



SRI GURUJI JANM SHATABDI SAMAROH SAMITI,
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ALL INDIA ESSAY WRITING COMPETITION

for COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY STUDENTS
ON THE OCCASION OF THE BIRTH CENTENARY OF
PUJYA SRI GURUJI (M.S. GOLWALKAR), A SEER & EPOCH-MAKER

Research-based essay of 6000 – 8000 words on any one of the following

Subjects

1. RELEVANCE OF SRI GURUJI'S THOUGHT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY
२१ वीं शताब्दी में श्रीगुरुजी के विचारों की प्रासंगिकता
2. SRI GURUJI'S THOUGHTS ON CULTURE & NATIONHOOD
संस्कृति एवं राष्ट्रियता के संदर्भ में श्रीगुरुजी के विचार
3. CHALLENGES TO NATIONAL INTEGRATION – SRI GURUJI'S THOUGHTS
राष्ट्रीय एकात्मता के समक्ष चुनौतियाँ—श्री गुरुजी के विचार

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SHRI GURUJI A VISIONARY



स्थापित १९१८ ई०

Shri Guruji - A Visionary

– Bimal Lath

The nation is celebrating the birth centenary of Shri Guriji - Madhav Sadashivrao Golwalkar - the second Sarsanghchhalak of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). He was a visionary par excellence. Active all through his life, a man of letters - an M.Sc from Benaras Hindu University - a science research scholar at Chennai and then a lawyer at Nagpur, a vibrant man of action who toured the whole country twice every year, a man of organisation who wrote a large number of letters in his own handwriting, an ascetic embedded with spiritualism, having been offered the top chair of Shankaracharya but who refused to accept it so that he could serve the nation through his social and cultural work - a sanyasi though not clad in saffron robes - every inch a saint of the Vedic order, an orator for whom the scholars waited to listen, a great human being whose identity merged itself with his idol - the Bharatmata. Many of us were fortunate to see Sri Guruji laughing, playing and speaking on this earth. Sri Guruji had said this about Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, the first Sarsanghchhalak, under whose guidance he had worked for some years and had realised Dr. Hedgewar's greatness and vision. We can definitely say so about Sri Guruji, a great son of Bharatmata.

We call a person '*Pragnya Purush*' who, while living in the present, can visualise the future ramifications of his current thoughts and deeds. Sri Guruji was one such '*Pragnya Purush*'. His thoughts, when rendered through his lectures, writings, interviews or letters, were not confined to the time being but were also beacons of light for a future when he would be no more. The nation was facing many challenges in all the fields of life. National integration was at stake, definitions of culture and nationhood were very hazy, economy and security were at peril, education and students were at a loss of focus; in this scenario Sri Guruji's guidance was outstanding. Not that the nation accepted them in totality, but now looking back, we find that when we have entered into another century his thoughts are very relevant and are a guiding force for rejuvenation and reconstruction of the nation - '*param vaibhav*'.

Sri Guruji lived his life when our country was passing through tumultous conditions, before independence, during the period of transition and thereafter. Being the head of a vast organisation, he carried a great burden on his shoulders. His colleagues looked upon him for guidance at every inch of the step. His detractors and the government in power

tried to block his way. He was mischievously jailed after the murder of Mahatma Gandhi, for whom he held very high respects, for no rhyme or reason and was later released with honour and dignity. It was only Sardar Patel in the government who valued his opinion and patriotism. Pandit Nehru behaved as if he was his enemy. This did not take away an iota of the energy and the inbuilt strength of Sri Guruji. His views were crystal clear on different issues before the country and the world. He did not mince words when he expressed them in many ways, through his lectures, his letters and his interviews. By God's Grace, all or most of them are on record and give us an ample opportunity to refer to them for guidance in similar circumstances. No event or issue escaped him. We are indebted to him for his views on all the relevant issues before the country, be it the culture, sociology, politics, economy, dharma, defence, internal security or anything that you name it. He had definite and clear cut views on any issue that presented itself before him and he did not hesitate to pronounce them since he had only his *Prabhu* and his *Bharatmata* to answer to. He saw the situation in its totality and not piecemeal and in fractions. A competent drama director does not see the one scene that is before him, but he sees it in terms of the totality of his production, whereas the actors on the stage are concerned with only the present. Sri Guruji had the whole world stage before him and he saw that scene in that total perspective.

When a child is born, he is born as a complete entity. All his limbs and sensory organs are born together. He has his head, hands, legs, ears, nose and eyes etc. all appended to him at his birth itself. It is not that these organs are attached to him afterwards one by one over a period of time. When we see a newly born child, we see him as one single living human being kicking and wailing. This fact applies to a nation too. The events and circumstances happening in the nation at a particular time should be viewed in the whole context of the country and not as a separate issue devoid of all connections. Sri Guruji could feel the pulse of the nation at any given time. However, what we see in modern times is that there is a chunk of people who either do not see the nation in its totality or even when they see, they pretend not to. Naturally, their vision is lopsided. When they see the east, they are oblivious of the west and vice versa. When they hear something, their eyes refuse to see the act. Even when they are doing so knowingly, they yell at the top of their vocal pitch to announce to the world that what they have heard is the truth and the only truth of the world. Many believe them too. Many a times they are also called by a pseudonym - '*opinion makers*'. We have to bear with

them in public life. In his life time Sri Guruji faced many such characters and politely but squarely replied to them.

Sri Guruji's life span of 67 years was a part of the 20th century. He was born on 19th February 1906 and passed away on 5th June 1973. Two world wars and the partition of our country happened during this period. From the records, we see this period as eventful and our analytical mind looks for explanations on various issues. Sri Guruji's views on such issues are before us. By looking at them, one can see that though they were expressed in that particular time frame, they are still valuable as a lighthouse in the ocean of time. Circumstances and events repeat themselves in one form or the other in every age and the guidance of Sri Guruji is valueless since it is based on the time tested Hindu way of life, called the *Sanatan Dharma*. Sri Guruji firmly believed in the principles of *Sanatan Dharma* and moulded the RSS activities in its pursuit.

The 20th century saw different experiments being made in the world politics as well as in the economy. The two could not be separated for obvious reasons. Capitalism had replaced kings' rules in a large part of the world. Then communism replaced capitalism in some parts of the world. Sri Guruji pointed out that both the 'isms' were born as reactions to previous rules. Both were based on a single goal for themselves, to achieve materialistic accumulation. They could not envisage that besides materialism, a human being needed something more for his peace and tranquility. Happiness can not be had out of collection of goods and services. Any happiness is not ingrained in the object itself but depends on the situation and the mood. A sweetmeat could be satisfying for a normally healthy man but the same would be poison for a sick person. Sri Guruji said that communism and capitalism both were destined to fail as both the concepts were born out of reaction and were shorn of the element of spirituality. Capitalism did not care for the welfare of the workers and masses, it only brought riches, strength and power in the hands of a few who were too selfish to share them with others. The man neglected the masses. Communism on the other hand neglected the man who became a subservient tool in the hands of a few who ruled in the name of a government. Man became a slave of the rulers. Communism talked of withering away of the state in the long run but not a single example could be achieved since it was not in the interest of the rulers. It was bound to fail. We have seen that Sri Guruji's predictions have come true. Recent history need not be repeated here. The powerful communist Russia has dissolved into many fragments and she no longer is communist. China, another stronghold of communism, is communist by name only,

private entrepreneurship is not only permitted here, but encouraged also. The crumbs of communism in our country like West Bengal and Kerala look for multinational investments day in and day out. They are also shelling out their harvestable lands belonging to the rural masses to foreign dispensations. One chief minister has proclaimed that though known by name as a communist, he actually is a capitalist. Sri Guruji's vision had seen through all these games in the early forties and fifties.

Sri Guruji had said that every country has to devise its own 'ism' based upon the perception, the requirement and the culture of her people. He said that our country and our culture did not pay obeisance to riches but to renunciation. The theory and practice of this country has always relied on '*Purusharthachaturtaya*'. The four '*PURUSHARTHAS*' are - *Dharma, Artha, Kama* and *Moksha*. It is like a river flowing between two banks. The banks are *Dharma* and *Moksha*. The river of *Artha* and *Kama* must flow, for a river is the lifeline of any civilization. But flow it must between the two solid banks of *Dharma* and *Moksha*. If the banks are too weak to sustain the flow of the river and it overflows the banks, devastation and misery are bound to come. Therefore, he advised restraint in all the worldly matters for all the people of a nation. Permissiveness, self indulgence and self centredness have broken the families and the societies of the western world. What could have been the '*Matrushakti*', has become a saleable commodity on the markets. The concept of spirituality having been absent from their dictionaries, they are devoid of the real '*Sukh*' (Happiness) which they were seeking in worldly possessions and through their political dogmas. Some in our country are shamelessly following suit without realising what harms it could bring to our nation and its culture. Sri Guruji said that the only 'ism' if it could be called an 'ism', suitable for our country's peace and progress is 'HINDUISM'.

The Vedic civilization has handed over the tenets of Hinduism to us. The saints and sadhus living in forests and on the banks of rivers obtained the '*gnyana*' (knowledge) through their meditations and penances and handed over their teachings to us. They were '*Mantradrasta Rishis*' who did not invent and write the mantras and suitably they were not called '*Mantrasrashtas*', as they saw them happening before them. We have inherited these mantras from them. Our *karmas* are based on '*Abhyudaya*' and '*Nishchreyas*', fulfillment, progress and growth here on the earth and the ultimate realisation and gain of oneness with the Divine. Sri Guruji believed that what could be true for our country, could be true for other countries also, hence, let us preach and give to others what we have - '*Krinvanto Vishvamarayam*', let the whole world be benefitted through

our efforts. Sri Gururji believed in '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*', the whole universe is my family.

We could argue that to live in the present times and to build our country fit for the 21st century, a thought on economics is one of the prime requisites. Very true. What could be the best model for us? Sri Gururji was not an expert economist in the true sense of the term, yet he had his roots firm in the masses of the country. Continuously he traversed the country. He was aware of their aspirations as well as of their shortcomings. He had the knowledge of the ancient history of Bharat where the foreigners were surprised to find no locks on the doors of our people. It was an age of fulfillment where thieves were unknown. Everyone was a satisfied human being. Could we not achieve it again? Yes, he said, to achieve it the formula is again the same - *Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha*. Artha and Kama controlled by Dharma and aspiration for Moksha. This could not be done by 'levelling down' (the communist jargon for slashing the rich). Sri Gururji said that every man in this country should perspire to do hard work to increase its wealth proclaiming that this is my motherland and I will be selfless in its progress. The political power and generation of wealth should not be in one hand, they have to be separated. Accumulation of power and wealth in one hand gives birth to devastation of the masses and unrest. Hence, power should be devoid of wealth and wealth should be devoid of power, both should be made to depend on each other under the close scrutiny of above board and selfless men from the society. He said that our Hindu culture has recommended such social justice systems where the wealthy or the man in power could not oppress the rest of the society.

Sri Gururji believed in the self reliance system for the villages. If there is dearth of foodgrains, the society should share the available. Artificial manures destroy the regeneration power of the mother earth, Sri Gururji recommended the use of the organic manures available from the cattle, specially from the cows and bulls. Many people go without food, for them our culture had devised '*Balivaishvadeva Yagna*' which means that first the hungry is fed and then others take their meals. It would be worthwhile to collect 'one handful' of grains from the society to feed such hunger stricken people. Small and Cottage industries can sustain the village economy, hence, they should be given preference over large industrial giants. He was of firm belief that a man's contentment was related not only to his physical needs but also encompassed his mind, intellect and 'atma' which could not be satiated only through 'economic

utilities'. He however, said that it was also true that in default of materialistic possessions, a common man's life could not be called happy. Therefore, a combination of both the materialistic and spiritual possessions could make a man satisfied.

When Sri Gururji mentioned our nation as 'Hindu Rashtra', it was not merely a religious concept. He explained - "The word '*Hindu*' is not merely religious. It denotes a 'people', and their highest values of life. We, therefore, in our concept of a nation, emphasise a few basic things : unqualified devotion to the motherland and our cultural ideals, pride in our history which is very ancient, respect for our forefathers, and lastly, a determination in every one of us to build up a common life of prosperity and security. All this comes under the one caption - '*Hindu Rashtra*'. We are not concerned with an individual's mode of worship". In this definition Sri Gururji encompasses all the religious communities, castes or genders. Our country is again facing a lot of crisis due to differences being mounted in the name of religion, castes and communities, courtesy the political bigwigs and their vote bank politics. Sri Gururji's RSS does not entertain any difference between castes and communities. One's religious faith is also not a constraint to rejuvenate our nation. Basic requirements have been well defined by Sri Gururji. Throughout his life by his actions, he paved the way for cultural unity of the country. He paid obeisance to any religious guru to whichever community or caste he belonged. Those who pay lip service and fan communalism and casteism should take a leaf from his life. He had with great effort explained that the '*Varna Vyavastha*' was a requirement of the time when it was practised and it had its great virtue as a socio service system and also for the defence of the country and it had saved the country from foreign crusaders' onslaughts, but now it has to be redefined to suit the present needs. This is a natural corollary of the process of progress for a society. The Hindu philosophy is not a closed book. It redefines itself with the change of time and circumstances. Sri Gururji saw a role for each and every individual who claims to be a son of the motherland to bring back the glory to it once she had. He stressed again and again that 'Strength is virtue, Weakness is sin'. Therefore, he saw great role for our armed forces and wanted them to be fully capable and equipped to thwart any attempt of aggression on us.

Sri Gururji's thoughts inspire us to face the challenges of the 21st century in their entirety, whatever form they may take. We can fall back on the documents preserved for posterity. □

Life Sketch of Shri Guruji

- 1906 : Born - 19 Febraury - (Monday, Magh Badi 11, Shaka 1927)
4.34 AM - Nagpur
- 1924 : Passes Intermediate Examiantion. Stood 1st in English Language. Admission in Benaras Hindu University.
- 1926 : Passes B.Sc.
- 1928 : Passes M.Sc.
- 1929 : Research Scholar in Fisheries, Madras.
- 1931 : Joins Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).
- 1931-33 : Lecturer in Benaras Hindu university.
- 1934 : 'Karyawah' in Tulsibag Shakha at Nagpur. Sangh work in Bombay for some time.
'Sarvadhikari' in Sangh Shiksha Varg (OTC) at Akola.
- 1935 : Passes LL.B at Nagpur.
- 1936 : Joins Ram Krishna Mission at Sargachi, Murshidabad, Bengal, before Dewali under its president, Swami Sri Akhandanandji.
- 1937 : 13 January, Makar Sankraman, Deeksha at Sargachi.
- Swami Sri Akhandanand ji passes away.
- End of March, returns to Nagpur.
- 1938 : 'Sarvadhikari' at Sangh Shiksha Varg at Nagpur.
- 1939 : 13 August, Rakshabandhan. Nominated as 'Sarkaryawah'.
- 22 March, leaves for Calcuta for Sangh work.
- Starts Sangh Shakha on Varsh Pratipada day.
- 1940 : 21 June - Dr. K. B. Hedgewar, founder Sarsanghchalak, passes away.
3 July - nominated as Sarsanghchalak.
- 1947 : 12 September - Meets Union Home Minister Sardar Patel and Mahatma Gandhi.

- 17 - 19 October - meets Maharaja Hari Singh in Kashmir.
Meets Prime Minister Pandit Nehru.
- 1948 : 1 February - arrested in Nagpur on frivolous charges of involvement in the murder of Mahatma Gandhi.
4 February - Ban on RSS by Government.
- 1949 : 21 January - Satyagraha Postponed. Sri G. V. Ketkar and Sri T. R. V. Shastri mediate.
12 July - Ban on RSS Revoked.
13 July - Unconditional Release from Betul prison. Arrives in Nagpur to a tumultuous welcome.
- 1952 : Andolan against Cow slaughter.
7 December - Submits a Memorandum to President Dr. Rajendra Prasad with approx. 2 crore signatures.
- 1954 : 21 July - Father passes away.
- 1956 : Whole country celebrates his 51st birthday.
- 1962 : 12 August - Mother passes away.
- 1964 : Vishwa Hindu Parishad established on Krishna Janmashtami day at Sandipani Ashram, Bombay.
- 1965 : 6 December - Indo-Park war. Participates in a meeting called by Prime Minister, Sri Lal Bahadur Shastri.
- 1967 : September - Offers Shraddha rites at Brahmakapal for forefathers and for himself.
- 1972 : 20 August - Inaugurates 'Deendayal Shodh Sansthan', Delhi
- 1973 : 24-25 March - Attends All India Pratinidhi Sabha Baithak at Nagpur
- "Vijay Hi Vijay Hai" - his famous last lecture.
- 5 June - 9.05 pm, breathes his last.
- 6 June - Evening, cremation at Rasham Bag, Nagpur. □

World Worships Strength*

– Sri Guruji

NOWADAYS in our country we hear a lot about ‘non-alignment’, ‘dynamic neutrality’ etc., as if they are our life-saving principles. But will they really help the weak? In the event of an attack by an aggressive power, how are we going to save ourselves? Shall we not have to throw ourselves into the arms of one or the other power-bloc for our protection? Then, that would indeed be the ‘dynamic neutrality’ of a football which is ‘impartial’ and ‘neutral’ by itself but is also ‘dynamic’ being kicked about from one side to the other! Moreover, in the event of a wider conflict, the bigger powers will care two hoots for the neutrality of the weak.

For Real Neutrality

During the First World War, Germany chose the plains of the neutral Netherlands to cross its armies into France in order to avoid the hazardous mountainous border between Germany and France. Germany never bothered itself about the protestations of neutrality by Belgium and Holland (the Netherlands countries) but marched its armies and trampled their neutrality under its military boot. If these countries too were armed to the teeth, then Germany would not have dared to incur their wrath.

The example of Switzerland affords a striking contrast. During the last war, Switzerland maintained its strict neutrality. The country is comparatively poor, but the people’s heart is vibrant with intense patriotic zeal, national pride and an indomitable spirit of freedom. The international rule is that neutral countries cannot be utilised as a corridor for the transit of foreign armies or arms during wars. Once during the war, English planes were seen flying over Switzerland on way to bomb Germany. Immediately, a warning was given to those planes to quit the air space of Switzerland forthwith. But the English, in their inflated consciousness of strength, ignored the warning. Then Switzerland, without compunction, shot down those planes. Later, England sent a long letter of protest. But Switzerland replied that she was a free nation determined to preserve her neutrality and if there was a recurrence of similar violation of her sovereignty, the same results would follow!

Staking Fact on a Fiction

But in our country a queer notion has gained ground that in this world

* Excerpts from Bunch of Thoughts - Elixir of National Life

we will be able to pull through with happiness and honour even without being strong, that just an appeal to the higher sentiments of man, to Panchsheel, or an appeal to the UNO will act as a solvent for all human conflicts. All such perverse notions are being paraded as universal truths.

Our leading personalities even preach to our army the virtues of ‘internationalism’ and ‘world brotherhood’! Once a military officer and another gentleman were travelling with me in train. They were conversing in Urdu. The military officer remarked, “Oh! You speak very nice Urdu.” The other gentleman replied, “Yes. I have studied Urdu during my school days. But now, as I have grown older, my love for Urdu has disappeared.” The military officer asked, “What is the reason?” He replied, “When I read Urdu or Persian, the picture that comes up before me in all their literature is some bul-bul, some Persia, some Euphrates, Tigris, but nothing of my country.” The military officer exclaimed, “How narrow-minded and medieval you are! Now the times are such that we should give up thinking in narrow confines of country, nation and so on. Now we have to think in terms of the whole world.” Suppose such an army officer goes out for war; will he be able to fight with conviction for the protection of his country? At any moment the ‘world consciousness’ in him may revolt and he may feel, “What is all this humbug? Why should I fight? What does it matter if they conquer? After all they are as much human beings as we are!” Then what will be our fate? Will such ‘world consciousness’ save us from annihilation?

Once I was addressing a group of elders. I reviewed the state of the nation and expressed my opinion that unless we stopped the rot from within and became strong, we will cease to live as a nation, Pat came the too wise remark, ‘What if we cease to live as a nation? We’ll live all the same, and live as humanity’. I replied, “Why, we’ll ‘live’ even after we die. Our ashes-or rather our entombed carcasses-will remain. For, has not science proved the indestructibility of matter?”

Effects of Self-Hypnosis

Such is the ludicrous and dangerous extent to which the present fads of ‘internationalism’, ‘world unity’ etc., has driven our country today. We are so thoroughly hypnotised by such slogans that we have become incapable of seeing through the aggressive designs of foreign powers who put on the mask of ‘world peace’, ‘internationalism’, etc., etc. They come and conduct ‘international peace conferences’ here, while they prepare world-destructive missiles in their home countries. The only meaning of

all their moves is that they want to draw us into their camp to serve as cannon-fodder in the future war they are planning. They, of course, want 'peace'. But what kind of peace? With them as the masters and others as slaves, they wish to sleep in peace and desire that the slaves should not quarrel amongst themselves and disturb the sleep of the master! And we, who have become victims of fantastic fads, allow ourselves to be duped, and pat our back on our 'progressive' and international outlook! Do we not see our people going to the so-called international peace conferences organised by the Communists, knowing fully well that such tactics are the thin end of the wedge of Communist expansionism?

The slogans and paper compromises like 'peaceful co-existence' and 'Panchsheel' that our leaders are indulging in only serve as a camouflage for the self-seeking predatory countries of the world to pursue their own ulterior motives against our country. China, as we know, was most vociferous in its expression of faith in Panchsheel. China was extolled as our great neighbour and friend for the last two thousand years or more from the day it accepted Buddhism. Our leaders declared that they were determined to stick to China's friendship 'at all costs'. Once, we had similarly resolved to win the friendship of Muslims in this land 'at all costs.' How much it has cost us in terms of our national integrity and honour is all too well known. The same history has been repeated in this case also.

Portents Ignored

We have forgotten that the ancient Buddhist China is now dead for the past few years. The Russian wizard has called a spirit in that corpse turning it into a fiend. And we are today witnessing its devil-dance on our borders. When it devoured Tibet and Pandit Nehru mildly protested, he was curtly admonished not to poke his nose in their 'internal affair'. Our late Prime Minister silently gulped down the national humiliation. From then on, we had been continuously paying the ever-mounting price to maintain China's friendship and the glory of 'Panchsheel' - the historic treaty of 'eternal friendship and fraternity' between the two great countries - on which solemn signatures of the two great Prime Ministers were affixed at the same time when the Chinese army trucks were rolling on the military road they had constructed in Ladakh and were grabbing large chunks of our Himalayan territory!

Dr. J. C. Kumarappa, a great disciple of Gandhiji and an economist of repute, after his visit to Russia and China had even in those days

categorically warned that in their eyes the treaty of Panchsheel was not worth the paper on which it was written. But our leaders continued to roam in their own dreamland, shutting their eyes to the glaring signs of the all-enveloping danger of Communist China's aggression. The Communists in our country distributed copies of a new map of China showing therein portions of all Himalayan territories - Ladakh, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and NEFA (indicating the five fingers of the aggressive fist of China, protruding from Tibet) - and of Burma. Our Government did not even confiscate these maps.

When Khrushchev visited our country and was in Kashmir, he declared, "When you are in distress, climb the top of these mountains and shout for help. We will always be ready on the other side to rush to your help." Let us not forget that their henchmen are here who may at any time raise that cry for help!

At the same time when Khrushchev and Bulganin were being greeted with unprecedented ovations all over the country and acclaimed as heroes of world peace, there was a Russian documentary film being exhibited in our country. The film opens with the scene of Moscow and the commentator declares, "Moscow, the capital of the future world"! If Moscow is to become the capital, does it not imply that the whole world must needs be under the heels of Russia?

The Washerman's Donkey

We are still unable to free ourselves from the delusion that our international prestige has risen high because of such pious platitudes. But what are the facts? For instance, take Pakistan. This flesh of our flesh does not lose a single opportunity to fling at us its impudent insults, kill and kidnap our men and officers, shoot down our planes and carry on a regular genocide of Hindus still living there. And now, it has invaded our country. Ceylon, a tiny country, is throwing out lakhs of our brethren staying in that land for generations. Burma also has followed suit. We referred the Kashmir issue to the UNO as the aggrieved party and in spite of our "high international prestige.", that world forum is now treating us on par with the aggressor! It is claimed that our influence counted in getting released eleven American pilots imprisoned in China, that we played a notable role in Korea and so on. Then, why has not that 'great international prestige' come into play in all these matters where our national honour and integrity are gravely jeopardised? Or is that 'prestige' similar to that of the

washerman's donkey whose fate it is to work all day for its master and then be driven out to fend for itself?

Our leaders often repeat that because of our policy of peace and non-alignment we are befriended and respected by all the big powers. They point to the economic aid that we are receiving from America and even from Russia. But it is the same America which is arming our enemy Pakistan with the latest arms. Is it a sign of friendship to feed us on economic aid like a sacrificial goat on the one hand and on the other supply arms to those aggressing on us? Much need not be said about Russia which has declared its 'unbreakable bonds of brotherhood' with China in contrast with its 'friendship' for Bharat and has often acted as the driving force behind China's aggressive designs.

In our simplicity, we take the words and diplomatic moves of the world powers at their face value and begin to flatter ourselves that we occupy a great position in the councils of the world. To give an example, some years ago Srimati Vijayalakshmi Pandit was elected as the President of the General Assembly of the UNO. But what was the ulterior motive behind the move of bestowing that 'great honour' on our country? Just then, the treacherous plot of Sheikh Abdullah to turn Kashmir into an independent state had been exposed. He had been dismissed and arrested. The intrigues of UN agents in abetment of that foul plot were also thoroughly exposed. The Anglo-Americans - whose tools those UN agents were - became anxious to devise ways and means to save their face and retain their foothold in Kashmir and bring our country into an amicable mood so as to continue their designs unhampered. And what better tactics could they have devised than bestowing the august honour of the UN Presidentship upon the sister of the then Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru? That was a subtle form of flattery and nothing more. But we, in our simplicity, took it as a genuine honour done to us.

A Lesson for the Present

Thus we find that the various high-sounding concepts that we have taken up as the sheet-anchor of our national prestige and progress have really no value in this world of hard reality. However, in spite of burning our fingers repeatedly, we are not able to overcome the infatuation for wishful thinking. This has been a curse on our people not merely now but for a number of centuries past. When Chengiz Khan was planning to invade our country he came to know that a large number of people in our N.W. region had embraced Buddhism. So he made a show of becoming a

Buddhist and then invaded. Many of the Buddhists here, seeing that he was their co-religionist, went forward to welcome him. The result was, Chengiz Khan could raise mountain-high heaps of human heads - all under the 'non-violent' cover of Buddhism!

Weakness is Sin

Let us at least now recognise the truth that for real national honour and peace, there is no other way except the building of invincible national strength. It is only then that the great principles that we preach to the world will carry weight and prestige. The world is not prepared to listen to the philosophy, however sublime, of the weak. There is an old incident which appeared in many of our important papers. Our great national poet Rabindranath Tagore had gone to Japan. He was to address the University students on the greatness of Hindu philosophy. But the lecture hall remained vacant except for a few professors! Thinking that such a poor show would be an insult to the distinguished visitor, one of the professors tried to persuade the students, who were standing far away, to attend the lecture. The students firmly refused saying, "We do not want to listen to the philosophy of a slave nation"!

The world worships only the strong. Before the last war, when England was powerful, our people tried to imitate and eulogise the English. But when, during the war, it appeared for a time that Germany would win, they began to adore Hitler and even Nazism. We know of persons now most vociferous in their condemnation of Hitler and Nazism but who were turning their radios in secret to listen to German news in those days with a sense of admiration. How elated they were to hear of the fall of France within hardly two weeks of German invasion! Now the very same persons worship either America or Russia because these happen to be the countries which shattered the military might of Germany and stand today as great world powers. The fascination Communism holds for many people today is mainly due to the show of brute strength by the votaries of Communism-Russia and China. That is the way of the world. Nobody cares a bit for the voice of the weak. Long ago our forefathers had declared that the desires of the poor and weak are just castles in the air.

उत्पद्यन्ते विलीयन्ते दरिद्राणां मनोरथाः ।

The Great Examples

Our philosophy tells us that man should be humble only when he is capable of humbling others. When can one be forgiving? Only when one

becomes powerful enough to strike down those who insult him. When should one serve others? Only when he becomes worthy of commanding the willing service of the entire world. We see this ideal in Sri Krishna who preached *ahimsa* in *Gita*, after annihilating the many evil demons one after another right from his childhood. It was he who slew Kamsa, reinstated Ugrasena on the throne but himself remained as the sentinel at the court entrance, welcoming the royal guests. It was again he who took upon himself the menial service of removing the leaves after meals in the great *Rajasuya Yagya* of Yudhishtira, where he was the person honoured with *Arapooja!* Such is the message of our philosophy.

All our great masters who have set the standards of our national conduct have always blended idealism with realism, the highest principles of human welfare with the demands of the practical world. There is an incident, narrated in the popular lore, which took place while the battle between Rama and Ravana was at a high pitch. Lakshmana, after killing Meghanada, the son of Ravana, had brought his head to his camp. Meghanada's wife Sulochana, who wanted to ascend the funeral pyre along with her husband's body, proceeded towards Rama's camp to request him to return the head of her husband. The soldiers on the side of Rama, seeing a beautiful woman approaching their side from Ravana's camp, concluded that she must be Sita herself. They were agog with joy and jubilation and were about to lay down their arms. But when Sri Rama heard of the excitement and the reason for it, he calmly told, "Do not forget that Ravana with his ten heads and twenty arms is still very much alive. It is only after walking over the dead body of Ravana that we can enter Lanka and free Sita. Do not dream of seeing Sita till then. Do not be under any such illusion." With his thorough grasp of human psychology, he had correctly assessed Ravana's nature and had concluded that the *rakhasa's* evil tendency was too deep-rooted to allow him to change under any circumstance and that his menace could be eliminated by the unfailing *Ramabana* alone. Rama's upholding of the highest standards of human life and his conviction in the ultimate sanction of strength were two aspects of the same character that made him *Maryada-Purushottama* (the ideal man).

And again in the *Mahabharata* Sri Krishna, on the battle-field of Kurukshetra, invoked manliness in Arjuna with the call:

क्लैष्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ ।

(Yield not to imbecility, O Partha!) Not only the message of the *Gita*, but

the context in which it was delivered, and the preceptor who gave it out, and the pupil, are all cast in a heroic setting. Sri Krishna, the preceptor, was accepted on all hands as the supreme hero of that Yuga. Arjuna, the pupil, too was a warrior *par excellence*, only next to Sri Krishna. And *Bhagavad - Gita*, the greatest treasure-house of spiritual knowledge, is the dialogue on the battlefield between these two great heroes of those times. This only highlights the fact of human life that the establishment of righteousness and virtues in this world of conflicts is not possible without the quality of fearlessness and heroism. Of course, Arjuna was not a coward. But having seen his own elders and preceptors ranged against him, he was riddled with doubts about the rectitude of his course of action. He did not want to run away from the battlefield. On the contrary, keeping aside his arms, he wanted to die at the hands of his adversaries, in a spirit of resignation.

यदि मामप्रतीकारमशस्त्रं शस्त्रपाणयः ।

धार्तराष्ट्रा रणे हन्युस्तन्मे क्षेमतरं भवेत् ।

(Far better would it be for me if sons of Dhritarashtra, weapons in hand, should slay me in the battle, while I remain non-retaliating and unarmed.)

The same confusion appears to have gripped the hearts of our leaders today. Words like "non-retaliation," 'peace' etc., are being shouted from housetops. Of course, there is a vast difference between the mental conditions of the two. Arjuna was a hero to the very core; while the protestations of high-flown words like 'non-retaliation' etc., that we hear today are put up as a smoke-screen to cover up our imbecility.

The Right Philosophy

In the world of today, whether one desires it or not, conflicts are bound to arise. Merely because we remain pious, does it imply that others also will be cured of their wicked tendencies? Can there be a greater self-deception than believing in such a palpably absurd superstition? The sacrificial goat which is peacefully led to the altar of sacrifice is, in fact, the very embodiment of 'non-retaliation'! Without the slightest murmur, it puts its head under the knife of the butcher. The butcher never feels for a moment that he should not kill such an innocent, 'non-violent' creature. At the same time no one dares even to think of offering a tiger in sacrifice- It is only the weak, docile, 'non-violent' goat that is pitched upon for sacrifice. There is a saying,

**अश्वं नैव गजं नैव व्याघ्रं नैव च नैव च ।
अजापुत्रं बलिं दद्यात् देवो दुर्बलघातकः ।**

(It is not the horse, not the elephant, and never never the tiger but the goat that is offered in sacrifice; even gods destroy the weak.) Such is the fruit of the attitude of 'non-retaliation'! Of course, we should not indulge in unprovoked violence. At the same time, we should also not allow others to do violence to us. Allowing violence to be done to oneself is also violence and therefore *adharmā*. Once a great Jain Sadhu explaining the significance of *ahimsa* said, "If you are faced with a brute force bent upon destroying you and you do nothing to protect yourself in the name of *ahimsa*, then you will have only encouraged the evil power to indulge in violence. You thus become an abettor in the crime and an abettor is as much guilty of the crime as the actual perpetrator." He added, "Intention, and not the physical act, is the only criterion to decide whether the act is in the nature of *himsa* or *ahimsa*."

The teachings of the really great ones have always guided us correctly in all such matters. Even a most compassionate saint like Tukaram defined compassion as:

दया तिर्चे नांव भूतांचें पालन आणि कंटांचें

(Compassion is protection of all living beings and destruction of the wicked elements). Usually the names of two great men are associated with the word 'non-violence'- Bhagawan Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi. There is an instance in the life of Buddha, significant in this connection. The commander-in-chief of a particular kingdom came to him to receive *deeksha* and become his disciple. Buddha asked him as to what had prompted him to become a *bhikshu*. To that, the commander replied, "Enemies have invaded our territory. I am now required to lead our forces against them. But that will lead to violence and bloodshed on both sides. I felt that it would be a sinful act. I therefore decided to relinquish the military responsibility and have come over here to follow your path of peace and non-violence". Buddha counselled him: "Merely because you have come away, the enemies are not going to give up their aggression. They are bound to indulge in killing and ravaging. If you forsake your duty of protecting the innocents under your charge, the sin of all that violence will visit upon your head. Protection of the good and righteous is verily a duty enjoined by Dharma. No sin will attach to you while doing this duty. So, go back and carry out your assignment." That was how Buddha interpreted the true meaning of *ahimsa*.

Gandhiji too preached in the same strain. Once when the Muslims went on a rampage and attacked the Hindus in Ahmedabad, the Hindus began fleeing from their hearths and homes. Gandhiji castigated them saying, "Why are you behaving like cowards? You take my name and repeat the word *ahimsa* parrot-like and run for your life under that shelter. My non-violence is not of the cowards, it is of the brave. Instead of running away in such a cowardly fashion it would be far better for you to fight, to kill or get killed." Sri Krishna has unequivocally and for all time to come declared that establishment of *dharma* implies the destruction of the evil-doers:

विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।

Sri Krishna himself was the very embodiment of that principle. No doubt he exerted himself to the utmost to avoid war and bring about peace. But he clearly foresaw that the ultimate sanction lay in his own supreme strength. When he was about to go to Duryodhana for bringing about a compromise Dharmaraja became anxious about his safety fearing that the evil-natured Duryodhana might harm Sri Krishna. Sri Krishna assured him that in that event Dharmaraja would get the kingdom without a war as he himself would destroy Duryodhana and his host of associates, that is the only right view regarding the role of strength while facing adversaries. To speak and act always in terms of applying force when it is not needed and when a just and honourable compromise is possible is inhuman and brutal. But to talk always of compromise and not to use force even when there is no other way out to undo injustice and insults is sheer cowardice and imbecility.

We, therefore, have to properly understand the true message of those great lives as lived by them in this world of hard realities. And the hard reality is that the world, as it is constituted today, understands but one language - the language of strength. It is on the unshakable foundation of immense strength alone that the nation rises and maintains itself in a glorious condition.

For an Invincible National Will

Where does this strength come from? What is that real and inexhaustible source of national strength? It is the consolidated, dedicated and disciplined life of the people as a whole. After all, the various spheres of national life are only so many manifestations of the innate strength of the people. Political power is one such manifestation. Military power is the well

disciplined, intensely patriotic and heroic attitude of the people.

It is on these practical and realistic guidelines of national conduct that our people can hope to rise again as a great nation. All our efforts have therefore to be concentrated in the direction of generating invincible national strength by making our people nationally conscious and moulding them all for a well-disciplined, co-ordinated and invincibly powerful national entity, which alone is the ultimate sanction for a free and glorious national life on the face of this earth. □

Bharat's Contribution to the World

- Shri Guruji M. S. Golwakar

History has recorded that it is in this land alone that, right from the hoary times, generation after generation of thinkers and philosophers, seers and sages rose to unravel the mysteries of human nature, delved deep into the world of Spirit and discovered and perfected the science of realization of that Great Unifying Principle. The penance and sacrifice and experience of hundreds of centuries of a whole nation is there as the inexhaustible fountain-head of this knowledge to assuage the spiritual thirst of the world.

The outside world, on the other hand, did not take to the study of this science of Spirit. Even to this day, they have remained extroverts habituated to study the outer world through their senses. The senses too go outward and as such they cannot lead to the vision of the inward nature. The Westerners, therefore, have remained ignorant of the knowledge and experience of the world of Spirit however much they might have unraveled the mysteries of the world of matter. Our ancestors who, on the other hand, crossed to realms beyond the senses could see within and have a glimpse of that glorious *Inner Reality*. □

Shri Guruji on Hindu View of Life

– P. Parameshwaran

Sister Nivedita in her foreword to the Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda wrote in the year 1906, "What Hinduism needed, amidst the general disintegration of the modern era, was a rock where she could lie at anchor, an authoritative utterance in which she might recognise herself. And this was given to her, in these words and writings of the Swami Vivekananda" (page ix - Introduction - The Complete works of Swami Vivekananda Vol I). More or less in the same words could be described the message that Shri Guruji gave to his couptrymen during the three decades of his Sarsanghachalakship of the RSS. Like Swami Vivekananda, Shri Guriji's ideas have come down to us mostly through the lectures he delivered and the letters he wrote on innumerable occasions. He neither had the time nor the inclination to sit down and write any book as such, though his skill, ability, scholarship and mastery over language for the task were unquestionable. To the question why in spite of his thorough knowledge of history, he did not write down a book on history, Shri Guruji's reply was typical. "We are here to make history. It is for others to write." In his endless travels, and meetings with people from all strata of society - rich and poor, intellectuals and illiterate -and in his almost daily lectures and discourses, Shri Guruji dealt with every aspect of life, both in their practical and philosophical dimensions. He was eminently qualified for such a daunting job.

These viewpoints have a unique significance. They are not mere philosophical treatises. Shri Guruji was not just an academic philosopher. No doubt, he had mastered the crux and complexities of the Hindu philosophy. But, as a down-to-earth, practical leader of men, guide and philosopher of a multi-faceted countrywide movement, he had tested his philosophical wisdom by experience and experiment in his every day life and contact. He never lost touch with concrete situations and burning problems. As such, his viewpoint, while remaining deeply rooted in the Hindu spiritual tradition, had intense practical relevance.

But, Shri Guruji never got stuck up in the problems and travails of the immediate present. Though he never failed to give practical guidelines for the immediate problems of the organisations and the Hindu society, he had always kept a long-term perspective and never swerved from the national and the spiritual angle. Even while guiding politicians who approached him for advice, Shri Guruji never counselled expediency or

unprincipled compromise. He belonged to the tradition of the Rishis who were the safe custodians of unerring wisdom.

The Mission

The mission, the destiny, entrusted to Shri Guruji as the head of the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh was to bring about national regeneration. This required a restatement of the tenets and practices, views and objectives of Sanatana Dharma in terms of the new Yuga Dharma, in a manner both intelligible and applicable to the modern generation. Moreover, this had to be done in the context of the emerging world situation. No country, much less an important one like Bharat, could live in isolation. The way Bharat shaped itself was of critical relevance to the shaping up of the world. Shri Guruji knew it only too well. Though his prime concern was national resurgence and reconstruction, Shri Guruji knew that Bharat had a global role to play. The international situation that presented itself at that time was one of great peril. There seemed to be no option left before the world. It was in the grip of two conflicting systems and ideologies - capitalism and communism - locked in a no holds barred combat, each claiming to be the sole custodian of a world redeeming philosophy and a model for humanity.

Many people falsely believed that the Hindu regeneration movement had nothing to offer to mitigate the distress or to resolve the dilemma faced by the world. To them, the approach of Shri Guruji was based on narrow Hindu sectarianism whereas the situation demanded an alternate worldview, which could provide hope and cheer for the future of all humanity.

Shri Guruji unambiguously stated that much before capitalism and communism were even thought of, our forefathers in India had been thinking about the whole world and its all-round welfare. The prayer on their lips was "Lokassamasta Sukhino Bhavantu". Let the whole world be happy. While the west based its philosophy on principles of competition and conflict, and envisaged survival only for the fittest, the Hindu paradigm visualized the entire world as one family. The highest that the west could promise was the greatest good of the greatest number. Bharat wanted to ensure that every one however small or insignificant had a proper and worthy place in the scheme of life. According to Shri Guruji, the different western views were incapable of offering a way of life, wherein not only human beings but the entire creation will find a safe and secure place to occupy. This is inherent in their philosophy whether it is capitalist or

communist. Both are compartmental and not comprehensive, because they are based on gross materialistic approach. Neither capitalism, nor communism that came as a reaction to the capitalism, could provide a lasting and peaceful solution because both were essentially materialistic. It was only the Hindu approach based on a spiritual view of things that could provide the real alternative. Spirituality does not compartmentalise. It does not reject material needs and requirements of man. It only locates and evaluates them in the total context. It gives a new view and vision of life, which includes both material welfare and spiritual enlightenment. Materialism does not ensure full growth of man. It indeed dwarfs him by abolishing the spiritual dimension altogether. For the materialist, whether a capitalist or a communist, man is essentially a body with or without a soul whereas spirituality envisages man as an embodied Divine spark or soul. It encompasses both the aspects and envisages a perfect or an integral man. Shri Guruji called him 'Poorna Manav'. This concept of 'Poorna Manav', which Shri Guruji invoked was the cornerstone of the philosophy of integral humanism elaborately propounded by Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya. "Integral humanism" was indeed a restatement of the Hindu social philosophy based on Sanatana Dharma in the context of the present situation which is posited not merely as another alternative or just a Third Way but as the real way ahead for humanity sandwiched between capitalism and communism in those days.

Not by Materialism Alone

Shri Guruji was of the firm view that neither communism nor capitalism could ever unite the world. The reason he gave is fundamental. Materialistic philosophy which considers man as basically a physical animal and which considers the fulfillment of material desires and wants as the supreme need of man can only generate competition and conflict and not Unity and Harmony. The reason is simple. At the material plane, there is only diversity and difference. They foster concepts of separatism and exclusivism. For people who see only at the level of material reality there is nothing that unifies or integrates. There is no reason why they should think of cooperation. It is only when we look beneath the apparent diversities that we come to realise that there is an underlying unity though subtle which unites all these gross entities into one integrated whole.

Shri Guruji stated : "From the materialist point of view we are all gross entities, each separate and exclusive in itself, who can have no bonds of mutual affinity or affection. There can also be no inner restraint in such

beings which can make them control their selfishness from running amuck in the interest of the humanity as a whole.

“After all, any arrangement evolved for achieving world welfare can be fruitful only to the extent the men behind them would mould their individual and national conduct in tune with the welfare of humanity. Without that supreme urge, any scheme, however good its purpose may be, will only provide one more alluring mask for the aggrandizement of power-drunk nations. That has been the uniform verdict of history right up to the present times.

“Our ancient Hindu philosophers, therefore, had turned their gaze to a plane higher than materialism. They delved deep into the mysteries of the human soul, well beyond the reach of material science, and discovered the Ultimate Reality which pervades all Creation, the one great common principle present in all beings whatever the name we may give it - Soul, God, Truth, Reality or Nothingness. It is the occasional realisation of this common entity that inspires us to strive for the happiness of others. The ‘I’ in me, being the same as the ‘I’ in the other beings, makes me react to the joys and sorrows of my fellow living beings just as I react to my own. This genuine feeling of identity born out of the community of the inner entity is the real driving force behind our natural urge for human unity and brotherhood. Thus it is evident that world unity and human welfare can be made real only to the extent mankind realises this common Inner Bond which alone can subdue the passions and discords stemming from materialism, broaden the horizon of the human mind and harmonise the individual and national aspirations with the welfare of mankind.”

Shri Guruji was of the considered view that the Bharateeya system was the only one which ensured individual freedom without compromising social development “The West relies on two systems: democracy and communism. Democracy, as we see, has led to the growth of selfishness and set up man against man. There is no peace to man. Spirituality has no chance to grow there. The self-praise and the condemnations of others which are normally indulged in during elections kill spirituality.

Communism on the other hand has led to the regimentation of mind; it destroys the individuality of man. But man is not a mere animal to be content with eating and procreating. He has an urge which goes beyond that, which cannot be met merely by the material things.

In our system individual liberty and social solidarity were both ensured. The individual was freed from the shackles of economic bondage, because

he was assured of a profession from his very birth. Even in the West, thinkers have begun pondering on these lines. This system ensures a clear way to rise to Godhead, devoid of the worry for worldly needs. *Thus it was that among all the castes, saints of the highest order were born. This is a wonderful democracy on the spiritual basis. All are one on that basis”.*

The Hindu Framework

Shri Guruji had solutions for every problem. Though his life was dedicated to the task of organising Hindu society, people from every walk of life approached him with problems of every kind ranging from personal to the international. Since Shri Guruji’s philosophy and view of life was based on the sound and scientific principles of Sanatana Dharma, his view and vision were clear and unambiguous. That is not to say that his opinions were rigidly conditioned by principles enunciated ages ago. Unlike the Semitic religions, *Hindu Dharma has always been flexible and adaptive*. Sanatana Dharma was basic and eternal. At the same time our sages had taken account of the inevitability of changes due to unceasing flow of time. So, principles of Sanatana Dharma had to be applied, not blindly and fanatically, but taking into view the requirements of changing situations. Shri Guruji understood this very well and gave guidance accordingly.

Society is in continuous flux. No social order can remain unaffected by the flux. The wisdom of the leaders lies in evolving suitable norms without sacrificing the fundamental laws. This has to take into account the individual aspirations also. Shri Guruji believed that the aim and object of the Hindu social order was to create perfected individuals -*Poorna Manav* - and then take them further up, lift *Nara* into *Narayana*. This could be achieved only if the entire social order is built up to create the environment suited to this. In-depth analysis of human psychology led Shri Guruji to the same conclusion as envisaged by our ancient rishis and scriptures. Man is in search of happiness. But he does not know the real source of happiness. So, he goes about searching for it in the external world under the impression that acquisition of various objects will give him the happiness he is seeking for. But, after innumerable trials and errors, he comes to the conclusion that after all happiness is a state of mind and it is within oneself to seek for. The temporary joys he gets from outside objects are not only evanescent but also produce reaction and revulsion. Unalloyed Bliss is lodged within one’s own soul. Along with this realisation comes another realisation that this soul is the same in every human being. So, he realises the essential unity of all. The limited

'I' becomes unlimited and engrosses everything. It is this broadening of the ego and its identification with the 'All' is really what is called liberation or Moksha. That is the ultimate objective of every human being. Such a liberated soul is a *Poorna Manav*.

But, then, this liberation is not to be achieved in another world or in another birth. It is to be achieved now and here, not in isolation but in the society in which we are born and brought up. *Liberation is not from the society but from the prison of ego and selfishness*. Such liberated individuals are the cream of the society - the salt of the earth, the true leaders and path breakers.

Shri Guruji believed that such perfection of individual is possible only if the society around him provides the congenial environment. Our ancient Hindu society was, in fact, built up with this as the final aim. Moksha was considered the ultimate goal of the individual. But, no one can attain Moksha unaided, at one go. The human personality is constituted in such a way that during its journey to the goal, acquisition of wealth and enjoyment of happiness are in-built necessities for a total development of the personality. Only then could one be qualified for the ultimate step. So, society had to make arrangements for the creation of wealth as well as opportunities for enjoyment. These were called *Artha* and *Kama*. But, by the very nature of the limitations inherent it is evident that there could be no unlimited wealth or enjoyment. Therefore, our ancestors insisted that there must be a law and a system which would regulate wealth and enjoyment in such a way that no one will be at a disadvantage. This rule and system was called *Dharma*. It is only a society based on *Dharma*, allowing legitimate scope for every individual to acquire wealth and enjoy life with restraint that can provide the atmosphere for deserving individuals to go beyond and graduate for liberation. Only such a society could be called a perfect society. This was the scheme of life, which was evolved in our country right from the beginning. These were called the four-fold *Purusharthas*. Shri Guruji considered this to be the cornerstone of an ideal social order. These have nothing sectarian or parochial. They are indeed universal.

Along with this, the four-fold divisions into four *Varnas*, and the four stages of life in the form of the *Ashramas* were also part of the Hindu social organisation; they sustained Hindu society for long. But now times have changed. Shri Guruji was realistic enough to recognise that the *Varna Vyavastha* and the *Ashrama Vyavastha* could not be practiced under the

existing circumstances. So, he categorically stated, "As the older, dried branches fall off a growing tree to give place to new ones, likewise, the society would shed *Varna Vyavastha* the existing social structure at one time and give place for a new necessary one. This is a natural process of the development of the society."

Similarly, the *Ashrama Vyavastha* also could be introduced with suitable modifications to the best advantage of the individual as well as the society. That would give occasion for the utilisation of immense amount of social capital which is wasted under the present unplanned, chaotic condition. It is encouraging to find that the concept of '*Vanaprastha*' is slowly catching the imagination of the society.

Shri Guruji was of the confirmed view that the Hindu social order based on Sanatana Dharma with suitable modifications has very great relevance today. It has none of the weaknesses of either capitalism or communism but has, at the same time, the advantages which they claim to possess. The Hindu social order combines individual initiative with social discipline. It does not stifle the individual like the communism nor does it place society at the mercy of individual self-aggrandisement. Shri Guruji believed that such a social order, if established in India, could be a source of inspiration for other countries as well.

Based on these fundamental principles Shri Guruji had also given us hints regarding the economic and political system which we should evolve in order to give free and full expression to our national personality and its aspirations.

Motherland as a manifestation of Divinity

Imbibing the *Rishi* tradition and carrying it forward Shri Guruji looked upon the Motherland as a manifestation of Divinity. This was a unique tradition from the dawn of history in Bharat. The '*Vedic Sooktaas*' have hymns singing the glory of the Motherland. This reverential attitude continued, uninterrupted through the ages. Bamkimchandra's '*Vandemaataram*' describing Bharat as Lakshmi, Durga and Saraswati was only a new version of the age long sentiment. Shri Guruji fully absorbed this. Every little drop of water from our rivers and every little bit of sand, every mountain and every lake - in fact everything related to and reminding us of the Motherland - was the flesh of his flesh and the blood of his blood. There was total identification. The various languages spoken, the various forms of worship followed, the variety of dresses and dishes conveyed to him the richness and colourfulness of the beauty of India's

soul. The history - be it one of sorrow and shame or success and joy reverberated in his mind with the same resonance as it did at that time to the people who experienced it. All these together constituted Hindu nationalism which was identical with *'Sanatan Dharma'*. It was the protection, preservation and promotion of this eternal nationalism that was the life mission which Shri Guruji inherited and worked hard to carry forward.

More than everything else it was this undying spirit of Hindu nationalism that was dear to his heart, because he knew that it constituted the national soul. Economics and politics, state and its administration, Constitution and Governance, all the limbs and organs of the state were, in a sense, subservient to this great ideal. Not that they are unimportant or insignificant. Each of them has a vital role, but only if and when it serves the purpose of the health and vitality of the nation. Shri Guruji looked upon the work of the *'Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh'* as embodying the national identity. Every other activity started by *Swayamsevaks* is meant to serve one aspect or other of this all-embracing national pursuit.

From a deep and intimate study of the history of our nation both from experience and academic sources Shri Guruji realized that the real strength of Bharat lay in its spirituality and Dharma. The Hindu society could overcome all the vicissitudes of history by relying on these factors. Her history was made, her socio-economic evolution was shaped, her value system was formulated by Dharma & spirituality. This shraddha made her capable of climbing the highest reaches of all-round achievements and success. Even in periods of decline and downfall it was these inner reserves of strength that helped India to survive and also to regain the lost glory. Shri Guruji also realized that this was possible only because India had produced an unbroken succession of saints and sages, who were known in our tradition as the 'Rishis'. Rishis were people, wholly devoted to the acquisition and spread of knowledge and its propagation in the society. They were the custodians of the norms, values and virtues of our social and collective life. They coveted neither power nor wealth. They scrupulously remained away from these two. That enhanced their moral authority and hold on the society. Even the kings and rulers paid respect to them and took instructions from them, not only in spiritual matters but also in mundane affairs, because everything had to be governed by Dharma. Being totally unselfish, the Rishis could be trusted to give right guidance at the right time. Shri Guruji in his speeches has often pointed out, how right from the time of Rama and Krishna, this tradition was

established in our country. Later on Buddha and Sankara, Vidyananda and Samartha Ramadas carried on this unique tradition. In recent times again it was persons like Swami Vivekananda and Shri Aurobindo, who were modern Rishis in the true sense of the term, that gave guidance to the nation.

Whenever there was internal decay of dharma within the society these Rishis came forward to re-interpret Sanatana dharma and propagated suitable value systems and patterns of behaviour keeping the living touch with the roots of our culture intact. Whenever the society was faced with foreign aggression or overpowered by unhealthy alien cultural influences, it was again the Rishis who made necessary adjustments possible while sticking firmly to spirituality and Dharma. The Rishi tradition was the backbone of this ancient society. It had to be maintained.

It was from this point of view Shri Guruji looked upon the Sangh. The main responsibility of the Sangh was to create an organized strength of the Hindu society on the basis of Dharma. It is indeed a divine work. It will invigorate every aspect of national life without getting involved or identifying with, any one of them. Its capacity to inspire and guide is strictly moral. Shri Guruji visualized the Sangh to play the vital role which the Rishi tradition had played in our society and see that the nation does not deviate from the path of Dharma. For this, it has to be above party politics and politics of power, above the corrupting influence of wealth, name and fame. *Swayamsevaks* as members of the society and nationals of this country have the right and duty to involve themselves and play their role in all the areas of their life and work. But Sangh as such would remain away and aloof from partisan involvements of any kind, only guiding by its moral strength invoking the national interests. This is a delicate and difficult job which has to be undertaken with great care and sagacity. Pit-falls are many and are to be avoided. By whatever name it is called, this unique Rishi tradition alone is the guarantee for India to be faithful to the national soul and carry its mission forward under all circumstances. □

* Excerpts from 'Hindu View of Life' by the writer.

The One Answer to Many Challenges

Shri Guruji's Last Public Address at Bangalore - February 1973*

The work of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh has been started with the one aim of building up an organised and consolidated life of our Hindu people. It is indeed a difficult and an uphill task. In order to achieve this goal, we have to first find out what are the obstacles and the problems which we have to face on the way.

Why Fight Shy?

The first thing that strikes our eyes is, that many of our Hindu brethren, even the educated and well meaning among them, feel shy to call themselves Hindus. Some specious arguments are advanced to support their view that they need not call themselves Hindus. I remember someone quoting Swami Vivekananda and saying that he spoke of 'universal religion' in order to usher in socialism and secularism! But the fact is that one can come across innumerable passages in his works wherein he exhorts us to stand up with pride and hold our heads high as Hindus. He has called upon us to proclaim at the top of our voice: 'I am Hindu'. Mahayogi Aurobindo has said that Sanatana Dharma is the essence of Hindu Rashtra. So we find that the present mental complex of fighting shy of calling ourselves Hindus goes against the saying of these great seers and thinkers.

A Myth Exploded

Secondly, we find that our Hindu society has been broken into so many bits and fragments. The countless divisions of castes, sects, creeds and languages, present a dismal picture of total disintegration.

About twenty years ago, it was thought that language was a great cementing force, but now that theory is exploded. People with the same language now want to go apart and carve out for themselves distinct political units called 'States'. This trend has been there among the Marathi speaking people already. The present upsurge for a separate Telangana in Andhra is also of the same nature.

Since the day Andhra Pradesh was formed, the complaint began gaining ground in the Telangana region that the coastal Andhra people were monopolising all services and economic opportunities and that the 'sons of the soil' were being thrown out. Now, what does this expression 'sons of the soil' denote? It only means that our people have begun to feel that

* from Bunch of Thoughts

they are the 'children' of a small region and not of the whole country. If this were to continue then each district will become a centre of loyalty! At present, the Telugu-speaking people are waging a sort of war with the Centre for breaking up of the present State into two or probably three portions. The belief that linguistic entity would be a homogeneous one is now belied.

Only Way Out

The only way out is to be courageous enough to declare a unitary type of Government by suitably amending the Constitution. The country is one, the people are one, and therefore let us have only a single Government, a single Legislative Authority. The country may be arranged into various zones from the point of view of administrative convenience. The zones may be few or many, that doesn't matter.

The executive authority may be distributed, but the legislative authority should be one. There are some who say that many provinces and provincial legislatures are necessary to satisfy the demands of democracy. I have not been able to understand what connection there is between democracy and having many legislatures. One Central Legislature for the whole of the country should satisfy the demands of democracy.

The Lesser Evil

However, as things are, the persons at the helm of affairs seem unable to muster courage to opt for the Unitary State. Then, if the present federal structure has to continue, it is essential that definite principles must be formulated by all and they must be stuck to.

If there are smaller units, with language as only one of the basic factors and not as the sole deciding criterion, then that should be welcome. States with more than one language in each, or more than one state with the same language, may be formed keeping in view the overall national interests. Smaller units need not be always harmful.

Beware of This Dangerous Precedent

As a matter of fact, tiny states have been formed in the old province of Assam where it is positively harmful. The British had kept the so-called NEFA separate from the rest of Assam. The same tradition is being carried forward by our Government also. Now NEFA has been given a different name so that its separate entity has been confirmed. Apart from that, under pressure or what I do not know, a small state called Meghalaya round about Shillong, and another, Mizoram, have been formed. These are

economically bankrupt; in fact, they cannot help being bankrupt, so small is their population. Breaking up of that province into so many parts has in a way weakened our position in that border area which has been the seat of trouble from China since 1962.

The Painful Spectacle

What a painful spectacle these agitations and violent demonstrations in one name or the other, present! And what a great havoc is being wrought by the various forces of disruption! The idea of belonging to one single country seems to have been entirely lost sight of. There is a widespread feeling that people in the South have nothing in common with those in the North. Rudyard Kipling wrote, "East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet." However, now, East and West are meeting on cultural and scientific grounds. But in our own country, where we have all along been one people for thousands of years, to say that 'North is North, South is South and never can they meet' - how extremely unfortunate it is!

The Multi-Faced Crisis

Added to these forces of disruption, is the corroding evil of corruption rampant everywhere. There is a crisis of character. Everyone knows this, everyone speaks of it. In fact talk about corruption is so widespread that our sensitivity to it seems to have become dulled. Even when we see it, we don't feel revulsion at it, our conscience is not roused.

When a country falls low in character its very existence as an honorable and free nation is imperilled. We see such conditions existing in our country today. Some of our leaders at the top have said that the American secret agency - CIA - is active in our country, trying to disrupt our national life. Suppose it is. How can such agencies - whether of America or Russia - act unless some of our own citizens play into their hands? Either they must be on their payroll or under their influence in one way or the other.

A Sweet Poison

Praise is also one such way of influencing. And there are subtle ways of praise too. Recently news appeared in papers that a certain institute of town planners and architects in France pronounced that Chandigarh was the best city in the whole of the world. I think they had given it a certificate of honour also. If they had said only that much, we would have had no objection. Because, after all, Chandigarh has been planned by French architects and town planners, and if they think that it is the best town

planned, it is quite natural. But in the same breath it has been said that it was all due to the foresight and the dynamic personality of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, which qualities are now being manifested in his daughter, the present Prime Minister. What a fine, sweet way of flattery! Let us hope that our Prime Minister will refuse to be flattered. That will be in keeping with our great tradition, of not falling a prey to praise or flattery, and keeping on a strong and balanced mind.

We do not know how many more ways of flattery are being practised upon our people by others! After all, human mind is weak and if persons in high authority succumb to it, harm is bound to befall us. We should bear in mind that succumbing to flattery is also lack of character.

Can There be Still Lower Depths ?

The painful experience that we have come across during the famine relief measures in several parts of the country at different times is a glaring example of the low depths of character to which we have sunk. Whatever help the Government or the other agencies mobilise for the sake of the famine-stricken people, does not always reach them. The 'middle-men' swallow up a substantial part. Last year, much help came from foreign countries also for the refugees from East Bengal in the form of drugs, woollen rugs and blankets. But most of them did not reach the refugees at all. They were sold in the markets of Calcutta. However, the authorities have not tried to catch hold of those who had indulged in such nefarious business and had enriched themselves at the cost of their suffering brethren. If a probe had been undertaken, probably some of the secrets of our corrupt political life would have come to light. To what a low condition have we degraded ourselves, that when some are dying for want of food, others should be fattening themselves at their cost! With such a corrupt people no nation can ever hope to rise. This is the great challenge - the challenge of 'Crisis of Character'.

Old Problem Renewed

Now, an old problem has once again raised its head.

During the freedom struggle, as we know, persons professing a faith not born out of the Hindu family of faiths, objected to the singing of *Vande Mataram*, the song which inspired our freedom-fighters to sacrifice their all in the cause of national liberation. As a result, this beautiful song was mutilated by our own leaders, and only the first few lines were allowed to be sung. Even now, the same thing continues except in the meetings

conducted by such persons as are wholly devoted to the Motherland as the very manifestation of the Divine Mother. Recently, a few Muslim gentlemen, some of them belonging to the ruling party also, have objected to the singing of the present fraction of *Vande Mataram* in the Urdu Schools of Bombay Corporation. All these years, schools teaching in any language, Urdu, Hindi, Marathi or Gujarati, have been singing this song.

A Suicidal Support

There was a report that the General Secretary of the Ruling Congress has also supported this objection of the Muslims. If the report is true, and the powers that be give a directive that the singing of *Vande Mataram* will be optional, then it will be a wilful attempt at suppressing patriotic feelings among the people. Such suppression is bound to harm the country. If the episode is allowed to pass off without taking a serious view of it, we can be sure that throughout the country impetus will be given to the communal feeling on the part of the non-Hindus.

In the present incident, unfortunately, no leader at the Centre has come forward to condemn the opposition to *Vande Mataram*. Not even those who are now trying to reform the Muslim society have come out with an unequivocal statement to that effect. I think that all the political parties, including the ruling party, should take a strong stand and declare that those who refuse to sing *Vande Mataram* shall have no place in the party. That will help creating an atmosphere of 'mother and child' relationship between our country and all the communities living here.

Manifest the Inherent

As the present conditions stand, it is clear that it is only the Hindu who feels that this country is his adored Motherland. This feeling is in his blood. For generations, he has been worshipping the dust of this sacred soil. Whatever auspicious work he takes in hand, he starts with *Bhoomi Poojana*. This ingrained devotion in us has to be made alive once again and the entire Hindu People made to feel that they are the children of the same soil and, as such, are brothers to one another.

We are nowadays trying to establish fraternal relations with all sorts of people in the world - the Russians, Chinese, Japanese, Arabs, the Americans and whom not - but within ourselves we are engaged in a fratricidal conflict! This is a very incongruous situation which must be corrected. We must learn once again the lesson that from North to South and East to West, to whatever sect, caste or language we may belong, we are one

single brotherhood, the children of the same Mother, with the same blood coursing through our veins. The integrated oneness of our people can manifest only as a result of this realisation. Mere economic or political adjustments here and there, some patchwork theories won't be able to create such abiding oneness.

Evidence of the 'High'

There are some persons in our country who say that all ancient things like our heritage, traditions, etc., are anachronisms in the present times and must be thrown into the dustbin of oblivion. But even they, when circumstances force them, cannot help singing the glory of our past. When there was war on the issue of Bangladesh, our Prime Minister - socialistic, secular etc., as she calls herself, and others also like to call her - could not but say that we have a glorious heritage of five thousand years and that we are not going to be brow-beaten by anyone. I was particularly happy that the Prime Minister voiced the sentiments propagated by the RSS all these years, as if she were also one of its members!

Cost of Denial of Truth

This idea that the Hindu People are the *Rashtra* here is a historical truth. To deny truth is not going to do us any good in this world. However, this truth has been sought to be denied for the past so many decades in a vain bid to bring the various non-Hindu communities into the mainstream of national life. Not only that but even the expression of that truth is made out to be against our country's interests. One fails to understand how the expression of truth can be against the national interest.

Truth is truth. It must be spoken, expressed and experienced; it must be lived up to. Unless we do this, real national integration of the people as a whole, even among the Hindus, will never be realised. As a matter of fact, even such Muslims and Christians who are really well-meaning and patriotic at heart and are not ridden by old dreams of their empires, do accept that this has been a Hindu land for thousands of years and its national ethos is the Hindu ethos. They are also aware that this national ethos in no way militates against their individual religions. But unfortunately, such persons are very few and are also not vocal. Probably they are not listened to by their coreligionists.

Responsibility is Ours

If once all the Hindus, whatever their political and other denominations, decide to stand shoulder to shoulder in a concerted manner as one national

entity right from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari and from Dwaraka to Manipur, then all those others who have been living in this country will also learn to respect the Mother and the national entity here. Keeping their own faiths intact they will be able to become useful members of this great nation.

Hence, the RSS has been emphasising that the revitalization of the truth of our national existence alone will be able to inspire our people for unified and dedicated efforts in the cause of the nation. That alone will make our nation march forward with strength and confidence holding its head high amidst all the turmoils and conflicts surrounding us in the world. □

Shri Guruji inspired many social activities

– Dr. N. K. Trikha

Whenever an honest evaluation of the contribution and impact of the social vision of Madhav Sadashivrao Golwalkar (Shri Guruji) will be attempted by even his worst critics seething with inveterate hatred and prejudice, they will be simply stunned by the sublimity of his concern and devotion for the cause of the poor and the deprived, the socially neglected and shunned part of the society, the industrial worker and even the helpless women working as domestic help.

This side of his personality and thought has never been brought out by the intellectuals who have always tended to assess and present him only within the frame of the Hindu-Muslim question or the much-maligned so-called 'Hindu conservatism.

Shri Guruji's tireless pursuit for social integration and harmony by invoking and applying the fundamental Indian philosophy of oneness of the humankind and instilling a sense of pride in the greatness of the whole Indian society will also be found to have a little parallel in contemporary history. In this pursuit, he covered the whole of India more than 60 times in the 33 years he served as the Sar Sanghchalak of the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS).

When the BJP swept the polls in the tribal areas of Chhatisgarh, Madhya Pradesh or Orissa, its opponents and the county's self-styled 'expert' political analysts were shell-shocked with disbelief. They were at a loss to find a radical reason for this and interpreted it as an event caused by some immediate political factors rather than the result of a process initiated in the mould of the social vision and guidance of Shri Guruji to selflessly serve the Vanvasis.

Thousands of different kinds of service projects run by the Bharatiya Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram, Sewa Bharati, Vidya Bharati, Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad, Bharat Vikas Parishad, Vishwa Hindu Parishad etc. keep reinforcing this process. All of these serve the poor and needy people in remote villages, tribal and hilly areas, and urban slums.

What is this social vision of Shri guruji? Shri Guruji believed that the answer to social problems was available in the Indian concept of society. This concept is fundamentally different from that prevailing in the West, where society is a collective of individual interests and their relationship

is of a social contract with it. But, in the ancient Indian thought, the whole society was perceived as one living body. The society was the manifestation of the divine. It was a *virat samaj purush*. The individuals were asked to worship it. It was said that a common consciousness of oneness runs through all members of the society. All individuals are imbued fully with this consciousness being part of one big body. All have one common existence. Hence, each individual must care for the other.

Shri Guruji said that it was our duty to awaken this inner feeling of oneness in every human being. In such a situation everyone will think of the good of the other along with or before his own good. Each one should accept that what is left with him after fulfilling his legitimate needs belongs to the whole society. If today we see poverty all over the country, it is the result of our having abandoned in practice this basic Hindu thought about the society. But, we must now prove by our conduct this great concept true for progress in all walks of life.

He said that it was our bounden duty to go and work among our deprived brethren and do our best to lift their standards of living. We should plan and implement schemes that would provide them with minimum needs of life. We should open schools, hostels and training centres for them. We should mix with them, eat with them, treat them with natural affection and display unalloyed feeling of oneness with them. We should offer prayers to God together with them, without consideration of social status. In serving the people, there should be no discrimination whatsoever. All the needy whatever they are, Hindus or Muslims or Christians, must be served equally well - more particularly during natural calamities that make no distinction among their victims.

The basic tenet of this essentially Hindu philosophy about society is that we are all sons and daughters of the society and, therefore, we cannot but have the natural sentiment and instinct of total social harmony. Consequently, Shri Guruji's fundamental approach to all social questions - be it the question of the linguistic differences in Punjab till the sixties, the problem of untouchability, exploitation of labour and other aspects of industrial relations, or even economic and political ideologies - was based on this philosophy.

It is this that made him to guide the Hindus of Punjab before the Census of 1961 in a manner that many of them felt deeply frustrated and in the first flush of emotions expressed their resentment over it. This was in the midst of a serious situation of social strife in the State when sentiments

were running high due to the Akali Dal's agitation for carving out of a Punjabi Suba on the one hand and the Hindu bodies' agitation for Maha Punjab on the other.

To many thinkers, it was being bold and courageous on the part of Shri Guruji to do so. But to him, it was the natural and the only right approach to the vexatious question as to what language should the Hindus of Punjab register as their mother tongue in the census. Shri Guruji not only asked the Hindus to declare Punjabi as their mother tongue, but also advised the Sikhs to write Hindu as their religion, as they shared the same religious, cultural and social traditions and ethos.

On the question of untouchability, he brought the dharmacharyas of all Hindu sects together, first at the Vishwa Hindu Parishad's conference in Udupi (Karnataka) in 1969 and later at Prayag (Allahabad), where they pledged to eliminate the ills of untouchability and divisive tendencies of casteism and classism and work for promoting the complete harmony in the Hindu society. The founding of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad under his initiative and guidance was itself a kind of a marvel that brought all religious leaders including one of the strongest Akali leaders Master Tara Singh on one platform.

He once referred to the treatment being meted out by the Indian plantation owners to workers in their tea gardens and stressed the need for human approach towards them besides paying them the right wages. He had no hesitation in approvingly giving the example of the personal approach that some of the foreign plantation owners had been displaying towards their workers. It was time, he said, that the tea producers and other industrialists realised their duty towards their large work force. To wipe out the tears from the eyes of these economically and socially exploited brethren, the feeling of caring affection and sense of belonging to one human community was essential on the part of the employers. Shri Guruji disagreed with those owners who thought that leniency towards the employees makes them take undue advantage of it. This idea was misplaced and counter-productive. On the contrary, the worker would put his best foot forward for them if he got the feeling of being genuinely cared for.

On another occasion, Shri Guruji depicted the scene of a female domestic help having to continue to work while her little child keeps crying due to neglect but the man and the lady of the house do not ask her even to take a short break to soothe the child. He said it is our first

duty to the nation to make our social life healthy in all respects, even in these little details.

Shri Guruji's approach on corruption and moral integrity may appear unconventional, but how humane it was, can be seen from what he said about it. Once a Sadhu met him who had taken upon himself the good job of preaching peons and clerks in government offices against the evil of taking bribe. Shri Guruji told him bribery was bad, but why tell only the poor peon who is economically weak and may have to feed a big family with his small earning? Why not preach the higher ups also? "Go to them and see if they can be reformed."

He believed that if the people higher up were moral and honest, then integrity and morality would progressively percolate down to the lowest level. Character building should start from the above and the provision of the physical needs should begin from below. I do not care if the people at the top remain hungry, but those who sweat day and night simply to survive, must be fed and nourished."

No doubt, then Shri Guruji's social contribution and impact, when assessed properly and impartially, will be considered unprecedented and legendary. There must be something out of the ordinary in his thought and action that he was able to move millions and millions of Indians behind him and built the world's largest organisation of dedicated voluntary workers, the RSS. □

(The writer is a veteran journalist and former editor, Nav Bharat Times).

Courtesy : Organiser

Wonder, Why was he branded anti-muslim !

Reminiscences of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee

After the ban on RSS was lifted, Shri Guruji came to Kashi (Varanasi), where Municipal Committee decided to honour him. The President of the Municipal Committee was a Muslim. Some Muslims had also been elected to the municipality. In his welcome address the municipal chief said : "We Muslims respect Honourable Shri Guruji, but we have some misgivings about RSS. Some fear is also there. But our fears vanished the moment we saw Guruji. We thought he must be a picture of a giant dreadful person. But he came laughing and smiling. We wish to ask: what will be the position of Muslims in Guruji's Bharat?"

Shri Guruji replied, "Who am I to decide the place of Muslims in Bharat? This has to be done by Muslims themselves. They should decide their own position. We have no dispute with anybody on his mode of worship. If somebody thinks that by calling Bhagwan (God) as Allah he will attain the Ultimate, he should call Him Allah. But keeping aside the mode of worship, they should integrate themselves with the nation".

Shri Guruji also made one more observation. He said, "You may perhaps not like what I say. The English ruled the country. We uprooted them and sent them out of country. Islam also came to India, somewhere through propagation, somewhere on the strength of dagger. Some people embraced Islam because they liked their mode of worship; some others accepted it because there was no other alternative with them. We threw off the political slavery. Now if somebody wishes to kick off the religious slavery, we will only welcome it."

In the end, thanking Shri Guruji the Municipal President said, "We have no differences with what Shri Guruji said. Yet, I wonder why some people still brand him anti-Muslim. We know he entertains no ill-will against any community". □

Nationality and Religion

– Dr. Rakesh Sinha

Constructive approach to Hindu organisation, leadership, ideology and programmes provides the solid foundation and resilience to the RSS. Sri Guruji views Muslim question from the cultural nationalist perspective rather than Semitic and non-Semitic division, with the assimilative spirit and yearning than confrontationist and majoritarian position. He begins his reconstruction of national community by presuming the presence and perpetuation of alien mentality in the nation's body politic. He defines, what is called, 'national' as "People whose loyalty to the country and her traditions, to her heroes down the centuries, to her security and prosperity, is undivided and unadulterated, are national." In a similar manner he traces the germs of separatism in the wrong notions of identity upheld by any community as a whole or majority of them. "Groups who continue to believe themselves to be aliens, aggressors, victors and erstwhile masters and rulers of the country, are aliens evidently, and when there is desire to reestablish themselves as such rulers as also hostiles." Both the definitions explicate the difference of approaches of the Hindus and the Muslims to India's freedom movement.

Aggressors and Converts

Guruji points out, "Many persons came to this country from various parts of the world. They have chosen to stay here. They have adapted themselves to the life here, the ideology and philosophy here. Some have made their own contribution towards enriching this mainstream. The Muslims unfortunately, stayed apart."

Guruji draws a line between Muslim aggressors and the converts. Aggressors belonged to different race; nationality, civilisation and culture while the converted Muslims have commonality with Hindus. They have common ancestors, common culture and history. Guruji follows more comprehensive criteria to define a Hindu. He says, "We are not so mean as to say that with a mere change in the method of worship an individual ceases to be a son of the soil. We have no objection to God being called by any name whatever... he can not be a Hindu at all who is intolerant of other faith".

Guruji's proposition is absolutely free from any ambiguity. He says that no race, community or nation can claim to be the custodian of all

wisdom and discard rest of the humanity. Creative wisdom is not confined to some people. He says, "No people on the face of this earth are entirely without some abiding virtues, nor will they be endowed with all the necessary noble qualities.... there are indeed very pious people worthy of emulation in all countries." K. S. Durrany wrote, "The RSS does not preach that Hinduism is the only religion in the world. The concept of finality and paramountcy of a single shed of divine revelation has always been alien to Hinduism and it appears that the RSS wants to retain that religious diversity with a sense of cultural unity throughout the length and breadth of the country."⁶ (Durrany : 86)

Guruji believes that philosophical and spiritual diversities need to be protected and encouraged. Cultural assimilation does not mean negation or rejection of freedom or religion. It does not "mean that anyone should give up his way of worship. We can never advocate this, or even think of it. We believe that one single way of worship is not suitable for the whole of humanity." (Jeelany; 48) His submission is that Hindu way of life is based on this very concept. It is originally inbuilt in the Hindu civilisation. So any sermon on secularism to Hindus is like using candle in daylight.

Unity in Diversity

Guruji was a practising ideologue. He views that philosophy of cultural nationalism does not deny space to pluralism in social and religious life. In fact religion does not find pivotal position in the concept of cultural nationalism. Thus he withdraws the role of religion in the formulation of nationality. He also does not find any direct relationship between secularism and nationalism. It is a mistaken idea to correlate them. Sociology of religion reflects nature of the society and its civilisational roots. Nationalism is based on mental allegiance of the people to their nation. It is not plausible that the change in religious composition would affect nationalist spirit. Nationality does not change with the change in religion in India.

Guruji uninhibitedly argues, "My feeling is that the nature abhors excessive uniformity. It is too early to say what these uniformities will do to western civilisation in times to come. Apart from the here and the now we must look back into distant past and also look forward to the remote future... we in this country have millennia of experience. We have the tested way of life. And our experience is that variety and unity can go together."

Hindu Rashtra and Muslims

Guruji's prescription that India is a Hindu Rashtra becomes confounded when it is superficially perceived from the western philosophical and terminological parameters. Its semblance to theocratic nation can then be superficially created. Guruji says that the fear that Hindu Rashtra "will imperil the existence of other religious groups arises by applying Semitic yardstick to it and imagining that the concept of Hindu Rashtra is analogous to that of the Semitic states notorious for their religious bigotry and persecutions".

He firmly rejects the communal state and says non-communal state has always been a feature of Indian culture except on two occasions, during Buddhist and Muslims rule.

He defines the non-communal state as "if the state does not meddle into religious issues then the state would be called non-communal. Even if a Muslim would be the Prime minister of India then too the state would be non communal. If he would try to metamorphose the culture of the country then he would be democratically defeated because his action would be against the interests of the people." Thus he argues that exclusive Hindu state that denies citizenship on religious basis or treats them unequally is a phantasm created by overstrained nerves and too lively an imagination, deserving only to be ignored as not worthy of consideration.

Unlike the western model of secularism, he does not take into account numerical value of any religious community. He believes there is one people in a nation with diverse approaches of their lives. There is no religious pre- condition for patriotism or nationality.

Concept of Mother India

Guruji treats the nationality above religious and all other identities and consistent to Indian tradition he elevates the nation as a Mother and above all goddess to be worshipped. The concept of Motherland is a common point of assimilation of Muslims with the culture. It is the supreme religion. However, it is not idolatry in a religious sense or merely ritual to worship the symbol of the Mother India but it is identification with the nation. Such dedication is not meant to create any totalitarian state or expansionist mission. It establishes an organic link between the people and the land and its culture and history. He defines the nation as "a practical and physical manifestation of the culture and a set of values, samskars, inherited by the people inhabiting in a geographical boundary." He further

underlines the importance of the motherland in the Hindu tradition. He observes, "In our concept of nationality some elements have been emphasised. Abounding reverence for the Motherland is placed at the top. Then comes in order the respect for our history, which of course does not mean of a few centuries but entire gamut of Hindu civilisation. Its natural corollary is regard for our ancestors".

"Let us realise and believe that we are all children of this soil coming from the same stock, that our great forefathers were one, and that our aspirations are also one. This is all, I believe, the meaning of 'Indianisation.'"

The opposition to the very connotation and concept is astonishing. He says, "It seems that this sacred country, immortal nation is a victim of some curse otherwise instead of showing repugnance to this very word it would have been welcomed and appreciated."

The problem arises because Indian Muslims show affinity with aggressors and identify with them. Guruji makes a distinction between aggressors and Indian Muslims, "the aggressors were foreigners and have nothing in common with the Muslims here. Let our Muslims here say that they are of this land and the past aggressors and their aggressions are not part of their heritage." He is not demeaning Muslims but it is a demand for cultural regeneration of Muslims.

When Guruji was asked by a Muslim about his attitude towards Muslims, he aptly responded, "we are the children of the same forefathers and must always bear this in mind. Follow your religion honestly, but in the national context we all have to be one. There can be no claiming rights and privileges at the cost of the nation." At the same time he says that the majority can also not be a privileged community. He further says, "We do not say to anybody that because we are Hindus, we alone are entitled to this and that. Not at all." (Jeelany : 44) He outrightly denounces the feeling of Muslims to reinforce the separate identity and warns "there can not be a state within a state... when people look at things from the point of view of political aggrandisement, dangerous difficulties crop up. But once this aggrandisement is left out, our country becomes one and we can meet the challenge of the whole world." □

* Excerpts from 'Shri Guruji and Indian Muslims' by the writer

Nation's Dharma above Politics

- Ram Madhav

"The RSS is very difficult to understand; and very easy to misunderstand," said Prof Walter Anderson, American political scientist and the author of the book, *The Brotherhood in Saffron*. What is the core idea of the Sangh? What is Hindutva? Is it a vision of a theocratic state? Is it a Fascist movement? Political pundits have been debating these issues ever since the RSS became a formidable force in Indian public life.

That a movement of gigantic proportions like the RSS can remain apolitical is difficult for many to comprehend. It is essentially because of the prevalent political climate in the world where political power is held supreme. Politicians are loath to the existence of any other power than political. Franklin D Roosevelt once said: "The liberty of a democracy is not safe if the people tolerate the growth of private power to a point where it becomes stronger than their democratic state itself. That, in its essence, is Fascism; ownership by an individual, by a group or by any controlling private power."

The RSS, on the other hand, believed in the age-old Hindu dictum of the supremacy of dharma over the supremacy of the king/emperor. Its Hindu Rashtra is essentially a 'Dharmocratic' idea - superior to the popular political idea of democracy.

To understand the RSS one must study Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar, also called Guruji, the second chief of the organisation whose birth centenary is being celebrated this year. While Keshavram Baliram Hedgewar had laid the foundation of the RSS in 1925, it was Golwalkar who gave it firm philosophical basis during his tenure as its chief between 1940 and 1973.

Plato talked about Philosopher Kings. But India has had a long tradition of philosopher-guided kings. While kings ruled landscapes, saints and recluses ruled over kings and steered social mindscapes. They made dharma and culture the guiding posts of the social life, not politics. We come across one Chanakya, one Samartha Ram and one Vidyaranya in history. We find in recent times leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Jayaprakash Narayan, among others, personifying the same ideal.

Unfortunately, post-Independence, politicians became supreme in our public life and statesmen were discounted. Politics took precedence over

everything including dharmic and cultural values of the nation. The RSS was born essentially to restore the supremacy of dharma and culture in our public life. There is an imminent conflict between modern-day political ideas which considered political power as supreme and argued over what form - democracy, dictatorship, monarchy, aristocracy - of political power is the best; and an essentially Hindu idea of a 'dharmocracy' - an idea that upholds dharma and culture as the core identity of the nation and tries to build all institutions including political power around these.

Golwalkar articulated this ideal of dharmic supremacy very forcefully. He reiterated the fact that a nation is not just a geo-political idea; it is a product of historical evolution. Our nation is Hindu because its history and tradition is Hindu.

Underscoring the fault-lines in the Western nation-state concept, he wrote: "The first requisite for a nation is a contiguous piece of land delimited as far as possible by natural boundaries to serve as the substratum on which the nation has to live, grow and prosper. Then the second requisite is the people living in that particular territory should have developed love and adoration for it as their motherland, as the place of their sustenance, security and prosperity. In short, they should feel that they are the children of that soil. Then, they should have evolved a definite way of life molded by community of life-ideals, of culture, of feelings, sentiments, faith and traditions. If people thus become united in a well-ordered society having common traditions and aspirations, a common memory of the happy and unhappy experience of their past life, common feelings of friendship and hostility, and their interests intertwined in one identical whole - then such people living as children of that particular territory may be termed a 'nation'."

It is interesting to note that after all the experiments and experiences of the 20th century, many Western political scientists are coming round to the same view. "No nation exists in the absence of a national history, enshrining in the minds of its people common memories of their travails and triumphs; heroes and villains; enemies and wars; defeats and victories," wrote Prof Samuel Huntington in his latest book, *Who Are We*.

Golwalkar was just 35 when he took over the reins of the RSS in 1940. The country was preparing for freedom. What should be the direction of free India? Not many leaders were bothered about this

question. For many, freedom meant constitutional government and creation of various political institutions. Yet there were some who felt the nation is not about politics alone. Gandhi had talked about Ram Rajya and Golwalkar articulated his Hindu rashtra thesis.

Golwalkar was not a politician; he was essentially a statesman-saint. He believed in creating a social power based on dharma. Naturally, politicians like Nehru who were seeped in the Rooseveltian belief in people's power, saw in him a threat.

In those days Golwalkar was the only leader in the country who could match Nehru in popularity. "Sri Guruji is a shining star on the Indian horizon. Pandit Nehru is the only other person in India who attracts such a huge crowd," commented the BBC in 1949. It was essentially a clash between a politician wanting to establish the supremacy of politics and a statesman-saint who was committed to establishing the supremacy of dharma.

For the RSS and Golwalkar himself, the period immediately after his taking over as Sangh chief was the most difficult and challenging. There was severe communal strife leading to partition. Hindus had suffered greatly and needed protection that was not forthcoming from the Government. Then came the scandalous allegation of the assassination of Gandhi followed by an 18-month ban on the RSS. A campaign of calumny was let loose on the organisation as 'communal', fascist, anti-Muslim, etc. The entire machinery of the Government was directed towards defaming the RSS. Any other organisation would have crumbled. But the RSS did not; instead, it emerged stronger.

Golwalkar always looked at the problems confronting the nation as a statesman and cautioned the leaders periodically. It is another matter that arrogant as politicians of his times were, they seldom lent their ears to his sage counsel and the nation had to pay a heavy price for it.

"China is expansionist in nature and is very likely to attack Bharat soon", Golwalkar warned in 1951. "It has been a terribly blunderous act to gift away Tibet to China. It is one blunder that even the British did not commit". While congratulating the Indian Army for its spectacular victory over Pakistan in 1971 he did not forget to tell the nation about the impending danger from Bangladesh. "If the present friendly Bangladesh turns to an extremist Islamic regime, we would have two independent enemies in the East and North-East."

Golwalkar detested reactionary tendencies in Hinduism. While he opposed the Congress's brand of hybrid nationalism, he was opposed equally to rabid Hinduism. Thus he wrote: "Once a gentleman asked me whether we are organising Hindus in order to counteract the various activities of the Muslims. I simply told him that even if Prophet Mohammed had not been born and Islam had not come into existence, we would have taken up this work just as we are doing it today, if we had found Hindus in the same disorganised, self-forgetful condition as at present."

Mark Twain once said, "In the beginning of a change, the patriot is a scarce man, brave, hated, and scorned. When his cause succeeds, however, the timid join him, for then it costs nothing to be a patriot". It happened with Golwalkar as well. Those who reviled him and wanted to crush his organisation had to recognise the great potential that he and his organisation had for the country. The RSS was invited to undertake a march-past shoulder to shoulder with the armed forces in the Republic Day parade in 1963 by Nehru himself.

Golwalkar was adored by millions but abhorred by a handful. Yet, when he passed away, the same politicians who opposed him had to pay rich tribute to him. "We have lost in Guru Golwalkar a famous personality. He held a respected position in the nation by the force of his personality and the intensity of his convictions," said Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister. □

Shri Guruji's thoughts on various 'Isms'

I consider all these 'isms' as but temporary phases.

(With friends and pressmen on several occasions)

Q : Do you think that there is any basic defect in all the various modern 'isms'?

A : Yes. They all stem from materialism. And materialism has no answer to the very fundamental question : "Why at all should people aspire for world unity and human welfare? Why should they feel pained at the sight of man set against man? Why should we love each other?" From the materialist point of view we are all equally gross entities, each separate and exclusive in himself, who can have no bonds of mutual affinity or affection. There can also be no inner restraint in such beings which can make them control their selfishness from running amuck, in the interest of the humanity as a whole.

Q : But how has it affected their working on the practical plane?

A : In the absence of any positive urge for service or sacrifice, on the practical level a sort of 'contract' between the individual and society had to be worked out to avoid the inherent conflict born out of selfishness. It is this basic conflict that expressed itself in the form of capitalism on the one hand and communism on the other. That is, on the one hand, the individual became the enemy of the society, and on the other, the society became the enemy of the individual.

Q : Whatever their practical failures, the communists have at least presented an ultimate inspiring goal of human society - 'the withering away of the state'.

A : Even thousands of years earlier to Karl Marx our seers had envisaged that state 'where there existed no state, no king, no penalty and no criminal; all protected one another by virtue of **Dharma**'. Whereas Marx could not give any basis for his concept of 'stateless society', our thought-givers had given a cogent explanation and the practical basis for reaching that goal.

Q : The communists claim that their theory is based on a scientific principle of human evolution. Is it not one of their strong points ?

A : But, in actuality, a scientific inquiry into the true nature of human

evolution disproves their claim. The communist theory solely rests on materialism which stands at the very lowest rung of human evolution. Evolution invariably proceeds from the gross to the subtle. Man, in his primary stage, is attached exclusively to gross material things. He expands all his time and energy in the pursuit of material pleasures and satisfaction of his bodily desires. As he progresses and evolves himself into a higher state, he thirsts for mental happiness by the satisfaction of his emotional aspirations. He is now on the path of culture, another name for human evolution. The aesthetic element in him gets quickened. He creates art in its myriad forms. Going a step ahead, he then attempts to unravel the hidden element of beauty underlying those forms. That is the state when he begins to experience delight on the intellectual plane. He now finds joy in diving into the deepest recesses of the ocean of knowledge. Science and Philosophy furnish a challenging realm to his powers of intellect for research. However, he refuses to be satisfied even with that. He hankers to forge ahead. He tries to go beyond his intellect and probe the secret of his own being. He now enters the region of the spirit. Finally, he reaches the Ultimate Reality, God - that all-pervading subtle principle of Highest Bliss.

Such is the true nature of human evolving from the gross to the subtle, from matter to the spirit. How then can the communists claim a scientific basis for their materialistic dogma ? In fact, viewed in this light, the communists are reactionaries, anti-progressive and retrograde.

Q : Do you not think that the principle of communism has an intrinsic value?

A : No ! I do not. Its 'intrinsic value' was exposed the very day the prophecy of its exponent proved false. According to Marx's prophecy, communistic revolutions were to have taken place first in the more industrialised countries of England, Germany and America. The fact, however, that it took place in Russia, a very backward country at that time, proved how his whole theory was basically wrong. And even now, after so many years, there are no indications at all of the coming revolutions in England, America etc.

Q : However, equality is their fundamental principle.

A : But it stands on a wrong basis - the basis of materialism. I fail to understand why I should cherish the feeling of cooperation with

others on a basic idea that man is a mere bundle of physical wants. It is not born out by facts. Along with the physical, man has a mental state also. These other wants are equally - if not more - important. Can any system of thought function which does not take into value the inner side of man ? The only basis of true equality can be the realisation that all living beings are part and parcel of one and the same Reality, call it God or Eternal Truth.

Q : The communists seem to have given definite answers to problems and successfully adopted them in practice.

A : No, they have not. They have also begun to accept the right of the individual and are gradually allowing the ownership of private property. The production in Russia has fallen sharply. It was only in the first few years that the production was at its peak. Now, in spite of the huge slave labour it is falling.

Q : Are you intending to incorporate some of the principles of communism or of some other 'isms' in the work of the Sangh?

A : I am not concerned with other 'isms'. If our ideology contains any 'ism' or any part of any 'ism' I do not mind. Even if it does not, I do not bother.

Q : In what 'ism' do you believe ?

A : I do not believe that human intelligence has by now gone bankrupt that it should be straitjacketed in some 'ism'.

Q : Do you want to advocate any new 'ism' ?

A : I consider all these 'isms' as but temporary phases. They are here today, they may be gone tomorrow. Many 'isms' have sprung up till now, many more may spring up in future also. But, the current of life behind them flows on as before. I am not one of those who believe that one or the other of the 'isms' as yet presented to the world must necessarily be chosen.

Q : Is not the growth of communism inevitable in our country, so long as economic disparity persists ?

A : Economic disparity is not the real cause for the class hatred on which the communists thrive. The idea of dignity of labour is not properly imbibed by our people. For example, a Rikshawala who gets a daily earning of 3 to 4 rupees is addressed as a 'fellow', and a clerk getting

but Rs. 60 a month is addressed as 'Babuji'. It is this difference in outlook which gives rise to hatred. A way out would be that graduates should take up such professions so that manual labour will attain dignity. In *Karma* there is no distinction of high or low. Every work is the worship of the same Almighty in the form of society. Bhagavad Gita says : *Swakarmanaa tamabhyarchya siddhim vindati maanavah.*

The theory of 'exploiter' and 'exploited' classification is also wrong. Sometimes the owners and other times the workers go on strike. The labour demands as also the owner's losses both fall on the consumer who will be the really exploited.

Q : Is there any other reason at all?

A : There is also another very substantial reason for whatever popularity communism enjoys. Man does not live by bread alone. He must have faith. He must have a faith to live by and die for. Without such a faith life loses its direction and meaning, man begins to drift. He feels lost. It is an impossible state of being. Till the rise of science, Christianity provided the necessary faith for European life. But science made mincemeat of Christianity. It blasted the Christian concept of time, space, life and the world. However, Europe lost one anchor-sheet but gained another. It lost its faith in religion and gained faith in science. Indeed, science became the new religion. Men believed it to be as omniscient and omnipotent as any God thought up by man anytime, anywhere.

However, soon science disproved itself. And Einstein, than whom there has been no greater scientist in recent times, admitted the inability of science to solve the riddles of the universe. From the omniscient mood of the Victorian era they soon felt themselves no more than picking pebbles on the shore of a vast ocean of knowledge lying unexplored before them. This collapse of faith in science left the western man rudderless on an un-chartered sea. The old faiths were dead, and new ones were powerless to be born. It was in this vacuity of faith that some specious faiths came-up to fill the gap. Fascism was one such, communism is another.

Communism is a crude revival of some tenets of Christianity like equality etc. Toynbee has rightly described it as a 'Christian heresy'. Communism is like Islam in the economic field, complete with its Holy Prophet, Holy Book and Jihad! Man must have faith. But communism is a poor faith.

Q : Where do communists thrive?

A : An important person has written an article that wherever there is a rule by characterless people, there the communists thrive. Because, when character is lost, selfishness shoots up and it makes a man forget his country and its interests, making him an easy prey to communist designs.

Q : What is your alternative to the communist pattern of economy?

A : It goes without saying that the primary needs like food, clothing, shelter, etc. should be fulfilled for one and all. The state should not assume, as in Russia, all powers. So I suggest that through cooperative enterprises production should be stepped up. We can adopt the technique of the West for production but should maintain the spirit of our social structure.

Q : During every crisis of war our Government appeals to the people in the name of democracy, secularism and socialism. Will this touch the hearts of our people?

A : The spirit of 'democracy' at its best, which confers the right of freedom of speech, thought and action on the individual, is nowhere more fully recognised and practiced than in the Hindu tradition. If by 'secularism' is meant that the state should not be tagged on to any particular creed and that all faiths should be equally respected, then this again would be another name for Hindu thought. In fact, it goes far beyond the western concept of mere tolerance; it respects all faiths as equally sacred. If by 'socialism' is meant removal of economic inequality, then here again it is the Hindu philosophy and practice that stand as the unfailing guarantee against social and economic inequality.

All told, these various concepts can all be conveyed to our people, and in a much better manner, in terms of Hindu tradition and nationalism. This is in their blood since ages. Therein lies the real source of inspiration which can rouse all the traditional virtues of self-sacrifice and heroism in our people. It makes them offer gladly whatever is expected of them in time of national trial such as war.

Q : What is the speciality of the Bharatiya concept of state?

A : In the West, the state has no higher purpose other than caring for the physical welfare of its people. We have, on the other hand,

looked upon the state as a means not only for achieving the physical welfare of the people but for improving the 'quality of man' as well.

Q : Is not the motto 'the greatest good of the greatest number' upheld by democracy the noblest so far conceived?

A : That is true so far as the West is concerned! Our ideal, on the other hand, has been 'the total good of all beings' :

"Sarvepi Sukhinah santu sarve santu niraamayaah."

(Let everyone be happy, let everyone be free from all ills.)

Q : Is democracy a Bharatiya concept?

A : We had tried all experiments - including democracy even prior to the West.

Q : Do you believe democracy to be the best form of government?

A : Bernard Shaw has said, democracy came for want of a benevolent despot. Any type of government will do, if the men running it are honest and selfless. It all boils down to the quality of the human being.

Q : Why is not democracy successful in our country to the extent it ought to be?

A : The persons in charge of running the democratic structure are themselves not democratic in their attitude. For example, if a person wants to remain in power for all time, it is not a democratic attitude. A real democrat will say, 'I will make way for others.' But in our country, people want to stick to their positions till death takes them away.

Q : How is the proper mental attitude to be brought about?

A : By educating the people. By education is meant the moulding of right attitude towards the nation, the people and the national ethos.

(With friends in Kerala and Karnataka, January 1969)

Q : Seeing that 'sects' are a universal phenomena, is there any way out of their baneful effects?

A : After the person who originates a movement passes away, it develops into a particular exclusive groove and becomes a sect. Considering the psychological condition of man, perhaps, it is inevitable. All

sects have started with a comprehensive view but invariably ended with 'sectarianism'. Not one of the prevalent sects started originally as a sect. But in course of time each has set up its own barriers. The way out would be a proper enlightenment and gradual absorption of the original ideas among its adherents. This cannot be achieved hastily. That will either break the institutions or throw the whole social order into chaos.

(With Pressmen at Bangalore, February 1973)

Q : What about the protection to Harijans guaranteed in the Constitution and its subsequent extension?

A : If any one is suffering from disability, social or political, on account of what is called caste, that must be removed completely. Dr. Ambedkar had envisaged the special privileges for only 10 years from the day we became a Republic in 1950. But now we are in 1973. It is going on, being extended. We are opposed to continued special privileges on the basis of caste only, as it would create vested interests in them in remaining as a separate entity. That would harm their integration with the rest of the society. All help must be given to those who are destitutes irrespective of the caste or class they belong to.

(With the President, Akhil Bharatiya Vadar Samaj, at Thane, November 1972)

Q : The educational standards are very low in our community. Matriculates are employed as either clerks or as watchmen in offices and factories. The more educated get some higher jobs. But their earnings will be much less than those who earn by physical labour. We are appealing to the Government to lower the educational qualifications required for Government employment with respect to our community.

A : Education is, no doubt, essential. But if by physical labour, earning is more, then even the matriculates should take to such work. Education and physical labour should not come in conflict with each other. It is only when these two are combined that prosperity ensues.

It is also not desirable to demand lowering of educational qualifications for employment. On the contrary, such sections of our people as are educationally backward should take the initiative

to raise their standards. If the minimum marks required are 35% this year, you should demand that it be raised to 40% after a couple of years. It is through such self-efforts that a backward section can raise itself up. Otherwise, the children in such sections will never be able to cherish higher ambitions in life. They will for ever be deprived of high positions which require greater intelligence and capacity. And people with low intelligence will also bring down the level in whatever sphere they work. The whole social life will then be endangered. For example, a pilot cannot work with a 35% training qualification. The life of so many, including his own, will then be in jeopardy. The same rule applies to doctors, engineers and technicians. In the present scientific and technological age, especially, it is essential that we increase our efficiency and capacity. Hence, it is necessary to see that our children imbibe the right ambitions and increase their capacities and educational standards. I urge that you should insist on this aspect.

The Questioner : I must confess that this is altogether a new viewpoint. So far, no one had put forward this aspect before us. I feel it is the only right attitude.

Q : Some employers argue that if they show human considerations, the workers become unruly and take undue advantage of it. Where is the solution?

A : I do not think that normally it is so. If the workers feel that you are sincere and not merely exhibit in your humane intentions and actions, then they are bound to respond in course of time. I can never conceive that our people are so devoid of inherent goodness as not to respond to human virtues. □

We and Our Students

– Sri Guruji

It does not seem right to regard the students as a community different from the rest of the society. The qualities of the people in general manifest in the younger folk, only that due to the immaturity, inexperience and preponderance of the emotional in them such qualities manifest themselves as an uncontrolled outburst. The general lack of training in codes of good behaviour, sense of uncertainty and insecurity in life resulting in a sort of frustration, want of any ideal to strive for and the none-too-edifying example of those who are projected as leaders and guides of the people, the crumbling down of the institution known as 'home' are some of the causes contributing to the 'ferment,' the disquietude and unbridled behaviour, which we name as indiscipline in the young folk, who constitute our students.

Our People - Their Faces

Our people may be broadly classified in three major divisions:

- (a) Those who for generations have been grounded down the penury, want of education and what is worst, social disabilities. Fortunately, the Government has taken up the work of spreading education, at least of the primary stage, and the students from this portion are getting the advantage. These students need careful and loving attention conducive to inculcating good qualities and awakening their dormant abilities, for they have little background of proper bringing up. In a way theirs is a clean slate with the inevitable scratches dug into them by their hard life—deprived of the light of knowledge, of the happiness of wealth and of the sense of being equal partners in the building up of our national life. They are the hope of the future and have to be nurtured with special solicitude.
- (b) The people in average circumstances. They have always been the backbone of the people's life in all its aspects. Due to queer but natural desire to appear respectable, they take to a way of life not commensurate with their means. The present economic conditions have hit them hard. Peace of mind and household peace have disappeared. They see no hope in the future for themselves or their children. This condition can produce all types of perversities. The young folk from this class form the bulk of our student population and this life of no hope but of only despair mars their otherwise

good mental make-up. Out of such desperation any kind of irresponsible activity can attract the youth.

- (c) Those who enjoy affluence and respectability. As overdose of wealth, the position and power accompanying it, is sufficient to turn anyone's head, more especially in the unripe youth who have little experience, little knowledge and in whom the quality of discrimination is still in the embryonic stage. These conditions can completely wreck the moral fabric of the young folk's life, as has been aptly expressed in a Sanskrit verse which means that, *"Life of frugality, austerity during the formative student days, giving no opportunity for the mind to indulge in unhealthy enjoyments and vicious habits—such precautions may help keep them away from undesirable activities and behaviour."*

Stress on Spirit, not Form

To convert this great mass of our youth into virtuous citizens devoted to building up of a great people, to guide their unlimited potential on right lines, is the real problem. It cannot be solved by superficial thinking and superficial remedies. For example, the question about the educational institutions, the teacher-student ratio and relationship, hostel arrangement, etc., cannot be said to go to the root of the problem. Rather than the way the institutions run, thought has to be devoted to in the first instance to the aim and the content of education, to the hostels and to the general environments in the country and a serious attempt made to ready them. Our education is merely informative and not formative. The emphasis is on somehow equipping oneself to earn a living and not in drawing out the personality of the youth. The ideal of improving 'the standard of living' relates only to material well-being, multiplication of wants and means of satisfying the carnal and lower mental cravings of the animal in man. It does not relate to developing the mental, intellectual and the higher aspects of the human being. The natural result is the production of an inordinate desire for amassing the means to such enjoyments by whatever means possible. The expression 'cultural activities' has come to denote singing, dancing and such other activities which easily rouse the baser instincts of man; its real significance of activities conducive to evolving and developing the higher qualities of the head and heart, qualities which inculcate the correct sense of values and restraint upon one's emotions and impulses, seems to have been completely ignored or considered unnecessary or unworthy of being imbibed.

Man-Making Education

Without dilating upon this aspect, suffice it to say, the whole system of education seems to need a complete change. Every student must be taught the basic principles of 'Dharma', the life history of great ancestors who lived and demonstrated those high principles, the correct and true history of our people with the story of our national heritage in its noblest aspect. He must also be given some preliminary training in the science of mind control through simple yogic exercises. The rest of the education has necessarily to relate to the surroundings, facts of day to day life, to each individual's aptitudes so as to equip him to successfully face the trials and tribulations in life. From the very beginning, the emphasis should be on duty in all relationships. Absolute sense of duty is most desirable but if in the present atmosphere of pampering to the self it seems impracticable, the truth that duty is supreme and the individual's or group's rights are only co-related to it and must be considered as subordinate to it, must be persistently impressed upon the minds of the young in their formative years.

The Ideal that Inspires

To achieve this end of inculcating a correct sense of duty, our system of education needs to be Ideal-oriented. The word Ideal is likely to give rise to differences and disputes and there may be experienced disagreement and wide divergence about its meaning. But I hope that all will agree on certain broad fundamentals. The human being is a wayfarer on the path to the ultimate Supreme Reality (how it is conceived of and what is chosen as the path is immaterial in this context). That Reality can be attained by devoted selfless service. It is through service to Man that we can serve the Reality. Service to Man has to begin with service to the people with whom we have natural bond of affinity of ancestry, heritage, tradition, national entity and grateful devotion to the holy motherland which fosters us all and common devotion to which unites us all in one National Personality. These are our basic ideas or aspects or our Common Ideal. A firm grounding in dedication to this one Ideal is calculated to induce community of will, of mental and intellectual level which when co-ordinated and controlled by physical activity makes what is known as discipline. Military training can produce co-ordinated action on the physical plane. It is good so far as it goes and to that extent is a necessary compliment to education. From the impressionable school-going age, graded military training needs to be imparted culminating in advanced courses in college days. Naturally such training need not be up to the

standard necessary for the armed personnel. But mere military training cannot by itself inculcate the real spirit of discipline unless concerted efforts are made to instill the discipline of will which is born out of common devotion to one great Ideal.

The Right Surroundings

All amenities granted in the educational institutions and hostels have to be directed towards this goal. The amenities available today are of the nature of relaxation and pleasure hunting. These also have a place in student life. But the whole atmosphere needs to be charged with spirit of learning, of making one's contribution to knowledge, of the pious ambition of making one's mark in the service of the Ideal. I think that suitable extra-curricular activities have to be provided in the form of lectures, discourses, debates, in the form of sports and physical exercises, in the form of arts, of pictures, of trips and outings, of participation in physical labour needed in actual life for following the various professions, in the form of service rendered to society presently living in less favourable conditions.

Teacher to the Fore

This will need constant guidance and supervision by teachers and wardens of hostels. Naturally the teachers have to be competent, well-versed in the subjects they teach, of unimpeachable character and of a disposition loving and also capable of establishing homely relationship with the youth. A teacher constantly haunted by the fear of penury, constantly afflicted by the necessity of augmenting his slender means to feed the members of his family and maintain an appearance of respectability, overloaded with work and burdened with the responsibility of looking after a crowd of young folk, cannot be expected to come up to the required standard. His economic condition has to be improved and he should have a limited number of students to look after. Our experience is that one person can conveniently and efficiently take care of between 16 to 24 wards. This ratio has to be established to achieve the desired results. The same is true about the wardens of the hostels also.

Home - A Moulding Centre

Under the stress and strain of economic conditions and with the growth of industrialisation, the institution of the 'home' has broken down. The parents and guardians have little time or energy to look after their wards. Much cannot be expected out of them. Yet their maintaining a peaceful,

loving family life, following virtuous religious life, performing with proper decorum their traditional rites at least in some minimum degree and training the children to participate in those with faith, devotion and a sense of duty, will go a long way towards inculcating good conduct and discipline in them. Other individuals such as neighbours may also be helpful by setting up a standard of good behaviour in their own lives.

The children learn by imitating. The lives of the teachers, wardens, parents and neighbours have their impact upon their impressionable minds. They have to realise this and mould their life properly.

The Right Leadership

The general atmosphere in the country has also to be taken into consideration. The whole atmosphere is vitiated by an inordinate emphasis on the political and economic aspects of life. Persons in these fields are projected as the leaders and ideals of society. It will be difficult to say that their character and conduct is worthy of emulation, barring some rare exceptions. Day in and day out, a ferment is on, agitations – fanning people's emotions often not very noble – are launched and persons of not a very commendable moral caliber are thrown up as leaders and ideals. It is unnatural to expect that agitations where passions are roused will leave the impressionable, emotional youth with abundance of energy, cold and unaffected. The promoters of agitations, desirous of strengthening their movements by adding to the number of participants to make them effective, cannot but be tempted to exploit this volatile youthful force.

It will be seen that most of the students' unions are working under the guidance or patronage of one or other of the many political parties, because the political agitations can, through such unions, have this force ready at hand to follow at their behest. This state of affairs must change. Politics and political parties may be studied by the elder students from an impartial and academic point of view, but they should not allow parties or party leaders to interfere in their union activities. In the country's general political atmosphere also a change is called for; the agitational approach to problems must give way to a constructive one born out of discussions, mutual understanding and readiness to accommodate one another's view and finding out a peaceful solution to them. The role of those in charge of the Government in this context is of prime importance. If they do not pay proper respect and consideration to opinions other than their own and remain stubbornly averse to making reasonable concessions to such

opinions, agitations will go on and with them student indiscipline, in ever-increasing proportions.

Union for Channelising Youthful Energy

The unions have, therefore, to be wholly divorced from political or other agitational parties and their activities guided into healthy channels for developing knowledge, spirit of service, dignity of physical labour, spirit of comradeship and of community life. Closing down unions is no remedy. Unions have to be encouraged especially at the college stage (at the school stage the students are too unripe to understand and operate union activities), for they give an opening to the excess of energy which the young possess. The channels into which their activities can be diverted with benefit have already been indicated in connection with the extra-curricular activities.

Elevating Role for Press & Publicity

The press is merely a reflection of the life of the people. All evils in the society readily find expression through the papers. The emphasis upon politics and upon the material aspect of life, which is today eating into our vitals, finds pointed and magnified expression there. Sensationalism and gloating over stories of sin and crime also find a place of pride in them. A complete change in this attitude is called for. Instead of giving excessive importance to politico-economic aspects and instead of projecting only such persons as indulge in them as ideal personalities to be emulated, the press will do a great service to the country, if they give due importance to those devoted to the service of God and humanity, whose lives, though not possessed of glamour, are spotlessly pure and tirelessly engaged in selfless action and hold these forth as really worthy of being imitated and followed. I think, however, that it is periodicals and magazines which can do this properly. From daily newspapers, it is too much to expect.

Audio-visual methods of education have been acclaimed and rightly as efficacious in imparting instructions and moulding character. But this power of these methods is abused by advertisers in the papers, on walls, kiosks and places which easily catch the eye, abused by dinning into the ears of the public unseemly songs over the loud-speakers, through the radios and transistors. Voluptuous pictures and songs meet the eye and ear at every step. How these must be corroding the moral fabric of the youth can easily be imagined.

Basic Reorientation—Need of the Hour

But in the name of progress all this goes on without let or hindrance. The result of all this inordinate emphasis on material, political and sensual propensities is seen in the shattering of all moral and ethical values. The present day leadership, the atmosphere built up by them and the false notion of the satisfaction of animal appetites is the end all and be all of modernism, of progressiveness and development, have contributed to make the people and more especially the growing generation amoral. Morality is good; immorality though bad has one good quality the understanding of moral values and realisation of having deviated from them. But non-morality is positively a danger for there is callous disregard for both the moral and immoral. The immoral, the sinful have a chance of turning over a new leaf, but the amoral becomes impervious to all sense of right and wrong; as such his is an irretrievable case. Such persons are extremely dangerous to the right evolution of the society.

A thorough reorientation in the processes of thinking, in establishing values of life and proper apportioning of importance of the various aspects which together go to make a full life for the individual and consequently for the nation, is the need of the hour. Want of this is at the root of all our social evils including student indiscipline. It will serve no useful purpose to separate this one question from the larger context and to try to remedy it. If this reorientation is not immediately taken in hand seriously, other remedies will remain merely superficial and ineffective. □

Internal Threats of Hostile Elements

– Shri Guruji Warns

It has been the tragic lesson of the history of many a country in the world that the hostile elements within the country pose a far greater menace to national security than aggressors from outside. Unfortunately, this first lesson of national security has been the one thing which has been consistently ignored in our country ever since the British left this land. Wishful thinking born out of lack of courage to face realities, mouthing of high-sounding slogans by the persons at the helm of affairs to cover up the tragedies overtaking us one after another, and opportunistic alliances of parties and groups with the hostile elements to further their narrow self-interests, have all combined to make the threat of internal subversion to our national freedom and security very acute and real. □

Uncompromising Devotion to Motherland is the life-breath

– Shri Guruji

Devotion to the motherland of the intense, dynamic, uncompromising and fiery type is the life-breath of a free, prosperous and glorious national existence on the face of the earth. And we the Hindus, are the inheritors of the most sublime devotion for the motherland. Let those ancient embers of devotion lying dormant in every Hindu heart be fanned and joined in a sacred conflagration which shall consume all the past aggressions on our motherland and bring to life the dream of Bharat Mata reinstated in her pristine undivided form.

We have to be beware, more than anything else of the deadening of national will. If the will to fight, the will to suffer and sacrifice for the sake of the liberty and integrity of the motherland becomes extinct, then, that will surely sound the death-knell to the freedom and honour of the nation.

The Bedrock of National Integration

Today we often hear our political leaders speaking of ‘national integration’, ‘emotional integration’ and so on. But what is that ‘common emotion’, that common basis on which all can come together? What are those eternal life-springs of our national life that go to make it unified, resurgent and glorious?

- in the first place, the feeling of burning devotion to the land, which, from times immemorial, we have regarded as our sacred Matrubhoomi,
- in the second place, the feeling of fellowship, of fraternity, born out of the realisation that we are the children of that one great common Mother,
- in the third place, the intense awareness of a common current of national life, born out of a common culture and heritage, of common history and traditions, of common ideals and aspirations,

This trinity of values or, in a word, Hindu Nationalism, forms the bedrock of our notional edifice.

It is on this positive and true understanding that the discussion regarding National Integration should be based. “Integration” is nothing less than strengthening the spirit of identification with this true national mainstream, its tradition and its aspirations. □



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