

OUR NATIONAL RENAISSANCE

*Its Directions
And
Destination*

D.B. Thengadi



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D. B. THENGADI

SAHITYA SINDHU . BANGALORE - 560 019

OUR NATIONAL RENAISSANCE : ITS DIRECTIONS AND DESTINATION
Four lectures by **DATTOPANT THENGADI**, dealing with the problems, prospects and prerequisites of national rejuvenation. Published by **SAHITYA SINDHU Prakashana**, Bangalore - 560 019 (India). Pages : 78 +Viii

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PREFACE

We have pleasure in offering to our readers this book by Sri Dattopant Thengadi. The four lectures reproduced herein constituted the sixth Rashtrottthana Lecture Series delivered at Bangalore From 5th April to 8th April 1973.

Sri Thengadiji has been known for his clarity of thinking and felicity of expression. His deep scholarship is matched by his breadth of perspective. As the founder of Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh and, more recently, of Bharatiya Kisan Sangh, Sri Thengadiji has been in the forefront of labour and farmer's movements, and thus has first hand knowledge of the pulse of the nation. To the solution of current problems Sri Thengadiji brings a rare insight founded on Hindu tradition as much as on a sharp analysis of contemporary movements. In these lectures he has traced the roots of major problems of today. He has demonstrated how ideology has often become a substitute for sound economic thinking in the Indian context; how even well-conceived plans have floundered because of lack of commitment to development; how vast knowledge and information as well as resources lie unutilized; how the wrong choice of priorities has adversely affected the pace of progress. All the major movements as well as the various 'isms' have been tested here on the touchstone of history and actual experience and, in that process, Sri Thengadiji has convincingly argued that the Hindu genius alone possesses the potentialities and prerequisites for accomplishing the task of national rejuvenation.

No wonder that when these lectures were delivered they held the huge audience enthralled for four days in succession. since then there have been requests for the lectures in printed form. At our request, Sri Thengadiji very kindly revised the taped scripts of lectures for publication, and we are immensely grateful to him for enabling us to bring out this useful and thought-provoking publication.

Bangalore

—Publishesr

Dated October 1980.

Foreword

Through these lectures, I have tried to express my sincere conviction

- i) that the basic approach of our seers to the problems of mankind is more humane, rational and scientific than that of the Western thinkers;
- ii) that even now the Hindu genius has all the potentialities necessary for accomplish the task of national rejuvenation;
- iii) that the present state of degeneration is only due to the lack of clarity of vision and the necessary will to reconstruct; and
- iv) that, consequently, there is absolutely no justification for diffidence regarding the glorious future of the Hindu Nation.

I request the readers to judge for themselves, going critically through the following pages, whether the conclusion arrived at it well-founded or not.

New Delhi

—D.B. Thengadi

Dated 13th September 1980.

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LECTURE 1

PERFORMANCE AND POTENTIAL

The very subject matter of this lecture series may appear to be strange, in view of the circumstances we are situated in. You are all aware how the situation is changing from bad to worse, especially our economic condition. The title of the series may give the impression that we are in a dreamland, which reminds us of the last days of Hitler. Even after his armies were vanquished, from his headquarters he used to issue orders of 'advance' to his non-existent divisions. It may just be a venture in dreamland; but whatever be the conditions obtaining, no nation can march ahead without a well-defined destination. Unless our destination is first determined, it is impossible for us to go ahead in a proper direction.

All of you must have gone through the story of 'Alice in Wonderland'. Alice is stranded, is confounded and wants guidance from somebody about how she could reach her home. Now you know that in children's stories, animals can hold conversation with human beings, though in our practical life man refuses to talk with man on various grounds. Alice saw a cat coming and asked her, "Well, which is my way?" The cat replies that it depends upon where she intends to go. Alice says that is precisely what she does not know. She did not know the address of her house. So the cat

says that if she does not know her destination, how can she tell her the way ?

Are we, as a nation, in such a dilemma? We have to think about it seriously. I know that conditions obtaining today are not very encouraging. But since we are nation-builders, should we not take courage in both hands and boldly march ahead in the direction which would give us credit in the eyes of the world? Can we not be reminded of Winston Churchill who, after the debacle of Dunkirk, gave his famous 'V' for 'Victory' slogan to the nation and ultimately carried the nation to victory? All these considerations were before me when I decided that I should speak on this subject: "Our national Renaissance - Its Direction and Destination."

Idle capacity

But the very first doubt that naturally occurs to our mind is whether we have the potentialities, any latent capacities, to enable us to move towards the destination. Our performance in the past may not appear to very encouraging. But is that performance is to be accepted as an indicator of our total potentialities and natural capacities? From this point of view, I think it would be worth while to consider in this first lecture the problem of our 'idle capacity'.

The moment I use the word 'idle capacity', only one context appears before our mind, that is, the context of our industry. We are accustomed to use this term 'idle capacity' only in that particular context. We know that most of our public sector undertakings are having large idle capacity-installed idle capacity. The Public Undertakings Committee (PUC) of Parliament has said that various factors are responsible for it. It is not so much due to the lack of ability, it is also due to largely to the absence of earnestness. The Public Undertakings Committee has stated that the Detailed Project Reports prepared in many cases were themselves faulty and inadequate, and because of that we could not properly assess and determine what type of machinery and material we should use. Apart from inefficiency of management and labour

unrest, this indifference, *i.e.*, our lack of caution on preparing detailed project reports is also responsible for this debacle.

But, here I am not using the word 'idle capacity' only in this conventional sense. Let us have an assessment of our idle capacity in different forms. You will be wonderstruck to learn that a part of our 'idle capacity' is *knowledge*, the information that is available with us but is not being utilized. I am not talking about knowledge acquired from other countries or stored in our ancient textbooks, but the knowledge which is currently available and yet not being utilised by us. This constitutes a part of our 'idle capacity'. You remember that during the last 26 years various committees and commissions were appointed for going through the various problems. They have submitted their reports, and those reports are lying safe in cold storage. We have not cared to disturb those reports. Much use full information is stored in those reports. I do not plead that everything recommended by various committees and commissions should have been accepted and implemented; but before rejecting them I think there should have been screening and proper scrutiny.

Experts ignored

The knowledge available with our economists is not being properly channelised. You may be surprised to hear this, because we think that it is economics which dominates our life. the services of our economists have not been fully utilizes for planning purposes. The panel of economists on the Planning Commission held its meeting on the 26th of March 1972 after a lapse of nearly three years. Prof. V. M. Dandekar complained that ideology was now becoming a substitute for sound economic planning, and that those who did not agree with certain policies were given various labels. I will not go deep into this question; but that the services of economists have not been fully utilised for our planning shows the extent of indifference or lack of earnestness on the part of the authorities-that-be.

Even our research scholars are not being properly utilised. We have the institutional frame work. Universities constitute one important part of it. In fact, our universities are capable of making invaluable contribution, and they should be asked to conduct purposeful and need-oriented research in relation to industrial and social problems, to assist in statistical researches like capital-output ratios, research-development ratios, sociological researches, etc., with a view to evolving enlightened policies, to maintain a continuous dialogue with Industry and Trade Unions on matters of common interest, and to conduct research on impact of technology on culture, and help their reorientation to each other. The talents of university scholars could be utilized for planning research. This has not been done. Though four study groups were set up in 1970-on (1) Plan methodology, (2) Employment regional imbalances, problems of weaker sections, plan reforms and economic controls, (3) Savings, resource mobilization, investment and pricing policy, and (4) Public enterprises the topics for research have not yet been identified.

You will be further surprised that the former Deputy Chairman of our Planning commission, Dr. D. R. Gadgil, who was an eminent economist himself, was sorry that some of his suggestions very important suggestion which would have gone a long way in restoring the economic health of the country - were not even being considered by the government. For example when there was a talk of land reform and land redistribution, Dr. Gadgil had suggested that land fragmentation should be checked and that unless there is reconsolidation of land in every village area it would not be possible for us to boost up production. He had, therefore, urged for reconsolidation of land, even after he became the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, this important suggestion was not taken into consideration. Whether this suggestion is proper or not, it is for the experts to say. But the fact that a suggestion coming from an expert was completely put in cold storage by the authorities shows the extent of our idle capacity in the form of knowledge already available with us.

In the engineering field

The Institute of Engineers, which is fifty-three years old now, is yet another institution whose capacities we have allowed to remain idle so far as its involvement in Plan formulation is concerned. Had we helped it to develop along the lines of the Institution of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, USA, its serviceability to the national cause would have increased tremendously.

Even as it is, its potentialities are not fully exploited. It has not influenced to any appreciable extent the planning of the country. It has not been pressed into the national service to foil foreign technological conspiracies.

Even the contribution our engineers have made to the national cause has not been properly utilised during the post-independence period. For example, their services could have been used for the cause of rural housing.

During the British regime, the Roorkee Research Institute had prepared the Manual of Building Construction and the Manual of Building Material, and various Provincial Governments had published PWD Handbooks periodically, through these, we could have availed ourselves of the technique of rural house construction with the use of local and indigenous material instead of cement and steel, with the help of manual labor instead of machinery. This would have gone a long way in solving the rural housing problem. But nothing of the sort was done. For building material, we did not organize research centres on the model of the Timber Research Institute, Dehra Dun. Consequently, all this information, the knowledge we could have gathered along these lines during the last 26 years, our indigenous building material and manual labor which could have been utilised for the purpose—all these are a part of our idle capacity.

Not that we should have followed everything written in these documents, but it would have helped us a great deal in our further researches and experiments.

Public Health

Now another such institution is that of medical profession, viz., Indian Medical Association. Here we are not discussing the merits and demerits of a particular institution but only the fact that whatever knowledge and institutional framework is available with us is not being fully channelised for the purpose of planning.

In the field of public health, we could have fully availed ourselves of the services of the Indian Medical Association by bringing it on par, organisationally with its counterparts in Britain and United States. Neither the government of India nor the Planning Commission has taken cognisance of the IMA Study Reports of Five Year Plans and its valuable suggestions through its journal.

In pre-independence day, for medical profession, one 'Bhor Committee' was appointed. Its report was followed by the Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar Committee Report. In the field of medical profession these constitute the basic documents. The Mudaliar Committee had said that theirs was not the last word on the subject, that new committees should be appointed periodically, and that whatever had been said earlier should be followed up by further investigation. Still these documents have not been properly studied, neither accepted nor rejected, so that all this information or knowledge available with us has been a part of our 'idle capacity'.

Institutional framework

As we are talking about the knowledge furnished by our regular institutions we are also Thinking of the institutional framework that is available with us. I do not mean to say that the institutional framework that we are having with us is not being fully utilized. This can be said about most of the institutions. To cite one example, we had recently the nationalisation of banks. Now, here we are not concerned with the merits or demerits of that move, but having set up the institution of Nationalised banking, have we fully tapped its potentialities for the purpose of national

reconstruction? On the admission of the authorities themselves, this has not been done. Was it because we did not know how this institution could be utilised? Not that there was lack of earnestness. Therefore, even after nationalisation, the banking industry could not serve the nation to the best of its capacities.

After the nationalisation, some nationalist leaders had suggested that there should be set up an autonomous monetary authority in full charge of currency and credit by raising the Reserve Bank of India to that status, after changing its present character and composition so that its Board of Directors should be manned by independent economists and not by bureaucrats or politicians. That authority should be made responsible for price stability through currency control and fullest employment through credit control. The nationalised banking should organise Financial Consultancy Service up to the village level. The FCS should invite from small uncredit worthy peasants, village artisans and self-employed persons in urban areas their individual and collective developmental plans, scrutinize and modify such microplans in the light of the technical and managerial experience, advance shortlight of the technical and managerial experience, advance short-term and medium-term loans for their implementation, and render creditworthiness to uncredit worthy citizens, through phased programmes of breeder finance in course of which income generated at every stage should be bigger than the expenditure incurred. It should further make an economic survey of every village, suggest and initiate appropriate subsidiary industries in it, and ensure full employment of all faculties of every individual through out the year. The Financial Consultancy Service should also, it was suggested, assist the Government in regulating the unorganised money market. I am not going to contest the point whether all these suggestions could have been implemented fully or not. But did we move a single step ahead in that direction? Nothing of this sort was done. Thus, whatever institutional framework we have is not being fully utilised by the authorities.

Resource survey

Just as knowledge or information currently available constitutes a part of our idle capacity, the materials and resources that are available but not utilised also constitute a part of our idle capacity. For example, some of us may really take time to believe that even after 26 years we are not having with us a complete survey of our national resources. Some may say, "We had so many Five Year Plans and you are alleging that our total national resources are not completely surveyed!" The veracity of this statement may be challenged. But that is a fact. Nobody can contest it. Thus, you are planning for the country and you are not aware of your total resources. What type of scientific planning can you have under this condition?

Another form of idle capacity is our capacity to save and channelise small savings. Our capacity to save may be small, but it is there even with the middle-class people. But no proper incentives have been given to boost the effort for small savings; and whatever small savings are available have had no opportunity of being channelised into industrial investment. Because of this we find that though we are poor whatever small savings we are having are not being converted into industrial investment, because the very character, the structure of our industry, is such that it does not allow investment by small savers, and notwithstanding the propaganda by the government, small savings are not boosted.

This is not a political speech, and I will not go into the details. But everybody knows that in our country there is, to a considerable extent, conspicuous, vulgar and ostentatious expenditure by private citizens. People of Karnataka need not be reminded of it. There has been wasteful administrative expenditure also. If all these are curtailed drastically, they could form a part of our economic potentiality. Most of us also know how losses are caused on account of the administrative delays in the decision making process and also because of lack of co-ordination between

different official and non-official agencies. This is also a subject of common experience and need not be dealt at length.

Next, we are all aware of the lack of the spirit of 'Swadeshi'. Probably, before 1947 we were more Swadeshi minded than at present. And consequently our balance of payment position is adversely affected. We have allowed foreign banks and foreign-owned industries to continue their existence unhampered; and our measures to control the profits, dividends and remittances by foreign companies have proved to be thoroughly inadequate.

Foreign collaborations

In every foreign collaboration agreement we are having restrictive clauses. They dictate from where the raw material is to be purchased. You cannot have spare parts manufactured in your own country. They also dictate what the market organisation and the export arrangement should be. All these restrictive clauses are a drain on our national economy. We have so far not taken courage to do away with them. our subservience to foreign loan and foreign aid need not be mentioned here; but stern measures could have been adopted to nationalize the foreign banks and Indianise the foreign-owned companies (By 'Indianisation' I mean taking over foreign-owned companies, throwing open their share capital to low-income group people and thus democratising these industries.) Had we imposed adequate restrictions on the profits, dividends and remittances of those companies, had we done away with the restrictive clause in foreign collaboration agreements, and had we declared a moratorium on foreign loans, our economic position would have been substantially strengthened. That has not been done.

Then we come across the problem of the waste of our managerial talents and entrepreneurial talents which can be useful in small-scale or medium-size industries. talents are there. But in our craze for large-scale industry, we have left these managerial and entrepreneurial talents quite unutilised, and they also constitute a part of our idle capacity.

We are aware that many of the Indians abroad are having capital and that capital can no longer be utilised as capital in their countries of adoption. With proper adjustment we could have utilised the capital available with such Indians abroad for our planning purposes. But no effort was made in that direction.

Manpower statistics

Of all the idle capacities available with us the most important, you may agree with me, is our idle manpower. The problem of unemployment is there. Can we say with any justification that the problem itself was incapable of being solved with all our earnest efforts? You will excuse me if I express some doubt about the earnestness of those responsible for the solution of this problem. If anybody wanted to solve the problem through scientific planning, he would have first ascertained the magnitude of the problem. It is not possible for anybody to give a proper solution without being fully informed. You need not be surprised if I say that to this day and to this moment, the authorities are not having correct statistics on the problem of unemployment and under-employment. That shows lack of seriousness. In the first three Five Year Plans, the Planning Commission furnished us with three figures on this problem. First, the number of unemployed persons at the commencement of the Plan period; secondly, the number of unemployed during the Plan period and thirdly, the backlog of unemployment at the end of the Plan period. Documents of the three Five Year Plans have furnished these figures. But the document of the fourth Five Year Plan says that they are not going to furnish any figures on unemployment because, they say, the methodology of assessing unemployment in a country like India is not available with the Planning Commission. The methodology utilised during the first three Five Year Plans was irrelevant to the conditions prevailing in India. Therefore, these figures were not correct. The Planning Commission now says that they are not going to repeat the mistake. So as not to repeat the mistake, they prefer not to give any figures on unemployment!

Now, if this be the condition of a body like the Planning Commission on such an important problem, can we really say that we have the necessary seriousness and earnestness for the solution of the problem? the priorities fixed by the Planning Commission also indicate lack of seriousness.

Appropriate technology

As a matter of fact, it is quite obvious that if the problem of unemployment and under-employment is to be solved, priorities should be different. Labour-intensive projects, minor irrigation projects, and rural works programmes through which we could reconcile employment with development, should have been given priority; then agro-industries, forest-based industries and small scale industries; and introduction of appropriate technology for the benefit of artisans so that through the introduction of reasonable and adaptable changes in the traditional techniques of production they could utilise their skills without incurring the risk of increase in unemployment, wastage of the available managerial and technical skills and complete decapitalisation of the existing means of production. Through appropriate technology and the help of power, we could have made every home, instead of factory, a centre of production and achieved the decentralisation of productive process.

I do not mean so say that any one particular type of technology will suit all industries. But blind imitation of the West in this respect would not help. All of us know how our planners are enamored of computers and other upto date modern machinery. But are they really helpful if used on such a large scale? Ours is the problem of providing employment to the largest number. their is the problem of ensuring highest production with the help of minimum hands. The very nature of problem is different and, therefore, whatever suits the West may not be suitable to our country. It is quit possible that within the same industry different levels of technology may simultaneously operate; but at the same time, for the solution of the problem of unemployment, it is necessary that the problem of technology should be reconsidered.

Pandit Nehru had invited one British expert, Dr. Fritz Schumacher, to advise him on this point. He had evolved some theories on technology. he had organised a group in London called the Intermediate Technology Development Group and conducted much propaganda about the introduction of changes in our technology. His technology was termed as 'Intermediate Technology' and it is now returned as 'Appropriate Technology'.

Some pressmen asked Dr. Schumacher why he should deviate from the conventional pattern of technology and think of evolving a new pattern. I quote now from that interview:

A.A. : "Dr. Schumacher, when did you recognise for the first time that technology in its present form was of little benefit to mankind and that we would have to develop what you have termed 'Intermediate Technology'?"

F.S.: "Many years ago Prime Minister Nehru had asked me to come to India to advise him on development of rural areas. In one place I was shown a potter who was doing his work with immense skill on his old potter's wheel. I admired his skill and thought, well, the total amount of equipment he had was worth Rs. 50.

I was then taken to an industrial estate. The first fellow I saw was working on a machine tool imported from Belgium costing something of the order of Rs. 50,000. I asked him, 'What are you going to do after your training? Are you going to start a workshop or something?' He looked at me with astonishment and said, 'In all my life I'll never see the money to buy such a machinery tool'. 'Yes, indeed, but then what are you going to do?' He said 'I am going to Bombay.' I told him, 'There are quite a lot of unemployed people in Bombay', and he replied, 'Yes, I know.'

And there it dawned on me, I had seen man working with Rs. 50. I had seen another working with Rs. 50,000. The two things had no connection. If something were to happen to really help the poor, this technology of the village potter would have to be upgraded and that of the milling machine scaled down. There has

to be something intermediate in between the Rs. 50-level and Rs. 50,000-level - something that the masses of people can afford. then It occurred to me to call this intermediate technology.'

I think I am quoting Gandhiji when I say, 'it is not mass production, it is production by the masses that will do the trick.' If you want to help the masses to become producers, and that is the problem of unemployment, then you must have this technology which is within the reach of small people.'

The Gandhian Institute of Studies at Varanasi has setup, with the help of the London Group, an 'Appropriate Technology Unit' at Varanasi. Mr. Mansur Hoda, an engineer who worked for several years with the London Group, is in charge of the Unit at Gandhian Institute.

Recently, an 'Appropriate Technology Cell' has been set up in the Union Ministry of Industries also.

It is announced that under the proposed reorganisation of the Department of Science and technology (DST), there will be a Special Technology Division to exploit and commercialise indigenous technology developed in Indian laboratories. This should have been done 26 years ago.

GNP and National Income

Apart from technology, what has affected the problem of economic growth and made it impossible for us to solve the problem of unemployment is the wrong thinking on the part of the authorities on economic problems. Till recently, I may say till 2 to 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ years ago, according to official thinking the most important factor in economic growth was the Gross National Product (GNP). If there is increase in GNP they would say that there is increase in the National Income (NI), and that we are prospering. And we know there used to be on the one hand a marked increase in GNP and on the other an increase in poverty. Many of us did not understand how both these things could go together.

But now some fresh thinking has been there in official quarter, thanks to an article by a Pakistani economist. Probably, if

the same idea had been conveyed to the authorities by Indian economists, it would not have been touched with a pair of tongs. Anyway, because of that article by a Pakistani economist, now the Government has come to feel that this exclusive emphasis on GNP alone is not proper, that the real indicator of economic growth should be the rise in the purchasing capacity of the lowest economic unit in rural areas, and that for that purpose, it would be necessary to alter our production strategy. This was started by the Prime Minister some two years ago. She said, and said rightly, that you cannot have one particular pattern of production and then suddenly say that we will switch over to a different pattern of distribution not consistent with the original pattern of production.

Even pattern of production has in it an in-built mechanism which would resist the pattern of distribution that is not consistent with the pattern of production. So, to think that we will first have the production anyhow raised and then we will redistribute the national income is not practicable. This was admitted by the Prime Minister. But if you go through the Approach Paper to the fifth Five year Plan, you will find that our authorities have the knack to learn nothing and unlearn nothing.

In this Approach Paper they have stated that they are going to raise the consumption level of the bottom 30% and that they are going to bring down the consumption level of the top 30%. Because they are not very serious, they have not considered that this top does not comprise Tatas and Birlas alone but those having Rs.1800 as annual income in rural areas, Rs. 2700 as annual income in urban areas, and Rs. 4,500 as annual income in cities which covers the lower-middle class people. Are they going to hit these lower-middle class? They have not given it serious thought. But, anyway, it is very commendable if they bring down the consumption level of the top 5% or 10%.

Production pattern

But at the same time, the same Approach Paper conveys us that there will not be any marked change in the production pattern.

The Approach Paper further says that the production of consumer goods will be less increased as compared to the production of consumer goods will be less increased as compared to the production of luxury goods. The growth percentage of luxury goods would be higher than that of the consumer goods. If we raise the production of luxury goods and do not boost up that of the consumer goods, how will the consumption level of the top be brought down and how will the consumption level of the bottom 30% be raised? We know that luxury goods are purchased only by rich people.

If instead of GNP we give priority to the problem of raising the purchasing capacity of the lowest economic unit in rural areas, we will have to alter our production strategy, we will have to boost up the production of consumer goods. We will have to do away with the myth that every wage rise is incompatible with the expansion of employment opportunities. We will have to thrust money, somehow or other, in the pocket of the lowest economic unit, so that his purchasing capacity is raised. If the lowest man is to go to the market and purchase anything, it is certain that he is going to purchase neither lipstick nor lift nor refrigerator. What he will purchase will be foodgrains or clothes or some other commodity of essential requirement. Thus if through any mechanism we thrust money into his pocket, he will be purchasing the essential commodities. Today the essential commodities are not so much in demand because those who want these commodities have no power to purchase. They need these, but they just cannot purchase.

If we can raise the market for consumer goods, naturally consumer goods industries will get a boost; and in that case new industries will be started in rural areas. Thus there will be a greater expansion of employment and the whole wheel will be moving fast. So this different circle, this different cycle can be started, provided we dispense with our conventional, traditional, orthodox thinking about the GNP. But that has not been done, not even the Approach Paper to the Five Year Plan.

Idle manpower

Now, when I am saying that our idle manpower also constitutes a part of our idle capacity, I must also say that the work that is left undone by those who are already employed-maybe because of absenteeism or go-slow or sheer-laziness-also constitutes a part of our idle capacity. It is alleged that our workers do not work. I am not going to have a lengthy discussion on this point. I would only like to say that the charge may be partly correct. but in this as in any other sphere, the lead should come from the top. Are you workers inspired by the example of the people at the top? "*Yadyadā charati shreshthah, tat-tadevetaro janah.*" If the top people prefer to remain lazy and lead comfortable, luxurious life, they have no moral right to give sermons to those who are not earning even rupees five hundred. Notwithstanding this discussion, we must say that the work that is not being done by the workers who are employed also constitutes a part of our idle capacity, and that it is because of the lack of inspiration.

Aptitude-wise employment

But mere employment is not sufficient. According to the Hindu concept, it is not enough that everybody should be employed somewhere, somehow. We have believed in the fullest development of every individual. All the faculties of every individual must be fully developed. If there are square pegs in round holes, if the arrangement of jobs is only vacancy-wise and not aptitude-wise, then naturally the worker cannot give the best he can to the nation, and the nation cannot help in developing his faculties to the best of his abilities. His faculties are undeveloped or under-developed, and his contribution to the national cause is less than what it could have otherwise been. and in this way both suffer. It is true, it may not be possible immediately to give an aptitude test in every case and to allot to every individual such work as is suitable to his inclinational aptitude or '*Gunakarma*'; but still if the nation is to receive the best and the highest contribution that an

individual can make, and if every individual is to be developed to the fullest extent, it is necessary that the arrangement of jobs should be aptitude-wise, not central-planning-wise or vacancy-wise. this important point should be borne in mind while planning for the future.

This aptitude-wise arrangement of jobs has been our traditional concept. but if I use the word 'traditional' it is likely to be misunderstood. therefore, I must state that even in the West now people are conducting aptitude tests. They have also grasped the significance of the aptitude-wise arrangement of jobs.

How this psychology works has been very well described by an American poet. I should like to read a few lines which in different words convey the underlying principle of the Hindu socio-economic order. It is a poem by Robert Frost: 'A Full time Interest'. In the beginning he says that he is standing before a tree which is about to be cut down. He has an axe with him and he wants to cut down the tree. But in the meanwhile somebody is standing behind him. It is a regular woodcutter whose profession is to cut the trees. the poet says:

"I had no right to play
With what was another man's work for gain."

...

"But yield who will to suppression,
My object in living is to unite my avocation and vocation."

....

"Only where love land need are none
And the work is played for mortal stakes
Is the deed ever really done
For the heaven and future's sakes."

Now, this principle-aptitude-wise arrangement of jobs-we will have to keep in mind for future planning, if not for the immediate present. thus these faculties which are not being fully developed also constitute a part of our idle capacity.

Then, there are dormant faculties of millions and millions of our people who are not given proper education or training and

who because of what have not been able to deal with that problem. But one thing is quite obvious, and that is, we have not taken any measures on a mass scale to combat the evil of illiteracy. We have not given the priority it deserves to the problem of primary and secondary education; and vocational training, though much publicised, much advocated, much pleaded for, has not been provided for adequately. All these faculties are lying dormant for want of proper education and training. If our policy of education had different bias, probably all these dormant faculties would have formed part and parcel of our national capital for national reconstruction.

Brain drain.

Now, we have a very big problem of brain drain. On the one hand we could not fight out the evil of illiteracy—we could not provide primary and secondary education to huge masses; and, on the other, a few persons who have had the opportunity to acquire a higher education do not prefer to stay with us. They are somewhere outside. It is called brain drain. Can we imagine Sri Hargobind Khurana staying in the U.S.A.? Had he stayed in India and utilised his faculties for nation building activity, would not such activity have been immensely beneficial?

Why must this problem of brain drain be seriously thought over? Because, this brain drain is also part of our idle capacity. It is because of the wrong values of life we have given to our people in the name of progressivism. We are progressives; we do not like to have anything to do with our cultural values.

But what is the effect? In ordinary life we find rampant corruption because we have divorced our life from cultural values, thinking that culture is a part of orthodoxy, conservatism and what not, and to be divorced from cultural values is only another name for progressivism. Are such wrong notions—they may be fashionable—really helpful? They are not. We know that because of the lack of cultural values, there is so much corruption; and

because of the lack of cultural values, there is so much corruption; and because our values of life are wrong, there is the problem of brain drain.

Materialism infructuous

We have told people that progressivism consists in accepting rank materialism, naked materialism, as the philosophy of life. It is quite obvious that if materialism is the only philosophy of life, then there would be some incompatibility between individual development and the concept of social equality. Our progressive socialists are clamoring for equality; but nowhere in the world have they been successful in establishing equality, for the simple reason that their philosophy is based on naked, crude materialism. It is impossible for them to reconcile individual development with social equality. Suppose I am a technician and a materialist, and my values of life are materialistic. I study hard. When I have an opportunity to earn, I am told, in the name of equality, that I cannot earn more than Rs. 2,000. I know that even those who have not burnt the midnight electricity, who have not worked hard, are assured of Rs. 100 per month. I think, under such conditions, only fools try to have higher development of their individual faculties if their values are nothing but materialistic. Even if I do not work hard in life, I am sure of getting Rs. 100 p.m. under the social security scheme; and howsoever hard I may labour. I am not going to get more than Rs. 2,000. So why should one work hard? There will be a tendency towards laziness, towards enjoyment of life. So what inspires men to work is either material benefit or spiritual satisfaction. You don't consider anything apart from the materialistic.

Then what is the incentive for individual development? Tulasidas, in the introduction to *Ramachanrita-Manas*, says that the incentive was satisfaction of one's self: "*Swantāh sukhāya Tulasī Raghunāthāgathā.*"

In the Christian world, *The Pilgrim's Progress* is next in circulation only to the Bible. In its introduction John Bunyan says,

“I did it for my own self to gratify.”

Now, this inner satisfaction is non-materialistic. But if in the name of progressivism we are to give our people purely materialistic values of life, then either we will have to give the incentive for individual development which would not enable us to secure social equality, or that incentive for individual development will be lost. This excessive stress on materialistic values of life is responsible for the brain drain. Our people are not told, “Our country may be poor, but this is our Bharata-Mata, this is our motherland.” That spirit of patriotism which is different from materialism is not inculcated in our youths, and hence this problem of brain drain. With the inculcation of the spirit of patriotism we could stop this brain drain, and this capital in the form of human intelligence also could be utilised for the purpose of our national reconstruction.

When we consider all these various forms of our idle capacity, with all modesty I must say-whether we are capable of a big leap in future may be controversial, but one thing must be, accepted, that is - our poor performance in the past is no indicator of our total potentialities and latent capacities. We have enough potentialities, enough capacities to give better performance, and if we had not pursued wrong policies, wrong values of life, and if we had shown some earnestness and seriousness in the nation building activity, we could have been in a much better position than we are in today. I think in this first lecture it would suffice if we can prove to ourselves that our past performance which may be discouraging is not an indicator of our latent potentialities

LECTURE 2

HOW HAVE THE DIFFERENT 'ISMS' FARED?

A Question has been posed concerning foreign aid. While a degree of apprehension is understandable, I refrain from using strong terms; and so far as doing away with or dispensing with the foreign aid is concerned, the planning commission itself has agreed to it in principle. In the Approach Paper they have said that by 1980 or so foreign aid will be dispensed with. I can also inform you that about a fortnight ago we asked the planning Minister whether there could be specific date beyond which under any circumstances we will not go in for foreign aid. The Honorable Planning Minister was reluctant or hesitant to give a specific reply.

Regarding brain drain : when the Government has put a premium backwardness, how can you think of reverting the brain drain?

There need, however, be no room for distrust about the future, considering the fact that the countries that were backward or completely ruined have also managed to come up. We know that the last World War was not fought on our land, except in some border areas. India was not the cockpit of the Second World War; Germany and Japan were. But, like phoenix rising out of its own ashes, leaders of Germany and Japan have managed to bring up their nations, to a remarkable standard, so much so that Germany,

which was completely crushed after the World war, has now become a terror to its neighbouring countries, though the geographical and strategic position of Germany has never been very strong. It has been described as a camp in the open field, and still it has become a terror! Japan, we know, has advanced to such an extent that experts say that one of the causes for the devaluation of the dollar has been the economic advance of Japan. If such nations could rise, we, with greater manpower, more resources and larger territory, need not be afraid. That was the purport of yesterday's lecture.

Today we have to consider, in this march towards progress, from whom we have to receive our guidance. So far we have not managed our affairs in a creditable way. that is true. But from whom have we to receive our guidance? Naturally we look to the West, because the West is advanced from economic, technological, scientific and political points of view. Now, before we try to find out whether whatever has been given by the West can be a guideline to us, it is necessary that students of European History should note that there has been a point of difference in the historical development here and there. These points of difference are important and unless they are taken note of, our attempt to transplant everything western here is bound to create problems for us.

Reasons for stagnation

First, the important point is that the period of European advance in all the directions synchronised with the period of our stagnation. After renaissance, particularly after industrial revolution, there was a marked progress in the West. But we know that during the last 1,100 years, we were in constant struggle for independence, struggle for survival. There were repeated aggressions by foreigners. It is well known that normal progress cannot be achieved, normal reorganisation of society cannot be

brought about unless there is peace time. We had no peace such as Europe had. This is one important factor to be noted.

We were engaged in life-and-death struggle during the last eleven centuries; and because of that, we had no opportunity to reorganise ourselves, to readjust ourselves with the changing circumstances. It is also true that prior to that period we had made marked advance in different directions. here I am not going to give you a catalogue of our achievements, but will only enumerate points which differentiate our course of history from the history of the West.

So far as the social order is concerned, you know that in Europe, monarchy was very much alive. In India there was no monarchy and there was no autocracy. The King was not the monarch at all. He was a part and parcel of the administrative apparatus. If like Louis XIV any raja in India attempted to declare 'I am the State', then our Niti-shastra had enjoined that such Raja should be killed. Shukra had enjoined it and as early as Mahabharata we find Bhishma quoting Vamadeva who says that if any Raja becomes tyrannical, there should be a revolt against him and he should be dragged down and killed. The whole arrangement of state was such that in India there was no monarchy. Kautilya says that the State comprised seven departments, seven *prakritis* of which the Raja was only one and he was in control of the other six *prakritis*.

Then we know that in India there was no aristocracy or Nobility as in England and elsewhere. The caste system- which may be good or bad or causing much harm in the present stage is another important factor. It prevented the coming together and forming a class even by land-owners.

Administrative machinery

Another thing in India was that there was no organised church as in Europe during that period. Clergy was absent. The Bramhin in India has a different function. Then we know that in this society, different socio-economic entities described as Ganas,

Shrenis, Nigamas etc. existed. These were autonomous and self governing; even the government had no right to intervene in the internal administration. Different smritikars had enjoined that the government must respect and cause implementation of the rules and regulations laid down by these different socio-economic entities. It is true that in the 13th and 14th century there were guilds in Europe also, but they were not so well organised and so autonomous and not so powerful. Because of the guild and also because of the cast, it was not possible for any Raja or King to become autocratic. This is the point of difference which deserves our serious attention.

Then we know that European political thinkers gave much importance to work out the implication of state institutions. In India that was not the case because the state or government or Raja did not occupy the same position as the monarchs did in Europe; and therefore we find that while Aristotle was busy classifying the States, our Kautilya was working out the details of administration of civil service, of State apparatus. I must say with some amount of pride that till the 19th century, no country in Europe has so well - organised an administrative apparatus as India had till the begin of the 19th century. This is another point of differentiation.

So far as sovereignty is concerned we know that right from the time of Aristotle this has been a point of public debate. In India never was. For our concept was that sovereignty ultimately rested with *Dharma*, and not with the state or government or Raja. Therefore the discussion on sovereignty were not as elaborate here as it was in Europe.

Different 'isms'

These are some of the points which must be borne in mind before we try to study different systems of institutions and start processing theories. Now we know that the West has given us a number of theories and systems. Popularly they are known as 'isms', Here also one point of difference is noteworthy. The Hindus have consider that it is below there dignity to belong to any

'ism', whatever that 'ism' may be, because they are convinced that no 'ism' can be useful for all times and climes. Even if any 'ism' is useful for a particular society during a particular period, with change in circumstances that 'ism' becomes obsolete. No 'ism' can be useful for different societies during the same period, if those societies are at different levels of civilisation; and even for same society, no 'ism' could be useful for all times or for a considerable length of time, because circumstances change. Circumstances are dynamic; any 'ism' is a closed book of thought and therefore static. Since 'isms' are static and circumstance are dynamic, no 'ism' can cope up with the circumstance for a fairly long time.

We know that the frontiers of human knowledge are ever expanding and therefore whatever was true for yesterday may not be so today. Whatever was established by Newton was disturbed by Einstein as all know. So, since no 'ism' can be founded except on the basis of its evolution, and since frontiers of human knowledge are ever expanding, it is natural that the foundation of every 'ism' is shaken after there is addition to human knowledge. In view of all these facts, the Hindus have considered it not very dignified to subscribe to any 'ism'.

Nevertheless, now it is fashionable for everybody to ask to what 'ism' you subscribe to. If I say I belong to no 'ism', then I will be dubbed as a reactionary.

The Three Revolutions

Now we will consider the different thought systems which were evolved in Europe, so that we can assess how far they can be useful for our process of national renaissance. We will not go into the historical past. We know that the west has given birth to three important revolutions—the French Revolution, the American Revolution and the Russian Revolution.

The French Revolution has given us trinity of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, out of which liberty could be achieved at the cost of equality; equality is said to have been achieved at the cost of liberty, and fraternity was nowhere round the corner!

Then we have the American Revolution after which it was declared that certain values were cherished by the U.S.A. Lincoln had declared that along with independence of nations democracy was an article of faith for Americans. He declared that democracy was a government of the people, for the people and by the people. I need not go into the details to illustrate how these principles of democracy are violated by the U.S. itself outside its frontiers; and we do not know whether they are being implemented fully even within their frontiers.

Fortunately for us, out of the various thought systems are conceived by the West, some have become already obsolete, so that apart from passing reference we need not devote much time to considering them. For example, we know of the individualism of Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill or Herbert Spencer, the Syndicalism of Pelloutier and Sorel; and the Guild Socialism of Bertrand Russell, G. D. H. Cole and others. Then there was the Anarchism of Bakunin, Kropotkin, Tolstoy and Proudhon. These various theories have come and gone and therefore we need not devote much time for considering them.

We also know that when we consider the Western theories, we cannot go by words alone, for words are many times deceptive. For example take the term Socialism. Now I for one have tried for the last forty years to understand what precisely the meaning of 'socialism' is. I have not been able to understand so far.

'Socialism' and 'Communism'

In this world it seems everybody is a socialist, but no one socialist agrees with any other socialist! Our sages declared, '*Ekam sad vipra bahuda vadanti*' - that the content of Parabrahman is one and the same but it is described by various people in various terms. Diametrically opposite is the condition of socialism. In the case of the Parabrahman, the content is the same, but the level are different. Here, in the case of Socialism, the level is the same but the contents are different. Everybody is a socialist. The British Labour Party is socialist; and Hitler against whom they had to fight was also a

socialist – but he was a ‘Nationalist Socialist’. And when we find that there are ‘Scientific Socialists’ in Russia and other countries, it is not surprising that there was ‘Islamic Socialism’ of Nasser. Unfortunately even in India there are ‘Hindu Socialists.’ I do not know whether they know the meaning of either ‘Hindu’ or ‘Socialist’ precisely. All the people are thus socialists; and at the same time no precise meaning can be given to that term. The socialists and the anti-socialists, in their heart of hearts, mean the same thing. Negatively it may be the same : that socialism is against inequality and exploitation. But there are also anti-socialists who are opposed to inequality and exploitation but do not approve of the term socialism because they suspect that, carried to its logical end, it may result in totalitarianism. Since they are not ready to take the risk of a totalitarian state they are anti-socialist. But so far as opposition to inequality and exploitation is concerned they are not different from socialists.

There are thus Socialists and Socialists, and there are Anti-socialists and Anti socialists. The same can be said about the word ‘Communism’. You may be interested to know that the word communism was not conceived of by Marx. In 1840 the followers of Robert Owens who stood for Co-operative Socialism used that term in their journal; and it was received, appreciated, relished, assimilated and subsequently adopted and owned by Marx. In course of time the Marxian theory received so much propaganda that people came to believe that the term communism was coined by Marx. Now Owenites were put to difficulties. Their word was taken over by Marx and it was so much publicised and popularised and they had to coin another term for the content of Robert Owen’s theory; and the term they coined was ‘Communitarianism.’ So even in the case of this term Communism we lack clarity.

We need not therefore give undue importance only to words and phraseology. Lord Jesus has said, “The letter killeth” – if you depend only upon the word, upon phraseology.

Probably you may end this confusion of thought if you find out the content behind the word. No 'ism' can stand merely on the basis of any textbook or any scripture or any slogan or catchword. Now, in case of Socialism we in India know how it has been propagated.

Nationalisation

Though there may be differences in the connotation of the term Socialism, at least there is one basic concept about which there is unanimity, and that basic concept is nationalisation of everything. We know that this nationalisation has been considered in India today as a central theme of Socialism. Different brands of Socialism have accepted nationalisation as the essence of Socialism.

Consider, for example, the case of the British Socialist Party. I feel that nationalisation is neither a panacea nor need it be ruled out completely on points of merit. We may accept it or reject it, but just to illustrate how a textbook 'ism' becomes useless when put to practice, I am citing this example of British socialists.

Till 1945 the British Labour Party and British Trade Union Congress conducted vigorous propaganda in favour of nationalisation, declared that nationalisation was a panacea for all industrial and economic evils, and that having come to power the Labour Party would vigorously launch the programme of nationalisation. Now it is creditable for the genius of British people that they have been pragmatic, whether they are conservatives or radicals. The British consider that both stand for progress, the only difference being that conservatism is progressivism with caution, and radicalism is progressivism with adventurism. But both stand for progress and therefore, though in principle the non-socialists and anti-socialists are opposed to nationalisation, we find the curious fact that nationalisation was introduced by the non-socialist and anti-socialist Government ! In 1880 British High Court gave a judgement that telephone service could be taken over by the States. Between 1880 and 1912 the entire telephone service was taken over. During that entire period no Socialist Government

was in power. It was either the Liberal, *i.e.* non-socialist or the other party which was anti-socialist which was in power. In 1908 the Liberal Government setup 'The London Port Trust Authority', a nationalised concern which has served more or less as a model of a managing board of nationalised industry in post-1945 period. Here is an illustration of how there can be an alliance between textbook theories and practical pragmatic approach. After coming to power they nationalised some of the industries. The first industry to be nationalised was coal, and it was going down so fast that in the National Convention, before the election, even the Conservative Party resolved to nationalise the coal industry. Other industries were also taken over.

But the experience was something different from expectation. There were two aspects that were considered. First, the British Trade Union Congress which went the whole hog in canvassing for nationalisation came to realise that the industrial relations in the public undertaking of nationalised industry had not improved. The expectation was, since the private profit motive was entirely eliminated, there was no reason why employer-employee relationship should not improve in public sector undertakings and nationalised industry. But in practice the experience was otherwise; and therefore in 1953, the British Trade Union Congress appointed a sub-committee to go into the problem and that sub-committee submitted its report. The conclusion of the report was that employer-employee relationship in nationalised industry was as good, bad, or indifferent as that in private industries. After this experience, the British Trade Union leaders are not now as enthusiastic about nationalisation as they used to be two decades ago.

Accountability

So far as the Labour Party is concerned, no doubt, they were enthusiastic; but in running the nationalised industries and in making them accountable to the nation there were difficulties. After all, if nationalisation has any meaning there must be public

accountability; and it was very difficult to achieve this. So they decided that it is a very inconvenient criterion. Why not have technicians on the Boards of Management? But regarding technicians also there are difficulties. To become a technician is a whole-time job. If I try to become a technician I will have no time and energy left to become popular; and to become popular is also a whole-time job! Therefore technicians are not popular, and popular leaders are not technicians.

In England also they are experiencing the same difficulties. They thought that if the Board of Management is managed by only technicians, such a Board will not command the confidence of a particular section of society. Some sort of patchwork was therefore attempted. On an ad-hoc basis, Boards were formed. But then fresh trouble arose. Number one, employer-employee relationship. We in India are demanding participation in management, we are also demanding participation in ownership.

Labour participation in management

Participation in management was demanded by British Labour Party also. In coal industry when the Board was framed, the General Secretary of the Employees Union was included in the Board as one of its Directors. Now there is an account given which is very interesting. In the very first meeting of the Board of Management, the Secretary of the Board placed certain documents and accounts before the members and suggested that since the coal industries were going down in profitability, there should be a wage freeze. No sooner did the labour leader hear this word 'wage freeze', than he was already mentally prepared to oppose it. So he got up and opposed it as vehemently as he would have done in gate-meetings before the workers. He expected that the Secretary would say something to counteract his arguments. But what the Secretary said stunned him. The Secretary just said: "All right. We have heard your arguments. Here are all the account books, balance sheet and profit & loss account. You take charge and give us the policy line according to which we can run the coal industries

without wage freeze.' This was something for which the labour leader was not prepared! It is one thing to dictate that there shall be no wage freeze, and quite another to study all the documents and formulate a policy which will avoid a wage freeze in an industry which is going down. He could not do it. He had to sit silent to understand the facts. He also came to find that in the Board of Management it would not appear decent to speak in the same fashion as at a gate-meeting. So, he had to soften his stand; the arguments in favour of wage freeze were so overwhelming that he had to accept wage freeze.

We know that in every trade union there are factions; human mind is such. So there was a faction against him too. They suddenly began to propagate that this fellow had been purchased. Now this is a thing that any worker can understand very easily. So the General Council was convened, and he was cross-examined before the General Council. Now he was sandwiched because for him it would have appeared very foolish to say a word against wage freeze in the Board of Management; but here it would be highly inexpedient to say anything in favour of wage freeze! The General Secretary had to resign.

Afterwards they evolved a convention that no office-bearer should be sent on any Board of Management because if he is sent on the Board of Management, his acceptance there would become final and binding on the workers.

So now the enthusiasm for participation in management is lessening. Workers are coming to the conclusion, 'We will have our demands, we will have consultation, but we will not have our duly elected representative on the Board of Management because his word there would become final and binding upon us here.'

This is why they could not improve the quality of industrial relations in British nationalised industries.

Functions of parliament

There was another question in regard to public accountability. As industries are nationalised, to whom do they belong? They

belong to the entire nation. Of course it is understandable that every citizen would not be a shareholder. But it must be acceptable to parliament. How to make it acceptable to parliament was the problem. Industries are to be run every day and they run in 3-4 shifts and now in every national industry some trouble or other would arise periodically, sometimes every day; and if all the administrative decisions of the industry are to be taken in the parliament, the parliament will have to be in session all the 365 days and 24 hours if there are 3 shifts and all the work to be done by the parliament is to manage the industrial relationship and day-to-day administration of the industries.

They realised that this was impossible. Now how to arrive at a compromise between accountability and the practical difficulty in managing day-to-day administration through the instrument of parliament? So they evolved a principle. For the day-to-day administration, the Board of Management, Managing Director or General Manager would have some autonomous power. But the accountability should be confined to the general policy of industry within the framework of national interest. So they coined this phrase, 'general policy of the industry within the framework of national interest.'

When this phrase was coined they thought this was a fair compromise. But difficulty arose subsequently. Suppose there are cases of victimisation or service conditions; about violation of contract, etc. An M.P. poses a question. The Minister says, "This particular question pertains to day-to-day administration." The Member says, "Though it is a solitary case of a particular category, it is a test case and a typical case and as such it constitutes a part of general policy." The Speaker would be confused as to whether this particular question is a part of day-to-day administration or a general policy, and he has to very often judge the correct position of the particular question. 'I will give a ruling tomorrow,' he had to say. It was very difficult.

'Non-interference'

Again accountability to parliament envisaged non-interference by the minister. But this non-interference by the minister was very difficult to achieve. In one particular case — it was also the case of coal industry—the minister concerned had a chat over a cup of tea with the Board of Management. It was not in an official capacity. The elections were drawing near, and on the eve of elections prices of essential commodities like coal go up. So, the minister just mentioned that he had been on a tour in different places and that people were very apprehensive that the prices of coal and essential commodities might spiral up; it would not be in the popular interest. Having heard this from the minister, even though in an unofficial capacity, the Board of Management was in a very delicate position. Either they have to ignore whatever he has said, or they have to follow his direction, which would go against the industry.

Alternatives to nationalisation

In view of all these considerations, in 1951 the British Labour Party set up a thinkers' group of Socialist members of parliament. That group has concluded, "Though we have set up nationalised industries, we have not been able to make them accountable to the nation, *i.e.*, to the parliament." That is the verdict given by the thinkers' group of the British Labour Party. Now the British Socialists are saying, "We do not consider the nationalisation is the essence of socialism."

The thinkers' group has said that there are various patterns of industries; there can be co-operativisation, there can be municipalisation, there can be regulated private enterprise. Many other varieties and patterns of industrial ownership can be there; but nationalisation should not be treated as the essence of socialism.

Somehow our Prime Minister also said the same thing recently. I do not know why; it may be because of the dismal failure of public sector undertakings.

Varieties of socialism

Now the example I cited was not intended to set out the merits or demerits of nationalisation. As I said earlier, I am neither for it nor against it. The remedy will depend upon the malady. If the malady is different the remedy would be different. In the same way, we are of the opinion that the special characteristics of the industries should be studied carefully and various patterns of ownership should be adjusted appropriate to different industries. I mentioned it just to show that the textbook socialism could not work. It has not worked even under the Socialist regime in an enlightened country like Great Britain which is highly industrialised, a country where literacy is so high. While professing socialism they have had to be pragmatic, be practical and not merely doctrinaire and dogmatic. So it is very difficult for me to say whether this socialism would be a suitable pattern for our country. There is no set pattern that can go under the label of socialism. There are patterns and patterns, so if somebody asks 'Is socialism suited to our country?' I will have to ask a counter-question, even in India, 'Sir, what variety of socialism?' Even in India there are varieties. We have Lohia socialism, Jayaprakash socialism, Nehru socialism, Namboodiripad socialism, Dange socialism, Revolutionary socialism, etc. There are so many socialisms. So I must say that we should not go by mere words. The word socialism has no specific meaning; we should clarify to ourselves the intended meaning of the word.

Lure of communism

Another equally interesting word is communism. That was once upon a time a very respectable term in our country. Many were attracted to communism. All were attracted to it, not so much by its philosophical content but because of the glamour of the Russian revolution. We were at that time in the struggle for independence against the Britishers. Many of us who were not

patient enough to become Gandhis wanted to do something radical and revolutionary. Outside Gandhism the only other philosophy in the arena of politics at that time was communism; and that communism had its source in Russia which had managed a successful revolution. So, even those who had not even a glimpse of the content of communism were attracted.

I remember my grand-uncle was a communist. he died in the Meerut conspiracy case. He was one of the accused. He died three days before the judgement was passed. He was also the first communist President of the All-India Trade Union Congress in 1925. My father used to ask him, "Sir, What attracted you to communism? What are the contents of communism?" He used to say, "Oh, boy, do not drag me into this discussion, this is all useless." because my father was much younger. "They had a successful revolution," he said. Not that he was a communist by faith, because I remember that he was a great friend of Revered Dr. Hedgewar, the founder of Rashtreeya Swayamsevak Sangh. In the presence of many people twice or thrice he suggested to Revered Doctorji that he should take out a route march in Bombay, after which my grand-uncle would collect a donation of at least Rs. 50,000 for the Rashtreeya Swayamsevak Sangh. Now, logically, what is the point of similarity between the Communist Party and R.S.S.? He was sympathetic to both : to R.S.S. because it appealed to his militancy, and to the Communist Party because of the background of a successful revolution.

Thus, it was not exactly the philosophical content that attracted the Indians in the earlier stages towards communism. Now we have to consider whether communism would help us on our way to progress. If it does we should have no hesitation in accepting it because it is not as if the concept of communism is totally inconceivable to Indian genius. *Das Capital* was published in 1857. In the very same year a thesis was published. The author's name was Vishnubaba Brahmachari. The date of publication leaves no room for doubt about the originality of Vishnubaba Brahmachari's

thoughts. You will be surprised to know that as an ideal society the blueprint he has given comprises the concept of communes. He has not used the word commune, but he has elaborately described how the society should be organised and it is the organisation of communes. This thesis of Brahmachari was published at the same time when *Das Capital* was published; so the author could not have been inspired by Marx.

When we think of communism naturally we are made to believe that communism is a complete philosophy of socio-economic life. Unfortunately it is not. Karl Marx who wrote *Das Capital* was a great thinker. As Hindus have the tradition of giving due respect to all great thinkers, according to us he is a very respectable man. There is no doubt that his thought contribution has helped in changing the course of world history to a considerable extent. But certain things about Marx deserve consideration. To be fair, I do not say that I know with any amount of certainty whether Marx wanted to found Marxism. His followers have developed this school of thought called Marxism. You must be remembering that on one occasion he said, 'Thank God, I am not a Marxist!' If Marxism is just a scientific way of thinking, its evaluation would be in a particular way. If it is an 'ism' the evaluation would be different.

Is Marxism an economic system ?

Whether Marx wanted it to be just a scientific way of thinking or he wanted it to be crystallised into an 'ism' is for the communists to say. But whatever he said and wrote was confined to the fall of capitalism. About the Revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat followed by withering away of the state, and about the blueprint of the socio-economic order what Marx said was – "to each according to his needs and from each according to his capacity." But "each according to his needs and from each according to his capacity" is hardly economics. If we call this economics, then our "*Sarve janah sukhino bhavantu*" is also economics. Economics is a science in which we have to specify what would be the various agencies of

production and distribution, of exchange, what agency would control their mutual relationship. This total picture is to be given. Marx did not give it. This is not my perception alone. When Lenin launched his Economic Policy as a nation-builder one of his textbook communist friends said, "Well, this is a deviation." While defending the 'New Economic Policy', Lenin replied, and I am quoting him : "Karl Marx has not written a single word about the economics of socialism." He was a wise man, therefore he did not write any thing about it ! No person who is aware of the dynamism of times and circumstances would go into the details of a blueprint before discussing the State apparatus. Many thought that communism was a blueprint of a new utopia. Many of our communist friends used to question whether those who are not communists have any blueprint of their society to come.

No blueprint available

I remember when I was in second year in college, Veer Savarkar had come to our place. Mine is a small village. He visited our place. He was lodged with a doctor gentleman. Now we were surprised that there was a demonstration of 25 or 30 high school students in front of his residence with black flags saying "Savarkar go back, Savarkar go back." Now we were young and we wanted to resist. But Savarkar said, "No. I want to talk to them." We did not like it but still those boys were admitted. Then Savarkar asked them, "Well, why you are demonstrating against me? Why do you want me to go back?" One 14 year old student got up and put a question. "Well, Mr. Savarkar, you stand for Hindu Nation. What is the blueprint of your Hindu Nation?" Obviously it was not a question framed by himself. A communist teacher in his high school had given him the question. We were eagerly waiting for a reply from Savarkar.

Savarkar paused for half a minute and then said, "Well, my boys, I accept defeat from you. You have raised a question for which I have no reply. But I must say that had this question been put to me by Lenin, I would have replied him."

Savarkar then said there was a time when three revolutionary leaders of three different countries were staying in London : Savarkar from India, De Valera from Ireland and Lenin from Russia. The detectives of the Czar were chasing Lenin and he took shelter in India House of Veer Savarkar at London. Savarkar said, "At night we used to have dinner together. Once I asked Lenin, 'Well, I am not interested in your philosophy, physics and metaphysics and all that. All I want to know is that if at all you come to power in Russia, what will be the order that you are going to establish, what will be the blueprint?' . Lenin just smiled and said, 'Well, is it practicable to give a blueprint of the shape of things to come before we come to power? We can give the broad guideline, and Marx has given those broad guidelines' ."

Savarkar told these small boys, "Well, had Lenin put me this question now I would have told him, 'Brother, when I confronted you with the same question you said that a blueprint could not be given before coming to power. Now, how is it that you ask me for the blueprint of my Hindu Nation? But to you, my boys, I cannot reply. I am defeated; you are victorious.'" In that way he disposed them of.

'Deviationists'

It is thus a fact that Karl Marx wisely enough has not given any blue print of the socio-economic order to come and therefore we find that the communist nation-builders had to find their own ways and means and their own paths. Hence the word 'deviationism' has become popular. We learn from China that Russia is deviationist and from Russia that China is deviationist, from both that Yugoslavia is deviationist, from Yugoslavia that both Russia and China are deviationist. In our own country we learn from Dange that Namboodiripad is deviationist and from Namboodiripad that Dange is deviationist, from both that Charu Mujumdar is deviationist, from Charu that both Dange and Namboodiripad are deviationist. So if we collect all the certificates

issued by communist to communist in the whole world, probably the whole thing would boil down to this question – that communism is deviationism.

Now, this is so because no one standard blueprint is given, for it could not have been given and it should not have been given. We know how when Yugoslavia introduced auto-management or workers-management, it was condemned by Russia as a non-Marxist gesture. And when Mao organised peasants in order to bring about revolution, his revolution was condemned as a non-Marxist revolution because it was spearheaded by peasants and not by industrial workers.

Varied interpretations

We also know how among themselves the Russian communists had internecine fights about the interpretation of the word communism. It was a matter for public debate whether after successful revolution the next important gesture would be equipping for world revolution or for consolidation of communism in one single country like an oasis. That public debate between Trotsky and Stalin is very much alive in our minds.

Lenin also was not a textbook communist. He was a practical nation-builder and therefore bookish communists took quite some time to understand his policies. It is said that once he was asked "What is your Marxism? What is your communism?" He said in simple terms, "Well, it is sovietisation and electrification of Russia." These have nothing to do with *Das Capital* but as a practical nation-builder he said that he believed in sovietisation and electrification of Russia. On one occasion textbook communists of the party were very angry about Lenin because for some important posts he had appointed some technicians who had occupied the same posts during the Czar's regime. So they asked Lenin, "How is it that these technicians who are bourgeois fellows are appointed to the key posts?" Lenin replied, "One technician is equal to 20 communists." I do not think that any textbook communist would

say such a thing in India. So long as he votes, he wants vote from communists.

M. N. Roy and Stalin

M. N. Roy has narrated a very interesting incident which illustrates that nation-builders do not go either by slogans or textbooks. Lenin had asked M. N. Roy to prepare a sort of manifesto for South-East Asian countries. He prepared the draft and come to Lenin. Lenin said, "Well, Stalin is our authority on the Asian problems. Kindly sit with him." So Roy went to Stalin along with the manuscript there was one particular clause about nationalisation of all lands. Stalin was a man of few words. He just drew a line over it and scratched it. Now Roy could not argue immediately, but when the reading was over he just put a question. "Sir, this nationalisation of land is a part and parcel of Marxism. How is it you have asked me to scratch the line?" Instead Stalin asked him to insert 'land reform with low rate of interest to the peasants.' Roy asked, "How is it you want me to scratch this nationalisation of land which is the very basic principle?" Stalin just smiled and said, "Well, it may be the basic principle. But if you write it now in your communist manifesto to South-East Asia then all the peasants who constitute the vast majority of population there would go against the communist party and communism, because every peasant in South- East Asia stands for peasant proprietorship. Whether you are going to nationalise land after coming into power is a distant thing. But today you will lose the support of peasants who constitute the vast majority of population everywhere. So this is to be scratched."

I do not say whether as principle this is good or bad. That is not the problem today but the main thing to be considered is that those who want to build up the nation cannot afford to go by mere textbooks. So, to state whether we follow communism or whether we do not follow communism is also equally meaningless, because

those who follow communism are also not united in their concept of communism or the communist order of society.

For example, industries are nationalised in all communist countries. But at the same time what should be the pattern of management? In Russia, the first communist country, we know all the industries are managed by bureaucrats. In Yugoslavia they introduced another pattern probably suitable to their national culture and genius, with the framework of budget and targets of national planning. Workers are free to manage their own affairs. Not only the problem of wage and service conditions, every decision-making pertaining to their industry right from the purchase of raw materials to the marketing organisation and even up to the collaboration or otherwise with the companies of other countries, all these are entrusted to the workers themselves. Till recently in Czechoslovakia and even in Hungary there was a different pattern. Unlike in Russia, industries are not managed by the officials, but managerial cadres, who are given independence and are accountable to the nation to fulfil the target given to the industry by National Planning. But within that framework they are free to have decision-making on all matters pertaining to their respective industries. This was resisted by Russia. When managerial cadre was given autonomy in Czechoslovakia and Hungary, Russia resisted it, thinking that it would have its repercussions in Russia itself.

'Cultural Revolution'

When Marshal Tito gave this autonomy in Yugoslavia – auto-management to his workers – it was condemned by Russia. Now, because of political factors they have somehow reconciled. But there are various patterns in communist countries. Now we know that Mao has introduced a pattern which is unique. I do not want to say whether it is good or bad. It is a matter of experiment, to be conducted over decades, because it is a new thing he has introduced

i.e., Cultural Revolution. If its bonafides are not to be challenged, if it is not a part of political manoeuvring, then any impartial observer will have to say that his experiment on Cultural

Revolution is very bold or adventuristic. Whether it is wise can be judged only after fifty years. But it is very bold and adventurous and must be accepted because he has a theory in it. He said that in the course of revolution new leaders of society were thrown up, but when they come to power, in course of time they come to acquire some static tendencies, some bourgeois tendencies, and status-quoism which stands in the way of further progress; and therefore the revolutionary leaders of today who come to power must be thrown out after, say, a decade or two. Otherwise they will again bring status-quo and the revolution will not live long. Of course, none of us know whether it is the theory in practice or this is just an excuse for liquidating his political opponents. So when we say communism, that also has no specific implication.

Even as there is nothing specific which can be described as socialism, there is no specific socio-economic order which can be labelled as communist. There are various factors, and there are various arrangements. That is why Russia has not succeeded in creating uni-central communism. Formerly it was uni-central; with the coming up of China it became bi-central, with Yugoslavia it became tri-central and now it is multi-central. Even within the sphere of Russian influence we know that Italian Communist Party and French Communist Party demanding for themselves complete autonomy and decision-making and, grudgingly no doubt, Russia had to concede.

‘Bourgeois’ concepts

All these suggest that if anybody thinks for a moment that by the word communism one standard socio-economic order is implied, that is a mistake. The nation-builders had to go by practical experience and not by bookish doctrines. This is very much evidenced in case of the systems they have adopted gradually, and this is described by themselves earlier as a bourgeois and anti-Marxist system. For example, the family was a bourgeois concept, but it is very much alive, it is getting stronger and stronger in

Russia. Private property was condemned but now in horticulture they have Private property. In the flats and in industrial housing there is right to property, *i.e.*, so long as you are alive you have the right to property in your flat, and if you have a successor he will succeed to your right to property; if there is no successor it will revert to the state. So the right to property is there and income disparity is there. They have said that everybody has to work. Because of the work performed if there are disparities in income those disparities are allowed, and those disparities are allowed to be passed on to the successor also. All these arrangements are there in Article 10 of the Russian constitution. Again, religion was a bourgeois concept. But religion has again become alive in different communist countries. Greek orthodox churches are again getting stronger, and the much condemned nationalism, a bourgeois concept, is the very foundation of Russian state today.

'Internationalism'

You might remember that when Hitler's armies marched inside Russia, Stalin appealed to Russians in the name of internationalism, communism and what not, and there was no response from the people because it did not touch the chord of their heart at the right place. He therefore had to appeal in the name of defending the sacred frontiers of fatherland. Now there cannot be any sacred fatherland of a communist, since a communist is an internationalist. His heart is very large; his heart has only North Pole to the north and South Pole to the south as boundaries! This much enlargement of the heart may be termed as a disease, but nevertheless they are 'internationalists'. For such internationalist to appeal to the people in the name of 'the defense of your sacred fatherland' was very much a deviation and degeneration. But that appeal was there. Not merely that. In order to rouse popular sentiment they revived the memories of bourgeois, reactionary, feudal heroes of Russia like Peter the Great, Catherine the Great,

their generals who were condemned so far. Their names were given to streets and their statues were erected! You will have to conclude that it is not communism but patriotism that can inspire the people. From the communist point of view Marx is much superior to Lenin, being the founder of the whole philosophy. So, if they are truly inspired by communism, then monuments and memorials for Marx should outnumber the monuments and memorials for Lenin. But everywhere you find monuments and memorials to the memory of Lenin, and rarely to the memory of Marx.

All I mean is that this internationalism had to degenerate to nationalism because of the expediency – political and strategic.

When we consider all these factors we come to know that textbook socialism is as much irrelevant as textbook communism. There is no blueprint of the communist economics; the national builders in communist countries had to find out their own path. It would therefore not be beneficial for us just to say or suggest that we will chant the *mantram* ‘Communism’ and be saved.

Democracy

Now I must say a word about another system though in brief. That system is democracy. I forgot to deal with it earlier when I differentiated the Indian course of history and the European course of history. Regarding the parliamentary democracy we are having, probably people may say that because we are immature, this experiment is not functioning well. But even in the West people are not happy about democracy. Direct democracy was in operation in Greek city-states like Athens and Sparta. What is democracy? It is people’s participation in management, and participation out to be direct. In city-states it was possible because the size of cities was small; but as the size of the state grows, direct participation in democracy becomes very difficult. Today in every country we have a representative Government and not democratic Government. It is very different under the present conditions in any country to make a government a democratic Government. We feel we have the

satisfaction of electing the government. But so many thinkers have said that so long as the institution of political party is there, and so long as there is no direct participation of all the people in government, direct democracy is a misnomer.

Suppose we elect a member to represent our constituency. When he is elected there is a manifesto of his political party. That manifesto may contain certain items, but it is not as if for the five year period only the items mentioned in the manifesto will come up for discussion before parliament. Various other subjects would come and no different subjects this member will have to exercise his vote. Now is he going to consult the voters of his constituency as to how he should vote on a particular issue? If it is to be nearer to direct democracy then voting of every parliament member should be in keeping with the wishes of the majority in his constituency.

But we have a very curious spectacle. He is sent to parliament by citizens. But once elected he does not consult the wishes of the majority of his own constituency but is guided by the mandate of the party bosses. The mandate of the party bosses may not be in keeping with the wishes of the majority of the people of his constituency, so that whenever there is such a difference his voting is not in keeping with the wishes of the majority in his constituency.

A blind alley

So some thinkers have said that so long as the party system exists and so long as all the people through some mechanism are not able to participate in the decision-making of the government it cannot be called a democratic government but only a representative government. No doubt, in some countries some devices have been adopted to bring the representative character of the government nearer to the democratic character of government. These measures are referendum, initiative, plebiscite and the right to recall. These measure are there but they are quite inadequate; and therefore even the best advocates of democracy have not said that it is the best form of government. They have said, 'It is the least evil, and therefore we support it.' This, then, is their verdict on their won

form of government.

In view of all these considerations, should we look to the west for guidance? We find that they are themselves in a blind alley. Even the most prosperous country of the world is not leading a happy life. I am referring to the U.S. No doubt they have stepped on the moon-what can be a bigger achievement than that? --but the same U.S., with their parliamentary form of government, with various institutions, corporations, organisation, the higher technological and scientific advancement which has enabled them to reach the moon earliest -- even such a nation is suffering from maladies. Can we afford to follow the U.S., the No.1 nation of the world? Do we not know that in that most prosperous and most advanced country the percentage of crimes and robbery is highest? The ratio of insanity and neurosthania is highest. Heart condition, blood-pleasure, hypertension and all these complaints are more than in any other country, in the world. many in that country are not having proper sleep, and some Americans, may be wrongly, are looking to some other countries like India for mental solace. They are suffering from a malady of plenty, while we are having our own problem of poverty. Now if you try to follow a nation which is not itself contented and which is looking to other countries for guidance, it will be a case of '*Andhenaiva niyamana yathandhah*' -- a blind man leading another blind man.

So the best course for us, when we are thinking of national Renaissance, its direction and destination, would be to know our own past. We must study the history of different countries, the various thought systems, all the various 'isms' and institutions, but at the same time we should not follow anybody blindly; we must scrutinise as to how much should be accepted and how much should be rejected and how this entire thing can be adjusted to our tradition, conditions and our requirements. Blind imitation of any country would not be helpful for the simple reason that no country is in a condition to inspire confidence in us, none of them have a social order which can be considered as a standard one.

A tried and tested social order

When Swami Vivekananda visited America one scholar asked, "Swamiji, we agree with all your philosophical tenets. So let us have a compromise. Your country is poor, and we are prosperous. We will accept your ethics, and you accept our economics." Swamiji said, "I have no objection, but there is a difficulty. All your systems are in an experimental stage. India is an ancient nation. No doubt, we have some perversions, some degeneration and some corruption that need to be mended. But we had evolved a social order which had stability and maintained our society for thousands of years. Here and there some perversions might have crept in, but this is a tried and tested social order. Now if we are to leave it and exchange it for something else, *i.e.*, yours, then your social order must also be tried and tested. Our social order has been tried and tested for centuries, and it has shown its potentialities for stability. But your social order is only in an experimental stage." Swamiji then said, "I am prepared to accept any system that you suggest. But that system must be given a fair trial for 500 years, because it is national history. What is a day in man's life, is one second in a nation's life. Therefore your economic system must be given a fair trial for 500 years, and then if its mettle is proved, we Indians will not hesitate to accept it."

Now taking all these facts into consideration, we understand, while we must study all the thought systems objectively and dispassionately, we cannot imitate any one of them blindly. We have to study all and scrutinise them and try to find out whatever is suitable for our tradition, condition and requirements.

LECTURE 3

THE HINDU SOCIAL FABRIC

Yesterday we considered to what extent different 'isms' have been successful in achieving the object professed by them. But still the question remains whether the problem that they were called upon to deal with were also not the problem before our country at some time or other, and what was the way, the methodology, the mechanism we resorted to while dealing with such problems. Frankly I must say we were not required to deal with these problems, because these problems were not posed here in an identical manner.

Lack of incentive

The other day I referred to the concept of equality and its incompatibility with individual development if our values of life are materialistic. I remember to have said that if I am a materialist and if I am told the minimum salary in the land is Rs. 100 and howsoever hard I may work, I am not going to get more than Rs. 2,000 per month, then I would have no incentive to work hard, for the simple reason that even if I do not work, even if I am not industrious, the social security is bound to give me Rs. 100 per month; and howsoever much I exert myself, I am not going to receive more than Rs. 2,000. Incentive for individual development will not be there, and that is one of the reasons for brain drain. That was mentioned yesterday. I am mentioning it as one of the reasons,

since there are a few scientists and technicians who quite because appropriate facilities for their development of research are not being offered. But that is another point. The main thing is the purely materialistic values of life. Now both things are necessary : individual development as well as equality or equitability. The West could not have it and even communist countries are not having it. Even Russia is not having equality. What is the reason? Because they have wasted their thinking on materialism; and so long as materialism is the basis of thought, equality cannot be reconciled with individual development.

We were not called upon to deal with this problem because our values of life are different. Our mechanism was different. We have been given an objective of life by our seers and sages which was neither purely materialistic nor purely non-materialistic.

Objective of life

The objective of life given by our seers was '*Chaturvidha Purushartha*' : Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha. These were not treated as four different objectives of human life. It is a single fourfold objective of human life. You can see that out of the four aspects – Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha – two are on materialistic plane, Artha and Kama; and the other two Dharma and Moksha, are on non-materialistic plane. It is wrong to presume that the materialistic aspect of life was neglected or undermined by our forefathers. Artha, for example, was extolled to such an extent that in his enthusiasm, Kautilya even went on to say, '*Dharmasya moolam arthah.*' It is overenthusiasm, but I mentioned it just to suggest that the Artha aspect was not undermined or ignored. Regarding Kama – it was not necessary for our forefathers to learn from Freud that the libido or Kama has importance. In the last but one stanza of the third chapter of *Bhagavad-Gita* the word '*Saha*' is employed. According to one commentator '*Saha*' here does not refer to Brahma or Ishwara but only to Kama. The stanza says that it is beyond not only *indriyas*, but also beyond the conscience plane, whatever it is. I do not think that a more dignified position could be awarded to Kama even by Freud.

So we have not ignored Artha and Kama; but they have been sandwiched between Dharma and Moksha. So two materialist and two non-materialist objectives have been combined into one. That has been our Hindu objective of life. It has given us the values which are material and non-materialistic - materialistic in the sense that you must earn your income, your income should increase, you must have physical enjoyment and all that which is so precious to the materialistic mind, and also non-materialistic as you are called upon to cultivate a sense of achievement, a sense of having arrived at a higher level and social status.

Income versus status

So, to put it in a simple form, income differential and status differential are the two values of life which were also combined and consolidated into one. The system was such that physical enjoyment and social status were put together, but the quantity was in inverse ratio; put together, the quantity was the same in every case. But it was in inverse ratio – that is, the higher the social status the lower would be the sphere of enjoyment; and the wider the sphere of enjoyment the narrower would be the social status.

Your social status would be comparatively lower, if you hanker after higher qualities. You are free to do it. If you have higher social status there is less physical enjoyment, the circle remaining constant. In the same circle if we have red and green colors, if the sphere of red colour is extended then automatically that of green will shrink, and vice versa. So it was left open to the discretion of everybody to have his own choice, whether he would prefer higher social status or more physical enjoyment.

I think if this principle is implemented even today probably many of the maladies in our political life would disappear. In the West, and following the West in the East too we are now having keen competition for political power, ministerial and otherwise, because physical enjoyment, privilege and social status go together today. Suppose it is decided that according to the Hindu values of life those who have higher social status should deny themselves

certain measure of physical enjoyments. You are free to become President of India even, but in that case 200 days out of 365 you have to do fast, you can't use conveyance and like Shankaracharya you have to go on foot from place to place. What will be the outcome? It is said that once a foreigner wanted to see the residence of Chanakya. So he was shown the residence and the sentence runs : "See the prosperity of our Prime Minister! Here is a stone in our Prime Minister's residence for breaking cowdung cakes. Here is lying the bundle of *darbhas*. How is the construction? It is made of mud walls which have become very old, and the roof is hanging down because it cannot bear the pressure of *samidhas* that are put on it for being dried."

Now, if that type of residence is given to our President or our Prime Minister, I think that there will not be any competition in the political field.

So we have a different type of equality – physical enjoyment and social status put together. Everybody would have the same quantity but within the constant circle the two would differ in inverse ratio. Higher the social status, lower the enjoyment; and wider the sphere of enjoyment, lower the sphere of social status. That was the formula and the choice was left to every individual. Every individual had the discretion. Now I think if this concept had been adopted by the West probably many of the 'isms' they have today would not have been born at all.

This is the way in which our seers and sages had conceived of equality and therefore the problem that the West was confronted with was not posed in India in the same manner as in the West.

There is much discussion today in India – because such discussions were common in Europe and America – about the right to private property. I must say that even that problem was not posed here in a similar manner. First, our leaders of thought had realised that after all property belongs to God. If we come in possession of a part of it, it is more as a trustee. The true 'Swami' was none but God. *Yoga-vasistha* says : '*Bhavam divyam chantariksham, vittam*

achyutanirmitam’; all *vitta* is created by god. That famous injunction of *Ishavasya* is before us : ‘*Tena tyaktena bhunjithah.*’ Everything belongs to Him and whatever is left by Him for you should be accepted you as His prasada. Then we are also told that you have right only to as much as is necessary for filling up your belly and whosoever claims more should be punished.

Vanaprastha

But at the same time our seers were aware that goody-goody talk, pious talk will not do; some institutional arrangement also is necessary to reinforce whatever good *samskaras* we inculcate in the minds of the people.

We had a very curious institution. I do not mean to say that we should revive the same institution in the same form; but we must understand that institutional framework. You may earn money, conduct yourselves, say as an industrialist or as other professional and all that up to a particular period. But after a particular period everybody was expected to retire, to leave his home and hearth to accept ‘Vanaprastha’; and the moment he accepts Vanaprastha he has nothing to do legally and practically with whatever had been earned by him; he may leave it to his successor. There was no provision in our ancient Hindu society for being in the chair and proceeding from the chair straight to the grave. Much earlier we were expected to relinquish our post, our office, our property, accept the Vanaprastha and be serviceable to society, give advantage of our experience to the society.

As I said, we do not stand for revivalism, but the spirit behind these institutions must be noted.

Division of society

Now it is very fashionable nowadays to say that we must have a classless and stateless society. This word ‘classless’ is much misunderstood. If we have to use the communist terminology then the word class is a technical one; it is used only to indicate the division of society between two camps-the ‘haves’ and the

'have-nots' and by the 'haves' and 'have-nots' they mean those who have the means of production and those who have not. It is confined only to one aspect of life, that is, the means of production. As a matter of fact those words can be used in various different contexts. For instance, some disciples of Marx from Poland had posed a question. The means of production have acquired so much importance in socio-economic life. If the desired changes are brought about, nobody would be in charge of the entire economic power and nobody would be below the subsistence level. In that case the possession or ownership of means of production will lose its importance in public life; it would recede to the background. And probably, by that time, if science and technology advance, the more important problem would be that those who have the technical know-how would constitute one class and those who do not have this scientific and technical knowledge would constitute another class; and the educated haves will try to exploit the uneducated have-nots in the same manner in which the present haves are exploiting the have-nots. To this aspect much thought was not given.

However, we in India stand for equality and equitability, but at the same time, to presume that the whole society is divided between two camps and that too on such a basis is wrong. There are no doubt conflicts; economic reasons may explain a part of the total picture. But at the same time it cannot be said that this is the cause of all the various internecine conflicts.

Still, broadly we understand that they want a classless society. Could they bring it about anywhere in the world? You must be remembering how Djilas, who was former Deputy Prime Minister of Yugoslavia, a communist country, has stated in his book *New Class* that while they have abolished the old classes, new classes are raised. Formerly there was a tussle between the capitalist and the proletariat; now capitalists were abolished, no doubt, but instead the administration and technicians constitute a new privilege class in communist countries. Though the old ones are done away with, new men have come in their place.

In Russia too classes are very much in existence. Some of you must have read an article by Khrushchev in which he expressed anxiety over theft that even in schools and colleges during interval when boys and girls sit together in groups, just to enjoy leisure, the boys from administrative sector and technicians form separate groups, and those of peasants and workers form another separate group, and those of peasants and workers form another separate group. How can we dispense with this class consciousness? Who says that there are no classes in Russia? Is there any country in the world where there is complete classless society? No. In a technical sense the Marxian theory of class conflict itself is wrong. But in a non-technical sense, because people nowadays are using the word class in a very loose sense, they say that teachers are one class and students are another class. Fortunately they have not said husbands are one class and wives are another!

World citizens

But we had a classless society in India; that is the only exception in the world. People who were above either class consciousness or consciousness of any differentiation whatsoever were our sannyasins. About our sannyasins it is said that they are world citizens; they do not belong to any particular caste or class, not even to a particular nation. 'Swadesho bhuvanatrayam'-the universe was their homeland. As has been said,

*Ayam nijah paro veti,
gananā laghuchetāsam
udāracharitānam tu
vasudhaiva kutumbakam*

Sannyasins conform to these standards. Once you adopt sannyasa, you have to change everything or you have to forget everything, except probably your mother till she is alive; you have to forget your name even, you have to adopt a new name.

So, in the true sense of the name, in the real sense of the term world citizens, universal citizens existed in India and only in India

and they are existing even today. There are no others-in the East or in the West—who can claim to be world citizens. Now, how could we raise the sannyasins here? that is the inherent strength of our tradition.

There is much talk about stateless societies. Yesterday I said that in India we did not attach the same importance to the state concept as was done by theoreticians in the West.

While monarchy and autocracy were prevalent in the West there was no monarchy or autocracy here; the Raja was considered as one of 7 *prakritis* of the state and he was subservient to *Raja-Dharma* which was legislated upon by people wearing loin-cloth having no political or state authority. Without economic or any other authority, they used to legislate *Raja-Dharma* and the Raja was expected to follow it. If he violated *Raja-Dharma* he was to be done away with. There are examples of Vena and Nahusha even in Vedic ages, when any king who said 'I am the State' was finished.

Balance of power

As a matter of fact the ideal condition according to Bhishma was statelessness. In shantiparva he says-

*Na rājyam naiva rājāno
na dandyo na cha dāndikah
dharmenaiva prajāh sarve
rakshanti sma parasparam*

There was neither state nor state officials; neither offenders nor judiciary. Only on the strength of *Dharma* people protected one another.

That was the ideal condition. But even when state was given to the people it was not all-powerful or totalitarian; the society comprised autonomous self-governed socio-economic entities; government had no authority to override their authority and interfere in their administration. They had only to co-ordinate their activities and their plans, but not to override them. Thus there was balance of power maintained in the country.

The concept of sovereignty is very much discussed in the West. There are so many theories, the matriarchal, the patriarchal, the divine right theory, idealist theory, organic theory, social contract theory, and a number of theories about sovereignty. In India we simply said that sovereignty rests with *Dharma* and with no other institution; and because of that, the very social picture in India was different from that in the West. Looking at the example of princes in princely India recently we are led to believe that probably this autocratic attitude of our princes during recent times was the heritage from ancient Hindu tradition. It is not. As I said there were no monarchical or autocratic rights for the Hindu Rajas. The picture we have seen in some of the princely states where autocracy was assumed was not because of Hindu tradition. I am quoting Sardar K. M. Panikkar who is an authority on this. He says: "The Hindu states never claim to possess such right because the idea of State Absolution was unknown in India. The Hindus recognized the obedience due to the State and had for that matter a better conceptions human values than the European theorists, who combined in the model state both the city of God and the city of man." It will be seen that the idea prevalent in some quarters that the revenue of the state was the private property of the Ruler has no support in the Hindu theory and Panikkar says: "In the British period the change which had come over the Hindu idea of kingship is curious. The importation of European theory of state omnipotence by the British gave to Indian monarchy a conception of autocracy totally opposed to Hindu ideas." Pannikkar can be accepted as an authority on the subject. Thus the importance given in the scheme of things, to the state or government, was limited and counterbalanced by autonomous self-governed socio-economic entities. As I said there were Shrenis, Ganas and Nigamas, occupation guilds, professional guilds. Regional autonomous corporations like Ugas were also there. We need not go into the details here. It is sufficient to mention that in regional and occupational level we had autonomous guilds. Because of that the examples we get from our history are unparalleled. If we compare

our example with those of the West, we can find a world of difference.

‘Withering away of the state’

People are very much after a stateless society because communists have said, first of all they will achieve the dictatorship of the proletariat. dictatorship means everything for the state, every thing within the state and nothing outside the state. Once the government becomes all-powerful, totalitarian and authoritarian, then the state will wither away. Now, does it appeal to your reason that you first of all make the state all-powerful and then it will suddenly wither away? It will never wither away; it has not withered away anywhere nor will it wither anywhere, because self-perpetuation is the psychology of rulers. it is not going to wither. On the contrary we had a device according to which the very authority was limited, confined to its own jurisdiction, and everything was subject to *Dharma*, subservient to *Dharma*; the sovereignty rested with *Dharma*.

Dominance of Dharma

I may give the well-known example of Ramachandra. We know that just to observe the norms he decided to abandon even Janaki, his beloved:

*Sneham, dayā cha saukhyam cha,
yadi vā jānakīm api*

Sneha, Daya, Saukhyam and even Janaki- if for the observance of *Raja-Dharma* I have to abandon these, I will not hesitate to do so. He abandoned the most beloved person to observe *Raja-Dharma*. During recent times, another would be monarch abandoned the unwritten constitution of his country just to marry a thrice-divorced lady Simpson.

We know that when Bharata comes to meet Ramachandra, there is a tussle between the two. Bharata says, “The kingdom is your, not mine.” and Ramachandra says, “The kingdom is yours, not mine.” can you conceive in the West any two persons or

parties saying the kingdom belongs to you and not to us? We witnessed it in India because here *Dharma* was dominant.

You might also recall how after the Mahabharata war, when Dhritarashtra wanted to go to forest, Kunti also decides to go. At that time an instructive conversation is there between Kunti and her sons the Pandavas. Yudhishthira is saying, "Well, you instigated us to have this war. We never wanted it. And now that the war is over and we are victorious and the kingdom is in our hands, you are going to the forest along with Dhritarashtra. What is this?" She says, "Well it was for the protection of *Dharma* that I instigated you to conduct war; and now I am not enamoured of the glory of your kingdom. It is in order to protect *Dharma* that I have to accompany Dhritarashtra to the forest."

This attitude of non-attachment cannot be expected of any of the Western countries, be they followers of socialism or communism. In communist countries we have seen comrades in arm were butchered by Stalin and others, and how they have made their way to the throne through the blood of their own brother partymen. Even 'cultural revolution' does not indicate much difference from this march through blood of comrades in arm.

In recent times Shivaji wrote to one of the Sardars of Bijapur that he should join hands with Shivaji for the establishment of Swarajya. That Sardar, Chandrarao More, wrote back: "No, we are not on equal footing, I am superior to you." He said that the Badshah had given the title of 'Raja' to him. Shivaji was not given any title or award by anybody. In reply Shivaji said '*Amche rajya sri shambhu ne dilat*': Sri Shambhu has given me this kingdom. That shows the spirit of *Dharma*. In another letter he says '*Rajya dharmancha hai shivabachi nhave*'- 'It is to *Dharma* that the kingdom belongs, and not to Shivaba.'

That is why we know he had such great non-attachment towards the rajya he had acquired. He once gave his entire rajya as '*bhiksha*' to his guru Sri Ramadas.

Many more such examples could be found in our Hindu history which have no parallel in the history of the West. All these

things could happen in India because of the predominance of *Dharma*.

What is Dharma?

Now, what is this *Dharma*? I will not go into a lengthy discussion as to whether *Dharma* is the same as religion. It has been explained time and again by a number of authorities that religion is different from *Dharma*. *Dharma* has no equivalent in West, because it cannot have. What is *Dharma*? *Dharma* is the unchanging universal law in the light of which we have to formulate and reformulate the socio-economic order to meet the changing challenges of the changing times. Yesterday I said that Hindus consider it is below their dignity to belong to any 'ism' because an ism is a closed book of thought; and even if an 'ism' is useful for some time for a particular society, it will not be useful for all societies for all time. We know how during the same period different countries are confronted with different problems and therefore no one 'ism' would be useful for different people or different countries. In our country we are suffering from poverty; so here Mahatma Gandhi had given us the *mantra* '*Curtail wants.*' But if the same slogan is carried to the U.S., probably they will laugh at you, because their problem is different: unless the consumption is increased their whole economy will crumble down! So there the slogan would be, '*Consume more.*' Both are living in 1973. But because the conditions are diametrically different, naturally whatever holds good in India will not hold good in the United States. Not merely that; during the same period no 'ism' is useful or serviceable to different people in different countries, because the conditions and problems are different. and even for the same society no 'ism' can be useful for any length of time because with the change of times the nature of problems and challenges becomes different.

To give a small example, when I was in High School we used to read articles from authors from Bombay and Poona in Marathi on the pet topic of those days- 'Ban the Child Marriage.' These articles

written some 80 years back. So it was clear that in Bombay and Poona the problem was how to stop child marriage. Now after 80 years if anybody goes to Bombay or Poona and delivers a lecture on how to ban child marriage, he would be sent to lunatic asylum. Now the problem there is not how to ban child marriage but how to ban the later marriages! That is the problem today before the urban populations Maharashtra.

So even for the same society problems do not remain constant and therefore the remedies for a particular malady during a particular period would cease to be effective when the nature of malady changes. So with the change of time and of societies the remedy should also change. Hindus are therefore wise enough not to accept any 'ism' as gospel truth. Even if it is useful, its utility is very limited. So we believe that circumstances are changing, and with the change in circumstances there is bound to be change in the social arrangement.

'Hindu Dharma'

But at the same time the change in the socio-economic factors must be guided by some unchanging principle. That principle is *Dharma*, that is, the universal law. Now, the term *Dharma* has been very much misunderstood, and there is some confusion about its meaning in the popular mind. As I said, it comprised the details of socio-economic order as well as some unchanging principles or laws. Our seers had visualised the universal laws. Universal laws were not composed, they were not invented. Our seers, because of their spiritual elevation, had visualised the universal laws. Consider the law of gravitation. Gravitation has always been there, but because Newton was the first man in the West to visualise it, it is termed as Newton's law. Likewise the law of relativity. In India '*Syadavada*' was so common, right from the Vedic times. But in the West Einstein was the first to visualise the law of relativity, so it is attributed to him.

In the same fashion, because the Hindus were the first to

visualise the universal laws, it was called the Hindu *Dharma*. But it does not mean that it confines itself to Hindus only, its operation is confined to only Hindu society. Even as Newtons law does not mean that it started with Newton or it had its operation only in the kitchen room of Newton, when we say Hindu *Dharma* it does not mean it is for the Hindu society only, because they are universal laws. Actually it is *Vishwa Dharma*.

Defiance of Dharma

Now universal laws are unchanging, but the details are changing. This *Dharma* is the factor that gives stability and prosperity to our society. Very often it is said that the days of *Dharma* are over because nobody cares for *Dharma*. Those who do not care do not know what *Dharma* is; they wrongly presume that religion is *Dharma* because when they disregard religion they think they are disregarding *Dharma*. As a matter of fact, disregarding religion is nothing new in our country. Even some of the *Shad-darshanas* are atheistic. We had a very organised system of atheism and materialism which denied the existence of god. Even the materialism was formed in Hindusthan and not outside. You might be knowing that in the West it was Democritus who first formed the materialist philosophy in a crude fashion 2,000 years ago. The first *sutra* of materialistic philosophy in the world was given by Brihaspati thousands of years ago; '*Asato sat ajayata*'—“out of non-existence emerged existence.” Materialism was given a free and fair hand; and if it failed to become popular it is not because it was banned officially but because in a free and fair competition with other philosophies it could not maintain its elf, and that is why it was defeated.

So we are not afraid of all this non-religious, irreligious philosophies, nor even of communism which has become a religion of irreligious ones with marx as its Mohammed, *Das Capital* as its *Koran*, dialecticism as its Allah, and the higher phase of communism as its heaven. Of all these things we are not afraid. But we know that the universal law is something different from religion. And those who think 'we shall finish *Dharma*' probably do not realise that it is not possible for anybody to finish *dharma*. How is

it possible to finish a universal law? A universal law does not depend upon your rejection or recognition for its existence. For example, light and heat is the *Dharma* of fire. We are told by our constitutionalists that parliament can do anything, it can make and unmake anything, except probably man a woman and woman a man. It is fashionable to say so. Suppose tomorrow our sovereign parliament passes a unanimous resolution saying "From tomorrow onwards in our country governed by parliament the *Dharma* of fire shall be changed. Instead of heat and light, it will be darkness and coolness." Being a constitutionalist, if I think "This is after all a unanimous resolution of our sovereign parliament. Now the fire must have changed its attributes" and if I embrace fire tomorrow, probably I will have no time left to verify whether that resolution has come into operation! The *Dharma* of fire does not depend upon the majority and minority of your parliament or assembly; It is there whether you accept it or not. So, if we become so democratic minded as to think that everything is subject to majority vote, universal law is not subject to it. It is in existence whether you accept it or not. If we want to benefit from it then we should have the knowledge of the *Dharma* of the fire, and we should utilise it for cooking, or if we so choose, to burn down our own house. Whether we benefit by it or not is left to our choice, but it is not as if the existence of *dharma* is dependent on majority votes.

So, when we say "*dharmorakshatirakshitah*", it only means that if we follow *Dharma* we stand to benefit, and if we do not follow *dharma* we stand to lose.

'Retreat' of Dharma

Very often people ask, "sir you are talking in anachronistic terms." My progressive friends tell me to abandon this anachronistic terminology and use some new fashionable progressive radical words. Of course, if words can help, we don't bother, but the problem is the content. Can we afford to abandon *Dharma*? Is it not the way we think in order to achieve stability and prosperity? And at times the progressive friends say to me, "Sir, you are saying so much about *Dharma*, but nowadays *Dharma* is on the retreat" as if the law of gravitation can ever be on

retreat or as if the law of relativity can ever be on retreat. to this my reply is, "Well, this is also a part of what has been said by our *Dharma*. Occasionally it would retreat." How is it? You know the famous stanza:

*Yadā yadā hi dharmasya
glānir bhavati Bharata
abhyutthanam adharmasya
tadatmanam srijamyaham*

The Lord was said, '*Sambhavami yuge yuge*'. The Lord has given us some assurance no doubt- "*Yato dharmastato jayah*" but we must mark the words carefully. He says, "*Yadā yadā hi....*" that term '*yadā*' is used twice, it means 'whenever'. The Lord has said "In every era I will reincarnate myself." It means that the '*glāni*' of *Dharma* would be there often and there would be necessity for Him to reincarnate as often.

So the lacuna is in the assurance itself! Instead of using the word '*Yadā*' twice, Our Lord could have said '*Yadā dharmasya glānir bhāvati*'; "When *Dharma* retreats, I will appear on the scene, finish *Adharma* once and for all, then I will go to Vaikuntha and have my good nap and you will also have your rest." But He has not said it. He had envisaged this cycle; when the forces of *Adharma* are advancing against Him, He reappears and reincarnates establishing *Dharma*.

Of course this is just by way of argument. *Dharma* neither retreats nor advances. But for the benefit of the progressives, who understand more about the West and least about the East, I have given all these explanations.

Adaptability

So this *Dharma* is there and it has been our tradition to adjust our socio-economic order according to changing challenges of the times. That is why we find that there are different rules and regulations even during the same period. Different tribes and different communities used to follow different rules and regulations framed by themselves. We had different forms of government and

we have learnt, '*Om swasti samrajyam, bhojyam, swarajyam, vairajyam, parameshthim, rajyam, maharajyam, adhipatyam,*' These were all various forms of government which were in existence in different periods or different people. Forms of Government were different, customs were different. Even from family to family there were different rules and regulations. Manu had enjoined that government must maintain intact and help the observance of different *kula-dharmas, jati-dharmas, shreni-dharmas* etc. There was such a wide variety, and from time to time there were changes. That is why we find that there are differences between shrutis and smritis. There is no one prophet or sage who is standard for all times and climes: everything would change according to the change in the challenges and circumstances. that is why the Hindus have this peculiar adaptability. Nothing is ruled out, any institution we can adopt if we find it necessary. Our forefathers have said: "Acharyas are to be found even amongst Yavanas."

Restructuring society

So we can adopt anything from anybody. There is nothing which prevents us from readjusting our society with a view to coping with the problems raised by the present situation. On the basis of *dharma*, in the light of *Dharma*, within the framework of the universal laws, Hindus have perfect freedom of action. The only binding factor is that everything should be in consonance with the universal laws, that is *dharma*. That is why I said that our past performance is no indicator of our present potentialities and that our potentialities are much more, and yesterday I said that no foreign 'ism' can be accepted blindly, no socio-economic order of the West can be accepted blindly, that we should study the various 'isms', scrutinise, find out whatever is palatable to us, whatever deserves to be rejected, what is adaptable. We must also thoroughly study our own system, we must understand *Dharma* which is the sustainer not only of one people but all the peoples because it has been said "*Dharmo dharayati prajah*". *Prajah* means all the people, all the society. So in consonance with *Dharma*, we should also benefit by the experiments in the west. No doubt, they are only experimental stages, not the tried and tested truth. We should benefit by their

experiments in the light of *Dharma* and try to reconstruct our society in any way we want.

Some of our thinkers have said that we can restructure the society. What is important is the will to survive, what is important is the national consciousness, and a sense of unity. If we have them, if we get rid of fissiparous tendencies, petty, selfish individualism, if all of us are determined to reconstruct the Nation, we may adopt anything and reject anything. So what is the habitual attitude of the Hindus regarding reconstruction of society which may lead to renaissance?

From reconstruction to renaissance

Explaining the process of reconstruction flowing naturally from the spirit of identity, M.S. Golwalkar observes:

“Once the life-stream of unity begins to flow freely in all the veins of our body-politic, the various limbs of our national life will automatically begin to function actively and harmoniously for the welfare of the Nation as a whole. Such a living and growing society will preserve out of its multitude of old systems and patterns whatever is essential and conducive to its progressive march, throw off those that have outlived their utility, and evolve new systems in their place. No one need shed tears at the passing of the old order nor shirk to welcome the new order of things. That is the nature of all living and growing organisms. As a tree grows, ripe leaves and dry twigs fall of making way for fresh growth. The main thing to bear in mind is to see that the life-sap of oneness permeates all parts of our social set-up. Every system or pattern will live or change even entirely disappear according as it nourishes that life-sap or not. Hence, it is useless in the present social context to discuss about the future of all such systems. The supreme call of the times is to revive the spirit of inherent unity and the awareness of its life purpose in our society. All other things will take care of themselves.”

This sums up in brief the attitude of the Hindus towards national reconstruction paving its way to the national renaissance.

This we have found out, that while we have to study the various systems, 'isms' patterns and everything in different countries, we have also to study simultaneously our own systems, our own patterns, to understand the importance of *Dharma* which alone is the sustaining, stabilizing centre in the universe, and in its light we have to reconstruct ourselves. When this particular attitude of the Hindus to readjust with the changing situations is understood thoroughly, then we will understand that there is no institution which cannot be discarded when it is necessary to discard it and no institution that cannot be adopted when it is necessary to adopt it. There is freedom, perfect freedom within the frame work of *Dharma*. If we think we should reconstruct our society it is possible for us to do it. This way we can meet challenge posed by the present condition.

We have confidence we can reconstruct ourselves, but we cannot isolate ourselves. We are living in a comity of nations. The world is becoming shorter and shorter, and there are actions and reactions between different national and international communities. While people in the developing countries are facing the problem of poverty and are thinking seriously about different 'isms' like democracy and socialism and communism and what not, the conditions in developed countries are different. In developed countries the very 'isms' like democracy and socialism and communism and what not, the conditions in developed countries are different. In developed countries the very 'isms' have become irrelevant. The challenge of tomorrow is not on the ideological plane but on some other plane. Scientific challenge has become a problem for humanity. It is not only the undeveloped countries that are facing this challenge but also the developed countries. That challenge is to be faced in the very near future by the entire humanity with technology, and whether humanity will survive the technical and scientific advancement of the West. The challenge is not going to spare anybody. To help ourselves and help the rest of the humanity, to face that challenge of scientific and technical advance, is our *Dharma*.

LECTURE 4

NEW DIRECTIONS

We deduced on the first day that our past performance cannot be treated as a sure indicator of our total potentialities.

On the second day we found that though there are various 'isms'; in the West and we have to study all of them, none of them can be helpful to us in our quest.

Then we saw last evening that we had a distinctive concept called *Dharma*. This has differentiated us from the rest of the mankind. But this *Dharma* is universal and not a monopoly of the Hindus alone; and on the strength of *Dharma* it is possible for us to readjust our society the light of the needs, the requirements and the conditions of our country.

Now as I was saying, till now, because we are not a prosperous country, the discussion has been centered round various 'isms', catch-words and phrases, but as I said, this is not a permanent stage.

'Managerial State'

Two decades ago an important book was written by James Bernham, in which he said all the theories were becoming irrelevant in the new set-up. He said that the very technique of industry and administration was becoming so complex that the

technicians would dominate the whole scene; those who propagate many 'isms' and those who are shareholders, those who are holding state authority without being technicians all these would have no voice in the direction of the industry and also the administration. the state to come, he said, is a 'managerial state' in which the class of managers, administrator- technicians would be the guiding factor in decision-making. Now we never thought that such a stage would come so soon; but it is coming, it has already arrived, and the one difficulty about our present world is that it is becoming shorter and shorter.

We may not be facing the problem here today but if that problem is posed anywhere in the world, it will not spare us; it will not cease to have its own effect upon our conditions also. For example, poor Japan had not developed the Atom-Bomb, but when the U.S. developed the A-Bomb, Japan could not say that because it had not developed the bomb it would have nothing to do with it; no, they had their Hiroshima.

Problems of global nature

If such life-and-death problems are posed in the West, we will not be able to escape their effects, and we will also have to consider the challenges that the West is facing. As I said the challenges are no longer on an ideological plane. The U.S. is considered to be most advanced country today and we in India think that Americans must be happy. The other day I referred to the state of mental and physical health of Americans and we find that they are worse off. Insanity, neurasthenia, blood-pressure, heart ailments, crime, suicide – everything is the highest in America; and that is the most advanced country! And there is the 'Hippy' cult. All this goes to suggest that in spite of affluence, they are unhappy.

Student revolt

A friend of mine visited the U.S. when there was revolt by University students. He contacted some of the student leaders and asked, "Well, you have plenty. In the midst of affluence why are

you discontented?" He replied: "Well, we are not happy. We want to change this consumer society." whatever be the meaning of that expression. My friend then asked, "What type of society do you want?" He replied, "That we don't know. We know that the present system should be completely shattered, so that something else can take its place. Nothing is worse than the present state of affairs.

You might have learnt in papers that when university students rose in revolt in Paris, the one slogan they had was 'Death to the technocrats'. Now technocrats are supposed to be the harbingers of prosperity and scientific and technological advance, but the students in Paris had his slogan "Death to the technocrats."

Futurology

In America, since the leaders of opinion are aware of this discontent and dissatisfaction among the people, they have even organised institutes and societies of 'futurology.' the question that is posed in the U.S. is, "What type of future do you want?" There are 'futurologists' in America, as if it is a science! You will be wonderstruck that, notwithstanding their technological advance, they have not been able to find what type of future would suit their own country. This question has been given so much importance that three successive presidents appointed special bodies to determine the type of future the U.S. should have. Eisenhower, Johnson and Nixon. Nixon in his last term appointed governmental bodies to decide what type of future the Americans should have, and they could not arrive at any decision. Because of that, looking at the activities of the futurologists, one student leader of the U.S., frustrated at the indecision of the futurologists, made some observations which are significant. Tod Gitten, a young American radical who was formerly president of Students for Democratic Society, notes that while an orientation towards the future has been the hall mark of every revolutionary and for that matter every liberal movement for the last century and a half, the new left suffers from want of even a coherent vision of the Future. He said

succinctly. 'We find ourselves incapable of formulating the future.' This is a remark of the leader of the younger generation in the most advanced and affluent country in the world, namely the U.S. So people are feeling frustrated notwithstanding their affluence.

The Computer age

In the meanwhile science and technology are advancing. Now it should be a matter of appreciation for us, because we are lagging far behind. No doubt about it. But I must tell you that there is no reason for despair, because in the modern world every bit of knowledge is internationalized sooner than later. There is no invention which can be exclusively of a particular country howsoever secretly you may maintain it, because there are effective means of communication. So there is no need to despair on this point. Their advance in scientific and technological field deserves our appreciation. But unfortunately the thinkers of the U.S. are not all appreciation for their advance. They are considering the other side of the picture also. For example, in 1950 a new device, computer, was introduced. We are simply flabbergasted at their progress in that direction. Now people who have reached the distant moon, have not reached their own peace of mind. They may even reach Mars, the space expert, Dr. Verner Bron has assured us: "Man will establish permanent research stations on moon and mars, may be even industrial activity on those planets, before the year 2000 is over. The first child will be born on the moon coming back to earth to get his college education."

Computerisation has further developed now. They now have with them an instrument called 'OLIVER', named after its inventor. It is actually in acronym for 'on lying Interactive Vicarious Expeditor and Responder.' So as to suit the spelling of his name they have called it OLIVER'. This OLIVER is exploited in judging the temperament, the responses, the reactions, the thought-processes of its master, so that if you have OLIVER and if you have attend a particular committee meeting it is sufficient if you send you OLIVER there! You need not attend or go personally.

Suppose the committee comprises 7 members and all the seven were to send their OLIVERS there. Let the secretary of the committee pose any question. The OLIVER of every master would instinctively (if it has any instinct!) judge your responses and expresses them so that in a committee none of the members need be present and your opinions will be properly recorded!

Advancement in biology

In the sphere of biology, we may consider what the U.S. biologists have said about the advance of biology in the next 80 years. Now I am giving you the programme specified by them:

- 1070s: choosing the sex of children before they are born;
- 1980s: creation of life in test-tube;
- 1990s: genetic micro-surgery by radiation and laser beams;
- 2000s: fetuses grown in artificial womb;
- 2010s: making carbon copies of animals from single cells;
- 2020s: making carbon copies of human beings;
- 2030s: complete control of human genetics-heredity, breeding of new plants, animals, man-like beings;
- 2040s: suspended animation of life;
- 2050s: complete control of the aging process and manmade immortality.

Of course it is certainly very ambitious, but they are advancing in this direction. Now, while this is something which we should congratulate them, a different question is disturbing the minds of thinkers in America. If through technology and science man comes to acquire these powers, how would these powers be used? Who uses them? Will they be used in the right direction? In that case we would have another heaven here. But if they are used in the wrong direction, probably mankind itself will go out of survival; there will be extinction of mankind. Are we raising 'Bhasmasuras'? Are we raising 'Franksteins'? Suppose with this much control over biology you produce all Mahatma Gandhis. Very good for mankind. But suppose the scientist prefers to have carbon copies of Hitler all over America. What will be the fate of

mankind?

Pace of change

Science and technology may have developed to such an extent, but who is to be in control? that is the point. Dr. W. H. Thorn of Cambridge University, a leading expert on animal behaviour says: "The ethical problems raised by the population explosion and artificial insemination by genetics or neuro-physiology and the social and mental sciences are at least as great as those arising from atomic energy and the H-bomb." Another scientist notes that not only the type of advance and the quality of advance but even the pace of advance and the rate of advance are also relevant; and unless mankind is ready to adjust itself to a particular rate of advance, probably that rate of advance may overcome mankind. How to face this new challenge? One eminent thinker says, "Change is life itself; but change rampant, change unguided, change unrestrained, accelerated change, overwhelming not man's physical defences but his decisional processes-such a change is the enemy of life"

There is nothing inherent in the evolutionary process to guarantee man's own survival. The reaction to such great and rapid advance by another U.S. scientist by name Ralph Lap is also worth recalling: "No one, not even the most brilliant scientist alive today, really knows where science is taking us. We are aboard a train which is gathering speed and racing down to unknown number of switches, leading to unknown destination. No single scientist is in the engine cab. There may be demons at the switch. Most of society is in the cupboards looking backwards."

Social control of technology

Another human behaviourist, one Mr. B. F. Skinner says in his book *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*; "We need a new technology now, technology of human behaviour. Presently we have none." And then Dr. Lero G. Augustein, chairman of the department of biophysics at Michigan State University, says: "Science marches on, fast and furious. But all too often our ability

to handle our new-found powers does not keep pace. Increasingly the advance being made in many areas of science and technology pose ethical and moral dilemmas which cannot be solved by facts alone." This is from a book called *Let us Play God*. Another thinker Lynn White has said. "More science and more technology are not going to get us out of the ecological crisis until we find a new religion or rethink our own one. Since the roots of our trouble are so largely religious, the remedy must also be essentially religious, whether we call it religion or not. We must rethink, refeel our nature and destiny."

Alvin Toffler in his book *Future Shock* pleads for social control of technology. He says: "Social indicators must also be given when we are planning." He says that there should be social control of technology, that there should be created a technological ombudsman-an institution to, investigate into the behaviour, conduct and misconduct of public officials. He says that even for technology there should be such an institution of ombudsman. He further says that our politicians, administrators, technologists and scientists are having a short-term horizon. Whatever is useful immediately will be adopted by them; they will not pause to consider the long- range effects, over long distances of time and space. But humanity will have to suffer.

Social structure

And then toffler says that our scientists and technologists should also be made to become human beings, not merely scientists and technologists.

He believes that the present planning by scientists and technologists is defective for three reasons: first because 'it is econocentric- the whole basis being economics; secondly, it is short-ranged; and thirdly, it is undemocratic in the sense that people are not consulted as to what type of future they want for themselves. Then he pleads for earlier anticipation of direct indirect effects of technology over distances of time and space. As I have said, every invention will have its impact on social structure. If you completely

control genetics you are controlling every living being in society and then what will be the value system in society? Now if there are test-tube babies, if the husband and wife have nothing to do so far as a production of the progeny is concerned, what will happen to the family organism? What will be the mutual relationship? All these problems will crop up. I will not go into the details I am myself a bachelor; you will understand better.

The know-how and the know-what

Another eminent scientist Mr. Venner has differentiated between the technological *know-how* and the technical *know-what*. He says, the progress achieved by our scientists and technologists is quite appreciable, but at the same time whether it will lead us to the desirable destination is doubtful. According to Mr. Venner, the technological *know-how* tells us how to achieve the given purposes, but which purpose are to be achieved is to be decided by the technological *know-what*. He says that we cannot entrust the decision-making to technology and science.

He has given an example of the story-‘Monkey’s Paw’. The Monkey’s Paw has the capacity to fulfil any desire of its owner. So one family comes to acquire it. In that family the father is a retired man, and the son goes to the factory. At the breakfast table the son tells father, ‘Kindly do not catch hold of this Monkey’s Paw. It is true that your desire will be fulfilled but they say it has some bad omen with it also. Kindly do not touch it,’ When he leaves for his factory, the father is tempted to use the powers of the Monkey’s paw. So he catches hold of it and at the time the one thing uppermost in his mind is that for a particular family ceremony he is in need of £ 200. Now in the afternoon a clerk from his son’s factory comes and gives him a cheque for £ 200 from the employer of his son. The father is very happy, and asks why that payment was being made. The clerk says with regret that it was the first instalment of the money towards workmen’s compensation as his son died while working on a machine. So now, even the futurologists of America and scientists and thinkers in U.S. are

thinking on those lines. Blind advancement of science and technology may land us in difficulty, may even wash us out of existence.

Technological ombudsman

So now there is one suggestion that there must be a sort of technological ombudsman. As I told you, whatever development there is going to engulf the whole of mankind. We cannot escape those repercussions and therefore we have also to consider how to face the problem. the problem is not how to advance in science and technology, but how that advance is to be guided and regulated. Unless this question is solved satisfactorily, the whole of mankind will have to suffer. Is it possible for the materialist west go give a satisfactory solution to this problem? It is not. that is why their futurology conclaves have failed to provide solutions. Who will function as the technological ombudsman? One materialist regulating the action of another materialist will not help the situation. Therefore it is necessary that there must be found somebody capable of paying this role. And that body can be none but a people who are accustomed to the ways of *Dharma*, who are not pure and simple materialists, who know that materialism land non-materialism should be put together, who are aware of the functions who are aware of the fourfold objective of human life, who know how *Dharma* functions and who know that all power must be utilised only in keeping with the tenets of *Dharma*. Only such people as are *Dharma*-minded can constitute the ombudsman for technology.

Thus it is paradoxical situation. They are advanced and we are lagging behind. They are leaders, we are camp followers. The leaders in science and technology have developed certain powers which it is not within their competence to restrain and which it is possible for us here in this land of *Dharma* to guide, to restrain, regulate and channelise, because that function can be entrusted only to *Dharma* and we are the people who are accustomed traditionally to follow the tenets of *Dharma*.

The New Era

I am reminded of one thing. This new era they say, started with the explosion of Atom. The first successful scientist was Robert Openheimer. It may be a mere co-incidence. In his diary which has been published, Robert Openheimer says that he had experimented a number of items without success. Then, on that particular day-may be in August 1945 or so-I do not remember the date exactly-when there was a successful explosion, in a desert, he was watching the results from a long distance. When he looked at the sea, he says, "Automatically, and unconsciously, these lines were on my lips: 'I am the death; the shatterer of the world'". You might be knowing that this is just a translation of '*Kalosmi lokashyakrit pravridhah...*'

I do not draw any implication out of it. But when the New Era commenced, on the very first day, the founder, the initiator of the New Era said unconsciously and without using the words of any other scientist, 'I am the death, the shatterer of world.'

Future leadership

This may be another coincidence. Arnold Toynbee, an historian about whom all of you have heard, said that the latter held of the twentieth century is a period for science and technology; whichever country advances in science and technology will be the world leader. But then he says that the twenty-first century would be a period of religion, and whichever country gives the religion becomes the leader of the world. What he meant by religion, why he said it, I do not know. But that is what he said. And curiously enough, technology precedes religion, and it is not the other way round.

Our geopoliticians had told us in 1905 that the world was expanding, that the different parts of the world had not been fully explored; and since the routes were only sea routes, they had told us that the leadership of the world comes to a nation which has naval power. Thus Great Britain was specified.

After all the parts of the world were explored, the politician said, "Well, there is nothing to be explored now, so now the leadership of the world will be concentrated in the land-mass".

Africa and Asia put together is the home-island; in their technical language. The heartland of this home-island, they said, is the center of the land-mass of the globe. Whoever controls that heartland will control the world leader. That heartland of this home-island of Asia and Africa was specified by geopoliticians as the territory extending from the Himalayan to the Arctic.

But now with the growth of air power, both these considerations have become obsolete. Now, with the spaceship, and with a man landing on Mars and moon, all these considerations have become obsolete. The world is shrinking every day in size, and now the biggest problem of the immediate future is going to be, not what parts have to be explored by sea-routes of which part of the land is impenetrable, that is not going to be a problem. The main problem would be, now that we have raised this demon of science & technology, how to channelise its energies for the benefit of mankind so that it will not become another Frankenstein. That is the main problem before mankind. And for the solution of this problem we feel, very modestly, that they have to look to this nation, because this nation alone has the tradition of an integrated view of life.

Unity amidst diversity

This nation alone has ceaselessly proclaimed 'All is one'. That is our speciality. We may not be conscious of this reality, but it is in our blood. Seers have consciously realised it, others have no consciousness of it. But all our actions and our behaviour is based upon this realisation that 'All is one'. When they talk of equality, as a matter of fact it is unscientific. When they talk of equality, as a matter of fact it is unscientific, we know, because all men are not equal. I cannot say that I am equal to Gama physically or to Einstein intellectually or to Rabindranath Tagore emotionally or to Aurobindo and Ramana Maharshi spiritually; I am not equal to them though I may have one vote and Ramana Maharshi may also have a single vote. Democratically we count heads and not anything beneath it. So, all are not equal but still we appreciate the Western urge for equality because we believe that it is a half-way house. Their thinkers are unconsciously advancing in the direction of 'All is one', and this is the half-way house. They have not fully

realised that all is one, nor even that all are equal. Our seers have not said that 'All are one.' No. 'All is one; *'Sarvam khalvidam Brahma'* – it is all one existence, and whatever universe or world we see, these are only the projections of the one Supreme Being. Even as different ornaments are projections of one and the same gold; or bread and cake and *roti* are all projections of same wheat-flour, in the same way whatever is seen in whatever form is the projection of one and the same reality. Because of this basic realisation, we have been able to develop the attitude of unity in the midst of diversity. We do not stand for tolerance; we stand for respect, whenever there is difference of opinion. All these basic attitudes are there in our blood. Now this is our cultural heritage. If we become ourselves, that is only the precondition; our cultural heritage will enable us not only to guide our own destiny but to guide and destinies of the advanced West also, because they also want somebody to lead them and guide them; otherwise they will destroy themselves.

Our subject was "Our National Renaissance, its Directions and Destination." The direction given by *Dharma*, and the destination we have discussed now. For some people this may appear to be rather far-fetched, but it is not so. It is true that today we are lagging behind, we are supposed to be a backward nation. But at the same time the whole history is advancing at such a rapid pace that we cannot say whether within a very short period it will not be possible for us to assume the role of the guide to the world, the role of intellectual and moral leader of the world. I am reminded to Tennyson's one-stanza poem. The title is 'the Play'. In that poem it is said:

Act first, this earth a stage,
so gloomed with woe that
you all but sicken at the shifting scenes;
and yet be patient
our Playwright shows in some fifth act
what this wild drama means

I believe that the fifth act is drawing near.