

**Party System and Values
of
Honesty and Efficiency**

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Academy for New Education
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First Edition, 2012

ISBN: 978-93-82085-10-

Published by:
POPULAR MEDIA
Jhilmil Industrial Area, Delhi-110095
popularmedia@ymail.com

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PARTY SYSTEM, ELECTIONS AND ANTI-DEFECTION LAW

In search of good and right governance, various countries have made numerous experiments, as a result of which several forms and structures have come to be built up and served specific purposes, which have possibly provided useful aids with varying degrees of satisfaction. But since three ideals of progress came to be formulated during the French Revolution, namely, those of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, the world has witnessed the rise and development of representative forms of democracy, and it is in this context that party system has grown and developed.

The representative form of democracy got shaped in Great Britain as the parliamentary system on the model of which Indian Parliamentary system has been cast.

The parliamentary system in UK has served well for a long time, and it can be

regarded as a necessary step in the evolution of democracy. For without it the generalised faculty of considering and managing with least possible friction larger problems of politics, administration, economics, and legislation concerning aggregates of people cannot easily be developed. This has also been one of the successful means yet discovered of preventing the State Executive from suppressing the liberties of the individual and the minorities. Nations emerging into the modern form of the society are, therefore, naturally and rightly attracted to this instrument of government.

But it cannot be said that parliamentary democracy with the eventual rise of multiplicity of parties has proved itself to be an ideal form of governance. Moreover, application of the party system in India has thrown up a number of thorny problems for which it is difficult to find appropriate solutions.

There is a great difference between the conditions that obtain in the UK and those which obtain in India. While the population of the UK is limited to seven crore, India has

today a population that has gone beyond one billion. It is easy to conduct elections in the United Kingdom at a short notice of one or two months, if such a necessity arises; in India we can never conduct elections without giving adequate time, even if a quick election is necessitated. The UK has only language, India has numerous languages; UK has one predominant and almost uniformly accepted religion, whereas India is multi-religious; climatic conditions in India are vastly different in different parts of the country, which is not so in the UK. Keeping these and other facts such as level of literacy and of communication and transportation, India should have, after attaining independence, considered the question of evolving a new form of democracy, suitable to the conditions and goals and ideals that we cherish in India. Neglect of these problems has brought about in India an acute crisis, and it is appropriate that, at last now, we should look at this problem closely and obtain mature counsels which are available to us. The recent initiative taken by the Government to set up a Review Committee is a very important step in the right direction.

Speaking of the difficulties of parliamentary democracy in its practice, Sri Aurobindo wrote in his famous book – *The Ideal of Human Unity* – the following:

“But it has not yet been found possible to combine Parliamentarism and the modern trend towards a more democratic democracy; it has been always an instrument either of a modified aristocratic or of middle class rule. Besides, its method involves an immense waste of time and energy and a confused, swaying and uncertain action that “muddle out” in the end some tolerable result. This method accords ill with the more stringent ideas of efficient government and administration that are now growing in force and necessity and it might be fatal to efficiency in anything so complicated as the government of the affairs of the world. Parliamentarism means too, in practice, the rule and often the tyranny of a majority, even of a very small majority, and the modern mind attaches increasing importance to the rights of minorities. “

We have to be clear that while we are required to invent better methods of conducting democratic governance, we shall

not advocate abridgement of the democratic rights which have already accrued to humanity. What we shall advocate is a search of those means by which democracy can be strengthened into more and more enlightened democratic democracy.

Why is that democratic processes that we have devised so far tend to generate the evils of money-power, muscle-power and several other practices which breed injustice? First of all, we may note that where a large number of people are called upon to work together, there is bound to be formation of groups of individuals. These groups may be divided on differences of ideologies or charisma of individual leaders or of certain specific group interests. Since there are at least two major rival philosophies of social change, capitalism and socialism, two groupings are inevitable in the present circumstances. A third group may try to effect a compromise. In a country like India, individual leaders have played a major role in creating powerful groups centred on themselves, regional groups have also emerged, and there are many other groups which advocate interests of sections of society. As long as these groups are few, ideally too,

the democratic processes are easily manageable. But as soon as the groups multiply, party system begins to degenerate, and various combinations and permutations become possible and even inevitable. We witness in India today multiplicity of parties, which tends towards coalition, which can break down suddenly, causing tremendous anxieties and uncertainties in the country. To save coalition, corrupt means come to be employed and the importance of individuals or groups which are hardly representative of large interests of the people, exercise a decisive role and power.

Parties themselves are often non-democratic in their internal functioning, and even if they are democratic to some extent, party bosses play unjustifiably predominant role.

It is the party bosses who decide as to who should contest the election, and this tends to deprive the people of the right to choose those whom they believe to be their real representatives. People remain strangers to the entire electoral process, excepting that they have a right to cast their vote and choose willy-nilly from among those candidates with whom they have no relationship either of

leadership or even of the acquaintance.

Party tends to choose such candidates who can finance their own elections and who, in their turn, have amassed wealth in various ways, not necessarily legal or honest.

Party system also underlines the theme of opposition rather than that of cooperation. Conflict is thus ingrained in the very system of parties.

It is very well known that success of a party in an election depends upon power of wealth, — considering the immense expenditure that is required to be incurred in the election processes. Parties, therefore, tend to collect money both before the election and after the election, and with a vengeance, if they come to occupy seats of power in the government.

Elections also are rarely free from the process of violence; and great deal of muscle power is employed to win elections. Rigging in elections is also not a rare phenomenon, and rigging implies denial of democratic rights of the people.

This is a very rapid analysis of what is actually happening in India, and it can easily

be seen that what goes on in the name of democracy today is a deplorable comedy or tragedy that impels us to cry out altogether against the party system.

Some of the wise political counsellors have, therefore, advocated in recent times a party-less democracy. Some have advocated formation of national government, in which all parties are invited to be a part of the government. But these counsels have not yet succeeded. A deeper search is, therefore, required.

Ideally, our Constitution should be so designed that only those who combine in their character honesty and capability can occupy the position of governmental power. While most will admit that such should be the ideal, they would think that this ideal is too utopian and they would not even make an effort to enquire into a possibility of a solution in that direction. It is against this background that one would like to make an earnest effort to explore its possibility with seriousness and responsibility.

There are two very attractive suggestions which have emerged during the last few years.

The first set of suggestions relates to the evil of getting elected by minority of votes polled. On account of a large plurality of contestants, votes get so much divided that the winner has to his credit only a minority of votes polled. In other words, the majority of voters have disfavoured the candidate who is declared to have succeeded under the present rules. It is impossible to consider such winners to be representatives of the people.

It has been noted that seventy to eighty per cent of all MLAs and Lok Sabha MPs are elected by minority of votes polled. In order to remedy this unacceptable situation, it has been suggested that a candidate, in order to win an election, should obtain of minimum of 50% plus of the votes polled. It has further been suggested that, if so required, the rules should provide for a second round when the contest should be between the two highest polling candidates of the first round.

This set of suggestion seems to be perfectly justified and it needs to be accepted and implemented.

The second set of suggestions is related to the qualifications that need to be laid down

for contesting an election. At present, the qualification that has been laid down is regarding the minimum age. There are reasonable grounds for not laying down any educational qualifications. But what about qualifications that would relate to experience and record of the past services rendered to the society?

In this connection, it has been suggested that a candidate should have rendered services at the local, district and state level in the capacity of a member of a Panchayat, Zilla Parishad and/or State Assembly for getting qualified to contest in the election for the Lok Sabha. This seems to be a good suggestion, provided that we could also add an alternative of service of at least five years in public services at the national or State level, — governmental or non-governmental.

One may venture to make one more suggestion. This suggestion aims at securing among members of the Lok Sabha such individuals whose constituency is as wide as the whole country and who have attained national recognition for their services to the country, their self-sacrifice and professional

excellence, and who, at the time of nomination, do not belong to any political party.

The related procedure could possibly be conceived as follows:

- (i) The total number of members of Parliament should be increased by 20% and this additional number should be reserved for the category of candidates that we are contemplating.
- (ii) Every sitting Member of Parliament should have the right to nominate a set of five persons in order of preference on the list of candidates to be considered for the election. This list should remain under preparation during the entire period of a given Lok Sabha.
- (iii) After the constitution of the next Lok Sabha, the above list will be placed before the members of that Lok Sabha as also the members of the then Rajya Sabha, and on a fixed day, each member will cast his/her vote in favour of one set of persons in order of preference from among those on the concerned list. Those who secure the

highest number of votes will become members of the Lok Sabha, provided that the number of such members will not exceed one hundred. If the number exceeds one hundred, there will be re-polls for the candidates who have won first preferential votes, until the number of the candidates that win the first preferential votes does not exceed one hundred.

- (iv) The members of Lok Sabha under this category shall not join any political party during the tenure of their membership of the Lok Sabha, and they will have no right to vote on any motion of non-confidence, even though caretaker government, if any, will be composed by these members.

It is argued in favour of democracy that only the wearer knows where the shoe pinches, but as against this, it is argued that for making or repairing the shoe one goes to a good shoemaker. Both arguments have their validity, and the above suggestion aims at giving some concrete form to the truth of these arguments.

It is argued that in our country there is no

dearth of capable and efficient people. But many of them do not believe in putting forward themselves in competition where they have to argue that they are better than their competitors in the election, or else, they are prevented from the process of election on account of the current money-power and/or muscle-power, which have become so indispensable at present. The above suggestion aims at meeting this argument.

It is argued that our election is loaded in favour of all kinds of divisive forces to such an extent that we find very few real Indians coming up to occupy seats of power. The above suggestion is expected to meet this argument also.

It will be seen that under this suggestion, which is essentially meritocratic, the spirit is democratic, since those who will prepare the list of candidates will be representatives of the people, and those will vote to select from among them will also be representatives of the people.

We may now turn to the question of defections. Strictly from the moral point of

view, every individual should be free to change one's point of view and one's alliance with one group or another. But morality demands that the motive should be genuine and a change should not be opportunistic, and should not be motivated by temptation of power or money.

Voting under a whip of a party can often turn into oppression or even tyranny. It is also a sign that party has turned into a deity, and one of the evils of the party system is that party bosses come to behave like gods and demand allegiance to them and their views instead of to the truth.

It is argued that if one is elected on a party ticket, then deviation from party discipline should have a consequence, viz., resignation of the deviating member from the seat that he/she had won by virtue of the membership of the party. This is a legitimate argument, and it would be indisputable, provided that the differences among parties are strikingly ideological, and thus deviation or defection to another party implies a change in the ideology. But, in the Indian situation, differences among a number of parties are not ideological,

but they indicate differences of some special interest or personalities or a given emphasis. In these circumstances, deviation would be preferential in character rather than principled. And the question is whether the parties have any moral right to determine the personal preferences of their members.

Anti-defection law that has been enacted seems, therefore, morally flawed, and its flaw is greatly marked because it leaves a lot of scope for group defections. The arbitrariness of the law is quite evident.

Everybody in the party system likes and dislikes anti-defection law, depending upon opportunistic circumstances. The result is that in the present situation that obtains in India, defection has resulted in extensive horse-trading and political instability, and splits are deliberately engineered in quest of ministerial offices and the like.

Defection and anti-defection are both thorny; and there does not seem to be any satisfactory solution. Parties have to be strong enough and morally so competent that members freely choose not to defect. Indian

Party System and Values of Honesty and Efficiency

Polity has to develop intrinsic ethical solidarity; there is no other alternative. But, as long as party system continues to operate as it does today, and as long as one has accepted the party ticket to get into the Legislature, the sound rule should be that defection must entail resignation; such should be the anti-defection law, and not the present one which promotes group-defection and horse-trading.

It may be added that one salutary practice that can be recommended is that the Prime Minister should, as a matter of custom, choose in his Cabinet honest and capable colleagues, and not necessarily from his own ruling party or from the ruling coalition.

ON POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTORAL REFORMS

When the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution (NCRWC) was appointed by the Prime Minister Sri A. B. Vajpayee, a genuine hope was generated in the country that the Commission would come up with some radical recommendations, which when implemented, would give rise to a new polity in our country that would be conducive not only to good governance but also to provide a better framework to realise great aspirations that were manifested during the Freedom Struggle. Our Nationalist Movement had envisaged free India to evolve, not an imitative polity, but a polity that would reconcile the needs of individual freedom and national integration; and national prosperity that would benefit all citizens of the country equitably. That the Westminster model of party system and governance is not suitable to India was acknowledged, and even though this acknowledgement is being reiterated, no

radical propositions have been effectively proposed or effectively considered.

It is regrettable but true that NCRWC has failed to sustain the hope that its birth had aroused, and the recommendations that it made, particularly regarding the party systems and electoral processes, are not radical enough, and one feels that the country has missed one great opportunity.

The Westminster model of elections had justification at the time when it grew up in the United Kingdom, since it presupposed for its success a two major party system. That model also presupposed smaller constituencies where interaction with the people could be more close and much more informed. In India, we have complex pluralistic society; some political parties have a vested interest in perpetuating narrower and narrowing loyalties. In such a situation, we need to develop a system whereby a casteless and classless society could be impelled in its growth and development. A very important suggestion that had come up before the NCRWC; but it did not unfortunately receive that kind of support that it deserved. The

proposal was to create a system of runoff context electing the representative winning on the basis of 50 percent plus one vote polled, as against the first-past-the-post system. The NCRWC had an excellent opportunity to insist on the creation of this new system, considering the fact that this would oblige every candidate to seek the support from his or her constituency of a much larger section than what is now enjoyed by a political party. This would have obliged every candidate to transcend narrower interests and narrow ideologies or narrow caste affiliations. Every candidate would have been required to serve wider purposes of national goals, and this would have enabled our polity to grow into an ideal system of equity, justice and service of the larger and larger sections of the society.

What the Commission did was simply to recognise the beneficial potential of the proposed new system, and instead of examining the issue in all its aspects; it recommended that it should be examined by the Government and the Election Commission of India. This recommendation is disappointing. If this proposal requires consultation with various political parties, it would have been done more impartially by the

Commission itself. Can we sincerely believe that this proposition would have received the attention of the Government and the Election Commission of India in an atmosphere of impartiality which was available to the Commission?

Many other recommendations of the NCRWC in regard to the electoral processes and political parties are important, but, even if they are implemented, they are not likely to lead the country forward to the creation of an innovative system that can save us from imitativeness. Even then, it should be said that several recommendations need to be highlighted and we should press for their adoption and even for their legislative support, wherever necessary.

For example, the provision for a foolproof voter ID card needs to be implemented without delay. The recommendations, which have been made in regard to the disqualification for contesting elections, seem to be well formulated, and they should be rigorously followed up by the amendments in the Representation of the People Act. Similarly, the recommendations that should govern the

individual candidates in regard to the declaration of assets and liabilities should also be enforced. The question of State funding of elections appears to have received close examination at the hands of the Commission, but it is somewhat disappointing that the Commission has advised that the proposal for State funding be deferred till some regulatory funding recommendations are formulated.

The subject of defection also received attention in the Report of the NCRWC. In particular, in the recommendation made in para 4.18.2 deserves to be implemented without delay. For it suggests an amendment to the 10th Schedule of the Constitution so as to provide that all persons defecting - whether individually or in groups - from the party or the alliance of parties, on whose tickets they had been elected, must resign from their Parliamentary or Assembly seat and must contest fresh election. It is true that the 91st Amendment takes away the protection that was provided to groups defection on the ground of party's splits and one third members of the party defection. But the other group defection under the merger clause still continues to be protected under the amended law. This means

that if a group of two third of the members of the legislative party decide to defect to topple a Government, for whatever lure of benefits, they can be saved from disqualification by claiming to have decided to merge their party with some other party. It is hoped that the 91st Constitutional Amendment will be further amended so that what has been recommended by the Commission is laid down unambiguously without any provisos and exceptions.

Much thought requires to be paid to the question of political parties in our country and the way in which they are conducting their own affairs. What has been suggested by the Commission under paras 4.13 is all very good, and it is hoped that the relevant recommendations will be enforced through a comprehensive law with the aim of regulating the registration and functioning of political parties or alliances of parties. Similarly, the recommendations made under paras 4.35 and 4.36 in regard to the contributions received by political parties towards election expenses should also be implemented through a comprehensive legislation.

But the important question is whether

these measures are sufficient to move towards party-less polity which was wisely advocated at one time by some eminent leaders of our country. It may be argued that political groupings are inevitable, wherever there is freedom of thought and expression. Indeed, this argument can be readily conceded, but the question is whether the relationship among the political parties should necessarily be that of opposition and confrontation. At a deeper level, the question is as to whether a new ethos can be created in the country so that political parties can collaborate among themselves for achieving national goals. It is, for example, observed that honest and capable legislators are to be found in all political parties which differ from each other. Should there not be, therefore, a custom or practice that would permit or encourage recognition of all such individuals who combine both honesty and efficiency to participate in the Government? It seems essential that measures should be evolved in our country to enable Prime Minister/Chief Ministers to admit in the Council of Ministers individual of merits, instead of on the basis of affiliation to the ruling party.

Closely connected with this question is the idea of finding a place in the Parliament for individuals, who do not nurse any particular constituency through political means, but nurse the entire country through their professional and meritorious services to the country as a whole. Experience shows that such individuals can hardly find a place in the Parliament under the existing procedure of election and electoral processes, where apart from anything else; the contestants require a huge amount of money for a successful electoral contest. How to bring those who are devoted to the nation as a whole and yet are not in the political field into the Parliament and even in positions of ministerial responsibilities? It may be urged that this matter deserves serious consideration by all those who are devoted, not to party politics, but to the promotion of the nation as a whole.

THE CITIZEN, CONSTITUTION AND VALUE-EDUCATION

Educationists have been spending a great deal of time in listing values that should form part of the curriculum; but often they forget to underline those values which have been enunciated in the Constitution. The Preamble itself speaks of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. Articles 14-19 bring out Fundamental Rights, which follow from the basic values laid down in the Preamble. Articles 25 to 30 lay down further rights in respect of conscience, religion, management of religious affairs and protection of interests of minorities. Certain social values have also been underlined in the Directive Principles of the State. And, significantly, Article 51-A lays down Fundamental Duties, detailed enunciation of which provides ample guidance in fixing incontrovertible values that citizens of the country must pursue.

There are, however, three most important

words in the very Preamble of the Constitution; they represent the basic features of the Indian constitutional polity, a number of values can be derived from them, but they deserve to be discussed in a spirit partnership among educationists, jurists and other experts for purposes of clarification and for deriving proper guidance. They are: Democracy, Socialism and Secularism.

The first question is as to what is democracy and what values we can derive from this great principle. Normally, democracy has come to mean in our country Parliamentary democracy, processes of elections, and values of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity, all of which have been encumbered with certain restrictions. These restrictions are necessary for practical guidance and legal enforceability, but in the field of education, where values are to be fostered, not merely from the point of view of enforceability but even in terms of intentionality and in terms of intrinsic axiological sense, we must have a wider canvas of understanding, defining and practising.

At the highest level, democracy is based upon the idea of categorical imperative of

which Immanuel Kant, the famous German Philosopher, gave certain alternative formulations, one of which is directly relevant to our purposes here. In that formulation, we are asked to treat every individual as a member of realm of ends and to treat every individual not merely as a means to an end but as an end in himself or herself. Educationally, therefore, we need to underline this individualistic sense of democracy and its deeper consequences for the educational methodology and contents. It is necessary in the educational processes to bring home to students the value of their own individually as also of all others, and to guide them as to how to discover the core of their individuality, and yet at the same time, to be so universal and unegoistic that the core of individuality of all others come to be respected, understood and embraced. And, it would also be necessary to bring out in the educational methodology how teachers have to respect the individuality of every student and, therefore, how educational process should not be merely child-centred but centred on the deeper soul of the child which has its own intrinsic value and which is, therefore, an end in itself. It

would also seem in order if, in the contents of education, it is brought out that what is valuable is not democracy in any particular form, which easily becomes plutocracy, but something that may rightly be called democratic democracy.

Similarly, when we speak of socialism as a value, we need to go to its root-value rather than its various forms, which are current in the world, and all of which are not necessarily value-oriented. The real value of socialism lies in creating the awareness that the individual needs to universalise himself or herself to such an extent that one contributes to the highest social welfare, and that those who represent the collective mind and soul must strive to bring about the highest welfare of each individual. Mere political or legalistic view of socialism may not necessarily approximate to the deepest values that need to be conveyed through the education system. In the present political situation of the country, we do not know whether our country is deviating from socialism in its increasing advocacy of privatisation, and we do not know what would be the judicial view of many economic reforms, if they are challenged on the ground

that they are inconsistent with socialism, which is the basic feature of our Constitution.

Similarly, we need to have greater clarity in regard to the word “secular”, which occurs in the Preamble. In a certain sense, materialism and materialistic values can incontrovertibly be defended as secular, whereas many other values can be controverted, since they can be shown to be inconsistent with what is defined as secularism in several dictionaries. Even the statement of objects and reasons provided in the 80th Amendment Bill of 1993, which was introduced but not ultimately passed, and which attempted to give a clearer definition of “secularism”, may not be found to be satisfactory, when we try to understand this word in the context of the great Indian secular tradition, which emphasises the synthetic view that encourages the bringing about of unity of religions on the basis of shared moral and spiritual values.

In fact, the lack of clarity in regard to secularism has seriously crippled educational concerns for value-education and education for character development. And if the present crisis through which our country is passing

today is really that of crisis of character, we cannot but feel greatly pained that the lack of clarity in regard to this important word has been a major contributory to the present deplorable situation. In fact, if a wise policy has to be devised in respect of value-education, we shall have to appeal to our experts in the country to clarify the concept of secularism in great detail, - particularly, keeping in view the entire theme of value-education as discussed in the important reports of Education Commission, such as those of Dr. Radhakrishnan and Dr. Kothari and also many other reports, books, and reflections, which have been brought out not merely after the independence, but even before, when our great freedom struggle was being fought in the country. In this connection, it would be useful to make reference to the very important book written by Dr. Subhash Kashyap "Delinking Religion and Politics", which is incisive in presenting many important issues, and which has in particular dealt with the question of values in the context of Secularism. This study, as also many other studies, should be taken into account while framing the national policy on value-education. We should remove those

obstacles which have prevented the implementation of even elementary but salutary recommendations which were made by Dr. Radhakrishnan that education *about* religions is not inconsistent with the Constitution and that at least at the higher levels of education, students should be acquainted with the main principles of different religions.

The question of the autonomy of moral values and dependence of these values on religions should also be brought out very clearly. We should also make a distinction between moral and spiritual values, on the one hand, and those values, which are tied to any particular religion and creed. This will help in fostering the study of moral and spiritual values, which are normally discouraged under the fear that they may be anti-secular. The concept of dharma also has to be brought out clearly in contrast to the meaning that is attached to the word "religion", "religionism", "secularism", etc.

Value-education is extremely important and deserves to be given the highest priority in the educational agenda of the country. Eminent leaders should come together to

discuss this important theme so that the educational world may get greater clarity from the experts of the Constitution, jurisprudence, dharma shastra, and other luminaries.

Apart from the problems that we have discussed so far, there are important issues even with regard to other aspects of the Constitution, even in regard to Article 51-A, which lays down Fundamental Duties.

Let us hasten to state that the very idea of introducing Fundamental Duties in the Constitution is not only remarkable but is in total harmony with the Indian ethos, which has given greater importance to the concept of obligations, duties and questions of allegiance than to that of Rights. However, having introduced this very important Article, certain important problems in regard to value-education have arisen. What were, it is asked, actually the noble ideals, which inspired our national struggle for freedom? Are they all homogeneous and free from conflicts? What exactly is the duty that follows from the injunction to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture? What duty, for example, follows from the fact that this

rich heritage cannot rightly be preserved if Sanskrit, Tamil, Persian or Arabic are not only accorded importance but even such a special importance that increasing number of students get encouraged and facilitated to learn these languages, particularly when the present language policy is increasingly alienating our new generations from the rich heritage of our composite culture, mainly because we have not provided to them any adequate competence in these languages?

It is understandable that the Constitution cannot be expected to provide full guidance to the theme of value-education. Educationists and other experts have to work diligently in developing full contents and scope of value-orientation in education. For example, pertaining to each aspect of human personality, there are a number of values, which should be cultivated in order to promote the ideal of integral education. Thus, for example, physical education promotes values of health and harmony of physical beauty; vital education should promote values of love, light, courage and heroism; mental education should promote values of clarity, synthesis and mental silence; moral education

should cultivate goodwill, and goodness, – both in the internal life and in the external life; aesthetic education should promote the values of joy and creativity; and spiritual education should promote widest universality, unity and oneness. One of the important issues in this connection is to resolve dilemmas that occur from the conflict between the rational and the ethical and the aesthetic, the aesthetic and the ethical, and the rational and the moral and spiritual. This is an extremely difficult task but must be dealt with squarely by educationists so as to provide the right guidance to all connected with education and, indeed, to all committed to national development.

We also speak of Indian system of values, which need to be promoted in order to preserve Indian identity and promote the synthesis of Indianness with the growing demands of universality and synthesis of cultures.

Here, too, the Constitution can come to our help but not fully. One of the important values that Indian culture specially emphasises is the pursuit of transcending egoism, and ego itself. Another important value is that of compre-

hensiveness, and the pursuit of this value requires us to look upon our own preferred idea as something temporary and provisional, demanding the arrival of such comprehensiveness that our own preferred idea and even the diametrically opposite ideas get so untied, that we become free from attachment to our own ideas and opinions and allow the comprehensive idea to succeed. A third value of the special emphasis on *shreyas* as opposed to *preyas*, – the value of moral and spiritual good as opposed to that which is merely pleasant. Another Indian value is contained in the concept of *dharma*, which is uniquely Indian, which is at once positive and normative, in the sense that it describes the underlying rhythm of life and the law of harmony and also prescribes it and prohibits deviation from it. Again, the value that we attach to the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom is something uniquely Indian in the sense that they are valued most and they are cherished most, and on the call of which we are inspired to renounce everything. How to emphasise these Indian values is an important item in the agenda of educationists working on value-education.

In addition, we also need to take into account how these values can be reconciled with those values, which are pouring upon us from the West, and which are also valuable both for the progress of India and of the world. These values include those of work ethos, prosperity and dynamism; they also include values of scientific temper and thought, of originality and criticality. At higher levels of the question of cultural synthesis, we need to emphasise the values that the French culture lays on clarity and precision, that the German culture lays upon organisation, that the English culture lays upon utility and accommodation, that the Japanese culture lays upon beauty, that the American culture lays upon freshness, openness and stress upon results. In the context of the new emphasis on what Swami Vivekananda calls "man-making education", we must include the values that make each one of us a citizen of the world. We need, therefore, to look into all these aspects, it remains to be emphasised that a very difficult task remains to be accomplished, if we are to provide to our system of education, the right and comprehensive orientation towards values.

While the guidance available from Constitution is of immense value, since it can provide us basic components of value-education and describe to us the rights and duties of the citizens, we should at the same time emphasise that the human being is more than a citizen; for the soul and spirit has its own special needs, demands, rights and duties, and allegiances, and these fall within the special domain of education and these domains teach us how to go beyond law lawfully and how to build higher and higher systems of law, higher and higher demands of civilisation and culture.

It is in fashioning the values appropriate to these deeper aspects that the responsibilities of the educationists assume their proper and vast significance. And this task also brings out the need for greater collaboration between educationists and experts in the domain of the Constitution.

Kireet Joshi

Kireet Joshi (b.1931) studied philosophy and law at the Bombay University. He was selected for I.A.S. in 1955 but in 1956 he resigned in order to devote himself to the study and practice of the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother at Pondicherry. He taught Philosophy and Psychology at the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education at Pondicherry and participated in numerous educational experiments under the direct guidance of the Mother.

In 1976, Government of India invited him to be Educational Advisor in the Ministry of Education. In 1983, he was appointed Special Secretary to the Government of India, and held this post until 1988. He was Member-Secretary of Indian Council of Philosophical Research from 1981 to 1990. He was also Member-Secretary of Rashtriya Veda Vidya Pratishthan from 1987 to 1993. He was the Vice-Chairman of the UNESCO Institute of Education, Hamburg, from 1987 to 1989.

From 1999 to 2004, he was the Chairman of Auroville Foundation. From 2000 to 2006, he was Chairman of Indian Council of Philosophical

Research. From 2006 to 2008, he was Editorial Fellow of the Project of History of Indian Science, Philosophy and Culture (PHISPC).

He was also formally Educational Advisor to the Chief Minister of Gujarat (2008-2010). Currently he is at Sri Aurobindo Ashram at Pondicherry, engaged in the tasks of research and guidance in themes related to 'Science and Spirituality' and 'Spiritual Education'.

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