

**FROM  
THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO  
TO RADICAL HUMANISM**

**M. N. Roy**

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**Renaissance Publishers Private Limited**  
15 Bankim Chatterjee Street  
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**From the Communist Manifesto to Radical Humanism**  
Collection of essays by M. N. Roy

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## FOREWORD

Manabendra Nath Roy (1887-1954) was more widely known in his life-time for his phenomenal career as a revolutionary. He had been a leading participant in revolutionary movements in India, Mexico, China, the Middle East, the Soviet Union and countries of Western Europe. He had worked on an equal footing with Lenin, Trotsky, Bukharin, Zinoviev and Stalin during his years in the Communist International. He had founded the Communist Party of Mexico (1919) and the emigré Communist Party of India in Tashkent (1920).

What is less widely known is that M. N. Roy was one of the most original thinkers of our time. His works like *India in Transition* (1922), *Revolution and Counter-revolution in China* (1930) and *Reason, Romanticism and Revolution* (1952) bear witness to his analytical powers, his immense scholarship and far-reaching vision. I see him as one of the last great figures of what is commonly called the Indian Renaissance. The philosophy which he formulated in the last years of his life is called New Humanism or Radical Humanism.

Roy was a prolific writer in several European languages — Spanish, Russian, German, French and English. A very substantial part of his early writings of the years from 1917 to 1936 has been translated, annotated and edited by me in four volumes of *Selected Works of M. N. Roy*, published by Oxford University Press. Since his return to India he has written almost exclusively in English, and much of his writings have been published as single books. But there still remains much that has not been gathered and published in the form of books. A collection of his writings in the quarterly called at first *The Marxian Way* and later *The Humanist Way* is shortly to be published from Delhi. The many speeches which he gave at seminars, conferences and institutions of learning were recorded in shorthand by Ellen

Roy, and a good part of them was published in the weekly *Independent India*, later renamed *The Radical Humanist*. A substantial part of these speeches remains to be collected and published as single books.

Roy was for about twenty five years an avowed Marxist, although his interpretation of Marxism was always more or less unorthodox. Towards the end of the war, he became increasingly conscious of the limitations of Marxism as a philosophy, and from the middle of 1946 he began to give shape to an alternative philosophy which he called New Humanism or Radical Humanism. The fullest exposition of this philosophy is to be found in his last major work, *Reason, Romanticism and Revolution*.

We have brought within the covers of this book a selection of twelve of Roy's essays published in the *Independent India* and *The Radical Humanist*. Readers will find in them the evolution of Roy's thinking from Marxism to Radical Humanism. Although they were originally published nearly half a century ago, I am convinced that they contain ideas and insights which are both intrinsically valuable and relevant to our present day problems.

We intend to bring out more selections from *Independent India* and *The Radical Humanist* in the form of books in the present series.

May 12, 1999

Sibnarayan Ray

## SINCE THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

### The Era of Proletarian Revolution

IT is quite evident from Shib Ray's exposition of our ideology that we are breaking new ground. We have found it necessary to examine the fundamental principles of philosophy and revise some of the traditional ideas which guided social thought and political action for a long time. Naturally, at this stage, it should be asked : what is the necessity of a new ideology? Why are we driven to take a critical view of philosophical ideas, social doctrines and political theories which were generally accepted for such a long time? What compelled us to make a critical examination of these theories and formulate new principles to guide our action? In order to answer these questions, one must review the history of the last hundred years, since the publication of the *Communist Manifesto*.

This morning's speaker reviewed the history of ideas and carried his review almost to the dawn of civilisation, in order to show that the philosophical principles we are formulating today are not really new, but represent the quintessence of the entire history of human thought. Thanks to the vast store of knowledge we have fortunately inherited, and also owing to the experience of history, it is possible today to examine critically old principles which in course of time assumed the character of dogmas, simply taken for granted, and having subjected them to a thorough criticism, reinforce and amplify them, free them from internal fallacies, and state certain fundamental principles which are rational, and consistent with modern knowledge and the experience of the last hundred years.

Just a hundred years ago, a historical document was published which came to be the source of inspiration of revolutionary ideas and practice, of all revolutionary political activities during this time. I mean the *Communist Manifesto*, written by Karl Marx with the co-operation of Friedrich Engels, and published on behalf of the International Communist League. It was published in 1847. We are meeting today just hundred years afterwards. Of course, new light has not dawned on us

suddenly on this centenary of the publication of the *Communist Manifesto*. As it was explained to you this morning and also yesterday, experience as well as the challenge of modern scientific thought compelled us to begin an examination of our theoretical presuppositions and ideological postulates already several years ago. We have been carrying on that examination, and in course of that study and investigation, search and enquiry, done in a scientific spirit, outlined a philosophy which was very aptly named by Shib Ray this morning as Integral Humanism.

Now, if we briefly survey the history of these hundred year since the *Communist Manifesto* was published, it should be evident why it is necessary to revise some of the articles of faith which guided what is known as revolutionary politics during the last two or three generations. We have also grown up in that atmosphere. Perhaps some of you belong to the third generation. I happen to belong to the second. Since we grew up in that atmosphere, our early political activity was guided by those articles of faith, and it is naturally very difficult for us to take a critical attitude towards events which were believed to have occurred according to certain predictions made hundred years ago in the *Communist Manifesto*. But I dare contend that such an attitude is contrary to the spirit of the *Communist Manifesto*. It stated the quintessence of a social philosophy and a political doctrine which was eventually elaborated into what is known as Marxism. Its point of departure was scientific, and a scientific point of view excludes the habit of fitting events into a preconceived system of ideas.

All those who call themselves Marxists profess Materialism as their philosophy. But this habit of fitting events actually taking place into an *a priori* system of ideas is the quintessence of Idealism. The experience of hundred years, which compelled all rationally minded people in the revolutionary political movement to do some heart searching and critically examine their own experience, resulted from the contradiction between the materialist professions and the idealist practice of the movement.

Materialism as formulated by Marx starts from the proposition that ideas are determined by being. If that is so, we should not quarrel with events if they do not fit into an ideal scheme. On the contrary, we should realise that there is something wrong with our ideal scheme, and therefore it must be revised. But the orthodox Marxist view has forgotten that

fundamental principle of Marxism. It holds that the whole of history was forecast by the Laplace of social science in the year of Grace 1847, and everything that happens in the world must be fitted into that scheme. If certain actual events could not be fitted into the Marxist horoscope of humanity, so much the worse for those non-conformist happenings! The validity of the Marxist scriptures cannot ever be doubted, because the final and the whole truth was revealed in the bible of revolutionaries. That attitude of the faithful is in crass contradiction to the scientific essence of Marxism.

All of you must have read the *Communist Manifesto*. Taking if for granted, I shall now proceed to show that history as it unfolded itself during the last century did not at all conform with the forecasts made in the *Communist Manifesto*. That is a matter of experience of a whole period of time. But faith has an inertia. Under the momentum of the inertia of faith (that seems to be a contradiction in terms, but the momentum of inertia is the most powerful momentum, because it paralyses the brain), most Marxists simply refused to see what was actually happening. But ultimately, when event after event, one chapter of history after another, went against our expectations, and generation after generation went from defeat to defeat, and the ideal, the utopia of Communism, receded farther and farther, some people could no longer resist the temptation to examine the validity, the logical consistency, of the articles of faith. Consequently, now we are in a position to draw the lesson of history. What we are saying today is not a revealed wisdom. We did not wake up one fine morning possessed of a new truth. Others before us have travelled the path of a scientific examination of experience. We should not be ashamed of having learned from them. Having done so, having travelled in the footsteps of those who went ahead of us, today we are in a position to make a more comprehensive criticism of the *Communist Manifesto*, and draw the conclusion that no horoscope of humanity could ever be cast; that a Laplace of social science would be the most extravagant utopian.

The *Communist Manifesto* heralded the era of proletarian revolution. Karl Marx divided history into several epochs. Ours is the epoch of Capitalism. Each preceding epoch ended in a revolution, which opened up a new era of social development. On the basis of that dogmatic reading of history, the *Communist Manifesto* proclaimed that the present epoch of Capitalism was bound to be closed by the proletarian revolution, which would

open up the new era of reconstructing society on the basis of Socialism, that is, on the basis of the common ownership of the means of production.

That was not a task set for humanity. It was not said that the capitalist order placed limitations on human development and therefore all human endeavour should be directed towards removing its defects or overthrowing it, so that more harmonious human relations could be established. No. It was a Categorical Imperative of history. That is how Karl Marx claimed his Socialism to be superior to the Socialism of the utopian dreamers who preceded him. Marxian Socialism was called Scientific Socialism. What was scientific about it? It was to free history from all human interference. History is composed of human beings ; Marxism starts with the declaration that man makes history. But in the actual unfolding of history, man has nothing to do. There the sovereignty belongs to the forces of production. The marvellous system of Newtonian Mechanics came to grief owing to the concept of force. The even more marvellous system of Marxian social mechanics is also coming to grief thanks to the mystic concept of the forces of production.

Karl Marx said that historical development, the succession and replacement of one social order by another, happens deterministically, of necessity, in consequence of the established social relations ; the society is polarised into antagonistic classes ; the antagonism cannot be composed within the framework of the given social order. Consequently, the clash breaks out into a cataclysmic outburst called revolution. The dispossessed and the oppressed class overthrows the possessing ruling class, establishes a new State and reorganises society. All this takes place mechanically, deterministically, necessarily, according to the laws of Historical Determinism, or the economic conception of history.

Now, this concept has perhaps the beauty of simplicity, and because it is simple, it is so convincing. It is so beautiful that only a superficial intelligence like that of Bernard Shaw was necessary to expose it. He pointed out that Historical Determinism was only another name for the good old providential will. As soon as you introduce the metaphysical concept of force in any scheme of mechanism, you cannot get away from teleology. The simplified version of the Marxist view of history is essentially teleological. The *teleos* in this case is the forces of production. Notwithstanding the beautiful simplification, there is a fallacy which cannot be explained

away by the obscurantism of the Marxist scholastics. The forces of production are the prime over. But who created the first means of production ? Either God or man must have been the original creator. If it was God, then man could not interfere with them, there could be no science of history, and Marx, a man after all, could not cast the horoscope of history. If, alternately, the miracle was done by man, then he is the maker of history, and the creation, however great, can never be so great as to put the creator out of the picture. The forces of production, even in this age of science and technology, are created by man, and the creator can always control his creation, and his creative power increases in course of history, because in that process knowledge also grows, and knowledge is power. It goes without saying that the man of the eighteenth century had a greater creative power than the man of the tenth century. The man of the twentieth century will have a still greater creative power than the man of the eighteenth century. Therefore, no man in the past could prescribe how the man of the future should behave. And since history is the sum total of human behaviour, it is absurd, irrational, unscientific, to prescribe its future pattern, to forecast its development.

Nevertheless, the *Communist Manifesto*, which was, so to say, the Sermon on the Mount of the new religion of Marxism, declared that the era of proletarian revolution was coming. The capitalist system was vitiated by internal contradictions, which could not be composed ; it was bound to develop into a monopoly ownership of the means of production ; society would be polarised into two classes, the proletarian and the bourgeoisie ; they would be irreconcilable and come to a clash. And as the proletariat could free the world by freeing itself, it was historically destined to make a revolution and establish its rule.

It was an inspiring vision. But there was nothing scientific in it. It was the dizzy flight of the imagination of a romantic soul, fired with the belief that man, being the maker of his destiny, can recreate the world if he so wills. In order to appreciate fully the genius of Karl Marx, you shall have to brush aside all his scientific phraseology and go down to the ethical foundation of Marxism. It was the creation of a moral fervour. Capitalist society was bad, it meant slavery, misery, poverty, degradation ; within the capitalist society all these evils could not be removed ; man must revolt against his conditions, and Karl Marx visualised how the revolt would happen. The British Socialist Hyndman described Marx as the

man who personified German erudition and the prophetic genius of his race. In the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx spoke like the old Jewish Prophets. He was thundering against a world full of sins, and heralding the kingdom of heaven to come. But there must be a God to bring the kingdom of heaven on earth. Like all prophets, Marx created his God — the proletariat, who was to fulfil his prophesy.

I do not want you to go only by this logical criticism of the *Communist Manifesto*. The object of this talk is to ask you to find out if history has borne out the prognosis of Karl Marx, as made in the *Communist Manifesto*. The optimistic, complacent world of the nineteenth century was shattered by the first world war. After a whole generation of tormented existence, the world experienced another global war. The second world war has thrown civilised mankind in a profound, tormenting, tantalising spiritual crisis. Any thinking and sensitive human being who claims to be something more than a well-fed pig or a well-dressed mannequin cannot help feeling the agony, this awful anxiety of civilised mankind caught in a vicious circle. As Shib Ray has already pointed out, Marxism appeared to be the most promising in the endeavour to get the world out this impasse. According to it, proletarian revolution is the only way out. We shall have to see if the civilised world can still travel that way in order to reach either the goal indicated in the *Communist Manifesto*, or conceived differently as the ideal of social justice, harmony, good life, democracy or whatever they may call it.

Let us begin with a retrospective glance, so that we may understand why the world is as it is today. That will dispel the fatalistic view that the world could not be different. If it could be explained intelligently and rationally why the world is as it is today, it should be possible to imagine how it could have been different. If it was bound to be as it is today, then let us give up all hope ; nothing can be done ; by fate, the world is moving to its destruction. But there is another way of looking at it. Man can make as well as mar thing ; the world is in the present predicament because man made a mess of it. If a critical study of history leads to that conclusion, then we can have the conviction and the courage to undertake new endeavours, try to rectify the mistakes of those who went ahead of us, and make a last desperate effort to rescue humanity from the present deep cultural and spiritual crisis. Perhaps we may succeed.

## II

The *Communist Manifesto* opens with the prophetic, or rather alarmist, sentence : the spectre of Communism is stalking over Europe. Communism is supposed to be the creed, or the creation, of the proletariat. In 1847, the proletariat was still in its swaddling clothes. Still worse — it was still growing in the womb of Capitalism. To say then that the spectre of Communism was stalking over Europe, was certainly an exaggeration. History proved it to be so, almost immediately. The proletarian revolution, which was believed to be just round the corner when Marx wrote the *Communist Manifesto*, did not happen — for many decades to come. In the middle of the nineteenth century, Europe indeed was experiencing great social and political convulsions. Karl Marx imagined that they were the prelude of a great proletarian revolution. Experience proved that was a premature expectation. The first proletarian revolution did not take place until seventy-five years after the *Communist Manifesto* was published. And it still remains to be seen whether the Russian Revolution will bring on earth the kingdom of the proletarian heaven. Until now, the experience has not been reassuring.

During that period between the *Communist Manifesto* and the Russian Revolution capitalist development took place in certain respects according to the Marxian prognosis. But there again, we must know that the merit of Marx was not the prophetic part of his work ; his criticism was corroborated by history. He set out to examine the anatomy of Capitalism, of capitalist production. Marxian economics does not go any further. Then follows the prophetic part of Marxism. Though his critical analysis of capitalist production in the nineteenth century was very largely factual, Marx's prediction about the future development of Capitalism was not borne out by experience. That was pointed out already at the end of the last century, less than fifty years after *Capital* was written, by a follower of Marx. It was Bernstein, who has been vilified and maligned and abused by orthodox Marxists. He showed that Capitalism did not develop as Marx predicted. Under it society was not polarised. It did not eat up the middle class. It did not lead to the concentration of ownership in fewer and fewer hands, nor to the pauperisation of the working class at that time. Those developments predicted by Marx were to precipitate the proletarian revolution. They did not happen. But theory was

not revised in the light of experience; Marxism began to degenerate into a faith.

At the close of the nineteenth century, the middle class belonged neither to the bourgeoisie nor to the proletariat; and it was larger than at the time when Karl Marx wrote, had a more important role to play in society. Today that is even more so. I do not know how many of you have noted that fact.

During the last ten years, all freedom loving people talked about the anti-fascist struggle. What was the driving force of that struggle? It was the middle class. It was the middle class which revolted against Fascism, because it was a mortal challenge to modern civilisation; the entire cultural heritage of mankind was to be destroyed, the world was to be taken back to barbarism. The middle class had the benefit of education, intelligence, ability to appreciate the human heritage of cultural values. They alone were able to understand the deadly danger of Fascism. Therefore, they fought it, not only on the ideological front, but also in the Resistance movements all over Europe. Do not forget that until the middle of 1941, when Fascism had almost completely swept Europe, the Communist Parties were still neutral in the deadly conflict, and their neutrality was benevolent towards Nazi Germany. They were calling on the world not to fight the war of British Imperialism; Hitlerism was the enemy of British Imperialism; to fight it was no business of the "revolutionary" proletariat. When Maurice Thorez was broadcasting from Hitler's radio station at Stuttgart, calling on the French proletariat to welcome the fascist hordes as the destroyer of French Imperialism, it was Romain Rolland, a middle-class intellectual, who called for a desperate fight against Fascism as the deadly enemy of liberty and culture.

One of the main mistakes of Marxism is to underestimate the importance of a class which, by its very existence, is capable of taking a detached, all-embracing view. Now look at the actual developments in Britain. The Labour Party, which is condemned by the Communists as a bourgeois party, is as proletarian as Comrade Stalin and seems to be as proud. It is reported that, when Molotov quarreled with Bevin at their first meeting, Bevin told Molotov that he was behaving like that because for the first time in his life he was talking to a workingman. Yet, how did the Labour Party come to power? With middle class vote. And but for the support of the middle class, conservatism of the trade-unions and the selfishness of the proletariat might again place the Conservative Party in power. The middle class is the decisive factor; it will determine the future of British

politics, and Britain is not an exceptional case. If the decayed capitalist order is ever to be replaced by an equitable and equitarian system, class selfishness must be replaced by a catholic social view, by a broad vision born of education and culture.

So, there is no polarisation of two classes. The situation is much more complex. Class relations overlap much more in modern capitalist society than in feudal society. There it was quite simple: there was the aristocracy; they had all the money and all the opportunities; the rest were all serfs, more or less. Still earlier in history, social relations were equally simple. But when modern civilisation introduced general education, when economic activities expanded, when wealth became more diffused, it was inevitable that a class of people appeared who had the advantages of education and knowledge, and because of those advantages could take a more rational, a more reasonable, more logical, more detached view of things. Social development no longer depends on the selfishness of either the working class or the bourgeoisie. If in between those two poles of selfishness there did not appear a class of people which, given the proper education and guidance, given correct ideals of life, could take a really social view, then there would be no hope for humanity.

The world is moving towards an apocalyptic cataclysm. That is evident from a realistic review of history since the Russian Revolution. At last, the era of proletarian revolution was opened up in practice, not only in theory. It was to develop into a world revolution. That expectation was not fulfilled. forty years have passed since the Russian Revolution and we are as far away from world revolution as ever. You may say, forty years is nothing in the history of the world; we may have to wait four hundred years. But can we wait indefinitely, when there appears to be no hope? We must face the distressing fact that the history of revolution during the last quarter of a century, since the world entered the era of proletarian revolution, has been the history of continuous defeats. Why has that been so? Of course, defeat by itself is not shameful. Often a just cause is defeated. Indeed, there are more instances in history of just causes being defeated than having succeeded. But the decisive fact is the relation of classes. From the experience of successive defeats, we have to draw conclusion, and the conclusion is that the relation of classes is such that by no stretch of imagination can we still believe in a victory of the proletarian world revolution.

What defeated the proletarian revolution in one country after another? Military power. In the calculation of Marx, this factor was ignored. That was not his fault, it was not a factor in his time. His fault was to believe that the world would always remain as it was in his time. It was also a fault of his theory; he did not think it out to its logical end. By studying history, he came to the conclusion that when man worked, say, with a simple hammer, his mind worked also in a simple manner, but when he worked with more complicated tools, his mental processes also became complicated. That is the concrete way of putting the proposition that man's consciousness is determined by his being; that man's ideals are shaped by the tools with which he works. Today man operates with aeroplanes and atom bombs; his mind must therefore have changed accordingly. This possible development of technology, and therefore of the military power of the bourgeoisie, Marx failed to foresee. He visualised a society polarised between the oppressors and the oppressed, and the latter joining the revolution. As soon as the signal for revolution would be given, the army, composed mostly of the oppressed, would go over to the side of revolution. In the eighteenth century, the army was a conscript army, and with the weapons of the time, that might have been possible. But when the army became mechanised, dominated by highly skilled technicians who might all come from the upper classes, it could not be expected to go over to the side of revolution. In that situation, the army would always be an instrument in the hands of the ruling class. In the Marxian scheme of revolution being built on an armed insurrection to overthrow the established State the military factor is decisive. In the contemporary world, it can never be available to the revolution. How, then, can we still think of revolution? Revolution, it would appear, has become impossible: the forces of history cannot work themselves out as Marx had foreseen; God has been defeated by his own creation.

But on the other hand, the dissatisfaction against the established order is much more widespread now than Marx anticipated. It is no longer confined to the working class. The spirit of revolt is shared by, perhaps ninety percent of the people in every civilised country today. Except for a few big capitalists, everybody feels that the *status quo* is untenable and things must be changed. Even the capitalists themselves say that today. This psychological atmosphere, the bourgeoisie losing confidence in themselves, is the greatest revolutionary factor, and Karl Marx probably anticipated it; but the Marxists

failed to appreciate it even when in the midst of the atmosphere. Karl Marx said that one of the three decisive factors for a successful revolution was the disintegration of the established order. Not only that factor has been in operation, but the vast bulk of people are keenly realising the necessity of a revolution. But the General Staff failed the army of the revolution. They still stick to a strategy and tactics which were suitable for different conditions, and they rely on antiquated weapons. Consequently, the army of the revolution could not but suffer defeat after defeat. In the midst of an apparently favourable situation, we are helpless. We may be very impetuous and organise the workers and the peasants; but what will happen? We may have ten million half-starved and indisciplined workers and peasants mobilised behind us, a thousand men with machineguns will disperse them in no time. Nor can we have the illusion that the workers and peasants will snatch the guns from the military. Even if they did that, the enemy would have tanks and aeroplanes and throw bombs on the masses.

For these considerations, we have to examine our Marxist horoscope. It has failed. Faced with the situation as it has actually developed, one must either lose faith in revolution and come to the conclusion that the world as it is is the best of all possible worlds, that it could not be different from what it is today and give up the idea of remaking it into a better social order; or we shall have to come to the conclusion that, if we still want a new social order, we shall have to find new ways of revolution and forge new instruments, new weapons, a new philosophy for the purpose.

After the Russian Revolution, when the Soviet State was established, there was a new hope that perhaps revolution could overcome the greatest difficulty unforeseen in the Marxist scheme. A powerful State was created with a powerful army. The decisive factor of military strength was no longer a monopoly of counter-revolution; revolution also had equipped itself with a military force. There was a fighting chance for the world revolution to succeed.

As an unmitigated revolutionary optimist, I developed the theory of Red Napoleonism. As a theory, it held out great promise. But then came experience. Having learned from it, I must now throw the theory overboard. As a theory, it was not wrong. My conclusion from the study of contemporary history is that revolution has missed the bus, time and again, during the last ten years. The only country where revolution succeeded built up a really powerful army and became a decisive factor

in the world. Time and again, opportunity was offered to it to lead the world towards revolution and freedom ; they missed it every time. The theory of Red Napoleonism was not wrong, but the part was allotted to people who were committed to a wrong view of history, to a wrong philosophy, which made of them Jesuits and opportunists without any ideals.

When the Russians made a pact with Nazi Germany on the eve of the outbreak of the war, the world was staggered. Their neutrality in the anti-fascist struggle appeared to be indefensible. That was a very uncomfortable time for those who believed in the Russian Revolution. I was one of the very few people who not only defended the pact, but tried to explain it rationally. Then it was a matter of loyalty. One had to stand by the old love to defend it against a world of enemies. But once the old love is happily married to someone else and out of trouble, it is permissible to recover freedom.

The war presented the Russians with the opportunity for making of this world something entirely different from what it is today. The signing of the pact with Germany might have been a necessity. But after the pact was signed, with Hitler started over-running one country after another, and finally attacked France, for the Russians to have stood even then with folded arms was a crime against revolution, a crime against history itself. What was the reason? They wanted two or three more months for military preparations. We could justify them saying that they needed a little more time for preparing themselves. But if it was only a strategic consideration, the time factor was the most decisive. What was at stake? On the one hand, a few months in which the Russians might prepare a few more devisions ; on the other hand, the whole army of France, which in those days compared not too unfavourably with Hitler's own.

Why did the Russians comit that mistake? It was not purely a miscalculation. It was due to their wrong perspective of history. In those days, the Communist Party of France was not yet nearly strong enough to make a revolution, and prevent France and Britain making up with Germany, if the latter was attacked by the Russians. That is how the Russians calculated. Therefore they did not prevent the fall of France, as they could have by attacking Germany when the bulk of her army was engaged in the West. That attitude resulted from the Marxist view that only the proletariat, that is the most backward section of the people, are qualified to appreciate human values, to cherish the heritage of human history and to have love for humanity

and faith in its future. But what happened? If the Russians were right, when Hitler attacked Russia, what compelled Churchill to make a speech which will go down in history as one of the noblest made by any man of our time? What compelled him, who had been the bitterest enemy of Communism all his life? He could have declared neutrality and wished Hitler good Luck. That would be no worse than paying the Russians in their own coin. And there would have been no Socialist Russia today. So, hardly a year after the Russians missed the first chance, perhaps by mistake and out of sheer stupidity, betrayed not only one revolution, but revolution in our time— only one year after that, history belied them. History showed that there are certain values which cannot be interpreted in terms of class antagonism and class polarisation. The British and American bourgeois governments rushed to the help of Communist Russia, and the history will still have to be written of how much victory was due to the fortitude of the Russian Army and how much to the help from capitalist Britain and America. But the Russians would not learn even from that experience. They still remain blinded by their old prejudice. Out of the fear that the capitalist world is conspiring against them they committed one mistake after another. They have forgotten that capitalist Britain and America rushed to their aid when they could have left them to their fate, at the tender mercies of their whilom ally, Nazi Germany.

Russia missed the first opportunity early in the war. If she had attacked Germany just when Hitler attacked France, France most probably would not have fallen. A great military factor might have escaped destruction, to be brought in operation against the fascist military power ; and the Axis alliance might have been defeated with less pain and destruction, not only for the world, but also for the Russians themselves.

### III

Just before the war was over, one of the most important events of our time took place : Labour came to power in Britain. That was a revolution. The obvious thing for the Russians to do would have been to welcome that event. During the war, the imperialist Chuchill Government had concluded a twenty years treaty with Russia. When the government passed in the hands of the Labour party, that treaty could have been reinforced, to become the foundation for rebuilding the whole of Europe on an entirely new pattern. But the Russians had set up the

doctrine that Social Democracy is the left wing of the bourgeoisie. Not the proletariat, but only the class, is the champion of revolution, custodian of human virtues, and the saviour of humanity ; and so, the British Labour Party was not to be trusted. The result was, driven under sheer compulsion, the British Labour Government was driven closer and closer to the Americans, and what the Russians dreaded most, the Western Bloc, came practically into being, because of their own stupidity.

What might have happened alternatively? As soon as the Labour Government came to power, Stalin could invite some representatives of the British Labour Party to say that between themselves, Communist Russia and Socialist Britain should settle European affairs. The British would have gladly welcomed that gesture. But that could not be. The Russians stuck to their dogma : There must be proletarian dictatorship ; Liberalism must go. The British Labour Party has an entirely different tradition, it would not accept Russian Communism ; and for that they are called Churchill's henchmen. The Russians would not recognise revolution if it came not in their way ; they would combat it as an enemy of the revolution. That explains their stupid policy of alienating a Britain actually in the throes of revolution.

Why do the Russians quarrel with the British Labour Government? There is a method in their madness. It is the desire for a monopoly of leadership. The Russians expected that they would be hailed by the European peoples as their liberators. History had given them all the chance to occupy that position of pride and honour. They missed the chance owing to their inability to understand that revolution in Europe could not conform with the Russian pattern. The idea of dictatorship, even of the proletariat, was repugnant to peoples with a democratic tradition. Having fought against the fascist dictatorships, the European democracy would not welcome any other kind of dictatorship. Already during the war, the Russians also had taken to speaking in terms of democracy. Therefore, immediately on coming to Europe, they could not act in a contrary manner. In the Balkans and Eastern Europe, the proletariat is such a small minority that it would be absurd for the Communists to seize power even with the backing of the Red Army. So, coalition governments were set up in those countries, but under communist control. The Russian army of occupation was the real ruler. It was not a change of heart on the part of the Russians ; it was a tactical move. Other parties were to be

utilised and then to be squeezed out by the Communists capturing all strategic positions in the State. That became evident before long, and the European peoples saw that the leopard had not changed its spots— that the Russians were still pursuing the policy of establishing communist dictatorship. In the meantime, the Labour Party had come to power in Britain. It could offer an alternative leadership to post-war Europe. Disillusioned by the behaviour of the Russians, European democracy turned hopefully to Socialist Britain. Had the Russians understood the problems of European reconstruction, they could have found in Socialist Britain an ally. But they wanted a monopoly leadership. Since the British Labour Party would not accept their idea of revolution, they saw in it a rival for leadership, and adopted the policy of maligning it before the democratic world. That stupid policy only acted as a boomerang ; it further alienated the European peoples who, only a year ago, were ready to hail them as the liberator.

Apparently, the deification of the proletariat is the basis of the Russian Communist Party. In reality, they don't want friends or allies, but henchmen. They have no belief in themselves ; if they believed that their message of revolution would appeal to European democracy, which has nothing to lose but the chains of hunger, destitution, despair and degradation, they would not adopt devious stratagems and dishonest tactics with a revolutionary purpose. But they cannot understand that the European democracy would not willingly lose the precious tradition of political liberty and a liberal culture. The inability to appreciate this basic feature of the European situation made the Russians miss the opportunity of being hailed as the liberators and leaders of post-war Europe. It is ultimately due to a false philosophy, a wrong view of history, which leads to this regrettable failure to understand social dynamics and social relations.

The failure of the Russian Revolution to develop into a world revolution according to the Marxist scheme destroyed the legend of the proletariat liberating society in order to liberate itself. The revolutionary class could not resist the rise of Fascism. Very largely, it went over to the camp of triumphant counter-revolution which offered jobs. Ultimately, it was the non-proletarian democratic classes which rose in revolt against Fascism. The war-time resistance movements were not a class struggle ; they were a democratic upsurge. Had the Russians been capable of appreciating the cultural significance of the antifascist movement, they would have been welcomed as the

leader of post-war Europe. If it had faith in democracy, and had the courage of welcoming friends and allies instead of relying upon henchmen, the red flag might be flying on the shores of the Atlantic today. Of course, it would then stand for greater ideals than the dictatorial rule of a class ; revolution then would mean democratic freedom— not regimentation, but liberation of the individual man and woman. What has happened instead? Wherever the Russians are in occupation, they are tolerated only because they are feared ; not as liberators, but as "squatters". This is the greatest tragedy of our time. If we can use a vulgar term : it is a typical case of missing the bus.

Now, what is the reason? It is the incapacity of the Russians, that is, of the orthodox Marxists, to appreciate the values, the ideas and ideals which constitute the essence of human civilisation and culture, and which alone can inspire mankind as a whole to fight for greater freedom and further progress. Because of this inability, they still attach supreme importance to the working class as the saviour of the world, the architect of a new order. And they completely ignore others who have actually saved the world in recent years.

This review of actual events drives one to the conclusion that history did not develop in the way Karl Marx thought it would. If we look into the internal conditions of the Soviet Union, we shall also be driven to the same conclusion. Conditions there are not approximating the Marxian utopia ; one gets the impression that they are moving in the opposite direction. The faulty logic of Marxist theory is taking revenge. Abolition of private ownership in the means of production has not solved the problem of unequal distribution of wealth. Some men live better, not because they are factory owners, but because they are trade-union presidents or officers. There too, mankind is divided : some have all the opportunities, others are regimented and deprived of the right of choice. There are poor and miserable people. The orthodox Marxist would say sneeringly : Oh, this is a moralist view ; it is. The Marxist view is cynical. It admits that there are inequalities in Russia ; but that is all for social progress ! By that token, America is also progressive. Indeed, it is better. The American worker earns more than the Russian. Why, then go through all these agonies of revolution, if a successful revolution cannot lead to conditions even like those of a flourishing capitalist country?

Similarly, look at the structure of industry. It is not privately owned in Russia, but by the State. According to Marxian economic theory, production of surplus value is cause of

exploitation. Surplus value is also produced in Soviet economy. Unless that was so, the rapid expansion could not take place. New capital is necessary for an expanding industry. In socialist economy also, new wealth is created by labour, and unless labour was deprived of the new wealth, expansion of socialist industries cannot be financed. If under socialism industrial expansion has been faster, that has been due to greater exploitation of labour than in the capitalist paradise of America.

My purpose is not to find fault. I am simply pointing out how Marxist theories have worked out in practice. They may be taking us away from Capitalism, but not to the goal we cherished all this time. Should we, then, not cry a halt? If what is happening in Russia is Socialism, can we still pursue that ideal? It is no longer a theoretical or imaginary picture. It is there in practice. We can judge if that is what we wanted and still want. Socialism has not been betrayed ; it has turned out to be something very different from the Marxist utopia. The *Communist Manifesto*, a hundred years ago, started on a wrong track. Experience has made that evident. Now we have to choose between blind faith and intelligence. Those who would still prefer blind faith, I wish them luck. But I am not prepared to accompany them.

There are others who are learning from experience. Having discovered that we have been going in a wrong direction, we want to stop and think. Our pilot, our map, our geographical bearings were all wrong. We need a new orientation. We must revise the entire outfit of our theoretical postulates, economic doctrines and political theories. Marxian economics, politics and revolutionary strategy— all resulted from certain philosophical presuppositions. They require revision. We must subject the fundamental principles of Marxist philosophy to a criticism, analyse and revise them if possible, and discard them if necessary. Marxian theories were not wisdom revealed to Karl Marx ; they were built on the foundation of earlier thought. We therefore propose to refer Marxism to its sources. If Marxist theories and principles could be logically deduced from earlier currents of thought, then they will fit in the unfolding history of events and can still be a guide for the future. By referring them back to their own background, we discover that Marx made false deductions from earlier thoughts, which he claimed as his sanction. We want to free Marxism from those fallacies, repair its break with the ideological context, and revise it in such a way as will make of it a logical sequence of earlier thought, a stage in the development of ideas. Once that is

done, we shall have to make economic and political inferences, which will no longer permit us to travel the way of revolution we have been pursuing so far and which many may still pursue.

Having reviewed the past and drawn lessons from experience, let us look ahead. What are the prospects? The present is gloomy, but a new situation is arising. Look at France. The Communists are the single largest party, and one should think that revolution was round the corner. But the Marxian scheme of revolution was the same as that of the anarchists. Lenin made the anarchist implication clear by emphasising that the party of the proletariat must capture power. The party being a part of the class, he admitted that revolution was the action of a determined minority. Stalin also visualised revolution as such. But it is no longer necessary for a determined minority to capture power; in one of the largest countries of Europe, the Communist Party is the largest party. But all the other parties together have a majority over them, and that fact may be advanced as another argument for the Marxian theory of revolution: that the proletariat cannot capture power through the Parliaments, but only through insurrection. There is another way of looking at the situation. The Communist party controls the working class, the trade-unions and a large part of the peasantry. On the top of it, it is the largest party in the Parliament. The opportunity for it to capture power in the orthodox Marxist way seems to be brighter than ever anticipated. Why does not Maurice Thorez capture power and establish proletarian dictatorship? Because, at the first signal of revolution, counter-revolution will succeed in France. Only that obvious danger dampens the enthusiasm of the Communists. But at the same time, no more favourable situation for revolutionary capture of power can be expected to occur anywhere and at any time. Therefore, we say that revolution of the classical type is no longer on the order of the day. The old pattern of revolution has become obsolete. If that is the only pattern of revolution, then we must come to the conclusion that revolution is no longer possible. The alternative to that defeatism is to find another way of revolution.

The Communists, Socialists and the Progressive Catholics (organisers of the popular Resistance movement during the war) together control an absolute majority in the French Parliament. But neither M.R.P. nor the Socialist Party would accept the Communist programme. Nor would the Communists, on the other hand, realise that in France the peasantry and the urban educated middle class together are so numerous and

powerful politically that even with the support of the entire working class they could never bid for power without provoking counter-revolution. If the Communists recognised the significance of the non-proletarian classes and allied with them, France would be moving towards revolution. But the Communists refused to see the reality of the situation and struck to their blind faith. Their tactics was to create a parliamentary stalemate, to disorganise economic life, hoping that ultimately a complete chaos would give them the opportunity to strike and capture power.

They went into the coalition government, voted for the policy of the government inside the Parliament and outside thundered against it. If the party of the proletariat is really the only party of the future, if it is really true that Communism is the only hope of the world, it should be possible for the Communist Party to win the confidence and secure a following from among the other two parties who also want to reconstruct society in a new order. They could not do that. Meanwhile, things are going from bad to worse, and counter-revolution is raising its head. De Gaulle is fishing in the troubled waters. Just as Hitler came to power in Germany, similarly conditions are being created in France to enable De Gaulle to come to power as the only man promising to lead the country out of chaos with a strong and determined hand. In Germany, the Communists helped counter-revolution to come to power with their wrong policy. They may do the same again in France. Hundred years after the *Communist Manifesto* heralded a new world order, to be established by the working class, political practice according to that prophetic document has driven the world to the brink of counter-revolution.

Only the other day, the Communist Party was returned as the largest party in the French Parliament. The De Gaullists were practically now here. And now De Gaulle has returned to politics to start a new "non-party" and claimed to have enrolled several hundred thousand members within forty-eight hours. Is that not an ominous sign? And what is still more ominous is that André Malraux, one of the most outstanding intellectuals amongst revolutionaries in Europe, is the brain of this new movement. In despair, not only the working class but even the peasantry and the urban middle classes were prepared to follow the Communists. Large numbers of them voted for the Communist Party. That is why it could be returned as the largest party in Parliament. But the Communists are creating such conditions as bring about more chaos, more anarchy,

more instability than even before. The people are getting more desperate, because they want the end of those conditions. In this desperate situation reappears De Gaulle, the great leader of the Resistance movement, the man of France's destiny, and says : you give me power and I shall give you stability. The people who vote for De Gaulle are not counter-revolutionaries. They are not voting for a counter-revolution. They are voting for peace and bread. Now, if the anxiety of the French people for peace and bread enables De Gaulle to take advantage of the situation, how can we blame De Gaulle? Why could not the Communist Party give bread and peace to the French people? They would have followed them.

What is the idea behind this apparently inexplicable behaviour of the Communists? They believe that the more the disturbances and disorganisation, the greater will be their chance to capture power and establish a proletarian dictatorship. You cannot establish a dictatorship in an organised society. Dictatorships rise out of disorder and despair. To create such an atmosphere, therefore, is communist policy. But the atmosphere is equally congenial for the rise of counter-revolutionary dictatorships. The communist policy, therefore, is a gamble with the fate of the world.

If the Russians wanted peaceful leadership of Europe, and share it, for instance, with the British Labour Party, American Imperialism could be ousted from Europe and counter-revolution defeated. But the Communists think they can have influence only when conditions are at their worst. However, more than one can play at that game. Counter-revolution can also fish in troubled waters, and counter-revolution is more explosive. This is what is happening.

Ever since the beginning of the age of proletarian revolution, history has been the record of one triumph of counter-revolution after another. So, if in spite of Marxist prophesy it seems that this is an age of counter-revolution, what shall we do? Is it not necessary to reconsider the whole position? Tinkering here and there will not do. It is not a question of tactics or of misunderstandings or of betrayal. Nothing of the kind. What is happening in Russia is the logical consequence of acting according to certain theoretical presuppositions. Whenever and wherever a group of people will act similarly, they will produce the same effect. I credit the Communists with all the honesty in the world. The Russians may believe sincerely that they are working for revolution. But they have vested interests, and what they have created, they cannot disown. Remember Stalin's

sophistry : "We are not building Socialism, but we are building for socialism." If you argue that there is not Socialism in Russia they will retort : What is forty years? Wait for another fifty or hundred years, and you will see ! And they believe it. We credit them with all good intentions. What they are doing may satisfy them ; but it is not leading us towards the ideal which you and I cherish. There must therefore be some difference in the ideals. We must go back to fundamentals and examine our ideals. There we discover the discrepancies : Their theory of history is teleological, fatalistic ; there are powerful forces ; man cannot do anything but be the vehicle of some metaphysical force to express itself. For those with such a philosophy of life, the world cannot be any better than it is.\*If we have a different philosophy, which places man in the centre of the world, then we can have a picture of the twentieth century which is better than that of the world as it was in the eighteenth century, and we can continue working for a yet better world.

We shall have to replace mystic forces by man. Karl Marx said religion is opium for the working class. But Marxism has a strong dose of opium in it, because of its metaphysical contents. It has drugged many people who believe they are working for freedom, but who are actually made to work for something else. We too were drugged by that dose. To recover, we must administer a strong counter-drug. Some of us may not be able to stand the shock of the counter-drug and fall behind at the wayside, as always happens with caravans on long treks.

But if we can give a rational explanation of what is happening today and show how it could be otherwise, then, I believe, people who have still faith in the future, who do not think that civilisation, mankind itself, is doomed, will listen to us and realise that our philosophy is the philosophy of the future, the philosophy life, and that New Humanism will replace the philosophy of Marxism as the philosophy of revolution and progress.

If you share this conviction, then we shall celebrate the centenary of the *Communist Manifesto* by issuing from this Camp a Radical Manifesto, the *Manifesto of New Humanism*.

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## THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF MARXISM

MARXISM was not the product of the mind of one individual. It drew upon the totality of human thought and human activity of the three to four hundred years which preceded the time of Karl Marx. Its positive value can be fully appraised only in the context of its liberal tradition. Liberalism proclaimed the principle of individual freedom ; but its practice nullified the principle by formalising it. Socialism promised the practice of the principle. Bernstein's contention that Socialism in practice would be organised Liberalism was not revisionist, but a true appreciation of the historical significance of Marxism.

Marxism offered a solution of the problem of dualism which had vitiated philosophy ever since the speculations of the ancient forerunners of science about the origin of the world were overwhelmed by metaphysical assumptions. In course of time, the world was split up in two— one of mind and the other of matter ; and ultimately, in the Cartesian system, philosophy came to the conclusion that there was no bridge over the gulf between the two. The corollary to the conclusion was doubt about the objective validity of knowledge acquired through the senses and denial of the reality of the physical world. Philosophy being the love of knowledge, having come to the conclusion that knowledge is impossible, it committed suicide.

However, the tradition of physical realism of the ancient naturalist thinkers, who were the fathers of philosophy and forerunners of science, was not altogether dead. Revived by philosophers like Gassendi and Hobbes, it inspired the "naive" Materialism of the eighteenth century, which accepted the mechanistic cosmology of Descartes while rejecting his psychophysical parallelism. Misguided by his Hegelian schooling, Marx disowned the heritage of mechanistic naturalism and was carried away by the essentially idealistic concept of dialectics.

Nevertheless, his approach to the baffling problem of psychophysical parallelism was more fruitful than the sensationalist epistemology of the eighteenth century Materialism. It was more scientific than Kant's *a priorism*. Marx regarded the problem as

of relation— of priority, and declared that consciousness was determined by being. The imaginary gulf between the worlds of mind and matter was bridged. He formulated the fundamental principle of Materialist monism just when biology was not only blasting the venerable doctrine of the special creation of man, but discovering the physical origin of life itself. The theoretically ascertained fact that physico-chemical conditions under which life is known to exist did not obtain anywhere in the Universe until a comparatively recent time, suggested that life was an emergent phenomenon. Consciousness being a property of life, the thesis that it is determined by being (physical existence) is a sound scientific hypothesis.

One step further, and the far-reaching significance of Marx's contribution to philosophical thought is clear ; scientifically mind presupposes the existence of life ; therefore, the world of mind cannot be independent of the world of matter. They are but two aspects of the self-same world, one being antecedent to the other. Matter as a conceptual metaphysical category is the ultimate reality, capable of producing life. Consciousness, cognition, mind, ideas follow in course of biological evolution. The world of experience as a whole is real ; transcendental reality is a figment of imagination. Mind as well as matter, the physical world as well as the world of thought and ideas, are equally real. But philosophy must have a realistic scientific understanding of their relation. Marx's contribution to this understanding won for him an important place in the history of philosophy.

The agelong struggle of philosophy (love of knowledge) to free itself from the domination of religion and theology, to which Descartes himself made a decisive contribution, culminated in the materialist naturalism (as distinct from the natural religion) of the eighteenth century. Already then, biology, though still in its infancy, showed that the Cartesian distinction between man and animal was arbitrary, and thus emboldened philosophy to reject dualism by generalising the mechanistic concept. Locke's sensationalism as improved by Condillac reinforced the movement for the liberation of the human spirit from the venerable tradition of sublimated superstition and pious prejudices.

Owing to the Hegelian association of his adolescence, Marx himself was not sufficiently aware of his spiritual ancestry. Under the influence of the Hegelian dialectics, he rejected the eighteenth century Materialism as mechanical. At the same

time, he disowned the humanist tradition of the earlier advocates of social justice, ridiculing them as Utopians. Though he thus believed to begin from scratch, Descartes as the founder of a new philosophy, Marx belonged to the intellectual lineage of Democritus, Epicurus, Lucretius, Bruno, Gassendi, Hobbes, Holbach, Diderot and Feuerbach, to mention only the most illustrious of them. His place in the history of philosophy therefore, is no less significant and honourable than any one of his forerunners. Indeed, his contribution to the cause of human freedom was greater, because he had the advantage of living in an age when scientific knowledge could throw light on the old problem of philosophy.

To be able to offer a rational explanation of the world of experience, and to avoid the pitfalls of mysticism, philosophy must be monistic; monistic metaphysics does not preclude pluralism in the process of becoming; and only a materialist metaphysics (irrespective of the change in the concept of matter in physics) can be strictly monistic. Marx's thesis that consciousness is determined by being placed materialist metaphysics on a sound scientific foundation. His subsequent thought, particularly sociological, however, did not move in the direction indicated by the significant point of departure. Marxism, on the whole, is not true to its philosophical tradition. In sociology, it vulgarises Materialism to the extent of denying that basic moral values transcend space and time. With the impersonal concept of the force of production, it introduces teleology in history, crassly contradicting its own belief that man is the maker of his destiny. The economic determinism of its historiology blasts the foundation of human freedom, because it precludes the possibility of man ever becoming free as an individual.

In addition to the accumulated achievements of the age-long struggle of metaphysics against dualism, philosophically, Marxism inherited also the liberating tradition of humanism. The two apparently conflicting trends of thought—mechanistic naturalism and romantic Humanism—harmonised in Feuerbach, who therefore could throw off the Hegelian influence more completely than Marx. Nevertheless, in Feuerbach's materialist Humanism, man remains an abstraction, veiled in mystery, an elementary, indefinable category, as simply given, to be taken for granted. The fiery Prophet of social justice in Marx was more a Humanist than a Hegelian. But his critical mind did not miss the weakness of Feuerbach's Humanism

and realised the necessity of explaining the being and becoming of man, if his sovereignty as the maker of his destiny was to be empirically established. It was in search of a rational foundation of the humanist view of life that Marx undertook his analytical study of history. At the same time, anthropology had discovered that the struggle for physical existence was the basic human urge—a biological heritage. Marx identified the primitive man's intelligent effort to earn a livelihood with the biological struggle for existence, and came to the conclusion that the origin of society and subsequent human development were economically motivated. The point of departure of the Marxist historiology was the mistake of confounding physical urge with economic motive.

For a considerable time after the origin of the species, *homo sapiens* was not moved by any economic motive, but by the biological urge of self-preservation. He earned the means of subsistence, and for the purpose devised primitive tools out of sheer physical necessity. Anthropological research does not show any economic motive in the human struggle for existence in the earlier stage of social evolution. What it does show is that the struggle for physical existence provides stimuli for mental development. Consciousness and other rudiments of mind are biological heritage antecedent to the appearance of *homo sapiens*. Thus, further evolution is determined by the physical conditions of the being and becoming of man. But the economic determinism of history, from the origin of society, cannot be logically deduced from the fact. In other words, economic determinism is not a corollary to Materialism. Moreover, it is antagonistic to Humanism, because it subordinates man to the inexorable operation of the impersonal forces of production. In an economically determined society, man is not a producer, but a means of production.

Marx's effort to place Feuerbach's materialist Humanism on a rational foundation led to the exactly contrary consequence. Feuerbach's mystic abstraction was replaced by an economic automaton; and the abstract conception was transferred from the debased man to society, which was endowed with a collective ego.

Marx's failure to work out a sociology consistent with materialist philosophy was due to his passion for social justice, inherited from his humanist predecessors, though he disdained them as Utopians. Marx, however, was not the dry-hearted mathematical prophet of history, as he has been celebrated by

his followers, and as he might have believed himself to be. With a burning faith in revolution, he was a romanticist, and as such a Humanist. The idea of revolution is a romantic idea, because it presupposes man's power to remake the world in which he lives. If purposeful human effort is felt out of account, social development becomes a mechanistic evolutionary process, making no room for sudden great changes and occasionally accelerated tempo. As the prophet of revolution, Marx was a romanticist. He proclaimed his faith in the creativeness of man which, accelerating the process of social evolution, brought about revolutions. Marx being a Humanist, the force of his theory of revolution was its moral appeal. Even his critics, who do not depart from objectivity, honour Marx for his passionate search for truth and intellectual honesty. Without a moral fervour of the highest degree, without an intense dislike for injustice, he could not undertake the lone fight to improve the lot of the oppressed and exploited.

One of the most impassioned fighters against cant and hypocrisy, Marx was a great moralist in the tradition of the ancient prophets of his race. His merciless exposition of the essence of capitalism was a severe moral condemnation. In the last analysis, *Capital* is a treatise on social ethics—a powerful protest against the servitude of the toiling majority. It may be presumed that Marx abstained deliberately from making the moral appeal of his economic theories explicit, because he hated the cant of the sanctimonious defenders of the established order of inequity. Nevertheless, it was as a moralist that he influenced history. Only his orthodox followers seem to be immune to that influence.

Marx talked of Socialism as "the kingdom of freedom" where man will be the master of his social environments. One, who preached such a humanist doctrine could not be a worshipper at a shrine of an exacting collective ego, even of the proletariat. According to Marx, under socialism human reason will overcome irrational forces which now tyrannise the life of men ; as a rational being, man will control his destiny. Freed from the fallacy of economic determinism, the humanist, liberatarian, moralist spirit of Marxism will go into the making of the new faith of our time. It is a part of the accumulated store of human heritage, which must be claimed by the builders of the future, who will not belong to any particular class.

The supreme importance of man results from the fact that in him the physical process of becoming has reached the highest

pitch so far. Humanism thus ceases to be a mystic and poetic view of life. Based on scientific knowledge, it can be integrated in the materialist general philosophy ; and the latter, then, can be the foundation of a sociology which makes room for human creativeness and individual liberty without denying determinism ; which reconciles reason with will ; which shows that co-operation and organisation need not stifle the urge for freedom. Harmonised with Humanism, materialist philosophy can have an ethics whose values require no other sanction than man's innate rationality.

The positive elements of Marxism freed from its fallacies and clarified in the light of greater scientific knowledge are consistent with a more comprehensive philosophy, which can be called Integral or Radical Humanism : a philosophy which combines mechanistic cosmology, materialist metaphysics, secular rationalism and rationalist ethics to satisfy man's urge for freedom and quest for truth, and also to guide his future action in pursuit of the ideals.

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## FOUNDATIONS OF A NEW SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

THE fundamental principle of the new philosophy is a clearly defined idea about the nature of man. This again is nothing altogether new ; ever since the seventeenth century, when the attempt to develop a comprehensive social philosophy began, all pioneers of the movement started from some hypothesis about the nature of man. There were two assumptions with many variations : firstly, the general idea was that man is either selfish by nature and is instinctively concerned only with his own interest. Secondly, human nature is to believe in some benevolent supernatural power. Though it appeared to be the antithesis of the former, the latter assumption was historically associated with the earlier Christian belief in man's original sin. So it amounted to that man was sinful (bad) by nature, but could be good by virtue of his readiness to subordinate himself to a heavenly father or metaphysical power.

With one or the other of these basic assumptions, no social philosophy could conceive of society except as a coercive organisation, to be guided either by man-made laws or providential ordinance ; both meant to curb the evil instincts of man. In either case, society was to be a prison—penal or reformatory. In one, man must surrender his birthright of freedom to the sovereignty of the State ; in the other, he must believe that life on this earth is dominated and dictated by some providential will or superman forces which he can never comprehend. In either case, man is helpless, and can have no freedom in social relations, and no initiative in political and economic practice.

With these prevailing views of human nature, it was not possible to develop such a social philosophy which allowed deduction of economic theories and political doctrines to guarantee freedom and equality in practice. The result is the present crisis of modern civilisation. Everybody talks about the crisis of our time ; books have been written about it. practically all the outstanding intellectuals of our time are trying to understand its nature and lay bare its causes. But all

these well-meaning and often competent attempts are stultified by the absence of an integral view of the crisis. Some say it is an economic crisis. All of them do not believe in economic determinism. But the view that man is selfish by nature and that the incentive of all economic activities is personal gain, logically leads to that belief. Karl Marx raised the economic interpretation of history on the level of a social philosophy. Some of the contemporary philosophers pretend to be wiser than Karl Marx and criticise his interpretation of history. But their point of departure is the same as that of Marx. Modern liberal sociology has not discarded the doctrine of the economic man. If man is primarily an economic being, then material gain is the determining factor of social development.

Given this point of departure, the crisis of the modern world must be regarded as essentially economic. It then follows that an economic reconstruction of society, replacement of the outmoded capitalist system by a new order, will end the crisis. Attempts have been made and are being made to develop a social philosophy on this line ; and they are not confined only to those who advocate a revolutionary reconstruction of society. More cautious and conservative economic thinkers are also making similar attempts. There are few who do not see the need of a revision of economic theories and readjustment of economic practice accordingly. Those who oppose revolutionary reconstruction suggest the so-called mixed economy as the cure of the crisis of the modern time.

The Socialist or Communist plans of economic reconstruction attract greater attention and have motivated powerful popular movements. More than thirty years ago, the revolution took place in one country, which began economic reconstruction according to Communist doctrines and plans. A number of other countries fell in line subsequently. Of late, they have been joined by the largest Asian Country. Consequently, we are now in a position to judge if revolutionary reconstruction of economy brings about an all-round improvement. Even the measure of economic equality under Communism is deceptive and doubtful. A considerable increase in industrial and agricultural productions has indeed taken place in Russia. The default of the newer Communist States in this respect may be explained by the shortness of the experiments. But in the Fatherland of Socialism itself, consumption has not kept pace with increased production. That means that the new economic system has not contributed even to the material welfare of the common people. But granted that some advance has been made

in that direction, and that it is a good beginning, one cannot ignore the price of this doubtful blessing. The price is forfeiture of political and intellectual freedom, and cultural regimentation. This experience exposes the fallacy of the social philosophy based on the doctrine of the economic man.

The exorbitant price for problematical economic security and doubtful material welfare has to be paid whenever the government of a country, whether dictatorial or formally democratic, claims to be the guardian of the welfare of the people and the latter expect the government to do everything for them. In such a situation, a government is entitled to demand the power to do things in its own way. Political dictatorship, either *de facto* or *de jure*, denial of freedom, intellectual regimentation, logically follow from the tradition that people by themselves cannot do anything. Consequently, society is divided into the people and the rulers. Whether the latter are feudal, bourgeois or proletarian, the distinction necessarily leads to the eclipse of liberty.

There are people who say that they do not believe in economic determinism. They also advocate replacement of capitalism by a more equitable, classless, economic order, but reject the dictatorial method of communism. They offer the alternative of the so-called democratic Socialism, or the Welfare State. This experiment is being made in Britain. The distinction between the economic theories of capitalism and Socialism is getting lost in practice. Because both start from the doctrine of the economic man. The idea of a Welfare State was conceived by bourgeois Liberalism in the age of capitalist prosperity towards the end of the nineteenth century. The proletarian Labour Party has taken over an idea of the bourgeoisie. Its practice is called democratic Socialism. It is democratic because under it the people can vote freely. But what are its economic blessings? The Welfare State undertakes to provide every wage-earner with a set of false teeth free of cost ; that presumably is his birth-right. But he may not get meat more than the size of a match-box for the whole week. There is something fraudulent in this welfare. Money is taken out of one pocket of the worker and put into his other pocket in the form of benefits ; in the process the money loses about 20-25 percent of its value. These are facts and not theories. Even under democratic Socialism, economic welfare must be purchased ; the price is forfeiture of individual liberty and regimentation. The practice of any theory, conservative, liberal, revolutionary, which starts from the doctrine of the economic man, must lead to the loss

of freedom and the degradation of man. If man is selfish and irrational by nature, society must be a coercive organisation, a prison house to be guarded by earthly policemen backed up by heavenly colleagues. Economic determinism therefore cannot be the social philosophy which is required to lead civilised mankind out of the present crisis.

Others diagnose the disease as a crisis of political theories and institutions. They recommend that the parliamentary system should be improved by various ingenious devices. It is hardly necessary to go into an examination of the mechanical remedies suggested ; they are bound to fail as long as greater importance is attached to institutions than to men. The central fallacy of these institutions are created by men. Any attempt at social reconstruction to promote economic welfare and political liberty must begin with man. If men are selfish by nature, and therefore predisposed to authoritarianism, the best of theories and constitutions cannot build institutions which would guarantee freedom and promote general welfare. It is quite obvious that such institutions can only be created by men, who may not as yet be free, but who want to be free.

The statement of a new approach to the problems of economic and political reconstruction is deduced from a social philosophy which resulted from an enquiry into the causes of the crisis of modern civilisation. The enquiry was undertaken on the basis of the experience of the political movement in this country and also the lessons of the contemporary history of the world. It led to the discovery that all the evils of our time — political instability, economic insecurity, impoverishment of the masses, rise of totalitarianism, danger of dictatorship, the growing menace of yet another world war, to mention only the most outstanding ones — could be traced to one single cause, namely, wrong notions about human nature. Social philosophies built on the different variations of the wrong notion ultimately undermined man's faith in himself. The crisis of modern civilisation, in the last analysis, therefore, is a spiritual crisis.

Others also reached the same conclusion, but believed that the conflict in the mind of man, his moral disintegration, was the cumulative result of his social experience. The corollary to this conclusion is that a reconstruction of human society on the basis of more democratic political institutions and more equitable economic relations is the crying need of our time.

But practice demonstrated the superficiality of this view ; the disease defied the remedy prescribed. Political instability spread even to the few remaining countries which still retained

the facade of parliamentary democracy ; the ominous shadow of totalitarianism (nationalist, socialist, communist) eclipsed liberty ; the appeal of dictatorship grew more and more irresistible. The economic crisis aggravated everywhere ; attempts to provide economic security spelled drift towards regimentation, even under formal parliamentary democracy ; violent revolutions destroyed liberty, while the utopia of social justice and economic equality remained as far as ever.

The disconcerting experience demanded a more penetrating enquiry, which led to the discovery that the roots of all the evils of the modern world could be traced to the absence of man's faith in himself. If better institutions are the need of the time, there must be men with the faith in the capacity to do so. The new institutions, to be stable, must be built from the bottom up. That cannot be done by governments, political parties, even great dictators. Institutions imposed from above collapse when they are not sustained by the intelligent will of individual men and women composing the society. But today men live in an atmosphere of helplessness and frustration. In this atmosphere, nothing whatsoever can be built. That is why the imposing structure of modern civilisation is crumbling.

That is a tragedy ; but there is a greater tragedy. Men have lost their faith in God also. Today, in despair, they do not seek solace in traditional religion. The spiritual crisis of our age expresses itself in the rise of a new religion. The masses are the god of this vulgar and secular religion ; the political party is the new priesthood, the leader is the high-priest. They have no faith in individuals, but they believe that, when thousands and thousands of helpless individuals come together, to follow the party and the leader, an irresistible power generates. It is a blind faith, so very blind as not to notice the curious arithmetic ; a zero is nothing, but when millions of zeros are put together, the total becomes the almighty God. This new God is worshipped as the Masses, the Nation, or a race or a class ; and entire continents are thus defined, for example, the mystic cult of the resurgence of Asia.

The remedy is suggested by the diagnosis of the disease. We shall have to strike at the root of the evil. The new social philosophy must start from an idea about human nature which will revive the hope of man having faith in himself. If it is true that man by nature is a believer in some power greater than himself, and therefore cannot think of doing anything by himself, then the cherished idea of human freedom must be abandoned. The religious man cannot think of improving God's creation.

On the other hand, the assumption that human nature is selfish logically leads to the view that society can never do without political coercion of the State or moral cistation of religion. So, this alternative view of human nature also rules out the possibility of freedom.

The history of civilisation, however, proves that both the assumptions about human nature were equally unfounded. Throughout history, heretics were the pioneers of human progress. Faith is based on ignorance ; if it was the foundation of human nature, knowledge would not be possible, and man would be still living in blissful ignorance. As regards the other assumption, it is true that his own existence is the primary concern of man ; but it is equally true that his selfishness breeds the capacity to outgrow it. The theory of class struggle ignores the fact that cooperation has always been a stronger social factor. Otherwise, society would have fallen to pieces at the dawn of civilisation. History, therefore, warrants the view that neither is human nature incorrigibly selfish, nor is it founded on the faith in the superhuman. Modern science corroborates this view, which can inspire a social philosophy capable of showing a way out of the crisis of our time.

In the past, inadequate knowledge kept human nature shrouded in history. Today there is little reason to call man the unknown. Nor is there any ground for the venerable faith in his divine essence. As a biological form, man is a physical entity. The entire process from the fertilisation of an ovum to the birth of the full-grown child, is a physical phenomenon. No extraneous element enters in the process at any point. Whatever distinguishes the human being from the lower animals, the so-called soul, is not a divine spark. Nowhere could the divine spark struggle itself into the physical process. What is called soul is but the sum total of the diverse manifestations of life, which itself is a physico-chemical phenomenon. Therefore we rule out the doctrine that, man being differentiated from animals by the possession of a divine spark, to believe in the transcendental source of his humanness is the foundation of his nature. Thus liberated from the venerable prejudice of his spiritual origin, which persuades him to accept spiritual slavery as the token of his superiority, man can think of being free as man. The spiritual liberation will give him the confidence in the capacity to participate voluntarily in the collective human endeavour to blind a free society.

Anthropology also helps us in the enquiry into human nature. It proves that human society did not originate in an *ad hoc*

contract. Primitive man had to struggle against his environments. He could do so more successfully in co-operation with others. The instinct of self-preservation and struggle for existence led to the foundation of civil society. Instinct is primitive reason. Man therefore is essentially a rational being. Rudiments of reason, the ability to connect experiences, can be traced in lower animals. Rationality, therefore, is a biological function which can very highly develop in the highest biological form. Rationality can subordinate man's selfishness to enlightened self-interest, which is a social virtue.

Now we can discard another idea which has bedevilled modern social thought ; the idea of conflict and competition. Some economists say that competition is the lever of all progress ; and revolutionaries attach the same significance to social conflict which they call class struggle. No doubt there have been conflicts, and there will be. But an unprejudiced study of history reveals that the desire to be helpful to fellow-men is a more fundamental human trait than competition and conflict. However, religion and social philosophies based on it and other wrong assumptions made man forget his innate rationality. Religion having done havoc in the past, philosophy in our time preached the cult of irrationalism. At the same time, the experience of conflict discouraged the spirit of co-operation. The cumulative result is man's loss of faith in himself.

The scientific knowledge about human nature reveals the root of the cultural crisis of our times, and should enable us to discover an entirely new approach to the baffling problems of modern life. The crisis does not effect just this or that aspect of social existence ; it envelopes the whole being of man. Therefore it can be called a spiritual crisis, a crisis of the soul of man. Man has forgotten what he is. The only way out of the impasse is to help him remember that he is a man, and not a slave either of a divine slave-driver or of any terrestrial power.

The fundamental principles of this new philosophy of life were outlined three years ago. We called it New or Scientific or Integral Humanism. There is nothing altogether new in it. Humanism is as old as history. The common feature of Humanism throughout the ages has been the belief that there are certain human values which transcend all other considerations, and to develop the human personality is the main purpose of life ; political practice and social institutions, economic organisations, educational endeavours, should all serve the basic purpose of life. But in the olden times the

wrong idea of human nature contradicted the humanist philosophy of life. Therefore, classical Humanism failed to hold its own view against the opposing views of life, which are harmonised with the wrong notions about human nature. But today scientific knowledge as well as a careful reading of history enable Humanism to challenge the wrong notions about human nature and thus free itself from all contradictions and fallacies. Therefore, we call it New Humanism. Since its newness is derived from modern scientific knowledge, the more appropriate name is scientific Humanism. We restate the principle of the sovereignty and primacy of man not as a dogma, but with the support of scientific knowledge.

That is the point of departure of a new approach to the various problems of modern life. Take for instance the economic problems of our country. Everybody knows that things are going from bad to worse. And the easiest thing to do is to blame somebody for this state of affairs, and the government is the obvious scapegoat. All complaints against prevailing conditions amount to abusing the present government, which is followed up by the demand for an alternative government under the control of the complainant. It is maintained that such a change of government will solve all problems ; but the pretenders to power do not explain how. If they really know how to solve the problems, why don't they let the established government have the benefit of their wisdom? There is no reason to believe that the men in power are less concerned with popular welfare than those who aspire to replace them. Governments may be mistaken and not do the right thing. But after all, they are also composed of human beings, capable of moral judgement. Therefore, if you appeal to their good sense and point out repeatedly that they can do things better, they may listen to you. But if you insist that they must get out so that you may be in power, their back will be up, and they will insist on pursuing their mistaken policy. The men in power are handicapped by the anxiety to remain in power. That desire on their part is morally no more reprehensible than the desire of others to replace them. Potentially, one man is as good as the other. To appeal to the rationality and the moral sense of the men in power, therefore, is the only manner of purifying politics.

This is not an abstract moralist attitude. It is the most practical approach to the problem of political practice. The politicians in power must have votes in the next elections. They must therefore listen to public opinion if it advocates a more promising approach to problems which have baffled them.

There are two lines of approach. One is fundamental. You cannot cure things by imposing reforms from above. It must be done from the bottom. So long as the people want their problems to be solved for them, they must be prepared to obey, to follow blindly, to be regimented. On the contrary, if they want freedom, they must prove that they are capable of being free. They can do that by declaring that as human beings they can do whatever they expect others to do for them. They may not be able to rebuild the whole of Indian economy. But they can indicate the way. It is the formation of local co-operative organisations as the nuclei of a new system of economy. There is no reason why the government should not encourage popular initiative. Without doubting the sincerity of its professions and intentions, we must persevere in appealing to its good sense, while doing things on our own initiative.

They say that economic prosperity of India is conditional on her ability to build up heavy industries. But they also say that the condition cannot be created with India's own resources. She requires foreign aid. But dollars are not coming. What are we to do? Can we do without them? We can. To point out, how, is the purpose of our statement on a new approach to the problems of economic reconstruction.

Consistently with the belief, based on the knowledge that man is essentially rational, we appeal to the government with the hope that it may change its policy. At the same time, we say that popular initiative is not precluded by whatever the government may or may not do.

Humanist approach to the problem of democracy in India is equally rational and realistic. It advocates initiative from below. Formal democracy has not been a blessing. It is bound to be less so when the electorate is politically illiterate, as in India. Party politics will not establish political freedom. It confounds democracy with demagoguery. Those who are dissatisfied with the present government, propose to organise an opposition party with the object of capturing power. Under the parliamentary system, power is to be captured through the ballot-box. In order to win the election, the opposition party must promise to do what the present government has failed to do. It does not explain how it will make the miracle. The present government may not be composed of angels and supermen, nor will the alternative one be. There are objective difficulties, which will baffle the one as they have done the other. But party politics does not make room for such honest admission. It must promise miracles, belief in which presupposes irrationalism on the part

of the electorate. Election propaganda, therefore, appeals to emotion and blind faith. Only consummate demagogues can succeed in it. Measured by this standard of formal democracy the method of counting heads—the avowed dictator Hitler was the most successful democrat of our time. By inflaming the passions of the people demagogically, he obtained their almost unanimous support several times. The voice of the people ceases to be the voice of God when the people ceases to be an aggregate of men capable of moral and rational judgment. The demagogic practice of formal democracy may degrade the sovereign people to the status of a mass of voting robots. In India, such degradation of formal democracy is practically predetermined by the cultural predisposition of the people to believe blindly and to expect miracles.

Intelligent people would take to this risky path with their eyes open for the reason that the only alternative is Communism. On the other hand, the none too reassuring experience of parliamentary democracy in other countries induces woolly-headed idealists to flirt with Communism. It is argued that Russian Communism is bad, but in China, Communism has taken the democratic path. There, Communism is supposed to have triumphed with the support of the people. This idea of Communism being purified by nationalism is simply not true. In China also it means violence, suppression of all liberty and all the rest of the familiar story. Whether it be of the Russian or Chinese variety, Communism will bring in its wake a long period of terror, regimentation, suppression of liberty, most probably civil war and chaos. It is sheer madness to welcome that catastrophe with the hope that the golden utopia may be waiting on the other side of the uncharted sea of blood and tears.

Is there no third alternative? Must we fall back upon the intellectual lethargy of choosing the lesser evil? And even that judgment will create endless confusion, because it will be a matter of opinion and predisposition. While rejecting Communism, we cannot ignore the defects of formal democracy. It will not establish political freedom in this country, where the cultural preconditions for democratic practice are absent. In this atmosphere, formal democracy will not only easily degenerate into vulgar demagoguery and deception; it may indeed prepare the way to a dictatorship with popular support. On the other hand, beginning from scratch, we in India need not be handicapped by the tradition of formalism. We can give democracy a chance by laying down its human foundation.

The coming election gives us the opportunity to do so. We should advise the people not to take any party on its words, and help them to examine critically the promises made during the election campaign. All the promises may be sincerely made ; but they may be unrealistic and therefore meant to deceive the people. The danger of democracy degenerating into demagoguery can be headed off only by helping the people to develop their capacity of judgment. And only a social philosophy which holds that man is essentially rational can inspire us to undertake the task of building a democratic order on the solid foundation of an intelligent electorate, which will not be swayed by appeals to emotion.

This endeavour to lay down the humanist foundation of a democratic order must be co-ordinated with the co-operative reconstruction of the economic life. The result will be creation of a chain of local republics in which democracy will be real, because it will be directly, and economic problems solved on the basis of local resources, with the intelligent initiative and co-operative effort of the citizens. Whoever are more concerned with the freedom and welfare of the people than with power to rule in the name of the people, can begin doing things by themselves, irrespective of the attitude of the established government. But they must have confidence in themselves, and the confidence is given by the humanist philosophy of life.

The practical details of what should be done and how are outlined in the two statements submitted for public consideration. They do not claim any finality. They do not lay down the blueprint of the future. They only indicate a new approach to problems which have baffled the politicians. Agreement with it will not mean any organisational commitment, involve no party discipline. Our appeal is to reason and moral responsibility. The response to this entirely disinterested appeal will be the measure of hope for the future not only of our country, but of the modern civilisation.

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## HUMANISM, RATIONALISM AND SCIENCE

HUMANISM is nearly five hundred years old. Why did it not succeed in influencing history more perceptibly? I use the comparative term because modern culture has been greatly influenced by Humanism, though imperceptibly. However, if its apparent failure was due to its being a wrong attitude to the problems of life, there is no sense in reviving it. The attempt to create a New Humanism would be to rationalise religion, as many modern Humanists are trying to do. However, the search for a more rational philosophy of life has induced us to fall back on the Humanist tradition. A critical examination of history reveals that there was something associated with Humanism which prevented that soundness to make itself manifest in a generally accepted philosophy of life. That weakness of an otherwise sound philosophy must be detected and eliminated. It was the failure to associate man with the physical Universe ; a Humanism which cannot be fitted into the context of scientific knowledge is bound to be transcendental ; and classical Humanism was subsequently challenged by modern scientific knowledge. Failing to stand the test, it degenerated into mystic romanticism, which made of man a metaphysical abstraction. Those who even today pose the problem as science *versus* Humanism represent the danger of smuggling into our ranks an antiquated, if I may borrow a term, muddled Humanism. We have to be very careful in analysing the relation between science and Humanism. There is no reason to assume that it is one of antagonism.

As a matter of fact, this defect of Humanism led to its rejection by Karl Marx, although his philosophy as a whole was inspired by the tradition of Humanism. The kind of Humanism which appears to be antithetical to science was brought to its logical conclusion in the beautifully poetical picture drawn by Feuerbach. Though he placed man in the centre of the world, yet, in his beautiful picture, man somehow hang in the air. Feuerbach expounded his Humanism in the context of the story of the rise of Christianity ; and the mystic concept of Humanism could easily led to the faith in the divinity of Christ.

Feuerbach's Thesis was that the essence of Christianity was humanist. Yet, a philosophy, an attitude to life, which developed originally as a humanist movement, ended by making the son of man the son of God. Karl Marx seized on that defeat of Humanism, although he should not have been so superficial. The early men of the Renaissance, who raised the standard of the revolt against God, did not have the benefit of science to understand what is man. The science of man was absent at that time. Therefore, they simply accepted man is given. But at that time of Feuerbach and when Karl Marx wrote, modern anthropology was sufficiently developed, and the knowledge of the biological science as a whole was well advanced to induce a critical mind like Marx's to look into the core of Humanism and explain man scientifically, instead of going to the other extreme of dismissing the concept as a mere abstraction. Feuerbach's Humanism made it possible for the son of man to be the son of God, whereas Marx's collectivist Humanism or Humanist collectivism produced the monster of *Massemensch*. If Feuerbach's man was a mystic entity, with Marx man became a non-entity; the masses are not composed of men and women of flesh and blood, with individual desires and will; the masses are something more than the sum total of individuals composing them; the masses are super-human — also a mystic entity.

Having failed to meet the challenge of science, classical Humanism degenerated into mystic romanticism and discredited itself. There arose other school of "scientific" philosophy to offer guidance to life in the modern world. Eventually, civilised mankind was overtaken by the present crisis of culture, which has exposed the inadequacy of all the systems of "scientific" philosophy, Materialist as well as Idealist, and also those rejecting both in favour of hand-to-mouth attitude, such as pragmatism, logical positivism, new realism, so on and so forth. Society is a creation of man, whatever he may be; history also is made by man. The basic assumption of the above mentioned systems of philosophy— ideas, reason, intuition, forces of production— are not ultimate categories. Evidently, man as the creator of society and maker of history can be the only reliable point of departure for a faithful approach to call the problems of life resulting from the present cultural crisis. unless the sovereignty and freedom of the individual man and woman of flesh and blood are recognised as the greatest and highest values to inspire all human endeavour, there does not seem to be any way out of the present crisis of modern civilisation. We

have not alone come to this conclusion; many thoughtful people in other countries have also been moving in that direction. But few among them have as yet freed the concept of the individual from the mystic connotation of classical Humanism. Some would even build a new Humanism with the sanction of "pure" Christianity. But as long as man is not explained, the Marxist contention, that the individual is an abstraction, cannot be challenged. We shall then be baffled by the relation between Humanism and science: there is humanist and a scientific approach to the problems of the modern world, and the two approaches yield different solutions. To get out of the dilemma, we must ask what is the content of the humanist approach? Is it to take man as something simply given, an elementary undefinable, which cannot be analysed and referred back to the physical world? That sort of Humanism must, in the last analysis, identify man with soul; and the concept of immaterial soul lends itself to all sorts of mystic doctrines about individuality, character and personality; all manner of mystifications have thus been woven out of the fictitious fabric of the belief in an unanalysable essence of man.

Therefore, before we can explain everything in terms of man, man himself must be explained, and that could not be done until science came to the aid of philosophy. Science placed man at the centre of the Universe. It is not a claim pressed arbitrarily, on behalf of man. Science is a creation of man. Knowledge belongs to man; it is the result of human endeavour. But there was a time when man could not explain himself, and therefore imagined that he was created by a being greater and more powerful than himself. Ultimately, science discovered that man's forefathers were sub-human animals. That was a significant pointer. Man did not drop on earth, a readymade thing. The human species resulted from a long process of biological evolution. The biological evolution, on its part, takes place on the background of the physical Universe. Man, with his soul, mind, instincts, intuitions and will, grows out of the physical Universe. There is nothing mystic or metaphysical in his highest biological form. Man belongs to this world. Man creates this world. Man lives in this world.

That is the central idea of the Theses. It reconciles the scientific and humanist views of life. The argument that our Theses begin with man, and therefore ours is the classical humanist approach is not correct. Ours is a scientific humanist approach. We do not start from any abstraction. We start from

the fact that man is the basic problem, and maintain that all problems must be approached from that point of view. If our point of departure remained veiled in mystery, our whole philosophy would be another dream castle built in the air. Therefore, having declared that man is the measure of all things, we proceed to say what is man. Then we trace man's evolution out of the physical world. By doing so, we reveal the relation between Humanism and science. There is a relation of continuity between the world described by the physical sciences, and the world of human affairs— a continuity between the inanimate and animate, between the physical and the biological, between the material and mental, or the spiritual, if you like. This monistic view is something new in the world of thought. It solves the age-long problem of dualism which bedevilled philosophy. In contemporary philosophy, the problem was visualised— not only visualised, but very pointedly stated— by Bertrand Russell several years ago, when he said that the main problem of philosophy was to bridge the gulf between physics and psychology. I make bold to advance the claim that our Theses have built this bridge ; or rather, we have discovered it. At most we can say that the material was lying about ; we have put it together and proved that gulf is not unbridgeable. We have shown the continuity between the physical, biological and human.

The problem of the relation between science and Humanism arises when science is conceived only as physical science, concerned only with the inorganic world ; man is believed to belong to another world, and therefore the laws of the physical world do not apply to man. We do not make the absurd claim that all human behaviour can be explained by Newton's laws of mechanics. But on the other hand, we do contend, and I think we have established our contention, that there is no dispute between the biological and the physical world. If that is so, then man cannot claim independence of the laws of the physical world. Every aspect, every department of science has its specific laws. But if there is no common denominator of all these laws, then let us not talk about science. Philosophy has always assumed an underlying unity ; but until now that unity was conceived as a metaphysical state. That metaphysical unity was simply assumed. Now science enables us to show that there is a physical unity. I am using this term, physical, because there is no better term, and in order to obviate the possible charge that I am still thinking of matter as "hard lumps of

reality". By physical I mean anything that can be measured, that can be described in mathematical terms : a measurable entity. Having thus reduced man of flesh and blood, his being, his psychology, intelligence, emotions, will and reason, all down to the common denominator of the physical Universe, we have solved the problem of the relation between Humanism and science. Therefore we call our philosophy Scientific Humanism. It is not mystic romantic Humanism, but Humanism based on Knowledge. It does not simply postulate man as the centre of the Universe as was done in righteous indignation when the man of the Renaissance revolted against the domination of the Church. No, today we have enough Knowledge to prove that man is the centre of the Universe.

Our second deduction, that man is essentially rational, logically follows from this New Humanism. Thesis four, which contains this deduction, is not easily understood by all. That is quite natural. The continuity between the physical, biological and social is taken for granted therein. The hundred years has been concentrated in four sentences. It is quite natural that those who do not possess a sufficiently large working knowledge of modern science cannot grasp the whole meaning of these sentences. We cannot expect all to be fully acquainted with modern scientific knowledge and its history.

We have tried to eliminate another source of mysticism. It is the classical, I should say conventional concept of rationality, which was also considered to be antithetical to Humanism. Two mystic and mystifying conceptions were faced with each and confused human thought. They were Humanism and Rationalism, or romanticism and classicism. Pre-scientific or super-scientific Humanism makes a metaphysical category out of man. The biological history of man is simply ignored. Man is like the Leibnizian monad. It exists, with all its attributes which are mysteriously given. That is a very irrational view. As against that romantic Humanism, we had classical Rationalism, which took reason for granted, as something simply given, which cannot be analysed and traced back to some tangible origin in the context of the physical world. A mysterious quality called reason distinguishes man from other animals. Classical Rationalism, which placed reason beyond the reach of intelligence, is the antechamber of the temple of God. Metaphysically conceived as a transcendental, extra-physical, category, reason can easily be mystified as the "inner voice" of the divine spark in man ; it is a property of the soul, not of

the biological form called man. It is something which is not a part of his biological heritage ; its origin, therefore, must be super-human, or super-natural— and that is, metaphysical, spiriual, divine.

We reject that sort of transcendental rationalism which is certainly antithetical of Humanism. Once God is let in, there is an end to the sovereignty of man. God is almighty ; you will have to pay fines not only once, but every moment of your life. There will be no freedom at all. The first precondition for the freedom of man is to dethrone the old-bearded gentleman in heaven, and to debunk other doctrines which make the concept of God more ethereal and elusive. Therefore, the origin of reason must be traced in man's physical being, as a biological property. Until recently, that could not be done, owing to the inadequacy of human knowledge. Nevertheless, the fact remains that ever since the appearance of man all his activities were guided by his innate rationality. Religion itself is Primitive Rationalism. At last, science enables us to free reason from the mystic connotation. And science is the result of the agelong effort of man to free himself from the original sin of having been born a slave of God. Unless we can revolt against that time-honoured slavery, let us not speak of freedom. The function of philosophy from the time immemorial has been to set man free from this slavery. Modern science reinforced philosophy. Therefore, it is idle to differentiate philosophy from scientific knowledge. Science means knowledge. In Greek, the word philosophy also means knowledge. A philosopher was a man who knew everything. In our time, to be taken seriously, as not mere speculation, philosophy must be a logical systematisation of the positive knowledge of the various aspects of nature. Therefore, as a philosophy, Humanism is a scientific view of life. It cannot be antithetical to science. Our New Humanism is an integration of philosophical thought and scientific knowledge.

Having rejected the metaphysical concept of reason, we derive rationality from the law-governed physical Universe. The so-called spiritual faculties of man— noble sentiments, morality, intelligence, will— developed in course of the long process of biological evolution, which again can be traced back to the inanimate nature. The notion of law-governed Universe is not a mere hypothesis. it is so only to the extent that we have not yet investigated every inch of Einstein's "finite but unbounded space" ; we have not got that amount of empirical knowledge which would satisfy the neo-positivists or the logical analysis.

But if conceptual knowledge can have any ontological validity, the concept of the law-governed Universe is more than a hypothesis. Yet, it is a hypothesis in the sense that it does not claim to state a body of knowledge verified by direct sense-experience.

The philosophical idea of a law-governed Universe is different from the mechanistic doctrine of classical physics. In order to explain certain phenomena, Newton postulated masspoints and motion. Mathematical deductions made from an *a priori* hypothesis were borne out by observed physical processes. From that experience it was concluded that the world was a mechanistic system like a lock. Thanks to the vast body of knowledge acquired since the time of Newton, physics no longer follows the deductive procedure, which might be more satisfactory from the point of view of pure logic ; inductive method has proved to be more fruitful. Starting from particulars, investigation is carried on to establish general laws. But physical laws are not written on the walls of nature, so to say, like Asoka's edicts. Certain physical processes are observed, and it is found that they repeat themselves. What is discovered is not laws existing *a priori* to govern nature, or condified by nature herself as an immutable system. Science discovers invariant relations in all observed and measured physical systems ; there is a coherence in all processes of nature. The concept of a law governed Universe is the generalisation of that empirical fact. Investigation leads to the discovery of order in the various parts of the Universe. Therefrom it is deduced that the Universe, being composed of parts which are law-governed, must itself be law-governed. It is not a teleological view ; it is a matter of inductive knowledge. Laws are not superimposed on nature. They simply describe certain invariant relations in nature.

This conception of the law-governed Universe enables us to come to the conclusion that reason is not a metaphysical category. On the other hand, biological science traces the origin of man to the primordial slime, and chemistry has solved the mystery of the relation between the seat of life and the world of dead matter. Man thus is an integral part of the physical world. If the one is law-governed, the other must be equally so. Mind may not act according to the Second Law of Thermodynamics ; nor emotional states be subject to the equations of Electro-magnetism. That distinction, however, does not qualify men and women for the lunatic asylum ; moreover, insanity itself is not a mysterious state ; there is method in madness

also. Man's behaviour is governed by psychological laws which are physiological and, in the last analysis, chemical. Chemistry relates man, with his "mysterious and spiritual" properties, to the physical world. Rationality is innate in man because he is but a fraction of the law-governed physical Universe. Law-governedness being the common denominator, everything in the world happens according to a rational system. When we say that man is essentially rational, we mean that every human behaviour can be explained. A man is not good simply because he is better than others, nor does one steal because he is depraved. Goodness and badness are not simply given as elementary unanalysable qualities ; they are emergent values. Perhaps there are certain psychological or even physiological phenomena which owing to inadequate knowledge cannot be explained today. But they will cease to be mysterious as soon as we know more about glandular secretion. Until recently, the cause of cancer was not known ; now it is known. Yet we cannot explain why a funny little cell which was to be in the toe, breaks away from its mooring, drifts through the veins and suddenly lodges itself in the brain and tries to grow into a toe in that improper place. Should we explain this curious behaviour of a cell by saying that we have now discovered the seat of the soul in the toe?

If we cannot explain certain phenomena, we say that we do not know enough about them. That is scientific approach, which admits of no mystery and limitation to man's power to know. Two hundred years ago, we did not know so many things. Two hundred years back, human knowledge was even more defective. There may be many things we do not yet know and may not yet know for some time, but there is nothing unknowable. I would go further and say that perhaps, in relation to the present capacity of the human mind, there may be even unknowable things. But who would maintain that the mind's capacity to know cannot grow with increasing knowledge, so that everything will some time become knowable? When man had to work with the primitive microscope, he could not see so many things ; the electron was an unknowable thing for him. But it came within the scope of the scientist's capacity to know as soon as he learned to operate with the calculus. Man has developed. The capacity of his mind to know has also grown. There are many things still unknown, but nothing unknowable. It is not necessary for us to discover God in all the dark corners of the world which have not yet been illuminated by human knowledge.

With these arguments, we come to the conclusion that the subtle mechanism, structure, function of the biological form called man is ultimately an orderly process, and therefore it is a rational process. Reason is not something revealed in man. As a coherence of physical and biological events, reason in man can be, should be conceived only as an expression of the law-governedness of the Universe. Man is rational, there is in man a property called reason, because man is part of the law-governed Universe. Man is a microcosm within the macrocosm ; a small order within a big order.

If man was ideal, then there would be nothing for us to do. In quest of freedom, in search for knowledge, he blundered into all sorts of wrong channels and conceived false ideals ; therefore his entire mental make-up is much burdened with heaps of ballast. When we talk about education and enlightenment, of making man moral, we undertake the task of removing the heaps of ballast which have buried the innate rationality of man. In proportion as we succeed in showing up the rationality in man, we only say that man is essentially rational ; that is an assumption as well as an empirical deduction. As assumption, it is corroborated by the scientific knowledge that man is part of a law-governed Universe.

Now, if we take this point of view, then all difficulty about discipline, rules, laws, etc., disappears. Rational laws are the result, and have the sanction, of man's intelligent thinking. Inasmuch as every member of our party and the Radical Democratic society begins to realise that they are rational beings, having some common idea of morality and cherishing common values, their standard of behaviour also becomes uniform. Under the same conditions, they will come to the same conclusions regarding right behaviour. Otherwise, we can never have a free society. A community of men holds together either by common ideals, and thinking and acting similarly in similar situations, or under compulsion. Only a rational human being can behave in a way so that his freedom will not be attained at the expense of other people's freedom. If everyone of us is zealous about the freedom of others also, and we have a common idea of freedom, all of us will be free, and one's freedom will not interfere with the freedom of others. That is the kind of society we want to build. It is proposed that we begin by making the Radical Democratic Party the archetype of such a free society. A community of men holds together either by common ideals,.

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## HUMANISM AND ETHICAL CULTURE

THE conditions of the contemporary world present a dismal picture of decay, degradation and demoralisation. The threatening perspective appears to be either of a ruinous war or a slow breakdown of modern civilisation. It may not actually come to the catastrophe of a ruinous armed clash between the two giants contending for world domination. But local wars, as the one in Korea, may break out in the the backwaters of the world, together causing incalculable human misery and adding to international instability. Meanwhile, all the European countries are driven into a mad race of re-armament, at the risk of their economic stability and a consequent hastening of social disintegration and political chaos.

While peace is obviously the crying need of a distracted and tormented world, on all sides there is talk of war and frantic preparation for it. No sensible person wants another war ; yet, it seems to be inevitable, like fate. Man seems to have lost all faith in himself ; consequently, the hopelessness about the future of the race has reached the limit. It is indeed a paradoxical situation. Man's creative faculties have unfolded themselves in our time to a higher degree than ever before ; he knows much more ; his ability to do things is, therefore, correspondingly greater. Nevertheless, something seems to be lacking. Human creativeness is inhibited ; the eternal urge to go forward, to break down intellectual and spiritual barriers, seems to have lost its force.

Plausible political theories and doctrines of social justice are still preached. They all talk of democracy, freedom and equality. But the realities of the contemporary world contradict the promising theoretical pictures presented in the nineteenth century. It is not because the theories were false or deliberately deceptive, but because man has failed to take the fullest advantage of the knowledge acquired in modern times, so as to apply it to the solution of the problems of actual life. During the last half a century, the failure has become more and more remarkable, until he reached its present state of hopelessness and despair. Human ingenuity seems to have been completely

exhausted. Promising political and social doctrines— liberal, democratic, Marxist— have all been practised, and all found equally wanting. If they were capable of solving the problems of modern life, the world should not be plunged in the present impasse. Nor is it true that they were not practised honestly by their respective protagonists. To hold on to discredited faiths by doubting the sincerity of the profession of others, is woeful self-deception.

The experience of contemporary history has exposed the fallacies of the cherished social, political and economic ideas and ideals, classical as well as revolutionary. The world is full of possibilities, material and also mental. To build a better and freer society is a practical possibility. Yet, things go from bad to worse ; helplessness and hopelessness grow, to corrode the springs of human action and corrupt the ideals of civilised life. Failure and disappointment are bound to follow from attempt to solve the problems of our time with the ideas of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The mental make-up and moral tone of the civilised man have not been brought up to the level of material progress. That is the root cause of the crisis of our time.

The civilised world has been confronted with new problems for a whole period of history, during which time they seem to have baffled human intelligence ; they have defied solution on the basis of old ideas and theories. History reached one of the recurring periods when man is compelled to take stock of things, look back on his past in the light of experience, and examine traditional ideas and time-honoured ideals critically, in order to find out what is lacking in them so as to have brought him to a state of helplessness, frustration and despair. Appreciation of the significance of the knowledge acquired in the intervening period enables man to reject cherished notions, and revalue old values, evolve new ideas and visualise new ideals, to inspire action and guide his steps towards the future.\*

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\* "The nineteenth century was an epoch of civilised advance— humanitarian, scientific, industrial, literary, political. But at length, it wore itself out, and marked the decisive turn of human life into some new direction, as yet not fully understood... The values of life are slowly ebbing. There remains the show of civilisation without any of its realities."

(A. N. Whitehead, *The Adventure of Ideas*.)

The decay and possible breakdown of old social institutions and political systems, and the consequent pragmatic discredit of their theoretical sanctions have precipitated the crisis. The errors, inadequacies and outright failure (in the case of some) of ideologies, either of reform or of revolution, have created the atmosphere of frustration, despair, disgust and disillusionment. Civilised mankind is confronted with the choice between a modern barbarism promising material well-being and security in a socially regimented and spiritually enslaved life, or a relapse into medieval obscurantism in search of an illusory safety in the backwaters of faith. This conflict of ideologies underlies the process of political polarisation which may any day plunge the world headlong into a titanic clash of arms. A growing number of tormented souls throughout the civilised world are eagerly looking out for a possible escape from the dreadful dilemma. Never in history has man's ingenuity been put to greater test. He will have the courage to decline the security of slavery, in one form or another, only by regaining faith in himself.

A searching analysis of the problems confronting the modern world leads to the conclusion that the crisis of our time calls for a complete reorientation of social philosophy and political theories, so as to recognise the supreme importance of moral values in public life. Therefore, one hears appeals to morality even from the most unexpected quarters. Politicians engaged in the unscrupulous scramble for power sanctimoniously talk of moral obligation. Yet, the situation deteriorates. The law of the jungle, scramble for political power, lust for economic loot, reign supreme.

Nevertheless, the mere fact that the absence of moral scruples in public life is generally deplored, that lip loyalty is pledged to moral values, is significant. If in practice politicians cannot be true to their professions, that is not necessarily a proof of dishonesty. They are caught in a vicious circle. Engaged in a game, one must play it according to the rules. The fault of moralising politicians is the failure to realise that, so long as power remains the object of political practice, it cannot be handicapped by irrelevant scruples, it must be guided by the dictum that the end justifies the means. Caught in the whirlpool, even the best of men are bound to be pulled down to the lowest depth, which may appear as the pinnacle of power.

The disconcerting experience of the contemporary world compels thoughtful people to re-examine the fundamental principles of social philosophies from which different political

theories— of the Right and Left, conservative and liberal, reactionary and revolutionary— are alike deduced. The experience is that in practice there is little difference, because capture of power, irrespective of the diversity of means advocated for the purpose, is the common postulate of all political theories. Morality in public life, therefore, pre-supposes a political theory which does not make capture of power the precondition for any necessary social change ; and a new political theory must be deduced from a social philosophy which restores man in the place of primacy and sovereignty.

Morality being the dictate of conscience, it can be practised only by individuals. Without moral men there can be no moral society. Until now, all the architects and engineers of a new society have reversed the order : They all postulate and ideal order as the condition for the free growth of human personality. The Liberals believed that the ideals of a good life could be attained by good laws. As against their "reformism", Socialists and later on Communists maintained that economic reconstruction on the basis of common ownership was the condition for human development. The result has been eclipse of the individual by collectivities ; totalitarianism and dictatorship in political practice have been the corollary to collectivist social philosophies.

Modern political theories, originally formulated in the seventeenth century, all started from the individual. The problem was regarding the origin of society : How was civil society founded? The creation of modern political institutions was to be guided by the knowledge of the origin of civil society. In the last analysis, the problem was about the nature of man. The origin of society was explained variously by different thinkers who applied themselves to the problem. They all assumed implicitly that man was a rational animal. The doctrine of original contract, expounded ever since the sixteenth century, ultimately became the Bible of Democracy. But philosophically, it was interpreted differently. Rousseau's interpretation differed from that of Locke. Liberalism based on Locke's doctrine retained the humanist principle of the sovereignty of the individual. Rousseau was the prophet of totalitarianism, which was heralded by his doctrine of the General Will. A metaphysical concept of sovereignty replaced the medieval doctrine of Divine Right. If kings ruled by Divine Right, Rousseau's democracy also rested on a metaphysical sanction. Subsequently, man himself was completely forgotten, and more and more emphasis was laid

on institutions. It was completely forgotten that, from the time primitive society was formed, all institutions had been created by man as so many instruments to serve the purpose of his being and becoming. Ultimately, it came to be believed that the creation was of greater importance than the creator, to the extent that it was entitled to claim the creator for its first victim. That has been the curse of modern political philosophy, and the breeding ground of the present social crisis.

It is easy enough to place the individual in the centre of a social philosophy. As a matter of fact, individualism was the cardinal principle of the liberal social philosophy and political theory ; and Liberalism was the source of inspiration for the magnificent achievements of modern civilisation. But in practice, the principle of individualism was reduced to an abstract doctrine, the sovereign individual to a legal fiction. The decay of Liberalism encouraged the rise of various collectivist doctrine which denied the possibility of individual freedom, ridiculed the idea as an empty abstraction, and proclaimed that, in order to be free, the individual must merge himself in the mass, in other words, find freedom in self-annihilation. If Liberalism had made a legal fiction of the sovereign individual, the Socialist as well as the Communist conception of freedom is a fraud.

The cause of the decline of the liberal social philosophy was the ambiguity about the sanction of morality. It started with the excellent principle that the individual is a moral entity and as such sovereign. That is an ancient belief ; in Europe, Christianity popularised it : Man is a moral entity because he possesses the soul which is a spark of the divine light of the universal moral order. In the beginning, that was an elevating idea ; inspired by it, European humanity threw off the thralldom of the patriarchal and communal organisation of the medieval social order. But the religious faith in man's moral essence limits his sovereignty ; indeed, it is a negation of the liberating concept. In the last analysis, it implies that man as man cannot be moral ; to be so, he must feel himself subordinated to a super-human power. With this paralysing sense of spiritual subservience, man can never be really free. Man's struggle against the doctrine of the necessity of his eternal spiritual subordination was the outstanding feature of the earlier stages of modern civilisation. Liberalism was born out of that struggle, which reached the highwater mark in the eighteenth century. The Enlightenment was its afflorescence.

The shock of the French Revolution, however, frightened Liberalism out of its wits. Natural religion was opposed to Naturalism, and the sanction for social and individual morality was traced in a transcendental moral order.\* As against the transcendentalism of the early nineteenth century moral philosophy, liberal social reforms and political theorists advanced the utility principle of morality. If in the former, moral values were metaphysical concepts beyond the test of human experience, the latter deprived them of any objective standard, and that amounted to a negation of morality. Between the two, the civilised world was thrown into a moral confusion.

At the same time, the practice of parliamentary democracy and *laissez faire* economics reduced the individual to a helpless position. The cumulative effect of moral confusion and social atomisation destroyed man's faith in himself. The collectivist ridicule of the idea of individual freedom corresponded with the experience of the bulk of the community. Having lost faith in himself, the individual welcomed the hope, offered by collectivist social philosophy, of finding security in the imaginary power of the masses. The reality of the human factor disappeared from politics. To sway the masses by appealing to their base instincts and evil passions, came to be the essence of political practice. It is clear that moral philosophy itself must be placed on a sound basis before it can have a wholesome influence on social doctrines and political practice. The crucial question, therefore, is : What is the foundation of ethics? Can man be moral by himself? Until now, the prevailing opinion has been that man can behave morally only under compulsion, either super-natural or social. This view about the source of morality nullified the time-honoured belief that man is a moral entity. That belief must be resurrected, and freed from its original limitation, if a really revolutionary social philosophy is to prescribe a rational political theory and a moral political practice.

A great advance in this direction was made during the earlier centuries of the history of modern civilisation, when its pioneers

\* One of the intellectual problems of the late Victorian era was how to accommodate Christianity in a society undergoing vast changes in its structure, its wealth and technology. (See Alan Wilard Brown, *The Metaphysical Society : Victorian Minds in Crisis*).

In France, Victor Cousin carried on a crusade against "shallow Materialism" and criticised the "misplaced scientific enthusiasm" of the earlier rationalists.

made certain secular postulates about the nature of man and his place in nature. Their bold speculative thought, progressively reinforced by the expanding knowledge of nature, culminated in the scientific naturalism of the eighteenth century. The approach was humanist, which discarded the dogma of special creation and traced the origin of man in physical nature. Growing out of the background of a law-governed Universe, man must be a rational being; as such, he established the original society to serve the purpose of his continued struggle for existence. The revolutionary discoveries of biology in the nineteenth century bore out the speculative postulates and rational hypotheses of the earlier thinkers. But just at that time, the ambiguities and inadequacies of Liberalism set the civilised world adrift towards the present moral confusion.

The confusion was more confounded at the turning of the century, when new discoveries of the physical sciences seemed to render untenable the classical concepts of substance and causality, which were the corner-stone of scientific naturalism. A neo-mysticism claiming the authority of science, challenged the pretentious philosophy of humanist naturalism. Not only the objective validity, but even the reality of human knowledge, was disputed. An exaggerated emphasis on epistemology confused cosmological and ontological thought. An intellectual crisis aggravated the moral crisis.

Before long, psychology preached irrationalism on the authority of the natural sciences; in the garb of the vague concept of intuition, mysticism and transcendentalism returned to ethics. Man is irrational; he is instinctively moved by the blind urge of dark forces; therefore, the sanction of morality, either in private or in public life, is the penal code and the police, or the priest. Except under the surveillance of these temporal and spiritual custodians of law and order, the law of the jungle came to reign supreme, nonetheless.

The only way out of this vicious circle is indicated by a moral philosophy which finds the sanction of its values in the rationality of the human being. But what is the sanction of the rationality of man? What is Reason? Is it again a metaphysical category, or a biological property? In the former case, the problem of the sanction of morality is not solved by tracing it to rationality. That is only referring one problem to another. As an expression of the reason in nature, rationality can be regarded as a biological function, and physical determinism is reason in nature. Otherwise, the classical concepts of natural

law and moral order are meaningless. Modern sciences, physical as well as biological, put a content of objective truth in those concepts, which were originally hypothetical.

The next problem is how to harmonise ethics with a social philosophy and political practice. The sovereignty of man, which must be the foundation of any democratic social philosophy, can be deduced only from the fact that man is a moral entity. It has been a time-honoured belief which could not be sustained in practice ; now the belief must be replaced by the knowledge of the fact that man is moral because he is rational. The Universe is a moral order governed by laws inherent in itself. Man grows out of that background.

A moral philosophy which can do without a transcendental and super-sensual sanction is the crying need of our time. In order to avoid the quicksand transcendentalism and the pitfalls of relativity, ethics must be integrated in a general philosophy. No useful purpose will be served by building yet another castle in the air, which will not stand the test of the next storm. A humanist ethics, based upon a naturalist rationalism, can be built only on the rock-bottom of a mechanistic cosmology and a physical-realist ontology. In the light of the discovery that life originates in course of the mechanistic process of nature, human rationality can be deduced from the background of the law-governed Universe. The gulf between physics and psychology is thus bridged and the most baffling problem of philosophy, the, epistemological problem, is solved. Truth ceases to be a metaphysical concept ; it stands out as the content of positive knowledge. In the light of the basic nature of truth, the nature of other values is more clearly visible, and they can be rationally arranged in a proper hierarchy. Having thus obtained moral values in the world in which man has his being and becoming, we shall be able to harmonise them with a social philosophy which indicates the humanist approach to the economic and political problems confronting the contemporary world.

Everything new grows out of the old. We must take advantage of the entire store of human knowledge and draw upon the entire history of thought. The new philosophy, the need for which we are feeling, can be deduced from the entire current of human thought, which has flowed ever since the dawn of civilisation. The crisis of our time is the result of an inability to appreciate that great human heritage. There are abiding as well as temporary values. We have to find out the permanent values created in the course of human evolution. The elements

of stability, of unity, of uniformity— ideals pursued over since the appearance of *homo sapiens*— should be the foundation of a new social philosophy. A philosophy thus founded will have no difficulty in solving the complicated problems which have been baffling conventional philosophers. The solution, however, will be theoretical ; it will come from action inspired by the new philosophy.

Modern democracy was, indeed an improvement on medievalism. But its individual units eventually became a constitutional fiction ; it eclipsed the man of flesh and blood, endowed with intelligence, will and emotion. In modern Liberalism, the individual became the economic man. That degeneration of the humanist tradition of modern democracy culminated in the philosophy of Radicalism of the nineteenth century, which still held individual freedom as an article of faith. But in the context of the capitalist society, the economic man could exist either as a slave or as a slave-holder. That debasement of the individual discredited the liberal democratic doctrine of individual freedom and gave rise to Marxist collectivism, which simply recognised the fact of the total eclipse of man by institutions and argued, with a measure of plausibility, that reconstruction of society frankly as a totalitarian institution would restore human freedom. Ultimately, democracy was destroyed in a fierce clash of totalitarian dictatorships, and civilised mankind was overtaken by the crisis of our time, perhaps the greatest of all history, being not only political or economic, but moral and spiritual— a total crisis affecting the whole of human existence.

The modern world appears to be moving towards a position like that of the Roman Empire in decay and on the eve of its downfall. Gloomy prophets are prophesying the end of civilisation. It does seem to be a hopeless situation. The eclipse of the humanist tradition is the cause of this degeneration and decay. Modern civilisation stood on the declining plane of decay, the moment it broke away from the tradition of Humanism ; subordinated man to institutions ; set up the cult of worshipping imaginary collective ego with the offering of the reality of human intelligence, of human reason ; celebrated the nation as something bigger than the sum total of the human beings composing it ; when an abstract conception of society was considered to be something greater than the concrete correlation of individuals. As a result of these wrong notions, there developed various kinds of political doctrines, which not only

went against the tradition of Humanism, but actually set up collectivist philosophies denying any value to the individual. Modern civilisation is threatened destruction because of the betrayal of its source of inspiration.

Ever since the original ancestors of man came down from their arboreal abode, and, instead of growing longer and longer limbs in the struggle for existence, learned to break branches to pluck fruits from the trees for nourishment, man has been creating his world. Yet, with the experience of this agelong creative effort, man has lost faith in himself. A greater tragedy has not been written in any language. The solution of crisis of our time, therefore, lies in the revival of man's faith in himself, in a humanist revival.

Rising out of the background of the physical Universe, man incorporates the best of creation. If there is any creative power, that is in him ; it can operate only through him. It is held by many that man is bad, immoral, unthinking, and therefore there is no hope for the world. But the present knowledge about man allows the proposition that man is essentially rational. Every human behaviour, in the last analysis, is rational, however irrational it may appear. Morality results from man's intelligent response to his surrounding. Therefore it can be deduced from his innate rationality. Since rationality is inherent in human nature, it is only necessary to remind him of his biological heritage, and he will regain faith in himself and undo the harm done to him. Having realised the mistakes of the past, and trying to rectify them, modern mankind will find a way out of the crisis of our time, and begin marching forward to much greater achievements than those of the past.

The burning problem of our time is the problem of morality, particularly of social morality, of finding a common norm for moral behaviour. If moral sense is referred to intuition, one can never tell how two men will act in a similar situation ; because, it is not known how intuition or instinct operates. So, there can not be a common norm for human behaviour. Intuition morality, therefore, cannot be normative. In the absence of objective standards moral values are relegated to the dreamland.

There must be a sanction which can stand the test of reason. The knowledge about man, of biology, physiology and psychology warrants the assertion that man is a rational being, and therefore, if the sense of morality is referred to his innate rationality, values can be derived from facts. In this manner,

we can have objective standards of morality. Only when goodness can be rationally conceived there can be a common norm of goodness. The understanding of the essence of man, the discovery of the fact that man is essentially rational, solves the problem. As biological beings, all men are similarly constructed, and therefore are likely to react more or less in a similar manner under similar circumstances, provided that a minimum background of knowledge is given. With the ability of discrimination and judgement, all men, being similarly constructed, can be expected to react similarly in a similar situation, and the ability can be cultivated. That is the hope for the much desired introduction of morality in politics and generally in public behaviour.

The realisation of the possibility of a secular rational morality opens up a new perspective before the modern world. The time-honoured concepts of man's dignity, personality, sovereignty, creativeness, become full of meaning. The feeling that by himself man can never be good fills him with a sense of helplessness, the hopelessness follows. Spiritual liberation is the condition for social and political liberation. It must be realised that human existence is self-contained and self-sufficient ; and that therefore man can find in himself the power to work out his destiny, to make a better world to live in. This self-realisation in the revealing light of the knowledge about himself will restore man's confidence in himself and create the condition for the solution of the moral crisis of our time.

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## METAPHYSICS OF MORALS AND SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

EXCEPT on the basis of a philosophy embracing the totality of existence, all approaches to the problems of individual as well as social life are bound to be misleading. In other words, a sound social and political philosophy must have a metaphysical foundation. It is of great importance to trace the relation between philosophy, science and society. The bearing of science on society is obvious. Ethics must be given a high place in social philosophy, including political thought, if the crying need of honesty and decency in public life is ever to be satisfied. But for that purpose, moral philosophy must be related to science. Social thought and political practice could not be harmonised with moral values so long as there appeared to be no relation between science and philosophy.

As a part of speculative philosophy, ethics refused to recognise its secular sanction revealed by the light of biological knowledge, and failed to find its roots in man himself. On the other hand, social and political philosophy came under the influence of rationalism, though as yet largely metaphysical, and of anthropology, philology and ethnology. It seemed that there was no causal relation between ethical values and the world of science. Moral philosophy was baffled by the problem of deducing values from facts. Social behaviour and political events, also being empirical facts, appeared to be beyond the jurisdiction of axiology. Religion, in the last analysis, remained the only sanction of morality. But in proportion as science undermined the faith in the supernatural, religion became a mere conventionality. Consequently, the position of morality in public life became very precarious. With the modern believing man, religion is the anchor or a mere preoccupation of private life. Having no bearing upon public life, it logically cannot dictate the norms of his social behaviour and political practice. The latter were thus completely divorced from moral values which, anchored in religion, could have meaning only in man's private life. The position is much worse with the frankly religious, whose number is legion in the modern world.

Fortunately, the end of an epoch has been reached. Science and philosophy can no longer be kept in water-tight compartments. The disappearance of the traditional differentiation between the two currents of human thought is the most outstanding feature of the advanced intellectual life of our age. Time, space, substance and causality used to be categories of pure thought, problems of metaphysical speculation. They have come under the jurisdiction of the empirical (including mathematical) enquiry of science, which had solved the problem. On the one hand, what used to be called philosophy proper — cosmology, ontology and epistemology — has been merged into science, and on the other hand, the influence of science, and its byproduct technology, on social development and social philosophy, is undeniable. The result is the possibility of constructing a system of logically co-ordinate though embracing the totality of existence — nature, life and society. The roots of the problems of social and individual life can now be traced down the entire process of biological and physical evolution, and the problems themselves be solved by the application of scientific knowledge. The riddle of the relation between facts and values disappears, because values themselves are also facts. Modern civilisations, in the sense of man's mind being enlightened by scientific knowledge, should not necessarily snap his moral moorings, because it is in his own self.

The urge for spiritual freedom, though it has remained largely in the realm of the subconscious, has been the lever of the entire human development, ever since the birth of the species. It is the striving to feel that man is a free agent, that he can act according to his judgment, and is capable of discriminating good from evil and right from wrong without being haunted by the preoccupation that he is helplessly at the mercy of some capricious superhuman power. Religion itself was an expression of man's urge for spiritual freedom. The history of religions, which traces critically the evolution of faith from animism to teleological rationalism, reveals that the tendency to outgrow itself is inherent in religion. The desire for freedom in social and political life, being an expression of the basic human urge for spiritual freedom can be satisfied only by actions according to general principles deduced from a world view which does away with the necessity of assuming a supernatural power or mystic-metaphysical sanction. Only in a self-contained, self-operating, self-sufficient world, can man as a part of it claim to be free.

The question which has troubled man's mind from time immemorial is : How can man be free in this mortal world of experience? The purpose of social and political philosophy is to answer that old question, and the reply should include a prescription for practice. A satisfactory reply presupposes the possibility to prove that freedom is really man's birth right. The idea of the sovereignty of man acquires a greater meaning than a religious dogma or an *ad hoc* postulate of political philosophy when it is known that the urge for freedom is a biological heritage and it is proved that man is capable of spiritual freedom, that is, to cast off the faith in a supernatural power or providential will. Modern scientific knowledge provides the evidence. The capacity to be free is in each individual; by being conscious of it, he becomes free; and a free society will be the creation of such spiritually free men.

The tradition of the eighteenth century naturalist humanism and of its development in the nineteenth century alone can inspire a philosophy which will set man free, spiritually as well as socially. Most appropriately, this philosophy should be called New Humanism; it is new, because it is scientific and integral; because it conceives human sovereignty not as a differentiation from the mechanistic processes of nature, but as their highest product. The idea of newness being transitory, the more precise term "radical" should be preferred. Because it goes to the root of the problem of the origin of the human being.

The former conception of the sovereignty of man, associated with classical as well as romantic Humanism, logically leads to two alternative conclusions : one is the doctrine of free will; and the other is the old Stoic faith taken over by Christianity, that man is a moral entity, because through his soul he is in unison with the universal moral order. If it is not traced to the mechanism of biological evolution, free will assume a mystic connotation; it is simply given in man as the token of his sovereignty; its origin cannot be traced. This mystic conception of free will imperceptibly converges towards transcendentalism. The alternative doctrine of man's sovereignty so frankly deduced from faith; therefore, it could be taken over by Christianity. Granted its premise, the Christian doctrine of morality is logically sound; a good case can be made out for it. But it breaks down as the foundation of the revolutionary social evolution as the expression of man's inexhaustible creativeness. Transcendental morality, the belief that man can be moral only by the grace of God, destroys its own premise. Man is a moral

entity; therefore he is sovereign. But his sovereignty is derived from a greater or higher power. So, he is really not sovereign. The corollary is denial of human creativeness.

The choice between these two alternatives confronts any social philosophy and ethics, because the doctrine of human sovereignty is the common point of departure. If the latter is chosen, as was done previously by all orthodox system, the idea of freedom, whether social or spiritual, must go by the board. Sovereign by proxy, so to say, man can never be a free agent. Free will, consequently, becomes a mere euphemism. With such an equivocal sanction, ethics hangs in the air, and can have an apparently stable position only by laying down dogmatic norms of behaviour.

But without a sounder ethical doctrine, no really revolutionary social philosophy is possible. The central problem of ethics is that of the sanction of its values. If it could be found in man himself, the problem would be solved. But this solution may bring back the problem of free will. The mystic conception atomises the individual and precludes the possibility of social organisation, co-operation and harmony in human relations. If man is simply given as God walking the earth, fully sovereign, absolutely free to act as he wills, and his will is of a mystic origin, then, the necessity of co-operation disappears and society disintegrates.

The moral philosophy which traces the sanction of its values to intuition may try to distinguish itself from the fundamentalist religious faith, but is nonetheless transcendental. If intuitions were not analysed down to mechanistic biological impulses, they must be traced to some mystic origin beyond human comprehension. So, in the last analysis, the elementary indefinable of the intuitive moral philosophy must be referred to some unknown and unknowable supernatural source. The alternative is to trace its roots down the entire process of prehuman biological evolution, otherwise, intuitive morality cannot disown the charge of dogmatism.

For a more satisfactory solution of the problem of the sanction of morality, it is necessary to dig deeper in the subsoil of human existence. Previously, moral philosophers either raised their eyes to the heaven or searched for God in man. An appeal to his animal ancestry will yield more satisfactory result. A truly revolutionary social philosophy, capable of inspiring action to lead modern civilisation out of the present crisis requires a revision of the classical doctrines of ethics,

whether religious, rationalist, idealist or intuitive. If the sanction of morality is to be found in man himself, man must cease to be a mystic entity of the conception of early Humanism, classical and romantic alike.

The mystery of man has been solved by modern biology. Man is the outcome of biological evolution. In order to find the sanction of morality in man himself, and avoid at the same time the morass of mysticism, the roots of what is called conscience or moral sense must be traced in the mechanistic biological functions articulated as instincts and intuitions. Biological evolution takes place in the context of the physical Universe, its mechanism being a part of the cosmic mechanism. Life grows out of the background of inanimate matter. The descent of man, therefore, can be traced to the law-governed physical Universe. Man's rationality and moral sense, which are casually connected, are the expression of cosmic harmony. Therefore, it is in the nature of man, as a biological organism, to be rational, and as such he is capable of living with others in peace and harmony.

The Universe is a physical system. Having grown out of that background, the human is also a physical system. But there is a great difference : The physical Universe is lawgoverned, the laws being inherent in itself, whereas man possesses will and can choose. Between the world of man and the world of inanimate matter, there lies the vast world of biological evolution. The latter has its own specific laws which, however, can be referred back to the general laws of the world of dead matter ; consciousness appears at a much later stage. Therefore, human will cannot be directly related to the laws of the physical Universe. It is rooted in the intervening biological world. But inasmuch as the entire process of biological evolution takes place in the context of the world of dead matter, human will cannot be an antithesis to the law-governedness of the physical Universe. Reason harmonises the two ; and reason results from the consciousness of man's (the whole man's) being, an integral part of the law-governed physical Universe.

Man did not appear on the earth out of nowhere ; with his mind, intelligence, will, he is an integral part of the physical Universe. The latter is a cosmos — a law-governed system. Therefore, man's being and becoming, his emotions, will, ideas, are also determined. Therefore, man is essentially rational. The reason in man is an echo of the harmony of the Universe. Morality must be referred back to man's innate rationality.

Only then can man be moral, spontaneously and voluntarily. Reason is the only sanction of morality, which is an appeal to conscience ; and conscience, in the last analysis, is nothing mystic or mysterious. It is a biological function, on the level of consciousness. The innate rationality of man is the only guarantee of a harmonious social order, which will also be a moral order, because morality is a rational function.

The axiology of Radical Humanism deduces all values from the supreme value of freedom. Freedom is the supreme value of life, because the urge for freedom is the essence of human existence. Indeed, it can be traced all the way down the entire process of biological evolution. Since all ethical values are derived from the biological heritage of man, they require no sanction which transcends human ; it is not necessary to go in search of divine or mystic metaphysical sanction. Humanist morality is evolutionary.

As soon as it appeared on the earth, the human species had to undertake the struggle with environments for survival. That was the beginning of an endless struggle for freedom. Since then, all human achievements — cultural progress, scientific knowledge, artistic creation have been motivated by the urge for freedom. In the last analysis, the environment of human existence is the whole Universe. The latter being unbounded, man's struggle for survival is eternal ; he will never conquer the Universe. His urge for freedom, therefore, is undying, eternal. Nevertheless, it is the basic incentive for him to acquire knowledge and conquer environments by knowing them. In course of the struggle for freedom, man discovers truth. It is neither a mystic-metaphysical category nor an abstract value. It is the content of man's knowledge. Therefore, it is a fact, objectively real.

The hierarchy of humanist axiology, thus, is freedom, knowledge, truth. They are not autonomous ; they are inter-related, logically as well as ontologically. Therefore, freedom cannot be attained by immoral means, nor can an enlightened man be a liar.

In the past also, Humanism proclaimed the sovereignty of man. But man remained unexplained, and speculation about the essence of man led to mysticism and revival of religion. Thus, Humanism defeated itself. Thanks to the enrichment of scientific knowledge, it can now be freed from all fallacies. It needs no longer to be misguided by mystic and metaphysical notions about the essence of man. Starting with a clear

understanding of the being and becoming of man. Humanism can now rule out all such speculation as in the past led to the subordination of man to imaginary forces beyond his comprehension. All human attributes — intelligence, reason, will, instinct, intuition — are rooted in the process of biological evolution antecedent to the appearance of *homo sapiens*. The capacity to acquire knowledge, as distinct from the common biological property of awareness, differentiates man from his animal ancestry. Knowledge endows him with the power to carry on the endless struggle for greater and greater freedom and the search for truth.

Scientific knowledge liberates man from the time-honoured prejudices about the essence of his being and the purpose of life. It reveals the truth about human nature. Man is essentially a rational being. His nature is not to believe, but to question, to enquire and to know. He gropes in the darkness of ignorance, helpless victim of the blind faith in forces beyond his comprehension and control, until knowledge illuminates his path. The only truth accessible to man is the content of his knowledge. When the light of truth makes his innate rationality more manifest, he can discard old hypothesis based on ignorance.

Radical Humanism proclaims the sovereignty of man on the authority of modern science, which had dispelled all mystery about the essence of man. It maintains that a rational and moral society is possible because man, by nature, is rational and therefore can be moral, not under any compulsion, but voluntarily ; that the sanction of morality is embedded in human nature.

In so far as it shows a way out of crisis of our time Radical Humanism is a social philosophy. But as such it is deduced from a general philosophy of nature, including the world of matter and the world of mind. Its metaphysics is physical-realist ; and its cosmology is mechanistic. Conceptual thought and sense perceptions are harmonised in its epistemology. It merges psychology into physiology, and relates the latter to physics through chemistry. It bases ethics on rationalism, and traces the roots of reason in the orderliness of nature and the harmony of the physical Universe.

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## ETHICS AND POLITICS

THE disconcerting experience of the contemporary world compels thoughtful people to re-examine the fundamental principles of social philosophies from which different political theories— of the Right and of the Left, conservative and liberal, reactionary and revolutionary— are deduced. The experience is that in practice there is little difference, because capture of power, irrespective of the diversity of means advocated for the purpose, is the common postulate of all political theories. Morality in public life, therefore, presupposes a political theory which would not make capture of power the precondition for any necessary social change ; and the new political theory must be deduced from a social philosophy which restores man in the place of primacy and sovereignty. Morality being the dictate of conscience, it can be practised only by individuals. Without moral men, there can be no moral society. Until now, all the architects and engineers of new social orders have reversed the order : they all postulated an ideal order as the condition for the free growth of human personalities. The Liberals believed that the ideal of a good life could be attained by good laws. As against their "reformism", Socialists and latter on Communists maintained that economic reconstruction on the basis of common ownership was the condition for human development. The totalitarianism and dictatorship in political practice have been the corollary to collectivist social philosophies.

It is easy enough to place the individual in the centre of a social philosophy. As a matter of fact, individualism was the cardinal principle of the liberal social philosophy and political theory ; and Liberalism was the source of inspiration for the magnificent achievements of modern civilisation. But in practice, the principle of individualism was reduced to an abstract doctrine, the sovereign individual to a legal fiction. The decay of Liberalism encouraged the rise of various collectivist doctrines which denied the possibility of individual freedom, ridiculed the idea as an empty abstraction, and proclaimed that, in order to be free, the individual must self-annihilate. If Liberalism had made a legal fiction of the sovereign individual,

custodians of law and order, the law of the jungle would reign. The irony of our time is that the dreaded law of the jungle reigns supreme, nonetheless.

The only way out of this vicious circle is indicated by a moral philosophy which finds the sanction of its values in the rationality of the human being. But what is the sanction of the rationality of man? What is Reason? Is it again a metaphysical category, or a biological property? In the former case, the problem of the sanction of morality is not solved by tracing it in rationality. That is only referring one problem to another. As an expression of the reason in nature, rationality can be regarded as a biological function, and physical determinism is the Reason in nature. Otherwise, the classical concepts of natural law and moral order, the meaningless. Modern science, physical as well as biological, put a content of objective truth in those concepts which were originally hypothetical.

These trends of thought have a direct bearing upon the practical problems of contemporary society. The problems confronting the world of today are expressions of the crisis of our time; they clearly call for a new social philosophy which allots a high place to morality in public life. The disgust with politics, that is, an unscrupulous scramble for power, and disapproval of economic exploitation of the majority by a minority, are no longer confined to the left. They are shared practically by all. Leaders of political parties actually engaged in the struggle for power sanctimoniously condemn power-politics. Parties enjoying the patronage of the upper classes proclaim their intention to establish a classes society; businessmen, big and small, call themselves Socialists. One hears the cry for morality on all sides; it has become incumbent on public men to talk of moral values.

Yet, there is little sign of improvement anywhere. The law of the jungle, scramble for political power and lust for economy loot reign supreme; no single country can plead not guilty of the charge without laying itself open to the graver charge of telling the untruth.

Nevertheless, the mere fact that the absence of moral scruples in life is generally deplored, that lip loyalty is pledged to moral values, is significant. If in practice, politicians cannot be true to their profession, that is not necessarily a proof of dishonesty. They are caught in a vicious circle. Engaged in a game, one must play it according to the rules. The fault of moralising politicians is the failure to realise that, so long as power remains the object of political practice, it cannot be

handicapped by irrelevant scruples, it must be guided by the dictum that the end justifies the means. Caught in the whirl, the best of men are bound to be pulled down to the lowest depth, which may appear as the pinnacle of power.

The crying need of the time is to harmonise ethics with a social philosophy and political practice. The sovereignty of man, which must be the foundation of any revolutionary social philosophy, can be deduced only from the fact that man is a moral entity. It has been a time-honoured belief, which could not be sustained in practice; now the belief must be replaced by the knowledge of the fact that man is moral because he is rational. The Universe is a moral order governed by laws inherent in itself. Man grows out of that background.

Ethics must be the foundation of the social philosophy which is the crying need of our time. In order to avoid the quicksand of transcendentalism and the pit-falls of relativity, ethics must be integrated in general philosophy. We do not want to build yet another castle in the air, which will not stand the test of the next storm. A humanist ethics based upon a naturalist rationalism can be built only on the rock-bottom of a mechanistic cosmology and a physical-realist ontology. Therefore, we must begin by examining the problems raised by modern science. The next step is to find the connecting link between the world of dead matter and living nature. It is no longer a missing link; it solved the problem of the origin of life. It is discovered that life originated in course of the mechanistic process of nature, human rationality can be deduced from the background of the law-governed physical Universe; the imaginary gulf between physics and psychology is thus bridged and the most baffling problems of philosophy, the epistemological problems, are solved. Truth ceases to be a metaphysical concept; it stands out as the content of positive knowledge. In the light of the basic nature of truth; they can be rationally arranged in a proper hierarchy. Having thus obtained out moral values in the world in which man has his being and becoming, we shall be able to harmonise them with a social philosophy which indicates the humanist approach to the economic and political problems confronting the contemporary world.

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## A NOTE ON GOETHE

THERE is hardly any difference of expert opinion about Goethe's place in the history of literature. He is counted among the greatest poets of all ages. But he was more than a poet. His restless genius went beyond the limits of imaginative literature, to conquer an important place also in the field of science and philosophy. His contribution to science, being concrete, as all scientific contributions must be to be so regarded, can be easily evaluated. It was not only to scientific thought, but also to experimental science. The significance of his contribution to the theory of organic evolution can be judged by the fact that he was the founder of a new branch of biology and coined the term "morphology". The concept revolutionised the science of life, and heralded the discoveries of Darwin.

But it is very difficult to fix Goethe's position in the field of philosophy. His philosophical views, in so far as they can be disentangled from poetry, lend themselves to different interpretations. His activist humanism seems to be in tune with Marxist Materialism, which subordinates thought to action and declares that the function of philosophy is not to explain the world, but to remake it, at the same time, as proclaimed by young Faust, it sounds very much like the ominous voice of the Wotan of Nazi Myth — "eternally dissatisfied, eternally striving, eternally becoming" (Alfred Rosenberg, *The Myth of the 20th Century*). As a matter of fact, young Faust was the hero of the "Sturm und Drang" German romanticism, which was claimed by the Nazis as their tradition. The young Faust exclaimed: "Let us hurl ourselves into time's dynamic sweep"; again, "Let us appease burning passions." Faust is autobiographical poetry. Age and experience satiated and sobered Goethe's youthful passions. Yet, the old Faust lamented that he had never lived.

Although it is doubtful whether poetry is a suitable medium for the expression of systematic rationalist thought, many great philosophers have tended to be poets. Notwithstanding his antipathy for poetry, even Plato is classed among poets. The inclusion of beauty in the trinity of supreme values inevitably

causes the confusion of philosophy and poetry at a certain point. No system-builder could or would leave aesthetics out of his world. The practice ignored the wisdom of Plato's warning; he would not allow poets in the Republic of philosophers because the former were sure to introduce irrationalism.

The enchant of many modern philosophers to worship at the temple of the goddess in their trinity may be traced to Goethe. But Goethe was primarily a poet. With him, philosophy was incidental. Philosophers cannot, should not, follow him. They are bound to be disloyal to their matronly muse, the eternal youth of the elusive maiden of beauty. Not a few of modern philosophers have been so enticed. Some of them may have earned their niches in the pantheon of poets; but as philosophers, all have failed, because they did what Plato prohibited. It is not an appeal to the authority of the Sage of Athens; it is only a recognition of the force of his argument.

Emotion, even on the plane of passion, is an essential ingredient of human life; it may be the central pivot of a certain type of personality. But if it is allowed to tamper with the rigour of reason, philosophical thought, though expressed through superb literary forms, as in the case of Goethe is bound to confuse and mislead instead of promoting the search for objective reality and truth. The qualifying term objective is used to differentiate between what is called the artistic creation out of imagination and the contribution of the rational mind to the knowledge of truth and reality.

Goethe is also the source of inspiration for poets and artists who tried to philosophise on the ground that theirs was the unitary view of the world. Some of them did stimulate philosophy. Their muse must be worshiped with passion — the more intense and unbribed, the greater the poet. The few who succeeded in keeping a balance between poetry and philosophy of nature, moved to the direction of a mystic pantheism. Schiller was the foremost. He was a Kantian; but in his philosophy the mechanism of the uncreated essence is replaced by hymn to the beauty of the Universe, in which evil contributes to the harmony of the whole; like shades in painting and discords in great music.

Goethe is generally recognised as a great poet who was also a philosopher; and, on the other hand, as an unorthodox but great philosopher who thought poetically. That is a contradiction in terms, which must be borne in mind when judging Goethe as a philosopher.

Goethe did not preach a philosophy. But his writings record the development of a view of life, as distinct from metaphysics or the rationalist philosophy of nature. Goethe's philosophy of life was like a beautiful castle built in the air. It was the sublime creation of a great poet — out of his imagination. It has been said that Goethe's supreme greatness is his uncompromising subjectivity. His works were the vehicle for expressing the feelings of a man — a great man, indeed, but nonetheless a man. Can the experience of one man's life have a universal value? The question can be affirmatively replied only on the ground that Goethe was the archetypal man — the most perfect, personification of the spirit of the Renaissance. But at the same time, as a man, he could not altogether be above the influence of history. He represented the purest expression of the spirit of the Renaissance as it came to Germany. The *Aufklaerung* was a complex and self-contradictory outburst of human genius. It tried to harmonise the influence of the Enlightenment as well as of the Renaissance with native tradition of the Reformation. Kant was the most successful philosopher of the *Aufklaerung* and as a philosopher, Goethe was a Kantian as Cassirer has shown (*Rousseau, Kant and Goethe*).

On the other hand, Goethe's dislike for Newton reflected the spirit of the scholastic rationalism of Germany. It was not satisfied with a God who had really nothing to do ; at the same time, it could not do without the idea of a God—the World Spirit. Already in Albertus Magnus, scholastic rationalism tended towards pantheism ; and the Prince of Scholasticism was also a pioneer of experimental science. There is the German parentage of Goethe's philosophy, which also bore the imprint of Renaissance paganism and the naturalism of the Enlightenment. The resulting philosophy of life was bound to be unstable, because it was not deduced from an appropriate metaphysics and a philosophy of nature. Life may be the flower of creation ; but it is a negligible essence of the cosmic mechanism. No unitary view of nature, therefore, can be really so and a reliable guide for life, which does not embrace the totality of the lifeless world. That was the defect of Goethe's philosophy.

Goethe was a humanist ; but his Humanism was not integral. It was subjective, to the extent of being ego-centric. Therefore self-culture was its cardinal article of faith. It has been said that his life was the greatest work of Goethe. If he really believed

that he had created his life out of nothing, he was a poor philosopher. His literary works were created out of imagination ; but not his life. Many other things than the poet's instable love of life went into its making.

Goethe admittedly accepted the basic ideas of Spinoza's philosophy. They are regularity of all that happens ; unity of all that exists ; and identity of spirit and nature. As a scientist, Goethe tried to work out the first idea, although he ridiculed the mechanistic naturalism of the French Encyclopedists. The second and third consistently developed, lead either to materialist (Physical) monism or to pantheism. Goethe emphatically rejected the former line of thought. His reaction to "The Bible of the 18th century naturalism" (Holbach's *System of Nature*) has been made memorable by repeated quotation. Yet, therein lies the most reliable clue to Goethe's philosophy. Therefore, the most pointed passage may be recapitulated : "It appeared to us so dark, so chimerian, so death like.... that we took a hearty dislike to all philosophy, and specially to metaphysics, and remained in the dislike ; we threw ourselves into living knowledge, experience, creation and poetising with all the more liveliness and passion."

This memorable unambiguous declaration should preclude all speculation about Goethe's philosophy. He emphatically disowned that he had any. Nevertheless, he did have a distinctive attitude of life, a view of life as an integral part of nature. Only he failed to see that living nature was a part, an insignificant part, of the lifeless cosmic scheme. No unitary view of nature can be really so, and at the same time avoid getting bogged in the morass of pantheist mysticism, unless it is identical with a monistic view of the physical Universe. However much one may "poetise" about life, a unitary view cannot ignore that vast cosmic background of living nature ; and except in the context of a rationalist explanation of the totality of the physical Universe a philosophy of nature and life cannot be really humanist. Because, such a circumscribed view keeps man's origin shrouded in mystery, and logically subordinates him to the superhuman. One does not talk of God so often as a mere manner of speech or poetic extravagance. It expresses the feeling (perhaps lurking in the subconscious mind) of the need of a faith in something beyond apprehension as well as comprehension.

The integral view of the world surveys infinity. There, analytical reasoning fails ; quantitative statements of experience

becomes impossible. But reason does not give way to intuition or creative imagination. At that point, science, merges into philosophy. Goethe thought it was poetry, and disputed the capacity of mathematical reasoning to fathom the depths of living nature. Since his time, mathematics has developed the theory of probability as the method of conceptually measuring infinity.

Although the poetic arrogance of the cult of self-development denied it, Goethe inherited the unitary view of nature from the Encyclopedists ; and the philosophical significance of this view, when held uncritically with poetic vision, was pointed out by one of the scientists in whose footsteps Goethe walked. "I know well that for certain minds behind this theory of analogies there may lurk, at least confusedly, another very old theory which, long ago refuted, has been sought out again by some Germans in order to favour the pantheistic theory which they call the philosophy of nature." (Cuvier)

Evidently the reference was to Goethe, although the cap will fit Schiller and other smaller lights equally well. That is a correct judgment of Goethe's philosophy. Only one point remains to be clarified : Is pantheism a philosophy ? and that is the crucial point. The one, in the last analysis, is rationalisation of faith, or poetising of rationalism, as in the case of Goethe ; while the other is an attempt to explain being and becoming in the light of the totality of positive knowledge of the world ; it makes no room for fantasy ; it does not live in a world created out of the imagination of the philosophising poet or the poetising philosopher.

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## EDUCATION OF THE EDUCATORS

I am not an educationist by profession, nor I ever have been an academician. If now I have turned my attention to education with the desire to contribute whatever I can for promoting it in our country, that decision has been taken in consequence of a life-long experience, an experience which covered activities not only in our, but in many other countries. This long experience helped me realise that not only in our country, but throughout the world, attempts are made to raise imposing structures of society and create institutions, political and economic, on a foundation of sand.

This experience reminded me of the memorable dictum of old Plato, that education is the foundation of democracy. Now, very fortunately, we have gained the privilege of building up a democratic order in this country of old traditions and ancient civilisation, a long time after other countries had the opportunity to do so. While applying ourselves to this task, we may therefore learn from the experience of those others.

It is a matter of general regret today that democracy, the democratic order of society, appears to be in serious danger of collapse or subversion. Learned sociologists have applied themselves to this disturbing problem, have tried to discover the causes and offered various remedies. In my own modest way, I have also searched for the future. I am of the opinion that democracy has not failed, but that it has never been given a chance. All attempts to build a democratic order until now have been like building castles in the air. No superstructure can be stable unless it is reared on a solid foundation. Institutions imposed from above are not anchored on the will and intelligence of the men and women who are to sustain them, make them work for good or evil. The quality of the human material is the measure of the stability of any political structure and of the success of any social institution. If the modern world remembered the wisdom of Plato, the democratic experiment might not have come to grief and civilised mankind might not be caught in the present crisis.

We are often told, and many of us believe, that for various reasons, many of which were not of our creation and were

beyond our control, the masses of the Indian people have lingered very long in backwardness. Compared to ours, the condition of the common people in other countries may indeed be better. But that is a superficial view ; because the sort of education which is the foundation of democracy— democracy not in the formal political sense, but democracy as a social order which will guarantee freedom to all individuals and give to each the opportunity to develop his human potentialities, so that society will march towards, the goal of a brotherhood of developed, integrated human beings— this sort of education was absent even in countries where democracy appears to have been more successful.

This lesson from the experience of countries which had an earlier opportunity should enable us to lay down a more solid foundation before we undertake the task of raising the superstructure. Politicians everywhere, businessmen and leaders in various other branches of life, are all trying to the best of their ability to work for the common purpose of helping the development of our country. But the teachers — a profession which does not often come to the limelight of publicity, whose service is not always appreciated, who are the worst paid section of our society — this section of our public life holds in its hand the key to the future of our country. Some may bring up blocks of stone, granite or marble, others supply the material to embellish the superstructure, but the cement which will hold this vast stone mass together on a solid foundation can be supplied only by the pains-taking silent labour of the teaching profession.

If we had to identify any particular social group as deserving the credit of being the architect of the nation, without the least hesitation I should confer that honour on the teaching profession. But while doing so, I would also ask you to remember the responsibility which goes with the honour.

Before a gathering of academicians and pedagogues, it is rather presumptuous for a layman like myself to say anything about the system or the purpose of education and the technique of imparting it. But unfortunately, we cannot ignore the fact that, by and large, students as well as teachers until now take a rather superficial view of education. The education of the educators, therefore, is of supreme importance. The proposition implies no disparagement. It only reminds the most important social group of the gravity of its responsibility. If we want to have a really educated people, we must turn our attention to the task of education of the educators themselves first of all.

Until recently, teaching has been a profession like any other, such as trade and commerce, a profession to earn one's livelihood. And if the livelihood keeps you just precariously alive, nothing more can be expected. There have been objective causes for the not very satisfactory state of the entire system of education in our country. Now we are in a position to remove some of these causes. But the new turn in our history may not be an unmixed blessing. A foreign rule placed many hindrances to the progress of the Indian people. It has been removed and replaced by a Government of our own. That very fact has, at the same time, given rise to a very objectionable tendency ; it is to expect the Government to do everything for us. Here I must ask you to remember your responsibility. The habit of expecting the Government to do everything, and if things do not always happen as we desire, to fall back on the very easy practice of blaming and criticising the Government, is only a device to shirk one's responsibility. The Government, after all, is a small number of people, more or less like you and me. They indeed possess the power to do things ; but they are also handicapped by commitments made for gaining power. The commitments often compel them to act against their better judgment. Men in power are prisoners of their own ambition. They cannot do what they wish, assuming that they wish to do good. It is no use quarrelling with men who are not free to do what they may themselves wish to do.

The deplorable habit of expecting the Government to do everything should at least not affect the teaching profession. I may repeat again that the condition of the teachers is not ideal ; there is more than enough reason to complain. Nevertheless, if we wanted to avail of political freedom, we should realize that the duty of building a really free society in our country does not belong to any group of people, but to every one of us. We shall be worthy of independence by constantly bearing in mind this responsibility and trying to discharge it.

Previously, the purpose of education in our country was very largely to teach a profession so that the students equipped themselves for certain jobs and earned their livelihood. If we bear in mind the rude realities of life— that one has to live and maintain his family— the learning of a profession, that is, acquiring education as a means of livelihood, will continue to be an important consideration. But while a student goes to school and college with the object of qualifying himself for a profession, so, that he could earn a livelihood, he can at the same time broaden the scope of his education and come out

of school of college not only qualified for a profession, but also as a man conscious of responsibility of citizenship, and prepared to discharge it in his own way, irrespective of what others may or may not do. In other words, education must awaken in young men and women the sense of self-reliance and self-confidence. The absence of these traits of human character, without which life is bound to be a failure, is due not only to the peculiarities of the recent past of our country ; it results from a fundamental defect of the modern social organisation.

We talk of creating economic and political institutions, but always forget that, whatever existed in the past, whatever exists today, and whatever will exist in the future, in the last analysis, is the creation of individual men and women. All the evil from which the modern world suffers can be traced to the disappearance from social life of the individual as a self-reliant, responsible, integrated personality. Individuals have become so many helpless cogs in the vast machine called society or State, that man has been submerged into the masses ; and in his helplessness, he has adopted a new religion of worshipping the masses as the most powerful god on earth. Man's loss of confidence in himself is the result of modern political philosophies and social doctrines. Men do not believe that by themselves, as individuals, they can do anything worthwhile and significant. When they are struggling for political ends, they rely on this or that party ; thereafter they rely on the State or a Government.

This feeling of helplessness on the part of the individual has naturally created an atmosphere in which everything seems to be disintegrating. There does not seem to be any hope for mankind. Now, if education and educationists are to play the role of the architects of a new and free society, I think the purpose of education should be to remind the students from their tenderest youth that they are human beings with all that this implies, and that barring the physically disabled, as human beings, they are endowed with the potentiality of developing all the highest human abilities and talents. In other words, as human beings, every single one of them is capable of being the creator of his own destiny. Only when the public life of a country will be invigorated by the appearance of a large number of such men and women, inspired with this spirit, only then the gloom that hangs on the present may lift and we may have the vision of a brighter future.

This work can be done by everybody ; whoever sees the necessity and feels the urge can do the work. But by their

profession, by their very life, this work primarily belongs to the teachers. Therefore, in this initial stage of a new chapter of Indian history, the teaching profession occupies the crucial place in social organisation. You will, however, bear with me if I tell you that most teachers have been educated and have grown up in an atmosphere where these needs were not felt. Consequently, before you can make your students conscious of this need, you must do it yourselves.

Teachers hold in their hands the lives of young people. By their work, by the education they impart, they cast the horoscope, so to say, of a large number of human beings. At the same time, many teachers will dispute that man is the maker of his own destiny. They believe that teachers can make the destiny of others, but not their own. So long as the teacher will lack confidence in himself, with all his efforts he will not be able to instil self-confidence in his pupils. The work on this line cannot easily be expected to be done in what may be called official educational institutions, or in the conventional patterns of the educational system. It can be done with the least obstruction in private educational institutions. The vicious spirit of collectivism, the subordination of the sovereign human individual to a fictitious collective ago, has penetrated even the field of education.

The concept of national education must be critically examined by educators who value the dignity of their profession. What is the purpose of national education? It is to make every inhabitant of a country a patriotic supporter of the established Government, which means that he will always be willing to sacrifice himself for the nation. But what is a nation, or a community or a class except a number of human beings? How can there be national welfare if it does not mean the welfare of every single number of such a collectivity? Yet, the prevailing idea is that when every single patriot will have sacrificed himself and his welfare to the greatness and prosperity of the nation, then the latter will be at the height of its glory. The corollary of this logically fallacious proposition is intellectual and emotional regimentation, which defeats the purpose of education, namely, the development and unfoldment of the human personality, to qualify citizens as useful members of society, to be able to practice a profession not only to earn a living, but for a conscious social purpose. But the prevailing practice is to attach greater importance to the subordinate function of education, and consequently the primary purpose, to help the development

of the human personality, to help every citizen to become an integrated individual, tends to be lost.

Therefore, official education must be supplemented by private educational institutions. There will be difficulties ; finances will not be easily available. But there are wealthy people who are eager to help the various nation-building activities. Their patronage should be available for such private educational institutions. But moneyed people have also their idiosyncracies. They may want a certain type of education to be imparted in institutions which they would patronise. The success of such private educational institutions, which are of very great importance in this transitional stage of our history, must primarily depend on individuals inspired with this new ideal of education, who are convinced that the social problems confronting our country and the rest of the world, cannot be solved unless man is restored to his place of primacy, sovereignty and supremacy. If they will apply themselves to this task, irrespective of difficulties, and if they are conscious of the fact that man is the maker of his destiny, I am sure their efforts will bear fruit.

In conclusion, let me tell you a little of my own experience. When I found that without a different spirit of education social life could not be improved, I experienced all the difficulties which can be imagined. But in the course of five years or even less, notwithstanding all these difficulties, with the help of a few colleagues, I have helped the growth of a group of remarkable young educationists whose work, I am convinced, will do honour to any country in general, and particularly to the spirit and name of the founder of your organisation.

This pioneering work has been undertaken by the Indian Renaissance Institute, on behalf of which I avail of this opportunity to seek the co-operation of the teaching profession. Let us hold high the torch of knowledge and human understanding and carry it to the farthest corners of the country, to dispel the darkness of ignorance, prejudice and superstition. By actively and enthusiastically joining this crusade of enlightenment, you will raise an inperishable monument to the sacred memory of the founder of your organisation and make incalculable contributions to the building of a free democratic social order in India.

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## CO-OPERATIVE ECONOMY

THE problem of reconstructing society so that freedom will no longer be a distant ideal, but a reality ; cannot be solved simply by replacing one set of social and political institutions by another. It is a problem which has its roots deeper in the subsoil of society. We cannot tinker with it. On the other hand, it would be suicidal to uproot a whole system with the mere hope of replacing it by something better, some day.

In the beginning of the modern age, the ideal of freedom came to be popular. The pioneers of modern democratic thought placed the ideal before the people. But in course of time it was realised that without economic freedom political democracy was bound to be a fiction. The formal political freedom under the parliamentary system having been experienced in a number of countries by the middle of the nineteenth century, its inadequacy was realised very widely, and all modern advanced thinkers, who wanted to put greater content in the concept of freedom, came to the conclusion that without economic freedom there could be no political freedom.

That was a revolt against the system of *laissez faire* economy. The central idea of the system is competition. The competitive economy is supposed to be based on the freedom of enterprise ; but in practice, it gave unlimited freedom to a small minority ; with the vast majority, it was only a legal right, which could not be exercised. Consequently, the principle of *laissez faire* benefitted only a few, The majority was reduced to what was called wage-slavery ; theirs was the freedom to sell their labour power in the competitive market.

Having realised this inadequacy of the capitalist system, which undoubtedly has promoted great economic and technological progress in Europe and subsequently in America, advanced social thinkers began to look out for an alternative economic system which might be more satisfactory and equitable and bring the benefits of modern economic developments within the reach of a larger number of people than before.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the hopes and ideals of the advocates of economic equality and social justice crystallised in theories of the collectivist economy of various brands— Socialism, Communism and others of paler or non-descript shades. But already then, and even earlier, more penetrating thinkers felt that competition must be replaced by co-operation if the ideal of a free and just society was ever to be attained. Accordingly, a co-operative movement developed in certain countries as a corrective for the evils of the competitive economy. But it was opposed by the advocates of collectivism as an attempt to reform capitalism. Co-operation indeed presupposes the existence of autonomous units to co-operate. Therefore, co-operative economy would obviously harmonise with political democracy based upon sovereign individuals. But the pioneers of Socialism held that private property was the means for the exploitation of man by man, and demanded its abolition. The principle of co-operation was rejected by the advocates of social revolution.

Socialist thought, particularly its economic aspect, spread far and wide in European countries, challenging the legitimacy or even the morality of the capitalist social order. Powerful popular movements developed with the object of replacing capitalism by collectivism.

Capitalism is private ownership of the means of production, either individually or through corporations. Socialism postulates collective ownership of the means of production. Socialists argued that modern industries were operated collectively by a large number of workers, and therefore the ownership of these enterprises should be transferred to the many who work in them instead of being vested in a few. The moral fervour of the socialist theory clouded its economic fallacies. These were exposed by competent economic thinkers over half a century. But the moral foundation of socialist economies, namely, that the fruits of labour should belong to the labourers themselves, was unshakable. Confusion follows when economic problems are tackled with non-economic considerations, and especially when these are not only moral but also political. In the latter part of the nineteenth and earlier part of our century, economic thought was so confused.

Ultimately, it ceased to be a conflict between two theories and became a conflict actually between two systems in practice. Firstly, a successful revolution in one of the biggest countries of the world abolished private ownership and initiated economic

reconstruction on the basis of collectivism. Subsequently, several other countries followed the example. Advocates of economic equality and social justice throughout the world were naturally attracted by these new experiments.

Being interested in popular economic welfare, you must be more or less acquainted with what happened in Russia, and also other communist countries. I want to draw your attention to one fact which should be noted by the progressive thinkers and social engineers who may still believe that abolition of private ownership of the means of production in favour of a collectivist economy necessarily establishes a higher form of political freedom. Whatever may be the economic benefits of the new system, though established with the plausible object of bringing freedom to the downtrodden masses, it has not promoted political freedom. This experience confronts progressive social thinkers with a new problem. If political freedom is not possible without economic equality, is economic freedom possible without political freedom? In other words, are not these two freedoms interrelated? And is it not in the last analysis one freedom, namely, human freedom, which must be the object of the generally desired reconstruction of a social order based upon exploitation of man by man? Subversion of the *status quo* or its reform by itself will not produce the desired result unless social relations are so readjusted as to guarantee economic as well as political and all other forms of freedom to the individuals.

I was among the first in this country who expected great things from Socialism and Communism. It so happened that I could take some active part in revolutions which subverted the old political and economic systems and established new one. So, not only theoretically, but also from experience, I was one of the first who also discovered that we cannot think of freedom as either economic or political, but we must consider them both together as human freedom. If the means to the end of economic freedom is suppression of political freedom of the individual, then whatever the economic benefits, it is not human freedom. And society being composed of human beings, it cannot be free unless composed of free individuals.

It is quite simple to see that in a collectivist society the individual freedom cannot be regarded as the measure of social freedom. A collectivist system puts things on their head. It says, the existence of one is to be deduced from the existence of the mass. You take the mass as given first and deduced the

individual by dividing up the mass. That is all upside down. The mass itself is composed of individuals. The root of all evils of the modern world is underestimation of the role of the individual. Social and political thinking which ignores its elementary category can only mislead. All political and social theories try to solve the problem of relations between individuals. Whenever they ignore the primary category, they are bound to go wrong. This is what has happened with modern social theories.

Instability and uncertainty are the features of contemporary world economy. The perennial crisis proves that there is something wrong. There are few even amongst orthodox economic thinkers who do not see the necessity of overhauling the capitalist system so that it can survive this crisis. *Laissez faire*, unbridled competition, was the fundamental principle of orthodox capitalism. today, except in the U.S.A., no theoretician of the capitalist economy believes in it. Various restrictive devices are advocated to prop up an economic system which has exhausted all its progressive possibilities. On the other hand, in a number of countries, capitalist economy has been replaced by collectivist economy. It is a new experiment, which has not improved the situation. It is true that the final judgement must be suspended until all the facts are known. The fact that experiment of collectivist economy is not open to free inspection suggest that its claims are unfounded. Anyhow, granted that it has been to some extent beneficial for the masses, one cannot ignore the other side of the picture. The price of that problematical economic advantage is political freedom. Is the rest of the world prepared to pay this price?

We are not in possession of sufficient material to judge exactly what are the results of the collectivist economy in Russia and other communist countries. But it is known that collectivist economy has necessarily led to regimentation of the entire social and cultural life. The idealisation of this state of affairs is to say that the working class as a collectivity has had to sacrifice their freedom for the class to be free. The fallacy of the position is so very obvious that no right-thinking person will be prepared to pay the price. When 100 people are well dressed and well fed, we can say that the group enjoys welfare. But if we are told the group is enjoying welfare and see that most of the hundred people composing it are not well fed, well dressed, well educated and happy, then we are asked to believe in a collectivist fiction.

The present position of the world as a whole is that the old competitive economy cannot be rehabilitated ; even its own defenders admit the necessity of reforming it. On the other hand, the new system which is to replace it throughout the world has revealed its dragon teeth. The world seems to be in a dilemma. Is there no way out? Must we choose the "lesser" evil, when both the alternatives are equally bad? Fortunately, there are men who do not want that ; they do not care to be hailed as the liberators of the masses ; they are interested in the liberation, whoever brings it about. Confronted with the present situation, they must think over their ideas anew, reevaluate their ideals, subject all older ideas to a critical examination. The competitive system has produced so many evils that it has to be replaced by some other form of economy. On the other hand, collectivist economy is not really an improvement. It even makes something worse. Therefore, unless a different form of economy with a sounder theoretical foundation is elaborated, the modern world may not survive the crisis, and we may experience the breakdown of civilisation as a whole.

Co-operation is the other alternative. But as hitherto practised in our country and abroad, it has limitations. In order to be an alternative economic system, it must have a sound theoretical foundation. The point of departure of all social and political thinking, including economic theories, must be a new conception of human relations. The object of all economic and political practice is to regulate the relations between individuals. In the last analysis, they are determined by human nature. So, a proper understanding of human nature is the prerequisite for an equitable economic practice. Unless it started from an empirically verifiable scientific view of human nature, economic theory and practice would go from blunder to blunder, and social justice remain a utopia. The modern knowledge about the early history of society reveals that the tendency to co-operation is more deeply rooted in human nature than competition ; and herd instinct is an expression of that tendency.

In the seventeenth century, the pioneers of modern political and social thought also started with the problem of human nature. But in those days, the relevant scientific knowledge was so inadequate that their idea of human nature had to be based on assumptions some of which turned out to be wrong. Some of them maintained that human nature was rational,

and other clung to the traditional view that it was to believe. This notion assumes something beyond human comprehension. The corollary to this notion will be that the causes of the present crisis of civilisation are beyond human understanding, therefore it cannot be overcome by human endeavour. We must fall back on the faith in Providence, which rules out the possibility of man remaking society.

Scientific knowledge acquired in the last two-hundred years has inspired a growing number of people to reject this fatalistic view of human nature, and maintain that the hypothesis that human nature is rational has been corroborated by scientific knowledge. If human nature is rational, the logical corollary is that the fundamental human impulse is co-operation, not competition. This point of view is corroborated by the whole history of civilisation. How was society originally created? When our forefathers came down from the trees and started to walk upright instead of on all four, they were exposed to many dangers and felt the need of co-operating with each other in common self-defence. That is how society was created ; co-operation obviously is the basis of society.

Human nature being co-operative, society originally having been a co-operative organisation, it can be legitimately deduced that restoration of the form and purpose of human relations is the only way out of the present crisis. Competitive and collectivist systems should both be rejected and replaced by a co-operative system. It is no accident that idealist thinkers have been speaking recently of a co-operative commonwealth. But we cannot have such a commonwealth on the foundation of a competitive or collectivist economy, in both of which the individual is completely submerged in the masses. The foundation must be the restoration of the individual to his position of primacy. But that cannot be done unless the greatest curse of modern civilisation is cured. It is the complete loss of self-confidence. Man has lost faith in himself. For ages human mind was dominated by faith in the supernatural. Modern science has to a great extent freed man's mind. Now man should be able to take destiny in his own hands. But the possibility of his regaining the faith in himself is destroyed by modern social theories which make a fetish of technology. They hold that this new god has ordained that man must be merged in the masses.

If the world is to come out of its crisis, man must revolt against this modern fatalism. Technology is man's creation.

Why should it make him helpless? It need not. Nor is it necessary to disown it. All the benefits of technology can be retained, and its evils avoided, by reorganising economy on the basis of co-operation. It has been proved by experience that neither competition nor collectivism can do that.

There is a growing number of people who share this view. From what I said, you will realise that I do not advocate co-operative efforts to mitigate the evils of competitive economy. I advocate co-operation as an entire way of living. The theory of co-operative economy is to be deduced from a comprehensive social philosophy based on the scientific view that human nature is essentially rational. The practice of co-operative economy will be a form of human relations governed by the new social philosophy. It will attach supreme importance to individual initiative and individual judgement. Any individual with faith in himself can take the initiative, and his example will help others to regain self-confidence. Together they will lay down the foundation of co-operative society. What I plead for is a co-operative society, not merely co-operative economy. I further hold that social changes imposed from above do not necessarily serve the professed purpose. Often they have the contrary effect. Therefore, to be generally beneficial, social reconstruction must begin from the bottom, so that men as individuals can take part in it intelligently. Only then man can be the maker of his destiny.

Far-reaching economic changes from above presuppose monopoly of political power, dictatorship of one kind or another. Whether it is of the left or the right, essentially there is little difference. The lesson to be drawn from that experience is that a free society must be built up from below. That is a matter of common sense. Whatever may be the architect's blueprint of the superstructure of a building, you have to begin with the foundation. And the foundation of a free society can be laid only by men who dare stand on their own legs. Then everything will result from experience. The more we learn from experience, the further can we see ahead and work out the pattern of a co-operative society in concrete details. To begin with, the people at the bottom, the direct producers themselves, should be encouraged to build up local economic organisations entirely relying on their own resources. The immediate result will contribute to the solution of the most burning problem of Indian economy—the problem of feeding the people.

In a country like India, economic rehabilitation must begin with agriculture, which is the key or basic industry. Unless that is done, the food problem will not be solved. The primary task of any government is to feed the people ; the present government has failed in that task. And there is no ground to help that another will succeed, so long as economic thinking will travel the beaten track and economic practice be dominated by party-political considerations. Politicians in power have failed ; those who would replace them will also fail.

Neither large-scale industrialisation nor nationalisation of land will produce more food and reduce the pressure of population on land. But the peasants can do better if they are given the chance. Capital investment necessary for the means to increase agricultural production can be raised locally through co-operative societies which should be entirely autonomous, free from party politics and bureaucratic control. The assurance that they will not be deprived of the benefit of increased production either by speculative traders or by the discredited food policy of the government, will be the incentive for the peasant to increase production. Not only will the small savings now lying idle be put to productive use, but increase of agricultural production will mean formation of new capital, which will then be available for developing industries locally to absorb displaced labour and provide manufactured articles for consumption. There will be a general rise of the standard of living. Co-operative communes like that can be built up everywhere, provided that there will be enough people with a new faith and a new vision. These co-operative communes will constitute the foundation not only of an equitable as well as prosperous national economy ; they will also be the basic units of a truly democratic State.

This vision of a bright future, however, should not make us blind to the innumerable difficulties of the situation. Our fundamental principle is that a free society cannot be built except with the endeavour of free men. All other would be architects of a new order have put the cart before the horse ; they hold that institutions must be built to free men. Who are to build those institutions? This crucial question was ignored. The result of the mistake has been that revolutions broke old bondage, but forged new ones. Men themselves were not allowed to take their destiny in hand. They were asked to follow prophets, leaders or parties. The latter usurped the sovereignty of man instead of freeing him. Only men with confidence in the

potentialities of man can adopt the new approach to the problem of social reconstruction— of human liberation.

Once this fundamental issue is grasped, the numerous difficulties on the way will not daunt us. The building of a co-operative social order is not conditional upon subversion of the *status quo* ; not does it presuppose political power. The foundation can be laid within the framework of the existing system. Our appeal is to reason ; the pioneers of the co-operative social order will not call up the people to destroy, but to begin construction with their own resources. Such effort is not likely to provoke any resistance. On the contrary, experience will win the co-operation of more and more people. For a time, co-operative economy may develop while the competitive system will still be in force ; but ultimately the latter may not be able to hold its own against a truly democratic economic order.

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## DEMOCRACY AND NATIONALISM IN ASIA

THE impossibility of defeating Communism on the battle-fronts in Asia results from the fact that nationalism is not a democratic force. Anti-imperialism makes of it a willing ally of Communism; and a nationalist-communist alliance can command the confidence and support practically of the entire populations of Asia. Apart from the common distrust and hatred against the white race, there is a more fundamental cause for the popularity of Communism in Asia. It is the authoritarian tradition of oriental culture. It is very much akin to the mediaeval culture of Europe. By and large, the latter has outgrown the tradition of mediaevalism. In Asia, it is still very much alive. Nationalism draws its inspiration from the mediaeval cultural tradition. Religious fanaticism plays a prominent role in the nationalist movements in the Near East. A powerful current of public opinion in Pakistan demands that the new State should be governed by the Islamic theocratic *Shariat* laws. The saintly Father of Indian Nation personified the spirit of revivalism. Notwithstanding Nehru's secularism, highest positions in the State are occupied by outspoken religious and cultural revivalists. Even the Christain and Westernised Sun Yat-sen culturally was a new-Confucian patriarch. The Kuomintang wanted to establish a neo-Confucian paternalist State.

The bulk of the people throughout Asia are steeped in ignorance, which keeps them wedded to mediaeval prejudices. The teleological view of life is the most outstanding feature of the mediaeval religious culture. It creates an authoritarian mentality — the psychological predisposition to cultivate submission as a virtue — to accept authority as providentially ordained. With the ignorant multitude, this cultural tradition takes the form of fatalism; and it makes the politically-minded minority regard dictatorship of paternalism as more desirable than democracy. And the demagogy of a wilful minority can sway the submissive masses to accept its dictatorship. The alliance between Communism and Nationalism is thus cemented by a cultural tradition.

That being the cultural background of Asian nationalism, it is a mistake to equate it with democracy. Even when it is anti-communist, it is not necessarily democratic. Then it tends towards fascist dictatorship. The advocates of genuine democratic freedom for the Chinese people should have little reason to prefer Kuomintang dictatorship to the communist dictatorship. Only the blindness of international power-politics can look upon the Iranian landlords or the Arabian Emirs or the Egyptain Pashas as advocates of democratic freedom. A sufficiently high price may lure them into the western camp. But even then, at home, they would establish their dictatorship as against communist dictatorship. National freedom means freedom for themselves to rule autocratically, may be behind a formally democratic facade, whenever convenient.

The chances of democracy should not be overrated even in India and Pakistan, where the influence of western liberalism is still far too weak as against the cultural tradition of nationalism. Indeed, the mistake of equating nationalism with democracy was more grievous in these countries than in others, which are culturally more backward. In the latter, there may not have been any choice. To withhold support the Nationalist movement because it was socially and culturally reactionary, would be to condone colonialism. It was a dilemma for the western Liberals, although objective historians cannot dismiss the doctrine of the White Man's Burden of a civilising mission as an apology for Imperialism.

However, in India there was a choice. The early nationalist movement was inspired by western liberalism. The "denationalising" influence of outlandish ideas—retionalism, political liberalism and social reformism—provoked religious and cultural revivalism, which affected the movement for national liberation. Nevertheless, until the advent of Gandhi, on the morrow of the first world war, liberalism dominated Indian nationalist politics. Under Gandhi, nationalism became a mass movement. Because he personified the mediaeval cultural tradition, the British rulers reacted very timidly to the new development; and their timidity undermined the position of the liberal politicians. The grudgingly granted Montford Reforms were so very inadequate that they discredited the liberal politicians who tried to work the new Constitution in the spirit of gradualism. The utter inadequacy of the reforms enabled Gandhi to wrest the leadership of the nationalist

movement from the Liberals, and develop a mass nationalist movement with a religious, culturally revivalist outlook.

The defeat of liberalism in Indian nationalist politics prepared the ground for the rise of the Muslim League and led to the communal differentiation of the nationalist movement and ultimately to the partition of the country. Jinnah had grown up in the atmosphere of liberal nationalism. He became a fanatical communalist when, under Gandhist leadership, Indian nationalism put on the complexion of Hindu religious and cultural revivalism. Jinnah was Gandhi's Anti-Christ, so to say.

When under Gandhi nationalism became a mass movement, the numerical conception of democracy induced the British rulers to strengthen revivalist nationalism by concessions which they would not make to the Liberals. When an objective history of contemporary India will be written, the world will be staggered to know to what extent the British Liberals, particularly the Labour Party, are responsible for defeat of liberalism in this unfortunate country, and the defeat of liberalism prejudiced the chances of democracy.

Those who believe that Nehru represents western liberalism, and that therefore under him independent India will move towards democratic freedom, ought to read his autobiography. He ridicules the ineffective gradualism of his liberal predecessors and denounces them as puppets of British Imperialism. It is a very significant fact that Nehru rose to his present position as the spiritual son and the heir-designate of the prophet of culturally revivalist nationalism.

In China also, nationalism, which won the patronage of western liberalism, rose on the ruins of the Reform Movement, which was inspired by modern rationalist thought. Kang Wu-wei and Liang Chi-chao raised the standard of revolt against the Confucian feudal-patriarchal cultural tradition. Sun Yat-sen ridiculed them as pedantic intellectuals obsessed with out-landish ideas.

In India as well as in China, democracy would have had a greater chance if the numerical conception of democracy did not mislead western liberalism to back up culturally reactionary nationalism. Ever since Chiang Kai-shek gave the Chinese masses a blood-bath in the later twenties, liberal democratic opinion turned against the Kuomintang. While the Western Power recognised the Kuomintang terror regime simply because it was in power, the Communists won over the sympathy and

support of the embittered frustrated Liberal democrats. During the war, when Chiang Kai-shek could not do without the substantial backing of the Western Powers, mainly America, he could be compelled to democratise the regime. If he went over to the Japanese, as he most probably might, with the support of the Western Powers, liberal democrats could set up an alternative government which would also be more efficient than the corrupt Kuomintang regime. The tragic policy of glorifying Fascist Chiang Kai-shek as a leader of World Democracy drove the incipient Liberals and Democrats in China to the camp of Communism.

During the war, the British rulers had the opportunity to discharge the much advertised responsibility to place India on the road to democratic freedom. It became evident that colonial nationalism and international Fascism were birds of the same feather. Nationalist India openly sympathised with the German-Japanese Fascist Axis, and refused to help the Democratic Powers in the darkest days of contemporary history. Yet, as soon as the war was over, British liberalism abdicated power in India to the National Congress which, on the pretext of anti-imperialism, had connived with international Fascism. It had refused to assume the responsibility of defending India even when the Japanese invaders were actually bombing Calcutta. If in that crisis Indian Anti-Fascists were entrusted with the responsibility and the requisite power, they could give the country a democratic leadership and take over formally from the British when the latter had to leave after the war. But in that crisis, British liberalism was guided by the false notion that, whoever could incite the mob by appealing to their base sentiments, were the true representatives of the people. The quantitative conception of democracy confounded it with demagogy.

Thus betrayed by western liberalism, advocates of democratic freedom as distinct from national independence, in India as well as in China, either succumbed to the temptation of climbing on the bandwagon of successful totalitarian nationalism or fell for the siren call of Communism. Mr. Wint wants me to say how the Western Powers should play their cards. I would advise them to rectify the mistake of equating nationalism with democracy. Instead of backing up established nationalist regimes as bastions against Communism, even at the risk of encouraging their authoritarian predisposition and dictatorial tendencies, the Western Powers can still help the crystallisation

of the disheartened democratic forces. A review of the historical relation between liberalism and nationalism will show the urgency of this reorientation.

Originally, liberalism was cosmopolitan. It believed in a common human heritage. The "civilising mission of the white man" was a corollary to that belief. Greece had civilised the ancient world ; Rome carried on the work ; Christianity brought law and morality to the barbarians of Central and Western Europe ; finally, the conquering army of Napoleon carried the light of a rationalist and democratic culture to dispel the twilight of mediaevalism in Germany. Modern Nationalism was born as the reaction to that last stage of the propagation of a cosmopolitan culture. nevertheless, it enjoyed the patronage of liberalism. Fichte, who had gone down in history as a liberal philosopher, was the evangelist of modern nationalism.

Inheriting the tradition of nineteenth century liberalism, all brands of leftism of the twentieth century patronised nationalism. In the nineteenth century, European nationalism represented a revolt against the Hapsburg and Romanov monarchies. Therefore, liberalism equated it with democracy. The experience was disappointing ; triumphant nationalism became reactionary at home and chauvinistic internationally. According to the Wilsonian liberal doctrine of the self-determination of subject nationalities, after the war of 1914-18, the Hapsburg Empire was Broken up into a number of independent national States. The experience proved that liberalism had been backing the wrong horse. As against one Czechoslovakia of Masary and Benes, there was Pilsudsky's Poland, Horthy's Hungary and the crazy-quilt of the Balkans, where Serbians tyrannised the Croats, Bulgarians oppressed the Macedonians, and the latter tried to terrorise all and sundry. In Italy, Mussolini personified the nationalism preached by Mazzini, and Hitler's National-Socialism claimed to draw inspiration not only from Fichte's Address to the Nation, but also from Herder's conception of the *Volksgeist*.

But disregarding that bitter experience and irony of history, the revolutionary Left in Europe vied with the reformist Liberals in patronising colonial nationalism. It had been miscarried in Europe ; in the more backward social and cultural circumstances of Asia, nationalism would be a democratic, progressive and even revolutionary force. Judged by their profession, Socialists and Communists should have been more cosmopolitan. On the contrary, they happened to be the more

fanatical supporters of colonial nationalism. In Europe, nationalism had turned out to be a reactionary cult ; but in the colonial countries, as anti-imperialism, it was a liberating force. The devil of Imperialism, however, was discovered neither by the democrats nor by the Liberals. It was a Marxist discovery. To support colonial nationalism as a revolutionary force was a part of the Leninist strategy of World Revolution. It is doubtful if Marx himself would have approved of his more fanatical follower condemning Imperialism as the evil genius of the twentieth century. This aspect of Leninism does not logically follow from the original gospel. It may be recollected that Marx had recognised the historically revolutionary significance of the British conquest of India. Therefore, he would not agree with Lenin about the revolutionary role of anti-imperialist nationalism.

However, the Leninist denunciation of Imperialism as the devil of the drama of the twentieth century and Communism championing the liberation of subject peoples compelled the Socialists as well as the Liberals to patronise colonial nationalism. During the period between the two world wars, nationalism in Europe developed into Fascism. Therefore, a distinction was made between nationalism in Europe and in the colonial countries, regarding the latter as a progressive democratic movement with the analogy that, originally, nationalism in Europe had also played a similar role. It was forgotten that Mussolini and Hitler were spiritual descendants of Rousseau, Fichte and Mazzini. Assuming the nationalism in the colonial countries was a progressive and democratic force, there was no reason to believe that it would not also develop as in Europe.

As a matter of fact, colonial nationalism, from the very beginning, was not progressive, but revivalist ; its hypothetical democratic character was deduced from the fact that it was anti-imperialist. Another highly objectionable result of the very fact was simply ignored. With the vast bulk of the colonial peoples, anti-imperialism was hatred for the white men ; and with the nationalist middle class, it meant rejection of everything that the latter represented, namely modern civilisation, rationalist view of life and democratic culture. To have equated anti-imperialist nationalism with the spirit of progress and urge for democratic freedom was obviously wrong.

Asian nationalism is an unmixed evil. It has not got the saving grace of a cultural and idealist origin, as in the case of early European nationalism. The cultural cosmopolitanism of

Herder degenerated into the chauvinism of Hitler because Fichte introduced into German nationalism the passion of race hatred. Asian nationalism originated in that passion, which continues to be its content even after the disappearance of foreign rule. Nehru is an idealist ; so was Fichte, a much greater one. Yet, the passionate advocacy of anti-French German nationalism made Fichte the philosopher of Fascism. By glorifying the anti-white animus as Asian nationalism, Nehru may go down in history as the herald of an equally rank reaction.

Pragmatic western Liberals may not be impressed by Goethe's denunciation of nationalism as a passion of the culturally backward people. But they should listen to the wisdom of Lord Acton, who wrote : "Nationalism does not aim either at liberty or prosperity, both of which it sacrifices to the imperative necessity of making the nation the mould and measure of the State. Its course will be marked with material as well as moral ruin."

To outline a detailed programme for the promotion of democracy in Asia is outside the purview of this analysis of colonial nationalism. The analysis suggests the programme, which can be elaborated in another article, if desired. Meanwhile, just a few hints may be helpful.

The prerequisite for the triumph of democracy in Asia is to lay down its intellectual and cultural foundation. Modern industrial economy will not necessarily help the establishment of a democratic society. On the contrary, in the prevailing social and cultural atmosphere, it may tip the scale to the wrong side. Not only are the masses culturally backward and politically illiterate, and therefore possessed of an authoritarian mentality, the appreciation of democratic freedom is very largely absent also among the educated middle class, which is the most active and influential factor of public life. The under-developed countries of Asia, therefore, need democratic ideas as well as economic aid. Nor can democratic institutions be imposed from above. Because, given the predisposition to accept authority, and in the absence of a democratic tradition, parties and politicians tend to be authoritarian. Under these social and cultural conditions, democratic institutions cannot be stable unless they are built up from the bottom. For that purpose, the people must be inspired with the spirit of revolt against tradition, of self-confidence and self-reliance. The rise of democracy in Asia must be preceded by an intellectual movement of the nature of the enlightenment of 18th century

France. It is easy to see how western liberalism can help the development of such a movement.

This may appear to be a long-term programme. In a way, it is. But let us not forget how long it took Europe to come out of the twilight of mediaevalism and establish the modern democratic society. Moreover, all hasty attempts to build in Asia bulwarks against Communism will defeat their purpose. They are more likely to help the establishment of a different type of dictatorship than of democracy. Only a democracy built from the bottom up by a self-confident and self-reliant people can defend itself against attack from either side.

A perspective of economic security, political liberty and social justice will inspire the people to resist the demagogic appeal to Communism. The people are losing confidence in the established nationalist governments and parties. In the resulting psychological atmosphere of despair of the masses and cynicism of the intellectuals, the cult of a strong man and a strong government can thrive as easily as the communist call for an elemental mass revolt gets a response. To foster the spirit of self-confidence and self-reliance on the part of the people will be the only effective resistance. Activities calculated to promote the cultivation and spread of this spirit will lay down the foundation of a stable democratic society.

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## A RADICAL HUMANIST VIEW OF PRESENT DAY PROBLEMS

**I**N order to present the Radical Humanist point of view on certain present day problems, I ought to begin with an exposition of Radical Humanism. But that would take us too far out of the scope of today's discussion. I shall therefore only summarise it. Myself personally and some of my friends, having taken part in political movements in India and other parts of the world, came to the conclusion that there are certain fundamental defects in the various political doctrines and social philosophies which have been guiding the activities of various parties and social groups. The corollary was that unless these traditional views are replaced by a new attitude towards the problems of life in the modern world — an attitude which will take into consideration all the developments since the 19th century — it will not be easy to find a solution to the somewhat heterodox view. It does not criticise this or that particular set of principles or programme. It challenges the fundamentals of social and political philosophies which have prevailed since the 18th and 19th centuries.

Now, I must select only a few problems for this talk ; because, there are so many in our time that one cannot deal with all of them in a short talk. The best thing will be to begin at home and select some of our own problems. And since our own century is not living in a vacuum, its problems are connected also with those of the rest of the world.

The most burning problem appears to me to be how to avoid another war, which might destroy modern civilisation. This is a problem confronting the world as a whole. The second problem of our own country which I would take up today is how to establish a democratic order — I should say, the establishment of a political order which will guarantee the greatest amount of freedom to the largest number of people. An associated problem would be the building up the economic life of our country. While these are our peculiar problems, our ability to solve them will very largely depend on what will happen in the rest of the world. Therefore, I shall very briefly

express my opinion about the approach to the problem of war.

Until now, attempts have been made through various international organisations and through diplomatic channels and certain world movements to avert a war. I believe that the problem of war results, in the last analysis, from the fact that the world is broken up into a number of sovereign national States. This doctrine of national sovereignty is at the root of most evils of our time. Internationalism cannot be superimposed on a world broken up in national sovereign States. The League of Nations came to grief for this reason, and so may the UNO. We shall therefore have to strike at the root of these evils. We have to attach supreme importance to the individuals composing collectivities before concerning ourselves with the fate of the collectivities as such.

Democrats are always criticising collectivist ideas and totalitarian political philosophies. But the earliest totalitarianism is nationalism. Socialism is based on the collectivist concept of the class which is supposed to have a super-ego and interests over and above those of its individual members. If you free the class, every member of that class is supposed to become free. Nationalism is based on a very similar idea. According to it, two people living on an imaginary line passing through the Khulna district and constituting the border between India and East Pakistan, have different interests because they belong politically to different nations. This subordination of the individual is based on the idea that, if a collectivity is free, its members are also free. But our own experience has proved this assumption to be false.

We are of the opinion that, unless in every country more and more individuals realise the harmfulness and danger of the collectivist concept of nation, the menace of totalitarianism and of war cannot be averted. Cosmopolitan Humanism attempts to break down national boundaries by contacting men and women and groups of people who think similarly in other countries. And such contacts and co-operation can be much more effective than mere governmental relations.

That in brief is the Radical Humanist point of view on the biggest and most terrifying problem of today, the problem of war. As long as the world remains broken up in sovereign national States, war will be the law. In the 16th and 17th centuries, when Europe began the process of breaking up into national States, the father of political theories, Grotius, started founding a system of law, which was to regulate the relations between States so that peace could be established in the world.

Since then, greater men have been carrying on this work. Yet, we have come nowhere near stable peace, and war is the law of the world and that will remain so, because fellow-feeling can exist between men only and not between supra-human collectivities. Unless we can go down to the foundation and attach importance to the human beings primarily and consider human life as the supreme value, we cannot break down national barriers and unless we can do that the danger of war cannot be eliminated.

As things are, the world is again threatened with war, and if it takes place, not only death and destruction will overtake large parts of the world elsewhere, but even if India is not directly involved, the process of building up an equitable order will be retarded, if nothing worse would befall us. Therefore we must always remember that the solution of all our problems depends on the solution of the biggest problem of the modern world, how to avert another war. Thus we must concentrate all attention on how to create the forces which alone can counteract these dangerous trends.

Turning to our political problems, we are having before us the greatest democratic experiment of the modern world: election in a vast country with a backward, illiterate electorate. It may be unprecedented, but anything unprecedented is not necessarily good. Formally, the Indian constitution has introduced universal suffrage. Other countries had to fight for it for centuries. But what is the result? The party, which had dominated the political life of our country these last decades, is laying all emphasis on the collectivist nationalist idea; the nation being one and indivisible must have only one party in order to have a stable government; its appeal to the electorate is backed by this argument. This kind of propaganda will not have great effect in countries where people have more political experience and understanding gained in the past when they were fighting for universal suffrage. But in India, because 90 p.c. of voters cannot think for themselves on political question and have no conception of what is democracy, they will vote not because they have a certain conviction, but because a great man tells them to vote in a particular way, or because some authority drives them to the polls and tells them how to vote.

This is not a criticism only of affairs in India, but of formal parliamentarism, of the arithmetical conception of democracy, which tends to degenerate similarly everywhere and under all circumstances. It is said that the existence of political parties

is essential for democracy. There must be at least 2 or 3 parties taking turns in running the administration of a country, and people are called upon to vote for one of them. The people are supposed to be the sovereign authority. How is their sovereign authority expressed? In nothing more than the right to go once in five years to put a piece of paper into a wooden box. For the coming five years they are completely out of the picture and forgotten until the next election.

What are these parties? One party says it represents the whole nation; another says it represents a certain class, etc. The former gets the votes of the nationalists and comes to power. But the members of that party, elected by particular constituencies, do not abide by what the people who elected them want them to do; in Parliament they speak and vote as the party whip tells them to do. Thus, the party has become another collective ego. I join a party because of its programme. Once in the party, I find that it does things which go against its own programme. When I protest I am driven out of the party. In the class-party, it is exactly the same. Individual men and women do not count any more; it is the collectivist institution which is supreme. Institutions are created by human beings as instruments for a certain purpose, to serve them in some way or other. But things have come to such a pass that the institutions are now given much greater value than the men whom they were to serve.

On the other hand, institutions are run by men, and the best devised institutions cannot be run and live up to their purpose in the absence of suitable men. But attention is not paid to the individuals running the institutions; only the institutions as collectivities are of concern. The Congress government is doing what it does certainly with the best intention of building up a democratic State. But the mistake is not to learn from the experience of others.

Throughout the world, formal parliamentary democracy has not produced the desired result. In other countries, because of their older traditions, it is difficult to break out of the beaten path. But in India our hands are not bound by such traditions. There are no old, established, time-honoured institutions. We could think out new institutions which might make real democracy possible.

Parties are formed for the purpose of capturing power in order to be able to do certain things. Any new party will have the same purpose. This purpose will justify all and any means, since it is believed that without State power nothing worthwhile

can be done. This notion leads to corruption. It is in the game. Starting from the conception that I must get the support of the people to come to power, any means to get that support is handy and good enough.

The alternative is to think out a new and different State organisation and, instead of being in a hurry, start with laying down the foundation of a stable democratic order. Radical Humanists maintain that a democratic society is not possible unless the people, the members of that society, are sufficiently intelligent to exercise their sovereign right with discrimination and are immune to the demagogic emotional appeals. The government is spending so much money on various experiments and for keeping an army in Kashmir. The experiments so far have yielded little result, and it is utterly indefensible to spend half the state revenue on armed forces when the vast majority of the people are inadequately fed. If part of the money was spent to educate and enlighten the people, the foundation of a democratic order might have been laid by now. But that would mean that in public life parties should be replaced by individuals, and these again would not address vast masses in mammoth meetings, but human beings in groups as they live together with common problems.

Only men who realise this vicious circle of power and parties in formal democracy can lay this foundation. The country is divided in so many constituencies. If from now on some people will select certain constituencies and work there from day to day, creating a co-operative spirit among the people who now feel no common bond but dissatisfaction and grumbling, educating them and teaching them how to judge issues for themselves, on their own co-operative initiative, then the parties which today come and sway the people off their feet would no longer be able to do so. And next time, men and women may be elected who have not so much their party and its power at heart as the welfare of the people among whom they live and concrete solutions of their day to day problems.

This approach can be applied to the political and economic field as well. Once the elections are over, the political issues will recede in favour of the economic. The government may do certain things. In the meantime, because governments move slowly, if at all, things will go from bad to worse. If the people have this mentality, that they cannot do anything by themselves and the government must do everything for them and if it does not, they can do nothing but complain, then they will always vote for the party which makes the biggest and most impossible promises.

But the people in their particular localities can do a good deal by co-operating among themselves. This again depends on their faith in themselves. If I think that I cannot do anything unless a benevolent authority makes me do it, or unless I am a member of a party, it means that I have no faith in myself. But if I have no faith in men and women how can I have faith in parties? A party is a collection of individuals. To believe that man can do nothing unless he subordinates himself to the party whip is a degradation of the value of the individual, of the dignity of man.

If I have faith in myself, I can have also the faith that the people around me can solve many of their problems by themselves. In the process of attempting to do so, they will gain in strength and will learn to administer their own affairs and understand the larger issues of the community.

As things are, after this election, popular discontent is likely to grow, because the people will expect from the government things it cannot do. And all the parties are as bad as the others, inasmuch as none can fulfil the promises they have made at election time. In the present elections, we have a peculiar feature. There is a large number of independent candidates. Some of them, of course, are other's "independent" candidates. But there may be 10 p.c. really independent candidates. And if they will work in the way I have described, they can do a lot until the next elections ; and by that time many more independent people from among the various constituencies may be elected.

The difficulty with the Radical Humanist point of view is that it appears to be a very long-term view. My reply to that is : Suppose it will take ages, is there another way? But in reality, only the beginning is difficult ; because, at present the people have no faith in themselves. It is necessary not only to preach. Example is more convincing than precept. If a few people realise the nature of the problem, feel the need of an entirely new approach and begin to work, the success of one will immediately inspire many others, because the need is so great and more widely felt.

In the next five years, we may have no spectacular results. But what little results we shall have, and are bound to have, that will be a great inspiration for others and increase the momentum of the movement. Otherwise, what will happen in the next elections? Instead of one-party rule we may have multi-party chaos. May be, next time twenty parties will pull down the Congress, but they will not be able to pull together,

and we shall have chaos, the precondition for another type of dictatorship.

Thus, nobody is offering us a better way out immediately. The only way is to start with a little confidence in ourselves and other human beings. And you will find, if only you start to work with the conviction that it can be done, that much more than expected will be achieved. The democratic age started with the conception of the dignity of the individual. All progress is meant to create conditions in which human beings can develop their potentialities as men and women, not as cogs in wheels. But that concept has been forgotten. In the 19th century it was thought, if there would be only good laws, all things and men would be good. And now, instead of good laws, there is faith in dictatorships and strong institutions. Assuming that the latter are meant for the good of man, it still means playing Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark—the people. Let us put the Prince of Denmark, the people, the men and women in society, in the centre of our efforts and have confidence in ourselves, that we have the ability to achieve what we want, and we shall succeed ; in any case, this is the only right things to do, if we believe that democracy is the best form of political organisation.

All great movements have been started with such a faith. The pioneers might be martyred and never see the harvests. But they have sown the seeds for all great harvests. This conviction is based on the experience of the modern world, and a critical examination of this experience leads me to think that a new and bold approach from the root is required. Therefore we call ourselves Radical Humanists. Man is sovereign because he is the highest point in the process of cosmic evolution. If we forget man and subordinate him to man-made institutions and organisations, we shall never be able to create a better world. Every man has infinite abilities and potentialities. If we do not believe in man's potentialities, he can of course never develop.

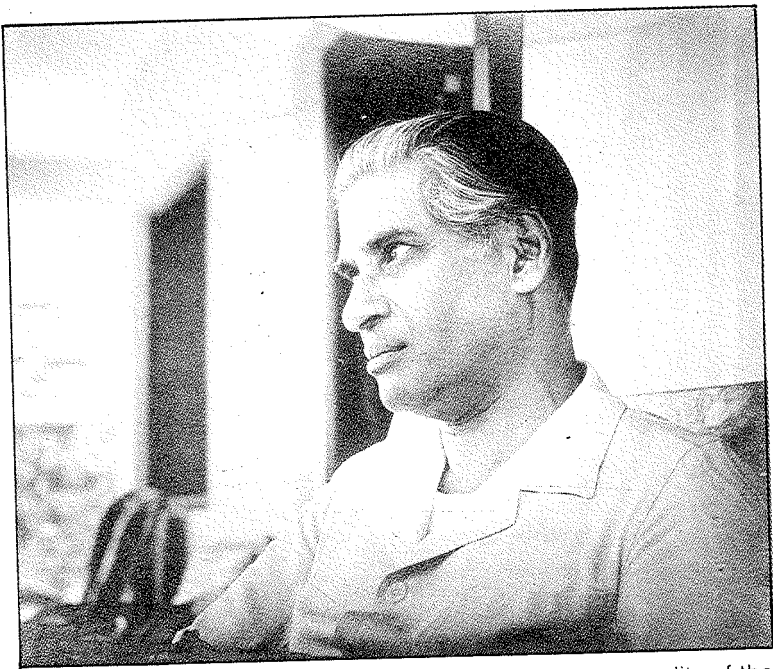
Ours is a race with time. If the forces of evil— and I have described what I consider evil—will triumph before man remembers himself and his endless potentialities, mankind will be doomed indeed. And if that happens, it will be because mankind had forgotten its root, which is man.

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M. N. Roy (1887-1954) an outstanding revolutionary personality of the twentieth century, joined the underground revolutionary movement in Bengal in 1905 at the age of 18, and by 1915 emerged as one of its principal organizers. After the failure of the plan of armed insurrection against British rule he went in search of German arms which took him through Indonesia, Korea, China and Japan, the United States, and eventually landed him in Mexico. Here he was converted to Marxism, founded the Communist Party of Mexico (1919), From Mexico he was called to Moscow by Lenin, and in the next few years became one of the top theorists and organisers of the Communist International. He founded the emigré Communist Party of India in Tashkent in 1920. In 1927 he was sent as Chief of the Comintern's delegation to China to guide the Chinese Communist Party, and eventually broke with the Comintern in 1929 by openly opposing its extremist strategy adopted at the Sixth Congress.

On his return to India Roy was arrested and spent six years in jail during which he wrote his nine manuscript volumes of "Prison Notes". In the following years he moved beyond the ideologies of nationalism and communism, and between 1946 and 1948 formulated his alternative philosophy of radical humanism.

Besides taking an active and leading part in revolutionary movements in India, Mexico, Soviet Union, Germany, Middle East and China, Roy was a highly original thinker and prolific writer whose works run to more than a hundred titles and cover history, philosophy, sociology and political economy. Among his major works are *India in Transition* (1922), *The Future of Indian Politics* (1926), *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in China* (1930), *New Humanism* (1948), *The Russian Revolution* (1949), *Fragments of a Prisoner's Diary* (1940-50), *Reason, Romanticism and Revolution* (1952-55) and his unfinished *Memoirs* (1964).