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EDUCATION FOR PEACE IN SCHOOLS

In this paper I propose to submit the ideas on Peace in two parts. In the first part I propose to state my concept of peace. It deals with understanding peace from its meaning and nature point of view. It deals with types and classification of peace. In the second part I propose to suggest the solution and indicate method(s) for implementing and realizing peace through Education for peace.

I Peace : Conceptual Aspects.

1.1 Let me open the talk on 'peace' with a great truth: Peace, perhaps one of the easiest concepts to understand, is very tough to exercise. Somebody said of Truth that truth is higher than all but a truthful living is still higher. We can say 'peace' is nobler than all the qualities but peaceful living is still the noblest. What is this peace ? I don't think anybody needs its definition. "Today by Peace, we generally mean, absence of war and of slaughter, absence of hatred and revenge". Peace is one of the highest aims that man can set for himself. India's ex-priminister Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao says "According to Indian Philosophy and our tradition the absence of war is not peace. Peace is a positive concept. When there is no war it would be wrong to believe that peace prevails. Hence our definition of peace is that people should live in peace, there should be peace between man and nature, there should be peace in sky, there should be peace in water, there should be peace in space and we should let peace prevail everywhere. You wouldn't get such a pervasive definition of peace anywhere else."

1.2 There is a tendency to understand peace as 'non - war' but peace is not merely that. It is much more than that. Peace can be conceived of in two ways: negative and positive. Negative peace means absence of war or absence of any organized violence amongst religions. Positive peace on the other hand is inner peace, an integration, co-operation and harmony amongst human groups.

1.3 A learned thinker and diplomat of India, Shri Karan Singh identifies five dimensions of peace which he wishes all to consider. These dimentions are (i) Peace in ourselves, (ii) Peace in the family, (iii) Peace in the society, (iv)Peace in the nation state and (v) Peace in the entire planet. He looks upon all these not so much as parallel lines but as concentric circles, the individual on the one hand and the entire plant on the other that constitute indivisible entities. He says , "The quest for world peace is now no longer merely a mystical vision or an idealist Utopia. It has become a sheer necessity for the very survival of human race".

1.4 The great epistemologist and modern philosopher Immanuel Kant has given to the states of the world the six noble principles for attaining and maintaining perpetual peace. These principles are as follows.

i.   "No treaty of peace shall be esteemed valid on which is tacitly reserved matter for future war."

ii.   "Any state of whatever extent, shall never pass under the dominion of another state, whether by inheritance, exchange, purchase, or donation",

iii.   "Standing armies (miles perpetuous) shall in time be totally abolished,

iv.   "National debts shall not be contracted with a view of maintaining the interest of the state abroad".

v .   "No state shall by force interfere with either the constitution or government of another state",

vi. "A state shall not, during war, admit to hostilities of nature that would render reciprocal confidence in a succeeding peace, impossible: such as employing assassins (percussors), prisoners (venefici), violation of capitulations, secret instigation to rebellion (perduellio) etc."

Since the subject of International or World peace is now becoming more crucial every year, it becomes necessary to take a good look at some of the above quoted provisions which Kant thought necessary to this end. We must always remember that to Kant, "mutual trust is the only, foundation of peace. 'Honesty is the best policy' is the deepest strand in Kant's thought

1.5 The concept of peace leads itself to be analyzed from different and distinct classification such as positive peace, negative peace, peace with cooperation or unqualified peace and war. It is time now to literally construct peace. Peace is intangible. Peace is not just a feeling or a state of being. It is not just something that one would achieve only during long hours of prayers or meditation. And it is certainly not end of war alone. So what is it ?

Peace, therefore, is a natural instinct and if we wish to construct a peaceful world, then all we've got to do, is to let it manifest in our lives. Peace, in its right sense, is that state in which fear of any kind is unknown. To survive and to live like Man, both, human harmony and peace are essential.

II Education for Peace,

II.1. In our final conclusion of Part I we have noted how Peace is the most precious state of both individual as well as society. Peace, with reference to today's situation, is lost mainly due to war and violence. There are many causes of war as: Economic Causes, Racial Antagonism, Political causes, Arms race, Ideological cause, Religious fundamentalism and fanaticism etc. One can easily say that if causes are removed the effect is automatically removed. The cause of war if removed, automatically war will be

removed. But we do not want simply the absence of war, we want people in peace, people in harmony, people always living together with love, integrity and co-operation. In short the actual cause is the nature of man. Man should learn to live together, man should value co-existence. His approach and attitude towards life and peace should be positive and constructive and for all these he will have to be provided with education for peace - an environment that will mould him for peaceful behaviour, the most creative initiative to enable the individual to influence the society to bring about a radical change. "Education has a key role in shaping the thought pattern of an individual or a group".

II.2 The total cessation of war and establiment of peace requires change in man. Radical change in the society, mainly amongst adults, can not be brought about by any other way. It can only be by absolute change in the minds - change in approaches and attitudes and ultimately change in behaviour and action. Again, no change is possible though ideologies alone. The only way of changing society towards mutual understanding and peaceful co-existence is timeless transformation of the minds of the youth through choiceless awareness. For this the most effective would be educating young boys and girls at schools. School is a place where tomorrow sits and today's school students are future leaders.

II.3 In his most monumental work, 'Learning: The Treasure Within' (a report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty First Century) Mr. J. Delor, presents a report that is bound to influence educational thought all over the world, in the 21st century in most significant way. Here the commission has put emphasis on the four pillars as the foundation of education. The four pillars are

    i. Learning to Know,

    ii. Learning to Do,

    iii. Learning to Live Together, and

    iv. Learning to Be.

Out of all these greater emphasis has been put on Learning to Live together" by developing an understanding of others and their history, traditions and spiritual values and, on this basis, creating a new spirit to manage the inevitable conflicts in an intelligent and peaceful way. The other three pillars will provide the base for learning to live together. We in India have conceptualized Delor's report, mainly by the Central Board of Secondary Education, New Delhi. The said Board has come out with illustrative steps to fulfill the objectives.

II. 4. Prof. David Adams, a scientist in the U.S known for his expertise and innovative approach in developing new weapons, one fine day felt convinced that the world was not yet ready for science. His determination to pursue peace made him offer his services to UNESCO. On his visit to India he said, : War is an ancient invention .... The culture of war has the following elements: an enemy, an authoritative structure or hierarchy, secrecy, belief in the use of force or the idea that power comes from force and violence and arms. It is dominated by man and has, as its goal, exploitation in all its forms - for plunder, taking slaves, establishing colonies, exerting economic domination and also for exploiting nature".

If we wish to go from war to peace, we should know that the difference between the culture of the war and culture of the peace, is in the alternatives available. Peace is made up of tolerance, democracy, transparency, belief in non-violence and dialogue, disarmament, equality of women, economic and social justice. People will have to be taught what real tolerance means. It does not mean indifference towards the other. Tolerance, as defined by the UNESCO declaration of 1995, is "respect, acceptance and appreciation." Tolerance is harmony in difference. It is fostered by knowledge, openness, communication and freedom of thought, conscience and belief. Mr David Adams said, "Listening will promote understanding - thereby prejudices will disappear. Also, individual behaviors must be in keeping with the need to preserve the planet. Equally important is the instilling of the democratic spirit". In short,

what David Adams suggests is to change the individuals, young boys and girls, and thus to change the society from culture of the war to the culture of the peace. And for that, in action, we need - we immediately need Education for peace.

Education is a process which on one hand aims at a better and higher quality of life through human enlightenment and empowerment; and on the other performs a key role in shaping the thought pattern of an individual or a group. Through education what is expected are the far-reaching changes in traditional pattern of life leading to a better understanding of other people and the world at large. The changes will bring "mutual understanding, peaceful interchange and indeed harmony".

II. 5 Peace and peaceful living is possible through law. In case of wars between the nations, "Law" or legal agency like UNO has failed as Nations disregard UNO and continue fighting amongst each other. There is one more solution to wars and slaughters. The emergence of a peaceful world through restraint. Restraint, which is capable to keep the conflicts and quarrels away and thus brings mutual understanding and harmony, is ultimately for a class and not for the mass. For attaining 'Restraint' a lot will have to be taught. It can never come overnight. It presupposes maturity attained from the clarity regarding life, values of life, living together or co existence and about the ultimate purpose of life. To teach these all is Education for peace. Of course, it should also be noted that more than ever before, government and nongovernment organizations are out to equip children and young people through education with the capacity to lead productive, positive and meaningful lives.

II. 6 We find quite a good number of thinkers who talk about science and religion meeting each other and serving God as well as mankind. "In all finality, the central doctrine of any programme has to be 'Mankind shall neither kill itself nor get killed in any other manner, unless God kills it, if at all.' To achieve this there has to be fusion of the two faiths : One that of 'God in Man' - what Man can do : 'Science' - and the other that of 'Man in God' - what Man

ought to do : "Religion'; and the second part of the doctrine, therefore, will be 'In God and ourselves we trust; Mankind we shall serve." Here also we find service to mankind as solution to war and slaughter and thus to establish peace. This has also to be taught to young minds and through education we have to prepare them for mutual understanding, harmony and living peacefully together.

II.7 To implement Education for peace in schools is basically to teach to live together. Mr. Delor's report to UNESCO of the International commission on Education for the Twenty first Century reads as under: "The importance of the role of the teacher as an agent of change, promoting understanding and tolerance, has never been more obvious than today. .....

The need for change, from narrow nationalism to universalism, from ethnic and cultural prejudice to tolerance, understand and pluralism, from autocracy to democracy in its various manifestations, and from a technologically divided world where high technology is the privilege of the few to a technologically united world places enormous responsibilities on teachers who participate in molding of the characters and minds of the new generation".

II.8 Implementation of Education for peace in schools is great and to launch this grand endeavor, what better material than the impressionable minds of young learners! The subject has to rise much above the rhetoric and didactics, enough material to help the teachers translate this lofty aim into actual classroom transaction through suggested methodologies be provided. The formulation of courses, curriculum plans, a hand book for teachers as well as resource manual could also be prepared to inspire the teachers to undertake all important materials. These all, though very important but more pedagogical, I skip its discussion here.

II.9 Before we conclude let it be also clear that the idea of peace and peaceful living should not come in the way of vindicating a right cause. Peaceful behavior shouldn't lead to a fearful state but should lead to a courageous mind. Sri Aurobindo stressed so

eloquently in his monumental work, " What is needed at this stage of human destiny is neither a philosophy of total transcendence which would leave human beings essentially powerless, nor a philosophy of immanence alone which leaves the world at the mercy of the hostile power".

"Rather, what we need is an integrated, hostile philosophy in which human existence is looked upon as a rare gift which must be utilized both for inner development and for the welfare of society and the world." Let through Education for peace in schools, our younger generation know that " an enemy is created and wars engineered for the benefit and whims of a privileged few. They invoke religion and nationalism for their crimes and clearly believes that many lies become dubious truth. And people can be bought with that dubious truth. They invoke religion and nationalism so they may sleep at night and not have their bloodletting haunt them". Let our students know that "those who engineer wars remain untouched by the brutality and suffering of war". Let our students know that, "The war kills and kills needlessly". Let, at the top of all these realistic facts, our students know and accept with total faith that: "Peaceful co-existence is the only way of existence in this world". "And let us all know that : "Peace is Life, war is death."

Epilogue :

"PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION"
The Underline Idea of
"National Policy on Education - 1986"

It is tbe Philosophy of Education that decides its role and aims and objectives. We had earlier the objective : an enculturation of the student; to fit the student in the existing frame of culture. Just like the regimentalization, enculturation of education was found to be insufficient. It was neither interesting nor progressive. Here the individual had no scope to realise his best-self, and because the individual was not, in a position of realising his best self the progress

of the society suffered. Unless the individual's abilities and potentialities are brought out, best results in society and nation could not be realised.

So the second phase was to bring out what is best in the student. To enable the student to realise his best self and thus to make hin unique individual. Here the aim was not enculturation of the student i.e. to fix him into a common culture but to convert into actual what was potential in him. This second phase continued for a number of years, say, till now. And it was found to be defective. It was found to be defective because when individuality and potentiality of student were brought out he became selfish and separatist. His individuality became so strong that he was only looking after it, never caring for society and social progress. He kept himself in the centre. How can one ignore the society and its progress where he has to relise his best self ? And as a result the "Production of clerical jobs" became the basic thrust of education system. "And this has led to the imbalances, the dissatisfaction and frustration amongst the educated youth that we are seeing to-day". The situation worsened to the extent that the individuals realised their selfish ends at the cost of the society. "The villages the rural areas were ignored. It was an urban oriented education. In fact the villages were treated almost as drainage areas for the towns and urban areas. The educated, even if they get their education in villages, become lost to the villages. We have in our rural areas what may be described as a "Thumbs-up; culture. It just removes or leaves out the youth from the village and make him a displcased person in his own home". The youth would take much from the society and would give a very little to the society. The natural effect of this will be that society suffers. Individuals will make progress but society would not. They would be self minded and not society minded. Their entire effort would be self oriented and not society oriented.

This position can well be illustrated by Doctors running away to US. for the sake of money. Society spends lot of money for

making doctors but society gets no advantage of their services. This second phase on one side "makesa person a misfit in his home, a misfit in his town and causes frustration in the youth which we can not allow to stand any longer," and on the other side it fails "to reach and teach every one who is reachable" as the benifit only lable comes to an individual or to the urbon areas "because the people with education leaves the rural areas and go to the urban areas."

In enculturation, a student was, immediately coming from the university, lost in common culture. In the second phase the student is lost to the society, Now we want, both the individual and society, none of them to be lost. "The new education policy will be for all Indians. It must bo egalitarian. It must give equal access" in the sense that "an attempt must be made to give access to the best type of education, to the 'most intellegent children no matter from which section of society they come." The ultimate objective must be the integration of Individual interest with National Interest. "Today the biggest thrust must be for national integration and unity. While developing regional culture, while not killing regional tendencies, we have to see that they do not develop in a manner that destroys or weakens our national entity, identity." Today, "we have to see that our education process reduce violence in society. It should challenge the concept of matterialism or consumerism which is being thrust on us" Moreover, it has "to culcivate secularism, socialism, democracy and nationalism, and nurture the correct moral values.

So a need was felt that the aim and philosophy of education should not be mere development of an individuality at the cost of society. Individuals should be integrated with the society. "The new education policy is an attempt to relink learning with life as it is in India, whether in rural or urban areas, in the tribal areas, in the hills, mountains or in the forests." Tho student is neither to be fitted in the existing culture not to be made exclusive individual who can ‧ be of no use to society. The development of the individual must cuntribute to the development of the society. The progress of the

individual must necessarily lead to the progress of the society. Education must be such that an individual should be able to squarly face the problems and challenges of life. Nature and life are ever changing. Every moment new situations arise. New situations involve new problems and, new challenge. Problems and challenges are inevitable in life. Either individual surmounts the problems and challenges or sucums to them. In one situation he lives in other he is as good as dead though alive. The aim of education is to enable the individual to surmount and solve the problems of life and face the challenges that are continueally coming from all directions; and while facing the challenges and tackling the problems he must not loose his courage and competence In facing any problem of life his .Integrity and Efficiency must remain intact. This can happen when individual is properly educated in a proper system of education where the aim is to develop both the capability of realising the best self as well as the altruistic attitude to serve for the larger interest of the society. This is what we call acculterating role of education, Acculturation means development of human and moral qualities with scientific temper and, not the dsvelopment of existing culture as it is. The aim is not enculturation but acculteration. Such philosophy of education is conceived in New Education Policy-1986.

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