave, Prof. V. S. Deshpande, Balshastri Hardas, Bindumadhav Puranik, etc. These same people had also worked for the Congress Nationalist Party on the issue of the Communal Award.

After Dr. Munje lost his hold, the leadership of the Congress Committee of Marathi-speaking Vidarbha passed into new hands. The new leaders were Barrister Morubhau Abhyankar, Punamchand Raka, Jamnalal Bajaj, Mahatma Bhagwan Din, Gen. Mancharsha Awara, Halde, Udhoji, Dada Dharmadhikari, Deendayal Gupta, Nilkanthrao Deshmukh (Virulkar), Dr. N. B. Khare, A. S. Patwardhan, Baburao Harkare, M. J. Kanetkar, editor of '*Nihspriha*', Ganpatrao Tikekar, etc. In Vidarbha Brijlal Biyani was coming into prominence along with Bapuji Anay and Veer Vamanrao Joshi.

Gopalrao Ogale, editor of '*Maharashtra*', also contributed in this work in his own way.

As Wardha was the main centre of Mahatma Gandhi, all political leaders at the national level had often to come to the Nagpur region; and the centres of various constructive activities conducted in Wardha (Maganwadi) became centres of attraction for constructive workers. Later the Wardha surroundings also became the centre for the Sarvodaya movement.

At many places in the region there were lawyers and other intellectuals who disagreed with the Gandhi policy. Some revolutionaries to whom Gandhiji's non-violence was unacceptable were also awaiting propitious times.

'*Aprabuddha*' of the Varnashram Swarajya Sangh, retired Justice Parande and Shri Girmikar were engaged in propagating their opinions through their weekly journal.

As young men of the Nagpur region were given to body-building, they were encouraged in this direction by the 'Ustads' of various Akharas and Vyayamshalas being conducted all over the region as well as by Anna Khot and Dattopant Marudkar of the 'Nagpur' and 'Bharat' Vyayamshalas, and Dr. Shivajirao Patwardhan, Ambadaspant Vaidya, Ashare, Kane, Kokardekar, etc., of Hanuman Vyayam Prasarak Mandal of Amravati.

Others who were engaged in mass awakening in their own ways were Vinayak Maharaj Masurkar of 'Gomantak Shuddhi' fame, who was conducting social-service organisations, student bodies and religious activities like Anath Vidyarthi Griha, Shraddhanand Anathalaya, reading-rooms, a blind school, cow-protection meetings, Bhajan groups, etc., disciples of saints like Pachlegaonkar Maharaj of the 'Mukti Sena', Tukdoji Maharaj of Gurudeo Mandal, Mozri, etc., and national 'Kirtankars' like Dadashastry Kayarkar.

With all of them Dr. Hedgewar had intimate and affectionate contacts.

In addition he was also in contact with such eminent personalities as Narayanrao Alekar, Justice Bhawani Shankar Niyogi, D. Laxmi Narayan, Dajishastri Chandekar, Tatyaji Wazalwar, etc.

All these contacts were useful for the newly-formed Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh as protective fencing, but they also obstructed the Sangh in maintaining its pure ideological form. It was a testing time for Dr. Hedgewar's mental poise.

Here are a few examples of what people expected of him :

'Our Keshav is so capable. In such a short time he set up an organisation and expanded it. He also has a group of educated young men. Now we'll call Keshav's band for baby's wedding instead of the usual band.'

'Why has Keshavrao started this new gymnasium ? Ours is working quite well. Let us tell him to merge the two, so that we would have one big Vyayamshala.'

'We need a lot of funds for our school. Dr. Hedgewar has good standing among the people. We'll send him for fund collection.'

'We have decided to hold an all-India conference of our political party and we can also collect the necessary funds for it, but where do we get the volunteers we shall need to arrange everything ? Dr. Hedgewar has a good group of young workers. We shall ask him to send a hundred volunteers in uniform and wearing RSS badges for three days. It would be a nice show.'

'Funds are required for revolutionary activities. The only way to get money is to mount a raid. But for that we need sturdy young men. If Dr. Hedgewar is not ready to cooperate with this work, what is the use of all this youth-power ?'

'If the Sangh's entire machinery is set to the task of propagating the national language Hindi, we could achieve this year's propaganda target in two months. But it seems we have not been able to convince Dr. Hedgewar of the importance of this work, although he is our man.'

The greater the orbit of contact, the greater and more varied the expectations of those in contact. Dr. Hedgewar had the organisation ; naturally his friends had the expectations ! Was it possible for all these people to understand the proposed final form of the Sangh ? If their expectations were met, unhealthy distortions would creep into this form which it would not be possible to remove in future ; on the other hand if they were not, carefully cultivated contacts would be jeopardised. That would be counter-productive in the short term, but in the context of the ultimate goal, fulfilling their expectations would reduce to nothing all the penance of the Sangh. What would be the right decision in such circumstances ?

Even now, six decades later, when people have had a good view of the final concept, it is by no means easy to explain to them the form of the Sangh and the constraints necessary for it. In those initial days, when there was not even a fleeting glimpse of the final form, it was neither possible to understand nor to explain it. Even today when the Sangh is so developed, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible to realise how Dr. Hedgewar must have been pulled in different directions and what great presence of mind and fortitude he must have required to steer his way through the situation.

Dr. Hedgewar started preparing for the founding of the Sangh by first controlling his hereditary short-temper. Those who had listened to his fiery speeches before the founding of the Sangh were surprised at his later soft speech. His complete dedication and consequent complete absence of ego precluded any possibility of clashes with anybody on an individual level. He always kept a modest profile. Consequently, even those who had political



differences with him had affection and respect for him. Wherever he went, prominent people of the place came to see him and pay their respects to him.

In those days there were various schools of thought in the social and religious fields, such as atheists and believers, supporters of idol-worship and those against it, followers of Dwaita philosophy and the followers of Adwaita philosophy, social reformers and sanatanists.

Dr. Hedgewar was careful not to enter into an argument with any of these. The thought behind this self-imposed restraint was that one who was out to unite all Hindus, irrespective of their views, ought not to uphold any particular view. In the economic field his goal was to free the whole world from the stranglehold of capitalism. This had become clear when at his insistence the reception committee of the Nagpur Congress (1920) sent such a resolution to the subjects committee for consideration. But even in this field he did not take an active part but built up friendly contacts with trade-union leaders.

As a patriot he was an active worker of the Congress since the Tilak era. In those days the Congress was not a party but a broad-based anti-British platform. Freedom-lovers of various views and tendencies had come together in the Congress as it was the only medium for the freedom struggle. Shaukat Ali and Mohammed Ali were in the Congress as well as Munje and Malaviya. Those who believed in non-violence in principle, those who accepted it only as a strategy, and those who did not believe in it but accepted it as a matter of discipline, had all come together on one platform. There were staunch nationalists there as well as staunch internationalists like M. N. Roy. People of the Hindu Maha Sabha, the Congress Democratic Party founded by Tilak before his death, and later those of the Democratic Swaraj Party were also active in the Congress. Malaviya, known for his religious piety, was twice president of the Congress and thrice of the Hindu Maha Sabha. Chitta Ranjan Das and Pt. Motilal Nehru, who differed with Gandhiji on the issue of Council Entry in January 1923, had formed a group called Swaraj Party within the Congress. In February 1926 Jaikar and Kelkar formed the 'Responsivist' Party and in April the same year the 'Nationalist Party' was founded. Leaders of both these parties were in the Congress.

In 1929 Maulana Azad formed the 'Nationalist Muslim Party' within the Congress. It was again within the Congress that people of socialist thinking organised a 'Congress Socialist Group' in 1934. People like Anay and Malaviya, who differed with Gandhiji on the issue of the Communal Award, even participated in the elections under the banner of the 'Congress Nationalist Party'. On entering the Congress in 1936 M. N. Roy had organised his 'radical democratic' friends within the party and advised Congress Socialists not to insist on any leftist programme so much that they would have to leave the Congress. Subhash Chandra Bose formed the 'Forward Bloc' in May 1939 only a few days after resigning from the presidentship of the Congress, but initially it was considered a part of the Congress. In short in those days the Congress was not a regular political party in the accepted sense of the term but an all-inclusive platform.

It appears, however, that this comprehensive character gradually began to shrink. The capacity to keep together followers of different views was gradually eroded and the Congress changed from a 'platform' into a 'party'.

On July 24, 1935 the British Parliament passed the Government of India Bill. It received imperial sanction on August 2. On August 23, 1936 the Congress published its manifesto. Elections took place in February 1937. On March 17, 1937 the Congress authorized concerned people to form ministries in the provinces, and they were formed in seven out of eleven provinces of the country. In Assam too a Congress ministry took office in September 1938. In Sind a Congress-supported ministry came to power. During all this period Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was chairman of the Parliamentary Sub-committee of the Congress. Perhaps the ministries were considered a part of the war with the Government, so it may have become imperative to give absolute war-time authority to the individual bearing the full burden of responsibility. But from the organisational point of view the changed atmosphere inevitably led to people differing with Gandhiji, finding it impossible to continue in the Congress. About Sardar Patel John Gunther wrote : "He is the party boss *par excellence*. He is the Tim Farley, the ruthless party fixer and organiser. Once Gandhiji has determined the line to take, it is Patel who rams it through. He is the creator of political machine and he virtually controls eight Congress ministries."

Another knowledgeable writer says, "He [Patel] was the fuehrer of the Congress parliamentary reign, both *de jure* and *de facto*."

As a result M. N. Roy had to leave the Congress in December 1940. Around the same time Bose met more or less the same fate. A few days before this, pro-Hindu elements also realised that they could no longer continue in the Congress. The transformation of the Congress from an all-inclusive platform into a party is clearly explained by the Nariman-Khare-Bose episodes.

But so long as this process of transformation had not run its full course, all patriots wanted to stay in the Congress and make it a comprehensive anti-British medium ; so in spite of their differences with Gandhiji even the pro-Hindu elements actively and vigorously worked on the political plane under the Congress banner. Dr. Hedgewar was among them.

At the time of Tilak's death, Dr. Munje was the unanimous leader of the Congress in the Nagpur region. Under his influence and because of his capacity, the Council Entry programme had been more successful in C. P.-Berar than anywhere else in the country. Because of Loknayak Bapuji Anay's undisputed leadership in Vidarbha and the influence of Tilak's thinking on the mass mind, Dr. Munje was in a strong position in Marathi-speaking Central Province. The region also had a well-knit band of workers, prominent among whom were Dr. Hedgewar and Appaji Joshi of Wardha.

In the Gandhi era this form of the provincial Congress gradually underwent a change. As in some other regions, here too the tendency to challenge the established leadership grew or was encouraged. The undesirable elements that had been promoted in the first elections under the Montford plan in the region had affected the Gandhian movement. Still with the passage of time people began to progressively forget Tilak and his work. This was a natural and partly a deliberately encouraged process. The money collected for Tilak's Swaraj Fund was used to appoint new full-time Congress workers who were apathetic to the Tilak school of thought. On the other hand there were systematic efforts to project the new national leadership of the Gandhi era. On top of all this there were some unfortunate events : S. B. Tambe of

the Munje group and E. Raghavendra Rao, supposed to belong to the same group, were tempted into accepting Governorship. The cumulative effect of all these events was that the Congress in Marathi-speaking C. P. rapidly changed. The thread of solidarity was snapped and Tilak's followers had to work for the Congress in the company of very different and even incompatible fellow-workers. This was a severe test of their dedication and balance of mind.

It is well known that Dr. Hedgewar had made a significant contribution in the first non-co-operation movement. It is also well known that he had led the Jungle Satyagraha of 1931. But during this period the internal atmosphere of the Marathi C. P. Congress had changed a lot for the worse and many new people, strange faces and different thoughts had appeared on the scene. How difficult it must have been to work with dedication and fortitude under the changed circumstances cannot be realised by merely reading the history of the Congress. Dr. Hedgewar was one of those followers of Tilak who showed these exceptional qualities in a generous measure during that period.

A very important event took place in Nagpur in the period between the two popular movements mentioned above. The small seed of a huge banyan tree of the future was planted without fanfare. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh was founded.

It need not be explained here in detail that as a result of a direct and active contact with all contemporary nation-building activities, good acquaintance with national as well as foreign schools of thought and a basic and deep study of the ideal and the instrument —

(1) Dr. Hedgewar acquired a bifocal vision. The immediate objective was freedom of the Hindu nation within his lifetime; the ultimate ideal was the pinnacle of glory of the Hindu nation.

(2) The means for the ultimate goal was protection of Dharma, and for this the entire Hindu society was to be organised into an irresistible force.

(3) The way to this organised state of society was the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. Every Hindu was to be infused with the spirit of dedication to the nation and thus made a

'Swayamsevak'. A disciplined organisation of such Swayamsevaks was to be raised. It was to identify itself with the entire Hindu nation.

(4) Swayamsevaks imbued with the 'samskars' of the Sangh were to enter various walks of life and engage in activities that would help develop thoughts conducive to 'Param Vaibhav', the height of glory. This was the ultimate grand goal.

(5) The Congress was a useful instrument for the achievement of the short-term objective ; the Hindu Maha Sabha was its refinement ; the Sangh was the enduring instrument for the attainment of the final goal.

This was the bifocal vision of revered Dr. Hedgewar.

He never lost sight of the final goal but made a comparative evaluation of temporary factors in relation to it. On the strength of this thinking he concluded that after the advent of Gandhi the Congress had undergone many undesirable ideological changes at the all-India level and organisational changes at the regional level ; still there was no alternative to the Congress as a useful means for achieving immediate objectives, and so it would have to be used as a political medium ; still this short-term activity would have to be put in the proper perspective in relation to the ultimate ideal which was never to be lost sight of.

Great equanimity is required to ensure that the immediate does not affect the ultimate and the ultimate does not remove the immediate from sight. Dr. Hedgewar clearly possessed this balance of mind. A discussion of the immediate and final goals never confused him or made him lose his balance. □

## 6.

# Composure and Poise

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**T**HE CONGRESS launched three agitations after 1920. The first was in 1920-21, which ended with the release of Gandhiji in February 1924. The second was in 1930-31, which was recalled in May 1934. The third began with Vinoba Bhave's individual Satyagraha on October 10, 1940, which was later converted into the August 1942 movement and ended with the release of all members of the Congress Working Committee on June 15, 1945.

The first agitation had taken place before the founding of the Sangh. Dr. Hedgewar's participation in it is well known. As explained earlier, before the third agitation began the Congress had lost its character as an all-inclusive platform and had become a narrow party since 1937, after which it had become difficult for any patriot not seeing eye-to-eye with Gandhiji to remain in it. So long as Congress leadership had not become narrow-minded, all pro-Hindu elements had decided to rise above their many differences with Gandhiji, use the Congress as far as possible as an anti-imperialistic platform, and strive sincerely for the success of its activities and agitations. In the meanwhile the agitations of 1930-31 began.

Mahatma Gandhi began the agitation with the Dandi March in March 1930. It was an important agitation from the point of view of contemporary political awakening. Dr. Hedgewar never held that going to jail would bring independence. Gopalrao Ogale, editor of '*Maharashtra*', had explained this when Dr. Hedgewar was sentenced in 1921. The only purpose of going to jail in those days was national awakening. Addressing a meeting on August 19, 1921, held on the occasion of Dr. Hedgewar's arrest, Vishwanathrao Kelkar had told the people about his message

while going to jail : "If you have to go to jail while engaged in your work, by all means go. But going to jail should not be the goal. The goal should be service to the country." Congratulating Dr. Hedgewar in the issue of '*Maharashtra*' dated August 24. Ogale wrote that Dr. Hedgewar was firmly of the opinion that he could do more outside jail instead of sitting idly inside.

Addressing Swayamsevaks on the eve of his participation in the 1930 Satyagraha, Dr. Hedgewar said : "There has been no change in the Sangh's convictions and methods of work, nor has our belief in them been shaken. It is the duty of every organisation ceaselessly working for the country's freedom to keep itself fully informed of various movements going on in the country and use the information for the good of the country. This is the purpose of the Sangh Swayamsevaks' participation in this movement. Today, going to jail is looked upon as a symbol of patriotism. But if we tell anyone prepared to go to jail for a couple of years that he should take leave from his domestic responsibilities for the same period and devote himself to building up an organisation of freedom-lovers, he would not fancy the idea. Why is this so ? The reason is that people are not at all ready to understand that freedom can be achieved not by working for it for a few months but by organising the people for long years. So long as this seasonal patriotism is not given up and so long as we are not ready to sacrifice everything for the country and pledge to lead a life dedicated to the task of organisation for the sake of freedom, the country cannot see good days. To instil this feeling in the youth and bind them together with the thread of organisation is the goal of the Sangh."

Participation in the movement was important for national awakening. It had to be done, but it was also necessary to remember that although it had much temporary importance, it was only an occasional national activity. It was necessary to maintain a balance that would fulfil the requirement of the hour but at the same time not adversely affect the regular work of the Sangh. It was decided that Dr. Hedgewar would certainly participate in the movement with some of his close associates, but the Sangh would not take part as a body. The Satyagraha was an important but temporary activity, while the work of the Sangh was of a permanent nature. Swayamsevaks could take part in the Satyagraha in

their individual capacities but they should not wear Sangh uniform or wear RSS badges while doing so. The Sangh Shakha must go on every day without fail. The organisation should work for the country without pride. This was why before leaving for the Satyagraha Dr. Hedgewar entrusted the responsibility of Sar-sangh-chalak to Dr. L. B. Paranjape and of the actual work in Nagpur to Babasaheb Apte and Baburao Bhedi. Declaring Dr. Hedgewar's plan to participate in the Satyagraha in his presidential address at the Guru Dakshina ceremony on July 12, 1930, Dr. Paranjape said : "There is no doubt that the present agitation would further the national cause. But it is only the first step on the way to freedom. The real task is to organise people who would devote their entire lives to the freedom of the country."

On July 14 Dr. Hedgewar's Satyagrahi Jatha left Nagpur. In a jungle six miles from Yeotmal he offered Satyagraha with some prominent associates on July 21, leading to his being sentenced to six months' rigorous imprisonment under Section 117 and three months' rigorous imprisonment under Section 379. The Satyagraha had brought many prominent patriots of Vidarbha to Akola jail. Dr. Hedgewar established friendly contacts with them and ensured that they would be helpful in setting up a network of Shakhas in Vidarbha on their release. In Bhashikar's words, "If one has to sum up Dr. Hedgewar's life in jail in a sentence, one can say he served the Sangh even in jail."

The time he chose for Satyagraha also showed his balance of thought about what was temporary and what permanent. The agitation had already begun in March and Appaji Joshi had said a couple of times that he felt he should take part in the Satyagraha. Dr. Hedgewar replied, "We'll see after the training-camp." When Appaji Joshi wrote a letter to him when it was over he replied, "I'm coming with you." Clearly he had already made up his mind to offer Satyagraha. The atmosphere was full of enthusiasm, but the training-camp, a part of the Sangh's regular activity, could not be allowed to suffer. The decision not to participate in the Satyagraha till the camp was over showed his balance.

Later too, at the time of the Bhaganagar (Hyderabad) Satyagraha Dr. Hedgewar said to a Swayamsevak wishing to participate in it even before the camp, "Have you people thought ahead ? We'll be having the O.T.C. in two months' time. That



is our basic work. It must never be ignored." He allowed the participation after the camp was over.

Till 1937 Dr. Hedgewar maintained a balance between Sangh work and Congress work. That year the Congress completely left its form of an all-inclusive platform and became a narrow party. Then Dr. Hedgewar said, "So long as the Congress was national in form, I was its member. Now that it is just a party, I am no longer its member."

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Dr. Hedgewar was himself a revolutionary. In Bengal he had taken part in revolutionary activities along with leaders of the Anushilan Samiti. Some information is available about his revolutionary activity in Bengal in 1910 and in the Nagpur region in 1916 after his return from Bengal.

He was entrusted with the work of co-ordinating the revolutionary activities in different regions. The assistance rendered by him to revolutionaries like Prasad Pande, Ramlal Vajpayee, Dr. Khankhoje and Rajguru is now well known.

In spite of all this, after the founding of the Sangh, he kept the work of the Sangh apart from revolutionary activities. Bhashikar writes : "Even during the revolutionary period of his life Dr. Hedgewar had come to the conclusion that although the martyrdom of revolutionaries deserved the greatest respect, a still more important task was to rouse a permanent and pure national spirit in the minds of the masses, to instil discipline and selflessness among them, and to create in them the willingness to devote every moment of their lives to the nation."

In those days many young and even adolescent Swayam-sevaks naturally felt the urge to engage in revolutionary activities. Laws ranging from the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act of December 1908 to the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act of March 1919 had not only failed to suppress the revolutionaries but had hardened them all the more. These laws added fuel to the fire.

In those days young men drew inspiration from Swatantrya-veer Savarkar's pristinely patriotic life and writings. Reports of

the deaths of Shyamji Krishnaverma (1930) and Madame Cama (1934) stirred them. They also received inspiration from the lives of the Bengal revolutionaries, Bhai Paramanand, Lala Lajpat Rai, Sardar Ajit Singh, Lala Hardayal, Raja Mahendra Pratap, Ras Bihari Bose, Senapati Bapat, Bhai Bal Mukund, Barindra Kumar Ghosh, Prithvisingh Azad, Khankhoje, Vishwasrao Davre, Waman Laxman Pachkhede, etc. Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev were their idols. Frequent reports of the martyrdom of revolutionaries stoked the fires of patriotism in their hearts. The examples of Ashfaq-ullah Khan (19.12.1927), Chandra Shekhar Azad (27.2.1931), Surya Sen (14.1.1934) and Champak Raman Pillai (16.5.1934) deserve special mention. At the time of Dr. Hedgewar's death, Sardar Uddham Singh and M. R. Anandan were also near death. Some revolutionary leaders from outside were in touch with this region. Among those who kept in frequent touch with Nagpur were Ram S. Savargaonkar, an activist of the Hindusthan Socialist Republican Army in Varanasi, Ramchandra N. Bapat of Ajmer, Gajanan S. Potdar of Gwalior, Sadashivrao Malkapurkar, who performed the last rites of Chandra Shekhar Azad's mother as if he were her son, and Vinayakrao Kaple of Telgaon near Nagpur, who looked after Ras Bihari Bose's work in Varanasi after the latter emigrated to Japan.

Because of all these events it was natural for the intensely patriotic Swayamsevaks of the Sangh to think of revolutionary activity.

On such occasions Dr. Hedgewar used to explain to them that their enthusiasm was praiseworthy but not productive, and what was required for ultimate success was a stable, disciplined organisation of dedicated workers. Although he had great affection for Balaji Huddar, he and the Sangh kept completely aloof from the Balaghat political dacoity incident in January 1931, in which Huddar was involved for collecting funds for revolutionary activity.

But this did not mean he thought the immediate objective of independence would be possible without popular revolt. Intelligent Swayamsevaks could understand why, after the start of the Second World War, Dr. Hedgewar had set the Swayamsevaks' numerical target at one per cent in the rural areas and three per cent in the cities. He was of the view that the difficulty of

the British was India's opportunity and should be exploited. The target he had decided upon meant there should be adequate advance preparation and the movement to be launched should be well-planned and well-regulated. The delay in achieving the target made him restless. Full advance preparation, a well-thought-out plan and complete control – if these are absent, success cannot be achieved ; on the contrary a sense of failure grows in the public mind.

Many Swayamsevaks could not then understand the meaning of this target. So when a District Pracharak reporting on his district in the Sangh's training-camp in Jabalpur in 1941 claimed that they had already fulfilled Dr. Hedgewar's targets for the urban and rural areas, Shri Guruji referred to the claim in his concluding address and said, "It seems some people have not understood the real meaning of Doctorji's percentage. 'One and three' does not mean we catch hold of any one or three persons out of a hundred, make them wear uniforms and feel satisfied at having fulfilled the target. When Doctorji talked of one per cent in the rural areas, he meant one capable of leading the remaining ninety-nine. The same applied to the urban areas. A world war is going on, so this is the time for us to fulfil Doctorji's target as early as possible."

This speech by Shri Guruji made it clear that this target had been set as a preparation for the effort to gain independence by exploiting the difficulties of the British. Dr. Hedgewar's revolutionary thinking remained the same from beginning to end, but on the basis of actual experience he had come to the conclusion that unplanned, unregulated haste like that of Mangal Pande, the martyr of 1857, destroyed all work, although the martyrdom of such heroes provides inspiration. He showed the unique balance of keeping the flame of revolution burning bright in the heart and at the same time keeping the final strategy in mind, dissuading his followers from the path of revolution and setting them to the time-consuming task of building up strength. For this he had required extraordinary control over his short-temper and sharp speech.

In this connection one cannot but recall Lokmanya Tilak's words – "If there appeared even a fifty per cent chance for the success of an armed rebellion I would resort to it and trust God to give success to the extent of the remaining half."

About Muslims Dr. Hedgewar had a clear point of view. He considered the nation a single unit and did not recognise terms like 'majority' and 'minority'. His personal friends included Muslims. While in Bengal he thought Moulavi Liaqat Hussain's speeches as patriotic as those of Shyam Sunder Chakravarti. He was an advocate of Hindu-Muslim unity but he did not agree with the policy the Congress adopted for the purpose. He disagreed with Gandhiji's estimate that "an average Muslim is a bully and an average Hindu a coward." About the propaganda of non-violence he said, "Do not hide under cover of peace to cloak your weakness. First become as strong as your adversary, then talk of peace ; that would become you." He thought the greatest impediment in the way of Hindu-Muslim unity was the weakness of Hindus. In this connection he used to quote a shloka from Mahabharata which says marriages take place only between those who are financially equal, and friendship between those who have equal strength ; it is not possible between the strong and the weak. Hindus are weak, so Muslims do not care for their friendship. When Hindus become strong, Muslims would themselves offer to become their friends.

During the Tilak era he had seen the behaviour of Muslim leaders like Jinnah and the Ali brothers. He thought Gandhiji's policy of ignoring nationalist Muslims and accepting crass communalists as representatives of Muslims with whom talks should be conducted was neither in accordance with Tilak's policy nor with the good of the nation. Such encouragement to undesirable elements would encourage communalism all the more. This would fortify their feeling that it was in their interest to remain apart from the Hindus and keep bargaining with them, and this in turn would permanently bury the hope of Hindu-Muslim unity. He considered this policy of appeasement worthless. Further, this policy naturally made nationalist Muslims feel that their patriotism was a disadvantage for them ; if they talked communally the Congress leadership would respect them and call them for talks, and they were ignored because they were in the Congress.

A national leader like Gandhiji said : "Who listens to me ? Yet I must ask the Hindu even today to die and not to kill." Dr. Hedgewar considered such words impractical. In his presidential

address at the all-India Khilafat Conference on November 24, 1919 Gandhiji had announced unconditional support to the Khilafat movement. Dr. Hedgewar saw the seeds of a future national calamity in this declaration, and, as is well known, it resulted in Gandhiji's giving the Muslim leaders a blank cheque. Gandhiji blessed the migration (*'Hijrat'*) of 18,000 Muslims of NWFP to Afghanistan on the ground that they were not prepared to live under a *'na-pak'* British rule – *'Dar-ul-Harab'*. It was in this connection that Swami Shraddhanand had declared that he agreed with Gandhiji that the government of India should be handed over to the Amir of Afghanistan.

In the Nagpur session of the Congress, Bade had requested that the Congress should take up the issue of cow-protection as it was a national issue. Gandhiji replied it would hurt Muslim sensitivity, so the Congress should not take it up.

After the Muslim riots in North India, Gandhiji went on a 21-day fast in Delhi in Maulana Mohammed Ali's residence under the supervision of Dr. Ansari and Dr. Abdul Rehman. A 'Unity Conference' held on this occasion passed a resolution equating the issue of cow-protection with that of taking out processions with bands by mosques. This saddened patriotic people. Dr. Ambedkar's comments on previous unity conferences were also applicable to this one. He had remarked, "But the unity conference produced nothing except pious resolutions which were broken as soon as they are announced."

The Mopla rebellion was purely an eruption of Muslim communalism. A report by the Servants of India Society stated that this anti-Hindu revolt claimed 1,500 Hindu lives.

Muslim terrorists wrought havoc in the Ernad, Wynad and Bahuluonad tehsils of Malabar. But the Congress said the number of deaths was negligible and without caring for the mental condition of the Hindus of Kerala Gandhiji said, "Brave, God-fearing Moplas were fighting for what they considered as their religion and in a manner they considered as religious."

Gandhiji had given a similar certificate to the assassin of Swami Shraddhanand.

The Khilafat movement was a unique movement of the world. The Khilafat was in Turkey and it was Muslims in Bharat who raised the demand for its revival ! Gandhiji gave unconditional support to the demand and encouraged the Hindus to make all sacrifices for it under the banner of the Congress. While Hindus chasing the mirage of Hindu-Muslim unity were carrying on a movement for Khilafat in India, the Muslim rulers of Turkey were digging its grave. Kemal Ata Turk sent a message to Khalifa Majdi saying, "Your Caliphate, your office is no more than an historical relic. It has no justification for existence."

Indian Muslims prayed to Kemal, "We shall look upon you as the Khalifa of the Muslim world, but please revive the Khilafat." Kemal replied, "I do not want this honour. Under no circumstances shall I permit the revival of Khilafat." In other words the Muslims of Turkey, the seat of the Khilafat, were putting an end to the institution calling it outdated, while Hindus in Bharat were preparing to lay down their lives for its revival! In the words of Polak, "While Indian Muslims were reviewing the romantic old-world tradition of an Islamic theocracy, the Turks, in whose interest they believed they were acting, were tossing it aside as medieval lumber."

This was also why the 'saffron flag' unanimously recommended by the Flag Committee of the Congress was rejected. Thus Gandhiji's Congress was adopting many things that were manifestations of perverse logic. Looking to this Muslim appeasement by Gandhiji and the Congress, even Dr. Ambedkar had asked, "Can any sane man go so far for the sake of Hindu-Muslim unity ?"

This appeasement policy of Gandhiji was leading to growing resentment among pro-Hindu ranks. Still **they** adopted the policy of conducting the freedom struggle through the Congress like other patriots who were doing the same in spite of their differences with Gandhiji. They used the Hindu Maha Sabha as a corrective to the Congress to protect Hindu interests.

Dr. Hedgewar was active in the Hindu Maha Sabha from the very beginning. He also held various offices in it. It was difficult to be an active worker of the Congress and the Hindu Maha Sabha at one and the same time. At times he had to displease Congress-

men on matters of policy. Congressmen were not happy with Dr. Hedgewar for organising the Dindi Satyagraha in Nagpur in 1923. Dr. Munje's presence at the first Round Table Conference was essential for Hindu interests, but as this was against Congress policy the Congressmen of Nagpur bitterly opposed him. They took out a procession carrying his portrait showing him like an animal, but a few brave youths entered the procession and tore it down. Still supporting Dr. Munje was in those days tantamount to inviting public wrath.

But for Dr. Hedgewar the good of the people was more important than people's applause. In his speech at a meeting held to felicitate Dr. Munje on his return from London he said : ". . . It is easy to chase cheap popularity, but a true leader's task is to fearlessly oppose a popular view if he does not think it proper. To go with the current is the sign of a follower, not of a leader. The true leader moulds the circumstances according to his view and attracts the people to him. The test of leadership lies not in following public opinion but in controlling it. Real dedication to truth lies in going against public opinion if need be, and according to this test there cannot be a more truthful person than Dr. Munje in the whole of Nagpur."

This speech highlights Dr. Hedgewar's basic beliefs. He did everything for the protection of Hindutva. The focal point of this activity was the Hindu Sabha. He held its leaders in high esteem. But after the founding of the Sangh he did not for a moment lose his balance and forget its interests, although his personal contacts were as close as before. He believed that ignoring the immediate for the ultimate as well as harming the ultimate through enthusiasm for the immediate were equally symbolic of an unbalanced state of mind. It was necessary to maintain such a balance between the two as would be beneficial for the Sangh. Dr. Hedgewar's system of work clearly showed this balance as well as a dedication to the ideal that rose above individualities. He always maintained this balance. Many politically minded Hindu Sabha leaders found it difficult to understand his vision, restraint and balance, so they used to be displeased with him and with the Sangh. He had to pay the price of this balance by way of displeasure of Congressmen on the one hand and Hindu brethren on the other. But without caring for this double unpopularity, he maintained his balance of thought.

Dr. Hedgewar firmly believed that the Sangh's method of work was fully capable of organising the entire Hindu society. Addressing the Vijayadashami function of the Nagpur Shakha in 1932 he said : "The Sangh's method of work has no scope for differences of caste or sect. The Sangh looks upon the whole Hindu society as one. As Hindus of all castes work in the Sangh under one flag, untouchability has long been abolished." In the winter camp of Wardha district in December 1934 Mahatma Gandhi experienced the truth of these words and congratulated him on his achievement.

In a letter from Rajgir Dr. Hedgewar wrote to Shri Guruji: "In the changed circumstances our work is spreading speedily. This means it is not dependent on any special programme. Our ideal and our method of work have such vitality that they will succeed in all circumstances."

Dr. Hedgewar had full faith in the Sangh's methodology being complete in itself. At the same time it was also true that such qualitative work could not progress as rapidly as some quantitative project. Emphasis on qualitative organisation would slow down numerical growth while mere thought of numbers would put an end to quality. So it was necessary to adopt a policy of 'hastening slowly'. The slowness was for safeguarding quality, while the haste was for saving the nation from more harm through delay. In such a situation it was inevitable for the regular work of organising the whole society to get first priority. At the same time arranging some treatment for immediate problems was also necessary.

Dr. Hedgewar encouraged all activities that were beneficial to Hindutva. It is not necessary to mention such activities and organisations here, firstly because it would be a long list and secondly because prominent bodies have already been mentioned. All these organisations and also many other social workers looked upon Dr. Hedgewar as a pillar of strength for them. He gave them all possible assistance but never publicised it, nor did he want to hold office in these organisations. For instance in 1936 revered Mausi Kelkar met him at Appaji Joshi's residence in Wardha and discussed with him the subject of education and organisation of women. He advised her to set up an independent organisation, but also gave the assurance that if there were any difficulties in



the way of her Rashtra Sevika Samiti, she should let Appaji know about it and all assistance would be given, but she should work through an independent organisation. It seems his thinking was greatly influenced by Samarth Ramdas. In his diary the following entry was found dated March 4, 1929 : "Shri Samarth did not want anything for himself. He spent his whole life in seeking the way for the upliftment of his fellowmen without letting any pride in his action sticking to him."

When asked how an organisation broke up or grew, the Buddha had replied that an organisation always grew when its leaders had a sense of 'apathy'. He had used the word in a technical sense. Attainment of success brings with it a crisis of credit-sharing. There is then the race to prove that your share of success has to be big because your contribution in achieving it was large. If, in such circumstances, the leaders show apathy in the distribution of credit and stay away from the competition to claim it, the organisation grows in strength. On the other hand if the leaders compete in claiming credit, the organisation becomes weak. This was what the Buddha meant by apathy. Dr. Hedgewar was the embodiment of this type of apathy. Hence his moral support was valued by various organisations and workers.

All believers in Hindutva know that in the political field the Hindu Maha Sabha had an important role as a corrective to the Congress. Whenever necessary Sangh Swayamsevaks actively worked for the Hindu Sabha in their individual capacities. This greatly strengthened that party. Still many Hindu Maha Sabha leaders were greatly displeased with Dr. Hedgewar, for he had laid down the strict rule that the Sangh, as Sangh, would not participate in any political party. As citizens, Swayamsevaks of the Sangh had the freedom to participate in such activities. The leaders did not like this rigid rule. They expected the Sangh to work as the volunteer corps of the Hindu Sabha. Their prominent leaders held that politics was too complex for these people playing with sticks to understand.

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Two movements took place under the leadership of the Hindu Sabha in the period from the founding of the Sangh to 1940. The first was the Sonya Maruti Satyagraha in Pune in 1937 and the other was the Bhaganagar (Hyderabad) Satyagraha in 1938. The

second Satyagraha took place under the joint auspices of the Hindu Maha Sabha and the Arya Samaj.

On both these occasions Dr. Hedgewar's stand was that the Satyagraha was for all citizens and as Swayamsevaks were also citizens they participated in it along with hundreds of other citizens. A training-camp of the Sangh was going on in Pune at the time of the Sonya Maruti Satyagraha. Enthusiastic workers of the Hindu Maha Sabha very much wanted that the Sangh should participate in it as Sangh and this was the first thing Dr. Hedgewar should do on reaching Pune.

Dr. Hedgewar had already decided to take part in the Satyagraha, but he held that the Sangh training-camp was something of permanent importance. So instead of rushing into the Satyagraha he took part in it in the afternoon of May 13 after the camp was over. He was firm about the basic stand of the Sangh and gave first priority to the camp. Not a few were displeased by this.

In October 1932 the Hindu Sabha and Arya Samaj jointly launched a Satyagraha under the leadership of Swatantrya-veer Savarkar, in which Bhaiyaji Dani and hundreds of other Swayamsevaks took part. But staunch Hindu Sabhaites were not satisfied with this. Their organ '*Vande Mataram*', published from Bombay, was quite critical of this policy of the Sangh and wrote a series of twelve articles strongly criticising Dr. Hedgewar. In reply the '*Savdhan*' of Nagpur wrote in its issue of May 27 :

"Had Mr. G. G. Adhikari distinguished between regular work and occasional activity, he would not have vomited poison against the Sangh as many as twelve times. In his childish enthusiasm for the Bhaganagar Satyagraha Mr. Adhikari has perhaps forgotten that the work of independence of the country still remains to be done. Full advance preparation is necessary before the final effort for freedom. The Sangh work is the daily work aimed at the country's freedom, while movements like the Bhaganagar Satyagraha are its occasional activities. Different organisations do different types of work. They should be kept separate, and although they may be parallel organisations they should not take such steps as would adversely affect their strength and their independent character and create a break in their regular activity."

Surprisingly enough, leaders of the Bhaganagar Satyagraha declared in December 1938 that the Sangh participated in the Satyagraha as Sangh. This was an effort to drag the Sangh into politics. So Dr. Hedgewar wrote them a letter clearly stating, "Misleading statements about the RSS on your part are not at all in the interest of your own work. So please give strict instructions to your publication division not to mention the Sangh henceforth in your statements."

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The Hindu Maha Sabha had proposed to organise a volunteer corps called Hindu Militia. It pressed Dr. Hedgewar to accept this responsibility. Expressing his inability to do so he wrote to Dr. Munje on September 30, 1939 : "Please do not mention my name anywhere in connection with the Hindu Militia. Even without it I shall certainly extend all possible help."

In spite of this clear-cut stand, S. R. Date informed him in a letter on October 12 that his name had been included in the Hindu Militia Committee. With all due deference to Dr. Munje, Dr. Hedgewar declined the nomination

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The most stressful crises in Dr. Hedgewar's life came in the last phase of his life. Nana Palkar has described them in clear words.

On March 17, 1940 the Hindu Maha Sabha launched a volunteer corps called Ram Sena. A statement published about it stated, "... The Ram Sena would be a corps of the Hindu Maha Sabha. All Maha Sabha directives issued through Dr. Munje will have to be obeyed by the Ram Sena." The statement further explained that "it became necessary to organise a separate corps because Dr. Hedgewar, an expert in military training for Hindus, has launched a non-party organisation."

Names of office-bearers of the Ram Sena were announced in the '*Maharashtra*' of March 27. They included Dr. Hedgewar's name. When he learnt about this in Rajgir he was both surprised and angry, for being an office-bearer in two organisations like the Sangh and the Ram Sena, that were active in different

fields, was against the interests of the organisation. It was also not possible in his state of health at the time. Furthermore he had repeatedly and clearly expressed his inability to the founders of the Ram Sena. He did not like this tendency to drag in his name. So he got a brief editorial note published in the '*Maharashtra*' of April 3 saying, "In connection with the appeal published in the '*Maharashtra*' of March 7 to make the Ram Sena founded by the Nagpur city Hindu Maha Sabha successful, Dr. Hedgewar, head of the RSS, states that his name had been published without his knowledge and consent." He knew that Dr. Munje would feel bad on seeing the explanation, and he was also worried about it, but he did his duty in the face of criticism.

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According to a Sanskrit saying, courage consists in not letting the mind be disturbed in the face of disturbing circumstances.

In a democratic system elections are such an occasion. That is perhaps why the slogan of 'now or never' appears appropriate during an election. For the devotees of Hindutva the most important of all elections held before 1940 was the one fought on the issue of Communal Award. The Congress policy of 'neither acceptance nor rejection' of the award was extremely dangerous for the country. so Anay-Malaviya organised the Congress Nationalist Party and all pro-Hindutva people opposed the Congress under its auspices.

In Nagpur Dr. Munje was himself the candidate of this party. Naturally the propaganda campaign was very bitter. The Hindu Sabha had heavyweights like Jagannath Prasad Verma, but their number was so small that it was not enough even to give physical protection to Dr. Munje, let alone win the election for the party. Still adequate security arrangements were made. Everyone in Nagpur knew who made them. Dr. Hedgewar had kept his balance. How difficult this was can be gauged from the character of the propaganda war. Here, for instance, is the description of a meeting:

Well-known Marathi author P. B. Bhawe wrote in his autobiography : "In those days political meetings were in full swing in Nagpur. There were few in which stones and shoes were not hurled and fists and shouts not exchanged. Such a meeting took place in the compound of Neil City High School. A Congress

worker was addressing it. During the course of his speech he began to abuse Munje, Savarkar and Hindu Sabhaites. What did Bindu Madhav (a pro-Hindutva worker) do ? He did not know means like discussions and questions-answers. He straightway climbed the dais, stripped the speaker of his dhoti and walked away with it. What must have been the plight of the speaker ! Hiding his shame somehow with both hands he ran away. People began to laugh and at first even Congressmen joined in his laughter, but soon they stopped laughing and wanted to take revenge on Bindu Madhav. But he had already disappeared with the dhoti. The upshot was that in a few moments the meeting came to an end."

This is just a small example of the intensity of the propaganda war raging in those days. We can guess how difficult it must have been to keep one's balance in such hot-headed times, keep following well-planned policies and yet give attention to fulfilling contemporary needs.

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The meaning of this sort of stern adherence to duty is not possible for common people without an ideal to understand. Why would leaders chasing success, office and fame like to go after such sternness of duty and lose their cheap popularity ? They would see no wisdom in suffering a personal loss in the present for avoiding a possible loss to the nation in the far future. They might well say – 'after me, the deluge'. Such 'practical' leaders cannot understand the thought process of one who has a long-term ideal before him. Being practical they are not so 'foolish' as to ask for the moon. On the contrary they would ridicule such idealistic persons as impractical. They are not to blame for this.

A book published about thirty years ago contains a story of birds of the sea. One of these birds who had stronger wings and a higher ambition flew great distances and on return began to describe to the other birds the wonders he saw during his flight. As his description went on his friends became convinced that he had lost his senses and become mad, for what he was describing was at variance with the reality around them. Common people feel the same way about one who has a clear vision of a distant ideal and is mad after it.

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However, this does not mean there are no people who can understand such men. Petty-minded people might not be capable of understanding them but idealistic individuals can understand them even in spite of their difference of opinion.

One such person was Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherji. When he met Dr. Hedgewar in Nagpur in 1940 after the Sangh's training-camp was over he urged him, "Now the Sangh should enter politics." Dr. Hedgewar was aware of Dr. Mukherji's importance as a national leader. That is why Sangh workers in Calcutta had kept in touch with him and invited him to visit the Sangh in Nagpur. It was very difficult to turn down the suggestion of such an eminent individual. Explaining the Sangh's policy in clear terms without hurting him called for great skill. Very respectfully Dr. Hedgewar said the Sangh would not participate in current politics, but he also took care to see that there was no adverse reaction in Dr. Mukherji's mind. A frank discussion and the prevailing atmosphere both helped in preventing an adverse reaction. Dr. Mukherji was high-minded enough to take Dr. Hedgewar's explanation in the right spirit, and Shri Guruji, who was present during the meeting, could see this.

In this connection Shri Guruji writes in his preface to Nana Palkar's 'Life of Dr. Hedgewar' :

"Although he [Dr. Hedgewar] had taken to politics due to circumstances, he had analysed the reasons for the rise and fall of the nation and realised that current politics, which had become a cesspool of selfish ends, was not only of no use but could harm national interests if sufficient care was not taken. At the same time realising that an aware, disciplined and united society was the foundation for a nation's bright future, he dedicated his entire life to building up such a means. While doing so he faced all adversities courageously, suffered the criticism and insults of his own fellowmen, and even snapped the ties he had forged with revolutionary activity, the Congress, the Hindu Sabha, etc., in his earlier life. He maintained his respect for these national leaders and their work and impressed upon the Swayamsevakhs never to have any disrespect for them. At the same time he taught them by his own example that organising the society was possible only by remaining away from these methods, and that is what every Sangh worker should do.

“It is difficult to imagine how difficult it must have been for an individual connected with various political activities from childhood and possessed of a sensibility that was roused at the mere mention of foreign rule to turn away without withdrawing from current political activities and to focus his attention on activities that were fully in tune with his thought-process. This unique power of thought could be achieved only through pure, selfless devotion to the nation. This was a dazzling miracle of his life, quite beyond the comprehension of the common man.

“Reading this biography would be useful from this point of view. The uncommon radiance in a common-looking form would be seen and then everyone’s heart would be filled with self-confidence. He would then feel that he too could equip himself with samskars of dedication to the nation, fortify them, triumph over base tendencies and outer temptations, and achieve the ultimate essence of life.”

This is the inspiring message of Parama-Pujaniya Dr. Hedge-war’s divine life. □

7.

## The Relevance of Dr. Hedgewar

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**T**HE QUESTION has been raised about the relevance of remembering Dr. Hedgewar, founder of the Sangh, again. The question is natural for those who are outside the Sangh and do not really understand its form. It was to explain this to them that the 'Dr. Hedgewar birth centenary celebrations' were organised. But to Sangh Swayamsevaks this question has always seemed irrelevant, for they know that being organised is the natural state of any living society. If we want our society to live for ever, we must also see that it remains organised for ever. Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh is nothing but the name given to the effort to keep the society organised. Hence, from the conceptual point of view, the Sangh and the Hindu society are coterminous. From the psychological point of view, the Sangh and the whole Hindu society are one, and from the point of view of life-span both are alike eternal. Hence, remembering the founder of the Sangh is always relevant. Consequently this question never arises in the minds of Swayamsevaks who fully understand the relationship between the Sangh and its founder.

A senior worker of the Sangh used to say that there is an inevitable connection between a worker's nature and the nature of his work-area. If we have full information on the qualities and drawbacks of the worker, we can accurately assess the qualities and drawbacks of his work-area although we may not know it at first hand. Those who know about the special qualities of Dr. Hedgewar can easily ascertain the special features of Sangh work, and the reverse is also true. Dr. Hedgewar's nature and the nature of Sangh work had an inevitable relationship. Everyone concerned has now come to accept this.



But another aspect of reality is sometimes ignored.

Some years ago, somebody had expressed the view during the provincial camp at Ahmedabad that the praiseworthy work done by Swayamsevaks during the cyclone in Andhra or the dam-burst in Morvi (Gujarat) has given a new dimension to the capabilities of the Swayamsevaks. Another question raised on this occasion was whether the natural tendency to run to the help of sufferers of natural calamities was a new phenomenon among Swayamsevaks or was already there. The answer is, do we not see in the willingness for social service among Swayamsevaks today a reflection of Dr. Hedgewar's willingness to carry a gunny-bag of parched rice across the flooded Damodar river in Bengal in 1913 for the relief of starving people? The inspiration of Swayamsevaks engaged today in medical service or in fighting pestilences, either individually or as a body, is derived from that mental attitude of Dr. Hedgewar which made him go into hundreds of huts to treat those stricken with cholera during the Ganga Sagar Yatra or to organise a relief squad of a dozen Hindu youths during Muslim riots in Calcutta.

The late Shri Guruji had inspired the unique collection of signatures of one and three-quarter crore citizens against cow-slaughter. At that time some old Swayamsevaks said they were very much reminded of Dr. Hedgewar, who had physically prevented cow-slaughter, who had whole-heartedly co-operated with Gopalrao Bhide in organising the Go-Raksha Sabha in Nagpur in 1928 and who, the same year, had protected the cow procession organised by Go-Bhakta Shri Chounde Maharaj from an assault by Muslims.

The '*Organiser*' of Delhi was followed by the launching of the '*Rashtra Shakti*' in Nagpur. When some Swayamsevaks connected with it thought this to be a completely new activity, Krishnarao Mohrir, Manager of the journal, told them this was not true and they should not forget that in pre-Sangh time Dr. Hedgewar had laboured hard for the Hindi journal '*Sankalp*' and the Marathi journal '*Swatantrya*', and even before that had organised a media campaign in Calcutta against the 'bogus medical degrees bill.'

After the Meenakshipuram episode, Swayamsevaks had voluntarily come forward to organise Vishal Hindu Sammelans in various regions. Reacting to this, a senior Swayamsevak happily remarked that he was reminded of the days when he and Swayamsevaks of Nagpur went to Ramtek to organise a Mela on the occasion of Ram Navami in April 1926. They had not only made efficient arrangements but had also prevented the pujaris from fleecing the pilgrims.

Resistance to aggression on religious beliefs is a great and divine task. Great men engaged in such work keep influencing the atmosphere for a long time. They even influence those who do not know or remember them. This is the force of the soul. The intangible influence of Dr. Hedgewar, who had participated in the Dindi Satyagraha with Dr. Cholkar and Dr. Paranjape, still inspires the Swayamsevaks struggling for Rama-Janma-Bhoomi. Any sensitive person can feel this.

Today Swayamsevaks of the Sangh are active in various fields of national life. They launched their activities with the inspiration and samskars derived from the Sangh. However, it would be a matter of research to identify those that were inspired by the life of the founder of the Sangh.

During the Emergency, students of Gujarat and Bihar had conducted a mass movement. The lion's share in these agitations was that of the Vidyarthi Parishad. Apart from the non-Swayamsevaks in the agitation, the Swayamsevak-students who shouldered the responsibility of efficiently conducting the agitation had a direct source of inspiration — the student life of Keshav who had organised a two-month-long strike in Neil City High School to protest against the 'Risley Circular' in 1908 and even gladly faced rustication. No one can deny this fact.

In the educational field, Sangh Swayamsevaks are conducting many institutions, collectively called 'Vidya Bharati'. What was the inspiration behind them? The same as that behind the national schools set up in Bengal, Maharashtra and Punjab. 'The National Council of Education' (Bengal) whose certificate was awarded to Keshav at the hands of its president Dr. Ras Bihari Ghosh in 1914 has a direct relationship with the first 'Shishu Mandir' set up by Swayamsevaks in Gorakhpur in the 1950s.

During the days when Comrade Dange was preparing A.I.T.U.C. documents he once gestured to me in the Central Hall of Parliament and humorously said to Ramchandra Vitthal Bade, "He is a gift to the labour field on behalf of our Communist Party." It is well known that when the Communists first acquired control over the A.I.T.U.C. in the Bombay Session in 1925, Dhundirajpant Thengdi had become its first Communist president. It was in this connection that Dange had said work in the labour field was hereditary for me and it was a gift of the Communist Party. Clearly he did not know the historical facts. Dr. Hedgewar was an active member of the Reception Committee for the Congress Session held in Nagpur in 1920 and it was at his instance that a resolution was passed by the Committee and sent to the Subjects Committee. The resolution said the Nagpur Congress Session should state in unambiguous terms that its two-fold aim was (1) freedom for Bharat and establishment of democracy, and (2) freeing all countries of the world from the stranglehold of capitalism. This second part of the resolution is the source of the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh's opposition to capitalism.

It is a matter of disadvantage for great men with multi-dimensional achievements that in course of time people remember their main work in life, which is the most prominent dimension of their achievement, but tend to forget the other dimensions although they may be important in themselves. People see the fruit on a tree, as they can easily see and taste it, but not the seed, which remains unseen. They think of the two separately because they do not keep in mind the causal relationship between them. Ordinary Swayamsevaks of the Sangh may have read that Dr. Hedgewar had stopped the marriage of the niece of Gangadharrao Deshpande of Arvi to an old man and got her married to a suitable young man. These days Swayamsevaks hear a lot about 'social thrust', but intellectually they keep the two in separate compartments.

Everyone knows the work that the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and the Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram are doing to foil the designs of the Christian missionaries. But Sangh Swayamsevaks also know that in 1926 Dr. Hedgewar had rescued two children kidnapped by a missionary woman from the Anath Mahila Griha of Nagpur. But again these two facts are in separate compartments of their

minds. The Swayamsevak proudly tells of how Swayamsevaks staked their very lives to protect the lives of Hindus at the time of the partition, and equally proudly he tells of how they roused the entire population of Nagpur in December 1927 for a struggle, but he does not realise the psychologically causal relationship between the two events.

The Swayamsevak is familiar with the test of the 'true member' of the revolutionary Anushilan Samiti as laid down by its senior leader Trailokya Nath Chakravarti in his book *Thirty Years in Jail* as well as with the 'Pracharak' system developed by the Sangh. But in his eyes there is no relation between the two. Taking legitimate pride in the social projects conducted by Sangh Swayamsevaks, he holds that their social service is a totally new and basic dimension of Swayamsevaks' work. This does not mean he is unaware of Dr. Hedgewar's efforts in setting up the 'Anath Vidyarthi Griha' or the 'Shraddhanand Anathalaya'. It only means he is not aware of the causal relationship between the two.

The most important characteristic of Dr. Hedgewar was the originality of his genius firmly based in Hindu Dharma and culture. We see this in the methodology of the Sangh. It is neither an imitation of some foreign system nor is it patterned on the system of work of any other institution or party. Many examples of this can be cited, ranging from insistence on coming together every day to programmes like the Guru Dakshina function. Today we see the same original genius in the work being done by Sangh Swayamsevaks in various walks of life. In their respective fields they have neither followed any Western model nor an Indian one. There were many student bodies on the scene before the Vidyarthi Parishad came into being, but projects like 'Indianisation' and 'social equality' that it took up since its very inception have not been handled by any other student organisation to date. Various trade unions have been working in the country since decades before the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh was founded. Their slogan was 'Our demands, whatever the cost'. The slogan that the Mazdoor Sangh gave was 'Service to the nation, full wages for work done'. No trade union before the Mazdoor Sangh had conceived of a 'national labour day'. Only Swayamsevaks of the Sangh can replace the slogan 'Workers of the world, unite' with

'Workers, unite the world' or the Western-type slogan 'No salvation without co-operation' with the basic psychologically sound slogan 'No sahaakar [co-operation] without samskar'. This is not within the capacity of shallow romantic leaders who call themselves 'progressive'. Today socialism is being devalued everywhere, but it was shining legal tender in the initial days of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh. In fact it was so popular that even the ruling party had to adopt a 'socialistic pattern of society' in the Avadi Session of the Congress. But only the Jana Sangh performed the unique task of placing before the world the comprehensive philosophy of 'Integral Humanism', integrally related to Hindu culture, on the strength of its original genius. The original genius exhibited by Swayamsevaks in every field of activity has its source in Dr. Hedgewar's own original genius as well as in his insistence on originality of genius.

Whether we think of Sangh work or of all these activities, we inevitably realise the relevance of Dr. Hedgewar's personality and thinking. A final instance in point would suffice.

Shri Balasaheb Deoras's speech at the Nagpur Vijayadashami function in 1987 had become a matter of hot debate. Actually some newspapers had deliberately distorted it. At the same time it is also true that even honest people who had been misled did not know Shri Balasaheb's mind.

Some Congress leaders of Nagpur and Vidarbha had a feeling of envy for the Sangh from the very beginning, so on November 10, 1937 the Central Province Congress wrote a letter to Dr. Hedgewar asking for authorised information about the aims and objects, programmes and policies of the Sangh. Later three more letters and a questionnaire were also sent. Explaining the points raised in his own natural way he wrote back : "I have received your questionnaire, which is a sort of question-paper set for a student appearing for an examination, but I regret I cannot accede to your desire as I have passed my student age."

This correspondence throws light on the real nature of Congress leaders. Some of them had this tendency from the very beginning, and Dr. Hedgewar knew this well. Still when the Congress passed the resolution for 'Purna Swaraj' he issued a directive saying "On Sunday, 26.1.1930, at 6 p.m. sharp all

Swayamsevaks should congregate on their respective Sanghasthan, salute the national Bhagwa flag and congratulate the Congress on espousing the ideal of freedom.”

This did not mean he had given up his staunch opposition to the Congress appeasement of the Muslims. It is well known that in December 1937 he had arranged Swatantrya-veer Savarkar's tour of Vidarbha. Those who could not understand these strands of Dr. Hedgewar were naturally unable to understand Shri Balasaheb's Vijayadashami speech.

It is not only a matter of relevance. The events in Dr. Hedgewar's life contain an assurance of a bright future for the Hindu nation.

In December 1937 a camp of Bal-Swayamsevaks of Nagpur was inaugurated by Pant Pratinidhi of Oundh State. Pleased with the disciplined display of a thousand small boys, the Pratinidhi gestured to the photographer accompanying him to start shooting. Dr. Hedgewar had not noticed the gesture, but as soon as he realised what was happening he directed that the shooting be stopped. It could have been stopped at any moment, but it was stopped at a significant moment. It was stopped after showing that he was hoisting the holy Bhagwa flag and it was fluttering in the wind. Was this a mere coincidence? Or was it to tell the world that we all were parts of one Hindu nation? Dr. Hedgewar's biographer Nana Palkar writes that the photographing of his noble ambition to hoist the holy Bhagwa flag on Akhand Bharat in this way was indeed a memorable event. Future historians would describe it as a finger pointing to the future of a new nation. □

8.

## Expectations of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh

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“**I**T IS TRUE that I take pride in Hindutva. Had it not been so, I would not have been able to serve my untouchable brethren.”

These are the words of Shripad Mahadev alias Bapusaheb Mate, a scholar not attached to any particular party or organisation, in his autobiography.

The Sangh expects national unity based on the solid foundation of social equality naturally emerging from social identification. Without identification equality cannot endure, and without the two national unity cannot even be imagined.

It was due to devotion to Hindutva that the founder of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh naturally insisted on social identification and social equality.

The greatness of the philosophy of Hindu Dharma is beyond dispute. But today it is not reflected in actual practice. There is no relation between our philosophy and our behaviour. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar strongly resented this. He used to say, “If, according to Hindu philosophy, God is omnipresent, He must certainly be present in the chamar. Then why does Hinduism have this untouchability, this inequality ? Apart from the Communists there is nobody in the world who does not need religion. We too need it, but we need good religion — Sat-Dharma : a Sat-Dharma that has social equality and equal scope for the uplift of all. That is the real religion, the real Dharma ; all others are a-dharma, false religions.” Dr. Ambedkar struck body-blows at the heresy that philosophically talked of the whole

universe being one but in practice clung to social evils like untouchability and distinctions of high and low. Like Dr. Ambedkar, Dr. Hedgewar was also concerned about the gulf between precept and practice prevailing in the Hindu society. During the last some decades the Hindu society has acquired a split personality. This, in the considered opinion of Dr. Hedgewar, was why in spite of its sublime philosophy it was going downhill. So he too struck at this inconsistency.

In this connection he used to say, "Our task is to organise the whole society. That would not be possible if we ignored any section of it. We must behave affectionately with every Hindu. The feeling of high and low by birth must never touch us. Even thinking of such differences is a sin. Swayamsevaks of the Sangh must never entertain such despicable and socially dangerous thoughts. Every Swayamsevak must firmly believe that every Hindu devoted to Hindusthan is his brother."

He used to say, "A philosophy is meant for practising, not for discussion. At first a principle is revealed, and then it is brought into practice. A philosophy that is not practised is a mere jumble of words. It is sterile. A philosophy that does not have the strength to shape the life of a society is worthless. An individual's life is moulded according to a philosophy. Principles alone can enable an individual to tread the difficult path of idealism. A principled life may have its ups and downs, but the principle remains constant."

"God helps those who help themselves. But why should He help us ? Why should He take pity on us ? Are we showing any prowess ? If not, why should He rush to help us ? Lord Krishna says in the Gita that He incarnates Himself for the protection of the good. But who are the good ? God takes birth to destroy those wicked people who look only to their own interests without caring for the plight of the society, the nation, Dharma and culture. This evil has reached its height in the Hindu society today. Should not such people be called wicked ? The good people are those who keep working for the good of the society, of the nation and Dharma. Are there enough such good people in the Hindu society today ? Had even half the society been made up of such good people, no one would have dared to aggress on it. And in such a situation God would have certainly come forward to protect



Dharma. In the present condition of the society we cannot expect God's help, and if God does come it would not be to protect us but to destroy us, for God has declared that He would destroy the wicked. So long as we think of selfish ends, have no feeling for the good of the society and thus do not become good in the real sense, God will consider us wicked and will help only in our destruction."

These words of Dr. Hedgewar make it clear that he was not for status quo. He severely condemned the evil customs that had corrupted the Hindu society. But he did this while identifying himself with it. His conviction about Hindu unity made him yearn for social welfare. He was as distressed as Dr. Ambedkar at the gulf between the religious principles of the Hindus and their social behaviour. The so-called progressives who did not know this background and who thought everybody else was backward tried to malign the Sangh. But this had been Dr. Hedgewar's stand since the very inception of the Sangh.

In other organisations a change in the top leadership generally brings about a change in policy and objective. But in the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh there is no such possibility. In any progressive nationalist organisation there is a 'progressive unfoldment' of basic principles and method of work in accordance with time and circumstance, but such progressive unfoldment is not change of direction. A speech delivered by the present Sar-sanghchak Shri Balasaheb Deoras in the Vasant Vyakhyanmala in Pune had become a topic of discussion at the time. So-called progressives of Maharashtra were surprised at his clear exposition of such evil practices prevailing in the Hindu society as caste and untouchability. His address at the golden jubilee celebrations of the Rashtra Sevika Samiti particularly pleased many. Shri Balasaheb again made it clear that "Chaturvarnya has become outdated and the caste system must go." In that speech he also said : "If the Hindu society removes the caste system the whole world will follow it. So our women must begin with their own homes in respect of inter-caste and inter-provincial marriages." Popular newspapers of Maharashtra welcomed this stand. Those who were friendly to the Sangh but did not have proper knowledge of its principles and practice even said it was a welcome 'change' for it. Sangh workers would feel grateful for this praise,

but as a matter of fact Shri Balasaheb was only giving expression to the stand that the Sangh had adopted on the Vijayadashami day in 1925. This is a scientific progressive unfoldment of principles and practice according to time, place and circumstance, but it cannot be called a change.

It is our conviction that the entire Hindu society is one, irrespective of caste and sect. This conviction would manifest itself in social unity. This firm belief has led the Sangh to reject the caste system and untouchability from the very beginning. Negative propoganda urging the society to forget something has the negative result of entrenching that thing in the public mind all the more firmly. Hence, however effective it may appear initially, its result is finally adverse. Such efforts to remove distinctions help to strengthen them. All negative agitations in the country have had such results. Some honest people have accepted this. The way of unity that the Sangh has accepted may not show immediate results, but it is scientific and in the end will produce real unity.

Because leaders, used to thinking about any problem in compartments instead of as a whole, raised such doubts, it had again become necessary to clarify the Sangh's position.

The former C. P. Congress Committee had sent a questionnaire to Dr. Hedgewar asking for clarification of the Sangh's stand on various subjects. Dr. Hedgewar responded by suggesting that a personal discussion on them would be more useful. Accordingly a meeting between Shri Jamnalal Bajaj, representing the provincial Congress Committee, and Dr. Hedgewar took place in Nagpur on January 31, 1934. When, along with other matters, Shri Bajaj asked Dr. Hedgewar to clarify the Sangh's stand on untouchability he clearly replied, "The Sangh totally disapproves of the practice of untouchability."

Shri Guruji, the second Sar-sanghchalak, clarified the Sangh's stand still further. He said :

"The basic reason of untouchability is the widespread feeling that untouchability is a part of religion and transgressing a religious injunction is a great sin. Despite efforts by Dharmacharyas and social reformers for centuries this evil practice is entrenched

in the public mind. Many great men like Guru Nanak, Acharya Ramanuja, Basaveshwara, Shankaradeva, Swami Dayananda, Narayanaguru, Gandhiji and Savarkar worked hard to remove this blot on the society and still it persists to this day. Even today so-called 'high'-caste people are not prepared to treat so-called 'untouchables' as equals. An 'untouchable' youth of Rajasthan was killed for keeping a moustache, because keeping a moustache was the prerogative of the Rajputs ! Such events should be condemned by Dharmacharyas. They create confusion between custom and religion."

Praising the Vishwa Hindu Sammelan held in Udupi, Karnataka, in 1969 in this connection Shri Guruji said : "The evil social practice of untouchability has persisted because of a distorted idea of religion. Now traditional heads of Maths would have to come forward to uproot this anti-religious custom. This is also necessary because even today the common man looks upon the Dharmacharyas as authentic spokesmen of religion."

Representatives of all sects within Hinduism, such as Shaiva, Madhva, Jain, Buddhist, Sikh, etc. were present at the conference. In accordance with the directive of revered Dharmacharyas, it passed a unanimous resolution calling upon the Hindu society to uproot untouchability from religious and social life. The historic resolution said :

"In order to organise the Hindu society on the basis of unshakable faith in unity, to prevent its disintegration through such concepts as untouchability, Hindus of the whole world should behave with each other in a spirit of unity and equality."

Shri Guruji called this resolution an event of revolutionary importance for the Hindu society. It heralded the victory of religion over a social evil persisting for centuries.

About other efforts being made in the same direction Shri Guruji said : "But forced concurrence with such resolutions can have an adverse effect. We have to achieve the desired result by constructive means and a change of heart."

After Shri Guruji's passing away the subsequent conference of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad at Ujire in Karnataka in December 1983 gave extensive guidance in this matter.

A few years ago newspapers had reported that a well-known social reformer wanted to force his way into the Kashi Vishwanath temple with some Harijans, but could not do so because of stiff opposition by the pujaris. A few days later I had an opportunity to go to the temple. I asked the pujaris why they had prevented those people from entering the temple. They replied:

“Thousands of people come here every day for the Darshan of Lord Vishwanath. All these devotees enter the Garbha-Griha (sanctum sanctorum), touch the Shiv Ling and offer prayers. We never ask about their caste. But this leader came here as if he was the saviour of the Harijans and we pujaris were sinners. He virtually mounted an assault with din and fury, so we took it as an insult and replied in the same language.”

This is the error our ultra-enthusiastic social reformers commit. If force or a propaganda campaign to denigrate a certain section of society is used to solve such problems, it will certainly have an adverse result. Many times the medicine is more dangerous than the malady.

In connection with the term ‘Harijan’ made current by Gandhiji, Shri Guruji said :“Repeated use of this term for removing the feeling that they are kept away from the society can have an adverse effect. Once I had expressed this doubt to Gandhiji. I had said the word Harijan has a good meaning, but it could lead to a separatist group which would see vested political interest in keeping its separate identity, which would pose a challenge to the unity of the society, but Gandhiji said my apprehension was baseless. Unfortunately this gulf is widening and this class has made a position for itself in the political equation.”

Have the so-called untouchables ever been inferior to us in point of merit or are they likely to be so ? In this connection Shri Guruji said : “Some people say the so-called untouchable class is inferior in intellectual or mental qualities, so for a long time they would not be able to come up to the standard of the rest of the society. This is not only a great insult to them but a travesty of truth.”

History stands testimony to the fact that in all the freedom struggles for the past thousands of years this so-called untouchable class has always been in the forefront. They were among

the brave warriors with Rana Pratap, Guru Govind Singh and Shivaji. They were in the forefront in the decisive wars that Shivaji waged against Delhi and Bijapur Muslim powers. In many battles they were the commanders. Even in the spiritual field they have made a name for themselves. This class has produced many saints for whom the entire Hindu society has great reverence.

Their devotion to their Dharma is also unique. In spite of atrocities perpetrated on them for centuries by 'high'-caste people in the name of religion, they never thought of embracing another religion. After the partition lakhs of Shudras (untouchables) came over from East Bengal simply because they wanted to live as Hindus.

The resolution passed in the Udupi Sammelan or the directives given by the conference will not be translated into practice merely by goodwill. The mental knots of centuries will have to be laboriously unravelled. Propaganda will have to be carried on from village to village and city to city. The resolutions passed will have to be acted upon not under pressure but as an enduring principle and way of life, and in a spirit of humility to correct our past mistakes. In brief we would have to undergo a change of heart. We will have to labour hard to bring the backward to our level in the economic and political fields. This is a tremendous task. Political and economic equality can be achieved even while maintaining a feeling of separateness, but it would not prove durable. Our goal must be to achieve all-round identification. That is our aim. The chicanery of political leaders cannot achieve it. Superficial efforts would get us nowhere. We would have to work for it ceaselessly on the social, moral and spiritual levels and in a practical manner.

Shri Guruji also suggested some programmes for social identification, such as Bhajan and Kirtan, celebration of religious festivals, Ramayan and Mahabharat Katha, etc. Everyone should devoutly participate in these programmes, forgetting distinctions like touchable and untouchable. Along with them programmes like propagation of literacy, health services and sports should also be taken up. Wherever possible audio-visual aids should be used for them. The focal point of all our efforts should be to join hearts and create a unified life.

All this is possible and achievable through Sangh work. Explaining this, Shri Guruji said : “The Sangh will leave no stone unturned to bring this into practice. So it has no place for distinctions based on caste, sect, language, etc. In the Sangh thousands of Swayamsevaks from different social levels sit and eat together, sing and play together. No one ever wants to know the caste of his comrade. It is enough that he is a Hindu. This mental attitude is the key to the Sangh’s unique success.”

Affection for the Vanvasis (forest-dwellers) and nomadic tribes is also a natural manifestation of devotion to Hindutva. In this regard Shri Guruji said : “Most social workers tend to blame others for adverse circumstances. Some blame current political distortions while others hold the aggressive activities of Christians, Muslims, etc., responsible. But our Swayamsevaks should keep away from such attitudes while working for Dharma and society. We must always offer a helping hand to those who need it. While rendering service we must treat all equally. Whether they are Christians or Muslims makes no difference. Everyone suffers equally in a calamity. We must serve suffering mankind not out of pity or like benefactors, but in a sense of offering to the Almighty. This will spread the resplendent glory of our Sanatana Dharma in all directions.”

From the very first day of the founding of the Sangh the sense of identification with the whole society has been the source of inspiration for all activity of the Swayamsevaks. This identification is the natural means for social equality. Everyone experiences this in the field of the Sangh. □

## 9.

# Self-contained Method of Work

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**T**HE IDEAL of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh is to take the nation to the pinnacle of glory. The precondition for this is the protection of Dharma, and the means of this protection is an organised, conquering capability. Organising the entire society is its basis. On this basis Dharma will be protected and the result would be the nation's reaching the height of glory.

The special characteristic of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh is that it did not stop at putting an ideal before itself ; it also showed the way towards it. It created a method of work in keeping with its ideal. On the strength of long experience we can say that the Sangh's method of work is the only effective way to organise the whole Hindu society.

There are various organisations in the country but hardly any of them has such a dry, difficult and patient method of work. There is nothing 'romantic' about it. There is only work in it, nothing else. Frequently various suggestions are made to make the activities of the Sangh more attractive by doing this or that. But it seems the leaders of the RSS are not 'romantic', so they do not agree to these attractive suggestions. They insist that activities and programmes must not only be interesting, they must also be useful for instilling useful 'samskars'. The Sangh believes its method of work is the only way to a united conquering capability.

We are convinced that the Sangh's method of work is a self-contained system for achieving its aim of organising the society. Its being self-contained means two things. In the first place this means no supplementary method is required for achieving the

objective ; and secondly it means there is no alternative method that can take us to the same goal.

After considering various methods of work one may be tempted to take a short-cut. Not that a short-cut cannot be taken, but it will not lead to the objective in mind. A palace cannot be built in a couple of minutes. Only a house of cards can be built in a couple of minutes. There is no cow that eats the least grass and gives the most milk. For a railway passenger headed for a certain destination only the train going there is useful and no other. We have to work with the conviction that the Sangh's method of work is the way to the fulfilment of our ideal.

This method has certain special features. Its focal point is coming together every day. Whether it is a camp or a picnic or some other programme, frequently coming together is its special characteristic.

The growth of the Sangh also takes place in a special way. The Sangh grows not by propaganda but by personal contact. The Sangh does not believe in the facile assumption that newspaper propaganda will achieve everything. People blame the Sangh for choosing the long way, and criticise it for lack of intelligence. They advise a hectic propaganda campaign in the press, radio and television, which would be enough. What was the need of going to the Shakha every day, even when it was cold ?

Not that propaganda does not have its uses. It is useful for changing opinion, but it changes opinion only on an intellectual level. Propaganda cannot bring about change of heart, a mental or spiritual change. If someone starts a bachelors' club and carries on a propaganda campaign in favour of celibacy in the press and on radio and television, people may vote for it if there were a referendum, but it will not increase the number of celibates in the country. There is a different medium for spreading celibacy. Preparing a voter for it is one thing, preparing a Swayamsevak, a voluntary adherent, is another. We have to understand the distinction between the two. Observing celibacy is good. Its advocate votes for it. Its voluntary adherent is a Swayamsevak. Similarly he who advocates speaking the truth, good behaviour and affection for the whole world is a voter, but he who is prepared to sacrifice his life for these things is a Swayamsevak.



The vote and actual realisation are two very different things. Mere propaganda cannot accomplish this work.

The need is to instil samskars day by day. It is necessary for everyone to live for an hour every day in an atmosphere imbued with these samskars. People have to be brought into this atmosphere. From this point of view the Sangh has accepted direct heart-to-heart contact as the means of its growth, not propaganda. Contact is the medium of our growth. The more we contact, the better we contact, the more we will grow, the better we will grow. Hence the need of the Sangh in the eyes of the Swayamsevaks. It is not only necessary for the Sangh to instil these samskars in the hearts of the Swayamsevaks but to continue its own existence so that each Swayamsevak could keep devoting his full day to it.

Contact is the medium of the Sangh's growth. The Swayamsevak comes into contact with different people. The students come into contact with teachers, the shopkeepers with customers, lawyers with clients, doctors with patients, factory workers with fellow-workers and the management. Everyone comes into contact with someone else according to the nature of his livelihood. We have to utilise our personal and social contacts for the Sangh. All work is done through the medium of purposeful and useful contacts. It is an old system of the Sangh to utilise every means for the Sangh. Dr. Hedgewar's life shows that even after the founding of the Sangh he participated in many activities. He sent Swayamsevaks to participate in the Bhaganagar (Hyderabad) Satyagraha in their individual capacities and he participated in the Satyagraha at the time of the Hindu Maha Sabha session in Bhagalpur as well as in many other agitations. While doing all this the question before the Swayamsevaks was not what would happen to the Congress or to the Hindu Sabha. Bhaiyaji Dani had taken a leading part in the Bhaganagar Satyagraha and the Hindu Maha Sabha Satyagraha in Bhagalpur was led by Nagpur provincial Sanghchalak Babasaheb Ghatate. Dr. Hedgewar himself had courted jail in the Jungle Satyagraha of Yeotmal and was lodged in Akola jail. We have seen that wherever we go, even in jail, we come into contact with good, selfless people. By building up contacts with them we can attract them to the Sangh, and after they come out of jail they could start Shakhas wherever they go.

It was with this calculation in mind that Dr. Hedgewar went to jail and took part in various organisations.

All twenty-four hours we are busy doing something or the other. In particular we have to do something for our livelihood. We also have some pastimes. All this brings us in contact with people. But the question is, can we use them for the Sangh? Have we made compartments in our mind? About Christians, for instance, it is humorously said that Sunday mornings are for prayers, all other days are for other activities. Have we similarly thought of devoting one hour to the Sangh and the rest of the day to non-Sangh work? There is no such division in the Sangh. The late Babasaheb Apte used to say that the hour we spend at the Sanghasthan is a measure of how much work we do in the remaining twenty-three hours. So we must keep thinking of the Sangh all twenty-four hours. We must keep 'seeing' Sangh as a cobbler by the roadside sees only the feet of passers-by and the condition of their shoes. That is all he concentrates on. A barber in his place, however, would look only at their heads and see if they needed a hair-cut. That is all he would notice. Similarly the Swayamsevak must 'see' Sangh everywhere.

Wherever we may be, we must build contacts for the growth of Sangh work. Whoever comes into our contact should be brought under the influence of the Sangh. Every Swayamsevak does this, but we need some more concentration on it. We have to do it deliberately. We see good results even when we are doing it without being conscious of it, so we can get still better results if we do it purposefully. If the same technique of personal contact is used in other fields of activity, all these efforts in various fields in various walks of life would naturally blend with each other. This growing blending, this increasing body of organised work, is a natural corollary of growing contacts by a growing number of Swayamsevaks.

Organised efforts are called mass organisation. A visible result of the natural desire of people in different fields of activity to keep in touch with each other is mass organisation. Sangh Swayamsevaks are active in many such organisations. For all these activities contact is the important means. Not that organisation began with Swayamsevaks. There have been some organi-

sations before, and they have worked in a different way. Swayamsevaks of the Sangh are working for them as well as for their own. We must not be like the child sitting in its mother's lap that sees a colourful ball and forgets its mother to run after it. We want the ball as well as our mother. In other words even while working in various organisations we have to see that our principles influence them.

Daily attendance at the Shakha is a must for becoming a good Swayamsevak. Some people tend to make excuses. They say those who urge them to attend the Shakha every day do not know what is happening in the world. For instance being in the labour field I could argue that when I have to spend nights on end thinking of the welfare of the working class, how can I attend a Prabhat Shakha early in the morning? Should I care for the whole country or should I care for your Shakha? But when I say so I forget that I am not the only busy person. A person who is not working for any organisation and is perhaps just a shopkeeper has also to keep late nights and think about his business. In fine the work may vary but the sense of responsibility is the same. It is the same for everyone, big or small, the same for the ordinary Swayamsevak and for the most senior office-bearers of the Sangh. If sincerity, urge for work, is the same, the sense of responsibility is the same too in spite of the difference in heavy and light work.

It would be wrong for those of us working as part of an organisation to say that those who are not in it have no idea of our responsibility. If they do not have any knowledge of the work of the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, likewise we do not have any knowledge of shopkeeping. If they cannot run a union, nor can we run a shop. Every man has his own separate work and his own separate aptitude. So let us not deceive ourselves with excuses. We must make it a point to attend the Shakha every day. Insistence is the key. Excuses will destroy everything. Another point we must bear in mind is that the Sangh works like a Parivar, a family. We may naturally feel that we are working well and building up our contacts, so it would be proper for the Sangh to send some more Swayamsevaks for our help. But this is a two-way street. If Swayamsevaks come to us from the Sangh, the mother organisation should also receive the benefit of a proportionate feedback. This would maintain a balance. But this would

depend upon the mental attitude of Swayamsevaks working in various organisations. If the attitude is right, the organisation can prove helpful in increasing the Sangh's area of contact. If it is not working in other organisations, it can prove a matter of loss for the Sangh.

According to a tale in the Puranas the great Yogi Machhindra Nath once travelled to the kingdom of women, where the queen challenged him to stay with her. Initially he declined, fearing that feminine company would corrupt him. On the queen's goading, however, he accepted the challenge, resolving that he would remain uncorrupted. Ultimately, however, he did get corrupted and gave himself up to sensual pleasures. His disciple Gorakh Nath had to find him out and bring him to his senses.

The allegory for the Swayamsevak is that even if he is a good Swayamsevak he must guard against becoming corrupted. According to another Pauranic tale, during the war between the Devas and Asuras, the Devas sent Kacha, son of their preceptor Brihaspati, to Shukracharya, preceptor of the Asuras, to acquire some exclusive knowledge. There Shukracharya's daughter Devayani fell in love with Kacha and expressed a desire to marry him and go with him. Kacha, however, replied that he had been sent on a mission to acquire knowledge and marriage was not a part of it.

Thus there can be both types of attitudes. Our worker can either become a Machhindra Nath working in various organisations or a Kacha. What he is to become depends upon him. If he has control over himself, whatever organisation he works for can prove a useful medium for spreading Sangh work. This is the entire scientific structure of our work.

To recapitulate in brief : the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh has an ideal before it. The basis for its attainment is organisation of the whole society, for achieving which a special method of work has been developed. This method is self-contained. It is self-contained in two ways. On the one hand it is self-contained in the sense that no complementary method is required to achieve the goal of the Sangh ; on the other, if we leave this method no other method can take us to the goal we have set for ourselves. Contact is the means for the Sangh's growth. If we keep the

Sangh before our eyes in our personal life and individual contacts and always behave with Sangh in view, we would be contributing to the Sangh's growth, directly or indirectly, for all twenty-four hours. This is how we should look at the Sangh. If we do so, we shall look upon every person in our contact as a potential Swayamsevak. But we need to bring about a correlation in all the diverse activities in which we are engaged. If we do that, our Swayamsevaks would be always aware of their ultimate mission, like Kacha. Our work must go on in both directions. Then we shall discharge our responsibility and successfully implement the Sangh's mission. □

## 10.

### The Standard

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**T**HERE 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 is considered a clever person.

It is also said that in the prevailing political atmosphere people are falling into bad habits and acquiring bad 'samskars'. The worst of these habits is to despatch the work in hand in the shortest possible time. 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 national 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. If a stone can be shattered by a hundred blows, he who wants to shatter it must be determined to hammer on it a hundred times. As the 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 organisation. They say strong enough propaganda would create an atmosphere in favour of their party, they would win on the strength of this atmosphere, and the need for workers would be automati-

cally 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 the monsoon. An excess of it brings a flood, a shortage of it brings a drought. It is dangerous to have it either in excess or short of the desirable extent. The same applies to publicity. A lot of publicity may possibly lead to growing popularity, but it also has an adverse effect. It leads to increased resentment among rivals and you are enveloped in an atmosphere of self-satisfaction. Propaganda 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. Instead of 'wasting' time and energy in building up members, it is considered more intelligent and simpler to build up one's image overnight through the medium of publicity.

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. To compete with concrete work is a laborious task. Getting publicity is much easier. Image-building does not require actual worth. Building contacts with publicity techniques does not require merit and looks so profitable. So publicity leads to internal rivalry. Idealistic people may not be affected by this, but such people are few in number. Not that all the rest are opportunists, but there are varying degrees of idealism. They too can become good idealists if exposed to good samskars.

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 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.

In the Sanskrit play “*Mudra Rakshasa*” there is a scene showing Arya Chanakya listening to reports of reverses after reverses, of generals 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 tremendous self-confidence ! It is a supreme example for a worker devoted to an ideal.

Success or 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. Against this background, we can understand why Churchill praised the generals who organised the safe retreat of the maximum number of soldiers after the debacle of Dunkirk. The point is, neither is it necessary to blame the leadership for a defeat or two, nor is a victory or two an occasion for self-praise. For victory and defeat depend upon a number of related factors, which include the ability of the leadership.

It has been seen in the history of the nation and the society that those who face an adversity, overcome it and feel a sense of achievement, come to feel that they are now complete. This gradually erodes their previous dedication without their knowing it.



In the seventeenth century, France was a big European power and French Generals were a terror all over the continent. King Louise thought, what if they prove the same terror at home ? His Prime Minister advised him not to suppress them but give them all a life of luxury. So the Palace of Versailles was built where the Generals were honoured with high ranks and a life of luxury was made available to them. The result was that they were all corrupted and the French aristocracy did not produce a single great man in that century. The same thing happened with the Italian aristocracy in the nineteenth century.

What is happiness and what is grief ? Can an ordinary person contemplate the real nature of happiness and unhappiness ? Naturally everyone 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 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 country 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 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 the 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 man's mind is his responsibility. Hence, in our memorandum to the National Labour 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.

Today the country has made a lot of progress. People have become clever in the pursuit of power. Before 1947 we had different values of life. Ram Prasad Bismil said before being hanged that he had courted jail to sacrifice his life. If anyone says so now he would be sent to a mental asylum. Now all eighty crores of us want to become prime minister. Now anyone having pre-1947 feelings would be dubbed mad, and such people are rarely in evidence.

Once a saint was invited by Emperor Akbar but he refused to go on the ground that it would not only wear out his shoes but he would forget the Lord's name on the way. Similarly, saint Tukaram refused to go when Shivaji invited him, saying it would tire his body to no purpose. The third example is that of a great Indian saint in Alexander's time that has been narrated by Savarkar in his book *Six Golden Epochs of History*. Alexander learnt about him during his invasion of Bharat and called him, but the saint refused to go. Therefore Alexander himself went to him, stood before him and said, "I am Alexander, conqueror of the world, and have heard about your greatness. What can I do for you ?" The saint, who was basking in the morning sun, replied, "You could move aside a little, so that I could enjoy the sun-shine."

The greatest example is that of the Roman Empire. When it was at its zenith it included the whole of Europe. For three

hundred years after Christ it reigned supreme, but three centuries of luxury led to decadence and not a single great man was born in the empire in all this period. 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 the Revolution. Adversities and calamities produced men of heroic proportions who could overcome them and their names were written in red 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 wait upon 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 a man becomes a leader even on the strength of his qualities, those qualities could gradually degenerate. Once his leadership is established he feels nothing more needs to be done. He has achieved what he aimed at. His will to work is gradually eroded. He begins to look for more and more ways of enjoying the privileges that he gets because of his status as a leader.

Worldly-wise people have their standards of behaviour 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 our country. 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 war 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 centre 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 the first President of the USA. By our current standards this was sheer madness.

Another example is that of Mazzini, Father of the Italian Nation. He roused the people against the Austrian empire, of which Italy was then a part, and instilled the spirit of nationalism in them. But when the time came to go to war with Austria he said he was not the right leader, as he did not have war experience, and Garibaldi would be the right choice. Garibaldi was not a known leader like Mazzini, but he was made the commander-in-chief, and Mazzini became an ordinary soldier under him.

Garibaldi won the war, conquered Rome and entered the city as the victor. As decided earlier, Victor Emmanuel of Piedmont was crowned king, but when the formation of a new government came up for discussion, Garibaldi said he was a soldier, and did not know diplomacy ; it was now time for Prime Minister Kaiser to lead the country, so he would retire to his village and farm his land.

Can such a thing conceivably happen in our country 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.

There is also a telling example in Gandhiji's life. In 1924 he presided over the Belgaum Congress – the only time he did so – in which the question of Assembly Entry was discussed. He was against it, while those in favour had formed a group called the Swarajya Party within the Congress. This group was led by Chitta Ranjan Das, Motilal Nehru and others. In the AICC meeting the majority was with Gandhiji. He toured the country for six months and talked to people, when he found that public opinion was gradually veering towards Assembly Entry as a possible aid for attainment of independence. A similar change was also taking place among AICC members, about which even the Swarajya Party was not aware. But Gandhiji knew about it and thought he had a moral duty under the circumstances. So he wrote a letter to Motilal Nehru, the then leader of the Swarajya Party, saying the majority that was formerly with him was now in favour of the opposite view, so he was resigning in his (Motilal's)

favour. One must here remember that in those days the office of Congress President was as important as that of Prime Minister.

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 behaviour 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 country. The way we think, our mental attitude, is very important.

Political activity has thrown up the current concept of leadership. Everyone wants to be a leader ; and a leader means he who 'commands' people to do things but does not do anything himself. He gives speeches and holds his head high in self-importance. There is a big crop of such leaders these days in the country. The new people whom we see entering politics every day have no samskars of patriotism or service to the country. On the contrary they look to the current leaders and feel they are in no way inferior. The behaviour of today's 'practical' leaders is very much at variance with that of those believing in idealistic values of life.

People say they saw a strange spectacle in the elections. Previously a worker used to do all things, such as registering voters, arranging chairs for meetings, etc. But during the elections those workers became leaders and stuck to moving about as supervisors. Nobody bothered about the actual small jobs that needed to be done. This is the fruit of the seed that was sown.

Another example from Tilak's life shows how even small events reflect the great behaviour of those who are committed to idealistic values of life. The Lucknow Congress session of 1916 was attended by delegates from Maharashtra and the South. There were long discussions and people slept late at night. In the morning they saw Tilak lighting a *choolha* for heating water in a large vessel. On being asked about it he replied the local people may not realise that people from the South would not be able to stand the cold weather of the north, so he was taking care of it. How many of our current leaders think of such small details ?

There is a new national awakening in the country 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 Shahu 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 Hindusthan."

After the conquest, when people in the North called him 'Swami' (master) he said he was not the Swami, the Swami was in Satara, the seat of the 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 organiser 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 given to 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 a 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 no one would raise an objection even if he took the whole of it ; 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 realised 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 the '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 concluded 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?

Gandhiji's source of inspiration for doing what he considered his natural duty was his values of life. He was not after cheap publicity. We have already seen an example from Prophet Mohammed's life. Another example is that when the first big mosque in Medina was being built he joined his followers in carrying stones on his head. He did not say he was the leader and so should only supervise the job. During Jesus Christ's famous last supper his disciples pushed each other to get the seat nearest him. Saddened by this spectacle he called for a bucket of water and began to wash each disciple's feet with his own hands. Then he said he did this because he wanted his disciples to behave with the same love and affection with each other, so that the world could know them as his disciples.

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 nation-building. 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 work, thoughts and behaviour. That is the real standard. □



## The Ideal Hero

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**T**HIS EARTH is the mother of heroes. Who can count how many? All those ranging from Valmiki, Vyasa, Homer and Plutarch, whose prowess and achievements are described in Vedic and other ancient literature, down to the subjects of the latest biographies.

There are the heroes of the folk-tales, ballads and folk-plays in different parts of the world – men and women who have played a noble role in various walks of national life, be it the battlefield, or trade and commerce, or farming or research and science, art and philosophy.

Then there are those divine beings – the creators of Hindu culture, which is world culture, prophets of Hindu Dharma, which is universal religion, and sustainers of the society who moulded it in keeping with the times.

The spiritual giants of all times and all climes who endeavoured to take humanity from darkness to light and from death to immortality.

Conquerors of the world and emperors, as well as the conquerors of the soul who looked down upon them.

The citizen of the universe who looked upon all three worlds as his own land.

All Jnanayogis, all Bhaktiyogis and all Karmayogis.

The countless achievers of towering ability in this great world from times immemorial.

It is impossible to count them all.

A very brief mention of the heroic progeny of Bharat, mother of the world, is contained in the '*Ekatmata Stotra*'. But it is representative and symbolic, not comprehensive.

Not everyone has the same concept of a 'hero'. Nietzsche's 'superman' is different from Carlyle's 'hero' ; and sage Aurobindo's concept of the future man is different from Nietzsche's 'superman'.

The common man today cannot quite understand even Carlyle's 'hero'. For him Leonardo, Michael-Angelo, Mozart and Beethoven are not heroes.

He does not consider St. Francis of Assisi or Father Damien, Robert Koch or John Hunter as a hero.

He has respect for scientists, philosophers and social reformers, but he thinks it odd to call them heroes.

The heroism of Joan of Arc is beyond dispute, but who would call Florence Nightingale heroic ?

It would be unjust to deny the status of heroes to Alexander, Caesar, Hannibal, Chengez Khan, Attila, Timur, William the Conqueror, Frederick the Great. But what is the test of heroism for Gautama the Buddha, Mahavira, Shankaracharya, Guru Nanak, Confucius ? Rustum and Sohrab were certainly heroes, but what is the category for Tulsidas or Zoroaster ?

According to the common man's understanding, Garibaldi was a hero, not Mazzini, Bismarck, nor Goethe ; Washington and Lincoln, not Benjamin Franklin and Jefferson ; Napoleon, not Rousseau and Voltaire ; Marshal Zhukov, not Maxim Gorky.

All these, like those in Kennedy's *Profiles in Courage*, were certainly heroes, but they do not fit the popular image of the 'hero'.

This being so, how can the common man accept as heroes volunteers engaged in giving relief to sufferers in natural calamities, housewives ably taking care of their hearths and homes in the face of poverty, those common folk who work devotedly in their respective occupations like farming, shopkeeping, etc., and those unemployed who give courage to their near and dear ones?

Samuel Smiles said, 'Do not think of how small your job is, think of how well you can do it. Even if you shine shoes, shine them so well that you will be known as the Napoleon of shoeshines.' How many find this advice acceptable ?

In the '*Daivi Sampad*' (divine wealth) described in the Gita the quality at the top is 'Abhayam', fearlessness. It is true that the visible manifestation of this quality is physical. Its mental, intellectual or spiritual manifestation cannot be seen by the eyes. Hence the common man associates 'heroism' with physical prowess. It is not often understood that the inspiration of that bravery lies in the brave man's mind. What makes the first impact is the physical manifestation of bravery.

Arjuna's two vows – "*Na dainyam, no palayanam*" ("No surrender, no retreat") can fill even a timid heart with courage. When the great Parashurama confronted his enemies he said to them, 'Let the first arrow come from you, because if I let fly the first arrow, no one will be left to retaliate'. Such self-confidence can make a hero out of a coward. The great poet Bana says, for a hero who takes a vow the ocean is but a stream and the great Sumeru mountain just an ant-hill.

This description is inspiring indeed, but on a physical level. The common man takes time to comprehend that the fountain-spring of this heroic manifestation is a heroic heart.

There was nothing much to commend about the physical condition of Che Guevara, the leader of the guerrilla war in the jungles of Bolivia, Madhavrao Muley, Sarkaryawah of the RSS who directed the people's struggle during the Emergency in spite of serious illness, and Charu Mujumdar, the protagonist of Naxalism, who had nothing but an oxygen cylinder at the time of his arrest.

Similar other examples are great men like Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Ramana Maharshi and the Sangh's second Sar-sanghchalak Shri Guruji, who kept working as usual in spite of being afflicted by the deadly disease of cancer ; boys like Khudiram Bose who embraced death at a tender age, revolutionaries like Anant Kanhere, Satyagrahis who did not accept parole in spite of serious illness, and idealists like Swatantrya-veer Savarkar who

voluntarily gave up life when their work in this world was done. This was why the same Bapu Gokhale who could not stand being nicked by the barber's razor could fight bravely on the battlefield. This was why *Johar* was possible. This was why the tenth Guru's sons, Fateh Singh and Jorawar Singh, could sacrifice themselves. This was why Harish Bhanot's daughter Neerja could courageously do her duty in a damaged aircraft.

The real source of heroism is internal. It is also manifested on mental, intellectual and spiritual levels.

Swayamsevaks working for the Sangh without chasing publicity, philosopher-scientists like Kanada who kept repeating 'the atom' even on death-bed, common people who believe that salvation lies in doing their duty to the best of their ability – all these come in this category.

The concept of 'heroism' is multi-dimensional and multi-level.

One of these dimensions is 'time' : immediate, life-long ; instant, enduring ; an occasional outburst, a natural and enduring entity.

It is possible that sometimes even heroes like Arjuna may be stunned for a moment by the arrows of Bhishma ; on the other hand it is also possible that a coward may momentarily be inspired to bravery. But as a rule occasional heroism and enduring heroism are two different things. It is said that even a coward in a crowd becomes brave, but it is extremely difficult to maintain the heroic spirit like Nelson Mandela in jail, Mazzini in exile, Baji Prabhu fighting a battle alone, or Horatio. It is not necessary that occasional heroes show enduring heroism. This is why workers participating selflessly in collective movements are seen leading a disappointing life later. Idealism requires a heroic spirit, not occasional heroism.

But if this heroic spirit is not deep-rooted, it could also have an adverse reaction on occasion. King Bruce of the Scots, Rana Pratap or Moses are great heroes of the world. Their heroism was an enduring quality of the mind. They stood like rocks in the face of adversity. But the truth is that only such great men have to suffer the cruellest adversities. Ordeal by fire is for gold, not for lead. For lead is bound to melt.

In such circumstances it is not impossible for the mind to be overcast by a sense of defeatism. There can be a dark moment in the life of the bravest and the most self-sacrificing.

At the same time there is an element that saves the mind in such testing times. In Robert Bruce's case it was the persevering spider ; for Rana Pratap, wandering forlorn in the jungle, it was a letter from his poet-friend ; for Moses, caught helpless between the Red Sea and the enemy's forces, it was a divine revelation. All these were superficial causes. They would have had no impact if the heroic spirit of these men had not been deep-rooted. This depth is spiritual. Only those are true heroes whose heroism reaches down to this level. Spiritual heroism is the source of all heroism. It is that which helps real heroes to rise above moments of despair. Spiritual heroism is the fire that burnishes them like gold. It is the one unfailing means to achieve material prosperity and spiritual glory.

All scriptures describe the process of taking heroism to the spiritual level. The Gita has digested all shastras and put it in a nutshell before humanity. The definition of 'Sthita-prajna' given in the Gita has been guiding the whole world on the path of self-development. With the Gita and the Dharma-Shastras available to us, there is no need of another commentary. The Gita's description of the ideal hero is like the pole-star guiding the traveller. It is that star which everyone needs to follow. Yogeshwar Krishna described the hero in the Gita in the following words :

*Mukta-sango anahamvaadi dhrityutsaaha-samanvitah  
Siddhyasiddhyor nirvikaarah kartaa sattvika uchyate.*

"The sattvik – essentially good – person is he who is devoid of longing and pride, possesses courage and enthusiasm, and is neither glad nor sad at the failure or success of what he does."

This is the only test of a hero.

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## 12.

### Concept of One Nation as a Whole

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**I**F WE WANT to learn the nature of our nation, we must first unlearn all those wrong things that Macaulay and his mental progeny taught us. It is a well-known fact that our entire history was so presented as to create a lack of self-confidence among the Hindus. Had Hindus known their real history they would have taken pride in it and then it would not have been possible for the British to stay on. So the whole Indian history was distorted for perpetuating British rule.

Another thing the egoistic Westerners said was that the history of every country and every society in the world undergoes the same developmental process as the history of Western countries ; no other process was possible.

The first political system in the West was absolute monarchy, so they said it was the same in Bharat. Actually Bharat never had absolute monarchy. True, kings in this country initiated this system to some extent after coming into contact with non-Hindus practising it. We have had various administrative systems for thousands of years, but never absolute monarchy.

Europe had feudalism in the initial stages of the developmental process, so they presumed it must have been the same with Bharat. Actually we have had no feudal system. Only after Lord Cornwallis's 'permanent settlement' did we see it to a limited extent. Even the Communists have had to accept this now, so now they call it the 'Asiatic social system' instead of feudalism. Still it was always propagated that because Europe had a feudal system Bharat must have or should have had it.

So far as religion is concerned, it is accepted on all hands that the West does not have the right equivalent for 'Dharma'. 'Religion' is a wrong translation of the term. This does not need further elaboration. Religion had a specific role in the West and it was assumed that Dharma would have the same role here. Hence that role was superimposed on our cultural history. The Catholic Church dominated the whole of Europe. It was not only a spiritual power but also a temporal one. Not only the common people but even kings accepted its sovereignty. We have had no such system. We did have 'Purohits', but there was no organised church. Naturally we did not have the ill-effects of an organised church.

Not that there could have been no built-in drawbacks in our system, but there was a difference. When some schools of thought were seen to differ from the mainstream Dharma, it was hastily concluded that it was like the Protestant revolt against the Catholic Church. Actually there was no revolt because there was no organised church. We have always had different schools of thought. There has been unity in diversity. So we have had Buddhist philosophy predominating in some areas, Jainism in other areas and Sikhism in still others. Even a type of materialism has held sway. But these philosophies were not revolts against each other. They co-existed. Western scholars cannot grasp this fact. Europe had an organised church and there was a clear revolt against it.

Our Western-oriented intellectuals have accepted the Western developmental process as our own. Actually many examples can be given to show that it was different. But this fact was ignored and our whole structure was based on the Western pattern. This was deliberately done to make us forget our identity.

Further, our scholars have been brainwashed into believing that our country had nothing ; whatever there is is from the West. This is the 'raison d'etre' of the Western empire. Had Indians the capability they would have had their own empires. The Western model is the only model of human progress ; that model should prevail all over the world.

Actually every society has its own culture. Its culture determines its pattern of progress. No country can provide a model

that can apply everywhere. In those times we were dazzled by the Western empire and so thought progress consisted in aping the West. As modernisation became synonymous with imitation of the West, the progress of our country came to be measured by Western standards. From the times of Lord Macaulay to date White imperialist nations carried on this campaign of disinformation in newly-independent underdeveloped countries.

So long as we do not liberate our minds from this disinformation, we would find it extremely difficult to think originally. A piece of cloth can be coloured only after it is washed clean. We can learn the truth only after we unlearn the falsehood taught to us.

Is the Western concept of 'nation' and our concept one and the same? Are 'nation' and 'Rashtra' conceptually interchangeable terms? Snyder's *Varieties of Nationalism* makes it clear that even in the West the nationalism of different countries did not have the same psychological ingredients. Different countries had different historical processes of development, and these in turn gave rise to qualitatively disparate types of nationalism. They all were given the same generic name of nationalism. Because of the differences in the historical conditions, this feeling remained confined within territorial limits, but from one country to another its psychological content differed. In such circumstances how proper is it to insist that we should have the same psychological pattern? It is time to reconsider our slavery to terminology.

In the very beginning of the progress of Bharat we had people but not institutions. Even the people fell into various categories.

The Atharva Veda says :

*Janam bibhrati bahudha vivachasam,  
Nana dharmanam prithivi yathoukasam.  
Sahasram dhara dravinasya me duham,  
Dhruveva dhenur anapasphuranti*

(12.1.45)

“This our motherland sustains people speaking different tongues, professing different religions and having different temperaments, but living together like a family. May this motherland,



like a milch-cow giving copious milk, bestow on us a thousand showers of wealth.”

Thus at first there were separate individuals. According to the Atharva Veda the first human group was the family.

*Saa udakraamat – saa gaarhapatyē nyakraamat*  
(8.10.2)

“The all-pervading condition evolved into the domestic condition, that is, the institutions of marriage and the family were created. The first to be created was the householder.”

The Atharva Veda also gives the next step in evolution—“*Saa udakraamat – saa aahavaniyē nyakraamat*” – that is, the institution of the family expanded into the ‘aahavaniya’ system, which means the households came together and began to participate in such communal activities as sacrifices. The next stage was the ‘Sabha’ and its members were called ‘Sabhya’.

*Saa udakraamat saa sabhaayaam nyakraamat,*  
*Yanti asya sabhyo bhavati.*

Thus village councils came up from place to place. These evolved into a national assembly. Members of this assembly (‘Samiti’) were called ‘saamitya’.

*Saa udakraamat saa samitau nyakraamat,*  
*Yanti asya samiti saamityo bhavati.*

The national assembly, Rashtra Samiti, evolved into ‘Aamantrana Parishad’, from which emerged the Mantri Mandal, the Cabinet. Its members were called ‘Aamantraniya’.

*Saa udakraamat saamantrane nyakraamat,*  
*Yanti asya aamantranam aamantraniyo bhavati.*

After this, various systems of government were created in our country. The West insists that a system of administration it selects should be applicable everywhere and for all time. That is not our thinking. We believe that administrative systems should differ from time to time and in accordance with circumstances and mental attitudes. There can even be different systems at different places at the same time. We thus had more than a dozen systems of government in ancient Bharat. More can also be added.

*“Swarit-saamraajyam bhoujyam, swaaraajyam, vairaajyam, paarameshthyam raajyam, mahaaraajyam aadhipatyam samantaparyaayi syaat saarvabhoomah saarvayeshu aantaapadhaa-paraardhaat prithivi samudraparyantaa ekaakaat iti.”*

(Aitareya)

These different types of governance came into being at different times and at different places. But who developed them? Who was the first originator? A special feature of our country is that political leaders did not take the lead in all this. These were developed by those who were away from power.

*Bhadram icchanta vishayah swarvidah,  
Tapo deekshaam upaseduragre,  
Tato Rashtram balam ojascha jaatam,  
Tadasmai deva upasamnayantu.*

“The nation, force and energy were created from the penance done in the beginning of time by seers possessed of self-knowledge. This nation is worthy of being of service to the gods.”

They have even given an example. This nation was scattered, no one listened to it, and it had become weak. What the sages did in such a situation has been described thus :

*Dandaa ived go aavanaasa aasan,  
Parichhinnaa Bharataa arbhakaasah,  
Abhavachya pura eta vasishtha  
Aadit tritsanaam visho aprathanta.*

“Sticks used for tending cattle are small and separate. Similarly the people of weak and scattered Bharat were weak and divided. But when sage Vasishtha became their leader, they became famous and prosperous.”

Those who were untouched by hunger for power gave dispassionate and objective thought to the most beneficial system for the good of the people and created various systems in various regions. Monarchy was just one of them, and even there the king did not have absolute power. The faults that later entered the monarchical system belong to modern times. The faults of non-Hindu regimes of this country, including the British period, sprang from despotism, and they were reflected in our polity. This distortion

crept in only during the last few centuries. Initially, care was taken to prevent the emergence of absolute power or dictatorship. So, careful thought was given to kingship, which is expressed in the mantra recited at the coronation. At the time of the coronation, the people say to the king :

*Aatvaa haarshamantar bhoor dhruvastishta-vichachalan,  
Vishastwaa sarvaa vaanchhantu maatvadraashtra adhibhrishata.*  
(Atharva Veda, 6.87.1.)

*Sarvaadishah samanas sandhricheeh  
Dhruvaya te samithi kalpataamiha.*  
(Atharva Veda, 6.88.3)

“May the nation not become corrupt due to you. May the people living everywhere unanimously desire to continue you as king. May this national Samiti have the power to consolidate your kingship.”

This means the king was not all-powerful. The people were all-powerful. The Samiti of the Rashtra was the link between the all-powerful people and the king. The king had to work under the guidance of the national assembly, otherwise he had to go. This cannot be measured by European standards. In the beginning the king was elected. Hereditary kingship came to Bharat very late. If the people were displeased the king could not last. There are many examples of this. One is that of king Prajapati. He tried to denigrate the national assembly and was peremptorily removed. Another well-known example is that of king Vena. He was removed for anti-people activities and his son was told that he would be put on the throne on certain conditions. He was forced to take the following pledge :

*Yanmaam bhavanti vashyanti kaaryam artha-samanvitam,  
Tadaham vah karishyaami naatra kaaryaa vichaaranaa.*

“I shall do as the people say, nothing else. I shall do only what will please you.”

Kings had to take the following pledge before ascending the throne :

*Pratijnaam chaamirohaacha manasaa karmanaa giraa,  
paalayishyaamaham bhoomam brahma ityevamaasakrit,*

*Yashcha ya dharmamityukto dandaniti vyapaashrayah,  
Tamasamah karishyaami swavavaaso na kadaachana.*

‘I shall not do as I please.’

If the king strayed from the right path, the common man could scold him. In the third century, when a king gave himself airs, a Buddhist monk named Aryadeva said to him :

*Janadaasasya te darpah shadbhaagena bhritakasyakah.*

“You are a servant of the people. Why are you so proud? You are our servant whom we pay a salary of a sixth of our income.”

We thus had a system in which even a monk could give the king a piece of his mind.

Injunctions of Dharma and moral leaders were the highest power in the society. Temporal power was under the control of spiritual power. This is the test for any system here. The supreme importance given to the government apparatus in the life of the nation by Western countries was never given in Bharat. The concept of nation-building through the institution of the government is non-Hindu. So in order to build the nation according to the Hindu system, the most important basis would be the common citizen’s national spirit. The level of the nation would be as high as the level of this spirit. The image of the country cannot be enhanced by building up the image of the rulers or some leaders.

Another system was an autonomous, self-governed people’s organisation that would protect the interests of its members. It would see that all its forces work for nation-building. It would co-operate with the government if it is working right but control it if it is not. Such an organisation should also work, if required, as an alternative source of power.

The institution of the government has its uses, but they are limited. The national spirit of the common citizen and a healthy people’s organisation together create a moral leadership. The administration can remain on the proper course only if it is between aware citizens and their organisation below and a moral leadership above. There have been ‘Rajarishis’ in our country as well as abroad, but today they are the exceptions. Any plan can

be successfully implemented if the rulers operating between the two levels are actively aided by a group of idealistic workers in every field of activity. Dependence on bureaucracy has a vested interest in the status quo. Any effort at change by the rulers is indirectly obstructed by it. For putting pressure on it, it is necessary that at every level and in every field groups of idealistic workers should be present to assist the rulers. All these things lead to the building up of the nation, and this is the Bharatiya system.

In our country Dharma is considered the foundation of all life structure, from the individual to the universal. Our seers had realised the universal regulations that are immutable and eternally true. It is true that with the passage of time circumstances change, and with them the problems. The regulations that were adequate and able to sustain the society in the past cannot tackle new problems. A new set of rules then becomes necessary. Hence the Hindu system is to build an ever-evolving social structure in the light of unchangeable universal regulations. This was why new smritis came up here again and again. We have given constant thought to new construction in the light of universal laws.

Those who equate Dharma with religion would find this difficult to understand. For instance Justice Gajendragadkar writes:

“It may not be impossible but it is certainly difficult to define Hinduism. Like other religions of the world it does not worship one God, nor is it linked with one particular ritual. It does not believe in one particular philosophy, nor does it follow specific rites. As a matter of fact it is not satisfied with any narrow religious traditions or values. It is predominantly a way of life and nothing else. The general tests for the accepted religions of the world are not adequate for examining Hinduism. Generally every prevailing religion or religious belief is linked with a certain philosophical outlook or other-worldly belief. Can this test apply to Hinduism ?”

After the attainment of independence a golden opportunity came our way to structure the society on the basis of Dharma in keeping with our culture, but we did not avail ourselves of it. We did not build a structure that was in consonance with the Hindu genius in the light of sanatana – enduring – Dharma. So long as this is not done, it is not possible to attain the objectives of peace,

amity, happiness and prosperity. National integration can also not last. The need of the hour is a new arrangement in the light of Sanatana Dharma.

A unique effort in this direction was made by Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya. It is called 'Integral Humanism'. A social structure based on this philosophy could be said to have the foundation of Dharma. It alone will have the capacity to sustain the society. The high-level national vitality emerging from integral humanism would remind us of those traditional Hindu values that are distinct from and superior to Western values of life. They will assure the individual that materialism and spiritualism are two sides of the same coin, and that the revolutionary within him is capable of bringing about a radical transformation. An unbalanced emphasis on the material side creates an imbalance in the life of the individual and the society.

Revival of Hindu culture and Dharma is not only required for our national renaissance and rapid progress but also for the peace and prosperity of oppressed humanity.

Hindu culture has the strength to remove the disabilities of Bharat as also of the whole humanity. Is it possible for the West to blend individual freedom with social discipline? In the materialistic West liberty can become licence and discipline dictatorship. The materialistic West cannot think comprehensively about the basic unity at the root of visible diversities of the world. It mistakes uniformity for unity. The Western world could never understand the strengths and weaknesses of Bharat's socio-economic structure. It considers our stability to be stagnancy and its thoughtlessness dynamism. Western thinking could not grasp the concept of maximum decentralisation of administrative powers within an integrated administration, because an autonomous, regional, industrial and civil political system that co-existed with a central political power was beyond their comprehension. In this system everyone had the same orbit: if there was more material happiness there was proportionately less social prestige; and with greater social prestige there was proportionately less material comfort. The two together kept the orbit constant. This maintained a balance between power and the society. This arrangement and concept are the special qualities of the Bharatiya social system. The West considers national self-reliance incompatible

with international cooperation. The West can define nationalism as imperialism and internationalism as disloyalty to your country. The integral humanism of Bharat highlights the uselessness, lopsidedness, imbalance and meaninglessness of the piecemeal thinking of the West. This integral system has made us capable of conceiving a universal kingdom. It will have the capacity of developing the various national cultures along with a religion of humanity and would be enriched by the contribution of materialism as well as all religious philosophies.

Hindu culture conceived of an integrated system, encompassing material and metaphysical values, that would inspire man to achieve individual progress. We have neither ignored the material side nor given it too much importance. As a result, two schools of thought emerged – material and metaphysical. Material achievement gave domestic happiness, but social prestige and status depended upon spiritual values. The condition was that no one could have both. One had to choose between the two. Material comfort was in inverse proportion to social status and prestige. There was complete equality in the society. Everyone had equal opportunity, it was for him to choose between material happiness and spiritual prestige. The total orbit of aspiration was the same for every individual. Both types of incentives were available within this orbit. The stronger the material incentive, the more restricted the spiritual one, and *vice versa*. The choice was the individual's. This was the scientific Hindu point of view for genuine and enduring equality. This system for the attainment of the fourfold aim of life can establish a really egalitarian and stable society.

This ancient Hindu attitude was reflected in planning. The basic aim of planning was to determine 'Abhyudaya' and 'Nihshreyasa' – material prosperity and spiritual glory – through an evolving Dharma. A planning related to only one of the two would be one-sided and incapable of a balanced growth of the society. The practical form of the individual and his minimum spiritual advance would inspire him to offer the fruits of his labour at the feet of the body-social. In the absence of such a feeling the special qualities, objectives and achievements of individuals become competitive instead of complementary. In our society every individual born had the right to life on the physical level.

He had the fundamental right to work suited to his talents. It is a tragedy that the Bharatiya system of right to work has not yet found a place in the Constitution. It is generally accepted that so long as minimum needs of life are not met an individual cannot think of high ideals. So long as an individual does not get work suited to his talents, his all-round progress is not possible. This suitability of vocation was a special feature of the Hindu social system. People with the same qualities and engaged in the same vocation were considered one vocational family. Economic groups engaged in the same profession or industry were considered units. Similar professional families came together to form regional or industrial socio-economic groups. We laid special emphasis on self-discipline. Disputes on various levels were resolved by the people's panchayats. State interference was minimal. The king himself had to abide by rules laid down by moral leaders, who had neither authority nor force nor wealth.

This was in brief our social scene. The plans made by these autonomous self-governed socio-economic units formed the basis of the nation-wide plan. This is the ideal situation according to Hindu philosophy. If the State is considered the only planning authority, dictatorship is inevitable. It would be impossible to conceive of a national plan if different class interests do not have the opportunity to solve their problems, if there is absence of moral leadership in the society, and if every group is forced to pull in its own direction. The internal autonomy of every group is inevitable, but there must also be a strong national sense in this autonomy. It should be guided by selfless persons dedicated to the society.

Integral Humanism believes in the development of the human spirit. A new-born baby is integrated with itself. As it grows and its spirit develops, it identifies itself with the family, the group, the society and the nation. Dharma expects this spirit to grow beyond and cover the whole world – "*Vasudhaiva kutumbakam.*" Either the individual becomes identified with animate and inanimate creation as a whole, or he is so integrated within himself that he becomes one with the universe. 'Advaita' is his foundation. 'Syadvada' is his viewpoint. Hence this philosophy has the capacity to reach unity through diversity. Its influence had made possible the creation of an ideal anarchical society in the past. It can again rejuvenate Hindu values of life.



Moral, not governmental, leadership has been the special feature of the Hindu social structure. The materialistic West could not grasp its importance. But now that the destructive effects of rapid scientific and technological advance are coming to the fore, a few thinkers have started thinking on these lines. Initially every scientific and technological advance seemed welcome but later thinkers had their doubts.

Integrated thinking has been a special feature of Bharat. Since the Second World War, the West has begun to realise the importance of such thinking to a limited extent. Sadly enough, we are forgetting this speciality. The result is grave evil effects in the social, economic and other fields.

Take, for instance, the very concept of equality. It is unexceptionable, but because there is no integrated thinking, the principle of equality is being used for promoting secessionist tendencies. Integral thinking would enable us to realise that social identification – ‘*samarasata*’ – could lead to equality. In its absence equality would either not be brought about or would not last. Dr. Ambedkar says in this connection :

“Positively, my social philosophy may be said to be enshrined in three words : liberty, equality and fraternity. Let no one however say that I have borrowed my philosophy from the French Revolution. I have not. My philosophy has roots in religion and not in political science. I have derived them from the teachings of my master, the Buddha. In his philosophy, liberty and equality had a place ; but he added that unlimited liberty destroyed equality, and absolute equality left no room for liberty. In his philosophy, law had a place only as a safeguard against the breaches of liberty and equality ; but he did not believe that law can be a guarantee for breaches of liberty or equality. He gave the highest place to fraternity as the only real safeguard against the denial of liberty or equality or fraternity – which was another name for brotherhood of humanity, which was again another name for religion.”

Shri Guruji, second Sar-sanghchalak of Rashtriya Swayam-sevak Sangh, has clearly said, “Realisation that all life contains the same divine spark can be the only basis of equality. You may call it God or Eternal Truth.”

Dr. Ambedkar too was aware of the fact that without integrated thinking the principle of equality can prove divisive. He said : “Backward and Dalit classes must not be given the opportunity to start a class struggle.” Because of his own integrated thinking, Dr. Ambedkar could say : “Everyone will agree that this country is divided into castes and classes and it cannot become one self-governed community so long as the Constitution does not provide adequately for the protection of the minorities. But the minorities must bear in mind that although we are divided into classes and castes our ideal is a united India. This ideal cannot be sacrificed at the altar of any demand of the minorities, either voluntary or otherwise, that destroys the nation’s unity.”

In the present circumstances it is not difficult to imagine how destructive the absence of integrated thinking can be. Under the influence of the West we forgot our own philosophy. Actually Western thinkers today look to Bharat for guidance, while we try to ape the West. Many thinkers like Fritjof Capra feel that “in the present system that is moving like the planetary system, we have reached the point of change. The present crisis is due to the transition from the old Roman political culture into modern times.” At this turning point only Sanatana Dharma and its manifestation as Integral Humanism can provide real guidance to the West. A proper study of this philosophy can help us to understand the comprehensive form of the nation. The following illustrative table is a pointer in this direction. Although it is just a pointer, it could give an idea of things to come :

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**Comparable social structures – difference in outlook**

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<i>Category</i>	CAPITALISM	COMMUNISTIC	HINDU PHILOSOPHY
Philosophy	Materialism	Materialism	Integral Humanism
Form of man	Economic animal	Economic animal	Body, mind, intelligence, soul
Objective	Material prosperity of individual	Material prosperity of the State	Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha of the individual
Model	Club life	Mechanised life	The human body

Category	CAPITALISM	COMMUNISTIC	HINDU PHILOSOPHY
Discipline and liberty	Freedom to the individual to the extent of licence	State discipline leading to incongruity in thinking	Liberty without licence and discipline without constraint on thought
Right to property	Limitless	No right	Need-based minimum (" <i>Yavad bhriyeta jatharam</i> ")
System of work	Exploitation	Gradually tightening State control	'Yajna', 'dana' – piety, generosity
Dominant attitude	Individualism	Statism	Interdependence
Process	Rivalry	Force	Cooperation
Structure	Multi-party democracy	One-party dictatorship	'Dharma Rajya' – rule of law
Who owns value of excess labour ?	The owner	The State	The society
Livelihood system	As per vacancy	As per State directive	As per aptitude
Thought process	Compartmental	Compartmental	Integrated



## 13.

### Facts and Fancies

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**N**AGPUR has the good fortune of being the place where the national force of Bharat originated. In 1925 Dr. Hedgewar founded the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh in this city, and from here the work of the Sangh spread in all directions. Since then there have been many good and bad times, but through them all the Sangh kept growing, and today its branches are functioning in all States, all districts, all cities and a majority of villages in the country.

Although Sangh work is now old, there are aspects about which people do not have adequate information. Rather, there are some misconceptions about it. Sometimes Swayamsevaks wonder why, if the Sangh is such an excellent thing, people do not understand it. Why do they oppose it? Why do they think it is in the wrong? Why are they apathetic to it? Why are there adverse reactions to Sangh work? Sometimes the Swayamsevak imagines that all those who oppose the Sangh must be dishonest, otherwise they would not oppose such a fine thing as the Sangh. But it is not so. Like honest supporters of the Sangh, there are also honest people among those who oppose or are apathetic to it.

People have now become very 'progressive'. So the modern way of life is to pursue immediate gains. When they think abusing the Sangh could prove profitable in some way – could possibly get some 'Gaddi' for them – they think it necessary to do so. But not all people are like this. There are also those who are honestly opposed or apathetic to it because they do not understand it. They are not to blame for this. The Sangh itself is partially responsible for it, for it cannot be easily understood by an outsider. The common man always tries to understand anything new on the

basis of his old knowledge. It is a principle of psychology that new knowledge is based on old experience, whether of similarity or dissimilarity between the new and the old. This is why linguistics has figures of speech like simile, allegory and metaphor. They help the understanding of new things. We talk of the 'lotus-feet' of the Almighty. But who has seen them ? The wise say we have not seen God but we have seen the lotus and so can imagine that God's feet must be as delicate, fragrant and sacred as the lotus. An outsider tries to understand the Sangh in the same way.

Swayamsevaks are in regular touch with the Sangh through the Shakha, so they are not confused about its aims and policies. But after all they do not live insulated lives and do not remain unaffected by the surrounding atmosphere. It is the duty of every Swayamsevak to establish contacts with more and more people and try to bring them close to the Sangh. While doing so they would be affected to some extent by prevailing social conditions. Sangh work does not depend upon circumstances ; it has to go on however congenial or adverse they may be. But this does not mean the mind of the Swayamsevak remains unaffected, whatever the circumstances. He can intellectually grasp the fact that Sangh work is independent of circumstances, but he would be naturally affected by them. Hence an evaluation, from time to time, of our work, its form, its condition, its progress and of how far we have still to go becomes necessary.

The political atmosphere in the country is of special interest to everybody. It is difficult to understand why. Why should Swayamsevaks all over the country feel so much interested in it? Is there some problem with basic thinking ? Keeping oneself informed is good ; there can be no objection to being generally informed on such subjects as science and technology, economics and literature, the sun and the moon, as also on politics ; but it is surprising that politics is considered important enough to determine the future of the Sangh or the country.

A dominant thought these days is that politics is everything and so anything can be done with political power. Naturally, coming to power becomes the most important thing. Everywhere we see the delusion that you can do nothing unless you are in power. Even those who call themselves advocates of democracy

are influenced by such thinking. Democracy means government of the people, for the people and by the people. Democracy and dictatorship can never go together. Then how can those whose only objective is to capture power defend democracy ?

Another thought is that whatever is to be done can be done only by the government. It is the job of the government to do everything. But in that case we would have to give the government all powers. Responsibility and authority should be equal. If we hold the government responsible for national renaissance we should have to vest it with absolute power. If we feel an all-powerful government would become dictatorial we should not entrust it with all the responsibility. You cannot abdicate the responsibility and retain the power. So if you do not want the government to have all powers it would be wrong to place all the responsibility on its shoulders. It is dangerous for democracy to hold that the government can be the means for everything. Such a thought is impractical and would make the people lazy.

The question is, would a few good people becoming ministers raise the country ? The answer is No. There are some basic requirements of nation-building. So long as they are not met the government would not be able to discharge even its limited responsibilities. The most important of these requirements is the level of the common citizen's awareness. If public awareness is high, wayward political leaders can be controlled ; otherwise power can corrupt even high-minded people. Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. In the absence of an aware public opinion an ordinary person in power can naturally get corrupted in one way or another. 'Rajarishis' like Maryada-Purushottam Rama, Yogeshwar Krishna, King Janaka and Charles the Fifth are exceptions that prove the rule. Another requirement is an autonomous and self-governed organisation of enlightened people – a people's organisation that would maintain a high level of national awareness without being pressurised by selfish elements. Only such an organisation can check the behaviour of those in power. In order to avoid distortions it is necessary that either the rulers should be idealists and consider power a means for the attainment of a high goal, or they should adequately be under the influence of a people's organisation that would keep them on the right path.

Even idealistic people in power cannot implement a popular policy for want of enlightened and idealistic workers, because such implementation does not depend upon the bureaucracy alone. The government may change, but the bureaucracy remains the same. Bureaucratic dictatorship has such a stranglehold on the administration that, but for a few exceptions, even ministers cannot do anything. A capable, studious and industrious minister may control the bureaucracy to some extent ; but it is not possible for everyone. So the government can make the administration do concrete work only if a group of idealistic workers is present in the field of work as well as at every level of the administration.

In Bharat rulers were never leaders of the society. You will not see this anywhere else. Those in government were considered 'administrative leaders' and the wealthy were considered 'economic leaders', but above them both were the 'moral leaders'. They had the trust of the society because of their morality, character, selfless life, willingness to work for the good of others and love for the society. The leadership of such moral leaders kept India alive as a nation for thousands of years. Wherever the government became the focal point of the society, the life of the society came to an end when the institution of government broke down for one reason or another. This process destroyed many nations, but ours survived, because our social life never depended upon the government alone. In our country governmental as well as economic power was influenced by moral sages. If we are out to rebuild our nation, we will have to again fulfil these basic requirements.

So '*vijetree samhataa kaaryashakti*', a conquering unified work-force, is the precondition for the creation of a nation, not political or economic power. Many people ask, if the Sangh is engaged in such valuable work, why do the rulers try to ban it or put various restrictions on it ? There are two reasons for this. There are many other organisations following the Hindu thought. There are people who express themselves more strongly in favour of Hindutva than Sangh Swayamsevaks, but no ban is considered for them, as they have no strength behind them. Had the Sangh been weak, nobody would have paid attention to it. But the strength of the Sangh cannot be ignored. Another reason is that although the Sangh is strong it is not yet so strong that no one would dare to level false charges at it. It is because the Sangh

is between these two stages that it is opposed. But there is no cause for worry. Sangh work is the divine mission of producing the enlightenment that would be the foundation of national rejuvenation. We will have to do it not with the support of political power but with confidence in ourselves, because if a mass organisation depends upon the pleasure of the government it will fall the moment that support is removed. Under democracy the ruling party changes, the ruling leaders change. Then how can we keep our mission dependent upon them ?

No aspect of nation-building is possible with political power. It has to be done with a people's organisation. This organisation must be big enough to make the government work selflessly. We must have the confidence to create such a strong and invincible people's power that no government, no party, no cabinet would so much as think of creating impediments in the basic work of nation-building. Because we do not have self-confidence or such organised strength, our minds are weakened by political upheavals. We worry about them more than about our 'Daksha-Aram'.

We should care more for the work and the atmosphere of the Sangh. The key to the creation of the Sangh atmosphere is affection for each other. The real Sangh Shakha is that where, after the daily routine is over, Swayamsevaks meet each other, inquire about each other, find out if anybody has a sick member in the family and arrange the necessary assistance. It cannot be a 'Sangh' Shakha if 'Vikira' ('dismiss') is followed by political or other gossip. Swayamsevaks of such a Shakha would lose their confidence day by day. Keeping this process of 'organisation' always in mind is the meaning of keeping the Sangh independent of the external situation.

Many times I am asked — 'You move all over the country, so tell us, how strong is the Sangh ? Has it grown or declined?' If I say it has become quite strong, would you think that nothing more needs to be done ? It is not so. Those who put the question want to know the strength of the Sangh in relation to the various attacks on, criticism of and opposition to the Sangh.

I would caution the Swayamsevaks not to go by the articles and speeches against the Sangh that are published in the newspapers. They do not show the real opposition. Those who are



strongly against the Sangh work of nation-building do not have their statements published in the press. They are systematically working for ending the Sangh. Their efforts to defeat the Sangh are systematically going on on two fronts – ideological and organisational. The papers do not give their names, speeches and statements. We must be vigilant about this. These elements are trying to set up organisations in order to establish a foreign ideology in various walks of life in this country. These elements pose the real challenge for us. We should worry about their plans, not about those who issue press statements against the Sangh. This should be the basis of assessing our strength.

What standard should be used to assess the present strength of the Sangh ? Mere numbers cannot measure the greatness of a thought. Numbers are important in democracy and elections are won on a majority. This is perhaps why people ask about the numerical strength of the Sangh. But the Sangh's ideology is a principle that can bring about the renaissance of any nation. Its validity rests on inner strength, not numbers.

To give an instance : it was at first thought in Europe that the sun moved round the earth. This was a universally accepted belief there. When Copernicus said it was the other way, his lone voice was ignored. But later his minority opinion became a universally accepted principle. Its success came from its inherent strength, not from numbers.

Mahatma Gandhi was once asked, “Why do you mix things like fasting, Ram dhun, religion, culture, Ram Rajya with politics? What do they have to do with politics ?” He replied : “Julius Caesar was the uncrowned emperor of the Roman empire. He had the power of the whole empire behind him. Jesus Christ, the founder of Christianity, had only twelve disciples, and even among them one betrayed him. Jesus Christ was crucified. Today there is no follower of emperor Caesar, but the followers of Christ, who had only eleven disciples, are spread all over the world. Then whom would you call successful – emperor Caesar, who was a politician, or Jesus Christ, who was dedicated to lasting moral values ?”

Socrates was charged with preaching falsehoods and misleading the youth. He was given hemlock to drink and thus killed.

Excepting for a few young men, entire Greece was against him at the time. Today no one knows the name of the man who gave him the poison, but his deep principles are known the world over.

It is the quality of fire to give heat and light. If our sovereign parliament were to unanimously decree that henceforth fire should be cool and produce darkness, would it have any effect? Can any constitutional expert embrace fire because of such a decree? Majority opinion will not change the quality of fire, because it is its inner strength. It is thus clear that the greatness of principles depends not upon the numbers that follow them but upon their inherent strength.

We should think similarly about the method of work for implementing those principles. Does it have such inner strength? I can say from my experience of over half a century that the Sangh's method is unique and self-contained in organising the society and raising a conquering unified work-force.

Then what standard should apply to this organisation? Some people think the strength of the Sangh is the strengths of all Swayamsevaks put together. But individual strength varies in different conditions. It has two levels. A Swayamsevak afraid of a little cold goes to the morning Shakha in bitter cold. A woman afraid of singeing herself while cooking jumps into the fire to save her children when her house is on fire. The level of the combined strength of five hundred people would also vary according to their objective. The levels of the strength of a crowd of five hundred people in the market-place and of those on the Sanghasthan are not the same. The number is the same, but the personality of those gathered together, their attitude and their objective differ. The crowd in the market-place does not produce strength. The Swayamsevaks who come together with a feeling of affinity for each other become a force. Organisation is the collective ego of all put together. This is the basic difference between an 'organisation' and a 'crowd'.

A crowd is just a mixture. You do not get an integral thing if you mix salt, sugar and white sand, because they look alike but retain their qualities. Their combined strength may perhaps be measured by weight, that is all. When two things completely merge with each other by surrendering their special qualities and

produce a third integral thing, the strength of the third thing is equal to the strength of the two previous things put together. According to the laws of Algebra if two leaders 'a' and 'b' come together and also progress individually their equation is  $a^2+b^2$ . If they stick to their individualities and come together only according to their power sign nothing new will be produced. When they change their viewpoints, change their identities and become a part of the equation and the equation is raised in strength it become  $(a+b)^2$  out of which emerges the new form  $a^2+2ab+b^2$ . In this new form '2ab' is a new thing that was previously not there. When both a and b became an integrated identity, a new power emerged. This is the inner strength of any organisation. This strength does not result by addition but by integration. Because the strength of the Sangh originates in this process, standards like numbers cannot be applied to it. Its real standard is its impact and its result.

This discussion makes it clear that there are three lasting strengths : (1) the inner strength of principles ; (2) a working method's own strength ; and (3) the integral strength of an organisation. These three strengths are well established in respect of the Sangh. A fourth strength that varies with the circumstances is the Swayamsevak's own strength. The Swayamsevak should always strive to keep it at the optimum level. A nation is built not on the strength of comments appearing in the press but on that of hard endeavour by patriotic and organised citizens.

We believe that the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh is the whole Hindu society. It is not a sect, institution, party or a section of the society. The Sangh does not aim at setting up a separate organisation within the society, it aims at bringing the whole society into an organised state. So the Sangh and the society are coterminous, the Sangh's sphere is as comprehensive as that of the society. The difference between the two is due to the fact that the present Hindu society is not in an ideal condition, it is divided. It has lost socio-national character. So the need is to restore that character, remove divisions and re-organise the society. The Sangh is striving in this direction. But it is not just an institution making the effort, it is the society itself. It is true that at present the organised part of the society is seen on the Sanghasthan, that which is not organised is seen outside. The miniature form of

the nation seen on the Sanghasthan is to be expanded till all Hindus are organised. Thus all Hindus belong to the Sangh. The only difference is that those who realise this come to the Sanghasthan, those who do not realise it do not come. We therefore say we have 'patent' Swayamsevaks who attend the Shakha and 'latent' ones who do not. Every Hindu, even when he opposes us by mistake, is a Swayamsevak. Some are Swayamsevaks today, some are future Swayamsevaks. It is our duty to make them realise this.

We say we have to organise the Hindu society, but what do we mean by organisation? The Sangh uses the word in a special sense. We do not mean a volunteer corps by it. We mean by it an ideal relationship between the individual and the society. What is an ideal relationship?

According to the Sangh the relationship between the society, the individual and groups of individuals should be the same as between a body and its limbs. Every limb has its own shape and place, and one limb cannot do the work of another. The nose cannot have the ear's knowledge of music. Every limb has its own function and it develops in its own way. Still the human body is not a confederation of limbs. In spite of differences of shape, place, function and direction of growth there is integration among them, and together they make up a living organism. When the foot is hurt the eye sheds tears. A tooth-ache causes a disturbance in the whole body. When there is a blow at the head the hand rises in defence. This does not happen because it is written in the Indian Constitution or the Manusmriti. It is a natural instantaneous response. The stomach does not say the problem is in far-away Jammu-Kashmir, not in Madhya Pradesh, where it is safe.

The different forms of the limbs make for diversity, not difference. Diversity also makes for beauty. Without this diversity and if all limbs looked alike, the body would look ugly. Diversity leads to beauty as well as integration. When we think of the Sangh we must try to understand its terminology. Every system of work has its terminology. Common meanings are not applicable here. According to the Sangh, organisation is the natural state of any living society. Without it a society is either dead or at least unconscious.

By 'organisation' we mean integration. Every limb must have the confidence that it is integrated with the whole body. By 'organisation' the Sangh means this realisation. Ours is a vast society. There are many beliefs, sects and contradictory political parties within it, but they all together make the Hindu society, which is the same as the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

How can an outsider appreciate this concept of the Sangh? Anything new can be understood only on the basis of what has been seen before. Not that people do not understand the Sangh at all. They do, but in their own separate ways. When they see Swayamsevaks engaged in stick-play or sword-play, they think the Sangh must be a 'Vyayamshala', a gymnasium, because they have seen gymnasiums teaching such exercises. Once someone said to me, "For four decades you have been living in the past. This is the age of the atomic bomb and you people are playing with sticks." He was right on the basis of what he saw. He was himself a politician. In his speech in Parliament he had forcefully pleaded against Bharat's making the atom bomb. But in his eyes the stick-play taught in the Sangh in the age of the atom bomb looked outdated. He felt nothing could be achieved in the age of the atom bomb with sticks – as if the Sangh was going to do everything with sticks. In fact Bankim Chandra writes about the *lathi* in his novel *Kamlakant* : "Oh stick, your days are over, but if you are in the hands of a good, educated man there is nothing you cannot do." The RSS has never said it would fight the atom bomb with a *lathi*. Interestingly enough only once in the course of world history was it said, "If the situation calls for it we would fight the atom bomb with sticks in our hands" – and these brave words were spoken by Pt. Nehru in London. No one else has said so.

Activities like stick-play, 'Bouddhik', 'Sangh Geet', etc. that go on in the Sangh are meant for instilling certain samskars in every heart. Doing these things in unison instils collective samskars. This is difficult for people to grasp because they have never heard such thoughts nor have they seen such work. They have seen only gymnasiums. They say the Sangh is an old-style gymnasium, which uses sticks instead of an atom bomb.

Some people look upon the Sangh as a militia, in which there is no place for democracy. If some institutions at present feel the

Sangh is a Hitler corps they are not to blame. The Sangh may well say it is a disciplined body – and this is true – but now that people have come to feel that democracy and discipline are incompatible, they are naturally surprised to see Swayamsevaks sitting in orderly rows. I have had the opportunity to sit on the dais of many political parties. The atmosphere there at times makes me feel there is something wrong with the Sangh – that there is dictatorship in it. The atmosphere in the programme is quite ‘democratic’. Some are smoking, some are jostling each other for a comfortable seat on the dais, some are wandering around. The leader is busy speaking on the mike, other leaders on the dais are drinking tea. Those used to such a scene will naturally charge the Sangh with Hitlerism when they see Swayamsevaks sitting in orderly rows.

When the Sangh was banned in 1948, half a dozen office-bearers of a volley-ball club in Barrackpore in Bengal were arrested because they had been elected unopposed. I was then in Bengal and went to Barrackpore on learning about it. On making inquiries with the Circle Inspector I was told that they had been arrested for conducting a Sangh Shakha. I pointed out that no Shakha was being conducted since the ban, so how could they be arrested on that charge? The Inspector replied the Club had forty members and yet elections to the posts of President, Secretary, Treasurer, etc. were conducted without fights, which was enough to prove that they were Swayamsevaks of the RSS.

The moral is, everyone’s understanding of the Sangh depends upon his past experience. There was an old political leader in Pune whom I used to see whenever I visited the city. He used to send me away from the doorstep without giving me a cup of tea. But when I visited Pune after the Panshet flood and called on him as usual, he greeted me very cordially and gave me tea. I was surprised at this unusual behaviour. I was still more surprised when he began to talk about the Sangh, as I knew his staunch opposition to it. He said to me, “Dr. Hedgewar was a far-sighted man. He foresaw that there would be a flood in Pune in 1961, so he set up a permanent relief committee in Nagpur in 1925. The volunteers (Swayamsevaks) of this committee saved the lives of people – including mine.” I thought here at last is a certificate for Dr. Hedgewar.

In fine everyone's view of the Sangh depends upon his experience. But no one sees it in its real form. They can understand an institution, a sect, a military organisation ; but they cannot understand how the Sangh can be the entire Hindu society. This was because no such effort was ever made before. What never happened before is difficult to grasp. As I said earlier, figures of speech are meant for bringing knowledge of a new thing with the help of a familiar thing. However, there is a particular figure of speech known in Sanskrit linguistics as 'Ananvaya' and its example has been given as follows :

*Gaganam gaganakaram  
sagarah sagaropamah,  
Rama-Ravanayor-Yuddham  
Rama-Ravanayor-iva*

"The sky is like the sky, the ocean like the ocean, and the battle between Rama and Ravana can be compared only with itself."

One can therefore say the Sangh is like the Sangh, but an outsider cannot understand the statement. Even honest and well-meaning people will take a lot of time to understand the Sangh, which is like the 'Ananvaya' figure of speech. It is difficult to understand the Sangh till one comes into direct contact with it.

I have experienced this in my life. As a student of Morris College, Nagpur, I and my friends thought ourselves to be very progressive. We used to take pity on those of our friends who went to the Sangh -Shakha with sticks in hand. But some Swayam-sevaks were intent upon roping me in. They used the Sangh technique of aggressive love. They tried to convince me that the aim of the Sangh was to create Man, but it was beyond my understanding. This is Sangh terminology, which one must understand carefully. Jesus Christ had said, "The letter killeth." When we are already men, we thought it useless to talk of creating man. But during those very days I came across the following poem in the college magazine :

Wanted men !  
Not systems, fit and wise !  
Not faith, with rigid eyes !

Not wealth, in mountain piles !  
 Not power, with gracious smiles !  
 Not even the potent pen.  
 Wanted men !

The poem reminded me of the Sangh's talk of creating Man. Later I read an interesting story. Diogenes, the famous Greek philosopher, one day went to the market-place of Athens at noon carrying a lighted lantern. On being asked what he was doing he replied, 'I am looking for man'. People were astonished and said, 'Are we not all men ?' Diogenes angrily retorted, 'Get out, I wanted men, not pygmies.' I thought if the Sangh says it wants men and if that poet and Diogenes say the same, there must be something to it. A little later I saw a similar quotation from St. Ignatius. I also saw a picture of Swami Vivekananda with a quotation below – "I want men with a capital M!" then I realised that there is a process for creating man and man is not just his limbs. Something more than all the limbs put together is required to make Man. Since then I felt interested in the Sangh and came to know that certain samskars are necessary for making Man.

It is difficult to say how many days you have to go to the Sangh to acquire how many samskars. There is no calculator for this. The progress of samskars is so minute that even he who imbibes them is not aware of them. He imbibes them without being conscious of the process. A new-born baby grows every moment, but even its mother cannot say how much it has grown in one day. Only ten years later its growth can be seen. Samskars grow the same way, and in difficult times one can know the difference between men who have them and men who do not. According to a Sanskrit Subhashita :

*Kakah krishnah pikah krishnah  
 ko bhedah pika-kakayoh  
 Vasanta-kale samprapte  
 kakah kakah pikah pikah*

"Both the koel and the crow are black ; but when spring comes we know the difference between the two."

How to distinguish between those who go to the Sangh and those who do not ? Testing times show the influence of samskars.



Too many examples of this are not necessary. Sangh Swayam-sevaks have done many things as citizens, as units of the society. The Sangh does not do things as the Sangh because it is not an institution.

- A small example would suffice. At the time of the Pakistani aggression on India in 1965, Fazilka, a city on the Indo-Pak border, launched a 'civil defence' programme. The district president of a prominent political party was elected chairman of the defence committee. During a minister's visit to the city, people of the political party complained to him that the District Magistrate was guilty of partiality as he was encouraging only RSS people to take defence training instead of calling workers of the party. The infuriated minister summoned the District Magistrate and scolded him saying, "There is an aggression on the country, so what? Whatever happens to the country – was it not your business to look to the interests of the party? Why don't you give due importance to the people of our party?" The District Magistrate politely replied he had made the district president of the party chairman of the defence committee, but when it came to training, the Sangh people put on their knickers and started the training while the chairman himself did not turn up, let alone other party workers. The minister said: "It was your business to call him." The Magistrate replied: "When I went to his bungalow on the fourth day he replied, 'I am not a vagabond like RSS fellows. They have nothing else to do, so they can come every day. I am a man with a family, with children'." His youngest 'child' at the time was a student of M.Sc. Thus, a testing time shows the difference between a heart endowed with samskars and a heart devoid of them.

Some people want to know why they should attend the Shakra every day. They think it is wasting an hour. They say—'What is it that you do there? Sometimes you sing songs, sometimes play games, sometimes exercise with sticks. These are all ordinary things. What will they achieve?' They do not realise that small things make a big contribution to man's perfection.

Michael-Angelo, the famous Italian painter, once showed one of his paintings to someone, who praised it highly. The painter said he was going to make some improvements in it. Six months later the man returned and Michael-Angelo explained to

him the small improvements he had made. The man said, "Every change is a trifle ; all changes are trifles." The painter angrily retorted, "All right, Sir ! All changes are trifles, nevertheless all these trifles put together make perfection, and perfection is not a trifle." People do not understand trifles properly. They say it is patriotism to talk about China and Pakistan, what would playing Kabaddi achieve ? It is wrong to think so. Collective activity leads to samskars of collectivity. Hence the small activities on the Sanghasthan have their own importance.

In 1946, when Shri Guruji was in Calcutta, a meeting was arranged with professors of the medical college. One of the professors said, "We like your Sangh, it instils good samskars ; but we cannot understand how nation-building can be accomplished by such trifling things as Kabaddi and stick-play." Shri Guruji replied, "As doctors you know that a master drug like Penicillin has been developed from mould on stale food. Does it not show that in expert hands trifles can give excellent results? We are the experts of the science of organisation."

People think a forceful speech on the radio or in the newspapers influences the mind. But articles and speeches do not have a lasting impact. For a lasting impact, an enduring samskar, it is necessary to keep an individual in a particular, pure atmosphere every day. This is why the Sangh had developed its own method of work. But if the uninitiated are told we shall create a nation while playing Kabaddi, they would call us mad. So those who do not understand are not to blame.

Instilling samskars is the work of the Sangh. Daily attendance is the focal point of its methodology. The work of the Sangh is to instil samskars in the individual through this medium, to organise such individuals and fill them with the sentiment of national integration, to create conditions that would be conducive to an integrated and disciplined society, and finally to create an integrated National Man. The terminology of the Sangh prevents people from understanding its methodology.

The various debates currently going on about the Sangh are proving beneficial for it. In the beginning people were so apathetic that they did not care to know anything about the Sangh. Now that something or the other is being published in the

newspapers about the Sangh, people have started thinking about it. Out of curiosity they have also started attending the Shakha. After understanding the Sangh they merge with it. There are also people with whom Swayamsevaks could not establish contacts in the natural course but who were brought into the Sangh by its opponents. Anti-Sangh propaganda has made people curious about Nation and Nationalism. Actually the Sangh is not opposed to anybody. How could it oppose anybody? Of course some sections of the society could oppose the Sangh. It is good that the basic principles of the Sangh have become topics of debate. It gives the Sangh the opportunity to explain them again and again.

The Sangh is charged with being communal. The way the word 'secular' is taken to mean in Indian politics will not be found in any dictionary. 'Secular' means 'this-worldly', as against spiritual of 'other-worldly'. When we say a secular state we actually mean a non-denominational state. With us 'secular' has acquired another meaning. Meanings change. For instance evolution used to mean progressive unfoldment. Now it means progressive development. It is the same with the word ideology.

The word 'secular' is used to prove that somebody is not nationalist, he is anti-national. One of the benefits of this debate is that it has given nationalism some prestige. Those who abuse the Sangh generally live in an ivory tower. They do not have their feet firmly on the ground. Sometimes they will talk of internationalism, sometimes of interplanetary unity. But they never talk of Bharat. They call nationalism a narrow feeling which actually it is not. There is nothing wrong about internationalism. But they say so here because the West says so. People do not understand that there is no basic contradiction between nationalism and internationalism, certainly not in Bharat.

The English equivalent of 'Rashtra' is Nation, and it is insisted that all rules applicable to 'Nation' should be applicable to 'Rashtra'. Now, is the Western concept of Nation and our concept of Rashtra one and the same? This could be a matter of research. According to Dr. Ambedkar, in the beginning there was no nationalism in Europe, there was tribalism. That is, people lived in tribes. Agriculture was not discovered, so cattle-keeping and hunting were the only two means of livelihood. The tribes

had to move from place to place for new hunting-grounds and fresh pastures. Because of this constant wandering, there was no attachment for a particular land. Later, when farming was invented, it became necessary to stay at one place and thus tribalism came to be joined with territorialism. According to Dr. Ambedkar this process went on for three or four hundred years. Just three hundred years ago the King of England was called 'the king of the English', and the king of France the king of the French. Nationalism emerged in Europe after the 'trisco-Germanic' invasions. In particular it arose as a reaction to the Pope's absolute power.

The feeling of nationalism was produced during the last three or four centuries as a reaction of different peoples to different empires. Even if we consider that the feeling of Nationalism in Western countries is complete in itself, would the level of its identification be qualitatively the same as the identification felt by the people of our Rashtra that has come down from ancient times? It would be a matter of research. The feeling of identification between a people and a land extending over a long period of time and that felt for a few days would naturally be different.

Secondly those who talk of the nation in Bharat take the nation and the state to mean the same thing. Are they? No, they are different. History highlights the difference, and we see it to this day. It is true that the concept of the 'nation-state' emerged after the First World War. It was a welcome concept. But it does not seem as if the two, Nation and State, would always be coterminous. Even today we can see examples of 'one state, many nations' or 'one nation, many states'. Czechoslovakia is one state, two nations. Yugoslavia has been one state, three nations. Soviet Russia included more than a hundred nations and nationalities in one State (which situation has now changed rather violently). As for 'one nation, many states' Germany was an example till the other day. Korea is one nation divided into two states. Ireland is one nation, two states.

It is thus clear that the nation and the state are not coterminous. Then again, they have different functions. They do have some common elements. Both need a land and a people. So, in a nation-state the two appear the same. But they have different

functions. For a state it is necessary that along with a land and a people there should also be a government and it should be sovereign. No state is possible without a government and sovereignty. On the other hand a nation is possible without a government and sovereignty. In Bharat we did not have a government of our own or sovereignty over large areas for many centuries, yet our nation lived on. A nation's life-style and its culture are its life. A government and sovereignty are imperative for a state, not for a nation. Nation is the name of a people's life-style and culture in a particular land. If the nation is the body, the state is its apparel and culture its life-breath. It would therefore be wrong to say that Nation and State are one and the same.

Another point is, are the feelings of integration created by the national feeling and by one state of the same type? The state does not generate the same amount of integration as the nation, because the nation is a living principle, the state a lifeless apparatus. Take Czechoslovakia – one state made up of two nations. Even after so many years as one state the Slavs have demanded a separate state on the ground of an independent identity. In Soviet Russia seven decades of Communist government could not produce integration. Different nationalities have begun to assert themselves.

Calling oneself a part of a glorious nation is human nature. Everyone takes pride in being the member of a rich family. During the days of the British empire we took pride in calling ourselves British. But when a family falls on evil days, becomes poor and debt-ridden, people who used to claim their connection with it deny it. It was the same with the British empire. So long as it lasted the people of Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales called themselves British, but as Britain declined the Scots and the Welsh began to assert their independent identities. They say they must at least have autonomy and their own parliament. America is said to be a 'melting-pot' of nationalities and Americans are said to take pride in being American, but one cannot say today how far, in the event of a calamity, the different ethnic groups would stick together as a nation.

The State cannot generate the integration that the Nation can. We must understand that the nation and the state are two different things. If we apply the rules of the state to the nation it would

mean we are not fully informed. The development process of European nations has made nationalism and internationalism appear contradictory. The origin and growth of nationalism in Europe was a reaction. European nationalism is only three or four hundred years old. It is still in childhood. But nationalism in Bharat is so old that history has always seen this country as a nation. The historical process in Europe shows that at first the Pope had absolute authority over the whole Christian world, but later the concept of separate nations gathered strength. In the times of Henry the Eighth, England refused to accept the Pope's interference. In the face of the Pope's authoritarianism and the Spanish armada, English nationalism became strong. As a reaction to Napoleon's invasion the nationalism of the German people, divided in thirteen states, became potent. As a result of the Austrian imperial invasion the nationalism of Italy, divided into many states, became a force. Thus in Europe nationalism was born as a reaction. So the people there came to feel that nations are opposed to each other. And when nationalism proved detrimental, people began to talk of internationalism. Marx and Lenin called for an end to nationalism. But Lenin was very sad when, during the First World War, Communists of various countries did not betray their own countries.

Nationalism in Bharat has undergone a completely different historical development process. We do not even know when our nationalism originated. Since before history Hindu nationalism has been working as a base of operations for a world culture. From times immemorial our country has been present in the world as a cultured nation, and our ancestors never thought of exploiting the people of the world. They thought of making the whole world as cultured as us. They wanted to raise the level of the whole world to our level. So their slogan was '*Krinvanto vishwam Aryam*'. Here the word Arya denotes quality, not race or caste. Hence Hindu nationalism is a means of strengthening world culture and civilisation.

European nationalism is also different in another respect. Its development process had made the Europeans' thinking quite 'traditional'. They think different social units are in conflict with each other. So their thinking is based on opposition. They find conflicts in units like individuals, families, nations, humanity, the

universe. So they are always faced with the problem of sphere of influence. There is always a debate on the respective spheres of authority between the individual and the family, the family and the society, the nation and mankind. Hence they have many 'isms' and social structures based on them. A system in which the individual's sphere is big and that of the society and state small is called Democracy ; the dictatorial system in which the sphere of the society and state is all-pervasive is called Communism. Under Communism the individual is looked upon as a lifeless part of the state machine. In Europe there is a tussle between the spheres of the individual on the one hand and the society and state on the other.

Our seers and sages had realised that there is no conflict between individual and family, individual and society, nationalism and internationalism. On the other hand those are links in the progress of the human spirit. Like the growth of a tree from a seed onwards, the growth of man to humanity is a complementary development process of consciousness. So we in this country believe that all social units from 'Vyashti' to 'Samashti' are parts of a development process. We believe that as human consciousness progresses the human being identifies himself more and more with the animate world. As the child grows he thinks first of his parents, then of his family and finally becomes one with the society, the nation. In the end, when he attains self-knowledge, he takes sannyas and looks upon the universe as his own — '*Swadesho bhuvana-trayam.*' In brief, our belief is that the individual is in no conflict with the family, the society or the universe ; they are all natural stages in the development of consciousness. Therefore, a social confluence on the practical level and individual consciousness on the philosophical level are considered the goals of life here. In our social system every individual is expected to develop himself in his own way. He should determine his way of life on the basis of his qualities and his functions. Everyone should have the freedom to develop. All individuals and groups of individuals should feel integrated with the nation and should be prepared to offer the fruit of their progress at the altar of the nation. Thus the full development of the individual and groups of individuals has been blended with national integration. In this system there is full freedom for the development of the individual and groups of individuals and elastic

discipline in the relationship between the individual and the nation. Because of this elastic discipline all units of the society, from 'Vyashti' to 'Samashti', function properly in their own spheres.

To know all these things about the Hindus is considered very retrograde these days. Hindu thinking is looked upon as very retrograde. This is due to the ignorance of our leaders. They have heard that in Europe nationalism and internationalism are at variance, so they blame nationalism and talk loftily about internationalism. Now at least, to abuse the Sangh, they have had to come down to earth. They have now accepted nationalism as a fact.

The campaign against the Sangh has benefited it in another way. Our political structure is such that the more divisive one's talk the greater the immediate gains. The smaller the unit one takes pride in, the greater the chance of getting elected. The result is the growth of separatist controversies like provincialism, linguism, etc. All leaders overcome by such tendencies are now at least paying lip service to nationalism. In their hearts they take pride in their caste, sect or province, but outwardly they talk of nationalism. However, their hypocrisy has its uses. As the saying goes – 'Hypocrisy is a tribute paid by vice to virtue'. It has given us the opportunity to understand and explain Nation and Nationalism.

On the subject of the nation, the difference of opinion between the Sangh and those opposed to it is quite old. In 1925 Dr. Hedgewar, founder of the Sangh, had to forcefully state that this is a Hindu nation. It had created quite a controversy then. In this context we must first understand the term Hindu. A few days ago a foreign journalist who wanted to know about the Sangh said, 'You people talk of the Hindu religion ....' I interrupted him with the words, 'Before we start the discussion tell me, what is Hindu religion? What religion is called the Hindu religion?' He said he did not know as he was a foreigner. I said, 'Religion is the relationship between man and his Maker – whether it is Allah or Bhagwan or Jehova. So religion is entirely a personal matter. Hindus have always believed this. So when other countries say everyone should have the same religion, we call it unscientific. We here say everyone cannot have the same religion. If religion is the relationship between man and God, how can everyone



have the same religion when individuals differ from one another in attitude, preference, physique, and on the physical, intellectual and spiritual levels ? So we do not accept one book, one prophet, one system of worship, one Allah and one duality for all ; we believe there can be as many ways as there are people. We have complete freedom of system of worship. We even say different religions are necessary for different people. Different people can go to the same destination by different ways. Their points of departure being different, they will travel in different directions to reach the same destination.'

Centuries before Democritus, the father of materialism, Brihapasti, preceptor of the gods, had laid the foundation-stone of Western materialism with the words '*Asato sat ajaayata*'. This philosophy ruled till the time of Charvaka. But when this materialism became sensualism, its progress stopped. Our spiritualism has many schools of thought like 'dwaita', 'adwaita', etc. The Christian missionary Stanley Jones writes in the preface to his book *The Role of Christ* that many modes of worship prevail in Bharat but everyone calls himself a Hindu. Some believe in ghosts, some worship stones or trees, some sit by the Ganga and discuss the soul and the divine, but all are called Hindus. Referring to this in his preface, Jones warned his fellow-padres – "Beware of this octopus of Hinduism."

In a way we have indeed assimilated Christ. For there is nothing he has said that our seers have not already said. In fact we have assimilated Christ so completely that some people call Gandhi a Christian and Gandhiji called himself a Sanatani Hindu.

A Christian missionary wanted a religious debate ('Shas-trartha') with Shri Chandrashekhara Bharati, former Shankaracharya of Sringeri. On being asked why, he said he wanted to know if Hinduism was better than Christianity or Christianity better than Hinduism. Bharati said, "Both are the same. A debate is necessary only when there is a difference." The missionary said there was certainly a difference, so Bharati agreed to the debate.

The missionary asked, "What is Hindu cosmology ?" Bharati replied, "The same as yours." The missionary said, "According to our cosmology in the Bible the Lord said let there be light and there was light."

Shankaracharya said : "We too say the same. The only difference is that although Truth is one, it has to be described variously to suit various levels of understanding. We give importance to the cow, Jerusalem to the sheep. It is the same. The cosmology is the same. When Jesus told the people of Jerusalem 'the Lord said let there be light and there was light' they accepted it because that was their level. Our level was higher. We had scholars who asked why the Lord said so and they had to be answered. And we had the answer – '*Sa akaamayata-ekoham, bahusyaamiti*' – He was one but desired to become many. So he manifested Himself in many forms. In the first stage of this process of multiplication he wanted light, so there was light. There is thus no difference in the cosmologies." The missionary was satisfied with the explanation.

I think Stanley Jones understood Hindus better than our politicians. When Hinduism includes so many modes of worship, it can easily include a few more. This fear possibly made Jones warn fellow-padres against the influence of Hinduism.

Religion is said to cause conflicts. That is not at all true. Conflicts are caused by people who seek to serve selfish ends under cover of religion. There are two types of people who make this excuse : those who have political ends and those who have personal ends. Whenever a religion gives rise to an economic system it also produces contractors, its priests, who further vested interests. These interests cause conflicts. Those who invaded Bharat did not call themselves invaders, but they were by no means saints. They said Allah had appeared before them and they had drawn their sword to spread His message. Mohammed Gazni had come here to loot gold and jewels. He was no saint. All those who came here, the Turks, Mughals, Pathans, Arabs had been tempted by wealth. They wanted to rule here.

But foreign invaders, including the British, had a problem—how to rule such a big country with only a few people ? How many could they bring from home ? So long as they did not raise an amenable local group or class, it was not possible to rule over such a huge country. A good way to raise such a class was to proselytise, to spread their religion. Those who go over to it would be excommunicated and ostracized, so they could form such an amenable group or class. This was the *raison d'être* of

proselytisation in Bharat. Not that the rulers indulging in it were very devout Muslims. The British did the same and spread Christianity. The proselytisation going on to this day in the Eastern region – Meghalaya, Arunachal, Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram – is not for spreading the message of Christ but for political ends.

So the conflict is not due to Christ and Christianity or Mohammed and Islam. Jinnah, creator of Pakistan, never prayed in a mosque nor recited the Quran. He was an atheist. But when he saw Islam could be useful for fulfilling his personal ambition, he espoused its cause. It is now universally acknowledged that Christianity and Islam have been used for selfish political ends.

The history of the world shows that the priest class that acquired prominence after religion was institutionalised – call them Pujaris or Mullahs or Padres – created the conflicts for their vested interests. In Bharat, we have Hindu-Muslim riots, but why are there riots in completely Muslim countries ?

Actually the problem is not with religion at all. The problem is, what should be the proper sphere of authority for religion and for nationalism ? Conflict arises when religion transgresses its sphere. And this conflict is not limited to Bharat. It has taken place even in cent per cent Islamic countries. Turkey, an Islamic country, had the Khalifa, the Muslim equivalent of the all-powerful Pope, but later the Khilafat was done away with.

After the First World War there was a new national awakening in Islamic countries. Egypt had not only felt a new national spirit but also pride in its ancient history. The ancient Pharaohs who built the Pyramids, became objects of pride. Streets, buildings and libraries began to be named after them. Their statues were erected at many places. Fundamentalists opposed this trend by saying the Pharaohs were Kafirs. How could they be Muslims when they antedated Prophet Mohammed by many centuries ? There was a fierce conflict between the newly-awakened nationalist Egyptians and fundamentalist Egyptians. When Amanullah Khan of Afghanistan tried to rouse the spirit of nationalism among his people, the Mullahs fiercely opposed him and crushed him. There was similar opposition when newly-awakened Iran fostered national pride in such pre-Islamic Iranian heroes as Rostam, Pehlavi,

Sohrab Jamshed, Bairam, etc., but there the nationalist forces won. In Turkey they kept alive memories not only of the Ottoman empire but even the pre-Islamic empire. They refused to accept the Arab culture in the name of Islam, removed the veil and changed the mode of dress.

When Kemal Ata Turk got the Quran translated into Turkish the Mullahs fiercely opposed him saying the holy Quran could not be translated. Kemal silenced them by saying God was not so ignorant that he could not understand prayers in other languages. It is a fact of history that a lot of blood was shed in Turkey the day the Quran was recited in mosques in Turkish. This conflict was between those who wanted to introduce Islam into public life in a wrong way and the newly-awakened nationalists. We would like to ask our secularists and internationalists if Turkey had an RSS to cause these riots.

The wrong meaning put on nationalism as well as Islam in completely Islamic regions is actually an injustice to the Prophet. The two are not incompatible. Mohammed has clearly said God gave every community its prophet. But no one has the time for such a thought. Everybody wants to make Islam an instrument of political bargaining. Riots have taken place in Muslim countries because of the wrong idea that Islam is against nationalism. When Indonesia became free the then Indonesian President, Soekarno, wrote a letter to Pt. Nehru expressing gratitude for the Indian cultural heritage that the Indonesians enjoyed.

It is quite wrong to say that belief in Islam requires surrender of national culture. The conflict in Bharat is not between Hindus and Muslims but about what the legitimate sphere of Islam should be. From this point of view Hindutva is nationalism. There is no sect called Hindu. All who live in Bharat are Hindus. Are not the Muslims Hindus? How many of them have come from Arabia? All Indian Muslims are forcibly converted Hindus. They may follow their own mode of worship but they should accept that they belong to the Hindu mainstream and are Hindus as a nation. They should have the same reverence for the motherland as the nationals, the same pride in the country's history. Their reaction to historical events of honour and insult, rise and fall, glory and misery should be the same as the Hindus'. They should think the same thoughts about present conditions and future

aspirations of the country. This is possible only when they consider religion a strictly personal affair.

Those who talk of communal riots have a vested interest in them. There are two types of vested interests that want to keep the Muslims apart – the religious middlemen and the politicians. Foreign invaders, whether Muslim or British, wanted to have their own group here. So they misused religion for their political ends. In 1984 there was a seminar on 'Minority Educational Institutions' in Lucknow under the chairmanship of Justice Murtaza Hussain. I was the chief speaker. In his address after my speech Justice Hussain said : "Muslims are not to be blamed for their communalism. Hindu political leaders vie with each other to offer more and still more rights to Muslims. Should Muslims be foolish enough not to take advantage of this situation ? First mend the ways of Hindu political leaders."

It is a tragedy that the political system introduced in our country after Independence is divisive by nature as it is based on regional nationalism. Under this system he who talks most of division gets the votes. Nobody cares for the country. Everybody tries to keep Muslims away from Hindus. A Muslim living in a village has no such confusion in his mind. He does not think of being separate from the Hindus so long as a political leader does not reach him for his vote, does not rouse in him the fear that he would lose his identify if he does not vote in a particular way. He knows that he belongs here. The Hindus and the Muslims are one family. It was the Mughals, Turks and Pathans who first spoiled things. Then it was the British, and now the political leaders. These leaders will keep up their divisive talk so long as the present political system is not changed. Alternatively, they will keep up their dirty political game so long as they do not realise that they will lose far more Hindu votes than gain Muslim votes if they frighten the Muslims away with the Hindu bogey. There is thus basically no conflict. It is a creation of politicians. It is these politicians who also sling mud at the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

It is said that we have a conflict between nationalism and communalism in our country. What is communalism ? They say it grows out of religion. Followers of Hinduism are said to harass believers in Islam. Without going into the truth or otherwise of

this assertion, we could inquire if Hinduism has ever led to a conflict.

In the first place, is there a sect called the Hindu sect ? We have many sects among Hindus but no sect called the Hindu sect. However, the Hindu knows what a sect is. He knows it is the link, the relationship, between man and the ultimate truth.

Lord Krishna says in the Gita—

*Ye: pyanya-devataa-bhaktaah  
yajante shraddhayaanvitaah,  
Te:pi maamaiva kounteya  
yajantyavidhipurvakam*

“Those who are devotees of other deities are also worshipping me.” That means the existence of other deities at the time was certainly thought of – as also of all future gods in the world, be it Allah, Jeyova etc. We have a Sanskrit prayer which goes—

*Yam shaivaah samupaasate shiva iti  
brahmeti vedaantino,  
Bouddhaa Buddha iti pramaanapatavah  
karteti naiyaayikaah  
Arhan ityatha jaina-shaasana-rataah  
karmeti meemaamsakaah  
So:yam no vidadhaatu vaanchhitaphalam  
Trailokyanaatho Harih.*

“May Hari, the Lord of the Universe, whom the Shaivas call Shiva, Vedantins call Brahma, Buddhists call Buddha, the Jains call Arhat, fulfil my desires.” Had this prayer been composed today it would have said – ‘whom the Muslims call Allah, the Christians call Father in heaven, the Jews call Jehova, may fulfil my desires.’ This means the goal of all is the same, the ways are different. In this sense one’s sect is considered a personal matter in this country. We believe in everyone having his own sect. So it is just impossible for Hinduism to lead to conflict. There is no such thing as the Hindu sect.

In different countries different prophets have discussed the man-God relationship in different words with their disciples, depending upon the disciples’ circumstances and attitudes. When Jesus said, “Glory be unto Thy name” we call it Dwaita. His

words "I am in my Father, He in you, and you in me" are equivalent to the Vishishta Adwaita of the Hindus. And his words "I and my Father are one, I am the Way, the Truth and the Life" are an echo of our Adwaita as expressed in the words "*Sarvam khalvidam Brahma*" and '*Aham Brahmaasmi*.'

We can appreciate the above thoughts because Hindus are not fundamentalists about their religion. We have various sects. We worship thirty-three crore (now eighty crore) deities. Those who have such a spacious house of worship can easily accommodate one more Allah or one more Christ. Hindutva is not an 'ism.' Hinduism is a conglomeration of religions. Marxism has also now become a full-fledged sect. It possesses all sectarian characteristics, such as one scripture, *Das Kapital*, one prophet Marx, one Allah, dualism, etc. The Hindu place of worship is open to all sects. So the Hindu cannot understand communalism as related to Hindus.

The late Shri Guruji, second Sar-sanghchalak of the Sangh, went to the extent of saying, "When we talk of religious tolerance it implies that one religion is superior to the other and the inferior religion is being tolerated. This is wrong thinking. We have equal respect for all religions. The Muslims can recite the Quran, pray in mosque and revere Prophet Mohammed as their religious leader. Christians can read the Bible and go to Church. Everyone has freedom of worship. But we must never forget that we are one nation, one people, with one culture."

Shri Guruji further said :

"Accept this as your nation. We have common ancestors. Why do you hesitate to say Rama and Krishna are your ancestors? We have certain national treatises. You may not accept them as religious scriptures, but they are certainly national works. Many Hindus do not consider the Vedas religious scriptures but they accept them as national treatises. If a resident of America calls himself an American national but refuses to accept George Washington, Jefferson or Lincoln as national heroes because they were not Muslim or Hindu, he would not have the right to call himself an American national. Whether you are a Muslim or a Shaiva or a Vaishnava, you have to accept America as your nation if you have to live there as a national. The same rules apply here.

“If religion causes riots what do we see in Indonesia ? Indonesia is a Muslim country with a Hindu culture. In that Muslim-majority country they recite the Quran and pray in mosques but they also perform *Ramlila* as their cultural heritage. The Mahabharata also is prevalent there. Students recite the Namaz in the morning but bow to Ganesh before going for their examinations. They do not see any difference between the two.

“Here too we can bring about this understanding. But some vote-hungry politicians say we should leave the word ‘Hindu’ and accept the word ‘Bharatiya’. Both mean the same thing, we agree. But we say if they mean the same thing, why leave ‘Hindu’ ? The fact of the matter is that you are not being honest when you say the two mean the same thing. In your heart of hearts they do not mean the same thing. At the back of your mind you feel giving up the word ‘Hindu’ would get you non-Hindu votes. You are prepared to barter a truth for electoral ends. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh will not surrender its principles, because it is not after votes. Beggars cannot be choosers, but we will propagate our principle again and again. The number of votes cannot decide the truth or otherwise of anything.”

We said if Hindus and Bharatiyas are one and the same, why not use the word Hindu ? They say some people do not want it. We say neither do they want the Sangh. Right from 1925 there have been critics of the Sangh. If we chase popularity, we better close down the Sangh. Our work is to instil samskars in the people’s mind, not to please them. We cannot always listen to a small child and do what it says. Sometimes we have to cajole it, sometimes to slap it, but we have to bring it to the path of truth.

We are not among the appeasers, neither are we beggars of votes. We shall keep propagating our principles of truth and we are sure the political leaders of today will lose their credibility and their effectiveness and will disappear from the scene. Then the Indian Muslim will realise that ‘Hindu’ does not denote a religion, it denotes a nation. It is only necessary to drive away these politicians. We shall do it. We are confident about it, then why should we make a compromise ? We shall directly tell the non-Hindus that it is in their own interest and the interest of all for them to consider themselves a part of this nation. We are not among those who believe in a fifty per cent marriage.



In my undergraduate days I had seen a film which showed a boy who was always falling in love with some girl or the other. One day he came to the hostel and declared that he was going to get married. His friends were surprised that any girl should be willing to marry a character like him and asked about the bride to be. The boy replied, 'It is true that my marriage is fixed, but it is so far fifty per cent fixed. That is, I want to marry a particular girl. The remaining fifty per cent depends upon her saying yes.' Similarly those who talk of Hindu-Muslim unity say fifty per cent unity is achieved, now fifty per cent remains. We do not believe in fifty per cent love. We are realists, so we shall explain to them, we shall not appease them. We are sure one day they will realise the truth.

As a matter of fact a fully enlightened Hindu cannot remain confined to territorial nationalism. He has to rise above it and become a citizen of the world. He even wants to integrate himself with the entire creation. This integration is outside the frame of territorial nationalism. Hindutva is a process of development of man's consciousness. The concept of territorial nationalism would hinder this process. Those who are after votes are against this unfolding integration. They fear this talk of a cultural Hindu nation would cost them their votes. How is this possible? They do not know that the process of Hindu awakening is not exclusive, it is inclusive. 'Exclusive' would mean if I love my family, I do not love myself, if I love the society I do not love my family. 'Inclusive' means if my awakening has reached the family level I love the family as well as myself, and if I love the family I love the society. If I love humanity I also love the nation. If I am one with the entire universe I am also one with the nation. No one has the right to stop the comprehensive process of the development of awakening of the concept of territorial nationalism. If Hindu and Bharatiya are one, it is not right to say that Hindu is narrow but Bharatiya is comprehensive. The fact of the matter is that the Hindu community is inclusive enough to include all.

To talk of Hindu-Muslim unity is to say that there are more units than one in Bharat. The truth is the opposite of this – that the whole Indian nation is one unit.

People say the Hindus assimilated other communities, but it is far from easy to assimilate the Muslims. But, provided the politicians do not prove a hindrance, it is not difficult. Even today we can assimilate them. This is the speciality of our culture, as also its capacity. What happened in history can also happen in the present.

It would be wrong to say we have had only Hindu-Muslim conflicts. There have also been Muslim-Muslim conflicts. When Babar came to Bharat he fought Ibrahim Lodhi. Did Lodhi belong to the RSS ? When Aurangzeb went South he not only battled with Shivaji but also with all five Bahmani Badshahs. Was that battle due to Hindutva ? No, it was for political ends. Despite this, and despite large areas of Bharat being in the hands of invaders, Hindu culture began the process of assimilating the Muslims. Whatever today's politicians may say, there is a lot of difference between Arab Islam and Indian Islam. After settling down here, even foreign Muslim invaders wanted to know about the Hindus.

Initially the Muslims were aggressive, but as they settled down, intellectual Muslims became desirous of knowing about the culture and religion of this land. During the reign of Jahangir and Shah Jehan many Sanskrit works like the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, Atharva Veda, Prabodha Chandrodaya, Yoga-Vasishtha etc. were translated into Persian. Reading these translations changed their thoughts. But Aurangzeb felt this was Hinduising or nationalising the Muslims, so he became a fundamentalist. He got his elder brother Dara Shikoh murdered because he considered Dara half a Hindu.

How the various Muslim communities that came to Bharat were Hinduised has been explained by Karl Marx in his 'Letters'. He writes : "Arabs, Turks, Tartars, Moghuls who had successively overrun India soon became Hinduised, the barbarian conquerors being, by an eternal law of history, conquered themselves by the superior civilisation of their subjects." As an example he wrote: "The Roman empire was the conqueror and the Christians of Jerusalem the conquered. But because the conquered had a superior civilisation, they achieved a cultural victory over the conquerors and the Romans had to accept the Christian civilisation."

This process was also going on in Bharat, but when some people saw that it was hindering ambitions of political power they started impeding it. During British times this process was halted due to the political leaders' inferiority complex. They thrust the Muslims away from the national mainstream. Muslims were told, 'We are going to unite with you, so keep your separate existence.' Even after the British left integration is being impeded for fear that if the whole society became one people, one nation, with one culture, ministerships would be jeopardised. So even today politicians are trying to keep the Muslims apart. As has been rightly observed, "Politicians in every country have a knack of exploiting religious sentiments for the furtherance of their political ends. When priesthood makes common cause with a gang of politicians, the combination becomes too formidable for an average believer."

It is true that before and after Aurangzeb and also during British rule the Hinduisation or nationalisation of Muslims was continuing as a natural process. In order to tease the Muslims, Iqbal, the originator of the concept of Pakistan, wrote the following poem :

From the British you have learnt your language,  
 Your culture from the Hindus,  
 How can Muslims pass as a nation  
 Who shame even the Jews ?  
 Into the sky of your nation you rose  
 Like a bright star with a hue,  
 But the lure of India's idols has made  
 Even Brahmins out of you,

Iqbal wrote the poem with a different purpose in mind, but it shows his anguish over the Hinduisation of Muslims. Dr. Shaukatullah Ansari said, "In India Islam is the Arabic version of Sanatana Dharma."

This makes it clear that the assimilation process had started. Now why is it being stopped ?

It is our principle that all are one. But some political leaders talk of a joint nationality and a composite culture. Let us ask them if the modern world has a single example of such a nationality

and such a culture. People give the example of America, but it actually proves our point. The Germans, French, Danes, Swedes, the British who settled in the USA took pride in their own culture till the time of the First World War. But when the war began between England and Germany, 90 lakh German residents of the USA thought of freedom from Anglo-Saxon sovereignty and of having their own state within the USA. President Wilson then arrested all leaders of German origin. Till the First World War the Americans took pride in their country being a 'melting-pot' of nationalities, but after the war the Anglo-Saxons conducted three cultural movements during the period 1918 to 1939. They took Anglo-Saxon nationality as the basis and called upon all people of non-Anglo-Saxon origin to identify with their culture. As a result the entry of non-Anglo-Saxon immigrants was regulated by law and the integration process thus encouraged. The good results of this policy were seen in the Second World War. The USA took part in the Second World War but did not have to face a German problem again.

Another example is Canada, a country of Frenchmen and Englishmen with the Anglo-Saxons predominating. Initially they talked of a composite culture. During both the world wars there was no problem because England and France were on the same side. But after De Gaulle became President a separate French nationalism grew among French Canadians. De Gaulle wanted to see France among front-rank European powers. He wanted to repeat Napoleon's achievement. This had its reaction among French Canadians. Replying to a felicitation during a tour of Canada, De Gaulle said the demand for a separate French nation and state was quite justified. As the remark was against political etiquette it created such a storm that De Gaulle had to cut his tour short and return to France. Even today French Canadians are continuing this agitation. The reason is that cultural integration has not been achieved there. They still look upon their country as a hostel for passing travellers. This is not the way of integration.

We are charged with being narrow-minded. We point out that we see no internal difference between nationalism and internationalism, while those who flaunt a big heart say the two are contradictory. After the Second World War the Czechs and the

Slavs were put together in Czechoslovakia, but despite the people of both races being Communist they did not become integrated. A year before the Russian interference the Slavs had said they were a separate nation and demanded a separate state. If Russia did not want that, they said, it should be a federation of two autonomous states. Even these 'international' people are not ready to get integrated with each other's culture. And yet, we in this country talk of a joint nationality and a composite culture! What did not happen in Czechoslovakia, Canada and America cannot be expected to happen here.

So the time has now come to adopt a scientific attitude. The Quran and the Bible are quite safe here. We must experience that our country is one nation, one people, with one culture. It is from this standpoint that the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh calls us national. It is quite untrue to say that other people are not allowed entry in the Sangh. On the other hand other people do not want to enter it. We are asked whether a nationalist Muslim can enter the Sangh. We say if Muslims get themselves socially and culturally integrated with the nation they are all our people. They can all come into the Sangh. It is not true to say that non-Hindus have no entry in the Sangh. In the accepted sense Parsis are not Hindus but Sri Guruji considered them Hindus. On the other hand Hindu Communists do not consider themselves Hindus. If they leave their negative and narrow attitude they can follow Communism and still be Hindus.

It is neither necessary to justify nor feel sorry about the Sangh's not doing this or that. Why and for what should we feel sorry? And why should we express our sorrows to those who do not keep their own word and tell lies? These people sell themselves in the market-place like commodities. It does not become our self-respect to justify ourselves to such political leaders. The need of the hour is not to justify but to understand and explain the truth.

The question is, what is the firm foundation on which we can raise the nation? Can an indivisible nation be raised on the concept of a composite culture and a joint nationalism? The answer, on the basis of experience, is No. Everyone has freedom of worship, but as a nation we are one people, one family, limbs of one Rashtra-Purush. This is our motherland. We are its

progeny. Our society has been living in it for thousands of years as a growth of the soil, Rama and Krishna are our national heroes, the Vedas are our national works, the Quran and the Bible can also be religious scriptures, ours is a national tradition, our festivals are national festivals. So long as this integration, this Hinduisation, does not take place, any talk of a composite culture would only widen the gulf in the country. On this scientific basis the Sangh has said Hindutva is nationalism. So it is first necessary to understand what Hindu means, what Nation means.

We will have to think seriously about the nation. Nation-building cannot be achieved by such small thoughts as winning the next elections. Fissiparous talk will be harmful. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh is a really national organisation. It is engaged in creating a nation. It has no political axe to grind. People of all political parties are welcome here. Our doors are open for all. It is they who have closed their doors for us. Thus the whole Hindu society is the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, and the Hindu Rashtra is the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. Look at it closely, try to understand it, then you may react to it as you think fit. □

## 14.

### Self-confidence of the Nation

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**E**VERYONE wants his nation to prosper. We have the ambition to make Bharat the world's greatest nation. Time was when mankind came here to learn individual and social behaviour. That condition, that status as Jagadguru, preceptor of the world, is a part of our concept of the height of glory. The actual condition, however, is going to the other extreme. From all points of view—economic, social, political – things are going the other way. But these are the ups and downs of our national history, like those of the waves of the sea. Once the wave was up. Now, as we again aspire for 'Param Vaibhav', it will again go up. Today our country stands at the nadir, but Sangh Swayamsevaks daily pray – '*Param vaibhavam netum etat swarashtram*'. The contradiction between the two may make one doubtful, make one feel it is all a sweet dream, which cannot come true.

In the beginning, when Sangh Swayamsevaks talked of the Hindu nation, they were told not to do so, as nothing related to 'Hindu' was worth being proud of. Because of our deteriorating condition, people were reluctant to call themselves Hindus. But now the situation has somewhat changed.

Why do we feel inferiority and defeatism when we talk or think of 'Hindu' ? The reason is our low condition today. We are counted among those nations that are militarily, politically, socially and economically at a low level. It seems many Western nations have gone far ahead. This has given rise to an inferiority complex.

It is true that we are backward today, but is this backwardness due to our nation's inability to forge ahead ? Are we not

capable of leading the world ? Have we always been a backward nation? Is a basic inability the cause of our backwardness ? Do we not deserve to go ahead ? Or are there circumstantial constraints on our capabilities ?

There are many examples of good nations falling behind due to adverse circumstances. They have not progressed in spite of being capable. Take Poland. It was partitioned time and again, and it looked as if it could never rise. Germany was defeated in both the world wars. For some time it seemed finished. The Israelis could not even set foot on their homeland for 1,800 years. Their backwardness lasted a long time. But we see that all these three nations have risen, because their reverses were due to certain circumstances. We have to see if our backwardness is due to a lack of ability or just due to circumstances.

What is the reason of our inferiority complex as compared to the West ? Why do we feel we have no future ? When we think of an answer to this question we notice two things that give rise to our feeling of inferiority – ideology and technology.

By ideology is meant the thought that can solve today's problems. The industrial civilisation and an industrial atmosphere are reaching our country; and they are bringing certain new problems with them. We feel our ancient tradition does not have answers to these problems. It is thought that the West has given rise to many schools of thought while we have none. We may well think anachronistic thoughts like religion, culture, etc. and that Hindu thought does not have solutions to modern problems. This in turn means we do not possess mental capacity. This is the reason for our backwardness and of our inferiority complex.

It is the same with technology. The West has made much progress in science and technology. They have reached the moon, and would possibly go beyond. We cannot even walk properly on the ground. This makes it appear as if we too could have reached the moon if we had the capacity. If we have not reached there it means we do not have the capacity to do so.

In both these directions the West has made dazzling progress, which has made us lose confidence in ourselves and made us feel we are incapable. We feel we have a basic incapacity,



a basic absence of internal strength. So we have come to feel defeatist about Hindu life and Hindu thought.

So then, is our present backwardness due to our internal incapacity or due to circumstances ? Those who have studied Hindu history know that for the last 1,150 years we have had an uncommon history. This was a long, adverse period. We had no peace. We fought against foreign invasions on different battle-fields under different generals and with different weapons. For the Hindus it was a long-drawn struggle. It is an acknowledged truth that a nation engaged in war for a long time cannot make natural progress. It also falls prey to various evils. The same thing happened with us. Our society had declined, it is riven with various divisions. We have untouchability and we have distinctions of caste, sect and language. It may be said all this is due to our religion and culture, but that is not true. Our religion and culture do not teach us these things. This distortion is the result of a war period of 1,150 years.

In the past we used to think that with changing times and changing circumstances new problems would emerge, which old rules of the society would not be able to solve. In such circumstances a change is called for. Then great men of the society would come together to deeply ponder what changes have taken place in the circumstances, what old solutions have become irrelevant, what rules have become outdated, and what form the new problems have assumed. On the strength of this thinking they used to make new laws for the new circumstances, which were called the 'Smritis'. The process of creating new Smritis used to go on continuously. This healthy system produced many Smritis. We never insisted that only one Smriti has been created and it will go on till the end of the world. Various Smritis were created in accordance with various 'Yugadharmas' – requirements of the ages. But for the past 1,150 years we had a war-like atmosphere all over the country and our activities were not natural or usual. This interrupted our social life. There was no scope for social leaders to come together and fashion new rules for the social structure. Naturally where there is obstruction there is squalor, as with stagnant water, and evils like casteism, untouchability, high and low etc. spread in the society. All this was due to a war-like situation, not due to an internal incapacity.

Now what were the conditions in which various 'isms' from capitalism to anarchism arose in various Western and other countries as possible solutions to new problems? They were all born after the Industrial Revolution. The Industrial Revolution revolutionised the means of production. In turn the mass production process changed the social structure. New problems surfaced, and with them various isms came up and grew as possible solutions. This Industrial Revolution is a recent phenomenon.

Such a revolution did not take place in our country because we lived in a continuous state of war since before it. I do not mean to say that if we had peace we would have aped the West in ushering in an industrial revolution and a machine age. But in peace time there would have been scope for us to devote our attention to studying the Industrial Revolution of the West and its social impact and to decide whether to accept it as it is or to modify it or to develop a third alternative. We have always kept in touch with the world and kept ourselves informed about what is happening around us. But we could not do so due to adverse circumstances and a long period of war. Because of this we did not have an industrial revolution and its consequent problems, and because we did not have the problems we did not have the 'isms' that seek to solve them.

It would therefore be wrong to ask why we had no solution for a problem that we did not have in the first place, or say that we were backward because we did not have the solution. In nature wherever there is an ailment there is a cure, but we think of a cure only when there is an ailment. It would be unjust to say that we had no cure for the ill-effects of the industrial revolution that we did not have or that it shows an intellectual deficiency in us.

The second point is about technology. The intellectual progress of Europe began after the European Renaissance. Before that Bharat was far advanced intellectually, scientifically and technologically. Westerners accept that Bharat was a front-rank nation in all respects. But after the European Renaissance they progressed and we fell back. It is to be noted that the period of European Renaissance and our period of struggle for 1,150 years were contemporaneous. It was more or less at the same time that the revived Europeans were progressing while we were engaged

in a life-and-death struggle. Our very survival as a nation was in jeopardy.

If a first-class student does not get first class because he was running high fever while writing his examination, it is no reflection on his innate intelligence. It is a matter of circumstances. We must similarly bear in mind that our inability to solve new problems and our falling behind in science and technology are due to circumstances, not due to a lack of ability. We have ample scientific and technological aptitude. We have greater innate capacity than the West. We can even say on the basis of experience that the Hindu nation has it more than the West. So we have no reason to despair about our basic capability.

Revolutionary changes in the West began with the first French Revolution. The slogan of this revolution was 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity'. How far were these three noble ideals brought into practice? Four decades ago this may have been just an intellectual discussion, but today we have concrete experience. The first to be established in Europe was freedom, that is, freedom of the individual. But man's mind did not change. The experience in Europe was that freedom of the individual gradually came to mean the freedom of the individual to exploit another individual. If every individual is free, if there is freedom for limitless progress and if the individual's ego makes him think only of himself, why should the strong not exploit the weak, the bright not exploit the dull? Social scientists had no answer to this. Thus, freedom of the individual came to be linked with freedom to exploit.

When this freedom to exploit reached fearful proportions, when a few powerful, wealthy, intelligent people began to exploit the society at large, a sharp reaction set in. It was thought that if the freedom to exploit originated in the freedom of the individual, this freedom of the individual should be ended. A social structure was proposed in which there was no freedom of the individual so that nobody could exploit anybody else. The next thought was to have a dictatorial power to control such a social structure. In other words, absolute state power that would rob the individual of his freedom was proposed as a means of translating the second principle of 'equality' into practice. The result was Communist rule.

Many countries adopted the Communist system of government. Russia had it for more than seven decades and other countries for more than four, but 'equality' was not established. Soviet Russia has undergone an upheaval of reconstruction. Individual freedom was lost, but equality was not gained. So there arose a feeling of revolt in all Communist countries including Russia and China. It is a fact of Communist history that in Poland the oppressed people in whose name Communism was introduced rebelled against it and the powers that be had to bow before them.

Equality was not brought about because the dictatorial regime that sought to become its medium is itself unequal. When the regime has the power to equalize everybody, those in power do not remain equal to the people at large. This is the reason of the distinction between the rulers and the ruled in Communist countries. Where liberty came, ego brought exploitation with it. Exploitation broke up equality. When a regime came to power in the name of equality, it ended liberty but did not bring about equality.

So far as fraternity is concerned, it has no scope, for Western culture has no basis for brotherhood between man and man. That egoistic culture has no answer to problems related to brotherhood. Western nations are confused today because instead of understanding the mind of man they are busy with the outer structure. They do not know the way ahead. If liberty comes, equality is destroyed. As for fraternity it is nowhere on the scene. What is the reason of all this ?

The reason is that even if the structure is changed, the ideals of liberty and equality cannot accord with each other so long as man's mind is not cultured, so long as this value of life is not enshrined in every individual's mind, and so long as the individual does not embark upon a journey of integration with the whole universe. Perhaps this realisation is possible in the West on an individual level, but it is the Hindu society that has collectively realised this value of life. Liberty and equality are not contradictory, but a confluence between the two is possible only on the basis of fraternity, a pervasive feeling of brotherhood.

"We are all one" is not the right translation of our "*Sarvam khalvidam Brahma.*" Its real translation is "all in one". When

we talk of 'we all' it means we are separate units that have to be integrated. This is not the truth. These units are all one, their existence is basically one. We are all just manifestations of that oneness. There are different gold ornaments, but gold is one. There may be a variety of dishes but their basic ingredient, flour, is the same. This can be the only basis for blending all, and this blend alone can impart permanence to any structure. Against the experience of the West, Hindu thought is clearly seen to be true. Because of the extraordinary circumstances of the last 1,150 years, we could not ideologically progress much during the period, yet the fact remains that no Western 'ism' has the capacity to impart stability and strength to the society. Only Hindu thought and Hindu values of life have this capacity. So there is no reason for us to feel any ideological inferiority. It is quite clear, and it is a matter of pride for us, that even today Hindu thought has ample capacity to impart stability and give guidance to the world.

As for science and technology, the technologically advanced Westerners have now come to feel that the world may have to suffer catastrophic consequences if the direction of scientific progress is not determined.

People of the West have experienced this fear at the time of the Second World War. When Robert Oppenheimer, father of the atomic age, first split the atom he had no idea that it would be used for killing people on a huge scale. In his diary, which shows he was not given to destructive thinking, he has written that he made many attempts to split the atom, but they all failed. But the final experiment, which took place in a desert and which he watched from a long distance, was successful, and the terrible scene he saw on that occasion made him exclaim, "I have become death, the shatterer of the world."

What he said was already said in the Gita – "*Kalo:smi loka-kshaya-krit pravridhah*". It is strange that a Western scientist watching an atomic explosion does not say something about science or quote the Bible but quotes Lord Krishna in the Gita – "I am death". When Oppenheimer's research was used in the world war for man-slaughter on a vast scale, the scientists asked themselves – 'Was this the purpose of our penance ?'

Geneticists have stated that by the year 2040 genetic engineering would be so advanced that it would be possible to make human beings to genetic specifications ; but what is the guarantee that it would produce men like Mahatma Gandhi, Lord Buddha and Jesus Christ ? What is the guarantee that they would not produce fiends like Attila, Timur and Changez Khan ? This is what Western scientists have been thinking about. In experiments done in Seattle, USA, on the possible achievements of genetic engineering, scientists came to the conclusion that the achievements could indeed be revolutionary, but they could not say if such experiments would release any destructive elements. When this news spread in the city, the civic authorities of Seattle asked the scientists what types of germs would be released by the experiments and what effect they would have on people if they spread outside. The scientists replied they could not say anything definitely but possibly the germs could annihilate one-third of mankind if they spread outside. On hearing this, the Seattle city authorities banned the experiments, saying they did not want such progress.

The availability of nuclear weapons has made some scientists realise that there would be catastrophe in the world if the direction of scientific progress is not determined. Dr. Wiener, exponent of cybernetics, the foundational science of computer science, says a scientist may make any experiment for writing down his name in the pages of history for the Nobel Prize, but what social price will humanity have to pay for it ? Will this price be terrible ? To emphasize his apprehension the scientist related the famous European tale of 'the monkey's paw'. Once a traveller came to stay with a family for a day. He had a contraption he called a monkey's paw. He said it had the power to fulfil its owner's first three wishes – but there was also some danger with that fulfilment. The landlord was in need of two hundred pounds, so he accepted the contraption as a gift, thinking he would throw it away after his need was served. The next day the traveller departed and the landlord's son went to work in a factory. In the afternoon a man came with a cheque for two hundred pounds. The landlord was happy at this achievement of the monkey's paw and asked about the reason for the money. He was told his son had died in an accident in the factory and the money was the first instalment under the worker's safety plan.

Relating this story Dr. Wiener said science and technology would fulfil some of our desires, but what would be the social cost that we would have to bear? Would annihilation of humanity be that price? He said technological knowledge would not be in the interest of mankind so long as it is not governed by technological purpose. By technological knowledge he meant knowledge of how to achieve a desired result. By technological objective he meant determining what objective we have to serve with technological knowledge. If objective does not govern knowledge we would come to grief. Expressing deep apprehension over this point, he said it was necessary to have a controlling thought-force to give a purpose to science and technology and keep it in check.

He further made it clear that scientists and technologists should not be a part of this controlling force, for in their chase of the Nobel Prize they might not care about what happens to the world. This force should consist of such cultured people as have love for the whole of humanity and wish mankind well.

The real situation is thus clear. Our seers held that the mind of man and outer circumstances are both equally important. They influence each other, but the basic thing is the mind of man. God has given man will-power. Therefore, so long as his mind does not become cultured, no social structure can be stable and healthy. Western experience also bears this out.

So let us not be dazzled by the West's scientific and technological progress. In the final analysis our system of human 'samskars' is the most important. It is because this system imbues our values of life with man's integration with the entire creation that we in this land can rise – have risen – above 'Aham', the ego.

It is true that we are backward today. We accept the fact that the interruption of the past 1,150 years has led to the growth of various evils in our individual and social life. But this is due to outer circumstances, not innate incapacity. We have ample capacity for the science and technology of thought. In point of number of scientists we rank third in the world. In addition we possess a special capacity that can act as a thoughtful restraint for saving humanity. Because of our samskars we can rise above our

ego, the 'Aham'. We see diversity in difference. We have the capacity to experience the integration that flows below diversity. This was why despite knowing our present poor plight, Arnold Toynbee had said, "The only way of salvation for mankind is an Indian way." Toynbee's confidence and our prayer expressing our ambition to take our nation to "Param Vaibhav" are indicators in the same direction. This is not a day-dream. We do possess the required natural capacity.

Even today, our people are working shoulder to shoulder with the Americans, Germans and Russians in science, technology and other processes. Our thinkers also do not lag behind. There is no thought that the Hindu cannot conceive. About the same time that Marx wrote *Das Kapital* and put forth the concept of communes, an Indian thinker named Vishnubua Brahmachari wrote an independent book presenting the same commune idea. Both works were written independently. Not that the commune is a proved concept, but it does show that Hindu genius does not lag behind that of the West. Hindus like J. C. Bose, C. V. Raman and Harbanslal Khurana have achieved international renown in science and technology. The capacity that we have for providing balanced guidance to the world is not seen anywhere else.

So there is no justification for the sense of inferiority that we at times feel when we think of the term 'Hindu'. We can legitimately feel confident that we can make our way through the present adverse circumstances to the height of glory. The firm faith of 80 crores of Hindus, the inherent strength of the eternal Hindu philosophy of life, and the blessings of the Almighty are with us. □



15.

## The Basis of National Reconstruction

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**C**ORRECT DIAGNOSIS is half the battle. So let us first diagnose the various problems facing us. Then we can think of the treatment.

There are many problems facing us today. The main problem is how to go about national reconstruction. We have to lift up the nation from its present condition. We have to make progress. People have suggested various ways of doing so. Some suggest progressivism, some swear by total revolution and radicalism. Some people call themselves revolutionaries. None of these words has any special meaning. Everyone chooses the word he likes. In simple words we can say we have to reconstruct our nation. We have to fashion our own destiny, even if in a partitioned Bharat.

Now, the first thing is, do we have a model before us – a model country where people have done such national reconstruction, where they are happy and prosperous? It would be very good if we had a model, so let us think of various models. America and Russia are in the front rank of modern, prosperous countries of the world. Even China is there. Once we know imitating a certain country would benefit us, our problem would be solved.

Has any of these countries achieved happiness? The strange answer is that America, which should be the happiest among them, being the most prosperous, is as unhappy as it is economically advanced. On the one hand there is a lot of progress there. Their technological advance has reached such a stage that scientists say in the near future all work will be done by machines. Progress is reaching such heights that even procreation would be

possible without human aid. They have also reached the moon. On the other hand figures for recent years show that America had the world's largest number of suicides. They have the greatest number of lunatics and people suffering from neurasthenia, hypertension and heart disease. They also have the greatest crime rate. Americans are prosperous and technologically an advanced nation, but they are a far-from-happy society.

We feel concerned about the incidents in our universities, but they have far more. Students there have revolted with stenguns in hand. The new American generation had declared it is not happy with the present system. A friend of mine who went to the USA asked American student leaders what they wanted. They said they wanted an end to the present social system, to consumerism. On being asked what type of society they wanted they said they could not say, because they did not have a clear picture before them, but they were sure the present consumer society had to go.

The hippy cult is in a way a barometer of the Americans' mental discontent. Is it due to material privation? In our country we do not have enough to eat, so we think discontent may be the result of material privation. Our problem is poverty, America's problem is excess prosperity. Even rich people's children become hippies.

It is true that the USA is reaching greater and greater heights of technological progress. But this is giving rise to problems. They have progressed in every direction on the strength of technology, but they have not thought of its impact on the society and the individual. According to their thinkers the situation has thrown up two deficiencies. The first question is, how far and in what manner should natural resources be used? If we use them all up for our happiness what would happen to future generations? That is how they are consuming these resources. For example at the rate mineral energy sources are being used up they would be finished in two hundred years. Supplies of thorium and uranium for atomic power also cannot last indefinitely.

This unbalanced consumption is adversely affecting the balance of nature, and they now realise that modern technology is causing unhappiness. The air is polluted, water is polluted and

even land is going to be polluted. This pollution is so terrible that a clean ecology has become a big problem for every American, be he industrialist or labourer. So an ecology conference was held in Stockholm in 1972 under the aegis of the UN, in which scientists and thinkers expressed the fear that the entire atmosphere and body of water on earth were being vitiated by elements that were dangerous for human and animal life. In Bharat too three thousand chemicals detrimental to man's health are present in the air in cities like Kanpur, Bombay and Calcutta. Because of this problem, American scientists now feel this technology should be changed, otherwise the pollution resulting from it would endanger the life of man and animal.

In brief the country that is considered to be at the top of the world and has reached the moon could not make its people happy.

Now let us take the number-two country, Russia, our friend. We can see no happiness there too. Every experiment made there since 1917, every principle or slogan placed before the people, has undergone a continuous change. For example Russia was against private property, but now they not only have it but it is growing. Section 10 of the Soviet Constitution lays down the special circumstances in which the right to private property would be valid. It can even be inherited.

Russia has declared that all are equal, but all are not paid equally. According to the latest figures the differential in income figures in Soviet Russia has been in the ratio of 1:80, while in capitalist America the minimum and maximum incomes are in the ratio 1:15. One of the reasons why China abuses Russia is that Russia has now given up the principle of 'to each according to his need', which is the professed principle of scientific socialism, and has now adopted the principle of 'to each according to his merit, production etc.' In other words, say the Chinese, the Soviets have betrayed socialism.

It was said that Russia would have a classless society. Actually no communist country, including Russia, has had a classless society. Djilas has said in his book *The New Class* that the old classes vanished but new ones emerged. They are the rulers and the ruled, and they are more active.

Russia had also said that the family was an outdated unit and would be replaced by the commune. But the communes failed and the family organisation has fully returned. Today Russia is undertaking domestic reconstruction.

They said they did not believe in nationalism, but it is well known that during the last war nationalism was used to encourage the people to fight. Since then nationalism has grown tremendously not only in Russia but in all Communist countries. In fact it has grown so strong that Communist countries have been fighting each other. The Sino-Soviet conflict is actually a conflict of expanding nationalism.

Then it was claimed that the profit motive and the principle of supply and demand are purely capitalist tendencies. But now the profit motive and competition have both entered Soviet Russia. The capitalist principle of supply and demand has also been accepted. Russia is giving up its professed policies one by one.

Despite all this, it does not seem as if the Russians are very happy. They too have made technological advance. They too have reached the moon ; on the other hand they do not have enough food to feed their own people. They have to import foodgrains from capitalist countries. There is a lot of resentment among many Soviet Republics as well as among non-Russians and non-White people. They too have been subjected to exploitation in the name of Russianisation. This is especially true about non-White Russians.

Are we going to imitate such people for our good ? It would have been good if we could place before ourselves a model where other people have achieved what we want to achieve. The situation today is that even countries within the Soviet sphere of influence like Czechoslovakia, Hungary, etc. have not followed the Soviet industrial system. They said, "We have certainly accepted Communism from you, but we will have to mould it according to our culture or traditions, otherwise it cannot serve our purpose." Every country tried to set up its own structure. If even those European Communist countries that have been directly under the influence of Soviet Russia feel that the Russian model cannot emancipate them, then how can other countries achieve their goal by doing so ?

China is another case in point. There is extensive discontent there. Crores of people were killed in the name of the 'cultural revolution'. They still swear by revolution, which means there is still no stability. There is incessant talk of revolution. If Mao's cultural revolution is justifiable even now, it only goes to show the failure of the present Chinese structure.

Thus nowhere do we see a model we can follow. If we want to imitate anybody at all, the imitation should prove beneficial for our future, otherwise we shall become mental slaves without achieving the purpose for which we accept that slavery.

There are many schools of thought in the West, and they are different from ours. Even with a little change in thinking they say they have different schools of thought. In our country everyone had his own way of thinking, but nobody said his thought was new. Everyone said, "*Idam paramparaa-praaptam*" – 'this has come down by tradition'. Everyone said the Vedas were the source of his thinking. It is not so with the West.

There are certain common factors in the various 'isms' of the West. Among the Leftist 'isms' the fashionable word is 'equality'. It is considered the basis of all things. Whether it is Communism, Socialism, Anarchism – they all talk of equality. But nowhere do we see this equality established.

The certificates that different Communist countries have given one another make it clear that there is no equality anywhere among them. Wherever efforts were made to establish it, people established inequality. Events in Russia and other countries stand testimony to this fact.

Why is it so? What is our concept of equality? Let us suppose all Hindu thinking was wrong, for had it not been wrong we would not have fallen. Still what was our thinking and what is Western thinking? All people there are equal. Yet there is no equality among them. Why? The reason is that Western thinking has not been able to reconcile two equally strong desires: one is for the development of the individual and the other for the development of the nation. How to achieve it? We thought everyone's basic need should be fulfilled. Culture begins at the point where these needs are satisfied.

But such individual development is possible when everyone gets the work suited to his talents and aptitudes. He would then have job satisfaction. The quality of his work would be higher and his productivity greater. If such a person dedicates his high-quality production at the altar of the nation it could be called the noblest contribution. On the one hand his personality would develop in accordance with his talents, on the other the nation would benefit from maximum production and maximum services.

We too have said that the individual should not consider himself a basic unit. We have said the society is a unit as a whole and individuals as well as groups of individuals are its limbs. We often hear about this in the Sangh. The individual's relationship with the society is that of a limb with the body. Even if we are separate units we are within the body-national. This sentiment helps our individual growth on the one hand and makes us dedicate the best fruit of that development at the altar of the nation on the other. This blends every individual's development with the nation's development. We have also taken care to see that one individual's development does not prove an impediment in another's development. One man's advance must not mean another's retreat. We have thought it necessary to blend a comprehensive social sense with every individual's full development.

This sense of integration has been considered old and outdated in the West. It is not considered modern or progressive. Modern thinking is that the individual must be happy, he is the dominant factor. The society is for the individual. In fact there is no basic unit called society ; it is only a subsidiary means for the happiness of the individual, because the individual cannot achieve happiness all by himself. The basic unit is the individual, so the individual's happiness is the main thing. This sort of thinking amounts to looking upon the society as a club. When one goes to a club to play cards one needs a partner. People come together there for an individual's happiness. Similarly the society at large is not a basic unit in their eyes. The basic unit is the individual, and so his happiness is all-important, he must have full freedom.

Another thought is that individual freedom should be ended because limitless and uncontrolled individual freedom is detrimental to other people. So the basic unit is the State, not the

individual. Everything and everyone should be under State control. The powers of the State should be absolute, individuals should be lifeless nuts and bolts of the State machinery. The individual must not have a separate identity or personal ambitions. The State will decide how the individual should live. The individual will have no voice in this decision. This second process gives no thought to the individual's development. The process will follow central planning. The individual will have to do the work allotted to him by the centre or the State.

Both these thoughts suffer from extremes. Even in a democracy, it is not certain that everyone would get the work of his liking. In a democracy jobs are by vacancy. You get a job if and when there is a vacancy, whether it is to your liking or not. In Communism work is allotted as per central planning. In neither system is the individual's liking considered. But the ancient Hindu system took into account the individual's inclination and aptitude.

The Hindu social structure was based on the premise that when we think of the personal work of all individuals in the society we also have to think about the total requirement of the whole society as well as of the aptitudes of all individuals. If every individual gets the work of his choice he would give maximum production. This maximum production and the nation's total requirement had to be in the right proportion. This proportion was a test of Dharma.

The Western school of thought stresses the development of every individual, but why did it not succeed in achieving equality? It seems the West has not been able to reconcile two contradictory desires in man's mind. The life of the society and the development of the individual are not properly balanced. The West is basically materialistic. All their values of life are materialistic. For them whatever there is – wealth, profit, comfort – is materialistic, and so only the materialistic has any importance.

Material values of life lead to certain problems. Even if there is equality in the society, what does that equality mean? Someone said it could mean a ratio of 1:40 in minimum and maximum income. Some say the ratio should be 1:20, still others say it should be 1:10, that is, if the minimum income is Rs. 100 the

maximum should not exceed Rs. 1,000. Even if this is accomplished, another problem related to the individual's development arises. That problem is, why should I work harder than necessary? As my values of life are materialistic I would say I would not get more than Rs. 1,000 even if I am as great a scientist as Einstein, as great a philosopher as Dr. Radhakrishnan, or as great a technologist as Sir M. Visveshvaraya. On the other hand even if I do not do any work and do not exert for my own development I shall get the basic minimum of Rs. 100. As the Constitution lays down 'equality', I shall get Rs. 100 even if I am a useless fellow. On the other hand even if I work very hard I shall not get more than Rs. 1,000. Then why should I not take it easy? That sum of Rs. 100 is always my due.

In other words, under materialistic values of life, the urge for self-development dies the moment the principle of equality is introduced.

This is also the reason for our current brain-drain. Our scientists and artists have been presented with materialistic beliefs. They work hard and acquire eminence. Possibly some of them might not think of money alone but may go abroad in search of facilities for their own development, but a majority of them would feel that the rewards here are not commensurate with the eminence they have achieved, so what is the point in staying on? This is the reason of the brain-drain. In fine materialistic values of life preclude a balance between equality and individual development.

The natural outcome of a materialistic system is that efforts for establishing equality made on the basis of materialistic values of life destroy the incentive for individual development, while encouragement to individual development ends equality. Only one of the two is possible, not both. Consequently equality has just become a slogan in the West.

Now, has our so-called outdated Hindu philosophy done any thinking in this direction? We looked at it from two levels – the socio-structural and the ideological. As regards the social structure we said everyone should have an incentive for self-development. But we did not mean a merely materialistic incentive. We have realised the need of the incentive being both material and



non-material. The material incentive was wealth and comforts flowing from power. The non-material incentive was social prestige. It is not easy to understand the present process in which social prestige and material comforts go together. If the two are separated and if social prestige is not accompanied by material comforts, why would an individual strive for his development? Western thinking has no answer for this. The answer is contained in Hindu thinking and the Hindu social structure. We believe both incentives should go together. We further hold that the sum total of both – material gain and social prestige – should be the same. The greater the area of material happiness, the lesser should be that of social prestige, and *vice versa*. The two together were to remain constant. How much of either an individual desired was up to him. No one was forced to make a choice.

Today the two have merged. Social prestige now depends upon the plenitude of material achievements. This has upset the social balance. But Hindu equality is real equality. There is freedom for everyone. All people are not equal. Different people have different likes and dislikes, different temperaments, different ambitions. Everyone can have his own choice. But if this choice is made on the basis of both material and non-material incentives the two together would maintain both equality and individual incentive.

This is an age of cut-throat competition. People feel competition leads to progress. But it is not so. Progress is achieved not by competition but by co-operation. Compete, if you must, with yourself. That is healthy competition. Pultarch wrote in his *Lives* that Alexander used to compete with himself. He always tried to better himself, not someone else. That is the real competition.

What is the purpose of competition? In public life, there are quarrels over such things as seats in the corporation, or who should become Prime Minister, President, etc. Why does everyone want to become Prime Minister? Because it combines social prestige with material facilities.

What would happen if today's Prime Minister lived like Chanakya? Would anyone want to become Prime Minister? It is said about Chanakya – "Look at this '*Raajaadhiraaja-mantri*'

*naam vibhutih'*, – the 'splendour' of the residence of the great king's minister –

*Upala-shakalam-etad bhedakam gomayaanaam,  
Vatubhir-upahritaanaam barhishaam stupam-etat  
Sharanam-api samidbhih shushyamaanaabhir-abhiih  
Vinamita-patalaantam drishyate jirnakudyam.*

In one corner lies a stone for breaking pieces of cow-dung, in another a heap of *kusha* grass brought by disciples. The roof of the hut is bulging down due to the samidhas, sticks for fuel, kept on it for drying ; and the walls are dilapidated. This is the residence of the minister to the great king."

If we make a law that the Prime Minister will have to live in such 'luxury' there would be no rivalry for the post. The reason for all rivalry is the merging together of material well-being and social prestige.

Let us compare our ancient system and the present failed experiment of equality.

Our ancient system is condemned today because we are not in a good condition. But is our decline due to giving up the old system or due to preserving it ? Somebody said to Gandhiji, "You talk of the Varna system. Don't you think it has led to so many conflicts in the society ?" Gandhiji replied, "True. Things have changed. Many distortions have crept in. They will have to be removed." He was asked, "Then does it not mean the Varna system should be abolished ?" The Mahatma replied, "Treat the disease, don't kill the patient." The way to cure an appendicitis patient is to remove the appendix. So let us cleanse our society of distortions, but let us preserve the basic principle. We have to see if our problems are due to our ancient principles or due to distortions in those principles.

The other word in fashion is classlessness. Everyone says he does not want classes. What does a 'class' mean ? Karl Marx has used the term in a highly technical sense. He said there are only two classes – the privileged or capitalists and the under-privileged or have-nots. One class owns the means of production, the other does not. There is a ceaseless struggle between the two.

But are there two such classes in Bharat or in the world ? I asked a Communist friend, what was the demarcation line between the two ? If we know that line, we could say those who were above that line were capitalists and those below it were poor. The Communist replied there was no such line, some people were capitalists, some were poor. I said there was a practical difficulty. A peon earning five rupees would say he was poor, the clerk earning fifty was not ; the clerk would say he was poor, the manager earning five hundred was not ; the manager would say he was poor, the proprietor who earned five thousand was rich, while the proprietor would say he was poor, the Tatas and Birlas who earned crores of rupees were rich. Thus everyone called himself poor and the other man rich. Then what was the demarcation line? Was it five rupees or five thousand ?

My friend said he would continue the discussion the next day. The next day he said I had confused him by asking the wrong question ; actually the demarcation line was not between the rich and the poor, it was between the owner and the labourer. Those who owned the means of production were the rich, the haves, those who did not were the poor, the have-nots.

I said, if that is so in what category did the small farmer who owns, say, half an acre of land, fall ? He owns the land, the means of production, so he would fall among the rich, but his land is too small to sustain his family, so he also works as a labourer for somebody else, who is then the owner. He is thus part-owner and part-labourer. Then in which category would he fall ? Marx could not answer this question till the end of his life. Could my Communist friend do so ? My friend replied I had discussed only one sector. So I said we have another sector, the 'Vishwakarma' sector, the sector of self-employed artisans like cobblers, iron-smiths, potters, carpenters, barbers, etc. They are neither owners nor labourers, they are self-employed. In what category would they fall ?

Even the labourer or worker is not a fixed category. A clerk in a factory is a part of the work-force, as opposed to the manager under whom he works ; but when he goes home he comes into the owner class as compared to the domestic servant who serves him tea. Then in what category should he be counted ? Is he among the have-nots during factory hours and among the haves

for the rest of the day ? And if a struggle breaks out between the two classes, on which side will he fight ? Will he fight on the side of the management during his off-hours and on the side of the workers during factory hours ?

In short, technically speaking there is no such thing as a class. It is just a figment of the imagination. It is true that there are various selfish interests and there can be conflicts between them. But there is no such thing as a class. There are only various categories, which will have to be ended.

But if the term class denotes different social divisions, we too had them. There was the division of labour. An advanced society would naturally have the division of labour, because one person cannot do everything.

Has classlessness been brought into practice anywhere ? The answer is No. Even Communist countries have two classes – the rulers and the ruled. Khrushchev had once said in an article, “People think of class distinctions from their childhood. My problem is how to remove them. When Russian students sit in the garden during the recess the children of administrators and scientists sit separately from the children of workers and peasants. How to remove this distinction ?” Thus, even Russia has class distinctions and they have accepted the fact. They have not created a classless society.

We had classlessness. I am not talking of the technical meaning, but in the general sense of the term we had classlessness. However, not everyone was considered entitled to it. It was for those who had become mature and had made innate progress. There is no such example anywhere else in the world. Those in authority were told they did not belong to any class, they were just eminent people and had to give up the old class feeling. (To repeat, the word ‘class’ is used here in the general sense, not in the technical sense.) Forget your caste, your class, even your own name. You are sannyasins and for a Hindu sannyasin the whole world is his land. He is a citizen of the world. No one knows the original name of the family of a sannyasin. This is our ideal of a classless citizen of the world. But not everyone was included in this category. A person’s level of enlightenment was first assessed. Was his soul sufficiently developed ? Only when the

answer was satisfactory was he given sannyas. But once he became a sannyasin, no one knew if he was originally a Brahmin or a member of a scheduled caste.

Classlessness exists only in our country, albeit on certain conditions, with certain modifications and with certain safeguards.

The third thing is statelessness. Karl Marx, the originator of Communism, and Bakunin, originator of Anarchism, have put forth statelessness as the ultimate social system. Communism and Anarchism are expected to find their consummation in a stateless social order. But are these progressive, and are Communist people progressing towards it? Rather, they tend to make the State more powerful and authoritarian. And they are not the only ones to be blamed for this. Had I power in my hands I too would have tended to do the same. I can deliver a religious sermon only because I do not have power. One who lives in the forest does not find it difficult to remain a Brahmacharin, a celibate. He has no option. Today we are all eminent people because we do not have power in our hands. Naturally we do not suffer from faults arising out of power. One of the characteristics of power is an innate desire for self-perpetuation. Once one has power, one wants it for ever.

Are there no exceptions to this? There are, but very few. Confucius had conceived of the 'philosopher-king' and the 'king-philosopher'. But Confucius had no followers, because there were very few such examples. The Roman emperor Domitius or Marcus Aurelius is a well-known example in point. He had a great empire under him but he had no longing for it. King Charles the Fifth was another such example. In our country King Janaka was both Raja and Rishi, and so was called Rajarishi.

It is generally seen that those who are saints and untouched by selfishness do not become rulers, and rulers do not become saints. The desire to stick to power proves stronger than the desire to discharge the duties of a ruler. This is a general tendency and it would not be just to single our Communist countries for criticism in this respect.

The other speciality is the ruler's desire to extend the sphere of his authority. In order to prevent the ruler's self-perpetuation, it is necessary to ensure a system that would prevent him from

extending his authority without limit. This has not been provided in any Western system. Even in democracy there is no system that guarantees success. Dictators like Hitler have risen out of the ballot-box. About Communist countries the less said the better.

The Communists say, what we mean by dictatorship is that everything is within the State and for the State, and nothing is outside the State. It would be wrong to believe that such statism would lead to the withering away of the State. Such a system cannot lead to a stateless social order.

In our country today the government is all-important, because our independence is recent. For a long time we had no experience of freedom. The current form of democracy is also new to us. In this form everyone feels he now has the power to make or break the government. For those who have enjoyed freedom for a long time it is a natural state, but in countries that have been in bondage for centuries it is natural for the people to feel great attraction for government and administration. Hence the excessive importance people give to the institution of government.

Some friends say everything can be done only through the government, including national reconstruction. Others say the Sangh's work has lost relevance after 1947. I asked why it should lose relevance after the advent of Independence. They said now that we have a democratic government, everything will be done by it, so there is no need of 'Daksha-Aram' of the Sangh, let us leave everything to the government. I pointed out that if we leave everything to the government we would have to accept the government's authority in everything, and if the government took up the task of nation-building it would become dictatorial. Would such a state of affairs be acceptable to us? A still more important question is that of the life and death of the nation. The historical process shows the relationship between the State and the Nation. We see that many nations have arisen in the world and reached great heights of advancement. The height of a nation's material progress is called a civilisation. In any particular age the name of the greatest civilisation of the times is given to that age. Many such civilisations have disappeared in the limbo of time. Where is Chaldea, Babylonia, Assyria, Persia? Where is the Greece of

Socrates ? The Greece of today is not a successor to Socrates. Where is Julius Caesar's Rome ? Today's Italy is not a successor to Caesar. Where is the Egypt of the Pharaohs ? Today's Egypt is not their successor. Egypt, Rome, Greece, Persia, Chaldea, Babylonia, Assyria – all these were so advanced once, then why did they disappear ? The answer lies in the common factor of the dominance of the institution of the government in the social structure, which made the life of the society government-oriented. It flowed around the government. In such a situation, once this institution broke down – either because of an internal weakness or due to foreign invasion – the society existing with its support perished. A society that is government-oriented, dependent on and centred on the government perishes when the government fails. This was the process that led to the downfall of Chaldea, Babylonia, Assyria, Rome, Greece, Egypt and Persia.

In this respect too Bharat has had a unique national life. It was never dependent or centred on the government. We had an autonomous or self-governed structure. Governments would come and governments would go but the life of the society went on. Every individual and group of individuals kept abiding by the code. Foreigners invaded and ruled over us, but even under them our individuals and groups of individuals abided by a code of conduct. The autonomous, self-governed life of our society continued without interruption.

Outside Bharat the thinking is that the government is the end, the society is the means. We on the other hand have always held that the society is the end, the government nothing more than one of its many means. Hence, our society was not oriented towards, dependent or centred on the government ; rather, the State was oriented towards, dependent and centred on the society. So governments came and went, but the society went on. Like the poet's 'Brook' which said, "Men may come and men may go, but I go on for ever", governments may come and governments may go but this Hindu nation, this Hindu society, has gone on since times immemorial and will continue for ever.

The relationship between the Nation and the State or between the Society and the State cannot be decided by the vote. The problem is, is the Hindu Nation to endure for ever or is it to join the ranks of by-gone nations like Chaldea and Babylonia?

If we believe the Hindu is Sanatana – eternal – has been so in the past and will continue to be so in times to come, our social life must become autonomous, self-governed and independent of the government. The government must remain nothing more than one of its many instruments. Otherwise the nation cannot endure, it will end.

Communism has placed before itself the ideal of classlessness, but it has not provided for effective checks and balances in respect of the inherent defects of power. In olden times our people – we may not call them progressive – had given thought to self-perpetuation and unchecked dictatorship and had devised a number of checks and balances. In the first place we never looked upon the institution of government as supreme. The government was never the leader of the society with us. Secondly government leaders were equipped with special qualities. They were not a class by themselves. They had risen above distinctions of mine and thine and looked upon the world at large as their family. They were spiritually so advanced that they had the capacity to think of the whole society, of the whole of humanity. They had reached the stage of self-development required for comprehensive and balanced thinking. For them material things had no importance – not because they could not acquire them but because they disdained their acquisition, turned their backs on them and repaired to the forest or the mountain to live. These classless people, who had neither economic power nor political power, were the leaders of the society. Preparing a constitution for the society was in their hands, not in those of the rulers. The constitution laid down everyone's duties, including those of the government, which were called Raja-Dharma. He who had no power in his hands, who was not even the president of the Panchayat Parishad, instructed the emperor in his duties. The moral authority of the society was on one side, the power of the State on the other. Economic power was on one side, social force on the other. This was how power was divided, and moral authority was considered supreme. Today one cannot even imagine the supreme importance it was given.

When Rama was crowned king, Vasishtha who did not have even enough clothes to wear, told him : "*Twam baala evaasi, navam cha raajyam.*" 'Baala' in Sanskrit means both a child and a fool. This man without clothes to wear tells a future king – "You



are both a child and a fool, and you are new to the science of administration, so be careful." Can anyone today have the courage to say such a thing to those in power ?

There is another example to show how effective this division was. Some brave kings used to perform the Chakravarti Abhishek (coronation) after they had extended their kingdom to a certain size. In the final ritual of the Abhishek function the emperor would sit on his throne in the royal court packed with people, with a Sadhu with a Palasha stick standing nearby. The emperor would then thrice declare "*Adandyo:smi, adandyo:smi*" – "No one can punish me." The Sadhu would then strike him thrice on the back with the stick and say three times – "*Dharma-dandyo:si, dharmadandyo:si, dharmadandyo:si*" – "You are not above punishment; Dharma, the code of conduct, can punish you." After this the king became Chakravarti.

Our social constitution provided for division of power and checks and balances. So the king was no more than the chief executive. He was just a servant of the people who received one-sixth of the income of the kingdom by way of salary.

Those who have always governed themselves do not give too much importance to the government. Those for whom it is new give it more importance. A man who gets married in the normal course has the normal attraction for married life. On the other hand he who is forced into celibacy for a long time and gets married at a late age has special attraction for it. It is the same with attraction for political power.

Today it is difficult even to imagine our ancient values of life. In 'Raghuvamsha' Kalidasa writes about those who –

*Shaishave:bhyasta-vidyaanaam youvane  
vishayaishinaam  
Vaardhake munivritteenam yogenaante  
tanutyajaam*

"People who were in power but left everything in old age and repaired to the forest for a hermit's life." What effect would such a rule of 'Vanaprastha Ashrama' have today ? Then, however big a person, whether an industrialist or a political leader, he would have to leave for the forest. If this happened, would it not sharply bring down rivalry ?

As a result, we can see many strange examples in our country. When Bharata, younger brother of Rama, got the kingdom he walked all the way to Chitrakoot to hand it over to Rama. Would a run-of-the-mill politician indulge in such 'madness' today? When warrior Guru Govind Singh had to take up political power he said, "Why has God burdened me with it? I feel no interest in it." Who would be foolish enough to say so today? Rather, everyone would welcome the precious burden of power. When Samarth Ramdas went to Chhatrapati Shivaji during the course of his daily round for alms, Shivaji handed over his whole kingdom as alms. Ramdas was a mendicant, it was not his function to rule, so he gave Shivaji the Bhagawa flag and told him to rule as a representative of that flag. Was it not madness to hand over to a sannyasin a kingdom earned with his own prowess? Such madness is our tradition.

After the Mahabharata war was over and the Pandavas vanquished the Kauravas, Dhritarashtra prepared to leave for the forest. Then Kunti, mother of the Pandavas, also prepared to accompany him. The Pandavas tried to stop her saying she had encouraged them to fight for the kingdom, then how could she leave now that they had won it? Kunti replied she had encouraged them because it was their duty to fight for their right to the kingdom, but she never intended to enjoy it with her sons. Encouraging them to fight for their right was her Dharma, her duty, and accompanying Dhritarashtra to the forest was also her Dharma. How would we have behaved had we been in Kunti's place?

Bhishma once told Yudhishtira there was once a time when there was no such thing as the State. "*Na raajyam naiva raajaa::seet, no dandyo na cha daandikah*" – "There was no kingdom and no king, no criminal and no punisher." There were no jails, no magistrates, no country, nothing. "*Teshaam naa::seet vidhaatavyam*" – "There was not even a constitution." So there was no question of anyone being taken to court for transgressing a certain clause of the constitution. "*Teshaam naa::seet vidhaatavyam praayashchittam kathamchana*" – there was no disciplinary action. Even the death penalty was unknown. "*Puraa dhig danda eva::seet, vadha-dando:dya vartate*" – "Today we have the death penalty, in those days there was 'dhig-danda' – condemna-

tion by the people.' That was the severest penalty. How did such statelessness function ? The answer was :

*Dharmenaiva prajaah sarve rakshanti sma parasparam.*

"The people protected one another with the help of Dharma, the code of conduct."

Dharma is nothing but the constitution that sustains the society. On this Dharma was based our stateless society.

The present problem is, what is to be the basis of social reconstruction ? The answer is Dharma. We once had a stateless society because we gave supreme importance to Dharma, and it will again give us a stateless society one day. Western countries cannot have statelessness. Autocracy cannot bring about a stateless society. An absence of Dharma leads to 'matsya-nyaya', the law of one fish swallowing another.

Western thinkers have conceived of statelessness, but they have no basis for it. We have given the strong basis of Dharma. We have looked upon politics as an instrument of Dharma. This has produced some very strange statements in our history – statements we cannot imagine anyone would make today.

Chhatrapati Shivaji once wrote a letter to Chandrarao More, a courtier of the Badshah of Bijapur, urging him to join the effort for Swarajya. More haughtily replied he was greater than Shivaji because the Badshah had himself conferred the status of 'Raja' on him. Shivaji wrote back saying the Badshah may have made More king but his (Shivaji's) kingdom had come to him by the grace of 'Shri Shambhu' – God. Had God come down to hand it over to him ? Was there a deed saying so ? Still Shivaji said 'God has given me this kingdom.'

In a letter to another associate Shivaji said the establishment of 'Hindavi Swarajya' is God's will. He does not say it is his will, the Bhosale family's will or the people's will. He said it was God's will. When did God say so ? What did God have to do with politics ? Still Shivaji said it was God's will. His entire endeavour was based on Dharma. Thus, none of our great rulers were attached to office.

When Shivaji became victorious, Samarth Ramdas expressed happiness, but look at the words he used. He did not say 'Aurangzeb's rule has ended, my rule has been established.' He did not say 'the opposition party has been defeated.' He said, 'The sinner Aurgangzeb has been worsted. Dharma has prevailed, Adharma has been destroyed.' He added, "The armies are moving all over the world" – not armies of soldiers but armies of Hari-Bhaktas. He did not say his partymen were moving all over the world. And what was the result of this political revolution? He describes it thus – "Ample pure air, water and land are now available for performing 'Snan-sandhya'."

By today's standards this was a trifling achievement. He should have expressed happiness over achievement of office. On the contrary he said the result of the revolution was the availability of sacred land and water for ablutions. This was the feeling of Shivaji, who brought about the revolution, and of Ramdas who blessed him. This feeling permeates our whole history.

Once this feeling is rooted in the society, it is not very difficult to progress towards statelessness. But where we have statism and the feeling that the State is everything, there is nothing outside it, we cannot even think of its withering away.

We now have another opportunity to build the nation. Even though partitioned, Bharat is now in our hands. We can now be the makers of our own destiny. Then what type of society and government do we want?

It would have been easy if we had a model to follow. We thought of the number-one and number-two nations as models. Unfortunately, though they have reached the moon, they have not been able to contain the discontent on their campuses or to prevent people from becoming hippies. We also thought of Communism and Anarchism, but we do not see any solution there either. There too we see the tendency to go back on principles more and more. It is thus clear that we have no model for national renaissance before us.

The progressives of the West could not bring into practice the ideals they placed before us. At the same time we have seen that our society had once succeeded in realising them. Then, is

our decline due to our tradition, culture and Dharma or due to giving them up ? There are now some distortions within us but they have resulted from a twelve-centuries-long period of incessant war. From one end to the other the entire country was fighting foreign invasions. What can be done in peace-time cannot be done in war-time. Hence the distortions. Why cannot we remove them and forge ahead with the basic principles firm in our hearts ?

We have to think comprehensively. Let us study all 'isms' of the world and also give deep thought to our culture and tradition. It is good to study all systems, but not to blindly imitate any of them. Our deepest thinking must be about 'Dharma', which has been the basis of our nation since ages. In view of all these things let us decide to base our national resurgence on our national genius. □

16.

## The Context of the Hindu Tradition

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**F**EBRUARY 19, 1630.

That red-letter day in history when an incomparable personality, Shivaji, was born in this holy land – a personality that had the capacity to create a brave new world out of nothing.

Many great men endowed with many qualities can be compared to Shivaji. As generals Alexander, Caesar, Hannibal and Napoleon ; for sustaining the people's morale in the hours of dark despair Lincoln and Churchill ; in arousing and organising a vibrant national spirit Washington and Bismarck ; in complete self-sacrifice for nation-building Kemal Pasha and Lenin ; as a ruler without longing, Marcus Aurelius and Charles the Fifth.

But with whom can Shivaji be compared for all qualities put together ? With what other ruler can we compare Shivaji, who honoured the beautiful daughter-in-law of the Subedar of Kalyan like his mother ?

Shivaji created the technique of guerrilla warfare nearly three centuries before Mao and Che Guevara. Hundreds of years before the Moscow campaigns of Napoleon and Hitler, he had shown the foresight of setting up possible emergency shelters in the far south in case of war. He initiated marine power 250 years before the development of 'geo-politics' as a science. In an age when the concept of a 'secular' state was not popular in the West, Shivaji established a secular Dharma-Rajya, rule of law, in accordance with the Hindu tradition.

In spite of having carved out a kingdom for himself on the strength of his prowess, he had no attachment for it. He had once

expressed his desire to saint Tukaram to spend his life in chanting the Lord's name, and once he had even offered his whole kingdom at the feet of his Guru Samarth Ramdas.

Shivaji's coronation on June 6, 1694 was not an individual's coronation, it was the enthronement of Dharma. It was the declaration of the establishment of Hindavi Swarajya, the successful rejuvenation of the Hindu Nation, the revival of Hindu Culture and the re-establishment of Vishwa Dharma. The people in those days looked upon the great event as the coronation of the human manifestation of that ideal which the Hindu Nation had nurtured since ages. Shivaji himself expressed this sentiment in the words—“That Hindavi Swarajya should come into being is the will of Goddess Bhagavati. It is the rule of Dharma, not of Shivba.”

This happened three hundred years ago. Everywhere foreign invaders had become rulers, Dharma was under attack, there was an absence of confidence among the Hindus and the feeling that they could not meet the challenge of foreign aggression – and in the midst of all these reverses a child's determination that he would fight the foreign invader, drive him out, and establish Swarajya, Dharma-Rajya. Against him stood kingdoms and empires, huge armies and generals, able politicians and limitless resources. The boy had nothing, except the devotion of a few boys of his own age. And with these paltry resources he fought and defeated powerful kingdoms and established Dharma-Rajya, the rule of law, on Jyestha Shukla Trayodashi. This day came to be called 'Hindu Samrajya Dinotsav'. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh has before it the same ideal, the same dream, as symbolised by that event. It is necessary to understand it.

It seems people find it difficult to understand this historic event and the Sangh. The more our people learn, the more they learn about foreigners and foreign principles but the less about their own things. We no longer have the desire to know about our ideals, our principles and our system, and so it becomes very difficult for us to understand our ideas and our system. This is the result of the modern educational system and propaganda. For instance we cannot imagine what Shivaji meant by the term 'Hindu empire'. Our educated Hindus are familiar with Western ideas but not with the idea contained in the word Hindu. Their education is not Hindu, it is Western. They would translate the

words 'Hindu Samrajya' to say it is imperialism. A wrong meaning, wrong translation, a wrong equivalent word. Two superficially similar ideas are considered one and the same. They do not try to understand the truth about the ancient tradition, the ancient culture and the ancient history of Hindus.

Our nation was the leader of the civilised world at a time when today's highly advanced people were leading a tribal life. So we have many ideas and many systems that the West does not have. Instead of making an independent study of them, people translate words on the basis of superficial resemblance and say we talk of imperialism, and that is bad. At first people used to say Dharma means religion. Now they accept that the two are different. Actually they know neither Dharma nor religion.

This ancient nation of ours has certain special features. We have some special words that have no English equivalents. They can be understood only in their original form. Without understanding this people compare the things we have with the things the West has and insist that whatever they have must be present here too, and foist the faults of Western ideas on our ideas. If we want to understand the term Hindu, we must understand its traditional meaning and connotation.

Shivaji had made it clear that his rule was not his own rule or his family's rule but Dharma-Rajya, the rule of law. He did not strive to set up a kingdom because he longed for power. He created Hindu Swarajya as a means of establishing Dharma. This was why he relinquished power as many as three times. He had handed it over to his guru Samarth Ramdas as Guru-Dakshina. No one obsessed with a political ambition would do so. Only he who looks upon power with detachment, as a means of establishing Dharma, can do so. If without understanding this Hindu background, psychological background and background of atmosphere we try to understand meanings in the Western context, it would be extremely difficult to understand anything Hindu.

How a misunderstanding can result from an inability to understand the connotation of 'Hindu' can be seen in the context of Shivaji. Comrade Dange has said every word of the Hindus has a connotation which should be understood for the proper meaning. He has given the example of a couple of concepts for



which the so-called 'progressives' criticise us. Dange has cited the example of the concept of God's 'Avatar'. Many progressive people made fun of it, but Dange said the word has a special traditional connotation. He said whenever the society declines due to socio-economic distortions some great man rises to remove them and rebuild the society in accordance with a new code ; he is considered an 'Avatar'. So we should not give too much importance to those self-proclaimed progressives who do not understand the real meaning of the concept and debunk it. They neither know nor want to know the traditional meaning of words. They are prejudiced and think all people except themselves are fools. We do not think it necessary to give importance to those who harbour such cheap and childish ideas.

The other point Dange has made is that we on this side also fall prey to similar confusion. One of Shivaji's appellations was 'Go-Brahmana-Pratipalaka'. This has been widely criticised. Cows are animals, so what is so great about cattle-keeping ? Brahmins are a caste. Why protect them ? Some people even see communalism in this. But Dange said this was not so. Both words are symbolic. According to Hindu tradition, 'cow' denoted the prevailing economic system, which was based on agriculture. Thus Shivaji had pledged himself to the protection and strengthening of the contemporary agro-economic system. About 'Brahmin' Dange said it did not connote caste. In the Bharatiya tradition it symbolised law. The kings and badshahs before Shivaji were autocrats. There was no law to control them. Their wish was law. Shivaji established a different system, a system in which the king's desire was not law but where the king would be guided by the law of the society. Hence, 'Brahmana-pratipalaka' was a symbol of the control of the law of the society over the king.

It is thus clear that in our tradition certain words have special meanings. Many words are symbolic. If we do not know what they symbolise we would put wrong meanings on them on the basis of current usage. It would be quite superficial. Such cheap thinking would become only so-called progressives, not those familiar with a deep tradition.

This is also true about the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. Its aim is national reconstruction. We believe the whole of

Hindusthan should forge ahead without its people surrendering their various modes of worship. There is full freedom of mode of worship, but as a whole Bharat is a Hindu nation. People may differ on whether it should be so called, but there would be no difference of opinion on the need of the reconstruction. People may use different words, but they all want reconstruction. Some people want all-round development, some talk of a total revolution. From serious to romantic, everyone uses the words that suit his temperament. However, everyone agrees that the present situation is not desirable and in every walk of life there should be an all-pervasive, all-round transformation that is in accord with the times. Efforts for this are going on in various fields. Those engaged in these efforts wonder what the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh is doing. They are happy to see the Sangh's huge form and great strength. But they also feel this great strength serves no purpose. Instead of doing something for social, political or economic change these people are busy with 'Daksha-Aram'. What is the use of that ?

The Sangh's effort is to bring the society to its natural state. By organisation the Sangh means instilling in every heart the samskars of identification with and dedication to the society. Every individual must feel that he is not an independent unit, he is just a limb of the body-social, he is integrated with the whole society, and that his happiness and grief, honour and dishonour are a part of those of the society. For the inculcation of such samskars the Sangh has adopted the method of coming together every day. The creation of an organisation of integrated and disciplined people is the Sangh's effort, but people do not realise its importance.

Why is it so ? It is because such a thought has no importance in Western thinking. The West does not believe that the transformation brought about in different fields through the medium of an organisation in which every individual has been imbued with samskars would prove stable without being distorted.

What is the Western thinking ? During the last century there was a great debate on mind *versus* matter. Which is fundamental? Does matter control mind or is it the other way ? The debate went on for so long that people were fed up, and Chesterton made fun of the whole thing, saying, "What is mind does not matter ; what

is matter – do not mind.” This intellectual exercise gradually became a part of social science and some eminent thinkers like Marx said matter comes first, it makes the mind ; outer circumstances are the dominating factor and they decide man’s mental make-up. Man’s mind is not an independent unit. It does not affect outer circumstances, circumstances affect it. The basic thing is the outer circumstance, man’s condition. So man does not change circumstances, circumstances change man. A change in man’s mind will not change the circumstances.

This concept came to our country directly or indirectly from the West. It influenced Marx’s followers, as also Hindus opposed to it. So it was held that if we want a change we must first change the outer circumstances. We must first think about what changes we have to make in our social structure, political authority, law and so on. A change in authority and law would bring about a change of heart in the individual. As this change in the individual would flow from a change in the outer circumstances, no special effort for it would be needed. This thought came to this country directly or indirectly and took root in the minds of our Western-oriented scholars for and against Marx. Institutions were set up in its light. Instruments were fashioned. So when the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh says it would begin with the mind and soul of man, bring about the desired change in every heart, set up an organisation of such transformed individuals and thus bring about a natural change in the circumstances, people think this is a very long process. They are not sure if it would be enough to imbue the heart with samskars. But what is the truth ? Hindu thinking is that both react on each other, the mind on circumstances and the circumstances on the mind. But will-power can change adverse conditions. Man’s mind is a power in itself. Because of ignorance of this Hindu concept and because of the influence of Western thinking, people cannot understand the Sangh.

Further, how far has this so-called progressive thought succeeded ? Has a mere change in outer circumstances, political power and law without a change of heart been able to sustain a system ? In this respect the experience of the West and the Communists has not been satisfactory. Milovan Djilas, former Deputy Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia, has clearly said that there has been a Communist revolution in Russia and it has

brought about a change in the social structure, but has not brought about any basic change in the Russian mind. The evils for the removal of which the Communist revolution professedly took place were not removed and new classes came up on the graves of the old. In the name of ending inequality a new inequality has been fostered. Because there was no basic change in the mind of man, old evils persist there under new names.

China has been considered the most revolutionary. In the beginning Mao Tse-tung had even claimed that he would prove the truth of the Marxist principle that circumstances mould man's mind. There was a Communist revolution in China. Had the principle been true the revolution would have brought about a change in man's mind there. But Mao was proved wrong. There was no basic change even in the Communists' thinking, let alone in that of the common people. Even those who led the revolution were not changed by the changes in the social system brought about by the revolution. Mao had to sadly admit that "they revolutionised the society but could not revolutionise the minds of the people and the leaders. Our experience is that the revolutionary of today becomes a counter-revolutionary tomorrow. When revolutionary leaders come to power they gradually acquire vested interests, try to maintain the status quo, and end up by opposing the revolution." So Mao said, "A one-time revolution is not enough. Make a revolution to destroy vested interests. When revolutionary leaders deteriorate after the revolution, they become selfish and counter-revolutionary and make a second revolution to destroy them ; then, when these leaders again acquire vested interests, they make yet another revolution to destroy them." Thus Mao propounded the principle of continuous revolution. There can be no bigger proof of the untruth of the Marxist axiom that outer circumstances would change the mind of man. Mao's principle of continuous revolution proves that a change in outer circumstances does not necessarily bring about the desired change in the mind of man. An independent effort is required to change man's mind.

The ancient traditional thinking of the Hindus is entirely different. We accept that circumstances and man's mind act and react on each other, but man's will-power is the dominating factor. This will-power can elevate him from Nara to Narayana, from

man to God, in his individual life. If we rouse this will-power and instil in the human mind the samskar of integration with the whole society, all distinctions will disappear and a new society will be born. Change in power, law and outer circumstances cannot be the basis for a basic change and a change in the society in keeping with the times. A desirable change first of all demands a change of heart. In accordance with this Hindu thinking, the method of coming together every day for collective activities, inculcation of the samskar of collectivity through collective activities, and the daily psychological change in the individual mind through the sentiment of collectivity, which the Sangh has adopted, will bring about lasting results.

But it is not enough to say there are two different ideologies, or ways of thinking. Wrong means give wrong results. If we feel outer circumstances affect and change man's mind it means our whole thinking is on the wrong track, for today outer circumstances mean power and the law. We then come to feel power can be the medium for a transformation, a revolution, the great revolution – whatever you may call it. This in turn focuses all attention on capturing power. The net result is a change in values of life, a change in the symbols of status.

The history of the world shows us what happens when we give importance to power, the law and other things instead of to man's mind. When historians studied various nations, they were struck by the special structure of the Hindus' national and social life. They saw that social life in this country has never been State-oriented or State-centred or dependent on the State. The Hindu society has been autonomous and self-regulated. We have given limited importance to political power. Under Hindu rule the regime was socially-oriented. Under foreign rulers this changed, but we can see in our entire history that from times immemorial our social life has been self-regulated. So the administration had no impact on social life. Many regimes came and went but the Hindu Nation continued.

Hence our immortality as a people would be preserved only when our social life becomes self-sustaining, secure in its strength, autonomous, self-regulated and organised. If we imbue every individual with such samskars he would be fully dedicated to the society and emotionally integrated with it. A disciplined organi-

sation of such integrated individuals would naturally be capable of tackling problems in various fields of social life. We have a basic difference of opinion with the ideologies borrowed from the West. We want an ideology rooted in the soil, not one borrowed from the West. This is the basic value of the mission of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. It is in this connotation that the 'Hindu' concept should be understood. We can chart our future course in the right direction only if we think of our future in the context of our past. □

## Words and Meanings

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**J**ESUS CHRIST said, "The letter killeth, the spirit reviveth."

Voltaire said : "If you want to talk with me, first define your terms."

The great grammarian Patanjali said : "*Ekah shabdah samyag jnatah samprayuktah swarge loke kamadhug bhavati*" – "A word properly understood and properly used fulfils all desires."

But in the present condition of the country the common people are not taught the real meaning of many important words in our social life. Rather, some ambitious politicians out to serve their own ends try to confuse the people's mind about words.

One such word is 'secularism'. Leaders with vested interests have deliberately spread many misconceptions about it. Nowhere else in the world is this word used as we use it. 'Secular' really means 'of this world'. What Nehru had actually in mind was 'Non-denominational'. From the debate in the Constituent Assembly to P. C. Chatterji's book *Secular Values for Secular India* there has been a lot of discussion of this topic. In the language of the Bible the practical meaning of 'secularism' is : "Give unto Caesar what is Caesar's, and unto God what is God's." That is, the State and religion are different things.

In Bharat the institution of the State has always been secular. The Sangh's second Sar-sanghchalak Shri Guruji repeatedly said, "In Hindu history the State has always been non-sectarian. Hindu rule means secular rule." The cruel religious court of Ferdinand and Isabel cannot be imagined in our country. At the same time it is wrong to translate 'secular' as 'irreligious'. Dr. Ambedkar says :

“It [Secular State] does not mean that we shall not take into consideration the religious sentiments of the people. All that a Secular State means is that this Parliament shall not be competent to impose a particular religion upon the rest of the people. That is the only limitation that the Constitution recognises. Secularism does not mean abolition of religion.”

Thus ‘temporal’, ‘non-sectarian’ and ‘irreligious’ do not mean the same thing. There is a difference in their connotations.

The second confusion is about ‘theocracy’. Because of familiarity with the concept of Dharma and because Dharma is translated as ‘religion’, many people honestly think theocracy and Dharma-Rajya mean the same thing. That it is not so has been repeatedly pointed out. For instance, on the basis of his study of the Shrutis, Smritis, the Dharma-Shastra, the Dharma-Sutra, 66 Shlokas of the Ramayana relating to Raja-Dharma, the Raja-karma chapter in the Shanti-Parva of the Mahabharata, the Artha-Shastra of Kautilya, the Shukra-Niti, and the *Dharma-Shastra* of Mahamahopadhyaya P. V. Kane, which analyses all these, M. Rama Jois writes in his scholarly work *The Legal and Constitutional History of India* :

“Dharma is a Sanskrit expression of the widest import. There is no corresponding word in any other language. It would also be futile to attempt to give any definition to that word. It can only be explained. It has wide varieties of meanings. A few of them would enable us to understand the width of that expression. For instance, the word ‘Dharma’ is used to mean justice (Nyaya), what is right in a given circumstance, moral, religious, pious or righteous conduct, being helpful to living beings, giving charity or alms, natural qualities or characteristics or properties of living beings and things, duty, law and usage or custom having the force of law, and also a valid ‘Raja-shasana’ (royal edict).

“When Dharma is used in the context of duties and powers of the king, it means constitutional law (Raja-dharma). Likewise when it is said that ‘Dharma-rajya’ is necessary for the peace and prosperity of the people and for establishing an egalitarian society, the word ‘Dharma’ in the context of the word Rajya only means Law and Dharma-rajya means Rule of Law and not rule of religion or a theocratic state.



“By virtue of the governance of the same laws on all matters including Raja-dharma, the entire population of this country constituted themselves into one people or Nation notwithstanding the innumerable political divisions constituting separate and independent states or territories under different kings or rulers. Despite the rise and fall of several kingdoms over the centuries, and many devastating wars in the achievement of maintaining the entire population under one system of law and as one people for generations – this was the most remarkable achievement of Indian society and its leadership.”

Another authority on the subject remarks :

“Dharma in ancient Indian jurisprudence cannot be considered a synonym for the Anglican word ‘Law’, since the former has a wider connotation and application. However, in the absence of an exact equivalent for the word in English, ‘Law’ can be accepted as coming close to ‘Dharma’.”

The third confusion is about Nation and State. Actually they are different concepts, but many thinkers who are ignorant of the difference have come to feel that religion can be the basis of a nation. Actually, the life-breath of a nation is its culture, not a mode of worship. If a mode of worship makes a nation, why are not all Christian nations of the world one nation ? It is the other way round. In two world wars in this century Christian countries fought for the protection of their independent national interests. If a mode of worship is the basis of nationhood, why are nearly fifty Muslim countries of the world not one nation ? On the contrary they have fought and are still fighting for their national interests.

Pakistan was created in the name of Islam. It became a State, but not a Nation. The day Dacca raised its voice against West Pakistan, the hollowness of a mode of worship as the basis of the Nation concept was proved.

Bangladesh has declared Islam as the State religion. Is there a nation based on religion there ? Had it been so, even if we leave aside the 15 per cent Hindus, why could the Bihari Muslims who migrated there in 1947 in the name of Islam not become integrated with the national mainstream to this day ? Why have the Muslims

(Mujahids) who migrated to West Pakistan from Bharat in 1947 in the name of Islam not yet been accepted by local Muslims ? Ahmediyas and Shias are both Muslims, then why do the Pakistanis not accept them ? To date the Pakhtoon identity of Pathans and Baluchi identity of Baluchis are alive and vibrant in Pakistan. The Muslims of all these three regions want to break away from Pakistan and set up their own States. Does this not mean that Pakistan is a State but not a nation and that a nation cannot be created on the basis of a mode of worship ? The senior Sindhi Muslim leader S. M. Sayyed, who was the first to table a resolution for the creation of Pakistan in the Sind Assembly in 1947, now openly says he was misled by Jinnah and made a big mistake. He now realises that Islam or any other religion requires a prophet, a scripture, a mode of worship and a heaven. Can we call Hinduism a religion on the basis of these tests ? What prophet do the Hindus have, what book, and what is their only heaven ? Rather, the Hindus say, "*Naiko munih yasya vachah pramaanam*" – 'there is no single sage whose words are the ultimate truth'. Hindus have many sects and they have the capacity to add new ones. Gandhiji said Hinduism has enough space to accommodate Jesus, Mohammed, Zoroaster and Moses.

Atheists like Charvaka were also Hindus. P. B. Ganjendra-gadkar, former Chief Justice of India, said :

"Unlike other religions in the world, the Hindu religion does not claim any one prophet, it does not worship any one God. It does not subscribe to any one philosophic concept, it does not follow any one set of religious rites or performances, in fact it does not appear to satisfy the narrow traditional features of any religion or creed. It may be described as a way of life and nothing more. . . . The history of Indian thought emphatically brings out the fact that the development of Hindu religion has always been inspired by an endless quest of the mind for Truth, based on the consciousness that Truth has many facets. Truth is one, but wise men describe it differently."

In this context Humayun Kabir's quotation from William Capp is worth careful attention :

"The capacity of adjusting and combining seemingly disparate creeds and contradictory systems of belief which more than

any other factor accounts for the unique vitality and longevity of Hindu culture, due to its ability to accommodate dissimilar elements and to give them a complexity and diversity which is probably unequalled in the history of mankind."

One of this author's friends compares Hinduism to a grocery in order to make it simple for the common man's comprehension. A well-stocked grocery will have scores of commodities, but if you ask the grocer for just 'groceries' he would not know what exactly you want, for there is no commodity specifically known as 'groceries'. Similarly there are many sects and modes of worship known as Hindu, but there is no religion known as Hindu.

It is difficult for Westerners to comprehend the Hindu concept. It has various regional connotations, various shades of meaning, and it has various aspects and dimensions. The word Hindu is religious, cultural, international and even universal in connotation. Hence many people ignorant of Hindu thinking are surprised at what some exponents of Hindutva say. For example Swatantrya-veer Savarkar, a towering personality among such exponents, says,

"In fact the Earth is our Motherland and Humanity our Nation. But as long as the law of evolution that lays down the iron command that 'the weak and the cowards are always the victims of the strong and bold' prevails, so long the banner of nationality will refuse to be replaced by that of universality."

Whether or not our 'progressives' understand the comprehensive meaning of 'Hindu' it is clear that it is not a religion. Consequently a kingdom of Hindus can never be a theocratic state. Shri Guruji had said, "Hindu and secular are interchangeable and equivalent terms."

In the context of secularism the historical development processes of Europeans and Hindus have been entirely different.

The Roman emperors at first opposed Christianity, then accepted it, giving it state patronage. The administrators of the various European divisions of the empire became independent rulers, still they were under the over-all authority of the Church and the Pope. This control was not limited to the spiritual sphere, it also extended to the material, political, practical and adminis-

trative spheres. This system lasted for many centuries. It was Britain's Charles the Fourth who first rebelled against this hegemony in the eleventh century. He did not succeed and had to finally surrender to Pope Gregory the Seventh,, but the revolt did initiate a European debate on the Vatican's sphere of authority.

Augustine supported the Pope's authority, while Marsilius of Padua, Wycliffe, Erasmus, Luther, Dante, etc. opposed it. After the fourteenth century the State and the Church ganged up to exploit the common people. Corruption in the Church prospered under the State protection. Before the French Revolution the clergy had become quite wealthy. In France its members had an annual income of around half a million. In addition the laity contributed as much. The abbeys were as luxurious as palaces. One-sixth of the people's earnings went to the Church. The annual income of the Church was around fifteen crore. It was the same in other European countries. As a result the common people rose against the Pope. Machiavelli was the first thinker to openly discuss the informal separation of the Church from the State. The revolt of Henry the Eighth of England against the Pope and the spiritual movement led by Martin Luther against him are facts of European history.

The reformist movement of the sixteenth century gave rise to the premise that religion is an individual's personal affair. The seventeenth century saw the political and ideological advance of secularism. In this connection the names of Althusius Gracias, Hobbes, John Locke etc. are worth special mention. With the growth of intellectualism in the latter half of the eighteenth century, the influence of the Church weakened further. Outside Europe the Fathers of the American Constitution, especially Madison, emphasised the separation between Church and State from the very beginning. In 1846 Holyoake did the job of explaining the principle of secularism. His books *The Principle of Secularism* and *The Origin and Nature of Secularism* have extensively discussed the principle.

On September 20, 1870 Italian liberation forces overran the Pope's Rome. In a referendum on whether the Romans wanted to live under the Pope or in newly-independent Italy, they voted for Italy, which led to Rome being declared the capital of free Italy. On June 2, 1871 Victor Emmanuel entered Rome as a

conqueror. The same year the Italian Parliament passed the 'Law of Papal Guarantees', which handed over the Pope's residence and some surrounding area to him as his exclusive kingdom and the rest of Rome officially taken away from his authority. In 1905 the French Parliament passed a 'Law of Separation' declaring France to be a secular state.

The history of the rise of secularism in Europe has been narrated by the Irish author William Edward Lakey in his book *The Rise and Influence of Rationalism in Europe*.

Opposition to the Pope's theocratic rule began in the eleventh century, and it has gone on increasing till today. This, however, does not mean the Pope's interference in temporal and political matters had ended. Napoleon was staunchly against the Pope, but at the height of his power, he had to bow before the Pope and make a treaty, known as the 'Concordat'.

Bismarck, the iron man of Germany, was against the Pope, but like Machiavelli he was also in favour of Monarchy. Once he had to simultaneously fight against the socialists and the excesses of the Church. A victory on both fronts seemed impossible, so he gave up his well-planned cultural struggle as a matter of strategy and reluctantly bowed before the Pope in 1887. Mussolini carried on an anti-Pope campaign for seven years, but he too had to surrender in February 1929. This compromise gave up the secular principles established by the 'Law of Papal Guarantees' of 1871, although it was a humiliation for Mussolini.

Our 'progressive' thinkers labour under the delusion that secularism prevails everywhere in the prosperous West and that Western regimes are free from the pressure of religion. Actually there are many proofs to the contrary. The learned Russian author A. Basminkov says in the fifth chapter of his book *Freedom of Conscience in the USSR* :

"Even after declaring the freedom of conscience and the separation of the State from the Church and the Church from the educational system as a matter of principle, the bourgeois does not really do so. After coming to power it supported the Church in the atheists' struggle against it. Even today many capitalist countries use the Church under cover of separating it from the

State for the sake of protecting the religion of atheism. Thus, the more atheism spreads and various sects raise their cacophony, the more the Church is being used for giving facilities to the exploiting classes. In many capitalist countries the Church has become a real constitutional part of the State. The State funds the Church and uses it for its own class interests.”

In most capitalist countries the constitution gives a special status to a particular mode of worship and places restrictions on other modes. For instance the Evangelical Lutheran Church is the official religion in Denmark, Norway and Sweden. The Greek Government advocates the Eastern Orthodox Church, while the Church of England dominates in Britain. The Roman Colloquy is the established Church in Spain. Official recognition to any particular sect reduces other religions and sects to a secondary position. In 17 countries of the Middle-East, South-East Asia and Africa, Islam has been given a special status by law. In 14 European and Latin American countries there are official arrangements for the benefit of the Church.

In 22 countries of the world only a member of a particular Church can become head of state. In Argentina and Iran it is compulsory to be a follower of the official religion for getting a job. What then is the point to freedom of conscience? In North Ireland, Protestant terrorists mount attacks on Catholics. They are backed by the British ruling class.

The USA has formally declared freedom of conscience and separation of State from Church. Still, most official functions follow a traditional religious pattern. A session of the Congress begins with Christian prayers. The President himself has to take a Christian vow while assuming office. The constitutions of 42 countries begin with prayers. In many countries judges do not accept atheists' testimony and atheists do not get government jobs. The constitution of the state of Delaware in the USA makes it compulsory for all citizens to attend public prayers. The constitution of Norway expects all citizens to educate their children in accordance with the established Evangelical Lutheran Church. In West Germany there are many Church-conducted schools and other educational institutions. The Greek constitution lays down that education in primary and secondary schools should be in consonance with the ideas of the Greek Christian culture

and national honour. In Israel there is an official body to look after religious education. Judaism is the official religion.

According to a survey done in 1986, out of a total of 166 million Americans above seventeen, 81 per cent took pride in being Christians, 62 per cent believed in Christ's resurrection, 38 per cent believed in reincarnation, and 43 per cent are regular church-goers. Only Ireland provides an example of greater religious influence among Western countries.

An amazing development is that these days Christian fundamentalism is raising its head in 'progressive' countries like the USA. Geoffrey Handon, professor of sociology at Virginia University, has called it a 'new tornado'. Popular protestant preachers like Jim Baker, Jerry Favell, Jimmy Swegart, Robertson, Ben Kichley, etc. are its protagonists.

Those who are openly opposed to secularism demand that those educational institutions that teach secular humanism instead of Christianity should not be eligible for government grants. At the insistence of these people, a one-minute silence was made compulsory for school-children in the State of Alabama, which was later declared unconstitutional by the US Supreme Court. These fundamentalists are opposed to Darwin's theory of evolution. They demand that books teaching secular humanism should be removed from schools and libraries. A declaration of fundamentalism was published by a padre named Francis Shaffer, who has called upon all Christians to use law, agitation and force for the fulfilment of their objective. Another preacher Favell has set up a body called 'The Moral Majority' for facilitating State action to promote Christian values of life. All these events should prove eye-openers for our so-called progressive friends.

Marx called religion an opiate, and during Soviet Russia's first five-year plan Stalin declared a time-bound programme for the abolition of religion and God. The same Stalin had to revive the Moscow Church in 1945, had to name a padre named Alexie as its head, and to recall the complete ban on church activities in Eastern Europe.

For many decades, some 60 million people in Communist Poland would come out on the streets to greet the Pope. More

than a million would attend Mass. Standing on Communist land, the Pope had roundly condemned materialism, the Communist philosophy. After a tour of Soviet Russia, Billy Graham had certified that the prestige of the Church was safe there. This was so because after decades of calling religion an opiate, Russia and China incorporated freedom of conscience in their constitutions. The Communist regime of Russia not only permitted celebrations to commemorate the Russian Orthodox Church completing one thousand years but gave them publicity through official media. Stalin had demolished a cathedral in 1945, but recently the Russian government set out to build another as a sort of compensation. In the days of Perestroika ministers of the Soviet Church conducted public prayers for the success of Gorbachev's reforms.

The confusion surrounding the concept of secularism has deliberately not been dealt with in detail here. It is the most important and fundamental, but it has been publicly discussed many times earlier. Repetition is not called for. The basic confusion is between Dharma and religion, which has been briefly discussed here.

So long as these misconceptions persist, 'Samyag-jnana' (real understanding) and 'samyak-prayoga' (proper use) of this term are not possible. □



18.

## Identification and Equality

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**T**HE 'Samajik Samarasata Manch' (Platform for Social Harmony) was established on April 14, 1983. Its setting up was linked with the process of a basic transformation.

It is well known that conditions in the country have been deteriorating for the last some years. New problems are cropping up every day. Superficial treatment is not enough for boils on the body caused by food-poisoning. What is needed is purification of blood. Political leaders are always in a hurry. So they do not bother with diagnosis. Because of their impatience, they have been carrying on with temporary treatment. As a result sometimes it is Punjab that is on fire, sometimes Assam, sometimes Jammu-Kashmir and sometimes Darjeeling. Political leaders never try to find a lasting solution to any problem.

Had anyone pondered deeply over the problems currently facing the country? Have they been diagnosed? Have solutions been thought of? We see that those great men who thought of genuine solutions were ignored by the society. But it will have to accept its mistake. Our country has produced great men who thought of the basic causes of the problems, and suggested solutions. By coincidence the birth anniversary of two such great men fell on the same day – April 15 last year [1983]. They are respected Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and revered Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, founder of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. They not only diagnosed the problems of the society but prescribed the right treatment.

I would like to begin with how I was first drawn to Dr. Ambedkar. I was then just a youth worker and he an all-India

leader. Till 1950 I had only heard about him and was under the impression that he was the leader of a particular class. Till then I knew neither about his life nor his work.

It was in 1950 that we young men were first drawn to his personality. I was a political worker in those days. At the time two leaders had a special impact on the youth of the country, because both had resigned from Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru's cabinet. They were Dr. Ambedkar and Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherji.

The resignation of both these leaders was an important event in post-Independence days. The common people thought it was an unwise step, as a ministerial position was a rare honour and one should do everything to keep it. Perhaps Nehru did not keep his word about making him Finance Minister, but it was not wise to resign on that issue. Once you are on the band-wagon you would reach your destination one day or the other. "*Ko kalahi phaladayakah*" – one day Dame Fortune would smile. It is the usual practice with so-called progressives to mouth principles to acquire power and forget them after power is achieved. The two men, however, were 'crazy' enough to hold that principles should guide the government, and when they fail to do so one should resign his seat of power. This action enshrined the two leaders in the hearts of the youth. I was one of such young men. In my very first meeting with him I saw the uniqueness of his personality. I was a fresh graduate of 31 and was not much given to evaluation of a person. Still some events had already made a deep impression of his unique personality on my mind. One of them was as follows.

Dr. Ambedkar was on a visit to Nagpur before the first general election. During a press conference held after a public meeting he replied to many questions. After the press conference was over my friend Sharad Sheorey, correspondent of the *Nagpur Times*, informally asked him, "You said your Scheduled Castes Federation will not fight the elections to become an opposition party, it aims at forming the government. Can you say how long this will take?" Dr. Ambedkar at first waved away the question with the words "Better ask an astrologer", but later said – "Look at the Labour Party in Britain. Look at when it was formed and how long it took to form the government. This will answer your question."

Looking to his age at the time one can say he definitely did not think of becoming Prime Minister through the Scheduled Caste Federation during his life-time. Then why did he bother to set up a new political party in his advanced age ? For the common man, for whom selfish ends are the motivating force for all actions, Dr. Ambedkar's action would not make sense.

There was another similar instance. A by-election was scheduled to be held in the Bhandara constituency in the first week of May 1954. The Congress had candidates for the reserved constituency and the general constituency. From the opposition Dr. Ambedkar was the candidate for the reserved constituency and a well-known leader of an all-India party for the general seat. The situation was such that whichever anti-Congress candidate got the second preference votes of the Scheduled Caste Federation would certainly win. On the other hand Dr. Ambedkar's prospects were not bright, because the party with which an alliance had been struck was notorious for grasping the other party's votes but very reluctant to see that its votes went to the party allied to it. This had already been the experience in Bombay. So everybody felt the alliance was of no use.

I was present at a workers' meeting held to discuss the situation. Most people felt if they gave their second preference vote to the allied party the Congress candidate would win and Dr. Ambedkar lose, so the second vote should not be cast at all for his sake. While the discussion was going on Dr. Ambedkar reached the meeting and was told by his supporters that he would win only if they invalidated their second preference vote. He replied : "I have framed the Constitution of India. I can never ask my supporters not to exercise their second preference vote. I can neither permit this nor tolerate such anti-constitutional behaviour. I would prefer defeat." The result was that he was defeated and the candidate for the general seat was elected. He preferred defeat to a winning trick in order to uphold the constitution he had made.

The third incident relates to his conversion. A meeting of prominent workers of Dr. Ambedkar was called by Vamanrao Godbole, Secretary, Indian Buddhist Society, at Shyam Hotel, Nagpur. It was on the eve of conversion day, that is, October 13, 1956. I was in charge of refreshments. Addressing the meeting, Dr. Ambedkar said :

“Now that we are going in for conversion, we must first properly understand our future plan. The people of the Scheduled Castes are our own people. Some of them would become Buddhists. Those who do not are our people because they are of the Scheduled Castes. We are not to limit Buddhism to these castes, we have to spread it even outside the Scheduled Castes. Then those who do not belong to Scheduled Castes but are attracted to Buddhism will side with us. There will then be a class known as non-Scheduled Caste Buddhists. Thus there will be three classes—Buddhist Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Caste non-Buddhists, and non-Scheduled Caste Buddhists. We would get the co-operation of all these three groups to the political party coming into being as the Scheduled Castes Federation. Our party will work on Western democratic principles.

“I know you people are more interested in politics than in religion, but with me it is the other way round. The Scheduled Castes Federation has to rouse self-respect and a sense of pride among the Dalits. They have erected a wall between themselves and the rest of the society. The situation has become so bad that people do not vote for candidates of the untouchable classes, nor do the Dalits vote for other candidates. So we should set up a political party with the help of those who are sympathetic to us, and we should also work with the leaders of other political parties. The time has now come for an assessment of the situation. Those who agree with the principles of the Scheduled Castes Federation will give us political support ; some of them may belong to Scheduled Castes, some may not. Some may believe in Buddhism, some may not. This means Scheduled Castes and Buddhists would be with us as Republicans, and also those who are not Scheduled Castes, Buddhist or Republican. In this way people of one religious belief, one political principle and one social class would come together to give us political support, thus creating a social basis supporting our principles. ...

“Let us at the same time be on guard against the class that rises as a social entity wearing a particular religious mask and also work as a political party.”

This was in October 1956. Looking to his age and health and strategy, one could see that he himself would not be alive to taste the fruits of such a long-term plan. His goal was clear, and

whether or not he was alive to see its accomplishment he would strive for it with dedication. A political leader would not call this wisdom ; he would advise a wise old man not to plant a new tree, as he would not live to taste its fruit in his life-time. Then why did this particular old man bother with a new endeavour ? Because there was a noble ideal before him, and it marked his great personality. Such incidents generated reverence for Dr. Ambedkar in my mind.

Along with high principles Dr. Ambedkar was also mindful of small things that are helpful for building up an organisation.

Addressing a building fund-raising meeting in Damodar Hall, Bombay, on July 14, 1952 he said : “The funds we have collected are made up of contribution of Rs. 25 or more made by various individuals and organisations. The total comes to Rs. 25,709. The amount made up of contributions of less than Rs. 25 is less than Rs. 1,000. That for which the source is not known is Rs. 5,000. Why ? Because receipt books have not been returned. It is possible that they may show an even bigger collection. There would be a natural doubt about this unaccounted amount being misappropriated. To remove such doubts, the receipts must be tallied with the collection. Not returning the receipt books or not depositing the collected funds is an offence in law.

“Here I would also like to say a couple of words to the educated. You must keep proper accounts of contributions made by the poor. Every paisa must be accounted for. There is nothing more sacred than proper accounting of public funds, and there is nothing more heinous than misappropriation of public funds.”

On another occasion he said :

“People ask me why I don’t make speeches and give messages. That I do not do so does not mean that I do not care for you or I do not wish you well. You have to take the times into consideration. You have to assess who is your friend, and who your enemy, and what should be done what time. In such a situation you have to think before you speak.”

To mount a saddled horse is one thing, to set up an organisation quite another. A leader out to set up an organisation must have his feet firmly on the ground. This gives him the capacity

to guide the workers. Here is an example of Dr. Ambedkar's discussions with workers :

“It is foolish to leave your house and enter someone else's. Take care of your hut, otherwise you will find yourself in the same situation as the non-Brahmin party. You know the sad condition of that party. Till 1932 there was co-operation between us. Later some non-Brahmin leaders thought there was no point in remaining outside the Congress and it could be undermined only from within. So they went into the Congress. I tried to dissuade them, but they did not listen to me. Now they realise their mistake, but I am doubtful if they can now build their own hut. A compromise that requires the razing of your hut is not at all acceptable to me. We must first preserve our hut and then do whatever we can. We must take what we get and keep struggling for the remaining demands.

“Our agreement with any political party does not at all mean that we have to put an end to our organisation. Whether it is the Congress, the Socialists, the Peasants and Workers' Party or any other political party, we must always bear this in mind while co-operating with them. In the political field a single individual has no value. If I am respected by the Congress or in the political field it is because the Scheduled Castes Federation is with me. If I lose this support nobody will care for me in the political field. So the leadership of the Federation must keep national interests in mind, distinguish between political friends and foes, and be zealous about guarding the party's identity.

“Man must not think of personal ends alone. He must look beyond the self. This is the feeling with which I work for the Federation. It is Dharma that has given me this inspiration. To fill your stomach is not the end and aim of life. Even beggars do that. Along with maintaining your family you should also work for the welfare of the society.

“Let us purify our minds. Let us concentrate on acquiring qualities. Let us become religious. Getting education is not all. Along with education we must acquire character. Education without character is useless. Knowledge is a double-edged sword. Its use or misuse depends upon the person's character. It can kill and it can also save life. Knowledge can also be used both ways. If

an educated person has character he will use his knowledge for the good of the people. If he has an evil character he would use it as a means for the people's oppression. Character is the culmination of a religious life. If an educated person is concerned only with satisfying his own hunger, does not see beyond his selfish ends and has no inclination for altruism, his life is useless.

“Workers think that politics means elections. Politics is meaningless without elections. So at the time of elections they run about to get tickets. After elections they all become inactive. But in the long life of the society politics is only a short-term phenomenon. Politics is not everything. There are more important things. Politics alone cannot uplift the society. For all-round development of the society, workers should also work in the social, economic, educational and other fields. Because of such excessive importance being given to politics workers have now come to feel that there is nothing beyond running about for tickets at the time of elections, indulging in groupism when you do not get them, turning away from public life on defeat in elections, and gracing a chair on being elected to the legislative assembly or parliament.

“Personally there is no question of my feeling special attachment for any particular worker. Our work is dear to me. He who works more would be dear to me. Elections are like a cricket match. The team that loses does not stop playing. It prepares with renewed vigour for a future victory. This is the attitude that our workers must cultivate. It is very dangerous to feel that the work of the organisation must go on in accordance with one's own wishes.

“There would be differences and arguments in politics. One must learn to forget them. It is not proper to nurse differences. In spite of my having a clean heart I may have difference with other people, but I immediately forget them. Man's mind should be as pure as a flower in bloom.

“Many selfish people have joined the Federation. If they have come to destroy it, they should leave. There is no place for such people in the Federation. It is not possible to ride two horses at the same time. The Federation is not a plant that grows rapidly. It will take a long time to grow, but it will be useful for a long time. Plants that grow quickly die quickly. We do not want such a plant. So those who expect quick results should go elsewhere.

“He who has no courage cannot lead. He who is always ready to die will not be touched by death. He who is afraid of death is already dead.

“He who wants to work in the political field must study politics deeply. Nothing is possible in this world without study. Our workers should deeply study political, religious, economic and other problems. Those who have to lead the society should know the duty and the responsibility expected of leadership. Our leaders have a very big responsibility. The condition of leadership of our society is quite different from that of the leadership of other societies. The work of leaders of other societies ends with making resounding speeches and returning home with garlands. For our leaders this is not enough. For them it is necessary to engage in study, deliberation and ceaseless work. Then alone will they be able to do some good to the society and be accepted as leaders.

“Perhaps you think it is easy to become a leader, but I think it is very difficult. That is my experience. For my leadership is not like those of other leaders. When I started this movement there was no such organisation. I had to do everything. I had to work hard to set up an organisation. Starting newspapers was also my headache. I had to work on all fronts, be it conducting papers like *‘Mook Nayak’*, *‘Bahishkrit Bharat’*, *‘Janata’*, etc., or running printing presses. In short I had to create a world out of nothing.

“Anger is of two types – that which originates in hatred, and that which originates in love. A mother is angry with her child out of love. Her innate desire is that her son should become a good boy. When I am angry with you it is because I wish you well. I want you to keep away from politics because I want equality and fraternity to be permanently established among you.”

Any worker of an organisation, organiser or ‘Pracharak’ would find the above practical advice useful. Its usefulness is independent of time and circumstance. Shri D. K. Pokharnikar and Shri M. F. Ganjre are to be thanked for making these thoughts of Dr. Ambedkar available to all. It was admirable of the framer of the Indian Constitution to provide such detailed practical guidance to workers. It reminded me of an eagle flying in the sky. However high it may fly it builds its nest in a tree on the ground.



It can provide guidance to workers in all fields. As a 'Pracharak' of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh I realise full well the importance of such guidance. It acquires special significance when we look to the thinking and behaviour of present-day leaders. Those who do not belong to backward classes may have naturally found Ambedkar's behaviour rather frank and brusque. When you work with people it is necessary that you talk to them in the language they understand. That was Ambedkar's speciality. He even used the idioms and sayings familiar to the people to whom he talked. He once surprised the people around him by correctly using a colloquial Berar variation of a Marathi term. The learned framer of the Constitution showed that organising the people was possible only when you identified yourself with the love of the people.

Dr. Ambedkar's thinking was so clear and basic that he was at times prepared to face unpopularity while expressing himself frankly. He did not mince words. This many times led people to become prejudiced against him, and he knew this. While explaining his temperament he once said, "Although I am hot-tempered and many times clash with those in power, they should not think that I shall speak against the country while abroad. I have never betrayed the country. The country's interests are above everything for me. At the Round Table Conference I was two hundred miles ahead of Gandhi himself."

On another occasion he said, "Many Hindus regard me as their enemy, but I have personal friends from even the Brahmin community."

Actually many Brahmins and other 'high'-caste people had many times helped Ambedkar's activities generously, and he publicly expressed his friendship for them. Personal relationships and diagnosis of social problems are two different things, but many times frank speech leads to confusion between the two.

It is well known that Dr. Ambedkar's book *Thoughts on Pakistan* had raised a storm. The advocates of Hindutva were greatly shocked. In the contemporary surcharged atmosphere no one had the time to think that there could be a point to the argument in the book. One may disagree with its conclusions completely or partially, but everyone, especially the advocates of Hindutva, must give them careful thought.

That the Muslims, the book argues, are a nation must be accepted without cavil. It advises the Hindus to have no fear for want of a nationally safe frontier in the event of the birth of Pakistan because geographical conditions are not decisive in modern world and modern technique. As the resources of Hindusthan are far greater than those of Pakistan, the creation of Pakistan will not leave Hindusthan in a weakened condition. It also impresses upon the Hindus that it is better to have Muslims (whose loyalty to Bharat is always doubtful) without and against, rather than within and against. A safe army rid of the Muslim preponderance is better than a safe border.

The book is not without its antidote to the poison of Pakistan. It prescribes a sovereign remedy for securing peace and homogeneity by arranging for a total exchange of population, Hindus from Pakistan and Muslims from Hindusthan, as did Turkey, Greece and Bulgaria to solve their internecine wars.

But unlike M. N. Roy's *Historical Role of Islam*, Dr. Ambedkar's book castigates the anti-reformist tendency of the Muslims. It observes that the dominating influence with the Muslims is not democracy. The predominant interest of Muslims is religion, their politics being essentially clerical. The Muslims are opposed to social reform, and are an unprogressive people all over the world. To the Muslims, the book states, Islam is a world religion, suitable for all peoples for all times and for all conditions. The brotherhood of Islam is not the universal brotherhood of man. It is the brotherhood of Muslims for Muslims only. For non-Muslims there is nothing but contempt and enmity. The Muslim has allegiance to a nation which is ruled by a Muslim ; a land not ruled by a Muslim is his enemy land. The book, therefore, concludes that Islam can never allow a true Muslim to adopt Bharat as his Motherland and regard a Hindu as his kith and kin. The spirit of aggression is a Muslim's natural endowment ; he takes advantage of the weakness of the Hindus and follows gangsterism.

Dr. Ambedkar wrote bitterly and at length about the retrograde and anti-national attitude of the Muslims, but his friends did not allow its publication. He was firmly of the opinion that "so long as the Muslim considers himself a Muslim he cannot be integrated with the nation. United India is not possible with Muslims, nor can there be social integration in the country. If a

ship is to be saved from sinking, excess luggage has to be thrown overboard." He was clearly of the view that so long as there were Muslims in Bharat an effective Government was not possible at the Centre.

Dr. Ambedkar repeatedly said Muslims cannot be integrated. Like some foreign element in the body-national, they should be taken out. Once when I met him to get an explanation of one of his statements on Kashmir he said : "I am as much a patriot as you are, but the difference is that I always know where the shoe pinches, you do not. If the Kashmir Valley is to be kept within Bharat, the Muslims must be integrated into the Hindu society. Otherwise it will be a constant thorn in our side. We, the Harijans, are a part of your society, but you have not been able to assimilate us. Do upper-caste Hindus have the capacity to assimilate all the Muslims of Kashmir ? Only after assessing this capacity had I said that it would be better to take out this foreign element."

This conclusion may be subject to dispute and what I said was not more important for Dr. Ambedkar than the thoughts of a callow youth. But I deeply felt that his conclusion was a sad commentary on the present Hindu society's powers of assimilation.

In the middle of February 1942, there were discussions held at the spring lectures series at Wagle Hall, Bombay. Three days were reserved for the discussion on *Thoughts on Pakistan*. Dr. Ambedkar was present at the time of the discussion. Acharya M. V. Donde presided over the meeting. At the express request by Donde, his friend, colleague and an eminent educationist in the province, Ambedkar rose to reply to the debate. He said at the outset that he would not waste his words on those who thought that Pakistan was not a debatable subject at all ; if it was thought that the demand was unjust, then the coming of Pakistan would be a terrible thing for them. It was wrong, he said, to tell the people to forget history. "They cannot make history," he continued, "who forget history. To bring down the preponderance of the Muslims in the Indian army and to make the army safe, it is wise to let out the hostile element. We will defend our land. Do not be under the false impression that Pakistan would be able to spread its Muslim empire over India. The Hindus will make it lick the dust. I confess I have my quarrel with the caste Hindus over some

points, but I take a vow before you that I shall lay down my life in defence of our land." A thunder of applause greeted his speech.

It was natural for some Sanatanist Hindus to resent some symbolic negative activities of Ambedkar, but they too should try to understand him.

It is natural for an artist to feel affinity for his work of art and for an author for his book. Dr. Ambedkar framed the Indian Constitution and the entire country honoured him as a modern Manu. This was his greatest achievement. He kept adequate scope for idealism in the Constitution, otherwise he would not have been satisfied with being called a modern Manu. He did not have superficial love for the Constitution he had framed. He was also aware of its deficiencies. For instance he said :

"On the 26th January 1950 we are going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics we will have equality ; and in social and economic life we will have inequality. In politics we will be recognising the principle of 'one man, one vote' and 'one vote, one value' ; in our social and economic life we shall, by reason of our social and economic structure, continue to deny the principle of 'one man, one value'. How long shall we continue to live this life of contradictions ? How long shall we continue to deny equality in our social and economic life ? If we continue to deny it for long, we will do so only by putting our political democracy in peril. We must remove this contradiction at the earliest possible moment, or else those who suffer from inequality will blow up the structure of political democracy which this assembly has so laboriously built up."

It was Dr. Ambedkar's nature to mount a fierce attack on anything that stood in the way of his goal. His burning of the Manu-smriti naturally angered the Sanatanists. But they must understand his outlook. He used to say he would unhesitatingly burn the Constitution he had himself framed if it proved a hindrance to the achievement of his ideal.

In his speech in the Constituent Assembly on September 2, 1950 he said :

"I framed this Constitution at the request of a majority government. I had to frame it with majority opinion in mind. So I was helpless. If the untouchable cannot be protected because

the Governor has no constitutional powers to protect their special rights I shall be the first person to burn it.”

He applied the same test to the Manu-smriti and the ‘Bhim Smriti’, that is, the Constitution he had framed. When we realise this, many prejudices about him disappear.

The basis of Dr. Ambedkar’s whole thinking was religion, and it was in the name of religion that the Brahmin class had exploited the general people. The Brahmins secured their vested interests by closing all doors of knowledge and status to the backward classes and arranging for their everlasting religious slavery. Dr. Ambedkar was a bitter critic of Brahmins and Brahminism. At the same time he used to say it is the Brahmins who are to blame, not the concept of religion. He said, “There is nobody in the world, except the Communists, who does not need religion. So we too want religion, but we want a good religion. Only that religion is the real religion where people are treated equally and everybody has an equal opportunity for development. All other religions are false.”

If, according to Hindu philosophy, God is everywhere he must also be in the scavenger or the cobbler. Then why does Hinduism have inequality? Lord Buddha passed away more than two thousand years ago, but his religion is still expanding. It has no administrator and no supreme chief. When the Buddha’s end approached his disciples asked him, ‘What will happen to this religion after you? Please name a successor.’ The Buddha replied, ‘After me Dharma will administer you. Oh Bhikshus, accept your Dharma as your administrator.’

All behaviour in the world is guided by religion. If a mother is told she should not feed her child because it is her enemy, it will destroy her beauty and would cause her death, would that stop her from feeding it? It would not, for sustaining her child is a mother’s Dharma. It is this Dharma that sustains all activities in the world. All should observe Dharma, but it should be good Dharma, Sad-dharma; not bad, A-dharma.

Once a disciple named Vishakha asked the Buddha, “What is Dharma?” He replied, “Purifying your mind is Dharma.”

The problem of untouchability will be solved only by a transformation of the mind.

“Education is certainly important, but more important is character. Without character education can prove suicidal. Character originates in religion.”

Inaugurating Atre's film 'Mahatma Phule' on February 6, 1954 Dr. Ambedkar said :

“Today there is no character anywhere in the country. If a country does not have national character, its future becomes a question-mark. Even if Jawaharlal Nehru is Prime Minister, or anybody else, without character the country has a dark future. Only a religion that is properly understood can uplift the country. Mahatma Phule was such a religious reformer. An individual should build his character on the basis of principles like knowledge, intellect, compassion, character and affection. A learned person without compassion is like a butcher. Compassion means love for humanity. Man has to progress even beyond.”

Addressing a women's meeting at Worli Camp, Bombay on June 13, 1953 Dr. Ambedkar said :

“Every person should be pure in mind, word and action .... We offered satyagraha for religion. We have passed a resolution for conversion. We have done everything. Now we must purify our minds. We must try to acquire good qualities. In other words we must now become religious. Being educated is not everything. Good character is an integral part of religion.

“Religion checks bad behaviour. A bullock-cart has two wheels, two bullocks but only one driver. The wheels have to be lubricated from time to time so that they run smoothly. Religion is like the axis of the bullock-cart, it is the axis of the chariot of life. There can be no stability without religion.”

Dr. Ambedkar was also aware of the importance of material-economic progress. He knew that man needed both Dharma and Artha. But excess of Artha became 'Anartha', disastrous. Wealth must be acquired in accordance with religion. The downtrodden need religion the most. In the Roman empire the poor were the first to embrace Christianity.

In fine Dr. Ambedkar's source of inspiration was purely Bharatiya, not foreign. Its basis was religion, good religion.

A class of society that has been subjugated for centuries but has now awakened is naturally aggressive, vengeful. This affects the country's integrity as well as law and order. Ambedkar's followers too included those who wanted to take revenge. But he said, "That would be suicidal. People say the Dalit Federation should adopt an aggressive policy. What is an aggressive policy? Is it in our interests? If we adopt it we will have to suffer for it. They would jail us and torture you for siding with us. You would be taught a lesson." So the better way was to work hard, purify the mind, and remove differences.

Replying to a felicitation in a public meeting at Nare Park, Bombay, on January 11, 1950 Dr. Ambedkar said :

"Initially our politics was motivated by an animus. Our leaders then were narrow-minded and behaved hostilely. To a certain extent I was responsible for this. But now this has to change.

"We were then engaged in working for the good of our society, and we have to keep doing so. At the same time we must also think of how we can protect the freedom of our country. In the past it was free but later it was subjugated. First the Muslims and then the British ruled over us. The lower classes need freedom as much as the upper classes do. We have now freed ourselves from the British yoke. It would be a tragedy if we become slaves again. Hence protecting the freedom of our country must be our first duty."

Looking to the possibility of the depressed classes being impressed with the success of the Communists, Dr. Ambedkar said: "Do not be allured by Communist success. I am quite confident that if we all become one-tenth as enlightened as the Buddha was, we bring about the same result by the method of love, of justice and goodwill."

In his talk given at this juncture for the Voice of America, Dr. Ambedkar dealt with the prospects of democracy in Bharat. He said that democracy could not be equated either with Republic or Parliamentary Government. The roots of democracy lay not in the form of government, parliamentary or otherwise.

"A democracy," he observed, "is a mode of associated living. The roots of democracy are to be searched in the social relation-

ship, in terms of the associated life between the people who form the society." Indian society was based on castes which were exclusive in their life. The voting and setting up of candidates was guided by castes. In industry, castemen of the industrialist occupied topmost posts ; the commercial house was a camp of one caste ; charity was communal. The caste system was a descending scale of contempt. Caste and class differed in the fact that in the class system there was no complete isolation as there was in the caste system.

"If you give education," he concluded, "to the lower strata of the Indian society, which is interested in blowing up the caste system, the caste system will be blown up. At the moment the indiscriminate help given to education by the Indian Government and American Foundations is going to strengthen the caste system. Giving education to those who want to blow up caste system will improve the prospect of democracy in India and put democracy in safer hands."

Dr. Ambedkar was a great champion of democracy. He defined it as a form and method of government whereby revolutionary changes in the economic and social life of the people are brought about without bloodshed." One of the reasons of his opposition to Communism was that pure materialism was not acceptable to him.

Referring to Marx's philosophy, Dr. Ambedkar observed : "Man cannot live by bread alone. He has a mind which needs food for thought. Religion instils hope in man and drives him to activity. Hindu religion has watered down the enthusiasm of the downtrodden ; and I found it necessary to change my faith and embrace Buddhism." Buddhism was independent of time and place and could flourish in any land. He would have no truck with a country whose people preferred bread to culture of the mind. If Hinduism had given the Scheduled Castes freedom of weapons, the country would not have been enslaved at any time, he added.

In reply to the debate on the third reading of the Constitution, Dr. Ambedkar told the House that he had entered the Constituent Assembly to safeguard the rights of the Scheduled Castes. He was surprised when the Constituent Assembly elected him to the Drafting Committee; he was more than surprised when the Drafting



Committee elected him to be its Chairman. He, therefore, expressed his gratitude to the Constituent Assembly and to the Drafting Committee for reposing in him so much trust and confidence and for the opportunity of serving the country. He expressed warm appreciation of the co-operation of Sir B. N. Rau and the secretarial staff, and of the lively interest shown by H. V. Kamath, Dr. Panjabrao Deshmukh, Saxena, K. T. Shah, Pandit Thakurdas, R. K. Sidhva and H. N. Kunzru in the drafting.

As regards the merits of the Constitution, he said that the principles embodied therein were the views of the present generation, or if this was an overstatement, the views of the Members of the House. And however good a Constitution might be, he observed, it was sure to turn out bad if those who were called to work it happened to be a bad lot ; it would turn out to be good if those who were called to work it happened to be a good lot.

Looking to the future of the country, he showed his anxiety and observed : "What perturbs me greatly is the fact that India has not once before lost her independence but she lost it by the infidelity and treachery of her own people. In the invasion of Sindh by Mahommed-Bin-Kasim, the military commanders of king Dahir accepted bribes from the agents of Mahommed-Bin-Kasim and refused to fight on the side of their king. It was Jaichand who invited Mahommed Ghori to invade India and to fight against Prithviraj and promised him the help of himself and the Solanki kings. When Shivaji was fighting for the liberation of the Hindus, the other Maratha noblemen and the Rajput kings were fighting battles on the side of the Moghul emperors. When the British were fighting the Sikh rulers, their principal commander sat silent and did not help to save the Sikh kingdom. In 1857 when a large part of India had declared a war of independence against the British the Sikhs stood and watched the event as silent spectators."

"Will history repeat itself ?" he asked the House. His anxiety was deepened, he proceeded, by the realization of the fact that in addition to their old enemies in the form of castes and creeds people had too many parties with diverse opposing creeds. He, therefore, urged the people of Bharat to resolutely guard against the eventuality of parties placing their creed above the country, or else "our independence will be put in jeopardy a second time

and probably be lost for ever ; we must be determined to defend our independence till the last drop of our blood."

He then turned to the ways of maintaining democracy. He said that the first thing they must do was to hold fast to the constitutional methods of achieving their social and economic objectives and abandon the methods of civil disobedience, non-co-operation and satyagraha, for those methods were nothing but the grammar of anarchy. He, therefore, advised his people : "I would like to tell the Scheduled Castes who happen today to be impounded inside Pakistan to come over to India by such means as may be available to them. The second thing I want to say is that it would be fatal for the Scheduled Castes, whether in Pakistan or in Hyderabad, to put their faith in Muslims or the Muslim League. It has become a habit with the Scheduled Castes to look upon the Muslims as their friends simply because they dislike the Hindus. This is a mistaken view."

Dr. Ambedkar further asked the Scheduled Castes in Pakistan and Hyderabad not to succumb to conversion to Islam as an easy way of escape ; and to all those who were forcibly converted to Islam he pledged his word that he would see that they were received back into the fold and treated as brethren in the same manner in which they were treated before their conversion. Whatever the tyranny and oppression which the Hindus practised on them, he asserted, it should not warp their vision and swerve them from their duty. He warned the Scheduled Castes in Hyderabad not to side with the Nizam and bring disgrace upon the community by siding with one who was the enemy of Bharat.

At the initiation (Decksha) ceremony in Nagpur he said :

"Religion is very necessary for the welfare of mankind. I know Karl Marx has shown a way. According to him religion is an opiate. Man does not need it. His philosophy is that man achieves everything if he gets a full meal of bread, butter, chicken and sound sleep. I do not accept this view."

Presiding over a Dalit conference in Mysore in September 1937 Ambedkar said : "There is no question of my aligning with the Communists. I am a staunch enemy of the Communists, who exploit the working class for their selfish ends."

Observing that text-book Communists did not know the pulse of the people he said, "Can it be said that the proletariat of India, poor as it is, recognised no distinctions except of the rich and the poor? Can it be said that the poor in India recognise no distinctions of caste or creed, high or low? If the fact is that they do, what unity of front can be expected from such a proletariat in the action against the rich? How can there be a revolution if the proletariat cannot present a united front?" (*Annihilation of Caste*, p. 18)

Religion was the mainspring of Dr. Ambedkar's philosophy. Constitutionalism and democracy were a part of his being. He considered Lord Buddha, saint Kabir and Jyotiba Phule his Gurus. He worshipped knowledge, modesty and character. It is to our country's glory that the so-called untouchable classes should give us a great man with such a noble background.

There were many baseless prejudices against Dr. Ambedkar. Here are some examples :

In Maharashtra people like Gopal Ganesh Agarkar gave first priority to social reform. They considered it more important than politics. Not that they were not eager for independence. Still many misconceptions about the social reformers prevailed among the people. It was the same with Dr. Ambedkar.

One such misconception was that Dr. Ambedkar was against independence. But he had clearly said, "It is only in a Swaraj constitution that you stand any chance of getting political power in your hands, without which you cannot bring salvation to our people. Consult your best interests, and I am sure you will accept Swaraj as your goal."

At the time of the Round Table Conference too he made his position clear. He said, "We must have a government in which men in power will give their undivided allegiance to the best interests of the country; we must have a government in which men in power, knowing where obedience will end and resistance will begin, will not be afraid to amend the social and economic code of life which the dictates of justice and expediency call for."

He too had before him the ideal of independence. But he gave the greatest importance to what place the Dalits have under a Swaraj Constitution.

In a very appealing and powerful tone Dr. Ambedkar declared :

“I know my position has not been understood properly in the country. It has often been misunderstood. Let me, therefore, take this opportunity to clarify my position. Sir, I say that whenever there has been a conflict between my personal interests and the interest of the country as a whole, I have always placed the claims of the country above my personal claims. I have never pursued the path of private gain. If I had played my cards well, as others do, I might have been in some other place. I do not want to speak about it, but I did not do it. There were colleagues with me at the Round Table Conference who, I am sure, would support what I say – that so far as the demands of the country are concerned, I have never lagged behind. Many European Members who were at the Conference rather felt embarrassed that I was the *enfant terrible* of the Conference.”

About Ambedkar's stand on the Bhagawa Flag, Dhananjay Keer, his biographer, says :

“Ambedkar returned to Bombay on July 3, 1947. As he was a Member of the Flag Committee of the Constituent Assembly, some Maratha leaders and leaders of the Bombay Provincial Hindu Sabha saw him at his residence. He promised that he would try to put in a word in favour of the Geruva flag if there was sufficient pressure and agitation from responsible quarters. On July 10, Ambedkar was given a send-off at the aerodrome by different leaders of the Marathas and the City Hindu Sabha leaders who handed over a Geruva flag to him when he was about to take his seat in the aeroplane. Ambedkar promised support if there was agitation for the establishment of that flag and with a hearty laugh asked S. K. Bolc, Anantrao Gadre and others whether they expected the son of a Mahar to unfurl the Geruva flag on the Constituent Assembly.

“The Constituent Assembly adopted on July 22 the Tricolour flag with the Ashoka Chakra on it as the National Flag. It is said that Ambedkar put in a word, but as there was no agitation from outside for the adoption of the Geruva flag he threw his weight in favour of the Ashoka Chakra.”

In the initial stage of his public life Dr. Ambedkar made special efforts to rouse the feeling of identification. He knew that mere opposition to the 'high'-caste sections of the society was not enough. He was aware of the efforts for the eradication of untouchability that were being made by Maharaja Sayajirao Gawkwad of Baroda and Chhatrapati Shahu. He was also familiar with similar work being done by organisations and institutions like the Arya Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj, the Brahmo Samaj, the Satya Shodhak Samaj, the Theosophical Society, etc. He knew the declarations made by leaders of caste Hindus for removal of untouchability. This was why he had kept such 'high'-caste persons as Chimanlal Setalvad, Wrangler Paranjape and Balasaheb Kher as President and Vice-President of the Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha founded in Bombay on July 20, 1924. Other 'high'-caste people were also taken into the organisation. Explaining his stand he said : "The purpose of setting up an organisation cannot be served without taking into it people from the class in whose interest it is set up or people affected by similar conditions. At the same time those who set up the organisation realise that the tremendous task of uplifting the untouchables cannot be accomplished without the help of 'high'-caste prosperous sympathisers. If we do not do so we would be harming this great mission." Unfortunately Ambedkar had to give up this initial position due to some stubborn people who thought they had a monopoly in religion.

More than twenty years before he accepted Buddhism, Dr. Ambedkar had decided to embrace Sikhism at the urgings of Swatantrya-veer Savarkar, Dr. Munje, Kurtakoti Shankaracharya and other Hindu leaders. At that time too he had clearly stated that converts to Islam or Christianity became anti-national. He had contacts with the Hindu Sabha but he held that the Sabha had no hold over the Sanatanist class and those who were under its influence did not think like their leaders. He was sad that this prevented a change of heart among eminent people of the society.

While it is true that because of the obtuseness of those in favour of the status quo Dr. Ambedkar had to play a reactionary role in the evening of his life, it is also true that basically his attitude was conciliatory. Many examples of this can be given. Look at his stand in 1930. Justice M. H. Beg, Chairman of the Minorities Commission, and Shri Balasaheb Deoras, Sar-sanghcha-

lak of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, have suggested replacing the Minorities Commission with a 'National Integration-cum-Human Rights Commission'. The suggestion found wide-ranging support. But 54 years before Justice Beg's suggestion and in very adverse circumstances, Dr. Ambedkar had expressed similar thoughts, which people have now forgotten. He had said : "To say that this country is divided by castes and creeds, and that it cannot be one united self-governing community unless adequate safeguards for protection of minorities are made as part of the Constitution, is a position to which there can be no objection. But minorities must bear in mind that although we are today divided by sects and atomised by castes, our ideal is a united India. No demand from minority should wittingly or unwittingly sacrifice this ideal."

This was praiseworthy balance on Dr. Ambedkar's part. Had he not been disappointed with the status-quoists, the country could have derived more constructive benefit from his eminence and activity.

In the present circumstances in the country the problem of social equality has become very complex and multi-dimensional. It has been all the more complicated by agitations carried on by political leaders who do not realise the complexity and are after cheap popularity. Still the solutions suggested by thinking people in the light of the changed conditions go to support the conclusions drawn by both Dr. Ambedkar and Dr. Hedgewar. For instance in a recently published book titled *Competing Equalities*, the author, Mark Galenter, has given the history of social injustice in Bharat, the struggle against it and the constitutional agitations carried on for the fulfilment of objectives stated in the Constitution, as well as the verdicts of the High Courts and the Supreme Court in such disputes. At the very outset Galenter says :

"The Indian system of preferential treatment for historically disadvantaged sections of the population is unprecedented in scope and extent. India embraced equality as a cardinal value against a background of elaborate, valued and clearly perceived inequalities. Her constitutional policies to offset these proceeded from an awareness of the entrenched and cumulative nature of group inequalities. The result has been an array of programmes that I call, collectively, a policy of compensatory discrimination. If one

reflects on the propensity of nations to neglect the claims of those at the bottom, I think it is fair to say that this policy of compensatory discrimination has been pursued with remarkable persistence and generosity, if not always with rigour and effectiveness, for the past thirty years.”

Such an in-depth study of complex internal problems of Bharat by a foreign scholar is indeed praiseworthy. However, he could not go to the bottom of the problem firstly because he did not have his finger on the pulse of the people in this country, and secondly because he was influenced by the historical background of American efforts for the uplift of the Negroes. Still he could reach the perceptive conclusion that “courts can avert the worst dangers by maintaining a precarious balance between competing commitments to formal equality and the compensatory justice, but they may be less capable of addressing problems of cost and ineffectiveness that plague such policies.”

How serious these ‘problems of cost and ineffectiveness’ are can be gauged from the countrywide storm raised by the policy of reservation in jobs, education and government posts. The book makes it clear that the problem of social justice and consequent social equality cannot be solved by such means as constitution, law and the courts.

A collection of scholarly articles has recently been edited by Andre Betelle and published in book form under the title *Equality and Inequality : Theory and Practice*, which seeks to throw light on the educational, social, economic and all other aspects. The articles make it clear that ‘social equality’ cannot be brought about merely by amending the constitution or by making a law. The book concludes that deficiencies in public education cannot be made good by law. Expressing his opinion Betelle says, “Whether Indians can make effective the ideas of equality or not will depend on the firmness with which they are able to apply themselves to the building of institutions.”

Among scholars who look at the problem impartially and as a matter of study Dr. Sivaramayya says :

“The difficulties are further compounded, because the basic law where the provisions of equality, in the part on fundamental

rights, are at variance with those in the directive principles of state policy is itself riddled with contradictions. The contradictions are at least partly the result of the scarcity of resources which prevent the State from matching the obligations of disabilities with the creation of abilities without which the directive principles merely mock at the very poor. There is no way in which the jobless can secure their right to work or the destitute obtain justice in the absence of provision for free legal aid.

“The balance between the meritorious and proportional concepts of equality postulated in Article 16 brings in its wake certain problems quite apart from the inherent incongruence between them. The right of equality of opportunity based on the meritorious concept exists in favour of the individual, whereas the protective discrimination exists in favour of collectivities. The former right is enforced by the courts, the latter is based on the policies of legislatures and their implementation by executives. Conflicts arise out of the varying degrees of emphasis placed on these rights by the judicial and executive organs of the State.”

Summing up the topic of the book in his review of it Sham Lal says :

“They [that is, the authors-contributors] are careful, however, to guard against seductive simplifications. The very purpose of their exercise is to show that things are far more tangled up, and therefore, far more impervious to simple remedies than the rhetoric of those who cast themselves in the role of saviours of poor will admit it. The facts of situation here, once we have a hard look at them, turn out to be far more discerning than stock liberal Gandhian or Marxist remedies make allowance for.”

This makes it clear that this problem cannot be solved by political agitations or superficial remedies. They may produce some short-term result, but they are inadequate for total social equality and will prove inadequate in future. Long-range practical remedies based on basic thinking are required for a permanent solution of this problem. In their absence one may well get votes but the problem would remain.

In this respect both Dr. Ambedkar and Dr. Hedgewar were like saint Tukaram. He distinguished between truth and falsehood, he did not go with the majority.



Neither was tempted by simple-looking solutions. They adopted the way of a lasting solution of the problem based on basic thinking. Despite a surcharged atmosphere and an explosive situation Dr. Ambedkar kept his balance of mind and conducted his agitation by peaceful and constitutional means. Many times he was attacked and his followers wanted to retaliate. Had Ambedkar not controlled them fierce riots could have broken out. His championship of social equality in the face of such adverse conditions was a tribute to his greatness. He had a glorious picture of Bharat before his eyes, a Bharat based on equality. His mind was imbued with pure patriotism. He had said, "the India of my dreams will not produce men like Jaichand or king Dahir's ministers." He tried to reason with 'high'-caste people, but when he failed he was forced to adopt other means. Still those means were constitutional and based on religion. His controlled and balanced thinking can give us an idea of the Bharat of his dreams.

Although we may feel the necessity of an immediate political solution in such a difficult situation we must understand Dr. Ambedkar's diagnosis of the malaise of the nation. He clearly said, "We must try to prevent class conflict, class war in our country. All our problems can be solved only when the whole society is integrated."

It must be noted here that he has emphasised a particular aspect of truth because he had adopted a particular position. (Although Truth is one, different people emphasise different aspects of it.) He stressed that the country should not break up on the basis of caste or class, but 'high'-caste sections of the society did not listen to him, and so Ambedkar was forced to prepare the Harijans for a constitutional struggle against the Government and the 'high' castes.

Another great man, namely Dr. Hedgewar, founder of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, emphasised another aspect of the truth for a solution to the problem. Dr. Hedgewar said it is true we do not want class or caste conflicts, but what is the way to end them? It is easy to say that they are dangerous and should stop, but psychologically such a negative attitude often produces a reaction. To say we should forget differences is one thing, to say our differences are superficial but we are basically one is another.

The difference in the words shows a difference in the attitudes. It is the same thing, but it gives a different psychological impact because of the difference in emphasis and presentation. There is an amusing tale that illustrates this point. Once a magician declared that he had a magic wand and it could produce gold from water stirred by it. He put a very small fee on the experiment and invited people to test the magic. Naturally the crowd was eager to do so. But the magician put a condition. He said the person who wished to get gold out of water must not think of a monkey or the magic would fail. The result was that whoever submitted himself to the experiment kept thinking of a monkey – and there was no gold coming out of the water ! Of course, he did not blame the magic, he blamed the monkey.

The moral of the story is that even good advice, if it is negative, tends to emphasise the thing it opposes. So instead of condemning class and caste distinctions, Dr. Hedgewar took the positive stand that all were one and launched his extreme experiment : he just refused to recognise the existence of castes. He said, "We are all just Hindus, there is no such thing as untouchability." The future will decide if this stand was beneficial for the society or not ; for the present we can only say that Dr. Hedgewar launched this novel experiment. It reminds one of Lord Buddha's sermon to his disciples. He said, "Oh Bhikshus, you have come together from different countries. All rivers have their own existence while they flow through their territories, but when they fall into the sea they lose their separate identities and become an ocean. The Sangh, the Assembly, is like the ocean. All are equal here."

Dr. Hedgewar's Sangh is also like the ocean. The aim of both Dr. Ambedkar and Dr. Hedgewar was to solve national problems, but because they were in different situations their ways were different. They emphasised different aspects. In 1934 the winter camp of the Sangh was held near Mahatma Gandhi's Ashram in Wardha. On Gandhiji's expressing a desire to visit the camp, he was welcomed by Appaji Joshi, Sanghchalak of Wardha. After carefully inspecting the arrangements of the camp Gandhiji asked Appaji Joshi, "How many Harijans do you have here ?" Appaji Joshi replied, "It is difficult to say. For us they are all Hindus, and that is enough for us." Gandhiji said, "Can I inquire ?" Appaji Joshi replied, "By all means." Gandhiji found that there were

many Harijans, but they did not think it necessary to know anybody's caste. The next day Dr. Hedgewar came down from Nagpur and called on Gandhiji. Gandhiji wanted to know from him what the Sangh was doing for the removal of untouchability. Dr. Hedgewar replied, "We do not talk of removal of untouchability. On the other hand we teach the Swayamsevak that we are all Hindus, members of one family. This naturally removes the feeling of untouchability." In 1916 Dr. Hedgewar had told Trailokya Nath Chakravarti, a prominent leader of the Anushilan Samiti, "So long as there is no change in the thinking of every member of the Hindu society, merely driving out the British would not be of much benefit. I am going to launch the task of changing the mentality of every individual."

The fundamental thought that inspires the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh is that the Hindu society is one family. Some years ago a deliberate attempt had been made to spread disinformation by distorting Shri Guruji's speeches. But after the storm subsided people could know his real position. Later the speeches of Shri Balasaheb Deoras, the Sangh's third Sar-sanghchhalak, on this subject during the Vasant Vyakhyanamala in Pune, removed whatever misunderstanding remained. Shri Guruji used to say: "This problem has arisen due to the narrow-mindedness of the 'high' castes. The main task is to eradicate the feeling of untouchability that is entrenched in their mind. It is natural for newly-enlightened untouchables to feel resentful. The only solution to this problem is to remove the untouchability in the mind of the 'high' castes. The feeling of revolt in the newly-enlightened untouchable class would facilitate their progress, but a lasting solution of the problem is possible only through emotional integration." According to Shri Guruji, "Out of the four Varnas not a single Varna remains today, nor any caste. Today there is only one Varna, one caste, and that is Hindu."

Neither Dr. Hedgewar nor Shri Guruji adopted the attitude of social reformers who preached reform. They firmly held that that was for the Dharmacharyas. Dharmacharyas never came together, but Shri Guruji had accomplished the difficult task of bringing them together through the medium of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad in 1966. Dr. Ambedkar also said that if Shri Golwalkar and the Shankaracharya gave different verdicts in some religious

or social issue it would be the Shankaracharya's verdict that the Sanatanist 'high'-caste Hindu would abide by. To those so-called progressive people who disdainfully questioned the Shankaracharya's authority Shri Guruji would say, "The question is not whether you and I accept the Shankaracharya's authority. The question is, whom do the people listen to? They neither listen to you nor to me. They abide by the directive of the Dharmacharyas. So such a directive is the only way to bring about a change of heart among them." Any impartial person would accept this fact. Therefore the work done by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad is more basic than the propagandist work done by social reformers. Dr. Hedgewar's stand is now showing good results. Dr. Ambedkar had the same sentiment in his mind, as numerous examples have shown.

To caste differences have now been added differences of political parties. This is another matter for grave concern. In his last speech Dr. Ambedkar expressed his anguish and called for the protection of national unity at any cost. Thus both these great men had the same ideal before them. The difference only related to the emphasis. Dr. Ambedkar also knew that equality was not possible without social identification. In fact he devoutly wished for it. He defined and described social identification as follows:

"For commonness, to share and participate in common activity so that the same emotions are aroused in him that animate the others making the individual a sharer or party in the associated activities, so that he feels its success as his success, its failure as his failure, is the real thing that binds men, and makes a society out of them. The caste system prevents common activity and has prevented the Hindus from becoming a society with a unified life and consciousness of its own being."

It would be dishonest to say that Dr. Ambedkar's concern for the Hindu society was different from Dr. Hedgewar's.

Both were right in feeling concerned. But equality is impossible without identification. Without it inequality is bound to be produced. In its absence there would be no answer to the question why the intelligent, the powerful and the wealthy should not exploit the others. A person with such exploitative capacity would refrain from using it and instead use his strength for the good of the society, only when he feels one with the society. So oneness,

the feeling of being one family, is a precondition for equality. Equality is the natural culmination of identification. In its absence equality, even if brought about, would not last. And when equality replaces inequality it cannot be the destination, it will at best be a halt on the way. The ultimate goal is oneness.

Dr. Ambedkar said : "The basis of my philosophy is religion. It would be wrong to link it with politics. I have accepted Lord Buddha as my Guru. I have based my philosophy on his teachings. The main parts of my philosophy are freedom and equality, but unrestrained freedom destroys equality, while freedom cannot grow in pure equality. My philosophy provides for some constraints as safeguards against the misuse of freedom and equality, but I do not believe they would prevent their transgression. Only brotherhood can protect freedom and equality. This brotherhood is humanity, and humanity is religion. This brotherhood is also called social oneness. It is humanity, it is religion. Lord Buddha's affection and compassion make for oneness. This is the medium for equality. I challenge all progressive, liberal, radical and revolutionary advocates of equality as the ultimate aim to show even one example where equality has been established by stressing equality alone. Every revolution shows us that the oppressed have rebelled against the exploiter. But according to well-known thinker Frier such a rebellion or revolution is led by two types of people. One of them is that of people who want to remove the exploiters but are not against their values of life. Rather, they want to preserve them, the only difference being that they want to take the place of the old exploiters. In such a situation when a new class of people with the same old values comes to power, exploitation becomes still more oppressive. For the oppressed there is no relief.

"The other class of leaders has different values. It wants to remove the exploiters as well as their values of life. So when the revolution is successful and these leaders come to power they begin a radical transformation in the social structure. But Frier says such leaders are exceptions. When leaders with the same old values bring about a revolution there is only a change of exploiters, and the process of exploitation begins anew. Mao has said the same thing. He said, 'We brought about a revolution in 1949 ; but when the revolutionaries came to power we saw that the

revolutionaries of yesterday have become counter-revolutionaries today.' The need for a cultural revolution was felt to remove them, but while initiating the cultural revolution he frankly admitted that 'the problem does not end with changing the old revolutionary leadership.' For revolutionaries who come to power become counter-revolutionary again and again, and a revolution would be repeatedly required to change them. Thus every ten or fifteen years there would have to be a revolution. Mao Tse-tung's theory of continuous revolution is well known.

"Thus when there is a reaction or struggle against the exploiting class it is vitiated with a feeling of vengeance, and so destruction at the hands of an uncontrolled mob becomes inevitable. It cannot produce a system that would bind the society together. There is no possibility of the welfare of the exploited class. Leaders of the revolution become the exploiters. Without naming names it can be seen that those who had led the revolt against the prosperous and 'high'-caste people have now acquired estates, and those who had sided with them have now raised the banner of revolt against them. Thus, although a revolt against an exploitative system is a natural process, it is not a lasting solution of the problem. For such a solution one must be prepared for both types of unpopularity. On the one hand are the vested interests who will be affected by a successful revolution, on the other the exploited, who would be angry enough to become extremists. The leaders of the exploited will have to suffer the anger of both in order to work in a balanced and constitutional manner.

"The exploited and the exploiters are all parts of the same society, members of the same family. They are all to be looked after, but like the ailing members of the family, or like the very young, the economically and intellectually backward sections deserve special care. Social integration is the way to do so. Its absence will create a reaction that would lead to continuous revolution. That would never be the right direction. Mahatma Phule's words, springing out of experience, deserve deep study. He had said, 'Let the Bhils, Kolis and the least privileged become learned and thoughtful. For unless all become one, 'Ekamaya', the 'nation' cannot come into being'."

History has many examples of how, when the exploited have the same values of life as the exploiters, they themselves become

exploiters after a successful revolution. The Negroes are one such instance.

In British Guyana the population has 33 per cent Negroes and 52 per cent Indians. During the days of the British empire the Negroes were greatly oppressed, so they hated the British and had the sympathies of the Indians. After the Second World War the British transferred power in some countries including Guyana. It was then hoped that the Indians would benefit from independence. But international powers like the US, Britain, France and Holland set up the Caribbean Community and incited racial hatred for Indians among the Negroes. As the Negroes were a minority it was expected that the Indians would form the government, but the gang of four nations introduced the system of voting by proxy, so that the Negro minority could come to power. Under this system Negroes living abroad were given voting rights, so that the local Indians became a minority. The US, which was hostile towards Dr. Chedi Jagan, played a leading role in this dirty game. After coming to power with the aid of foreign powers, the Negroes changed their attitude. Their enmity for the British was transferred to the Indians. The Negroes and the British ganged up against the Indians, and the Wismar slaughter of May 25, 1964 was repeated from place to place. Projects like the National Service Scheme were started, under cover of which Indian women were raped by Negroes. There was open discrimination against Indians in administrative services and public life.

Thus it is not enough for the exploited to be rebellious, they must have different values of life, otherwise when they become victors they become still greater oppressors. The Negroes of Guyana, Trinidad, Surinam are instances in point.

The distinction of touchable-untouchable in the Hindu society cannot be compared with the White-Black distinction of the USA or the citizen-slave distinction of ancient Greece. Although untouchability is an unfortunate historical fact, one cannot deny that we are all units of one nation. At the same time, as Phule asked, is the concept of a nation possible when a collective mind is absent, and is a collective mind possible in the face of class distinctions in the society? Eradication of this feeling of separateness and filling everybody with the determination to live together sum up the essence of 'social identification.' This is the only way

to remove social inequality and instil unadulterated nationalism in every heart.

Social oneness is also necessary for establishing enduring equality. Identification is the guarantee for equality. People do not trust those indulging in tall talk. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's quiet system of working through personal contacts may be time-consuming, but it will rouse the society. Unity cannot be created by rousing selfish interests among the people or by causing conflicts between the classes. We want a permanent solution. So without indulging in tall claims we have to take slow but concrete steps towards a natural transformation through social consciousness.

Once we know the right way, we have to increase our speed of progress. Success is surely ours. How soon we achieve it depends upon our speed. Whether it is Dr. Hedgewar's effort or Dr. Ambedkar's effort, or even the efforts of those who we thought had vested religious interests and could not become social reformers but whose decisions were taken in the light of the gravity of the situation – we have a cumulative result. The 'Dharma Sansad' session of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad bears this out. The fifth point in the code of conduct unanimously adopted in that Sansad called for bringing the realisation of equality and integration to our neglected and backward brethren by way of rousing dignity of labour. The second point of the code appealed to Dharmacharyas to undertake Padayatras for removing hostile behaviour towards weaker sections of the society and to establish amicable relationships between the classes. This is an excellent example of concerted efforts by all. 'Social equality' is a Govardhan mountain that we together have to lift up.

Offering his felicitations to Dr. Ambedkar on his 50th birth anniversary in 1942, Savarkar observed : "Ambedkar's personality, erudition and capacity to lead and organise would have by themselves marked him out as an outstanding asset to our Nation. But in addition to that the inestimable services he has rendered to our Motherland in trying to stamp out untouchability and the results he has achieved in instilling a manly spirit of self-confidence in millions of the Depressed Classes constitute an abiding, patriotic as well as humanitarian achievement. The very fact of the birth of such a towering personality among the so-called



untouchable castes could not but liberate their souls from self-depression and animate them to challenge the supererogatory claim of the so-called touchables." "With great admiration for the man and his work," Savarkar concluded, "I wish Dr. Ambedkar a long, healthy and eventful life."

In a brief but significant message sent to a Souvenir published by Dr. Ambedkar's followers in 1963 on the occasion of his 73rd birth anniversary, Shri Guruji said :

"I consider it my duty to pay respects to the sacred memory of revered Dr. Ambedkar. Swami Vivekananda, who gave Bharat's noble message to the world, had said that the poor and the ignorant of this country were his god. To serve them, to revitalise them, to uplift their material life is service to God. He attacked the untouchability created by the customs of the 'high' castes. He challenged people to reconstruct the society. Dr. Ambedkar, who had suffered political and social ostracism, accepted this challenge. He made a life of respect possible for a very important class of people that was living a life of ignorance, hardship and humiliation. This was his unique accomplishment. Our nation will always be indebted to him.

"Swami Vivekananda had said the emancipation of Bharat was possible only through a blending of Jagadguru Adya Shankaracharya's intellect and Lord Buddha's great compassion. Dr. Ambedkar has fulfilled an important part of Swami Vivekananda's expectation by accepting and activating Buddhism. His sharp and towering intelligence had knowledge of the deficiencies of Buddhism. He has even referred to them. But it seems that he may have accepted Buddhism because he was inspired by the thought of uplifting humanity through social equality, purity and brotherhood and because he felt belief in Buddhism was imperative for the advancement of the nation and mankind. Lord Buddha had also struck blows at contemporary customs for preserving the pure form of Dharma and for improving the social system. His objective was not to break away from the society. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar has also striven to purify our eternal society for its own good and for the good of Dharma. I very much believe that his object was not to found a sect apart from the society. So I look upon him as a worthy successor of Lord Buddha in this age and bow to his sacred memory."

The problems of the depressed classes of Bharat and the Negroes of America cannot be compared. Our so-called Dalits are racially our own people. So the American example does not apply to Bharat. Still we can learn a lot about the political and social problems there from the struggle of the Negroes. From this point of view, Sterling Tucker's book *For Blacks Only*, published in the last decade, is worth study. In the introduction to the book the publisher says :

"The polarisation of America continues. Black (and White) radicals call for the overthrow of the Government, for the destruction of what they believe to be a pervasively racist society. Theirs is the voice of violence. Responding are those who demand order at any price – additional laws, harsher penalties, the prompt and sometimes indiscriminate use of police and the National Guard Force. These too are the voices of violence. Too often the voices of extremists are the only ones we hear, and we begin to believe that we have to choose between them."

In his Lincoln Memorial Speech of 'The March on Washington', John Louise had said in 1962 :

"The Civil Rights Bill is too little and too late. There is not one thing in that bill that will protect our people...."

"We will not wait for the courts to act, for we have been waiting hundreds of years. We will not wait for the President, the Justice Department, nor Congress, but we will take matters into our own hands and create sources of power outside any national structure..... The revolution is at hand..... The Black masses are on the march. We shall pursue our own scorched-earth policy and turn Jim Crow to the ground – non-violently. We will make the action of the past few months look petty."

Another leader of the Negro movement, Bayard Rustin, said in 1964 : "The Negro community is no longer taking Martin Luther King's brand of non-violence. No Negro leader, if he wants to be listened to, is going to tell any Negroes that they should love White people. Furthermore I would not do it because I do not encourage that kind of psychological dishonesty. They don't love them, they don't need to love them, there is no basis on which they can love them. Who can love people who do these things to people?"

Even in the America of such great men as Abraham Lincoln, Booker T. Washington and Martin Luther King, racism became so intense due to extremist leadership on both sides that the process of an understanding between the two parties came to a halt for some time. It is remarkable that in spite of the explosive situation and the polarisation between the mental attitudes of the two sides some leaders of the Negro community kept their balance of mind. One of them was Sterling Tucker. Tucker believes there is another way of sanity and realism. He believes there are at hand within the system effective tools for change.

Tucker begins by providing an overview of the civil rights movement and why it failed. He discusses the meaning of Black power, suggesting that this concept initially released wholesome energy, but was not able to offer strength, purpose and cohesion to the equal rights movement. Turning to the assessment of the national mood he shows that fear and guilt have prevented White Americans from understanding Black anger. Misconstruing the nature of Black violence, Whites have enshrined 'law and order' at the expense of justice. Then he proceeds with an analysis of realistic strategies. Having shown the failure of Black radicals to relate to the realities of the American scene, he considers separatism as a concept, showing its dangers as an ideology as well as its constructive uses as a temporary tactic. He deals at length with the question of alliances and suggests the ways in which Whites, earlier banished from Black organisations, can be enlisted again without compromise.

Drawing on his experience as head of Urban League Field Services, he shows how broader elements of society can be engaged in an attack on the problems of education, employment, crime, housing, police relations and political power. The emphasis maintained throughout is that contrary to radical rhetoric, the anger of the Black American can be channelled to work for change within the only framework available to its contemporary American society.

The Urban League has been active since 1910 but it became a 'Civil Rights movement' after 1960. Although it adopted various strategies their aim was the same integration. Tucker says :

"The only question was how fast integration could be achieved. Except for the isolated fringe groups of Black Muslims there was

no talk of separatism then, no thought of it. The very premise of the movement's legal action was that separatism bred and perpetuated inequality. The years of unremitting efforts that triumphed in the landmark cases of '*Sweat vs. Painter*' in 1950 and '*Brown vs. Topeka*' in 1954 were inspired by the conviction that only in integration could equality come."

In the meanwhile there were impediments in the work of the Urban League due to certain incidents that lent strength to extremists on both sides. Yet Tucker still believes that equality is possible only through integration. On the strength of this belief he provides guidance to his Negro brethren on future strategies in his book. Before that the undesirable results of the extremist policies that Negroes had adopted under the influence of emotion were coming to the surface. This was one of the reasons why the Negroes accepted Tucker's stand. His strategy was briefly as follows :

It would be suicidal to conduct an agitation based solely on racism. It is necessary to organise the Negroes, but narrow Negroism should not be the basis of such an organisation. There are also White Americans who want the uplift of the Negro community. If the Negroes adopt a narrow attitude they would lose their sympathy and support. There are also other problems that face both the Black poor and the White poor. It is possible and useful to bring them together on one platform on the basis of such problems. During the last 70 years the Negro population has been reduced to 11 per cent, so if the Negroes do not think of a wide joint front they would lose the sympathy of other people due to their narrow-mindedness. Due to their being an such a minority, it would not be possible for them to struggle alone and win.

Tucker says :

"We are Black poor and White poor, Black workers and White workers, victims of a system whose income distribution is so inequitable as to be almost unbelievable ....

"If we Blacks are ever to reach our goal of a livable life in America, if we are ever to escape the poverty that grinds us down, we must ally with the Whites who are victimised too. No matter if they suffer less than we because their skin is not black. They still are oppressed, and together we must make common cause

against the tax laws that pamper the rich and impoverish the poor, and a common front in our fight for a guaranteed annual income.... Father Geno Baroni, an Italian-American Catholic priest .... reminds us that ‘the danger is terribly real that the demagogues of vote will prey on the anguish of these communities and will further divide those who should be natural allies.’”

Here it must be borne in mind that 50 million Americans live below the poverty-line, Negroes, Puerto Ricans and Mexicans being in a greater proportion to the population. So far as the total American population is concerned there are more Negro poor than there are White poor. The proportion of Negro poor to the Negro population is very high, while that of White poor to the White population is much less. This supports Sterling Tucker’s stand for a joint front of Black and White poor on selected problems. For this a new leadership that would present a comprehensive policy as a strategy would be required. The leadership so far had a vested interest in racism and was after cheap popularity.

What Tucker said about the future strategy of the Negroes holds good for the depressed community of Bharat – “where once noble principle and rhetoric stood in the way of practical change, and the image of the leader obstructed progress for the people, the arts of collective bargaining are being practised.”

“The new breed of leader is ready to concentrate his efforts. He is willing to be a big fish in a small pond. He is concerned that the water should not be polluted in that small pond, and he has the patience to listen and talk with the people.

“In the past the organisation that has traditionally predominated in the Black community has been social – church guilds, sororities, men’s clubs.... While still active, even these clubs now justify their existence with do-good projects. For the Black community has become issue-oriented. Where it once left action on issues to the ‘leadership’ on top .... it is now seizing responsibility itself. In consequence the ‘Negro leader’ of the community, the ceremonial spokesman, is replaced by a proliferation of local grassroots leaders focused on separate causes and supported by genuine followerships. Where before there would not have been a change for a neighbourhood-level organisation to get much attention or exert much influence, such organisations can now

affect City Hall. The shore-front leader whose name may not be known downtown has his say now in what housing comes up or goes down in his block. Something is at work that could be called democracy, and it is forcing relevance, responsiveness, and a greater measure of integrity on the higher-level Black leadership.

“The days of the ceremonial Black leader are past.... Adam Clayton was defeated because he had come to function as though he were a ceremonial leader..... Where previously he had provided services to his district, he was content to become a symbolic figure. That is no longer enough to today’s Black community. The ceremonial leaders are being disposed of unceremoniously.

“We see, then, a leadership emerging that is of the people. Schooled in the grassroots problems of the community, it is receptive and responsive to the people’s needs. It is authentic. As long as their relevance is real, these leaders have a new authority and a new freedom to act.” □

## 19.

# Backward Brethren

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**T**HESE DAYS many statements are being given, articles written and propaganda made on solutions to the problems of our backward brethren and on how to undo the injustice done to them. But the more the propaganda the graver the problem grows. The disease is actually aggravating with the treatment. Why is this so ? Is there some basic deficiency in looking at the problem ?

The answer is that despite goodwill a negative attitude in any problem produces a negative result. If we try to eradicate the caste system because it has become unjust it becomes all the more entrenched. Those who try to destroy the caste system themselves become a caste.

Still the present situation is not without hope. For example some values of life, like good character, good qualities, honesty, etc., are still accepted. Even a blackmarketeer wants his clerk to be honest. Below the small and narrow attitudes we still see reverence for cultural values of life. This is a good sign. However vitiated the atmosphere may be with casteist and other narrow feelings, those working selflessly for the good of the society are still respected.

Another good sign is that people with separatist tendencies and different opinions come together in times of a common difficulty. During common calamities like the Chinese aggression of 1962 and the Indo-Pak wars of 1965 and 1971 the people sank their differences and rose like one man. This awakening, this unity, was short-lived, but it proves the possibility of unification on a common platform. This is good.

What we have now to think of is, what is the common subject, the common objective, which would inspire the people to rise above narrow-mindedness, differences and hatred and unite if its importance is explained to them? Foreigners spread many misconceptions to weaken the thread of nationalism in our country—like saying the Aryans came from outside, the Vedas are purely Brahmin literature, etc. Dr. Ambedkar disproved all these misconceptions and stated that the word Arya does not denote a caste, it denotes a quality. All Varnas contributed in composing the Vedas. Even the great Gayatri Mantra was revealed by sage Vishwamitra, who was not a Brahmin. Ambedkar further said, “There was no untouchability in Vedic times. There were common regulations for all Varnas. Anyone guilty of a social offence was ostracized for some time, even if he was a Brahmin.” Providing proof for this statement he wrote, “During the era of emperor Chandragupta the custom of untouchability started due to certain historical reasons, but that should not adversely affect the fundamental importance of national integration.”

Ambedkar held that we are all parts of one nation. His stand on nationalism was firm and pure. He urged that “the society would have to come forward to undo the injustice done to our backward brethren during the last some centuries due to evil customs, and agitations would have to be launched, but not at the cost of national integration.”

The history of the origin and growth of untouchability has been constantly discussed and analysed. This is of course necessary for a diagnosis of the disease, but the treatment has also to be considered. In the present changing social and economic situation a merely negative discussion is pointless. The country is now in the age of industrial technology. We have to give careful thought to how this development would affect the problems of untouchability and poverty. People of various castes work together in big industries in the cities, eat together and forget caste distinctions, which they recollect when they return to the village. A new structure is coming up with the new technology. We now notice new meanings and new dimensions of the collective feeling. Common interests are being formed. If instead of taking these changes into account and studying the new situation the intelligentsia busted itself with controversies like ‘should the Manu-



Smriti be burnt or worshipped' it would be an irrelevant folly. The first industrial revolution brought about a change in technology and in the distribution system. A 'technocrat' class emerged out of this, but Marx's analysis of it is now outdated. So instead of raising the slogan of 'demolish caste distinctions', the need of the hour is to study the good signs emerging out of the changing social structure and to think of what common objective would have to be newly established for social integration. Clear thinking is required for the basis of a new organisation and a new sense of oneness.

The Government of India Act of 1935 promoted casteism and provincialism. The present electoral process also promotes these differences. This is a big impediment in the creation of an integrated social force. So we need constructive thinking, we need a firm and socially beneficial position that rises above election politics. Some signs indicated earlier can be helpful in this respect.

Here I am again reminded of Dr. Ambedkar. I had the good fortune of not only coming into contact with him but of exchanging ideas with him. These opportunities revealed to me his purely national and constructive point of view. A few days before he embraced Buddhism I said to him, "Many injustices like untouchability were done and atrocities committed in the past, but now some of us young men are trying to eradicate these faults and to set up a healthy social system. Are you aware of this?"

He knew I was a Sangh Pracharak and said, "You are talking about the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. Do you think I have not thought about this? The Sangh started in 1925. In the past 27-28 years its strength may have risen to, say, 27-28 lakh. At this rate how much time will be required to bind this huge society with the thread of unity? I know algebraic progression has a different rate. Still a long time will be required. But the situation will not remain static during that time. I too might not be alive. My main problem is to give a definite direction to my community before I am no more.

"Today my people are oppressed, exploited. A gradual awakening is taking place among them. Naturally there is some anguish and some enthusiasm. Such people can quickly fall prey

to Communism. But I do not want my people [the Scheduled Castes] to fall prey to Communism. I have to guide them from the national point of view. You people are also working for the nation through the Sangh. Still I feel if I do not give a direction to my people, and if they turn to Communism, you people would not be able to bring them back to the national mainstream. It is not a question of right or wrong, it is simply that they will not listen merely because you tell them.

“So I have to make all arrangements before I go. Remember, Ambedkar is a barrier between the Dalits and Communism, as Golwalkar is between caste-Hindus and Communism.”

The purpose of recounting this conversation here is to show that Ambedkar thought about the problems of and injustices done to the oppressed and exploited brethren with a feeling of oneness with them, not as a benefactor, and pondered over a nationalist solution. Finally he set aside all temptations and concluded that Buddhism, being of Bharatiya origin, would not affect the nationalism of his community. This is the constructive attitude we need today.

It is the experience of the whole world that if you have a noble ideal before you you forget small differences. Love alone can do away with the misery of our oppressed brethren. Ours is an ancient nation. We have seen ups and downs, happiness and misery many times, and we still endure as a nation. This nation was not born to be destroyed by calamities. If we act wisely and control selfishness we can still scale the greatest heights. Our nation has the inherent capacity to triumph over all difficulties and divisive forces and establish integration again.

During the last forty years it has become a fashion to blame the working class for industrial unrest. But it is generally not accepted that in general the management of the private sector and the officers of the public sector do not understand the psychology of the workers. They are neither consulted nor taken into confidence while deciding the national or industrial policy as related to them or in the planning process. On the other hand they are always expected to give whole-hearted co-operation to the government and the management. Trust given is trust begotten, but the government has no trust in the working class. Naturally

workers' resentment has gone on increasing. It is not proper that while other people may not fulfil their duty to the nation the working class should always be expected to make sacrifices for the country. Today's worker wants to know if the industrialist, the government and the manager are honest to him. Even if he sees a little bit of it he would respond to the call of national leaders and the government.

The worker also wants to know if the planners and the industrialists would properly implement all labour laws. Would they accept bipartite or tripartite understandings and directives of Boards *in toto* and without delay? Would they discourage immoral and illegal exploitation of labour? Would they voluntarily accept a generous and simple labour policy?

It is a matter of concern that most workers, whether organised or not, suffer from a sense of insecurity. A big section of the working class is still outside the legal definition of a worker. Problems of the workers of the industrial security force, the armed forces, the police, religious organisations, the foreign service and contractors still remain. The exploitation of the daily-wage-earner continues as before. For want of planned and organised efforts all these problems are becoming complicated. If we honestly want to become partners in national reconstruction we require a new thinking to solve these problems.

Our basic objective is not only to solve problems but to rejuvenate the nation. Today's labour has no universally accepted leadership or organisation. The leadership that exists is fragmented and weak, and a new attitude of shocking the established beliefs is emerging. Formerly there were certain points of belief, but now the common man is becoming cynical. He has begun to doubt every individual, every party, every event. Cynicism is contagious. If old beliefs are destroyed, if those who were trusted prove to be unworthy of trust, man loses trust not only in that individual or institution but in everything else as well. This is the gravest danger for the country.

If such cynicism and disbelief persist for long, democracy would be jeopardised. The people's will to live as a free nation would be broken. This is a big challenge for all advocates of nationalism. Adversity brings opportunity. So the present

atmosphere of distrust is an opportunity for nationalist thinkers. The vacuum created by an absence of belief is to be filled by nationalist workers with their national spirit, idealism, character, selflessness and a feeling of oneness with the labour class and backward brethren. We have to fill this void with the truth that there is an organisation of nation-builders that is worthy of trust, a champion of the working class and a servant of the nation.

From this point of view we look upon labour organisation as a political organisation system, not merely an economic system of organisation. We are neither a part of any political party nor is a solution to the problem of bread our only goal. We are certainly seized with the problem of how to render relief to the sixty per cent people of the country who live below the poverty-line and how workers could receive minimum wages and basic amenities, but the basic point is that this is our nation ; we have to make it prosperous and powerful ; we shall strive to make it the world's greatest nation. Today Russia is the first nation for some, America the first for others and our leaders keep going there. We want to change this and create a situation in which any nation wanting to do anything that would affect the world situation would first have to take Bharat's views into account. We want a Bharat with this type of leadership.

On the one hand we have to uplift the oppressed and neglected sections of the society, provide them the wherewithal of life and arrange their educational progress, and on the other equip them with spiritual leadership qualities. A nation in which sixty per cent people live below the poverty-line cannot lead the world on the strength of just ten per cent capitalists and scholars. So our twin inspirations are oneness with the downtrodden and the deprived, and national ambition.

When we think of the problems of the labour class we think of its duties along with its demands. Whenever the society was in danger our nationalist workers came forward to do their duty by the nation. They faced great dangers and did what was expected of them during the Chinese aggression of 1962, the conflict with Pakistan in 1965, the Bangladesh war in 1971 and the internal Emergency in 1975-76. Many people ask us why we did all this when our organisation is not a part of the political system. The answer is that we may not be political but we are national and

democratic. We are an integral part of the comprehensive effort at national reconstruction that is going on.

Our Vanvasi brethren have an important place in our society. The British used various means to keep them away from the rest of the society. The word 'Adivasi', aboriginal, was a part of those tricks. As a result the Vanvasis, tribals, began to consider themselves a distinct entity. We recorded their freedom struggles against the foreign power in our history books, but we forgot that our 50 million Vanvasi brethren (including nomadic tribes) who live in 5,000 remote villages, are divided into 427 forest tribes and speak more than 150 dialects are actually our labour force. They are not a separate entity. Their problems are our problems. After Africa, Bharat has the world's biggest tribal population. They are poor, ignorant and in the grip of superstitions and customs. According to a report of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Commission atrocities on them are on the increase. More and more of them are being killed, their huts burnt down and their women raped and pushed into prostitution. Their diseases, their debts and their exploitation are mounting fearfully. There are no minimum wages for them. Drinking-water has become an acute problem for them. The slogan to liberate the tribal Bandhua labourers has proved a sham. Bharat's first forest policy, fashioned in 1894, was against the Vanvasis. The law of 1927 stripped them of their rights. In British days the administration struck at the traditional rights of the Vanvasis. In 1800 Sagwan trees of Malabar were felled to build ships. Since then forest trees have been indiscriminately felled for making railway sleepers, for military uses during the two world wars, for paper manufacture, etc.

The national forest policy chalked out after Independence in 1952 was not implemented. No appropriate amendments in the Forest Act were made. Forests were thoughtlessly cut down. Hills are losing their foundations. Pollution is on the increase. Flora and fauna are being destroyed. The most important point is, habitable areas of the Vanvasis are shrinking. The legal and constitutional facilities included in the five-year plans do not reach the poor tribals. They are being misappropriated by middlemen and a few advanced Vanvasis. Representatives of Vanvasis are not consulted while plans for the Vanvasis are drawn up by the Planning Commission. As a result they are unrealistic and

barren. There are very few social service organisations working for the welfare of the Vanvasis. The common Vanvasi finds himself surrounded by money-lenders, middlemen, contractors, forest department officials, the police and politicians. Their old social structure, which kept their community together and obviated the need to go to the police or to court, is breaking up under the impact of the new civilisation, but no new order is emerging.

It is our duty to solve their problems, because they are a part of our labour force. We forget all this but we recognise their achievements from the national point of view. We take pride in remembering Kewat and Shabari of the Ramayana, Ekalavya of Mahabharata, the Bhils who helped Rana Pratap in historical times, Kuruchiar who helped the Palashi king of Kerala. Chandu and Neeli, tribal leaders, the brave Oraon who defeated Aurangzeb's forces attacking Rohtasgarh, Queen Durgawati of the Gonds of the old Central Province, the Santhals and their leader Baba Tilak Mazi, who had launched a freedom struggle against the British even before 1857, the rebellious Munda leader Virsa Bhagwan who considered Porus their ancestor, as well as heroes like Tana Bhakta, who took part in the non-co-operation movement of 1921-22. We do not hesitate to say that leaders like Phizo, Isaac Khailang Muiwah, Kahedai, who tried to cut the Vanvasis away from the national mainstream, were 'traitors', at the same time we praise leaders like Rani Guidinliu, N. C. Jhelian, Hipshon Roy, etc. and Vanvasi organisations like Seng Khasi for their forceful patriotic spirit. They are economically separate from us because they are labourers and peasants. We are all one. This feeling is not present in other peasants' organisations, but it is present in the Bharatiya Kisan Sangh. We may not be in a position to do much for them for the time being, but we shall certainly take up their problems when we are stronger and give all possible co-operation to institutions like the Bharatiya Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram which are striving to raise their standard of life. □

## Problems of the Liberated Communities

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**I** WAS INVITED to inaugurate a tailoring class for women for the 'Bhamti' community in a village called Makardhokda in Nagpur district. The Bhamtis, formerly included among 'criminal tribes', are now officially known as 'liberated tribes.'

These tribes can make a significant contribution to Bharat's labour force. They are basically labourers, but except for some exceptions it can be said that the country is denied the benefit of the liberated tribes as a work-force.

The traditional, hereditary vocation of these tribes is crime. The criminal tendency is as old as man, but it is only in our country that we find communities following crime as a hereditary career. They find it easier to make a living out of crime. Those born in these tribes accept crime in the natural course. For them crime becomes an inheritance.

In his book *Primitive Society* R. H. Louise says the first and foremost reason of a criminal tendency is contact. Mental aberrations and an absence of mental health and balance are the special features of criminal tribes. The society too ignores them. They are half-naked and hungry, and are bereft of many comforts and facilities available to other sections of the society. To date the society is ignorant of various aspects of the life and psychology of these people. Here are some facts about the criminal tribes of Vidarbha :

Liberated tribes naturally feel that it is simpler to earn a livelihood by crime than by honest labour, and it is also the right thing.

They disguise themselves as Marwaris, traders, fakirs, sadhus or Brahmins.

In some of these communities pregnant women deliberately get caught while stealing, so that the delivery takes place in jail at government cost.

These people are mainly found in beggars' homes, railway stations, remand homes and police stations.

A youth of these communities is considered eligible for marriage only when he shows his skill in thieving. Some men of the Manggaru community have to remain bachelors till late in life because they have no big theft to their credit.

In some liberated communities a girl marries her lover only after he has been to jail 14 times. Those who go to jail for a lesser number of times do not get wives.

In some other liberated communities the women earn their livelihood by prostitution and the men by dacoity, murder, etc.

These people use dogs to take messages from one group to another and to track down plainclothesmen.

Parents teach their offspring the trade of crime right from childhood.

In the Kaikadi community the wife of a man who goes to jail lives with another man till his release. In this community the women are the more dangerous criminals.

Members of the Bhamta, Dhag, Badhak, Berad, Yerukal, Pailmar, Kempadi, Kartalun communities are experts in committing thefts at post offices, railway stations, banks and government treasuries.

Every community has its own hereditary crime and members of that community try to acquire skill in that particular crime.

It is easy to say that these communities are anti-social elements and should be reformed, but this cannot be done by looking down upon them. They need sympathy and affection.

It is necessary to bring civilised and advanced sections of the society in contact with these communities. In the past they



may have taken to crime due to force of circumstances, but now the situation has changed. Now the society is willing to accord them status and a respectable calling. It is now in their interest and also in the interest of the society that they should become a part of the regular work-force of the country. All these things can be explained to them with sincerity and affection.

Newly-awakened liberated communities have set up their own association by name the Vidarbha Federation, which has placed the following demands before the government :

1. An independent and comprehensive table of liberated communities be prepared.
2. Appointment of a separate Commission for them.
3. Appointment of a separate all-India Commission within the Home Ministry at the Centre to look after their interests.
4. Region-wise appointment of some members of the communities for the collection of data relating to their interests.
5. Setting up regional hostels for their boys and special Bastis to give them education.
6. Appointment of their representatives in the legislatures, Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

Although the leaders of the Vidarbha Federation are nationalists they have been forced by outer political conditions to place these demands before the Government against their will, which could promote socially divisive tendencies. So instead of using only constitutional means, the feeling of social integration should also be made the basis of real guidance for them. It is the duty of the society to accept the facts of the situation and provide these communities all facilities for assimilating them in the regular work-force of the country. □

## Malady and Treatment

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**V**ARIOUS FACTORS are responsible for the present malady. One of them is the system we have adopted in the form of our present Constitution. Great thinkers have already suggested that we should not blindly imitate the Western pattern for this purpose.

In a university examination a student can pass by copying another's answer because the question paper is the same for all examinees. But, as Rabindranath Tagore said, God has given a separate question paper to every country and no country can borrow another to pass God's examination.

As early as in 1908 Mahatma Gandhi said in *Hind Swaraj* that Western parliamentary democracy will not suit Indian conditions. Acharya Vinoba Bhave and Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan had said that the institution of the political party is not suitable to Indian conditions. Shri Guruji was of the view that the system of territorial representation is quite inadequate for fulfilling the aspirations of the people ; functional representation, which is in keeping with the Hindu tradition, must be brought into the picture and should at least supplement if not replace territorial representation. He made various suggestions in this direction. He was also of the view that at the lowest level elections should be unanimous and not by the majority-minority system imported from the West.

M. N. Roy had warned even before Independence that in the absence of widespread public education the parliamentary system of the West will not succeed here, and that more and more stress should be laid on public education ; it was going to be a long, protracted process, and people were likely to be exasperated at

the delay. He said it may be a long way, but if it is the only way, then it is also the shortest one.

Even Dr. Ambedkar, the architect of the Indian Constitution, was not fully satisfied with its nature. He said he had to accommodate various points of view and therefore could not draft the Constitution as he would have drafted it had the task been left to him. Not that he would necessarily have drafted it in accordance with the wishes of the champions of Hindutva, but it would have been substantially different. He went to the length of saying that if he found the Constitution failing the expectations of the people he would not hesitate to burn it publicly.

Here what P. Koteswar Rao said bears repetition :

“Our constitution is neither Indian nor Gandhian. It is not the people’s constitution. It is unduly perplexed, confusing and inconsistent to reflect the nation’s ethos and the people’s genius in its provisions. It has become outmoded. The raw-material for making the constitution is not drawn from the native soil. The inspiration is not taken from the ancient wisdom. The needs and aspirations of the common man are couched only in rhetorical platitudes and empty propositions, without creating any machinery for realisation. There was no people’s participation in framing the constitution. The Western concepts of political, economic and social ideologies are imported without relevance to the conditions. It lacks a proper sense of priorities. It needs revision in many parts, deletion of many portions and incorporation of many new provisions. Hence, it is high time to take stock of things realistically and broadly repeal the constitution lock, stock and barrel, by replacing it by a native-socialistic genuinely-democratic constitution.”

This constitution is not a product of the soil. Therefore it is not related to our past traditions, present requirements and future aspirations.

To cite an instance, under the present system we have a particular method of electing the government, which is borrowed from Britain. But conditions in Britain and Bharat differ greatly. Here we have 440 million people who are completely illiterate, 120 million who are semi-literate and 50 to 60 per cent people

who are below the poverty-line. In a country with such overpowering illiteracy and poverty the Westminster model cannot work effectively.

Similarly we have imported Western institutions without considering the special conditions in our country. The institution of the political party is an example. Many people are under the impression that only this institution can arrange the election of the government and there is only the British model of this institution.

In Great Britain parties are based on ideology. If we go into the depth of the matter we will find that by ideology they mean economic ideology. The same thing can be said about other West European countries like Germany, France and Italy. These countries do not have pluralistic societies. The main differences lie in the economic field. Consequently the terminology of Right, Left and Centrist came into vogue. They may have other differences but those are not basic and sharp. They can be resolved outside the jurisdiction of the political party and political power. There are other institutions and arrangements for the resolution of such differences.

But ours is a pluralistic society. The USA is also pluralistic, but we find that the main American parties are not divided by economic ideologies. They cannot be categorised as Right, Left or Centrist. They are just election machineries, and on the eve of an election they just give out their proposed programmes for the next tenure, on the basis of which people are called upon to vote.

The USA is comparatively a new nation and does not possess a historical past and an inherent unity as we do. In our country we have a stream of unity in the midst of diversity. In the USA, there is diversity without any stream of unity. Due to this diversity many differences arise in different fields of life and the Americans do not expect their political parties to resolve them. They have a separate institutional framework for the purpose.

In the case of West European countries, where societies are not pluralistic, political parties are not expected to resolve problems that largely lie outside the economic sphere. Consequently

the Westminster model of political parties can fulfil their requirements.

But in our country the differences are sharp and deep, so the Westminster model cannot work effectively. Here we expect our political parties to resolve problems in all fields.

Our political leaders today do not pay attention to problems arising out of pluralism. Time and circumstances will force them to do so.

Take, for instance, a debate on the quantum of expansion of the public sector. Suppose there are a hundred people who hold that the public sector should be expanded, but it is not necessary that these hundred people would be in the same group or of the same view if it comes to the question of including Belgaum in Maharashtra or in Karnataka. Among those who agree on the scope of the public sector some may be in favour of Belgaum going to Maharashtra and some in favour of its going to Karnataka. And it is also not necessary that those who favour Belgaum going to Maharashtra may have identical views on Rama-Janma-Bhoomi. Thus there can be different groupings on different problems.

A few years ago Om Prakash Tyagi had introduced a bill on conversions. After the formation of the Bharatiya Janata Party, Ram Jethmalani introduced another bill on the same subject, which was just the reverse. Some people may have liked one of the two bills, some may have liked the other. There was a discussion at the time on whether the bills should not be withdrawn or the two people not forced to withdraw them if they were not in keeping with party policy. Party discipline requires that there should be no deviation from party policies. But if Jethmalani has a particular view on conversions, should he not be allowed to hold it even if it may be wrong in the eyes of others? Under democracy is he not entitled to his opinion? Should he not have the freedom to express it? As a member of a political party does he have any other forum for the expression of his views? If the party differs with him, should he be silenced even if he holds strong views on the subject?

So, different forums are required for different matters. As we have a pluralistic society we require a varied institutional

framework for fulfilling the people's aspiration in various matters. All this cannot be done under the umbrella of the political party. So we need to evolve an institutional framework that is in keeping with the spirit of our traditions. What should be the guiding principles for evolving it? I believe Shri Guruji's speeches at Thane have fulfilled this need. Therein he has expounded the guiding principles of socio-economic, politico-religious and other types of reconstruction based on the spirit and basic principles of Hindutva. Frankly I had become nervous while listening to him. I had full faith in his leadership, his guidance and the maturity of his views. What I was doubtful about was whether his ideas and his interpretation of Hindu socio-economic and other structures could prove practicable in the post-second industrial revolution era.

I am happy to say there was a pleasant surprise in store for me when I visited Yugoslavia five years after I listened to Shri Guruji's speeches. The arrangement the Yugoslavs had envisaged in their constitution was very much akin to the concept Shri Guruji had expounded at Thane. I do not say it is identical, but it is very much akin. When I studied the Yugoslav system I became convinced that Shri Guruji's thinking was relevant to modern times. So we can be modern without parting contact with our past and without following the Western pattern.

One cannot say if the Yugoslav experiment would succeed or fail, as the success or failure of such experiments depends upon a number of factors. But it is commendable that they ventured to make such an experiment. That it is so near to Shri Guruji's concept should encourage us to conduct further research on this problem of national reconstruction.

In addition it is also important to mould men through appropriate samskars for the task of national reconstruction. Every activity that helps the process of man-moulding should be considered more basic than the institutional framework. From this point of view we are fortunate that we had a seer like Dr. Hedgewar, who could think ahead of the times. He had his finger on the pulse of the people and founded the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh to fulfil the need of the future. The focal point of the Sangh is the Shakha, for it is the Shakha that can mould men in a pattern

required for nation-building – men of dedication, of complete surrender to the cause, men of national character.

So, if all these factors are taken into consideration, if we relieve our minds of the glamour of the West, if we come down to reality, and if we concentrate on the evolution of an appropriate institutional framework as well as on preparing the right people to handle that framework, we should be able to solve our problems. □

## The Alternative

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**E**VERY ELECTION is followed by a debate on the current election process or political system. The experience of the SVD (Samyukta Vidhayak Dal) Government of 1967 had given rise to the thought that the present system was faulty and inadequate and should be replaced by the presidential system in the interest of the country. The topic was again publicly discussed in the wake of the Emergency in 1975. The British pattern of our constitution leaves no scope for a rational proportion between seats and votes. There have been more seats with less votes and *vice versa*. Different political parties have been victimised by this system at different times, and the party that falls a victim immediately suggests proportional representation. This has become a ritual. Such suggestions are a natural reaction, not the result of basic thinking. Parties suggesting proportional representation in order to safeguard their prospects in the next elections do not realise that in our multi-dimensional and pluralistic society it would promote fissiparous tendencies. The number of small parties based on narrow-minded thoughts would increase, national integration would weaken, instability would increase both at the Centre and in the States. As a result of all this, after some time people would prefer a stable dictatorial government to an unstable democratic one. All this is natural in a pluralistic society with varied preferences.

But the question is, have even those suggesting the presidential system taken a long-range view ? Would a President not related to a Parliament have the capacity to resolve the internal contradictions arising out of different and differing requirements? In the absence of a proper relationship between the Cabinet and the Parliament, various parliamentary groups would try to pres-



surise the President for their narrow interests, thus intensifying internal conflicts. Further, how many universally acceptable candidates for presidentship, worthy enough of concentration of such huge authority in his hands, be available in the country? Even a charismatic leader like Pt. Nehru had lost much of his charisma during his final days.

It would indeed be difficult to find a fitting candidate for such a system, but the most important point is that the presidential system in our country would lead to frequent clashes between the President and the Parliament. An extraordinary situation of conflict, control and compromise would prevail. In other words there would be stalemate and disorganisation.

All these things are not very difficult to understand, yet political leaders make these concessions. This means they do not think ahead in spite of their capacity to do so. They do not have the long-range view of nation-building before them. Their thinking is limited to winning the next election.

But short-term election-oriented thinking cannot serve the country for long. There is a need to go to the bottom of the problem.

Because of long contact with the British empire we have come to feel that the British model of a democratic dispensation is the best. Gandhiji wrote in 1908 that this model was not suitable for our needs. Shri Aurobindo said the same, adding that a vast country like Bharat needed a 'government of interests'. Many Western thinkers have analysed the Western democratic system. The West had realised the need to bring representative government close to direct democracy, and some plans in this direction, like recall of elected representatives, had been suggested. The West also realised that a referendum was not adequate for filling the gap. Public education is the basis of a successful democracy, but political parties are not actively interested in it. A few days before the French Revolution Robespierre had said, "Elected representatives of the people can conspire against the people to end democracy; a dictator can rise out of the ballot box." Hitler was an instance in point.

Britain's parliamentary history has examples of the trickery to which a government with a thin, less-than-decisive majority,

resorts to perpetuate itself. The West has also experienced the contradictory and evil situation in which a government official needs some basic qualifications but a minister requires none. Communist as well as non-Communist thinkers pointed out that an expensive election system leads to political corruption and to capitalist control over a democratic government. People also realised that the recently created institution of the political party proves a barrier between the common man and a democratic administration. A system based on territorial representation cannot take an over-all and balanced view of different interest-groups. So the West had started thinking of vocational representation.

Our thinkers had also started an evaluation of the Western systems of democracy on the basis of Indian character and genius and an exchange of views. Many of them rejected the British system of majority decisions and proposed the apparently novel thought of unanimous decision. Jayaprakash Narayan, Vinoba Bhave and Shri Guruji were the protagonists of this idea. Shri Guruji said although there would be practical difficulties in the way of implementing the principle immediately at all levels a beginning could be made at the lowest level. This would necessitate a change of heart among the people at that level. M. N. Roy also expressed distrust of the institution of the political party and made the constructive suggestion of setting up people's committees at the lower levels within the present system of party democracy for initiating an evolution of a 'partiless democracy' that was in keeping with Indian genius. (The later ideas of voters' councils and people's committees are akin to this suggestion.) Shri Guruji stressed vocational representation and said it should supplement, and not replace, territorial representation.

But our Constituent Assembly had no time for such basic ideas. It had been elected by 12 per cent of the country's population, who had given it no clear-cut guidance on the form of the Constitution. The ideological leaders of the Assembly were under the influence of the British tradition. They were in a great hurry. The Assembly had no time for consideration of divergent views. For some time its leaders did not think it necessary to pay heed even to the dissenting views of Sachidanand Sinha and Dr. Rajendra Prasad, its chairman. The British Government had passed the Government of India Act of 1935 to serve its own imperialist

interests. It was based on the 'divide and rule' policy and promoted divisive elements and tendencies. In its haste the Constituent Assembly did not hesitate to lift portions of this Act too. There is ground to believe that the framers of the Constitution were subconsciously doubtful about its being in consonance with Bharat's character, tradition and circumstance, but they consoled themselves with the thought that if the Constitution failed the people would be responsible for the failure, not the Constitution or its framers.

Once the Constitution was adopted it was the sacred duty of the people to owe allegiance to it, and they discharged it. But political leaders are strange beings. On the one hand they accept its sanctity, on the other they do not hesitate to amend it time and again for party ends. These amendments are not done with long-term national interests in view. They are motivated by short-term interests of the party. Political leaders do not seem to possess the willingness to go to the bottom of the problem and set up a system based on lasting interests of the nation. Their horizon is limited from election to election. Only a few people were given to basic thinking, but they were not in active politics. On the other hand the thinking of active politicians was not basic by nature.

The late Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya was the only great man who did basic thinking on this subject in spite of being the leader of a political party. It is an extremely difficult task to play the dual role of political leader and nation-builder successfully, but he performed it. He successfully provided day-to-day guidance to a political party within the present framework, set up a healthy and strong organisation, made an in-depth study of problems at every level and conducted agitations for them within the framework of national interests, chalked out party strategy at the time of elections, created a band of idealistic workers through personal contact and training-camps, placed before the country a practical blueprint of what can be achieved in the near future in national interest, and led a personal life that would create reverence and trust not only among party workers but the people at large. He also rose above the prevailing conditions in the country and initiated thinking about a beneficial, enduring system for the country. He worked with a two-fold vision. Unfortunately his untimely end did not give him enough time for all these things; still he could indicate the direction and lay down the guidelines.

Pt. Deendayal was of the clear opinion that the present Constitution did not accord with Bharat's genius and needs ; it has neglected to take into account the special features of our society. It apes foreign countries. It would create more problems than it would solve.

A federal system of government had become inevitable because of certain resolutions passed and assurances given by the Congress before Independence. One cannot say if Congress leaders were aware of the harm a federal structure could cause to the nation. It is also not known if they had voluntarily adopted the federal system or had to do so because of assurances given in the past. At the time of the debate on the subject Shri Guruji had warned that the federal system was in every way against the interests of the country. But at that time politicians were not in a mood to listen. In the first place, as said earlier, they were in a hurry, and secondly they were in the habit of applying European standards to Indian concepts. Western countries think about federal and unitary structures of administration in a certain way because of the special characteristics of their historical development process, which is not applicable to our country. Western nations are new, so the resolution of their problems is comparatively easier. At least they feel that if already existing units want to come together to make one state, only a federal structure can preserve their separate entities and yet bind them together. In such a system there would be maximum devolution of power on the original units and the centre would be vested with predetermined minimum powers. A federal state is not historically an integrated state. The federal system becomes irrelevant in a state which covers a territory that has historically been one. It would mean forced fragmentation of a living unit. In such a case only an integrated system, in which power would be naturally concentrated in the Centre, can serve the purpose.

Neither of these alternatives, however, can solve the problems of an ancient and mature nation like Bharat. Bharat has been one nation since thousands of years. It is an integrated nation. Unlike Westerners Bharatiyas do not confuse unity with integration. In the West integration is the same as unity, while we in this country believe that integration is against the natural growth of independent units. Since the very beginning Bharat has had ample diversity along with integration. The Atharva Veda says:

*Janam bibhrati bahudha vtvachasam  
Nana-dharmanam prithivi yathoukasam  
Sahasra-dhara dravinasya me duham  
Dhruveva dhenur-anapasphuranti*

(12.1.45)

We did not have the Western system of thought that saw difference in diversity. Our ancestors could see apparent differences as diversity. There can be parts of the same unit that have different features. Their development can take place in accordance with their inclinations. This type of developed diversity is the beauty of an integrated nation. It does not weaken the thread of integration. This was the thought behind the service to the nation rendered by our ancestors in historical times, and the institutions set up by them. In all walks of life they set up institutions that could blend unity and integration. The federal system is not in keeping with the temperament and history of Bharat. Thinkers influenced by Western concepts hold that if a system is not federal it must be unitary. They think there are only two choices – either a federal system with maximum decentralisation or a unitary system with maximum concentration. This does not accord with our thinking, for if we do not accept the federal system as the proper one, nor is centralisation of power in our nature. Centralisation of power and Bharatiya culture do not go together.

Western-type thinkers have only these two alternatives before them. It was an achievement on the part of the late Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya that he put forth the new concept of a system of government that was in consonance with Bharat's genius, tradition and situation, and which could be integrated without being unitary. It envisaged maximum decentralisation on the basis of the whole country being one unit, with limited powers for the centre and maximum possible powers for the lower units. At the same time the maximum powers of the lower units were not to be such as would lead them to break away from the national mainstream for the sake of their independent identity. Like the lower units there would also be regional units with similar characteristics. For the sake of convenience Pt. Deendayal called them 'Janapadas'. Such units exist in almost every state. In his opinion we could have nearly 50-55 natural Janapadas like today's

Madhya Bharat, Mahakoshal, Chattisgarh or Telangana and Rayalseema in Andhra and Vidarbha, Marathwada, Konkan, Bombay, and the rest of Maharashtra in Maharashtra. They would be autonomous, with more financial and administrative powers. It would be easier for the Janapada administration to keep in direct touch with the smallest unit, the village. This direct contact would eliminate many deficiencies that we see in the present system of government. One may also think of what subjects should be taken out of Central purview, and which should remain. Along with a practical analysis Pt. Deendayal was also gradually giving final touches to the basic concept. Unfortunately he did not have the time that a thinker should have to develop his thinking. After all, no concept is complete from the very beginning. Those implementing it develop it during the process of implementation on the basis of predetermined guiding principles.

While this is the practical course during the process of implementation the presence of guiding principles is a must. In their absence the direction cannot be determined, and for want of a direction what is there to be developed? It is the duty of Pt. Deendayal's successors to develop his concept in the light of the guiding principles laid down by him. Still it can be said with certainty that had not Upadhyaya placed before the country the novel – and from the Western point of view unique – concept of an integrated system of government that was compatible with the maximum decentralisation of power, future nation-builders would have had to choose between deficient systems that were useless from our point of view. His great gift to future nation-builders is the thought that a healthy system of government that was in keeping with the genius of the nation was the only alternative to today's defective system.

Now that political scientists have concluded that the present system is defective, it is time for us to forget immediate gains or losses, go to the bottom of the problem, and do some basic thinking on an alternative system. Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya's thoughts can make an important contribution to this process. □

## Functional Representation

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**R**ECENTLY there is a growing realisation on the part of the intellectuals that the parliamentary democratic system, as is being implemented in Bharat today, is not adequate to deal effectively with the ever-new challenges of the times. Our present governments are merely representative and not democratic in the true sense. It cannot be said that in our country the State and the entire society are coterminous. The Western type of political party system renders elected representatives least answerable to their real masters, whose reactions to various bills and resolutions may not necessarily and invariably coincide with those of the party bosses. Very often the two are not identical, and the elected member is expected to cast his vote according to the directive of the party, with no reference to the actual verdict of his voters, or their majority, on the point. Our Constitution does not provide for the device of referendum or the right to recall. Again, political minorities often fail to secure justice for themselves under the present set-up, which has led some political thinkers to put forth a plea for proportional representation. The cumulative effect of all these factors is discernible in the current serious thinking on the very problem of representation. It would, therefore, be appropriate at this juncture to recapitulate some views of Shri Guruji on the subject.

As is well known, Shri Guruji's thinking was always comprehensive, integrated and pragmatic. It had its roots in the culture of this land.

Shri Guruji was a democrat by temperament. He did appreciate the soundness of arguments in favour of the rule of the elite, that is, the 'sovereignty of knowledge', as contemplated by

Socrates, Plato or Mill, but he felt that its advantages were more than outweighed by its corresponding disadvantages, since it did not provide for bifurcation of political authority from moral authority and the social supremacy of the latter over the former. As a realist he knew that no human system can ever be perfect, and as a pragmatic thinker he realised that under different conditions different forms of government would be appropriate. But he considered democracy the least defective system under normal conditions, though he always cautioned against letting liberty and democracy degenerate into licence and mobocracy and discipline into regimentation. For him social discipline was not only compatible with but actually complementary to the form and spirit of democracy. He thus stood for elastic, democratic discipline.

Shri Guruji was aware that it would not be easy to initiate the process. To classify the entire population on a functional basis for purposes of election is not simple. It would be particularly difficult to classify industries, especially the smaller ones. To determine the group of an individual is difficult even when the jobs are static. The problem would be compounded all the more by the mobility of individuals from one vocation or industry to another.

According to some thinkers the principle of functional representation is inconsistent with the principle of national sovereignty and contrary to the objective of national integration. They hold that functional representation would force citizens to give priority to their own sectional interests over national interests. They apprehend that this process "would promote a struggle between different interests and forces, accentuate the feeling of antagonism between them, and undermine the sound doctrine that a man's interest in the welfare of the group, class or profession to which he belongs should be secondary to his interest in the welfare of the whole society."

Shri Guruji appreciated the validity of this view. He could also foresee that functional representation may be objected to on the ground of impropriety. For example, Laski has said, "Why is a function like that of medicine, for instance, properly relevant to the purpose of the legislative assembly? There is not a medical view of foreign policy, of the nationalisation of mines, or of free trade."



Shri Guruji was aware of the other aspect of the subject. But he felt that in the absence of functional representation the democratic decision-making process of the legislature would become lopsided. He, therefore, did not lay exclusive emphasis on this principle but advocated an interweaving of functional representation and territorial representation.

Dissatisfaction of social thinkers with the system of territorial representation is not a recent phenomenon. In the beginning such thinkers demanded, by way of reform, the system of proportional representation, but they soon realised that it ensures representation of the minorities, which are already recognised as political parties. It does not give representation to economic, social, professional and other special interests. The need for such interests to be represented has been felt progressively.

Mirabeau pleaded that a Legislative Assembly should be a mirror of all interests in society.

Sieyes is of the view that big industries should be given special representation in the legislature.

Duguit advocates the representation of all forces influencing national life – industry, property, commerce, manufacturing professions, and even science and religion.

Graham Wallace thinks that while the lower chamber should be elected on a territorial basis the second chamber should represent various interests and functional groups.

The Webbs stand for a system in which there would be a political parliament and a social parliament.

Pelloutier introduces the idea of non-political, purely economic interests. The task of revolution is to free mankind not only from all authority but also from every institution which is not for its essential purpose, that is, the development of production. He stands for statelessness. Trade unions of producers constitute the only authority. In the organisation of unions he wanted to combine vocational with territorial representation.

Lavergne pleads for a parliament elected by strictly professional representation. He considers the parliament of today to be defective. In the first place legislators are ignorant of economic

and social questions. Secondly, social bodies are not integrated in the State. He stands for professional representation, by which he meant (i) the representation of professional interests, either individualistic or syndicalists, that is, associational, (ii) the representation of technical skills or professional techniques, and (iii) representation of competences (efficiencies) such as that of scientific associations, etc. Both the Houses, that is, the Chamber and the Senate, should be reconstituted, each House to be composed of members representing half and half the interests of the individuals as well as the groups.

The groups would be (1) scientific associations, (2) economic associations, and (3) associations of general interests. Thus reconstituted, they would have territorial as well as professional representation.

Martin stands for representation of professional groups in the Councils of the State. All the members of a profession in every region should be organised as units for the purposes of public life. These should constitute the basis for the electoral and constitutional framework.

Lantaud and Poudenx also propagate the theory of professional representation. The purely political institutions, according to them, are incapable of solving the economic problems. The idea and fact of multiplicity of corporate groups are to be harmonized with the idea and fact of the unity of the State. Professional representation is the representation of efficiency, interests and professions.

Paul Boncour envisages economic federation under which social, regional and corporate groups would reconquer the fullness of their autonomy from the centralised state. This would lead to economic decentralisation. It is the professional groups that are most diverse in their tendencies and vary according to the complexity of economic facts themselves.

Bougle pleads for a council of professional interests as an aid to parliament with territorial representation.

Dr. Pitrim A. Sorokin said : "The government of the states must consist of a combination of the elected representatives of the citizens of the electoral districts and of those of agriculture,

industrial management and labour, religion, science, the fine arts, and the professions. A sufficient proportion of representatives of labour, management, agriculture, science, religion, and the professions, elected by their respective groups, independently of the territorial district would weaken the vested interest of a given territorial district and immeasurably heighten the competence, impartiality, morality, and prestige of the government."

Spann stands for a 'community-state' which would give so much of the economic and administrative functions to communities that the central state itself would be left in charge mainly of the idealistic functions, that is, education (not technical, which would be taken up by the communities), law (excluding economic), the army, etc. Political parties of the present type have no place in his scheme. The members of his state are not individuals but communities in and through which the individuals have their existence. All these communities function as partial wholes within the framework of a larger whole. They have their own administrations within the framework of the community-state.

Benoist wants the professions to be the basis of the electoral constituency. The professions should be broadly allowed representation in proportion to their numerical strength and social importance. He was an enthusiastic advocate of an Economic Parliament based on professional representation.

G. D. H. Cole, the chief exponent of Guild Socialism, lays great stress upon functional democracy. His theory stands for the combination of the functional and geographical representation reflected in two legislative assemblies, a Political Parliament and an Economic Parliament. The economic sovereignty is to be shared between the Guilds and the State. Leroy Beaulieu, Gierke and Durkheim believe in the importance of voluntary, intermediate, functional associations between the state and individuals, and develop the concept of industrial self-government as propounded by A. J. Penty, S. G. Hobson, A. R. Organe and Russell.

The extreme leftist theory of anarchism stands for statelessness. Peter Kropotkin, who was the first scientific interpreter of Anarchism, which was fathered by Pierre Joseph Proudhon and developed by Count Michail Bakunin, envisages a stateless society

based upon mutual aid and co-operation of different 'self-organisations' of workers, consumers and other interests, which can exist in conformity with a classless society and govern their affairs in lieu of the State and the Government.

Sister Nivedita, an admirer of Kropotkin and also a disciple of Vivekananda, came to conclude that co-operatives and 'self-organisations' such as trade unions, peasants' unions, ratepayers' associations, railway servants' associations etc. must be given an important place in the scheme of the State.

The French Syndicates Congress at Lyons (1919) demanded nationalisation of land and water transport, mines, water, power and credit organisations, and specified the association of producers and customers as the Authority.

The principle of functional representation constituted the basis of the Imperial Economic Council established by Bismarck. Subsequently the Weimar Constitution of Germany (1919) introduced the National Economic Council representing the interests of labour, capital and consumers. The Council was, for certain purposes, almost an economic legislative chamber though, on a practical plane, an ineffective one.

In the official programme of the Fascist Party formulated by Mussolini in consultation with Martinetti, Bianchi and Rocca one of the items was "participation of workers' representative in the technical and organisational management of factories, administration of railways by railwaymen's union." The Party, however, did not implement this programme after coming to power. Mussolini did introduce the system of occupational representation, but no special importance was given to it by his totalitarian government.

In the USSR territorial representation has been theoretically replaced by a system based on functional representation. It is not the district but a particular interest that is represented. But this too is devoid of any significance on the same ground.

The Yugoslav system provides for a bicameral legislature. In consonance with the labour policy of the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, one of its chambers, called the Council of Producers, is elected by representatives of producers. This is at all levels – the

commune, the district and the Republic. The Councils of Producers in the districts and communes are elected by the members of workers' councils and other self-governing bodies of producers, and the district councils elect the members of the Councils or the Republic level. For the purpose of representation producers are divided into two groups – the group of industry, commerce and handicrafts, and the group of agriculture. The number of seats for each group at each level is proportionate to its contribution to the national income. This is defended on the ground that a man's voice in the fortunes of his community should be proportionate to the value of what he contributes to the national income. Both chambers have equal rights in matters such as passing of social plans and of other regulations and decisions concerning the national economy as a whole, but certain questions relating to the work of economic units, government organisations and self-government institutions are within the separate jurisdiction of the Council of Producers. This is how the social and economic organs of the people are integrated at all levels of the highly decentralised economy.

So far as Bharat is concerned, what would be the form of functional representation ? Which organs of the society are to get the right of representation through this system ?

Shri Guruji held that although the four Varnas meant functional representation in ancient Bharat, the system was not relevant today. No Varna or caste existed today in the true sense. The scriptural basis of the Varna system was nowhere in evidence today. The so-called radicals condemn the system because they are ignorant of the fact that, in the words of Dr. Mees, "Varnas can never be *instituted*, simply because they *are* there all the time. Division between men on this basis can never be *made* ; it *is* there all the time, and no amount of effort could do away with it." The Varna system cannot be *established* in the sense in which Socialism or Communism is sought to be established. The Varna character *is* there right now, and even the worst critics of the Varna system belong to one Varna character or the other in spite of themselves. But the fact remains that the system of the fourfold scientific division of society as envisaged by Hindu seers as well as by Persian-Zoroastrian sociologists, Plato, Aristotle, Abul Fazal who composed the *Ain-e-Akbari*, or Adam Mueller, the German thinker

of the last century, is not in existence anywhere today, and representation on its basis is simply inconceivable.

Shri Guruji held similar views on the caste system. With the introduction of changes in the techniques of production, communication etc., most of the more than 3,000 traditional jobs became obsolete, or least remunerative, and new jobs came into being. This resulted in the breakdown of the traditional caste system, though casteism is growing stronger for political reasons. Shri Guruji envisaged the emergence of still more and highly skilled jobs as a result of the uninterrupted advance of modern technology, causing ever-increasing inter-occupational mobility. The process of consolidation and organisation of occupational or trade groups must be pursued and the latter given due representation on elective bodies. In his opinion the role of Trade Unions, Chambers of Commerce, Engineers' Institute, Indian Medical Association, commodity-wise Consumers' Associations and Technicians' Associations could be helpful in this direction. But the vast majority of our people, comprising peasants, managerial and technical cadres, self-employed artisans, agricultural and forest labourers, etc. are still unorganised. He said that occupation-wise organisation should be expedited for the successful implementation of the principle of 'functional representation'. The texture of the Hindu socio-economic order has been woven with the warp of autonomous industrial families from the village upwards and the woof of regional administration with the village panchayat at the base. This structure could serve us even in the future if the social and economic institutions are amended in accordance with the requirements of the times.

Shri Guruji felt that the criteria to determine the proportion of representation to various functional entities should be worked out through the process of joint consultation and consensus. Once the principle of functional representation is accepted it was not too difficult to work out the details. He himself did not present any blueprint of the proposed system because, in the first place, the time was not yet ripe for it – even the principle was not being endorsed by the people so far – and secondly because the very fact of the presentation of a comprehensive scheme by any person or group of persons would vitiate the evolution of the process. In this context it would be relevant to ask if mere numerical strength

of any profession should be the basis for determining the extent of representation it should be granted, or some qualitative standard should also be prescribed. To cite an example of the latter, in Yugoslavia representation to various groups is proportionate to their contribution to the total national wealth. There can be other qualitative standards also. What is important here is not so much the soundness of the criteria adopted as their approval by the largest number of people.

It is high time our leaders gave serious thought to these views and did the needful without further delay. □

## Revolution in India

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**T**HE FIRST EVER revolution of the world was organised in Vedic Bharat when, under the leadership of the politically disinterested sages, the people rose against, deposed and killed the tyrant Vena. This was centuries before Romulus slew Remus, or Cain, Abel. Vamadeva, as quoted by Bhishma, advocates bloody revolution against autocracy, and Shukra enjoins the duty to rebel against bad government. Bhagavad-Gita can be more aptly termed the 'Saffron Book' of all authentic revolutionaries, though, as Geoffrey Fairbairn points out in his *Revolutionaries' Guerrilla Warfare*, "one of the casualties of modern warfare" is a loss of that deeper understanding of the human condition which was stated, over two millennia ago, in the Bhagavad-Gita : "A man has the right to act, but not to expect the fruits of his actions." Incidentally, violence is a common denominator for both wars and revolutions, and the above observation highlights the qualitative difference between Karmayogi Arjuna and most of the politically motivated revolutionaries of this century.

Every household in Bharat is familiar with the names and deeds of the revolutionary leaders of the recent past, such as Shivaji and others.

In recent times, the Naxalites popularised the Maoist dictum 'political power grows out of the barrel of a gun,' But a few are aware that seventy years before the commencement of the Naxalite movement Lokmanya Tilak wrote, "Our readers will understand why the Afridis say that the British Empire in India is the reward given by Allah sitting in the barrel of a gun."

The illustrious names of revolutionaries from 1857 to 1947 are too well known.



Thus, political violence is a phenomenon not unknown to the history of Bharat.

It is, however, worth noting here that the successor of king Vena himself became a tyrant in course of time.

Many in this country mistakenly identify revolutions with Marxism. They forget the fact that long before the birth of Marxism the West witnessed the Cromwellian revolution of 1649, the American revolution of 1778, and the French revolution of 1789. Again, though Marxism preaches violence and nothing but violence, it is significant that Engels wrote in 1847 in his treatise *Principles of Communism* : "Communists know only too well that revolutions are not only useless but even harmful. They know all too well that revolutions are not made intentionally and arbitrarily, but that everywhere and always they have been the necessary consequence of conditions which were wholly independent of the will and direction of individual parties and entire classes. But they also see that the development of proletariat in nearly all civilized countries has been violently suppressed and that in this way the opponents of Communism have been working towards a revolution with all their strength." Marxism is indisputably wedded to violence. But recently some national Communist parties have put forward the non-Leninist idea that they may conquer political power without violence, and though their bonafides may not be above suspicion simple justice requires, as Prof. Sydney Hook observes, "the recognition that they too find the ideologists of violence in some countries somewhat of an embarrassment."

In colonial countries the Marxist revolutionary leaders appealed to their compatriots in the name of patriotism, though they were cautious enough to state simultaneously that 'genuine patriotism' is 'part and parcel of internationalism'. For example, Ho Chi-Minh reported in 1951, "Our people are ardent patriots. This is our invaluable tradition. Today, as in the past, every time the Fatherland is invaded their patriotism boils over in a wave of great violence that sweeps all dangers and difficulties and drowns all the traitors and aggressors." A recent trend in the Communist world to 'nationalise' Marxism by making it compatible with the national culture and traditions, must also be taken into account. A determined effort by Mao to 'Chinify' Marxism is already well known in our country. The character of Marxism thus 'nation-

alised' becomes very much different from 'textbook Marxism'. It invariably contains an element of 'nationalism'. This is just to suggest that straitjacket thinking in this respect will not be realistic.

But some categories of violence do not deserve serious consideration here : firstly, the instinctive or pre-planned reaction of the people to the violence by opportunist hoodlums patronised by the government – because, in fact, they are government agents and, in that sense, a part of the Establishment ; secondly, the unplanned violent reaction to the violence organised by a government against itself in the *Reichstag Fire* style. For example, on March 6, 1971, the Ceylonese Government alerted the army and the police, and staged a provocation by organising a petrol bomb attack on the US embassy. The Government attributed this action to the opposition despite the latter's denial of responsibility, and invoked special powers under the Public Security Act. The Government declared an Emergency, imposed a curfew throughout the island, arrested all known militants and leaders of the people, and shot a number of them. The on-the-spot reaction to this type of officially-inspired, provocative violence is obviously outside the present purview. Such official violence can also be directed against minorities, such as the Jews in Hitler's Germany or the Hindus in Pakistan. The Ku-Klux-Klan-type activities, including lynching, can also evoke violent resistance. But it is also outside our purview, because it does not, or at least did not so far, bring about any change of regime.

In his *Coup d'Etat* Edward Luttwak, improving upon the *Technique of the Coup d'Etat* by Curzio Malaparte, says that a 'coup' consists of the infiltration of a small but critical segment of the state apparatus, which is then used to displace the government from its control of the remainder. 'Civil war' is actual warfare between elements of the national armed forces leading to the displacement of a government ; *pronunciamento*, a take-over by a particular army leader who carries it out in the name of the entire officer corps ; *putsch*, an attempt by a formal body within the armed forces under its appointed leadership ; and 'liberation', in modern times, the overthrow of government by foreign military or diplomatic intervention. Basing his conclusions on the experience of the 88 coups and attempted coups in 36 countries between

1945 and 1967, Luttwak lays down certain prerequisites for the success of a coup. It is evident from the facts furnished by him that in a vast and multi-central country like Bharat, the technique of coup cannot succeed. In civil war, pronunciamiento, putsch, or liberation, the civilian population is allotted only a passive role; the people can neither initiate nor influence these operations. Consequently, it is the army, and not the people, that dominates the new regime. If the army leaders choose to become authoritarian, and there is no reason why they should not do so, the people are again equally helpless. They just shift from the frying pan into the fire. What people can bring about, depending mainly upon their own will-power, is resistance, rebellion, revolt and revolution. True, even in this process, it becomes necessary to neutralise or win over the army. But the lead lies with the people, and the role of the army becomes auxiliary or supplementary.

The minimum prerequisite for the launching of a violent revolutionary war has been prescribed by Che Guevara in the following words : "It must always be kept in mind that there is a necessary minimum without which the establishment and consolidation of the first centre [of rebellion] is not practicable. People must see clearly the futility of maintaining a fight for social goals within the framework of civil debate. When the forces of oppression come to maintain themselves in power against established law, peace is considered already broken. In these conditions, popular discontent manifests itself in more active forms. An attitude of resistance crystallizes in an outbreak of fighting, provoked initially by the conduct of the authorities. Where a government has come into power through some form of popular vote, fraudulent or otherwise, but maintains at least an appearance of constitutional legality, the guerrilla outbreak cannot be promoted, since the possibilities of peaceful struggle have not been exhausted."

It is noteworthy that industrial backwardness of and discrimination against Scotland and Wales, internal conflict in Canada and Belgium along linguistic regional lines, or infusions of migrant foreign labour in West Germany, Switzerland, France and Britain have not given rise to any revolutionary efforts, and in USA, though there are Black revolutionaries resolved to overthrow the social system, the vast majority of Negroes, Red Indians, Mexi-

cans and Puerto Ricans are not yet a party to any such move. The National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP) continues to believe in constitutional pressures, and the disciples of Martin Luther King are still clinging to the possibility of achieving their goal through non-violent mass action and the Christian appeal. Notwithstanding the revolutionary potentialities of the young and the Black in USA, the surge of West German student demonstrations in 1967, the tumultuous events of May-June 1968 in France, and the Catholic revolt in Northern Ireland, it can safely be asserted that the cult of violence is not gaining any appreciable ground in Western democratic countries. It is presently of only peripheral significance.

A new trend in some national Communist parties, like those in Italy and France, is already mentioned. It is, however, a fact that the situation in undemocratic countries is different.

It is noteworthy that the personal equipment of an underground activist of a non-violent revolution is very much the same as that prescribed by Carlos Marighella for a guerrilla fighter. though the material equipment prescribed by him for the latter is certainly irrelevant in the case of the former.

For example, Marighella says that a guerrilla fighter must have courage, a spirit of initiative, imagination and creativity. He must be a good tactician (and a good shot) and must make up for his inferiority in weapons, ammunition and equipment by his skill and cunning. He must be mobile, flexible, able to adapt to circumstances, and able to keep a cool head. He must be a good walker, resistant to fatigue, hunger, rain and heat ; he must be able to hide and keep watch, know the arts of disguise, never be intimidated by danger, act as easily by night as by day but never precipitately, possess unlimited patience, keep calm and clear-headed in even the worst predicaments, never leave a trace behind. and never be discouraged. He must not appear different from anyone else. He must never speak of his activity to anyone. He must have a great capacity for observation. He must be well informed, specially as to the enemy's movements, good at asking questions, and thoroughly familiar with the terrain he is working in. Addresses, names, telephone numbers and route-plans must never be written down. Plans should be secret – each knowing details pertaining to his own assignment. Notes on the margin of

newspapers, papers left somewhere, visiting cards, letters, tickets—all these should be destroyed. He must memorise meeting-places. A guerrilla who is arrested must say nothing that could damage the organisation, causing the arrest of any other comrades, or the discovery of any of the places where they keep arms and ammunition.

For revolutionary leaders the supreme quality required is mental, rather than mere physical toughness : the will-power. Both Che Guevara and Charu Mazumdar suffered from chronic maladies.

The following eight deadly sins deserve to be avoided as much by a non-violent guerrilla as by a violent guerrilla : inexperience ; under-estimate or over-estimate of strength ; boastfulness ; over-valuing one's own rule ; disproportion between one's action and one's logistic infrastructure ; precipitateness out of impatience ; temerity ; and improvisation.

In 1950, Ho Chi-Minh instructed his revolutionary followers to 1) heighten discipline ; 2) strictly carry out orders from higher levels ; 3) love the soldiers ; 4) respect the people ; 5) take good care of public property and war booty ; 6) sincerely make criticism and self-criticism. He further drew their attention to the following points : 1) conducting propaganda ; 2) not indulging in subjectivism and under-estimating the enemy ; 3) winning time in order to make preparations ; and 4) keeping absolute secrecy. Such instructions are equally useful, with some variation, for organising non-violent revolutions.

The favourable nature of terrain is important for the success of violent revolutionary guerrilla activities. For example, as Robert Taber states about the base of the Cuban revolutionaries under Castro, "The Sierra runs more than one hundred miles east and west and is fifteen to twenty-five miles deep. Simple arithmetic shows how impossible was the task set for the army given a trackless terrain of precipitous and thickly-wooded mountains." The air force or artillery cannot do much against a revolutionary force in such a terrain. In Bharat Shivaji could not have successfully employed his guerrilla tactics in the vast Gangetic plains, which disappointed Tatyá Tope who adopted guerrilla tactics after the fall of Bareilly and Lucknow, and showed skill in mobile

warfare in Central Bharat (which comprises such terrains). Could the following General Order of Tatyta be implemented in the Northern plains ? –

“Do not attempt to meet the regular columns of the infidels because they are superior to you in discipline, Bandobast, and have big guns ; but watch their movements, guard all the ghats on rivers, intercept their communications, stop their supplies, cut their daks and posts, keep constantly hanging about their camps, give them no rest.”

A region that is more rural than urban, mountainous rather than flat, thickly forested rather than with extensive railway lines and roads, and an economy that is preponderantly agricultural rather than industrial is eminently suited for guerrilla activity.

The limitations of military power in difficult terrain were highlighted by Senator George MecGovern when he said, “There, in the jungles of Asia, our mighty nuclear arsenal, our 50 billion arms budget, our costly new ‘Special Forces’, have proved powerless to cope with a band of ragged guerrillas fighting with home-made weapons.”

So far as Bharat is concerned, though it is for the experts to precisely locate, on the strength of an analysis of the geographical and demographic structures, areas favourable for initial guerrilla operations, it can safely be stated that our vast plains are not suited to such operations, that the suitable areas are not fairly contiguous, and that the political, administrative centre of the country is situated in the midst of plains. The terrain counts in war as well as in revolutions. Had the adjacent areas of Delhi been mountainous the invader of 1761 would have been vanquished even before he could reach the battlefield of Panipat.

No doubt Carlos Marighella has perfected the technique of urban guerrilla warfare. Murder and kidnaping of foreign officials ; the burning down of television and radio stations ; the bombings of newspaper offices and government and military buildings ; train robberies ; bank robberies ; release of political prisoners through the seizure of hostages ; expropriation of arms and goods belonging to the government, large capitalists and landlords ; tactical street-fighting to gain participation of the urban

masses ; mutinies inside or attacks on prisons ; industrial strikes. All these have their own importance, but these can be effective only under certain conditions. In most Latin American countries 50 per cent or more of the total population lives in three or four major cities, while in Uruguay or Chile almost one-third of the population lives in one city. Urban terrorism cannot yield results where the population is distributed in different ways, which is the case in Bharat.

The non-violent revolutionaries do not consider it ethical to receive any material aid from any foreign power, though they certainly realise the value of international propaganda. On the other hand most of the successful revolutionary wars after the Second World War were fought with the help of some foreign power or the other. The Algerian revolutionaries received considerable aid from Egypt, and had their privileged sanctuary in Tunisia. General Giap has himself acknowledged 'the significant change that was brought about' by Red China's occupation of the areas bordering on Vietnam in December 1949. By the end of 1950 the entire Sino-Vietnamese border was cleared of French-held forts, and the Chinese territory on the other side of the border became an active sanctuary for training regular Vietnamese divisions and fulfilling logistical and other military requirements of the Vietnamese guerrillas.

The strategy of Mao to convert an area on the Sino-Soviet border into his base of operation is well known. The Greek revolutionary army depended for its supplies upon Yugoslavia and Albania. Mao tribesmen in North Thailand were trained in North Vietnam. Who is not aware of the role of Cuba in some revolutions in Africa and Latin America, and the Chinese assistance to Nagas of Bharat, Shans and Kachins of Burma, revolutionaries in Laos, Malaysia and Cambodia, Palestinian guerrillas, the PFL of the Arab Gulf, and guerrilla fighters in some African countries ?

It can be concluded that 'no guerrilla campaign in recent years has ultimately prevailed without large-scale infusion of outside aid and arms', though such aid does not come forth to assist the guerrillas of any country whose success is not likely to have any impact on the international order, as was the case of guerrillas of tiny Tchad fighting against the French rule. On the contrary, Tupa-maros of Uruguay acquired importance despite the propor-

tion to the size (less than 19 million hectares) and population (3 million) of their country because it is sandwiched between the two giants of the continent, Argentina and Brazil ; and both Castro of Cuba and Allende of Chile saw Uruguay as a centre for promoting successful revolutions throughout South America.

Even today, the 5,000 Rhodesian Black guerrillas have made their base in Mozambique and are receiving supplies from and through Zambia. Recently Dr. Agostinho Neto, Angolan President, has publicly expressed his "most profound gratitude" to at least 9 Communist and 5 non-Communist countries.

Arm-chair revolutionaries are under an impression that the first and foremost requirement of a violent revolution is an adequate supply of sophisticated arms. They will be surprised to learn from the Associated Press report that "often a Vietcong unit is organised initially with no weapons. The political organiser tells his men and women they must fight at first with handmade arms — spears, daggers, swords and crude shotguns. To get better weapons the unit must capture them from the enemy."

Though arms are certainly important, the outcome of a revolution is decided by the people, not by sophisticated weapons. Che Guevara observes, "The guerrilla fighter needs full help from the people of the area. This is an indispensable condition. This is clearly seen by considering the case of bandit gangs that operate in a region. They have all the characteristics of a guerrilla army: homogeneity, respect for the leader, valour, knowledge of the ground, and often, a very good understanding of the tactics to be employed. The only thing missing is support of the people, and inevitably, these gangs are captured and exterminated by the public force." Neither supplies nor civil organisation, nor intelligence, nor propaganda, nor sabotage, nor medical care, nor even concealment is possible without popular support. What distinguishes revolutionaries from bandits is their idealism, their zeal for the "cause", their moral and ideological superiority to the forces of the Establishment ; on account of these factors, people consider them more trustworthy.

It is impossible to stamp out guerrillas in rural areas where they have the support of the rural population, which ensures, among other things, co-operation regarding intelligence also.



The primary effort of the guerrilla is to militate the population, without whose consent no government can stand for a day. Conscious efforts are made to disturb links and lines of communication between the Administration and the people, and to bring about psychological estrangement between the two.

A guerrilla fighter is an armed civilian whose principal weapon is not his rifle, nor his machet, but his relationship to the community, the nation.

A guerrilla is more political than military in character. Moral superiority, idealism and self-sacrifice of revolutionaries ; counter-terrorism or repressive measures by the government ; propaganda value of guerrilla action on national and international plane ; dislocation of orderly administration and transport ; need to ensure continual crippling pressure of armed guard at every place, every time ; the intolerable strain on the exchequer and consequently on the taxpayers ; — all these factors have a cumulative effect of antagonising the entire population against the Establishment, and the consequent popular support to revolution is the ultimately decisive factor. That is why the revolutionaries could succeed in Ireland, Cuba, Zanzibar, Cyprus and Israel (anti-British) with a comparatively modest figure of casualties on their side.

The following facts, expressed in the words of the authorities on the subject of 'revolution', are quite revealing.

The main reason for the failure of the three-year Greek revolution (1946-49) was the alienation of the guerrilla forces from the general population and their terrorism against civilians, though there were other contributory factors also, such as their dependence upon foreign bases and supplies, and their premature decision in 1948 to hold ground and to expose large formations to a numerically, technologically, logistically, and organisationally superior army of the Establishment.

Magsaysay could foil the designs of the Huk revolutionaries in Philippines because the latter failed to establish anything like a popular front during a period when urban support, the participation of students, industrial workers, and the poorer white-collar class, was clearly required. They failed to seize and hold the popular imagination and so to create the broad mass unrest needed

to topple the government or to build a revolutionary army capable of confronting and defeating the government army.

In Malaya, the Malayan Races Liberation Army had very few Malaysians in it, being composed almost exclusively of Chinese, and more particularly, of the large squatter population of recent Chinese immigrants, with no deep roots in the country. That is why the insurgents could be isolated from the people, more particularly after the implementation of a massive resettlement programme for the benefit of half a million Chinese squatters. Isolated from the people, the revolutionaries were starved into submission or lured into disastrous ambushes.

The April 1971 insurrection of Ceylon was a failure because, in the words of Rohan Wijeweera, "the conditions were not ripe for organising an armed revolutionary uprising to seize state power... It has not reached a stage where the masses saw no other solution but revolution."

Raul Sandie of Uruguay failed in his plan on April 14, 1972 because he did not take due cognizance of the people's verdict against revolution in the presidential election of November 28, 1971.

In 1948 the Communist Party of the Soviet Union abruptly changed its international policy at the inspiration of Zhanov and consequently the CPI announced that Bharat was ripe for a revolutionary seizure of power ; but in the absence of mass support its strategy ended in fiasco, notwithstanding its limited success in Telengana.

Regarding the Naxalite movement the following remarks of a correspondent of the *Economic and Political Weekly* (22nd July 1972) are worth being quoted in full :

"Misinterpreting the symptoms of discontent in the wake of spiralling food crisis, all agog over reading Lin Piao's thesis about how the country surrounds and encircles the city, they concluded that the revolution was for the taking. No need to organize the masses before the event, they will join the revolution once the sparks start flying ; no need to be excessively mulish about imparting political education to fresh recruits, even the so-called anti-social elements, wagon-breakers and professional murderers

included, would be pressed into service ; let violence be afoot, for fire turns everything pure and once the revolution is abroad in India in the afterglow nobody will be sorry if the person who slashed the throat of the class enemy was a genuine ideologue or a ruffian from the market-place. Revolution by the short-cut was Charu Mazumdar's obsession. The pragmatist goondas with whom he had struck an alliance soon deserted him ; the police, ... they soon discovered, had a better percentage to offer. Amble down the streets and bylanes of Calcutta, it will be a revelation of a sort; the same young men who, two seasons ago, steeped in the teachings of Mazumdar, were scribbling invocations to Mao Tse-tung are now engaged on a full-time basis in deification of Indira Gandhi. ... so much is lost for the traditional leftist movement in the country. Who knows what historical process has been served by this fearsome catharsis ?”

All these examples illustrate the axiom that without mass participation and popular support, there can be no revolution.

On the contrary, the Irish revolutionaries of the Easter Rebellion who were unpopular in 1916 began to win popularity after the fifteen leaders of the Rebellion were shot dead by the British, who also prepared a repulsive conscription act to draft Irishmen of military age as recruits for the First World War. Martyrdom of Terence Macswiney, who died in Brixton jail after a hunger-strike lasting seventy-four days, finally united the entire people against the foreign rulers, while the whirlwind tour of US by De Valera mobilised world opinion in favour of the Irish cause. The counter-terrorism of the government defeated its own purpose. With the hostility of the entire population, the British found it unprofitable and too costly to hold on in Ireland.

Explaining the factors for the guerrillas' success in Cyprus, General Grivas, the leader of the non-Communist patriotic guerrillas, writes : “I laughed aloud when I read that General A or Brigadier B had come to Cyprus to put into operation the methods that had won him fame elsewhere. They could not understand that the Cyprus struggle was unique in motive, psychological circumstances, and involved not a handful of insurrectionists but the whole people.”

The Long March of Mao which lasted a year and covered about eight thousand miles could not have been undertaken at all

had popular sympathies not been with the revolutionary forces. Resistance movements operating against collaborators with the Nazi occupation forces in Europe had all-out support of their respective peoples.

Lacking weapons and manpower and the capacity for sabotage or guerrilla warfare, the revolutionaries in Palestine and Morocco resorted mainly to individual terrorism against their British and French masters respectively. Their purpose was to demonstrate to the foreign rulers the immense cost in money and manpower of continuing to rule in the face of popular resistance, and to arouse the people until one and all were united in opposition to the foreigner.

The tenacity of Algerian guerrillas, who fully utilised the inaccessible Auras region and the massive support of the people, enabled them to defy French forces and create a huge drain on French manpower and the French treasury. Full-scale guerrilla warfare was launched by them more for its psychological effect than for practical military reasons.

In all these cases, a situation was developed under which the authorities could have maintained themselves only by making use of the entire population. No foreign power can continue for long under such a condition ; continuance becomes still less practicable in the case of native dictatorships. Ian Smith of Rhodesia and John Vorster of South Africa were also forced to realise this fact before long.

A careful study of a recent survey of over 80 organisations engaged in some kind of violence of guerrilla nature, urban or rural, in nearly 50 countries, will prove conclusively that while arms and popular support are both essential for the success of a violent revolution, the latter is more decisive than the former. It is true that it is comparatively easier to win popular support for a struggle against foreign rulers, but it is not that simple when the government to be opposed is Swadeshi, though matters are less difficult when such a government is a known satellite of some foreign power.

Internal propaganda is sufficient to ensure popular support, but cadres cannot be raised only on the strength of propaganda.

This necessitates revolutionary mass education. Again, every revolution is expected to accomplish two different tasks – destruction of the present regime and construction of a new order. The first one may in some cases be carried out even without revolutionary mass education ; but in its absence it is simply impossible to consolidate the gains of the first phase of the revolution and undertake and accomplish the second task. Hence the importance of such education.

Education is to be distinguished from mere propaganda. Propaganda aims at winning over popular sympathies in varying degrees, the least to be expected from it being benevolent neutrality. Education enables the people to become equal partners in revolutionary activities. Propaganda is a one-way traffic, proceeding from the top to the bottom. Education is a dialogical process in the course of which the leaders come in direct and constant contact with the people, learn from them (i.e., the people) what they consider to be their problems, conduct joint thinking, accepting the people as co-partners, and reconvey to them in clear terms what they receive from them confusedly. Revolutionary education starts from the needs of the masses – the needs that are uppermost in their conscious minds and also those of which they are not yet conscious. To make them conscious of their own inner urges is a very patient process ; but there is no substitute for it. And, again, the subjects of joint investigation must be the actual needs perceived by the people. They are to be helped in discovering their own mental processes, and this cannot be done unless these leaders understand perfectly the mind of the masses, allow the latter to understand their own (i.e., the leaders') mind, and strive jointly to understand the reality surrounding them. When as a result of this patient process the people begin to place trust in themselves and in the revolutionary leaders, as the former perceive the dedication and authenticity of the latter, the higher idealism of the latter is unconsciously absorbed by the former.

This is a very slow and patient process. The leaders addicted to the get-quick-popular methods of parliamentary democratic system may find it extremely difficult to adapt themselves to this process. Again, the size of the population and general level of literacy and political consciousness are factors that must also be taken into account.

Revolutionary leaders do not treat people as things to be used. They love the people and are willing to sacrifice themselves for them. Che Guevara says, "Let me say, with the risk of appearing ridiculous, that the true revolutionary is guided by strong feelings of love. It is impossible to think of an authentic revolutionary without this quality." Because of this instinctive love, revolutionary leaders do not manipulate ; they educate and organise.

As Frier puts it, "Leaders who do not act dialogically but insist on imposing their decision do not organise the people, they manipulate them. They do not liberate, nor are they liberated ; they oppress." Such leaders have no faith, no trust in the people. They consider the latter intrinsically deficient, incapable of dialogue and consequently utilise the same procedures as are used by the oppressors. They try to win the people over, forgetting the fact that "the revolution is made neither by the leaders for the people nor by the people for the leaders, but by both acting together in unshakable solidarity. This solidarity is born only when the leaders witness to it by their humble, loving and courageous encounter with the people."

Frier observes, "Denial of communion in the revolutionary process, avoidance of dialogue with the people under the pretext of organising them, of strengthening power, is really a fear of freedom. It is fear of or lack of faith in the people. But if the people cannot be trusted there is no reason for their liberation ; in this case the revolution is not carried out for the people, but by the people for the leaders : a complete self-negation. Dialogue with the people is radically necessary to every authentic revolution. This is what makes it a revolution, an authentic revolution, as distinguished from a military coup.... Conversely, revolutionary leaders who do not act dialogically in their relation with the people either have retained characteristics of the dominator and are not truly revolutionary, or they are totally misguided in their conception of their role, and as prisoners of their own sectarianism are equally non-revolutionary. They may even reach power. But the validity of any revolution resulting from anti-dialogical action is thoroughly doubtful."

And unfortunately this has been invariably the case with the leaders of all violent revolutions. That is why every such suc-

successful revolution was followed by the authoritarian regime of the 'revolutionary' leaders who no longer continued to be 'revolutionary'. The leaders of non-violent revolution have to lean heavily upon this dialogical process ; in fact it constitutes their main source of strength. All the various programmes adopted by them have as their main motive a dialogue with the people. The best illustration of such a programme is the Dandi March by Gandhiji for Salt Satyagraha. Coming in close and constant personal contact with the people, a non-violent revolutionary learns directly about the people and their problems, and in course of time, becomes identified with them.

Faith in ultimate, inevitable victory is essential for the success of both types of revolution. Che Guevara says, "Whoever does not feel this undoubted truth, i.e., that the victory of the enemy against the people is impossible, cannot be a guerrilla fighter." Neither can he be a successful non-violent fighter without this conviction.

The time element is important in all revolutionary wars. What brings about the downfall of a regime ultimately is the full ripening of its inherent self-contradictions. A Satyagraha or guerrilla warfare accelerates the process of ripening ; but the full process takes a longer time.

Intra-party rivalries and dissensions, a progressively increasing strain on the exchequer and the taxpayers, spiralling of prices, a progressive reduction in the growth-rate, an alarming growth in unemployment, a disastrous position of the balance of payments, discontent in the forces of law and order, administrative breakdown, mounting indifference, disquiet among and disaffection of the masses, neutralisation and subversion of armed forces, loss of the regime's credit-worthiness in the international sphere – all these factors take their own time to mature.

The economic and political self-contradictions can be contained for a longer time by a regime supported by the committed, ideological cadres ; but a government not having at its disposal the services of such cadres cannot manage these self-contradictions that long, depending only on the bureaucratic machinery. In any case the time element is essential. As one leader of a successful revolution puts it : "Time is required not alone for political

mobilisation, but to allow inherent weaknesses of the enemy to develop under the stress of war." About another revolutionary leader it has been observed, "His patience was infinite ; he could wait and watch until others got impatient, acted and failed."

Both types of revolution have in them an international component. But in the case of a non-violent revolution it is confined to propaganda only. During our fight for freedom the Indian National Congress had made consistent efforts in this direction. It had set up a special sub-committee for this purpose. Even in the second struggle for freedom, i.e., against the Indira Gandhi regime, this aspect had been properly taken care of.

During the 1857 War of Independence, Nanasaheb Peshwa was also aware of the importance of international contacts ; his letters to Napoleon III of France, and his plan of sending Ajimulla Khan, his emissary, to Great Britain and other countries amply prove how he had not lost sight of this aspect.

The Establishment is generally nervous about the contacts of the foreign embassies and foreign journalists with the revolutionists. What the government is afraid of is publicity of the revolutionary activities within the country and abroad.

Every government has to maintain some appearance of stability in order to assure the other members of the alliance that contracts will continue to be honoured, that treaties will be upheld, that loans will be repaid with interest, that investments will continue to produce profits. One of the strategies of both types of struggle is to destroy the stable image of the government, to deny it credits, to dry up its sources of revenue, and to create dissensions within the frightened owning classes and the bureaucracy.

If the constitution of the imperialist country is democratic, it becomes feasible for the native guerrillas to win over a sizable section of its population and bring its pressure to bear upon the imperialist power.

For propaganda abroad, both types of activities try to influence and press into service the media of mass communication in different countries. But their means are often different. The seizure of the Cambodian Embassy in Prague on behalf of the NIF of deposed Prince Norodom ; the capture of the Indonesian Embassy



in The Hague in September 1970 by Ambonese refugees ; the exploding of bombs outside the Portuguese Embassy and the Rhodesian Information Office in Washington ; the Palestinian guerrilla attack on Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics, which cost seventeen lives ; the bomb explosion in Singapore on the eve of the National Day Celebrations of 1970 ; various recent hijackings of aircrafts – all these and other similar moves were calculated to focus the attention of the world on the issues concerned.

The latest example of successful international propaganda is furnished by the SWAPO (South-West African People's Organisation) of Namibia which is receiving moral support from the UN and the World Court.

The non-violent revolutionaries use for this purpose the method of spectacular self-torture and self-immolation. Self-immolation of Buddhists in South-east Asia has certainly been more effective. Martyrdom of a Lumumba, a Kennedy, or a Martin Luther King can earn more international sympathy, compassion being a sentiment stronger and deeper than terror. Even international critics of Allende were not sympathetic to his assassins.

There has always been a wide gap between the promise and the performance of every violent revolution. For example, which revolution has fulfilled its assurances to its peasantry ? Which revolution has made workers the owners of their own plants ?

Vergnaniand observed that the revolution devours its own children. The indictment contained in a letter to the leadership of the Soviet bureaucracy from three Soviet intellectuals, academician Andre Sakharov, historian Roy Medvedev, and physicist Volenti Turchine, was a revealing commentary on the nature of post-revolutionary totalitarianism.

As Ronald Segal wrote, "Aside from the crude imperial aspect of Soviet rule, there is, in the proclaimed socialist homeland itself, more than enough to provoke a revolutionary idealism. Over half a century since the revolution of 1917, liberty, equality, fraternity, the cardinal values of socialism, are a mockery and rebuke : when not, in various attempts to express them, tried and punished as crimes against the State. Economic discrepancies are everywhere evident."

*The New Class* deals with the outcome of all Communist revolutions. The proposition of the 'New Class' proceeds, according to its author Milovan Djilas, as follows :

"The society that has arisen as the result of Communist revolutions is torn by the same sort of contradictions as are other societies. The result is that the Communist society has not only failed to develop towards human brotherhood and equality, but that out of its party bureaucracy there arises a privileged social stratum, which in accord with Marxist thinking, I named the New Class."

Djilas further observes in his *The Unperfect Society* : "Communism, once a popular movement that had in the name of science inspired the toiling and oppressed people of the world with the hope of creating the kingdom of Heaven on earth, that launched, and continues to launch, millions to their deaths in pursuit of this inextinguishable primeval dream, has become transformed into national political bureaucracies and started squabbling among themselves for prestige and influence, for the sources of wealth and for markets – for all those things over which politicians and governments have always quarrelled, and always will. The Communists were compelled by their own ideas and by the realities in their society first to wrest power, that delight above all delights, from their opponents, and then to scramble for it among themselves. This has been the fate of all revolutionary movements in history."

The experience of non-Communist revolutionary dictatorships is not very much different. The 'Night of Long Knives' in the course of which Captain Rohm and his officers were brutally murdered by their own comrades-in-arms, is not a peculiarly German phenomenon ; it is typical of all dictatorships determined to silence the dissenting voice even within the ruling party. Liquidation of dissenters outside the orbit of the party is nothing to be wondered at. The Russian forces suppressing the strike of Siberian workers or the upsurge of the people of Hungary, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia were as 'revolutionary' as the 'revolutionary' army of Napoleon pitted against the Spanish guerrillas or the Nazi troops liquidating opponents at home and freedom-fighters abroad.

Since the fourteenth of July 1789 (the date on which the term 'revolution' was first used in its modern sense by Liancourt in Paris) to this day this has been the inevitable fate of every violent revolution. It is not as if this is a result of personal whims, caprices or idiosyncrasies of revolutionary leaders. This constitutes an integral part of the methodology of violent revolutions.

Hannah Arendt observes in *On Revolution*: "To the extent that the greatest event in every revolution is the act of foundation, the spirit of revolution contains two elements which to us seem irreconcilable and even contradictory. The act of founding the new body-politic, of devising the new form of government involves the grave concern with the stability and durability of the new structure ; on the other hand, what those who are engaged in this grave business are bound to have is the exhilarating awareness of the human capacity of beginning – the high spirits which have always attended the birth of something new on earth. Perhaps the very fact that these two elements, the concern with stability and the spirit of the new, have become opposites in political thought and terminology, the one being identified as conservatism and the other being claimed as the monopoly of progressive liberalism, must be recognised to be among the symptoms of our loss."

And again : "The failure of post-revolutionary thought to remember the revolutionary spirit and to understand it conceptually was preceded by the failure of the revolution to provide it with a lasting institution.

"The revolution, unless it ended in the disaster of terror, had come to an end with the establishment of a republic..... But in this republic ... there was no space reserved, no room left for the exercise of precisely those qualities which had been instrumental in building it..... If foundation was the aim and the end of revolution, then the revolutionary spirit was not merely the spirit of beginning something new but of starting something permanent and enduring ; a lasting institution, embodying this spirit and encouraging it to new achievements, would be self-defeating. Nothing threatens the very achievements of revolution more dangerously and more acutely than the spirit which has brought them about..... Should freedom in its most exalted sense as freedom to act be the price to be paid for foundation ?"

Condorcet had remarked : "The word 'revolutionary' can be applied only to revolutions whose aim is freedom." Only where change occurs in the sense of a new beginning, where violence is used to constitute an altogether different form of government to bring about the formation of a new body-politic, where the *liberation from oppression* aims at least at the constitution of freedom, can we speak of 'revolution'. Judged by this criterion, violent revolutions in the past appear to be less than 'revolutionary' :

The methodology of non-violent revolutionaries is entirely different. The main weapon in their arsenal is soul-force, not terror. They believe in purity of means. They reject the dictum 'ends justify means'. They have firm faith in the inevitability of their ultimate triumph, because they visualise it as a triumph of Truth, the Cause. They believe that those who refuse to be defeated can never be defeated, that there is nothing like failure in the struggle for Truth ; there is only incomplete success. They are convinced that no individual can be governed for long without his willing consent. What they seek is progressive purification of 'self' through penance, and not physical annihilation of the enemy through violence.

A non-violent revolution is necessarily preceded and accompanied by revolutionary mass education. 'Passive resistance' as defined by Aurobindo, 'Chatur-Sutri' of Lokmanya Tilak, 'Satyagraha' of Mahatma Gandhi – all these envisaged intimate interrelationship between struggle and mass education. Mass education through struggle ; struggle through mass education.

Against this background all the moves, big or small, acquire new significance : even simple, innocent gestures of the non-violent activities ; deputation, badge-wearing, protest resolutions, petitions, silent processions, slogan-shouting, token hunger-strikes, Hartals, display of posters, distribution of literature and news bulletins, big funerals of martyrs, observance of martyrdom anniversaries, demonstrations, propaganda of the atrocities by the authorities, educative group-meetings, boycott of legislators and government functions, general strike or *bandh*, fast unto death, Satyagrahas, no-tax campaign, all-out non-co-operation and civil disobedience, establishment of 'Janata Sarkar', peaceful agitations

for the redressal of local or sectional grievance : all these are as much a part of struggle as of revolutionary education.

When Thoreau explained in his *Civil Disobedience* why he went to jail rather than pay a tax to a government which condoned human slavery, he could hardly have imagined what impact his theory was going to make on the political scene of this land of Prahlad. Is it a mere coincidence that his thesis for individual action was developed into the technique of mass movement in this distant land ? Our spiritual tradition was conducive to the growth of such a system of thought and action. That is why Aurobindo could say, "To break an unjust coercive law is not only justifiable but, under given circumstances, a duty." Tilak proclaimed that he wanted to take the country "outside the Penal Code" and Gandhiji initiated and perfected the technique of 'Satyagraha', which is not just the passive resistance of the weak but the active non-violent defiance of the strong. In an article in *The Illustrated Weekly* (15.8.1976) Acharya Kripalani explains how the technique of Satyagraha was followed by Prahlad, Mirabai, Socrates, Jesus Christ, Muslim Martyrs, social reformers, scientists and others ; how Satyagraha can be practised in the family, the village, the province or the State, and how it cannot be conceived of as an anti-social activity. "It recognises the social utility and necessity of the State and the laws and yet allows the individual to enjoy his liberty as a human being. The Satyagrahi even in chains is a free man. He can call his soul his own. He is not afraid of his opponents. Enemies he has none. His opponents are afraid of him, and not he of them. He can even stand alone, while the violent resister must have others to join or follow him."

Djilas, while not endorsing completely the tenets of Gandhism, comes independently to conclude :

"It would appear from contemporary experiences that revolutionary organisations of the classic type – thoroughly conspiratorial, militarily disciplined, and ideologically united – are not essential. Revolution is not essential for victory over the Communist oligarchs and bureaucrats, civil wars are even less necessary. However, recourse should be had to all other forms of struggle – demonstrations, strikes, protest marches, protest resolutions, and the like and, most important of all, open and coura-

geous criticism and moral firmness. All historical experience to date confirms this.”

Through violence it may be possible to shoot down every agent and leader of the Establishment ; but violence cannot guarantee establishment of a rule which will be considered by all citizens as their own. People cannot be the masters of the post-revolutionary regime unless they are also the real masters of the processes of revolution. And, again, if they are equipped mentally only for destruction, they will prove to be very poor instruments of subsequent construction. The methodology of non-violent revolution necessarily includes mass education in both the aspects of revolution, development of the soul-force of the masses, and their involvement in and leadership of the various phases of revolution. It is an authentic revolution, of the people, for the people, and by the people. For such revolutionary leaders, organisation means organising themselves with the people. Their method is dialogical : communion, not communique ; they do not own the people ; they are co-authors of revolution along with the people. Consequently the ultimate victory belongs “not to the leaders alone, but to the leaders and the people – or to the people, including the leaders.” This eliminates all possibility of dictatorship following the revolution.

This may appear to be a long way. It certainly is. But, as M. N. Roy remarked about the patient process of mass education, “It may be a long way, but if it be the only way, then it is the shortest one.” □

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# INDEX

## TO

### NAMES OF PERSONS AND WORKS CITED

'A Call to Arms'	15	Appaji-Joshi	21, 36, 41,
Abel	265		49, 50, 219
Abhyankar, Morubhai	30, 31	<i>Aprabuddha</i>	31
Abul Fazal	262	Apte, Babasaheb	41
Acharya, Tirumal	27	Apte, Dr.	13
Adhikari, G. G.	51	Arendt, Hannah	284
Afzal Khan	26	Arhat	135
Agarkar, G. G.	212	Aristotle	262
<i>Ain-e-Akbari</i>	262	Arjuna	92, 93, 265
<i>Aitareya</i>	99	<i>Arunodaya</i>	15
Aiyar, V. V. S.	27	Aryadeva	101
Aiyar, Vanchi	15, 28	Ashare	31
Ajimulla Khan	281	Ashe	28
Ajit-Singh	43	Ashfaq-ullah Khan	43
Akarte	30	<i>Atharva Veda</i>	97, 98,
Akbar	83		100, 139, 253-4
Alekar, Narayanrao	32	Attila	91, 151
Alexander	83, 91, 175	Aurelius, Marcus	166, 175
Allah	129, 131, 135, 136, 265	Aurobindo Ghosh	18, 19, 91,
Allende	273, 282		250, 285, 286
Amanullah Khan	132	Aurangzeb	139, 140, 173, 239
Ambaprasad, Sufi	15	Awara, Mancharsha	31
Ambedkar, B. R.	30, 46, 47,	Azad, Chandrashekhar	43
	64, 66, 106, 107,	Azad, Maulana	35
	124-5, 184-5, 194-225,	Azad, Prithwisingh	43
	233-5, 244		
Amritkar, Nanasaheb	30	Babar	139
<i>Anandmath</i>	15	Bade, R. V.	46, 60
Anandan, M. R.	43	Bagi, Sarabhai	15
Anay, M. S.	7, 16, 31, 35, 36, 53	<i>Bahishkrit Bharat</i>	201
Anna-Khot	15, 31	Bairam	133
Anna-Sohani	9	Bajaj, Jamnalal	31, 67
<i>Annihilation of Caste</i>	212	Baji Prabhu	93
Ansari	46	Baker, Jim	192
Anandacharlu, P.	9	Bakunin, Michail	260



Bal Mukund	43	Bianchi	261
Balasaheb-Deoras	62, 66-7, 214, 220	<i>Bible</i>	142-3, 184
Bana	92	Bindumadhav	54
Bankim Chandra	15, 118	Bismarck	91, 175, 190
Bannerjee, W. C.	15	Bismil, Ramprasad	83
Banta-Singh, Bhai	15	Biyani, Brijlal	30, 31
Bapat, R. N.	43	Bole, S. K.	213
Bapat, Senapati	43	Boncour, Paul	259
<i>Barar Mitra</i>	5	Bose, J. C.	153
Basaveshwara	68	Bose, Khudiram	14, 27, 92
Basminkov, A.	190	Bose, Ras Bihari	28, 43
Beaulies, Leroy	260	Bose, Subash Chandra	9, 35, 36
Beethoven	91	Boswell	12
Beg, M. H.	214	Brahma	135
Besant, Annie	19, 21, 25, 26	Brahmachari, Vishnubua	153
Betelle, Andre	216	Brihaspati	77
Bhagat Singh	43	Bruce, King	93
<i>Bhagavad-Gita</i>	19, 92, 94, 135, 150, 265	Bruce, Robert	94
Bhagha Jatin	28	Buch, M. A.	18
Bhakna, Sohan Singh	28	Buddha	50, 91, 135, 151, 206, 212, 219, 222, 226
Bhakta Tana	239	Caesar	91, 114, 168, 175, 184
<i>Bhala</i>	15	Cain	265
Bhanot, Harish	93	Calvin, Auckland	24
Bharata	86, 171	Cama, Madame	27, 43
Bhat, Damodar Balwant (alias Bhide)	9	Capp, William	187
Bhave, P. B.	31, 53	Capra, Fritjof	107
Bhave, Vinoba	39, 243, 251	Carlyle	91
Bhedi, Baburao	41	Castro, Fidel	270, 273
Bhide, Gopalrao	58	Chaki, Prafulla	27
Bhide Bhat	9	Chakravarti, Shyamsundar	45
Bhil, Tantya	14	Chakravarti, Trailokyanath	61, 220
Bhishikar	41, 42	Chanakya	81, 86, 162
Bhishma	93, 171, 265	Chandavarkar, Narayanrao	10
Bhosale, Appasaheb	1	Chandekar	32
Bhosale, Baburao	30	Chandragupta	233
Bhosale, Laxmanrao	30	Chandrashekhhar Azad	43
Bhosale, Raghuji	11	Chandrashekhara Bharati	130
		Chandu	239

- |                              |   |                           |                         |
|------------------------------|---|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Chapekar Brothers            | 9, 14, 26                                       | Das, Chitta Ranjan        | 34, 86                  |
| Charde, Govindrao            | 30  | Das, Tarak Nath           | 28                      |
| Charles IV                   | 189   | <i>Das Kapital</i>        | 136, 153                |
| Charles V                    | 111, 166, 175                                   | Date, S. R.               | 52                      |
| Charu Mazumdar               | 92, 270, 276                                    | Da Vinci                  | 91                      |
| Charvaka                     | 130, 187  | Davre                     | 9, 43                   |
| Chatterji, P. C.             | 184   | Dayananda, Swami          | 10                      |
| Chattopadhyaya, Ravindranath | 28  | Deendayal Upadhyaya, Pt.  | 103, 252-55             |
| Che Guevara                  | 92, 175, 268, 270, 273, 279, 280                | De Gaulle                 | 141                     |
| Chengezkhan                  | 91, 151   | Democritus                | 130                     |
| Chesterton                   | 179   | Deoras, Balasaheb         | 62, 66-67, 214, 220     |
| Chistikhan                   | 28  | Desai, Mahadev            | 13                      |
| Cholkar                      | 59  | <i>Deshher Katha</i>      | 15                      |
| Chounde Maharaj              | 58  | Deshmukh, Balwantrao      | 30                      |
| Christ, Jesus                | 84, 114, 120, 131, 135, 136, 151, 184, 187, 286 | Deshmukh, Gopal Hari      | 10                      |
| Churchill                    | 81, 175   | Deshmukh, Nilkanthrao     | 31                      |
| <i>Civil Disobedience</i>    | 286   | Deshmukh, Panjabrao       | 210                     |
| Clayton, Adam                | 231   | Deshmukh, Ramrao          | 30                      |
| Cole, G. D. H.               | 260   | Deshpande, Gangadharrao   | 60                      |
| <i>Competing Equalities</i>  | 215   | Deshpande, Manoharpant    | 30                      |
| Condorcet                    | 285   | Deshpande, Shamrao Dada   | 7                       |
| Confucius                    | 91, 166   | Deshpande, V. S.          | 31                      |
| Copernicus                   | 114   | <i>Desh-sevak</i>         | 15                      |
| Cornwallis                   | 95  | Deuskar, S. G.            | 15                      |
| <i>Coup d'Etat</i>           | 267   | De Valera                 | 276                     |
| Cromwell                     | 266   | Devayani                  | 77                      |
| Dahir                        | 210, 218  | Dharmadhikari, Dada       | 31                      |
| Dalhousie                    | 8   | Dhingra, Madanlal         | 14                      |
| Damien                       | 91  | Dhritarashtra             | 86, 171                 |
| Dandekhan                    | 28  | Din, Bhagwan              | 31                      |
| Dange                        | 60, 177-8                                       | Diogenes                  | 121                     |
| Dani, Bhaiyaji               | 51, 74  | Djilas, Milovan           | 156, 180, 280, 283, 286 |
| Dante                        | 189   | Doctorji (see 'Hedgewar') |                         |
| Dara-Shikoh                  | 139   | Domitius                  | 166                     |
| Darwin                       | 192   | Donde, M. V.              | 204                     |
| <i>Dasbodh</i>               | 15  | Duguit                    | 258                     |
|                              |   | Durgawati                 | 2, 239                  |

Durkheim	260	Gautama (see 'Buddha')	
Dutt, Bhupendranath	28	Gazni Mohammed	131
Dutt, R. C.	15	Geno Baroni	230
Einstein	161	Ghatate, Babasaheb	74
Ekalavya	239	Ghori Mohammed	210
<i>Ekatmata Stotra</i>	91	Ghorpade, Wamanrao	30
Elizabeth	16, 84	Ghosh, Aurobindo	18, 19, 91, 250, 285, 286
Emmanuel, Victor	85, 189	Ghosh, Barindrakumar	19, 43
Engels	266	Ghosh, Ras Bihari	59
<i>Equality and Inequality :</i>		Giap, Gen.	272
<i>Theory and Practice</i>	216	Gierke	260
Erasmus	189	Girnkar	31
Fairbairn, Geoffrey	265	<i>Gita</i>	19, 92, 94, 135, 150, 265
Farley, Tim	35	<i>Gita-Rahasya</i>	15
Fateh Singh	93	Godbole, Vamanrao	196
Favell, Jerry	192	Goethe	91
Ferdinand	184	Gokhale, Bapu	93
<i>For Blacks Only</i>	227	Gokhale, G. K.	7
Francis, St.	91	Golwalkar, M. S. (see 'Shri Guruji')	
Franklin	91	Gond, Bapurao	1, 14
Frederick the great	91	Gond, Vyankatrao	1, 14
<i>Freedom of Conscience</i>		<i>Gondvanatil Priyamvada</i>	7
<i>in the USSR</i>	190	Gorakhnath	77
Frier	222, 279	Gorbachev	193
Gadre	16	Gorky, Maxim	91
Gaekwad, Sayajirao	214	Gosavi, Prithwiger	7
Gajendragadkar	102, 187	Govind of Nasik	15
Galenter, Mark	215	Govindlal, A. B.	15
Gandhi, Indira	276, 281	Gracias, A.	189
Gandhiji	21, 23-27, 31, 34-5, 39, 45-47, 49, 86, 89, 114, 130, 151, 217, 219-20, 243, 250, 280, 285-86	Graham, Billy	193
Gangaprasad	21	Grivas, Gen.	276
Ganjre, M. F.	201	Guevara (see 'Che Guevara')	
Garibaldi	85, 91	Guidinliu, Rani	239
		Gunther, John	35
		Gupta, Deendayal	31
		Guru Govind Singh	70, 171
		Guru Nanak	68, 91
		Gurudit-Singh, Baba	28
		Guruji, Shri (see 'Shri Guruji')	
		<i>Gyan-Kosh</i>	65

- |                                 |   |                                   |                         |
|---------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Halde                           | 31  | Hussain, Liaquat                  | 45                      |
| Handon, Geoffrey                | 192   | Hussain, Murtaza                  | 134                     |
| Hannibal                        | 91, 175   | Hussain, Sheikh Raza              | 24                      |
| Hardas, Balshastri              | 31  | <i>Indian War of Independence</i> | 20                      |
| Hardayal, Lala                  | 28, 43  | Indira Gandhi                     | 276, 281                |
| Hardinge                        | 28  | Iqbal                             | 140                     |
| <i>Hari Kishor</i>              | 7   | Isabel                            | 184                     |
| Harkare, Baburao                | 21, 31  | Jagan, Chedi                      | 224                     |
| Harnam-Singh                    | 28  | Jagat-Singh                       | 28                      |
| Hauffer, Eric                   | 13  | Jahangir                          | 139                     |
| Hedgewar, Dr. Keshav Baliram    | 7, 10-13, 16, 20, 21, 26, 28, 30, 32-34, 36-40, 42, 43, 45-53, 55-57, 59-64, 66, 67, 74, 109, 119, 129, 194, 215, 217, 219-21, 225, 247 | Jaichand                          | 210, 218                |
| Henry VIII                      | 127, 189  | Jaikar                            | 34                      |
| <i>Hind Swaraj</i>              | 243   | Jamn Lal Bajaj                    | 31, 67                  |
| <i>Hind Swarajya</i>            | 15  | Jamshed                           | 133                     |
| <i>Hindustan Review</i>         | 15  | Janaka                            | 111, 166                |
| Hipshon Roy                     | 239   | <i>Janata</i>                     | 201                     |
| Hislop, Stephen                 | 5   | Jayaprakash Narayan               | 243, 251                |
| <i>Historical Role of Islam</i> | 203   | Jefferson                         | 91, 136                 |
| <i>History of Dharmashastra</i> | 185   | Jehova                            | 129, 135                |
| Hitler                          | 119, 167, 175, 267  | Jethmalani, Ram                   | 246                     |
| Hobbes                          | 189   | Jhelian, N. C.                    | 239                     |
| Hobson, S.G.                    | 260   | Jinnah                            | 24, 26, 45, 132         |
| Ho Chi Minh                     | 266, 270  | <i>Joan of Arc</i>                | 15                      |
| Holyoake                        | 189   | Joan of Arc                       | 91                      |
| Hook, Sydney                    | 266   | Johnson                           | 12                      |
| Hopkins                         | 28  | Jois, M. Rama                     | 185                     |
| Horatio                         | 93  | Jones, Stanley                    | 130-31                  |
| Huddar, Balaji                  | 43  | Jorawar Singh                     | 93                      |
| Hukumchand, A. C.               | 15  | Joshi, Appaji                     | 21, 36, 41, 49, 50, 219 |
| Hume, A. O.                     | 15  | Joshi, Vamanrao                   | 31                      |
| Hunter, John                    | 91  | Kabir, Humayun                    | 187                     |
|                                 |   | Kacha                             | 77-78                   |
|                                 |   | Kahedai                           | 239                     |
|                                 |   | Kaiser, William                   | 28                      |
|                                 |   | <i>Kal</i>                        | 10, 15                  |

Kali	18	Koch, Robert	91
Kalidasa	170	Kokardekar	31
Kamath, H. V.	210	Kolhatkar, A. B.	7, 16
<i>Kamlakant</i>	118	Koteshwar Rao, P.	244
Kanada	93	Kripalani, J. B.	286
Kane	31	Krishna (see 'Shri Krishna')	
Kane, P. V.	185	Krishnavarma, Shyamji	27, 43
Kanetkar, M. J.	31	Kropotkin, Peter	260-61
Kanhere, Anant	15, 92	Kuka, Ramsingh	9, 14
Kaple, Vinayakrao	43	Kunti	85, 171
Kartar-Singh	15, 28	Kunzru, H. N.	210
Kayarkar, Dadashastri	32	Kuruchiar	239
Keer, Dhananjay	213		
Keikar, Mausi	49	Lajpat Rai, Lala	19, 26, 43
Kelkar, N. C.	29, 34	Lal-Bal-Pal	18, 19, 29
Kelkar, Vishwanathrao	31, 39	Lakey, W. E.	190
Kemal Ata Turk	47, 133	Lantaud	259
Kemal Pasha	175	Laski, Harold	257
Kennedy	27, 91, 282	Lavergne	258
Keshav Chandra Sen	10	Laxminarayan, D.	32
Ketkar, S. V.	5, 6	Lenin	127, 175, 266
Kewat	239		
Khan, Afzal	26	Leonardo	91
Khan, Ajimulla	281	<i>Letters (Marx)</i>	139
Khan, Amanulla	132	<i>Letters from Andaman</i>	15
Khan, Ashfaq-ulla	43	Liancourt	284
Khan, Chengez	91, 151	Lincoln, A.	91, 138, 175, 228
Khan, Chisti	28	Lin-Piao	275
Khan, Dande	28	Locke, John	189
Khan, Syed Ahmed	22	Lodhi, Ibrahim	139
Khankhoje	42, 43	Louis XIV	82
Khaparde	7, 10, 15, 30	Louise, John	227
Khare, N. B.	31, 36	Louise, R. H.	240
Kher, Balasaheb	214	Lumumba	282
Khurana, H. L.	153	Luther, Martin	189
Kichley, Ben	192	Luttwak, Edward	267-8
King, Martin Luther	227-28, 269, 282		
Kingsford	27	'M'	13
Kinkhede	7	Macaulay	95, 97
		Machiavelli	189, 190

- |                           |  |                            |  |
|---------------------------|--|----------------------------|--|
| Machhindranath            | 77   | Mewa-Singh                 | 28   |
| Macswiney, T.             | 276  | Mill, J. S.                | 257  |
| Madame Cama               | 27, 43   | Mirabai                    | 286  |
| Madison                   | 189  | Mirabeau                   | 258  |
| Magsaysay                 | 274  | Michael-Angelo             | 91, 122-23   |
| <i>Mahabharata</i>        | 137, 139, 171, 239   | Minto                      | 27   |
| Mahajan, V. D.            | 18   | Mohammed Ali               | 26, 34, 46   |
| <i>Maharashtra</i>        | 31, 39, 52, 53   | Mohammed, Prophet          | 89, 132, 187   |
| Mahavira                  | 91   | Mohammed-bin-Kasim         | 210  |
| Mahendra Pratap           | 28, 43   | Mohammed Gazni             | 131  |
| Malaparte, C.             | 267  | Mohammed Ghori             | 210  |
| Malaviya, Pt. Madan Mohan | 23,<br>29, 34, 35, 53  | Mohrir, Krishnarao         | 58   |
| Malkapurkar, S.           | 43   | Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms | 25,<br>30, 36  |
| Mandela, Nelson           | 93   | <i>Mook Nayak</i>          | 201  |
| <i>Manu-smriti</i>        | 117, 205, 206  | More, Chandrarao           | 172  |
| Mao Tse-tung              | 175, 181,<br>222-23, 265,<br>272, 276                                  | Morley-Minto Plan          | 23, 24   |
| Marcus Aurelius           | 166, 175   | Moses                      | 93, 94, 187  |
| Marighella, C.            | 269, 271   | Mountbatten                | 89   |
| Marsilius                 | 189  | Mozart                     | 91   |
| Martin                    | 259  | <i>Mudrarakshasa</i>       | 81, 163  |
| Martinetti                | 261  | Mueller, Adam              | 262  |
| Marudkar, D.              | 15, 31   | Muiwah, Isaac K.           | 239  |
| Marx, Karl                | 127, 136, 139,<br>153, 163, 166,<br>180, 192, 209,<br>211, 217, 266-67 | Mukherji, Jatindranath     | 28   |
| Masurkar, V.              | 32   | Mukherji, Shyama Prasad    | 55, 195  |
| Mate, S. M. (Bapusaheb)   | 64   | Muley, Madhavrao           | 92   |
| Maulana Azad              | 35   | Munda, Virsa               | 239  |
| Mavkar, R. B.             | 31   | Munje, Balkrishna Shivram  | 7, 9,<br>11, 16, 29,<br>30-1, 34, 36,<br>37, 48, 52-4, 214 |
| Mazar-ul-Haq              | 24   | Mussolini                  | 190, 261   |
| Mazi, Baba Tilak          | 239  | <i>Nagpur Times</i>        | 195  |
| Mazumdar, Charu           | 92, 270, 276   | Naidu, R. B.               | 30   |
| Mazzini                   | 15, 20, 85, 91, 93   | Naigaonkar, G.             | 30   |
| MecGovern, George         | 271  | Naik, Umaji                | 9, 14  |
| Medvedev, R.              | 282  | Nair, Shankaran            | 10   |
| Mees                      | 262  | Nanak, Guru                | 68, 91   |
|                           |  | Nanda, King                | 81   |

Naoroji, Dadabhai	15, 16	Parande	31
Napoleon	84, 91, 92, 127, 141, 175, 190, 283	Paranjape	7
Napoleon III	281	Paranjape, Babasaheb	16
Narayan, Jaya Prakash	243, 251	Paranjape, L. B.	41
Nargundkar, Babasaheb	14	Paranjape, Narayan	16
Nariman, F. S.	36	Paranjape, Shivrampant	10, 15
Narcissus	80	Paranjape, Wrangler	59, 214
Neeli	239	Parashurama	92
Neerja	93	Parchure Shastri	89
Nehru, Jawaharlal	27, 118, 195, 250	Patanjali	184
Nehru, Motilal	34, 86	Patel, Vallabhabhai	35, 36
Neto, Agostinho	273	Pathak, Sohanlal	15
Nietzsche	91	Patil, Dasharath	30
Nightingale, Florence	91	Patil, Pandharinath	30
<i>Nihspriha</i>	31	Patwardhan	7-8
Nivedita	261	Patwardhan, Annasaheb	14, 31
Niyogi, B. S.	32	Patwardhan, Shivajirao	31
Nizam	8	Pehlavi	132
Norodom	281	Pelloutier	258
Ogale, Gopalrao	31, 39	Penti, A. J.	260
<i>On Revolution</i>	284	Peshwa, Bajirao	88
Oppenheimer, Robert	150	Peshwa, Nanasaheb	281
Organe, A. R.	260	Phadke, Ghorhonath	15
<i>Organiser</i>	58	Phadke, Vasudev Balwant	7, 9, 14
Pachkhede, V. L.	43	Phagu, Kisan	30
Pachlegaonkar	32	Phizo	239
Paigambar	88	Phule, Jyotiba	10, 11, 207, 223, 224
Pal, B. C.	18, 19, 29	Pillay, Champak Raman	43
Palkar, Nana	52	Pinglay, V. G.	15, 28
Palvankar, B. R.	15	Plato	257, 262
Pande, Prasad	42	Pokharnikar, D. K.	201
Pant Pratinidhi	63	Polak	47
Paramahansa, Ramakrishna	10, 13, 92	Pope Gregory VII	189
Paramanand, Bhai	28, 43	Potdar, G. S.	43
		Poudenx	259
		<i>Prabodha Chandrodaya</i>	139
		Prahlad	286
		Prajapati	100
		Prasad, Rajendra	251

- |                                   |                           |                                     |  |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <i>Primitive Society</i>          | 240                       | Ringe, Krishnarao                   | 7  |
| <i>Principles of Communism</i>    | 266                       | <i>Rise and Growth of</i>           |  |
| Prithwiraj                        | 210                       | <i>Indian Militant Nationalism</i>  | 18   |
| Prithwisingh Azad                 | 43                        | Risley Circular                     | 59   |
| <i>Profiles in Courage</i>        | 91                        | Robertson                           | 192  |
| Proudhon, P. J.                   | 260                       | Robespierre                         | 250  |
| Puranik, Bindumadhav              | 31                        | Rocca                               | 261  |
| Puranik, Nanaji                   | 21                        | Rohm, Capt.                         | 283  |
| Pyarelal                          | 13                        | Romulus                             | 265  |
|                                   |                           | Rousseau                            | 91   |
| <i>Quran</i>                      | 142-143                   | Roy, Hipshon                        | 239  |
|                                   |                           | Roy, M. N.                          | 28, 34-6, 203,<br>243, 251, 287                                  |
| Rabindranath Tagore               | 243                       | Roy, Rammohan                       | 10   |
| Radhakrishnan, S.                 | 161                       | Ruikar, Rambhau                     | 30   |
| Raghavendra Rao, E.               | 37                        | Russell                             | 260  |
| <i>Raghuvamsha</i>                | 170                       | Rustin, Bayard                      | 227  |
| Rajendra Prasad                   | 251                       | Rustum                              | 91, 132  |
| Rajguru                           | 42, 43                    |                                     |  |
| Raka, Punamchand                  | 31                        | Sachidanand Sinha                   | 251  |
| Rama (see 'Shri Rama')            |                           | Sakharov, Andre                     | 282  |
| Rama Jois, M.                     | 185                       | Salar Jung                          | 8  |
| Ramakrishna Paramahansa           | 10, 13, 92                | Sami-ulla Khan                      | 30   |
| Raman, C. V.                      | 153                       | Sandie, Raul                        | 275  |
| Ramana Maharshi                   | 92                        | <i>Sankalp</i>                      | 58   |
| Ramanuja                          | 68                        | <i>Sanysta Khadga</i>               | 27   |
| <i>Ramayana</i>                   | 139, 239                  | Savargaonkar, Ram S.                | 43   |
| Ramdas, Samarth                   | 50, 171,<br>173, 176, 177 | Savarkar, G. D.                     | 15   |
| Rammohan Roy                      | 10                        | Savarkar, Swatantrya-<br>veer V. D. | 13, 15, 20, 27<br>42, 51, 54, 63,<br>83, 92, 188,<br>214, 225-26 |
| Rana Pratap                       | 76, 93, 94, 239           | <i>Savdhan</i>                      | 31, 51   |
| Rana, Sardar Singh                | 27                        | Saxena                              | 210  |
| Ranade, M. G.                     | 7                         | Sayajirao Gaekwad                   | 214  |
| Rand                              | 26                        | Sayyed, S. M.                       | 187  |
| <i>Rashtra-Mukh</i>               | 15                        | <i>Secular Values for</i>           |  |
| <i>Rashtra-Shakti</i>             | 58                        | <i>Secular India</i>                | 184  |
| Rau, B. N.                        | 210                       | Segal, Ronald                       | 282  |
| Rehman, Abdul                     | 46                        |                                     |  |
| Remus                             | 265                       |                                     |  |
| <i>Revolutionaries' Guerrilla</i> |                           |                                     |  |
| <i>Warfare</i>                    | 265                       |                                     |  |



Sen, Keshav Chandra	10	Singh, Jagat	28
Sen, Surya	43	Singh, Jorawar	93
Sengupta, S. M.	29	Singh, Kartar	15, 28
Setalwad, Chimanlal	214	Singh, Mewa	28
Shabari	239	Singh, Udham	43
Shaffer, Francis	192	Sinha, Sachidanand	251
Shah, K. T.	210	Sitaramayya, Patabhi	23
Shahjehan	139	Sivaramayya	216
Shahu Maharaj	30, 88, 214	<i>Six Golden Epochs of History</i>	83
Shamlal	217	Smiles, Samuel	92
Shankaracharya, Adi	91	Smith, Ian	277
Shankaracharya of Kurtkoti	214	Snyder	97
Shankaracharya of Sringeri	130	<i>Social Renaissance in India</i>	18
Shankaradeva	68	Socrates	114, 168, 257, 286
Shaukat Ali	26, 34	Sohani, Anna	9
Sheorey, Sharad	195	Sohrab	91, 133
Shiva	135	Sorokin, Pitrim A.	259
Shivaji, Chhatrapati	14, 26, 70, 139, 171, 172, 173, 175-7, 210, 270	Spann	260
Shraddhananda, Swami	46	Stalin	82, 192
Shri-Guruji	44, 49, 55, 58, 67-71, 92, 106, 123, 136, 142, 184, 220, 243, 247, 251, 253, 256-8, 262-3	<i>State Gazetteer</i>	20
Shri-Krishna	19, 65, 82, 89, 94, 111, 135, 143, 150	<i>Subhashita</i> quoted	121, 128
Shri-Rama	111, 143, 169, 171	Sukhdev	43
Shukracharya	77, 265	Surya Sen	43
Sidhva, R. K.	210	<i>Swatantrya</i>	58
Sieyes	258	Swegart, Jimmy	192
Singh, Ajit	43	Swetlana	82
Singh, Bhai Banta	15	Syed Ahmed Khan	22
Singh, Baba Gurudit	28	Taber, Robert	270
Singh, Bhagat	43	Tagore, Rabindranath	243
Singh, Fateh	93	Talatule	30
Singh, Guru Govind	70, 171	Taman, Bapuji	7
Singh, Harnam	28	Tambe, S. B.	36
		Tana Bhakta	239
		Tantya Bhil	14
		Tarodekar, Babasaheb	30
		Tatya Tope	270-71
		<i>Technique of the Coup</i>	
		<i>d'Etat</i>	267
		Thakur, Devendranath	10

Thakurdas	210	Udham-Singh	43
<i>The Brook</i>	168	Udhoji	31
<i>The 1857 War of Independence</i>	15	Umaji Naik	9, 14
<i>The Illustrated Weekly</i>	286	Upadhyaya, Pt. Deendayal	103, 252-55
<i>The Legal and Constitutional History of India</i>	185	<i>Upanishad</i> quoted	136, 149
<i>The Nationalist Movement in India</i>	18	Vaidya, Ambadaspant	31
<i>The New Class</i>	156, 283	Vajpayee, Ramlal	42
<i>The Ordeal of Change</i>	13	Vamadeva	265
<i>The Origin and Nature of Secularism</i>	189	<i>Vande Mataram</i>	51
<i>The Principle of Secularism</i>	189	<i>Varieties of Nationalism</i>	97
<i>The Rise and Influence of Rationalism in Europe</i>	190	Vasishtha	99, 169
<i>The Role of Christ</i>	130	Vena	100, 266
<i>The Unperfect Society</i>	283	Vergniand	282
Thengadi, Dhundirajpant	30, 60	Verma, Jagannath Prasad	31, 53
<i>Thirty Years in Jail</i>	61	Victoria	14, 16
Thoreau	286	Vidyasagar, Ishwar Chandra	10
<i>Thoughts on Pakistan</i>	202	<i>Vihari</i>	15
Tikekar, Ganpatrao	31	Vinoba Bhave	39, 243, 251
Tilak, Lokmanya Bal		Virsa Munda	239
Gangadhar	7, 10, 14-23, 25-27, 34, 36-37, 44-45, 86-87, 265, 285-86	Virulkar, Nilkanthrao	31
<i>Tilak and Gokhale</i>	18	Vishakhā	206
Tilak Mazi, Baba	239	Vishnubua Brahmachari	153
Timur	91, 151	Vishwamitra	233
Tirumal Acharya	27	Vishwanath, Lord	69
Tourchine, V.	282	<i>Vishwa-vritta</i>	15
Toynbee, Arnold	153	Vivekananda, Swami	10, 15, 18, 121, 226, 261
Tucker, Sterling	227-30	Voltaire	91, 184
Tukaram	83, 176	Vorster, John	277
Tukdoji	32	Voss	5
Tulsidas	91	Vyas, K. C.	18
Tyagi, O. P.	246	Wacha, Dinshaw	15
		Wallace, Graham	258
		Washington, Booker T.	228
		Washington, George	85, 91, 136, 175

Wazalwar, Tatyaji	32	Wycliffe, John	189
Webbs, The	258	<i>Yogavasishta</i>	139
Wedderburn	15	Yudhishthira	171
Wiener, Norbert	151-52	Yule	24
Wijeweera, Rohan	275	Zhanov	275
William the Conqueror	91	Zhukov	91
Wilson	141	Zoroaster	91, 187, 262
Wolpert	18		