

Realism key to development

Present world situation calls upon philosophers to combat blind dogmatism and irrational creeds and reconstruct man's institutions on more rational basis. The history of humanity has been a continuous struggle between rational and irrational forces, between knowledge and enlightenment on the one hand and stupidly, prejudice, superstition and factionalism on the other. The social intellectuals of the prehistoric age like Plato have also advocated government by people whose knowledge constituted the good and the true so that social and political life could be organized on the basis of justice. He wanted his statesman to be men of supreme critical intelligence because such men alone could eliminate through education, the darker side of human nature and guide man in the right direction. The present world situation seems to be degenerated into a sordid lust for power and into factionalism, intrigue and violence, creating highly unstable conditions. The intellectuals are our greatest revolutionaries. They are the real social scientists capable to mold men's thoughts and direct them into the right channels to establish human relations on a rational and moral basis. It is the age of science and technology. The old dogmatic beliefs and superstitious have no place in this society. We have to be radical in our approach to problems and examine continuously the foundations of the social system to see whether it is sound and whether the structure built upon these foundations is efficient, lasting and flexible, we cannot depend on the blessings of some unknown power to guide us in our difficulties and be mute spectators to the happenings. There can be no social justice if there is tyranny, professional and unmerited privilege. Most of these conditions are the result of the faith of people in the old institutions like racial discrimination, undue favor of the members of fellow caste, creed, colour or religion. The writings of Voltaire, Rousseau and other thinkers brought the revolution in France, they questioned all the major assumptions of old regime its faith in God, in the monarchy and scepters in religion. They were profoundly impressed by the British political institutions and the British passion for freedom. Voltaire vehemently ridiculed the supernatural aspect of the freedom. Voltaire vehemently ridiculed the supernatural aspect of the Christianity, the obscurities and dullness of the metaphysicians and the antiquated laws of political institutions of France and pleaded for tolerance in religious matters, admired the English system of government and philosophy and urged a rational approach to problems. It was, however, Rousseau who revolutionized world thought with his doctrine of popular sovereignty and made democracy and nationalism a most dynamic force in politics. The French Revolution with its slogans of liberty and equality and fraternity inaugurated a new era in history. There was no place left for old dogmatic beliefs and discrimination on the basis of religion, class or color. Europe, under the influence of these slogans became progressive and liberal and the spirit of

nationalism began to dominate politics till old empires, not only in Europe but subsequently in Asia and Africa, disintegrated. The world has always taken fast strides with the progressive measures taken and suffered grievously at the hands of thinkers who did not cultivate objectivity in their approach to social problems, and allowed their own preferences and prejudices to determine the philosophies of life. The Fascist and Nazi intellectual justifies the brutal methods to crush opposition and their creed and deliberately encouraged myths and falsehood as instruments of propaganda. Every scientific thinker knows that theories of racial purity and superiority are devoid of any truth, yet the Nazi intellectuals justified the extermination of the Jewish race in Germany in the name of presenting the purity of the German race.

Human nature and behavior is determined by its response to environment, education, culture and the indoctrination to which mind is subjected. There are no eternal laws of human nature and the elements of co-operation and competition are found everywhere in it. War and the policy of crushing others interests have been traditionally defended on the ground that they are in conformity with the human nature, which has been proved futile on the ground. The people should cultivate the virtue of humanity and brotherhood, instead of becoming dogmatists, instead of claiming to be in the sole possession of the truth like religious fanatics and justifying persecution of those who do not subscribe to their theories. The world is facing a serious terror at the hands of some religious fundamentalist zealots these days, who, for fulfilling their narrow religious sentiments terrorist not only individuals but nations together to settle scores with them. They fill up the minds of youths with a dangerous hate for the members of other communities and prepare them to sacrifice their lives in the name of getting a place in heaven in the other world. They subdue their own people and force them to their line, quite opposite to the wishes and aspirations of the masses. Such an abominable state of affairs, recently met its logical end in Afghanistan, at the hands of US and British combined operation, after they successfully managed to attack world famous World Trade Centre, New York, on September 11, 2001 along with the Pentagon, killing about 20,000 people.

India has splendid tradition of tolerance going back to centuries. The aristocracy of intellect occupied the foremost place in our social hierarchy but the men of learning among Hindus are still concerned with the interpretations and elucidations of ancient sacred texts, with the interpretations and elucidations of ancient sacred texts, with abstruse metaphysical problems dealing with the salvation of soul, the western education has introduced new ideals, new values and new institutions, the acceptance of which means a synthesis of old order our old superstitious, caste prejudices and the evils which have erupted in our social system. Our masses are still steeped in traditional culture. The traditional social institutions are still very strong and the masses are still faithful adherents of the old ways of life. The idealist

approach to the problems is still rampant. The realistic approach towards life and its problems is in gaining fresh knowledge of science and technology and try to be more capable to solve the problems by one's own efficiency and confident approach than to wait for some super-natural force or a favorable star to guide in your difficulties, is what is needed in the present circumstances. India need to come out of these age-old customs of looking for a favorable occasion to start a new work, to seek blessings of some sacred person or thought in order to expect success in a particular adventure. These are merely superstitions and indicate the weak intentions of a weak resolution to do a job or venture into a major adventure. It is only the confidence of the success in a particular event that keeps you going. That is the realistic approach. This is the age of reason, education and confidence; the people are better educated than ever before and have acquired the experience of self-government. The dictum "virtue is knowledge" is valid today as was never before. The architects of independent India gave India a constitution and five-year plans seeking to build a new civilization based on western science and technology and socialism through planning. It is not difficult to borrow western technology and achieve rapid industrialization and rationalization in agriculture. There is little opposition to modernization of the economy. There are, no doubt, some objections' raised on the modernization in life-style to the extent that the people get scrapped from the basic Indian culture and adopt totally the ways of western way of life. Here also it is lack of realistic approach that works. Dr. Radha Krishnan was modern India's most outstanding philosopher. He gave ancient institutions and systems of thought an interpretation which is in full conformity with the modern thought. We cannot success in creating a united nation while we still remain committed to parochial loyalties regionalism, Communism, catechism and linguism. Unless we usher into the new era of realism and try to forget the age old differences on the basis of caste, colour, creed and religion we cannot be able to hold a welfare state based on social equality for all/ How can we be able to operate parliamentary institutions efficiently and provide stability unless the people think rationally and discard their superstitious, irrational beliefs and fatalistic mode of thought. Unfortunately, our political leaders and their parties are exploiting this weakness of the masses, encouraging their prejudices to satisfy their personal ends, arousing their passions instead of leading them and educating them on the need of a new outlook. India is on the brink of nuclear warfare facing a country in her neighborhood which is a creation of communal hatred. Both the countries are spending thousands of crores on war-preparedness and have been running a cat-mouse race for the last half a century. The masses of both the countries are steeped in abject poverty, need and deprivation but the safety of their country is their top-priority need for a complete revolution of the human mind social, religious and sectarian fanaticism to a straight forward reason and realistic life full of love and spirit of brotherhood for fellow-man. The great nationalist but he had equal love for the people of every country. He defied narrow nationalists, at the cost of generating hate for the people of other countries. He was a great admirer of the

British for some of their qualities of head and heart but at the same time wanted them to free India from the clutches of their tyrannic rule. He was also a grate admirer of Indian rich cultural heritage and her people for their being able to adapt themselves to the changing circumstances during a long history of foreign invasions and alien rulers who tried to subdue her heritage according to their wishes. India and her people changed their attitude with every new influence but retained the content of their rich culture. Thus, this country has a tradition of adapting to new circumstances, as the time demands, withing the framework of her own heritage and it is hoped that she can serve ads a torch-bearer to the suffering masses of the world in coming out of the perennial irrational attitude, stupidity, prejudice and fanaticism and fight to combat blind dogmatism and reconstruct man's institutions on more rational basis.