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Founder Editor:

M.N. Roy

Advisor:

Dr. Nariseti Innaiah

Editor:

Mahi Pal Singh-Editor

Editorial Board:

Vinod Jain, Bhaskar Sur,
Dr. Dipavali Sen, Pratap Saharan,
Mahi Pal Singh-Editor (Ex-Officio)

Printer and Publisher:

Sheoraj Singh,

Send articles and reports to:

Mahi Pal Singh at Raghav Vihar, Phase- 3,
Prem Nagar, Dehradun- 248007. (Uttarakhand)
(M) 9312206414, 8433255386, (Landline):
013-53549624

or E-mail them to:

theradicalhumanist@gmail.com or
mahipalsinghrh@gmail.com

YouTube:

INDIAN RENAISSANCE INSTITUTE; I.R.I.

Website: www.indianrenaissanceinstitute.com

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Sheoraj Singh,

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Email ID: srsingh3821@gmail.com

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CONTENTS:

Page No.

Articles and Features :

Articles and Features.:

To BE, or Not To Be? 3
Mahi Pal Singh

**What those who celebrate Bihar
verdict, and those who lament it,
get wrong** 6
Yogendra Yadav

**Civil society activists reject SIR,
call for mass agitation against electoral
manipulation** 8
The Hindu Bureau

Exclusion, streamlined 9
Yogendra Yadav

**Possibility of Synthesizing the
Thoughts of Gandhi - Roy-
Ambedkar and Upadhyay** 11
Dr. Vidyut Joshi

**From Brahminism to Hindutva:
A Century of Ideology and Its Toxic
Expansion** 16
Pratap Saharan

**Dalit vs. Bahun and the Need for
Multi-Class Unity** 18
S.R. Darapuri

**When Counter-Revolution Devours
Historical Icons** 19
Prem Singh

The Integration of Knowledge 26
O.L. Reiser

**Two Fundamental Criteria:
Man and Reason** 30
He Wan

Letter to the editor 35
He Wan

**Marxism Applied to India
from Abroad** 36
G.P. Bhattacharjee

**Reports of the General Membership
Meeting of the Indian Renaissance
Institute** 42
Mahi Pal Singh

To BE, or Not To Be?

Mahi Pal Singh

At the convention of the Radical Humanists held on 13th February 2016 at New Delhi the question of whether the Radical Humanists should take part in party politics was discussed at length. Earlier in 1940 M.N. Roy and his followers had formed the Radical Democratic Party and even contested elections. But utter failure in the electoral battle led Roy to disband the party in 1948 and he decided that the Radical Humanists should rather undertake the task of educating the masses so that they could not be led into voting for a particular party candidate without even knowing him, merely under the influence of the pomp and show and the beating of drums and chanting of slogans by a party, because such a candidate would not fulfill their aspirations as he would actually be responsible to his party which gave him the party ticket and not to them. Our experience of elections in the post independence India shows that Roy was not wrong. Party politics has pushed the electors further and further away from being able to decide the policies of governments. It is not the electors, nor even their elected representatives but the few top leaders of political parties in power who decide the future of the masses. It is they who decide how public money will be spent and how much of it will really be spent for their welfare. Since political parties take huge money from big industrialists for elections, they practically control the governments and their policies and reap huge harvests in the form of big loans from public banks and tax waivers. Crony capital practically controls governance in the country and the influence of the people is not seen anywhere.

The events following a students' meeting at Jawaharlal Nehru University is a pointer that we are living in troubled times and the worst

may follow. Some slogans were raised in the meeting by some people with covered faces. Who they were has not been found out. But some student leaders were arrested and remained under judicial custody for about 15 days allegedly for shouting anti-national slogans, though none of the videos shows any of them raising such slogans, but they were booked on 'sedition' charges. JNU Students Union leader Kanhaiya Kumar was attacked, beaten up and later even threatened with life by goons in black coats in court premises. What is ironic in the whole matter is that innocent students were booked on 'sedition' charges while the fact remains that even those who shouted anti India slogans could in no way have caused any harm to the country merely by shouting those slogans. No one had indulged in violence of any kind. No one had lifted arms against the country. Those who shouted those slogans must have their frustrations, complaints and dissatisfactions which made them shout those slogans. On the other hand, what cause and right had those goons against them, who beat up Kanhaiya Kumar, JNU teachers and journalists?

Even today the JNU and Hyderabad University teachers and students are being hounded by the police. For the first time in history the police entered a class room in the JNU and stopped the screening of a film which formed part of the teaching. Does the government want that the students should be taught only what it wants them to be taught? If questions of governance and politics that affect the lives of the countrymen cannot be discussed even at the university level, where else will they be discussed? Is it not throttling of all dissent against the government, its policies and high-handedness? It is not surprising, therefore, that

over 300 academicians, activists, artists and writers have in a statement condemned the state violence and unlawful detention of faculty and student protesters of the University of Hyderabad where even access to basic necessities such as water and food has been restricted on the campus.

Besides clamping down on students and teachers of various universities, the BJP leadership has taken upon itself the responsibility of deciding who is a nationalist and who is anti-national though it and its parent body, the RSS, has no history of participating in the independence struggle to stake a claim of being nationalists. First the fringe groups of the RSS killed noted writers, artists, thinkers and rationalists who raised their voice of dissent. Then came attacks on Muslims raising the bogey of beef eaters and non-beef eaters. The JNU, the highest seat of learning and research, has always irked in the eyes of the BJP as it has a long history of free thinking - free from narrow mindedness and communalism, the main tools of the divisive politics of the BJP. Now they have raised another controversy. According to BJP leaders, those who do not raise the slogan 'Bharat Mata ki jai' are anti-nationals. Those who have been repeating the slogan 'Jai Hind' after the Prime Ministers every independence day have to say 'Bharat Mata ki jai' to be recognized as nationalists as if chanting the former shows lesser respect to the nation. It is quite possible that in their eyes the farmers who work in their fields day and night and the labourers who sweat it out in factories and at house building sites and may not have chanted the slogan 'Bharat Mata ki jai' are all anti-nationalists. However, black marketers, exploiters of the labour class, those who take huge loans from nationalized banks and never return it, those legislators and ministers who have multiple cases of rapes, murders, abductions, money laundering, corruption and causing communal riots through their hate-

speeches are great nationalists merely because they shout 'Bharat Mata ki jai', even though they are bent upon dividing the country even to the extent of breaking it. Those who are real anti-nationalists have taken upon themselves the task of issuing certificates of nationalism and anti-nationalism to others.

The fascist forces have raised their heads as never before and are testing the patience of those crores of people of this country who love their country as much as they love to live in peace with their fellow citizens but refuse to follow the diktats of these fascists. After all who are they to tell us what slogans we should raise or not raise? We all are free citizens of a free and democratic country and we will decide what to do or what not to do within the limits of our rights and duties as enumerated in the Constitution of India. But the threat to our rights and freedom from these forces is so grave that we cannot ignore it and just sit and watch.

Today students across the country are agitated over Rohith Vamula's death in the Hyderabad University and the way the government has acted against the students of JNU on the basis of a doctored CD. The journalists and university teachers are agitated over their beating up in New Delhi's Patiala House court premises. Lawyers are agitated over the way some lawyers belonging to the Hindutva brigade maligned the name of law respecting lawyers. Farmers facing water scarcity are agitated over the apathy of the government towards their plight leading to farmers committing suicides. Tribal people are agitated because they are being thrown out of their habitat denying them their basic right of livelihood and life itself. Unemployed youth is agitated because in spite of tall claims of providing them employment nothing substantial has been done by the government during the last two years. Corruption stands where it stood when the NDA government took over. Students, teachers and social activists are being booked

under the stringent and outdated ‘sedition’ law. There is chaos and suffering all around and there is no respite in sight.

Under these circumstances we all have to get together, both individuals and civil society groups, as happened during the anti-corruption movement demanding the Jan Lokpal Bill and also against the Nirbhaya gang-rape case both of which saw tremendous upsurge of people’s power which vibrated across the country, and raise a strong movement to oppose these tendencies. A beginning can be made by getting together on specific issues like corruption, unemployment, price rise, repeal of sedition law and AFSPA and communal fascism facing our country and its people and the movement can be broadened as more and more people join it. At this crucial moment, a beginning in this direction was made by Swaraj Abhiyan at New Delhi’s Constitution Club on 27th and 28th February 2016 when a National Convention on Corruption was organized and an Anti-Corruption Team (ACT Now) was formed and joined by well-known activists working in the

field of RTI, PIL, anti-corruption, human rights, judicial and electoral reforms, and activists belonging to various other fields like Aruna Roy, Nikhil Dey, Justice Santosh Hegde, Justice A.P. Shah, Admiral Ramdas, Wajahat Habibullah, EAS Sarma, Jagdeep Chhokar, Venkatesh Nayak, Kamini Jaiswal, Subhash Agarwal, Yogendra Yadav, Prashant Bhushan, Dr. Anand Kumar among about 1000 other participants from all over the country. Some Radical Humanists from Delhi also took part in the Convention. After long and serious deliberations an action plan to fight corruption was charted. We have to pick up the thread from there and go ahead. It is time to end the dilemma of ‘To Be, or Not to Be’ part of the greater social and political movement, and ‘To Do, or Not to Do’. The risks are certainly grave as the corrupt are very powerful politically and financially, and we have seen activists being killed or implicated in various cases, but the task is bigger and greater than our lives and brooks no further delay.

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What those who celebrate Bihar verdict, and those who lament it, get wrong

Here is how the media would like you to read the Bihar outcome — as a sign of the shape of things to come. This astounding victory is not just a state verdict but a resumption of the BJP’s nation-wide juggernaut. And here is the flipside of the same narrative — elections are pointless. Bihar proves that you cannot take on this authoritarian regime by participating in and legitimising fraudulent elections.

Both these readings have a grain of truth. And a sackful of myth. Both of these are based on a telescopic view of the political reality of this election, a limited and limiting understanding of the horizon of political possibilities and a dim view of the people.

The idea that the Bihar verdict is somehow a turning point in the post-2024 political trajectory is based on three assumptions — that it is unexpected, that it breaks the trend line and that it is representative. All these are questionable.

First of all, the political trajectory of Bihar does not represent the rest of the “Hindi heartland”, let alone the rest of India. The only state in the northern region where the BJP is forced to align with an equal partner, the trends and patterns in Bihar do not find an echo even in the neighbouring Jharkhand, far from flowing into Bengal. Second, the outcome in Bihar was not a reversal of the result in the Lok Sabha polls last year. The NDA had continued its dominance in the state, with a comfortable lead in 174 assembly segments and a vote share lead of 8 percentage points over the Mahagathbandhan (MGB). The final figures for the assembly polls indicate a small push in the same direction. The tally of 202 seats appears unbelievable but is the result of a small addition of 1.2 percentage points in the NDA’s lead over the MGB. Bihar cannot be put in the same category as Haryana and Maharashtra, states

that witnessed major upsets after the Lok Sabha elections.

Finally, there was little that was unexpected about the verdict for those who understood the basics of state politics. Ever since 2005, a coalition of



Yogendra Yadav

two of the three main parties — RJD, JDU and the BJP — has scored a comfortable victory in every election except the strange contest in 2020. The simple fact is that the NDA was a much bigger political coalition — nearly 5 points larger, going by the last assembly elections — than the MGB. The NDA’s social coalition is much bigger than that of the MGB. At 32 per cent, the MGB’s core (Muslim+Yadav) may be larger than NDA’s core caste-community alliance (Forward+Kurmi + Kushwaha+ Bania/Teli+Paswan) of 28 per cent. But MGB’s 10 per cent auxiliary support (Mallah+ Ravidasi +Tanti/Paan) is way smaller and less committed than the 20 per cent Hindu EBCs that lean heavily towards the NDA.

So, it was advantage NDA right from the beginning. The onus was on the MGB to alter this equation either by shifting social blocs or by an effective campaign that cut across caste lines. It made some attempts — attention to EBCs and the promise of government jobs — but too little, too late. Instead, the last-minute bribe of Rs 10,000 (besides the upping of many pension schemes and reduction in electricity bills) cemented the support that the NDA has assiduously built over elections among women voters. These basics, combined with the low level of expectation from a government and the absence of a pronounced anti-incumbency

against Nitish Kumar, are enough to explain the nature of Bihar's verdict. We don't need to assume that everything the RJD and the Congress did failed, or imagine a masterstroke in every move by the BJP. The sense of awe and shock relayed by the media after this verdict may have been manufactured.

Similarly, the sense of shock experienced by many critics of the present regime may also be over the top. Somehow, watching from a distance or through the echo chambers of social media, there was a widespread but mistaken impression that the MGB was in the lead. The rude shock of the final outcome ignited a suspicion, flamed by the ECI's low credibility, that the election outcome was manufactured to suit the ruling coalition. Hence, the call for boycott of future elections in some circles.

It is important to distinguish between an unfair and a fraudulent election. There is little doubt that Indian elections are no longer fair, that there is nothing like a level-playing ground in the electoral contest. Bihar elections provided ample proof of the systemic bias, beginning with the deletion of 68 lakh and the addition of 24 lakh electors during the shoddy SIR exercise. The EC's acquiescence in multiple violations of the Model Code of Conduct, including communal propaganda, tendentious allegations of illegal migrants, allowing the bribe of Rs 10,000 to be

paid during the campaign period, and special trains to be run to ferry BJP voters from other states, leaves no doubt on this score. Add to it the regime's control over mass media and its access to unlimited money during elections, and you know why free and fair elections look like a chimaera. The Opposition's chances of winning an election are not zero yet, but it has to walk uphill.

That is different from the charge of electoral fraud, that is, manipulation in the voting and counting process, such that the electoral outcome does not reflect the voting choice of the electorate. While many doubts have been expressed on this score in Bihar (belated declaration of turnout figures, discrepancy between postal and EVM votes, high voter deletion, sharp reduction in the votes for "others"), we do not yet have any hard evidence that meets the high standards of proof that such a grave charge requires. And given what has been suggested above, Bihar may not be the right place to look for evidence of electoral fraud.

The Opposition's meltdown is no doubt a setback for all those who struggle to reclaim our democracy. But this is not the end of the road. The next round of elections, especially in West Bengal, would be a better test of electoral integrity. And Uttar Pradesh would be the real signal of the shape of things to come. 🌈

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- Mahi Pal Singh,
Editor, The Radical Humanist

Civil society activists reject SIR, call for mass agitation against electoral manipulation

The Hindu Bureau

Civil society activists, lawyers, former civil servants, academicians, and technologists, at a national conclave on Democratic Governance and Citizens Rights here on Saturday (25th October 2025), demanded immediate scrapping of Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and called for a mass agitation against alleged electoral manipulation orchestrated by the Election Commission of India (EC) at the behest of the ruling BJP-led NDA at the Centre.

The Chennai Convention passed resolutions demanding immediate dissolution of the present EC and constitution of a new Commission through an unbiased process, 100% counting of the VVPAT (Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail) slips, and no addition or deletion to be done without informing the voter or their family.

While machine-readable voters' list should be made available online, as a measure of transparency, voters' data in every EVM (Electronic Voting Machine) should be behind an immutable electronic lock and the lock values should be shared online.

The Conclave resolved to carry the Chennai resolution to all parts of the country to build nationwide consciousness towards ground action in all States.

“Democracy is where the voters elect a government. We have reached a stage where the government selects voters,” said Parakala Prabhakar, social scientist and author. Pointing out the “inexplicable” discrepancy between provisional and final voter turnout figures in several elections in the past few years as raised by researchers, civil society members, and opposition parties, he rued the absence of a movement on ground against it. “We cannot any longer outsource the task of defending democracy to political parties, which themselves are innately

undemocratic,” Dr. Prabhakar added.

Speaking on the judiciary's role in the Bihar SIR imbroglio, Usha Ramanathan, legal expert and rights activist, said that the burden has shifted to the individual to establish that they are citizens of this country and has been so for a long time, and the courts have no ability to recognise this. “We know that the whole Assam process was actually pushed by the court,” she added.

Outlining measures to improve electoral transparency, M.G. Devasahayam, former civil servant, said that the counting of votes should start immediately after polling was over, the EC should reveal actual turnout of voters within three hours of close of polling, and social audit of electoral rolls should be done at the village pancha

Outlining measures to improve electoral transparency, M.G. Devasahayam, former civil servant, said that the counting of votes should start immediately after polling was over, the EC should reveal actual turnout of voters within three hours of close of polling, and social audit of electoral rolls should be done at the village panchayat or local body-level to get the voters involved in the process.

R. Balakrishnan, former Deputy Election Commissioner; V. Ponraj, former technology advisor to A.P.J. Abdul Kalam; Madhav A. Deshpande, former technology consultant to the US government; Anjali Bhardwaj, activist; Nithin Sethi, journalist and trustee, The Reporters Collective; Tara Rao, founder-member, All India Mission (AIM 24); R. Sachithanatham, CPI(M) MP, and S.S. Balaji, VCK MLA, spoke.

Courtesy **The Hindu**, October 26, 2025, Chennai 

Exclusion, streamlined

The madness now has a method. The second, nationwide, edition of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls is no longer a knee-jerk solution in search of a problem, an afterthought in search of a rationale, a man-made disaster constantly in need of a coverup. The SIR has seen improvements. A crude instrument of indiscriminate mass disenfranchisement has now been refined into a precision weapon for targeted exclusion.

The latest announcement shows the ECI's inability, or rather unwillingness, to learn from the experiment carried out in Bihar. As reported in this column (IE, October 7), instead of a quantum jump in the quality of electoral rolls, the SIR has resulted in a worsening in all key respects: A sharp decline in the adult-electoral ratio, disproportionate deletions of women and Muslims, and continued presence of glaring inaccuracies (duplicate names, junk entries, bulk voters under one address, etc.) in the voters' list. Add to it the monetary cost to the state, political upheaval before the elections and the untold physical and psychological cost to poor citizens, and you can see why Bihar was a textbook model of how not to carry out a revision of electoral rolls.

The lessons were there for everyone to see. One, our electoral rolls are seriously defective. Two, the routine exercise of summary revision leaves in too many dead and absent persons and leaves out too many eligible new voters. Three, physical verification through house-to-house visits was, therefore, long overdue. Four, getting each person to fill in the enumeration form within one month, or else lose their voting rights, was unnecessary and exclusionary. Five, the whole charade of connecting voters to the supposedly pristine voters' list of 2003 had nothing to do with improving the quality of the voters' list. Six, the new list of eligibility

documents was exclusionary and impossible to implement. And seven, there is no evidence whatsoever of foreigners on the pre-existing voters' list.



Yogendra Yadav

So, if Bihar was a pilot case for the SIR, it should have led to a serious rethink about the wisdom of such an exercise. Instead of the SIR, the ECI could have carried out an old-style intensive revision — house-to-house physical verification — backed by sophisticated IT solutions to weed out any inaccuracies. It could have junked the cumbersome requirement of enumeration forms, expanded the restrictive list of eligibility documents and done without the hair-brained mapping of each elector to someone on the 2003 list. The ECI has chosen not to take this eminently sane and simple route. The CEC's strange denial of a need for de-duplication software — weird coming from an IIT Kanpur alumnus — confirms the suspicion that “purification” of electoral rolls is not what the ECI is interested in.

The improvements in the new version of the SIR are all about more efficient administration of an inherently malevolent scheme. The ECI is surely better prepared this time than it was in Bihar. Timely training of election officials and advanced mapping of names to older voters' lists would ensure less chaos. Allowing party booth-level agents (BLAs) to submit forms would reduce the burden on the official booth-level officers (BLOs). The ECI has now formalised the post-hoc and surreptitious concessions that it made in Bihar. Electors will not need to submit any

documents along with their enumeration forms. The exemption from showing documents has now officially been extended not just to children but also any “relative” (undefined so far) of anyone who features on the older electoral rolls of 2002-04. Allowing any adult family member to sign and submit enumeration forms on behalf of someone temporarily away would be a relief for many seasonal migrants. Asking every BLO to carry forms for new voters should ensure that there are substantial additions and not just deletions in the house-to-house phase of the SIR. All this would make the process less painful for voters and less of a nightmare for election officials.

Yet, these concessions and improvements do not change the basic exclusionary design of the SIR. The ECI has decided to persist with a lie that the present exercise is a repetition of the intensive revision that has been carried out eight times in the past. Now that the older guidelines are in the public domain, despite the ECI’s attempt to withhold the document, we know that the present SIR is unlike any other intensive revision in the past.

Above all, the new SIR continues to shift the burden of being on the voters’ list onto the voters themselves, a fundamental shift in the architecture of universal adult franchise in our country. This comes with a draconian provision, not amended in the new edition, that anyone who fails to submit the form within a month will be summarily excluded from the voters’ list, with no notice, hearing or appeal. Global experiments show that any shift from state-initiated registration of voters to self-

initiated registration leads to a significant drop in the electoral rolls. This structural impediment could lead to the exclusion of anything between 5 and 10 per cent of eligible electors from the rolls. This would include a disproportionate number of women, as was the case in Bihar. The ECI has not bothered to attend to this real danger.

Add to it the mechanism of targeted deletions that has been sharpened in the new version. The ECI has persisted with the fiction that the citizenship of those who featured on the electoral rolls in 2002-04 has been tested, though the guidelines of that time clearly show that it was not. Unlike Bihar, now everyone will have to go through the filter and prove that they or their relatives existed on the 2002-04 rolls. And if they don’t, they receive a notice to show documents, the same old restrictive list with a grudging and qualified mention of Aadhaar. Plus, all of them would be asked to prove why they cannot show any family member on the rolls in 2002-04. This sounds very much like Assam’s NRC. Since the ECI has not developed any transparent protocol of how the SDMs will verify the documents, there is a valid apprehension of arbitrary deletion, or targeted deletion of individuals of communities that are inconvenient to the ruling dispensation. In that sense, the second round of the SIR is more directly a citizenship verification exercise.

Clearly, Bihar was a test case, not to check whether the SIR was the right medicine for the disease afflicting our electoral rolls but to check how best to administer a pre-decided medicine of dubious efficacy. 🌈

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‘The Radical Humanist’ is now available at <http://www.lohiatoday.com/> on Periodicals page, thanks to Manohar Ravela who administers the site on Ram Manohar Lohia, the great socialist leader of India.

– Mahi Pal Singh

Possibility of Synthesizing the Thoughts of Gandhi - Roy-Ambedkar and Upadhyay

Dr. Vidyut Joshi

....Continued from the last issue

After the Enlightenment era, the political changes that came, led to the establishment of socialist state in early twentieth century. Such types of states lasted for some decades. Socialism could not last long because it was against the inherent nature of humans. Three thinkers discontinued memberships of Presidium and also left USSR after. They realized that a socialist state was not established. Gramsci believed that it is hegemony that works and not the exploitation of workers by owners. Stalin believed that a socialist revolution cannot work at national level. It can become successful only if it is international revolution. Roy had differences with Stalin on issues of morality in revolution. On the other side, capitalism or liberalism emerged. Capitalism also had many problems, but internal corrections made it last longer. These days, liberalism or capitalism has taken form of neo - liberalism or marketism. This marketism refers to a competitive society, where there is no fundamental cooperation between humans but competition, and it is believed that one has freedom to compete with others. Now, there is more cooperation and harmony in human relations and the extent of competition is much less. Therefore, a structure created solely on the basis of competition generates many problems.

Today, neo liberalism has generated many problems. Welfare and social justice measures by states have been cut drastically. Issues such as environmental crisis, inequality, human rights violations, terrorism, centralization of decision making and many other problems have emerged. It seems that thinkers around the world are now looking towards humanism. Joseph Stiglitz, who coined the term neo - liberalism

and received the Nobel Prize for it, apologized in 2003 to the world for giving wrong advice to the American government. Now he says that the world cannot run solely by the market. There is a need for the state and civil society institutions here. There is a need for moral control over the market. Interested people should listen his lecture on ethics and globalization available on you tube. Now, many economists have favoured moral controls over the market. Many thinkers are Thus, India is now in a position to provide the world with a new perspective. Amartya Sen came out with 'The Idea of Social Justice' as well as capability model and happiness index. Piketty carried out almost 25 country studies on inequality. Edie Soffrant wrote about ethics and development. Kaushik Basu and Kanbur edited two volumes on "Arguments for a Better World". The first volume is on 'Ethics, Welfare and Measurement.' Thinkers and social scientists world over are looking for a viable alternative of neo liberalism.

Humanism in India:

Today, what we call humanism has become known through the thoughts of Western thinkers like Immanuel Kant, Auguste Comte, Tolstoy, Ruskin, Emerson Thoreau, Schumaker, and others. However, what I want to emphasise here is that the tradition of humanism, without naming it as humanism, has existed in India since the Vedic period. Yes, it wasn't given the name "humanism", but the idea that the world is one family is humanism itself. Additionally, the shanti mantras alias peace rhymes (द्योहो शान्तिः, अंतरीकाः गुण शान्तिः, पृथ्वीः शान्तिः, वनस्पतयः शान्तिः...सर्वे देवा शान्तिः।) in the Vedas, which mention about maintaining peace with biotic and abiotic elements of the cosmos like water, fire, trees,

and other natural elements, symbolize the idea of living in harmony with nature. Similarly, the idea of Advait (non-duality) in Vedanta, where it is believed that all elements (including humans) are one, and therefore humanity itself is one, is another aspect of humanism. Narsimh Mehta repeated this idea by saying, “After creating different shapes from the same metal, the names may vary, but in the end, it’s the same metal.” The Jain religion’s vision of a non-violent world where society lives without violence is essentially about dialogue and harmony. The Middle Path proposed by Buddha was also about creating a society of equality. These thoughts need to be reviewed in detail and given a new interpretation.

However, this is a separate subject. Our purpose here is to discuss how much of this humanist thinking has manifested in modern India and whether these thoughts can be presented in today’s context. As mentioned earlier, four thinkers and political figures in modern India can be called humanist thinkers: (1) Gandhi, (2) Roy, (3) Ambedkar and (4) Upadhyay. I reiterate, this order is based on their time. The author believes that the thoughts of these four thinkers can be more relevant in the twenty-first century. The issue, however, is that the followers of these four respective thinkers, in their efforts to establish their Guru as correct, have often ended up proving others wrong. In doing so, the process of synthesizing Indian philosophy or the integration of the thinkers’ ideas gets lost. We will now look at glimpses of the thoughts of these three thinkers. While viewing these glimpses, we will also see how much of their ideas can be integrated.

Gandhi (1869-1948):

We all know that Gandhi’s life and thoughts were initially influenced by Indian thought, and after going to England for his studies, by humanism. Although he did not clarify his philosophical position to stay away from ideological battles and controversies and said

that truth and non-violence are as old as mountains. But his humanist thoughts become clear when we read books like Experiments with Truth (his autobiography), Gandhi in England, and Social Philosophy of Gandhi. His thoughts were close to the ethical humanism branch of humanism.

1. Gandhi was influenced by Advait Vedanta, the Bhakti path, Jain non-violence, and the principle of anekantvad (non-absolutism), and Buddhist appropriate path (samyakmarg) principles. He accepted Manu’s Varna system as a division of labour, but he clearly rejected caste discrimination. He had faith in the idea of Ramarajya (a just state) with social justice.
2. For Gandhi, truth was the fundamental value. He initially said that God is truth. After some reconciliation he said that truth is God. He wanted to create a society based on truth and non-violence.
3. Gandhi believed in ethical and social reconstruction. He considered politics without principles, wealth without labour, pleasure without conscience, knowledge without character, commerce without ethics, science without humanity, and worship without sacrifice as seven social sins. These sins hindered the creation of a new humanist society.
4. He believed that every individual could determine their own future, and he called this self-rule (Swaraj). Therefore, human sovereignty is fundamental. In this view, humanity is at the centre of society, and no system should undermine human freedom.
5. Gandhi’s ideal society was a small, self-reliant community with primary groups. If humans were to maintain

their Swaraj (self-rule), they needed to establish decentralized economic systems, cooperative and trust-based industries, and such local communities that could fulfil their own needs. Large industries would lead to the destruction of social harmony, and a competitive society would destroy harmonious order.

6. Similarly, a large state with a centralized decision-making system could not give sovereignty to its citizens. Therefore, a Panchayati Raj (village self-governance system) where each village takes its own decisions is essential. In such a system, where citizens directly participate in decisions, harmony would be preserved.
7. Gandhi opposed the British education policy of liberal education that only provided knowledge but neither skill nor character. He thought of primary education that was connected to production, where knowledge could be imparted through the medium of production. This education would be holistic, covering knowledge (head), skill (hand), character (heart), and harmony (to live together.)
8. The liberal law and justice system divides people into winners and losers. This destroys the harmony mutuality. The justice system should be based on arbitration and reconciliation. It should be based on communitarian principles.

Roy (1887-1954):

Originally named Narendra Bhattacharya, the person known as Manabendranath Roy (M. N. Roy) was influenced by the thoughts of Swami Vivekananda, Swami Ramteerth, and Swami Dayanand. He was initially a revolutionary and socialist, which led him to become acquainted with Lenin. Lenin invited

him to the second International Socialist Conference to Russia and gave him important position. But after Lenin's death, he had difference with Stalin and had to leave Russia. He was not in favour of using immoral practices in revolution. He left Russia and criticized the communism, asserting that there should be morality in revolution and individual must have freedom. He moved away from Marxism towards a radical humanism and in the later years of his life, he turned towards New Humanism. Some of his followers, even today, use the term 'radical humanism', but following Roy's last thoughts, we will use the term 'New Humanism'. Thus, his philosophy can be called a New Humanistic philosophy. He came to India, joined the Congress, and even contested for the position of Congress President. He participated in the Swaraj movement but later on left Congress and established his own political party, which he disbanded in 1948.

1. According to 'gyanmimansa' (epistemology), Roy believed in materialism. However, his materialism was different from that of Marx. Roy says that matter is fundamental, and as civilization develops (progresses), from it emerges the intellectual world. As humans progress, they evolve, and idea (not matter) becomes important. Thus, like other humanists, Roy gives a new form to materialism in order to approach humanity.
2. Having said that any revolution must have morality, Roy criticized the Russian Revolution. Here, he becomes the ethical humanist almost equivalent of Gandhi. However, the culture of Bengal and Roy's radical past set him apart from Gandhi. Nevertheless, he abandoned the idea of violence and conflict and accepted the concept of harmony, which makes him a true humanist. He recognizes the

importance of cooperation in economics, which gives him a New Humanist perspective. He asserts that morality is rational, and the complexities of human relationships are not possible without this morality. Thus, in order to sustain society, morality is necessary.

3. Like other humanists, Roy places the individual at the foundation of the world. Every individual has freedom, and this freedom plays a fundamental role in their development. The core question is human freedom. Like communism, it does not deny the individuality of the person. At the foundation of Roy's New Humanism is human individual freedom, not class. He accepts human diversity and considers it necessary for diverse creations. For an individual, logic, morality, and freedom are the essence of Roy's New Humanism.
4. While communism talks about the destruction of private capital, Roy accepts private initiative and suggests creation of cooperative enterprises over private ventures. Cooperative economics is not unknown to India. There have been many successful experiments with cooperation here. Through cooperation, the socialization of capital can occur. Like other humanists, Roy was not an opponent of private capital. However, when the concentration of private capital becomes so large, it leads to the exploitation of one person by another, and he opposed such exploitation. Therefore, he believed that very large industries should not be privately owned.
5. Regarding the state system, Roy, like Emerson, did not believe in large

political structures. He talks about people's power and non-party democracy. Initially, he had founded the Radical Humanism Party, but after realizing that political parties only favour a few and not entire humanity, he dissolved his party and talked about creating direct democracy through various committees. He believed in people's power. Here, we are reminded of Jayaprakash Narayan.

6. Regarding education, Roy believed that the current liberal and purely intellectual education would not work. In reality, education in science and industry is what would be useful. Therefore, useful education should be provided. He believed in combining scientific and vocational education with education in citizenship. He also believed that education for different sections of society could be distinct.

Ambedkar (1891-1956):

We all know Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar as the architect of our Constitution. He studied abroad, earned a Ph.D. from Columbia University (USA), and obtained a Doctor of Science degree from London. Thus, he held two doctorates. Very few people know that one of his doctorates was on the "Problem of Rupee". This study gave him a strong grasp of modern institutions and their understanding. Additionally, his personal experiences of untouchability in India gave him a voice for social justice. Gail Omvedt, in the second chapter of her book on Ambedkar, mentions that he was opposed to Brahmanism (caste-based discrimination), but not opposed to Brahmins. Here, Brahmanism refers to a caste-based ideology. Ambedkar, thus, was a proponent of justice humanism.

1. During his study in US, Ambedkar was influenced by the ideas of Booker T. Washington. Washington was known

for his movement against racial discrimination. Ambedkar found this approach appealing for the fight against caste discrimination. This is where his justice-based humanism began. Ambedkar stated that his humanism means liberty, equality, and fraternity, but not as the slogans of the French Revolution - rather as humanist religion. His humanism is about “a societal system built on mutual support and cooperation, where human dignity and honour are preserved.”

2. For Ambedkar, liberty, equality, and fraternity are fundamental for the average individual. Therefore, these values are necessary for individuals. If principles are great, and yet the individual does not have access to them, the individual must fight for justice through a movement to attain them. This concept of social justice was at the core of Ambedkar’s humanism, and it was also part of his agenda. Here, the idea of justice is also contextually linked to social conditions.
3. Ambedkar says that religion is at the core of his philosophy. This religion is not the idol-worshipping or belief in God, but humane religion. He believed that humanism is the greatest religion. He was so disgusted by the caste discriminations in Hinduism that he converted to the non-theistic religion of Buddhism. He found the doctrine of the Noble Eightfold Path in Buddhism particularly appealing. He believed that there is no caste discrimination in Buddhism. Of course, the Eightfold Path also appealed to Gandhi.
4. For Ambedkar, the social structure is not based on class, but on caste structure. Here, it is important to

understand the difference. Marx talks about the exploitation of the lower working class by the higher bourgeoisie class. Class is an open social system, while caste, *varna*, and race are closed stratification systems, based on birth (ascriptive) status. As Booker Washington was against racial discrimination, Ambedkar was against caste discrimination, meaning the hierarchical discrimination based on caste. Therefore, he wrote the book *Annihilation of Caste* and sounded the trumpet for social justice against caste discrimination.

5. Ambedkar placed great importance on education. He believed that education gives a person freedom, protection, and character. Therefore, he gave the slogan “educate and agitate” to Dalits. He believed that educated people could move away from casteism.
6. Ambedkar believed in political democracy. For him, the idea of the welfare state was important, and he believed that freedom and equality could be achieved through the Constitution. Our Constitution is one of the best in the world, and Ambedkar played a crucial role in its creation.
7. Economically, Ambedkar had faith in private capital. However, he believed that the state should play a role in the welfare of the weaker sections of society.
8. Ambedkar, being broadly humanistic, was not opposed to any non-Dalit caste. He believed that the injustice faced by Dalits was due to the Manuvadi or Brahminical caste system and untouchability. However, he was not opposed to Brahmins, because Brahmins are also human beings. 🌈
(To be continued in the next issue....)

From Brahminism to Hindutva: A Century of Ideology and Its Toxic Expansion

Pratap Saharan

1. The Nineteenth-Century Revival of Brahminism and the Construction of 'Hinduism'

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, reform movements such as the Arya Samaj, Prarthana Samaj, and Brahmo Samaj gave rise to a new religious discourse that redefined Brahminical traditions under the label of "Hinduism."

This revival, in reality, was a project of caste-based and Brahminical consolidation—masking deep social inequalities—and it laid the ideological foundation for the later emergence of political Hindutva.

2. 1923: Savarkar and the Idea of Hindutva

In 1923, Vinayak Damodar Savarkar's book *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?* gave ideological form to the belief that India was exclusively a "nation of Hindus," while "foreign religions"—especially Islam and Christianity—were excluded from the essence of Indianness.

Savarkar himself was an atheist who used religion as a political instrument. His doctrine sowed the poisonous seed that eventually grew into the politics of communal hatred.

3. 1925: The Founding of RSS and Brahminical Supremacy

In 1925, Keshav Baliram Hedgewar founded the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) in Nagpur, with the declared mission of building a "Hindu nation."

The RSS drew ideological inspiration from the fascist regimes of Mussolini and Hitler—as evidenced in the research of Italian scholar Marzia Casolari (2003) and Christophe Jaffrelot (2010).

It propagated notions of "racial purity" and "disciplined nationhood," enforcing these ideas upon Hindu society.

4. 1958–1980: From RSS to the BJP

Narendra Modi joined the RSS in 1958 and became a full-time pracharak (campaigner) in 1970.

The RSS's political wing, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), was formally established in 1980 to give political shape to the Hindutva ideology.

Over time, it evolved into the primary political instrument of the RSS.

5. 2001–2002: Gujarat and the Politics of Mass Violence

In 2001, Narendra Modi transitioned directly from the RSS organization to become Chief Minister of Gujarat.

After the Godhra train burning in 2002, widespread and organized violence erupted against Muslims—described by numerous experts and British investigative reports as state-sponsored genocide.

Independent media organizations such as the BBC also questioned Modi's accountability.

Consequently, the United States and European nations imposed visa bans on him.

Meanwhile, the RSS and its affiliates glorified Modi as the "Hindu Hriday Samrat"—the "Emperor of Hindu Hearts."

6. 2003–2014: The Nexus of Capital and Hindutva

The "Vibrant Gujarat" campaign, launched in 2003, brought together corporate capital and Hindutva politics.

Through pro-business policies and personal alliances, Modi positioned himself as

the leader who served corporate interests—most notably those of the Adani Group.

In 2002, Gautam Adani’s assets were worth around ₹ 7 crore; by 2014, they had multiplied hundreds of times.

This alliance created and aggressively marketed the so-called “Gujarat Model,” which masked growing inequality behind a façade of development.

7. Demonetization and State Control

The authoritarian decision of demonetization in 2016 dealt a massive blow to India’s economy.

Justice B.V. Nagarathna of the Supreme Court’s Constitutional Bench called the move inconsistent with democratic procedure.

The policy exposed the government’s desire for total control over the nation’s financial systems.

8. International Funding of Hindutva Organizations

Tax-exempt organizations registered in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia—such as the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS), Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America (VHPA), Sewa International USA, and Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation-USA—serve as foreign extensions of the RSS.

Although these groups collect donations in the name of “cultural” or “humanitarian” causes, in reality, the funds are funneled into Hindutva propaganda and political expansion.

The CIA World Factbook has classified both the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Bajrang Dal as militant religious organizations.

9. The Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation and Ideological Indoctrination

Through the Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation, over 100,000 schools operate across India—predominantly in tribal and Dalit regions.

These institutions indoctrinate children with Hindutva ideology from an early age,

effectively converting them into instruments of communal politics.

10. The Transnational Expansion of Hindutva in the Digital Age

The international wing of the RSS, the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS), was founded in the United States in 1989.

It openly describes itself as “inspired by the RSS vision.”

Scholars such as Ingrid Therwath and Christophe Jaffrelot have demonstrated that the HSS functions as an overseas extension of the RSS.

In the American context, it attracts Indian immigrants under the guise of “cultural preservation,” gradually drawing them into political Hindutva networks.

11. Hinduism and Hindutva: The Distinction

While Hinduism embodies philosophy, tolerance, and diversity, Hindutva is a political ideology that seeks to bind the nation to a singular religious identity.

Even Savarkar distinguished Hindutva from religion, framing it as an instrument for enforcing “national unity” through the suppression of plurality.

12. Conclusion: The Greatest Threat to Democracy

With more than 57,000 branches and over four million volunteers, the RSS-led Hindutva network has deeply poisoned India’s social fabric.

Its ideology targets not only Muslims and Christians but also Dalits, Adivasis, and dissenting Hindus.

Its roots lie in the unholy trinity of Brahminical supremacy, capitalist alliances, and political fanaticism.

To preserve democracy, equality, and the soul of the Constitution, it is imperative to clearly distinguish Hinduism from Hindutva—an appeal repeatedly echoed by progressive Hindu thinkers and intellectuals. 🌈

Dalit vs. Bahujan and the Need for Multi-Class Unity

S.R. Darapuri

For quite some time now, the term “Bahujan” has been used in politics instead of “Dalit.” According to the proponents of the Bahujan concept, Bahujan includes Dalits and backward classes. According to Kanshi Ram, it also includes Muslims, and their number constitutes 85%. According to his theory, the Bahujans should unite and seize power from the 15% upper castes. While this formula sounds very good and seems to hold great potential, the question is, what is the formula for uniting the Bahujans? Is it the commonality of being Untouchable and Shudra, or something else? The Untouchables and Shudras are divided into countless castes, and they suffer from varying degrees of caste pride. They are just as afflicted by Brahmanism (superiority complex) as they accuse the upper castes of being. There are many intense internal contradictions within them. The Backward Castes consider themselves superior to the Dalits and behave accordingly. Currently, most atrocities against Dalits are committed not by the upper castes but by the prosperous (kulak) Backward Castes. Most Dalits are labourers, and the economic interests of these newly wealthy castes clash with those of the labourers. This is why these castes perpetrate atrocities against Dalits regarding wages and forced labour. In such a situation, on what basis can unity be established between Dalits and Backward Castes? On one hand, there is social distance, and on the other hand, a conflict of economic interests. Therefore, merely being Dalit and backward, or Untouchable and Shudra, cannot be the basis for unity. Even if some unity is formed based on political self-interest, it cannot be permanent, as has been observed in practice.

Now, if we analyse the class structure of Dalits and Backward Castes, it is found that even within the Dalit community, a class division between the prosperous and the poor has

emerged. The distinction between the forward, backward, and extremely backward classes within the Backward Castes is very clear. For some time now, only the affluent sections of the Dalit and Backward classes have benefited from economic development and gained a share in political power. In contrast, most Dalits and Backward Classes remain severely marginalized. This division has given rise to the concept of the “most backward” among Dalits and other backward classes. This also makes it clear that the concept of “Bahujan” (the majority) is merely an abstract idea. Similarly, among Muslims, there is a division between Ashraf, Ajlaf, and Arzal, which is manifesting itself as the Pasmanda (most backward) Muslims movement.

Now the question arises: what can be the real basis for unity within these groups? The above analysis makes it clear that within Dalits, backward classes, and Muslims, there are two distinct classes – the forward and the backward – whose economic and political interests are different, and there are sharp contradictions and conflicts between them. Until now, the dominant section of these groups has been leading the entire caste/class and community in the name of caste and religion, and it is this section that has reaped all the economic and political benefits of development. This has intensified caste/class divisions and conflicts within these groups. Various political parties have been exploiting this caste/class division, but no party has identified their real issues or done anything for their upliftment. Recently, the BJP has united them in the name of Hinduism and garnered their votes. If we look closely, this class is socially, economically, and politically backward. The real upliftment of these classes can only be achieved by addressing the issues related to their backwardness and formulating policies to resolve them.

(To be Contd....on Page - 25)

When Counter-Revolution Devours Historical Icons

Prem Singh

1

It is said that revolution devours its own children. This statement about the French Revolution has been echoed and applied to the American Revolution, the Russian Revolution, and the Chinese Revolution, among other revolutions, both large and small, around the world. Scholars have extensively pondered upon this problematic aspect of a revolution. However, the crucial issue of what counter-revolution does has not received the necessary attention of scholars. A close look at the reality of the world today indicates that counter-revolution acts as a shield to protect its own children, and selectively devours the very icons who dreamed of and carried out the revolution.

Apart from Kishan Patnaik, no other leader or thinker has explicitly stated that the process of globalization is, in fact, a process of global counter-revolution. After three and a half decades of neoliberalism, it can be said that India has become a component part of that counter-revolution; and also a vocal eulogiser. If we examine India's counter-revolution at this juncture, we find that it has been nourished by devouring its icons in an acrobatic manner. Those icons have been the dynamic source of freedom, sovereignty, equality, self-reliance, culture, and harmony, that is, these symbols and icons are the ones that have shaped our national life. The storm of counter-revolution raging in India is so powerful that its hunger is not limited only to devouring historical symbols and icons; it is also devouring spiritual and religious symbols that reside in the infinite dimension of time.

India's freedom struggle against imperialist domination and its vision was hailed as a glorious revolution across the world. The message of that revolution not only reached the colonized countries of Asia, Africa, and the Americas, but the imperialist countries of Europe too could not

remain untouched. Independent India had to carry that revolution to maximum fruition on a national and global scale. Imperialist powers, in collusion with local communal elements, dealt a major blow to India's revolution at the very beginning by dividing the country. Meanwhile, with India's independence, the next phase of imperialism came into the hands of the United States. The American version of imperialism was even more retrogressive and inhumane than the first. It was not merely a relic of past imperialism, destined to end with the rise of newly independent nations. The United States started the creation and expansion of new economic, strategic, commercial, educational, and intelligence institutions as the part of a far-reaching strategy and diplomacy to bring the newly independent countries of Asia, Africa, and South America under the neo-imperialist yoke. European countries that had previously held various colonies made its stooges in strengthening and expanding this new version of imperialism.

The American incarnation of imperialism, founded on the foundations of market, weapons, deceit and debauchery has essentially become the dream of the entire world. It is a term coined as the 'American Dream'. What is the American Dream and how its magic works makes an interesting topic to ponder upon. But it would be a lengthy subject to discuss here. It is simply necessary to emphasize that if the leadership of independent India has not followed Gandhi's path in totality, it has not become a slave to the American Dream either.

For about ten years after Gandhi's assassination, some aura of the Indian revolution persisted among the ruling class and the people. But even at this time, some prominent opposition leaders and thinkers continued to interpret and expand Gandhi-era revolutionary spirit in the new circumstances. The country's socialist/communist

movement, divided into several streams, remained active in transforming the Indian revolution into a socialist revolution. Their work exerted some pressure on the policymakers and even the communal and right-wing elements.

Several leaders who resisted injustice globally drew inspiration from the methods and values of the Indian revolution and waged their own struggles. However, the corrupt and dishonest class that had reaped full benefits of achievements in independent India became desperate to open the door to the American Dream. Within four decades of independence, the American Dream had left no stone unturned to destroy the Indian revolution in India itself.

Rajiv Gandhi was the first to wonder and regret why the world's two largest democracies remained alienated in relation to each other. Then, through the New Economic Policies and the Dunkel proposals, the team of Narasimha Rao and Dr. Manmohan Singh presented India as the open pasture of the American Dream. HD Deve Gowda, who had Chidambaram as Finance Minister, abdicated his throne to receive Bill Gates when he visited India. Then came Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and the long series of Jaswant Singh-Strobe Talbott talks ensued. This firmly tied up India's destiny to the American Dream.

The BJP-led NDA government could manage only one term. The reason was that a large number of Indians continued to struggle against neo-imperialist subjugation outside the government. As a result, the government changed, and Dr. Manmohan Singh became Prime Minister of the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government. All governments formed after Rajiv Gandhi, before the 2014 Modi government, were coalition governments. All the players in mainstream politics, including communists and socialists, were involved in these governments in one capacity or another. Most intellectuals had either become outright advocates of neoliberalism or were acting as hidden/covert/latent neoliberals. Meanwhile, a network of NGOs, funded by

foreign money, primarily by the United States, sprung up across the country, was engaged in various kinds of research and solving problems. The inherent condition attached to this foreign funding was that no genuine voice should remain in the realm of politics and thought against the American Dream. The multifaceted business of feeding the opium of the American Dream to the entire Indian population, began to spread rapidly.

It was a natural move on the part of the counter-revolutionary side to bathe Gandhi, the greatest icon of India's revolution, in the hamam of the American Dream! Narasimha Rao, while addressing the US Congress, declared proudly that he was building the India of Gandhi's dreams. Following him, Vajpayee, at the inauguration of the Gandhi Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, and then in his speech before the US Congress, attempted to reconcile his "Gandhian Socialism" with American imperialism. Manmohan Singh, while addressing the US Congress, once again apprised the world that the work of building an India of Gandhi's dreams was progressing rapidly. Gandhi, who had stipulated that he could visit the US only if the country dethroned the dollar, was drowned in the American Dream by India's ruling classes.

The purpose of the discussion here is simply to clarify that the greatest symbol of India's revolution was made the first victim of India's counter-revolution; and the political and intellectual elite from all walks of life have been complicit in this act. No one has argued that Gandhi's dream is an alternative to the American Dream; no one has argued that if the consensus favours the American Dream then Gandhi's dream should not be unnecessarily invoked. If the decision rests with the political and intellectual elite, they are responsible for it, not Gandhi.

2

This trend could not remain confined to Gandhi's name. Almost all the symbols and icons of independence were drawn into the ocean of counter-revolution. In 2007, on the occasion of

the 150th anniversary of the 1857 Revolt, the Congress organized a revolution march (*kranti yatra*) from Meerut to Delhi. Numerous civil society activists, writers and thinkers participated in it. In 1991, Manmohan Singh, who formally mortgaged the country's independence at the feet of neo-imperialism, welcomed the marchers at the Red Fort. A flood of seminars on various aspects of the 1857 Revolt, organized with government funding, erupted. It seemed possible that India's intelligentsia would recognize the anti-imperialist spirit of 1857 and sharpen its anti-neo-imperialist struggle. But the entire event ultimately fed counter-revolution by making known and unknown Indians, who sacrificed their lives, its fodder.

Numerous mini-counter-revolutions have occurred in different countries in conjunction with the neo-imperialist counter-revolution. This happened in India as well. Within four or five years of the 150th anniversary of the 1857 Revolt, on a platform set up by NGO leaders and the RSS, official communists, socialists who considered themselves above caste-based socialism, civil society activists, professionals from various fields, writers, scholars, religious, meditation, yoga gurus, corporate houses, and the entire media got united to support a counter-revolution disguised as an anti-corruption movement. The youth, which had become largely apolitical during two decades of neoliberalism, frantically plunged into the movement. The entire world witnessed a colourful competition to see whose boat would sail faster in the currents of counter-revolution. Naturally, the rest of society, including the vast population excluded by the New Economic Policies, was stunned by the sudden appearance of 'revolution' at their doorstep! The entire country eagerly watched the 'elder Gandhi' and 'young Gandhi' preaching sermons day and night on news channels.

At first, it was said that India needs to be made corruption-free; the corrupt need to be exposed publicly. But soon the call changed and it was

announced that the country was going through another wave of the second and third revolution. Comparisons were made with the JP movement, even the freedom movement. Fatwas were issued declaring that anyone who did not support this revolution was not with the country. NRIs living in Europe and America too enthusiastically joined the patriotic cause. In the presence of the image of RSS's Bharat Mata, the elder Gandhi declared to the countrymen that Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi was running an ideal government. Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar was placed second. Modi, who had a sharp eye on the occasion, expressed his gratitude to the elder Gandhi by writing a letter.

To avoid giving the entire credit to RSS's Bharat Mata and Gandhi, the picture of Ambedkar's was also added onto the stage. When the moment arrived to give the nascent revolution its scriptural name, the pundits of revolution-science declared that, as per the codex, it would be called "Kejriwal Kranti"! Gandhi had been around far too long, so it was decided to assign Ambedkar and Bhagat Singh the role of icons for the nascent party. A prominent Marxist leader had already called the hero of the revolution the Lenin of India.

Everything was so natural and coherent that nothing could be felt missing except wonder. When the revolutionary hero performed the revolutionary action of cutting an electric wire in full view of the media, two renowned civil society activists arrived to encourage him.

As promised, the governments of the elder Modi at the center and the young Modi in Delhi were established. A scholar of Bhagat Singh had long ago appealed to Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to establish the Bhagat Singh Archives and Research Center in Delhi. Young Modi fulfilled that demand, thus stamping his patent on Bhagat Singh. The public has already been acquainted with the 'fakirs of today'; it has also enthusiastically embraced the 'modern-day freedom fighters'. When these modern-day

freedom fighters get released from jail on corruption charges, they are showered with flower petals. We understand what this means, it's a blatant act of making the children of the counter-revolution the 'rightful' heirs of the millions of Indians who actually sacrificed their lives in the struggle for independence!

Whatever Gandhi's other 'usefulness' may have been to the ruling class of India, he had been a counterfeit coin for vote-mongering. However, his name does have some appeal for Muslim votes. Sensing this, the nascent party born from the womb of 'revolution' fielded one of Gandhi's grandsons from the East Delhi Lok Sabha constituency. I happened to be a contestant from that constituency as a Socialist Party (India) candidate. During the election campaign, some auto-rickshaws were seen roaming in Muslim-dominated neighbourhoods with banners reading "Mahatma Gandhi's grandson." Auto drivers were strictly prohibited from going to other colonies in the area with that banner. Gandhi's grandson might have garnered a significant Muslim vote in Gandhi's name, but it was an unsuccessful attempt. Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Vishwanath Pratap Singh had also unsuccessfully attempted to field the same Gandhi's grandson in the election.

India is a large country. It is natural that many mini-revolutions have occurred within the framework of counter-revolutions, and will continue to occur in the future. One such counter-revolution in India was against secularism. Kishan Patnaik has written, "To give a recent example, we can say that secularism has been the central principle of modern Indian politics; in the 1980s, a chapter of counter-revolution, disguised as Hindutva, began aiming to transform the country's political culture. It is consistent with the current wave of counter-revolution sweeping the world; but its significance is small in comparison; rather, it is encouraged by the atmosphere of counter-revolution." ('Vikalphein Nahin Hai Duniya' (The World Is Not Without Alternative), p. 172-173)

The above mentioned statement of Kishan

Patnaik dates back to 1994. Had he been present to see the situation now, two decades later, he might not have said that its (Hindutva's) significance is minimal and that it serves only to transform political culture. Sitting comfortably in the lap of the capitalist counter-revolution, it has not only shattered the Indian nation and society but has also destroyed the sanctity of divine symbols, the very foundation of faith and devotion. This is a more profound injury than the commercial exploitation of religion and spirituality.

3

The aim of this article is not to provide a complete list of the several mini-counter-revolutions that have occurred in India in conjunction with the imperialist counter-revolution. However, a number of mini-counter-revolutions have taken place in constitutional democratic institutions, educational and research institutions, diplomatic institutions, and academies related to literature, art, and culture. We are confronted daily with the counter-revolution taking place in the ecology from the sea to the Himalayas. Parallel to the above, one can examine the counter-revolution taking place within social and religious institutions/festivals. One can delve deeper into the causes resulting in counter-revolution in Indian values and human values.

By citing the examples of two counter-revolutions, an attempt has been made to illustrate that the political class and the intellectual class have jointly dragged the symbols and icons that stood for socialism, democracy, and secularism during the freedom movement and independent India into the pit of counter-revolution. India's national flag, the tricolour, which has been the supreme symbol of nationalism during the freedom movement and independent India, is the same that is used by the wave of counter-revolution. Some counter-revolutionaries campaign for 'tricolour in every home', while others strive to place 'tricolour in every hand'.

The Constitution of India is a significant symbol of the principles, the nature, and the

construction of independent India, reflected in the light of the values behind the freedom movement. It goes without saying that the very act of counter-revolution in 1991 happened to be the reversal of the Basic Structure Doctrine of the Constitution. Minds, crippled by the American Dream, are simply incapable of comprehending the fact that India cannot be a secular and democratic republic without being a socialist republic. That waving copies of the Constitution and spreading fears that “they will change the Constitution” will not restore constitutional India; that constitutional institutions are being eroded not merely because the RSS attacks them but because they are being used to create a distorted form of capitalist India. Every distortion breeds another distortion.

The RSS mistreats and manipulates national symbols and icons because having been left out of the flow of history, it is doomed to do so. The mind-set the RSS represents is unable to cultivate a relationship of easy acceptance with national symbols and icons, let alone a critical one. To develop a comfortable and/or critical relationship with national symbols and icons, it must overcome its stagnant mind-set. But can the secular/progressive camp, which claims to uphold the idea of India shaped by the values of the freedom movement and the Constitution, even consider its treatment of national symbols and icons to be correct? By making their ancestors victims of counter-revolution, aren't these children of counter-revolution playing a more profound role against the Indian revolution?

Much before confronting the truth of counter-revolution, the secular/progressive camp has to first acknowledge that India is in its grip. It seems only one aspect of the crisis: that India is in the grip of the RSS. It is unwilling to seriously consider why India is in the grip of the RSS; how to free it from its grip; and what political culture of thought and conduct should be evolved so that it does not fall further into the RSS grip. Instead, it attempts to co-opt the ideas and efforts of alternative politics in favour of neo-imperialist counter-revolution.

The obvious reason is that in case it accepts this reality, it will have to confront the truth of counter-revolution, to which it continues to remain hypocritical and serves as a misleading force for the new generations. The secular/progressive camp flaunts its rage against the RSS's distortion of history, but seeks to conceal the history that it is creating by itself.

It is to be noted that as the grip of imperialist counter-revolution tightens, the trend of printing individual and group images of iconic ancestors on banners, posters, pamphlets, placards, etc., has also increased during protests, demonstrations, rallies, and even academic seminars. The politics of icons has spread rapidly in the 'New India'. Everyone has their own icons, and there is intense competition among them. In this era of politics of corporate-communal nexus, accusations and counter-accusations of hijacking and stealing each other's icons', their names have become common. Even the highest honour, the Bharat Ratna, has become entangled in the politics of icons. Recently, Karpooori Thakur and Chaudhary Charan Singh have been drawn into the fray of counter-revolution by being awarded the Bharat Ratna. Meanwhile, Mayawati has publicly praised the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh for diligently maintaining the memorials of her icons, something the previous Samajwadi Party government had failed to do.

Thus, it can be seen that there is no single pattern in making symbols and icons the fodder of counter-revolution. A group within the secular/progressive camp, infuriated by the Modi-Shah-Bhagwat-style communal fascist counter-revolution, has adopted a new pattern. They have launched a campaign claiming that the RSS/BJP, which were once untouchables in Indian society and politics, were legitimized by Jayaprakash Narayan and Rammanohar Lohia, therefore both are responsible for the current situation. They are even held responsible for certain other national and international problems, including Israel's atrocities against Palestinians. Congressmen and

Communists derive great pleasure from this blame-shifting campaign. Some Gandhians and Praja Socialists also feel good about this.

Any person with a basic knowledge of politics and history will know that the acceptance of communal fanaticism in India was not due to the non-Congressism of 1967 and the Janata Party experiment of 1977. Nor were communal forces and their organizations ever viewed as untouchable in society and politics. Gandhi, distressed by the impending partition of the country, never considered it unsuitable to meet or interact with communal organizations/leaders. The Congress's right wing was occupied by the communal rightists, represented by the RSS, and the left wing by the official communists.

In the first general election of 1952, the combined vote share of the All India Jan Sangh, the All India Hindu Mahasabha, and the All India Ram Rajya Parishad was not much less to that of the socialists and communists. Among the independent candidates who got the second highest vote share and seats after the Congress, were many candidates with communal right-wing thinking. When combined with these and other reactionary/status quoist parties, the vote share of the communal rightist parties was higher than that of the socialists and communists.

However, regarding the period between 1967 and 1977, considerable discussion and analysis has already been done on this contentious subject, both selectively and comprehensively. All documents and statements/writings of JP and Lohia from that period are available. It is beyond the scope of this article to delve into all those details. However, one keenly interested is requested to read Kishan Patnaik's article, *JP Andolan Aur Aaj Ka Sandarbh* (JP Movement and Today's Context) ('Samyik Varta' (Loknayaak Jayaprakash Narayan Special Issue, August-September 2002, Year 25, Issues 11-12).

No icon is beyond criticism, nor should it be a subject beyond question. But defaming someone with the intention of mere dismissal prompted by

self-righteousness, is hardly justifiable. A stagnant society, unaware of the path ahead, or having chosen to take a dubious path, might decide to throw dirt on its predecessors. Such an exercise achieves nothing. It only deepens the crisis. It wasn't long ago that self-proclaimed honest people launched a defamatory attack against the "dishonest" Manmohan Singh and his "corrupt" government. The new generation must consider whether the crisis has increased or decreased since then.

In this context, it's also important to mention that some socialists, who strongly opposed the defamation of JP and Lohia, are now, under the aegis of a merchant of education and his private university, organise the Lohia Memorial Lecture with speakers like Rajnath Singh, Ramnath Kovind, Manoj Sinha and Arif Mohammad Khan. The finale of this ritual would be to extend an invitation to Narendra Modi to deliver that memorial lecture. It takes immense courage to achieve this feat in a time of unprecedented crisis facing the Indian nation and society. Interestingly, the senior journalist who led the campaign of maligning JP and Lohia happened to be a part of the same team until recently. This pattern of making icons the victims of counter-revolution, demonstrates the extent of stalemate and disorientation in India's left and democratic movement.

If counter-revolution engulfs the entire canvas of a civilization, society, and nation, it should be clear that the period of decadence for that civilization, society, and nation is not too far behind. The responsibility for this decadence cannot be brushed aside by simply blaming those who licked the plates of this decline. Instead, a deep and serious investigation of the factors that led to this decadence should be demanded. Only then can a deep and serious effort be made possible, to challenge the predicament.

Future generations, imbued with a spirit of freedom, will observe with astonishment that we ourselves handed over India to neo-imperialists. They will see that the only difference was that

earlier they were the royalties who signed treaties and agreements to hand India over to British imperialism, whereas in the new India the program of handing over the country to American neo-imperialism has been accomplished by the bureaucrats, intellectuals and leaders of the elected governments. They will further see that this time, the greed of us Indians is deeper. The roots of neo-imperialism have, consequently, gone deeper. However, they will also recognise the leaders, bureaucrats, thinkers, political activists, farmer-labour-student organizations, and journalists vociferously who opposed this assault of new slavery. From there, hopefully, the path to alternative and struggle will emerge.

Postscript: The names of the secular-progressive figures involved in some of the episodes described in this article have not been mentioned though the reader might easily identify them. However, this is not a personal criticism of them. I respect them. The arena of counter-revolution abounds with other such episodes and their associated participants. Some have been mentioned in the article to illustrate the reality of the various tendencies and shades of counter-revolution.

(The writer, associated with the socialist movement, is a former teacher of Delhi University and a fellow of Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla) 

Contd. from page - (18)

Dalit vs. Bahujan and the Need for...

Therefore, their true unity can only be built around these issues, not based on caste and religion. From the perspective of economic and political interests, these groups are natural allies because their problems are similar, and their struggle for liberation is also the same.

Under the umbrella of “Bahujan,” the issues and interests of the most backward sections get suppressed. Therefore, to establish strong unity among these extremely backward sections, instead of the artificial concept of Bahujan based on caste/religion, issues related to their social, economic, and political backwardness should be raised. Politics based on caste and religion only strengthens Hindutva. With this objective, the All India People’s Front (AIPF) has included the following issues under social justice in its agenda: (1) separating the quota for backward Muslims from the Other Backward Classes (OBCs), amending Article 341 to include Dalit Muslims and Christians in the Scheduled Castes, and implementing the recommendations of the Sachar Committee and Ranganath Mishra Committee; (2) providing separate reservation quotas for extremely backward Hindu and Muslim castes from within the 27% OBC quota; (3) restoring the reservation system in promotions as soon as possible; (4) filling vacant government posts under the SC/ST quota through a special campaign; (5) providing reservations to Dalits, Adivasis, OBCs, and Extremely Backward Classes in the private sector as well; (6) granting tribal status to tribal communities like the Kol community of Uttar Pradesh; (7) strictly implementing the Forest Rights Act and making employment a fundamental right, etc.

With the aim of giving representation to these sections, the party has reserved 75% of the positions in its constitution for Dalits, Backward Classes, Minorities, and Women. The AIPF is striving to promote issue-based multi-class political unity instead of caste-based Bahujan politics, as Dr. Ambedkar also did by establishing the Republican Party of India. With this objective, the AIPF is currently running an Employment and Social Rights Campaign which is getting good response.

S.R. Darapuri is I.P.S. (Retd); National President, All India Peoples Front. 

The Integration of Knowledge

O.L. Reiser

(Summarized by Vinod Jain)

I. The World's Cultural Crisis

We live in a world of political sovereignties, with a varieties of social, religious, national, and economic loyalties and doctrines. Such competing loyalties and creeds have existed for countless generations, and while conflicts arose between them, these clashes in the past were localized in scope and consequence.

As the world has undergone a mechanical unification through the telescoping of space and time relations, it has become increasingly difficult to limit these conflict-patterns to local areas—as two world wars have demonstrated.

This is the dark side of the picture. Looking to the future, we find that there is a prospect of world unity and perhaps ultimately an effective United Nations Organization with a code of international law to formalize it's civil relationships... Here, in the restless present, the nation's of the world find themselves in a kind of Twilight zone between the world of the past, filled with the relics of an era that is dying, and a world of the future, with its embryonic proliferations of a social order yet unborn.

The contrast stands out in sharpest relief in such organizations as UNO, FAO, WHO, and UNESCO as they carry on their work in New York, Paris and elsewhere. Here the disappearing past and the emerging future come to grips; realism and social idealism clash; and despair and hope stare each other in the face. The problems are acute; the stakes are high; the rivalries are keen; and the tensions are electrifying.

What is the place of cultural diversity in the world community?

Without doubt, the roots of such cultural diversity go back into the remote past. On the one side, we wonder whether cultural diversity is not a divisive force in the world, setting

peoples apart from each other.

On the other hand, one of the main assets of any group is it's cultural achievements, its inheritance of traditions, its dreams and beliefs, its customs and folkways.

And if you sweep away the past, what then? What have men to live for, if you take away their traditions? And what remains to build upon? Here we have the dilemma of the modern world in a crucial form. If we keep our diversified and local cultures, how can peoples function as part of a world civilization? But if we do function as a part of a world civilization, will we not kill off these local cultures and ideologies peculiar to regional groups? Will we not be creating world uniformity and cultural poverty? How can we obtain unity without destroying variety?

To some extent the issues here represent a clash between those who cling to the forms of the past and those who are reaching out to new and more inclusive thought-forms and culture patterns of the future.

II. The need for a General Ideology

It appears that at the present juncture in human history the world is caught between two opposing forces. The first is an inertia binding us to the past. This is a conservative force which would maintain the traditional political and theoretical diversities based on regional and parochial patterns of thought and doctrines.

The second force is a suction drawing us towards unification, a synthesis of cultural variety in ideological unity. This social and intellectual integration of nations and classes will eventually culminate in a world civilization based on a commonly accepted world philosophy.

All serious thinking today should be concerned with the methods for constructing a world civilization appropriate to man as the planetary species. The supreme problem of the

contemporary world is how to bring into being a new simplicity, a unitary system of ideas based on the minimal core of beliefs, values, and institutions, which will do for our time what Scholasticism [the system of theology and philosophy taught in Medieval Universities] did for the Western medieval world and what Marxism has done for the Russian experiment. Neither one conforms to the requirement of scientific method—democracy in thinking. A world ideology is not to be attained through revelations, whether from Moses or Marx. Only science and the scientific imagination can provide the methods and the materials for philosophical synthesis.

Both variety and unity are necessary ingredients of any organized field pattern. The problem is how to integrate a reasonable amount of diversity into a unity which is dynamic and flexible.

III. Cosmology and Ideology

Those who have lost faith in a universally valid system of knowledge as the goal of man's search have abdicated the role of human intelligence; they have renounced the very function of philosophy — the pursuit of wisdom.

{The author says that at one time he posed some questions to his students, of which, the following was one} "How would you solve the major problems of modern man — such as freedom from mass destruction, mass employment, mass starvation, mass prejudices of 'racial', religious, and national origins, overpopulation, and illiteracy — in terms of the utilization of an integrated body of beliefs?"

He says: The reader should, of course, work out his own answers to these problems.

It is obvious that an ideology, as we use the term, refers to the ideas and beliefs about man's place and role in the universe and his consequent privileges, duties, and potentialities in that universe. The precise form of any given ideology is a function of (a) the past history of the culture, and (b) the state of knowledge about man and

the universe which is available at that time. Our thesis is that present knowledge makes it necessary for us to develop a new ideology which centres about the fact that man is the agent for his own future and that of the entire planet. The current 'knowledge explosion' makes this imperative in our time.

IV. The Knowledge Explosion

A major objective of a scientific Humanism is the organization of human knowledge for the purpose of human progress, that is, guiding human development toward what might be called the 'fulfilment society' (as a successor to the 'welfare state'). This means that we must integrate human knowledge. Increasing knowledge always alters man's idea of his destiny (as for example, modern genetics and psychology spell the doom of 'original sin' in its earlier theological form).

The 'knowledge explosion' of the last half-century {this was written around 1960} —the accelerating accumulation of knowledge in all fields, from cosmology to social science, aesthetics, and religion —has produced an enlarged awareness of cosmic, planetary, and human evolution.

A modern synthesis would yield the following levels of study: (1) the physical field; (2) the biological field; (3) the human or psychosocial field.

This way of looking at operative fields of integration calls attention to the fact that, as we move up the ladder of evolution, new patterns of causality become manifest. At the lowest level we have physical fields. Here, on this level, we deal with the total pattern of physical energy (nuclear and atomic).

Next we have the biological field. On the human or psychosocial level, natural selection is now subordinated to the operations of man's psychosocial integrations. Man's superior mind is associated with the highest known elaboration of the central nervous system. With the coming of human psychosocial life, such as articulate

speech and writing, the symbol takes on its unique importance. With the symbolic function, art, religion, science, and philosophy make their appearance in the evolutionary process both as resultants and as operative factors.

We must plan for unity-in- variety, both individual and social, within a unitary ideological field. This planning— or ideological technology—brings us to the important problem of the relation of facts to values.

V. The ‘Dualism’ of Facts and Values

A crucial test of the utility of a naturalistic Humanism is its ability to overcome the alleged dualism of facts and values. We may consult the writings of Bertrand Russell, Robert Hutchins, the Positivists in this regard. This is a strange assortment of individuals to be found in the same camp. They all agree on the importance of reason to build a science of ethics; but they agree about little else.

Let us examine more carefully the various aspects of the alleged ‘dualism’.

An example of this dualism would be this: Natural science can tell you how to get to the moon, if you want to go there; but it cannot tell you whether you should go to the moon. Again: natural science may tell you smoking cigarettes does (or does not) cause cancer, but it cannot tell you whether you should (or should not) stop smoking. Our inability, to resolve this dualism, i.e. find the answer to the problems of ‘oughtness’ in the ‘isness’ of things, seems to be responsible for a number of resulting difficulties, as follows:

- (1) The dualism of objective, descriptive natural science and subjective, prescriptive human purposiveness seems to support the amoral attitude of those scientists who maintain, with the positivists, that natural (objective) science knows nothing of values, so that such preferences are incapable of rational justification.
- (2) A second defect of the dualism is that

it is correlated with an inability to provide a reasonable justification for value preferences. ‘Truth’, ‘goodness’, and ‘beauty’ are said to be our highest human values — but how can one prove that men should foster such values?

- (3) A third consequence of the fact-value dualism is that it appears to support the cultural relativism of those anthropologists and sociologists who can find no final and universal standards, though they do sometimes discover trends. Thus, by implication, if Nietzsche extols the tough virtues of the ‘superman’, and Jesus praises the virtue of love, charity, and mercy — who is right? Is it possible to prove that any preferred values are right?

These are some of the problems created by the above dualism. In the course of the next several sections I hope to have something to say which may help to overcome this. Meantime, I would like to state some considerations which we should keep in mind as guiding principles.

VI. Some General Considerations

In the first place, it is obvious that the natural sciences are more fundamental (but not more important) than the normative value- disciplines, in the sense that our life is built upon material foundations. If our religious or aesthetic preferences are permitted to determine our models of reality as framed by the natural sciences, these lead to wishful thinking. In general, a knowledge of empirical facts and laws must provide a basis for moral reforms, if we are to have intelligently guided social change.

Our second general observation is that values are facts. They are entirely products of man’s psychosocial evolution, and as such they are modified as our knowledge increases. They are phenomena to be studied and understood like any other phenomena.

A third general observation is that while

these two levels of science reflect a dualism of types of interest and study, we have not therefore created any necessary conflict in the sense of an unresolvable hostility.

Having thus sketched some general theses, I pass on to more specific items.

VII. More Specific Guiding Principles

- (1) Man, whether he be a scientist, poet, peasant, or philosopher, begins with emotional and valuational commitments which are implicit in the facts of organic existence, i.e. man's biological constitution and cultural heredity. Because of this inescapable inheritance, we all want a measure of bio-social security, balanced with more or less novelty and adventure.
- (2) Science involves ethical commitments no less than religion, politics, education and other phases of human enterprise. The objectivity of science is itself an ethical imperative.
- (3) 'Facts' are of value, because a knowledge of the facts helps us solve human problems, i.e. enables man to survive and enrich his existence. In addition, knowledge is valued for its own sake as well as for its utility.
- (4) Judgments of fact and judgments of value are not necessarily exclusive of each other. When a Humanist says, 'it is good that men should be happy', this is both ethically sound and logically defensible.
- (5) Historically what were once only value-preferences have occasionally become matters of social fact, and conversely what were once facts may have disappeared from the human scene. Thus social security, public hygiene, etc., which were once ideals to be realised, are now matters of fact. On the other hand, organized Fascism was once a social fact, but it is now

socially extinct.

- (6) If we completely understood the facts, and the 'logic of events' which factual situations exhibit, we could frequently resolve conflicts which otherwise are unresolvable except by violence.
- (7) To resolve problems which seem to involve conflicts of beliefs and values, we must try to find more inclusive value systems. Thus loyalty to mankind is higher than loyalty to this or that nation, race or religion.
- (8) The problem of the modern world is to create planetary objectives, universal values for all mankind. This is the Humanist Frame — with an ideological field— within which a cultural pluralism of diversifications may be protected. In general, social and cultural progress has moved toward the fabrication of more inclusive societies, from the family units to tribal societies to villages to city-states to nation-states to world community. In this process, differences of races, religions, nationalities, and social classes, are gradually submerged in higher social and ideological integrations.

VIII. The Humanist Frame as Planetary Democracy

The Humanist Frame is one in which the greatest mass of significant facts becomes the supporting foundation for the maximum satisfaction of human values. Man alone is capable of moral choices. To prevent human tragedies, what is required is a synthesis of knowledge and benevolence, facts and values, unified into a general ideology. In my own language, I would picture the situation in this manner:

(The Facts of all Sciences)+(The complementary Values for all Mankind)= A General Ideology

(To be Contd....on Page - 42)

Two Fundamental Criteria: Man and Reason

He Wan

Abstract

The two criteria of man-oriented and reason-standard are undoubtedly the fundamental standards for judging all the right and wrong in everything. To be specific, state, party, nation, family and other forms of artificial collective organization are actually obstacles to achieving fairness in the whole society. The prescription that I make to this world is simply to unify thinking, unify actions and unify development under the guidance of reasonably righteous principle, so as to realize the fully unified all-fairism's society of all of mankind. Today, here I might as well put forward "righteouscracy", a political form that is completely different from democracy and autocracy. In fact, it is still the same sentence, thought is the heart, and regime is the surface. In the case of no change in thought, the changes of regime again and again are any meaningless.

The two criteria of man-oriented and reason-standard are undoubtedly the fundamental standards for judging all the right and wrong in everything. But the reason for such a conclusion must have its ins and outs, and formed my political proposition and social conception. Another one, how to carry out the whole philosophical theory also needs a carrier, namely the implementing organization. Regarding to these contents, this article will carry on a summary elucidation.

The definition of the two benchmarks of man-oriented and reason-standard can be explained as that man-oriented means that the man of the whole and the individual is the root that is above all things, rather than god, state, nation and party, let alone spirit and matter, as well as fowls and beasts, flowers and trees; that reason-standard means to take axiom as the rule's standard for measuring all things, not will, law and morality, also neither heavenly principle (including natural law) and sacred principle, nor ablaze way and narrow way. Since today the subject is mainly described at the political level, those philosophical level's issues will be taken away in glance, such as god, spirit, heavenly principle and ablaze way.

First of all, we have to establish a man-oriented ideology, that is, man is the noumenon of everything, so as to protect human maximum

rights and interests. In this world, human beings are a whole, and human interests are above everything else. Some people are fond of thinking about animals, but on the other hand, will those animals think about you? Even if we want to develop harmoniously with animals, in the final analysis, we serve the fundamental purpose of how humans can live better. The other point is that human development should be based on the whole or each individual, rather than on which collective or group. This is to say, whatever you do must be for the whole humans, not which country, which nation and which political party. Within some countries, actually a fairly fair environment to profit has been created, but it is impossible that they are to the outside world, and It becomes unscrupulous to pursue profits. What fair or unfair is has nothing to do with oneself. Therefore, only by eliminating the existence of interest groups such as the states can each individual be guaranteed the maximum benefit he deserves in a unified environment. It can be seen that what strength the people pay in developed countries and what strength the people pay in less developed countries! But are their rewards direct proportional? There is also the protectionism of various countries, which is a flagrant destruction of fair competition, and

HUAWEI is now suffering a lot from it.

And therefore, only when the interests of all individuals are protected can we talk about how to protect the overall interests of all mankind. The open struggle and in-fighting among countries is undoubtedly the biggest culprit that harms the overall interests at present and also the main obstacle to the next step of human development of forward movement. As long as the state is not eliminated someday, the world will never be fair! Furthermore, how to protect the environment and ecological balance, how to use resources and share technology, are difficult to coordinate with one accord and act in a unified manner under the circumstances of their own independent governance. So, from the perspective of the long-term development of humans, the unification of the world is the irresistible trend and the inevitable course, so that we can forever keep a endless global village!

To be specific, state, party, nation, family and other forms of artificial collective organization are actually obstacles to achieving fairness in the whole society, especially state, which can be called the biggest obstacle. These groups can undoubtedly be regarded as communities of interests, and what is even more frightening is that fighting for these interests is seen as a duty-bound responsibility and even a supremely glorious mission. It is because of the existence of these collective forms that humans will inevitably be struggle with each other, mutual suspicion and confrontation in this state. Such as from the global perspective, this is also a manifestation of narrow and short-sightedness, and in the struggles again and again, the fights again and again and the wars again and again, the only thing that can be brought is the loss of both sides, the death of fish and destruction of net and the complete devastation. Therefore, this kind of collective “legitimate” fierce battles is undoubtedly the greatest destroyer of humans, and there is more no fairness among them. Although there may be a moment of success to

which party, but it also can not be long, in the alternation again and again, this is undoubtedly another unmeaning vicious circle. Also in fact, these communities are virtually no any different from the extreme self-interest groups established by the emperors and dignitaries in the past, and all are just organizational methods for grabbing extreme self-interest among groups. Therefore, if one wants to achieve the fairness of the whole human society and make everyone profit equally, one must eliminate these artificial forms of organization. In addition, only under such circumstances can the greatest energy of mankind be released, and it is also the most likely to overcome all objective worlds, thus ensuring the endless life of mankind. When all the human beings live in a unified and fair society, we will reach the other side of the ultimate happiness!

The word “reason” in reason-standard is the meaning of reason in the common saying “Do you have to be reasonable!” Obviously, the reason definitely does not refer to the reason of god’s law, nor the reason of nature’s law, but the reason of man’s law, that is, the righteous principle of man’s law; at the same time, it is not the fervid reason and narrow reason of man’s law. And the standard of this righteous principle is just whether it conforms to the common interests of all human beings, so as to completely avoid the phenomenon of grabbing extreme interests. In fact, it can be said unceremoniously that divine principle and heavenly principle, and fervid principle and narrow principle are the guise for a small group of people to grab extreme interests. Of course, another is to break the extreme phenomenon of the rule of man, such as the beliefs that “the ruler’s orders cannot be violated” and “it is the bounden duty of a soldier to obey orders”, and the status of the reason is higher than the law, that is, the rule of law is changed to the rule of reason. Therefore, the corresponding supreme authority is not the Legislative Council, but the Reasonable Council; and the arbitration body is not the court of law,

but the court of reason. The simplest explanation for this is that if a person violates a certain law, but the one thinks that the law is unreasonable, he can appeal to the court of reason. As long as the court of reason votes to decide that the law is indeed unreasonable, it can be amended at any time to protect the reasonable rights and interests of the party. All in all, when someone asks you to obey an order, you must see if the order infringes the interests of others; and when a law requires you to comply with a certain regulation, you also must see if the regulation infringes the interests of others, otherwise, you will become an accomplice to the encroachment on the interests of others, that is, legal but unreasonable. In fact, if there were no such “ignorant accomplices”, those “smart” people would not have succeeded. To be still the remark, only by ensuring the interests of everyone can the interests of the whole human race be truly and effectively guaranteed. We are all grasshoppers on one rope, and harming others to benefit oneself seems to be harming the interests of others, but actually ruining the future of mankind (Include himself). All are in order to survive! I dare not say where on earth humans can go, after all, there are many objective factors in this, but one thing I am certain is that when humans solve the existing subjective problems, one can accumulate maximum energy and conquer the objective world in the maximum possibility. Therefore, man must not be short-sighted, must not rush for quick success, and must not be penny-wise and pound-foolish!

Of course, my political philosophical theory is definitely based on my philosophical basic theory, and these two criteria can be said to be derived from the ontology and the theory of human nature in it. And of course, the generation of all these theories was definitely derived from my epistemology — integrated epistemology, that is, the plain empiricism of Locke and Mill, or the moderate empiricism (it is also different from Dewey’s extreme empiricism and Spencer’s mechanical empiricism), which constitutes my

whole philosophical theoretical system (of course, please refer to the book “The theory of Humanism” for details in future). The following might as well let’s first have a review to my ontology and theory of human nature.

First of all, from a historical point of view, the greatest philosopher is undoubtedly Locke, but although his philosophy can be said to be well-rounded, only lacks an ontology, therefore the world can never be unified, so this should be said to be the most necessary place to make up. I believe that man is the noumenon of the universe, that is, everything exists because of the existence of the conscious knowing subject of man (include other lives that may be equivalent to man), and both the spiritual and the material are cognized through the subject of man and thus give them their existence. In other words, if there is no man as the subject, the spiritual and the material will be nothing and have no meaning, that is, it will be a dead thing, equivalent to an unconscious dead person (once the subject has no consciousness and only his body remains, the meaning of the subject will be lost. It will become non-existent, an object that can only be given by other living subjects, such as remembering your life story), and also become non-existent. Obviously, in this way, man becomes the measure of all things, what everything is in your eyes is what it is, and only in this way can all things serves man. You don’t need to care what the world looks like in the eyes of cats and dogs, you just need to know that cats and dogs are available for you to play. Even if you understand their structure, the ultimate goal is to serve man.

For another, throughout history, who is also the first person to be truth-seeking and pragmatic through the ages? No doubt, this person is the Grand Historian, Qian Sima from the Western Han Dynasty! And he used his not only the most true but also the most beautiful words to break the mystery: “Everyone living in this world comes for interests and everybody living in this world goes for interests.” In this way, the Grand

Historian has unveiled that mysterious veil for us — What is man? that is, What is human nature? Of course, this remark of Qian Sima is just a microcosm, I have the special topic and chapter for the specific research on this, and now I only pick up the content related to this thesis and talk about it briefly. To be precise, human nature is selfishness and desire, but the main content involved in both will lead to the destination of interests spontaneously. Therefore, it can be said that everything is for interests, that is, the remark of Qian Sima, and therefore the root cause of almost all problems and contradictions lie in the word interests, and therefore as long as the biggest learning of interest relationship is researched well, all problems can be readily solved. If from the principle of the theory of human nature, selfishness and desire are undoubtedly a double-edged sword, which not only achieves the power of human life and development, but also brings disasters and developmental obstacles to humans. So, how to grasp this double-edged sword has become the key to solving all problems. That is to say, it is necessary to encourage people's positive desires, that is, to give play to their enthusiasm and fully obtain the interests they deserve; to also curb their extreme desires, that unscrupulously encroach on the interests of others by their negativity. Therefore, how to set up the concept of fairness and establish the law of justice has become a crucial prerequisite. And the idea of eliminating state, nation and party as the forms of artificial organization in order to preserve the rights and interests of the whole and of each individual is a manifestation of the concept of fairness, namely, man-oriented. All in all, I attribute human nature to selfishness and desire, its characteristic is that it will inevitably lead to extreme selfish desire in the absence of constraints, and the ways to curb extremely selfish desire in addition to establishing a soundly fair mechanism, is to avoid the great disparity in strength between states and states, nations and

nations, and people and people, that is, maintaining a state of balance. And how do one maintain the state of balance? This is just to provide everyone with the necessary learning opportunities, especially to acquire the correct and true knowledge, that is, Real Knowledge.

Finally, if we take a broad view of the entire history of Western philosophy, we can easily see that after Locke, there emerged another great philosopher, namely Feuerbach. In fact, the problem that Locke failed to solve -- the ideological issue at the spiritual level -- was the next direction and focus of philosophical development. And the person who thought most deeply about this issue after Locke was undoubtedly Feuerbach. His book "The Essence of Christianity" is a clear proof of this. Just like Protagoras, when Western philosophy lost its way and became preoccupied with trivial matters, he once again pointed out the correct direction for humanity. "Feuerbach believed that 'species essence' is a unique attribute of human beings, which lies in 'reason, will, and heart'. Animals only have a sense of self, but they cannot regard their species essence as an object. Humans, however, have the ability to take their species essence as an object of thought, that is, they possess a higher consciousness. This ability enables humans to engage in religious and philosophical activities, and it is also an important distinction between humans and animals."¹ Feuerbach's concept of species essence is undoubtedly a profound reflection on what makes humans human, leading to the incisive conclusion that religious and philosophical activities are merely artificial creations of humans through their advanced consciousness. That is, the existence of religion and philosophy in humans is the best proof of their distinction from animals, and also the best manifestation of their species essence. Feuerbach further proposed the view of religious alienation, which holds that "humans attribute their essential powers, such as reason, will, and love, to a fictitious, supernatural being -

God. The religion originally created by humans has instead become an alien force that rules and oppresses them, causing them to lose their own essence.”² In my opinion, this is the last ray of sunshine after the numerous philosophical shifts following the reconciliation between the bourgeoisie and religion. Clearly, Feuerbach wanted to carry out the revolution to the end, not just stop at pushing the bourgeoisie to power. Therefore, he further proposed his new humanistic ideology of “the religion of love”, aiming to solve social contradictions, build a harmonious social order, achieve an ideal state of life, and ultimately realize true human happiness. However, Feuerbach’s theory also has a fatal flaw, which led to the failure of his entire theory. This fatal flaw lies in his specific understanding of species essence. If Feuerbach had only regarded consciousness and reason as species essence, it would not have been a problem. But he also regarded will and heart as species essence, which is essentially equating humans with animals. Moreover, his attempt to establish a human religion through love is undoubtedly a huge mistake. In this regard, I can only attribute it to Feuerbach’s fall into the dross of sentimentalism. What is the difference between this love and the imagined benevolence and morality of Confucianism? It is merely a tool used by the ruling class to deceive the common people, a false and pretentious thing. Regardless, although he did not identify the truly effective solution to the problem (in fact, if he had replaced his love with real knowledge and established a new religion based on real knowledge as faith, his theory would have been perfect), and ultimately failed, his approach and thinking were at least correct. He knew the root cause of all problems - the deep-seated disease in human thought - and proposed a thorough transformation through a new religion, without the need for violent revolution. These views are in line with mine, it seems that great minds think alike. But after him, Western philosophy completely fell into

ruin, deviating entirely from the main course of philosophical development. To be precise, it began to neglect its proper duties, indulging in nonsense and becoming nothing but a meaningless game and trash. That’s why I say there is no philosophy in the West after Feuerbach!

Another is to regard the righteous principle as the rule standard for measuring everything, that is, reason-standard. Since we are conscious men, we will definitely be different from other unconscious lives. From then on, the way of natural law has become out of place, and the way of human law has arisen at the historic moment, but the essence and the dross go together. While the productivity is greatly improved, the narrow ways and fervid ways which a few people squeeze the majority of people have appeared one after another, resulting in a huge difference between the rich and the poor, so that the lives of the people at the bottom are not as happy as the animals living in the natural law. However, how can we break this situation? It is necessary to establish a perfect set of artificial righteous law so as to guarantee everyone’s due interests and to realize the maximum fairness and the ultimate constant development of all mankind.

Also therefore, the creation of righteous law has become the only way out for human development. This is also the most direct manifestation of the general guiding ideology of implementing “man-oriented”, that is, putting man as noumenon for everything. Do not believe in god, do not believe in nature, but only believe in man himself, and therefore how to build a man-made law well and grasp the fate in our own hands is the most really right way. In other words, if the two huge roadblocks of theology and metaphysics had not stood in the way in history, mankind would have realized the perfect world long ago. They are also like two big invisible hands, which deadly blindfold man. So now is the time to thoroughly debunk them and return the pure and beautiful sky of mankind! 🌈

(To be continued...)

Letter to the editor

Dear Mahi Pal Singh,

This is truly amazing! It undoubtedly marks a significant step for me from theory to practice. In today's world, conservative forces are rampant, which has led to progressive individuals and groups being marginalized. As a result, despite my theory being quite complete and mature, it has been difficult for others to accept it, which means I have encountered a huge bottleneck in the practical stage. But now this problem has finally been solved, and from now on, it will be smooth sailing and success will come quickly. As the saying goes, "When the road ahead seems blocked, there is always a way out."

In fact, the most distinctive feature of my theory, apart from its unparalleled correctness, is its simplicity and accessibility. This forms a sharp contrast with other philosophies, thus laying another solid foundation for removing the next obstacle. Seeing that you have published the letter I wrote to you together with the article is clearly a great idea - apart from making it easier for readers to understand the article and extend their thinking, it also gives people a sense of being there and a wonderful feeling! Indeed, I really like this feeling of innovation, striving for excellence and vividness -- a form that is impossible to appear in traditional academic journals. Of course, this once again encourages my original way of writing --making philosophy accessible to everyone, so that it can serve the public to the greatest extent.

Apart from this basic theory, my philosophy also includes an important applied theory, "Two Fundamental Criteria: Man and Reason". This is also my political theory, which provides a practical implementation plan for how to put the theory into practice and create a new society. It serves as a guiding framework and specific methods for practice. It is precisely because of its indispensability and significant practical effect that I am now sending it to you (see attachment) to prepare for the step after the next.

Yes, we have now entered the stage of promoting and discussing the basic theory. Although this is just an overview, it has expressed my main viewpoints and the essence of the theory in a simple and understandable way - it feels like achieving twice the result with half the effort. However, no matter what, it is extremely important to seek everyone's opinions, especially those of the conservative forces, as this will provide an objective basis for the next steps. In fact, your existing strong humanistic organization is a huge hardware advantage, which will save a lot of time for the change. After all, the beginning of everything is the hardest. Therefore, I believe that as long as the software theory is further refined, success will be within easy reach. In short, I believe that as long as everyone's hearts are united, efforts are combined, and paths are aligned, humanity will surely thrive and be beautiful -- everyone will surely gain the greatest benefits and happiness from it! That is, only by holding one's destiny and happiness in one's own hands is the hard truth!

The hope of humanity will ignite in the East!

Best wishes,
Mr. He Wan

Marxism Applied to India from Abroad

G.P. Bhattacharjee

M. N. Roy tried to lead the freedom struggle of India from abroad by applying the principles of Marxism, as he understood them. For this purpose he at first tried to analyse the position and role of different classes composing the Indian society. From the beginning it was clear to him that due to foreign intervention the Indian condition was quite different from that of Europe.

The feudal rulers of India were deprived of political power by the representatives of the foreign bourgeoisie. With the growth of capitalism the craft economy of the feudal system is bound to die but in India the craft industry was destroyed not in favour of a higher form of production within the country but in the interests of the industrial growth of England. The machine industry did not grow in India though its destructive effects were fully felt. In the words of Roy "the secret of the abnormal economic condition of India during a century and a half lies in the fact that with the machine, the effects of machine production were not kept out of the country"¹. As a result, the growth of the Indian economy became stunted. Later on, when the bourgeois class arose in India, it could not play its normal role for various reasons discussed below. Due to the abnormal development of Indian economy Roy analysed the position and role of five important classes of Indian society, namely, the landed aristocracy, the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie, the peasants and the workers.

To consolidate its foundation in India, the foreign imperialism naturally sought a social basis in the country the support of a section of the Indian population. With this end in view, in the earlier days of their domination, the British rulers created a new class of tax farming landlords" with more or less feudal attributes"².

This land-owning class, owing its rise to Imperialism, became an unconditional supporter of the colonial economy. Pre capitalist social relations thus galvanised became the basis of capitalist exploitation.

Roy's ideas on the role of the bourgeoisie in the colonial countries are found for the first time in the supplementary thesis on the National and Colonial Question, which he prepared for the Colonial Commission of the Second Congress of the Communist International. In the Commission two theses on the subject were submitted- one prepared by Lenin and another by Roy. In his Memoirs Roy states that he prepared his thesis on National and Colonial Question at the suggestion of Lenin who was much impressed by the conversation which he had with him on this subject. At his own insistence, Roy tells us in the same context, his viewpoint was presented as a supplementary, rather than as an alternative, thesis to that of Lenin. In order to understand Roy's ideas about the position and role of the bourgeoisie in colonial countries like India it is necessary to analyse his thesis and to compare it with that of Lenin.

The main point where Roy and Lenin differed was about the particular social force in the colonial countries that should be assisted by the Communists. In his preliminary draft Lenin recommended assistance to "the bourgeois democratic liberation movement"³. Roy, on the other hand, recommended assistance to the "proletarian parties of the colonies" and through them to the revolutionary movement in general⁴. In his thesis Roy referred to "two distinct movements" in these countries. One was "the bourgeois-democratic nationalist movement, with a programme of political independence under the bourgeois order" and the other was "the mass struggle

of the poor for their liberation from various forms of exploitation". In order to overthrow the foreign rule "which is the first step towards a revolution in the colonies", Roy thought, "cooperation" between them might be necessary, but he was opposed to the attempt of the bourgeois-democratic nationalist movement to "control" the other one. Here Roy did not exclude the bourgeoisie from the anti-imperialist movement but the problem was one of leadership. He argued that in the anti-imperialist movement the leadership should remain "in the hands of a Communist vanguard" so that after the national independence "the masses in the backward countries may reach communism not through capitalist development" but peacefully under the leadership of the class-conscious proletariat of the advanced capitalist countries, that is, the Communist International. In his thesis Roy categorically affirmed that in the first stage "the revolution in the colonies is not going to be a communist revolution". On the contrary, he said, it would include "many petty bourgeois reforms" particularly in the agrarian field. But from this, Roy contended, it did not necessarily follow that the leadership of the movement should be left to the bourgeois democrats. The foremost task in the colonial countries, Roy thought, was to form communist parties which would organise the workers and peasants- the revolutionary masses- in the anti-imperialist struggle.

As a result of Roy's criticism Lenin's thesis was modified and in the Final Draft of this Thesis the Communist parties were advised to support "the revolutionary liberation movements" rather than 'bourgeois-democratic liberation movements' as recommended in the preliminary draft⁵. OK Whiting thinks that the change was only verbal and in support of his view he quotes from Lenin who in his report to the Comintern Congress on the deliberations of the National and

Colonial Commission said that every national movement can be only a bourgeois-democratic movement⁶. On the same ground Overstreet and Windmiller also conclude that "to Lenin's mind the change was more apparent than real"⁷. The views of Roy and Lenin were however "markedly different in emphasis"⁸.

Explaining the difference Roy in a letter to Whiting wrote: "I did recommend formation of Communist Parties on the ground that, as a guarantee against the danger of the nationalist bourgeois compromising with Imperialism, the movement for national liberation must be socially based on the workers and peasant masses. Lenin believed in the revolutionary role of the bourgeoisie in the colonial countries on the analogy of European history"⁹. Both stood for the bourgeois-democratic revolution in colonial countries but Roy held that the bourgeois-democratic revolution such as the abolition of feudalism and the development of industries does not necessarily mean the rule of the bourgeoisie. These changes should take place under a government controlled by the working masses and the same government would gradually lead the country to socialism. Therefore, the working class parties should be assisted by the Communist International. Though Lenin agreed to change his thesis still it is doubtful whether he accepted the viewpoint of Roy and the change practically made confusion worse confounded. The change in the wording of the thesis did not settle the controversy and it has rightly been pointed out that "the root of the later catastrophe in China lies to this duplicity"¹⁰. Overstreet and Windmiller think that Roy's ideas as expressed in his Supplementary Thesis were possibly determined mainly by sentimental and personal factors."¹¹ As an Asian, they maintain, Roy naturally felt that the Asians were better able than the Europeans to understand the Asian conditions. Secondly, they point out that his ambition to

establish his leadership over the communist movement in India might also have played a part in this matter. Virendra Nath Chattopadhyaya, the leader of the Indian Revolutionary Committee in Berlin, also established contact with Lenin and agreed to cooperate with the Comintern to further the cause of revolution in India. The Berlin Committee had fairly good relations with the Indian National Congress and its leader Chattopadhyaya was the brother of Sarojini Naidu, a prominent figure of the Congress movement and a close associate of Gandhiji. If the Comintern should decide in favour of the bourgeoisie, naturally it would give direct support to the Congress leaders. In that case Chattopadhyaya would be a greater help to the Comintern than Roy because the latter's contacts were entirely with the Bengali and Punjabi revolutionary groups. Therefore, Roy opposed Lenin. This, in brief, is the argument of Overstreet and Windmiller.

A brief comment on their views is necessary for an impartial evaluation of Roy's ideas. Roy maintained his view of the bourgeois democratic revolution in colonial countries under the proletarian leadership (or hegemony) consistently for a long time until he gave up Marxism itself. Is it not more reasonable, therefore, to treat it as a theoretical proposition without trying to discover a personal motive behind this? If personal leadership were the principal concern of Roy, he should have sided with Lenin instead of opposing him. Is it conceivable that to oust Chattopadhyaya, Roy went to the length of opposing Lenin's thesis? Roy had to face this controversy in all the Congresses of the Comintern as long as he was within it. Roy's opposition to Lenin, unless it was fortified by strong theoretical arguments, was more likely to ruin his leadership and bring Chattopadhyaya closer to Lenin. Moreover it was only after the second World Congress that the contact

between Chattopadhyaya and the Communist International was established. On the report of the British Intelligence, Overstreet and Windmiller gather that Chattopadhyaya sent to the Communist International a programme of his organisation of Indian revolutionaries two months after the second world congress. Then why should Roy be so much afraid of Chattopadhyaya's group in the second World Congress and go to oppose Lenin to maintain his leadership? In order to justify their suspicion, Overstreet and Windmiller observe that Roy might have an inkling (hint) in Berlin that the Chattopadhyaya group would approach the Communist International for its support to the Indian National Congress. When Roy visited Berlin on his way to Moscow, Chattopadhyaya was in Stockholm and therefore Roy could not meet him there. He met Bhupendranath Datta, an important member of the Berlin Committee, and Bhupendranath Datta admits that Roy himself first invited Chattopadhyaya to Moscow¹². All these considerations appear to make the suspicion of Overstreet and Windmiller rather untenable. In China and Mexico, Roy had found that national Independence by itself did not mean people's welfare and this experience was possibly the basis of his antagonism towards the bourgeoisie. As an Indian he was certainly deeply interested in the revolution of his country but this does not necessarily imply that this theory was determined by racial arrogance.

In his thesis, Roy did not deny the anti-imperialist role of the colonial bourgeoisie but he stood for the leadership of the Communist Vanguard in the struggle against imperialism with an eye to the future development of the revolution in those countries. But his opinion on the role of the bourgeoisie in the colonial countries passed through a process of change ultimately giving rise to what is known as the 'decolonization' theory. In 'India in Transition',

published in 1922, Roy refers to a clash of interest between Indian capitalism and foreign imperialism, the former trying to bring about the industrial development of the country and the latter trying to hold India as a source of raw materials and as a market for finished products. This relation of antagonism continued down the First World War but "the war", Roy analysed, "opened up a new era for the Indian bourgeoisie"¹³, -- an era of cooperation between them and the British Government. During the war, due to her military pre-occupation, Britain, Roy argued, was unable to keep the Indian market supplied with manufactured goods. Temporarily, therefore, the competition of the imperial capital was removed and Indian capital found a free scope of development. Even after the war was over, Roy pointed out, the British Government which so far had persistently followed the policy of keeping India industrially backward found it necessary to change its policy. As a matter of fact, during the war and after it, Roy found certain developments, such as the appointment of the Indian Industrial Commission in 1916, the Fiscal Commission in 1922 and the Montague-Chelmsford Reform Scheme in 1919, as indicating a spirit of cooperation between the Indian National Congress the political instrument of the intellectual bourgeoisie to gain their economic objective¹⁴ -- and the British Government. Trying to explain these developments Roy discovered two basic factors of which one was political and the other economic. The political factor occurred to him first and this is explained in his book "India in Transition". The economic factor, which was fully elucidated later provided the foundation of the decolonization theory.

In the political movement of India Roy found, as we have already mentioned, the presence of two factors- one was the bourgeois class fighting the British Government

for its economic interest and the other was the mass of poverty-stricken people groaning under the policy of exploitation pursued by the foreign capital. Though socially contradictory, these two factors, having a common enemy in the British Government, might unite in the anti-imperialist struggle. To prevent this union, Roy said, must be the natural desire and purpose of the British Government. After the war the British Government did not revert to the old policy of obstructing the industrial development of India owing to the fear that such a policy might force the Indian bourgeoisie to make common front with the Indian masses in the anti-imperialist struggle¹⁵. Roy interpreted the various concessions, political and economic, granted to the Indian bourgeoisie by the British Government after the war as attempts to split the revolutionary movement. British Imperialism, Roy further thought, was eager to come to an understanding with the Indian bourgeoisie in order to counteract the influence of the Russian revolution in the country. "The plan of British Imperialism" he wrote, "is to encourage the Indian bourgeoisie and to terrify them with the cry of Bolshevik propaganda"¹⁶.

Until the First World War the British imperialism in India rested, in Roy's view, on two factors, namely, loyalty of the revolutionary landed aristocracy and the passivity of the masses. After the war the passivity of the masses disappeared and the country was in a state of agitation. As a result, it was evident to the British Imperialists that their domination in India could no longer be maintained on the old narrow social basis, that is, the loyalty of the reactionary landed aristocracy. Therefore "the necessity of widening and deepening the social basis of British rule in India by winning over the native bourgeoisie became imperative."¹⁷ The policy of concession was a strategy of British Imperialism to win over the Indian bourgeoisie to its side.

This strategy, Roy thought, cannot remove the contradiction between the interests of the Indian bourgeoisie and those of foreign imperialism. The ultimate objective of the Indian bourgeoisie was to overthrow foreign imperialism in order to enjoy the right of monopoly of exploitation of the Indian people. But this objective cannot be realised by the Indian bourgeoisie without the help of the Indian masses. Therefore, the bourgeoisie in their own interest wanted the cooperation of the masses by throwing the door of the Indian National Congress open to them and thus the British strategy of winning over the sympathy of the Indian bourgeoisie may not succeed. Roy observed: "The overthrow of the British rule will be achieved by the joint action of the bourgeoisie and the masses, but how this joint action can be consummated still remains a question"18.

The bourgeois class in colonial countries is, according to Roy, objectively revolutionary in so far as it is anti-imperialist but in a positive way it cannot play the progressive part which its counter-part played in Europe. Roy explained this point clearly in the Fourth Congress of the Communist International held in November 1922. He said: "The bourgeoisie become a revolutionary factor when it raises the standard of revolt against backward, antiquated forms of society that is, when the struggle is fundamentally against the feudal order, the bourgeoisie leading the people. Then the bourgeoisie is the vanguard of the revolution. But this cannot be said about the new bourgeoisie in the Eastern countries, or most of them. Although the bourgeoisie is leading the struggle there, it is at the same time not leading it against feudalism. It is leading the struggle against capitalism. Therefore, it is a struggle of the weak and suppressed and undeveloped bourgeoisie against a stronger and more developed bourgeoisie. Instead of being a class war it is an internecine war so to say and as

such contains the elements of compromise. So, the nationalist struggle in the colonies, the revolutionary movement for national development in the colonies, cannot be based purely and simply on a movement inspired by bourgeois ideology and led by the bourgeoisie"19.

In Europe the bourgeoisie abolished feudalism in favour of a higher form of economy and thus they brought about a social revolution. But in India, Roy pointed out the relation of forces is different and here in numerous instances "the rich landholder and the industrialist are combined in the same person"20. In many cases the landholders themselves, investing their accumulated wealth to commercial and later, when the Government allowed it, (for reasons to be explained afterwards) to industrial enterprises, developed as the bourgeoisie. And as long as the road to industrial development was closed to them, the native bourgeoisie who arose as a group of middle men carrying on trade on behalf of imperialism naturally sought to invest their capital in trade, usury and land holding21. The bourgeoisie in India, thus, unlike the bourgeoisie in Europe, developed in alliance with and not in opposition to feudalism. Therefore, the bourgeois-democratic revolution cannot take place in India under the leadership of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeois national movement in the colonial countries "should be given support" (leadership must not be left to the bourgeoisie) in so far as it is anti-imperialist but the anti-imperialist role of the colonial bourgeoisie, Roy pointed out, is extremely limited because of the danger of their coming to a compromise even in their own interest with the imperial bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie in the colonial countries, he observed, "are now really afraid that in case foreign rule is overthrown as a consequence of the development of this revolutionary upheaval, a period of anarchy, chaos and

disturbance, of civil war will follow that will not be conducive to the promotion of their own interests. That is to say the industrial development of the bourgeoisie needs peace and order which was given to most of these countries by foreign imperialism. The threat to this peace and order, the possibility of disturbance and revolutionary upheaval, has made it more convenient for the native bourgeoisie to compromise with the imperial overlord²². The problem was a ticklish one because though the Indian bourgeoisie and the Indian masses are two objective forces making for a revolution still these two factors are divided by class interest. Under such circumstances, the Indian bourgeoisie, Roy maintained, "stands between two fires"²³. It cannot fully cooperate with foreign imperialism because of the basic contradiction between their interests nor can it fully cooperate with the Indian masses fearing a social revolution submerging capitalism in the process. Which side would the Indian bourgeoisie prefer? In 'India in Transition', Roy did not give any categorical answer to this question beyond suggesting that "to rely on the national solidarity under purely bourgeois leadership for the purpose of destroying British rule in India may not be always safe"²⁴. Later thoughts however, would give Roy a definite answer. That was to be found in the economic factor.

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19. *Inprecor*, II (22 December 1922), p. 989.
20. M. N. Roy, *India in Transition*, p. 23.
21. M. N. Roy, *Our Task in India*, p. 49.
22. *Inprecor II (22 December, 1922), p. 988.*
23. M. N. Roy, *India in Transition*, p. 240.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 41. 

(to be continued)

REPORT OF GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING OF INDIAN RENAISSANCE INSTITUTE HELD ON 2ND NOVEMBER 2025 AT NOIDA.

The biennial meeting of Indian Renaissance Institute was held on 2nd November 2025 at Noida. About 20 members attended the meeting.

First of all, members stood in silence to condole the death of our former colleagues Shri Jayanti Patel, Ajit Bhattacharya and Sunil Kumar Bhattacharya. As usual the Chairman, Sh. V.K. Jain gave a very informative lecture on evolution of civilization with a particular reference to the evolution of Indian Society.

Then, Secretary, Shri Mahi Pal Singh presented his report on working of Indian Renaissance Institute during last two years. The Secretary emphasized the spread the ideas and principles of M.N. Roy's philosophy. He informed that two volumes from the Selections from the Radical Humanist in 2019 had reached 840 cities all over the world including 260 Indian cities.

The full report is available on our website: www.indianrenaissanceinstitute.co. Shri Sheo Raj Singh, Treasurer appraised about the latest position regarding court case of 13 Mohini Road Dehradun at Nainital High Court. There was very heated discussion about the continuous anti IRI activities of Mr. N.D. Pancholi and his actions were condemned in one voice.

The Treasurer also presented and executed audited financial reports of the financial year 2023-2024 and 2024-25. The reports were approved and adopted by the General Membership Meeting unanimously after some discussion and clarifications.

The Secretary then presented the resolution of political situation of the country which was adopted after some discussion. Then the election of seven Trustees was held and all the seven Trustees were elected unanimously.

The General Membership Meeting ended after lunch and vote of thanks to the Chairman.

Secretary.

The Integration of Knowledge

Contd. from page - (29)

It is the faith of a naturalistic Humanism that people of the highest order of knowledge, ability and social environment, will agree on the next major objectives for psychosocial development. For example, the 'rights of man' as enunciated in the United Nations Declaration are now being recognised, regardless of colour, nationality, or religion. A Humanistic ideology thus becomes a guiding field for the fabrication of a Planetary Democracy.

IX. Universal Ethics as an Ideological Field

The ethics of a naturalistic or scientific Humanism places a premium on intelligence —as opposed to an unintelligent morality which demands blind obedience to absolute commandments 'from above'.

Operationally defined, ethics is what ethics does.

In an evolutionary framework social values are not absolute; they are relative, but they are relative to something. They are today relative to the greater fulfilment of the present peoples of the world and to the welfare of future generations of mankind.

(To be continued)

Some members of the IRI who attended the meeting at NOIDA on 2nd November 2025



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We must learn to live together
as brothers or perish together
as fools.

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

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