

# SOCIAL JUSTICE TO MANKIND

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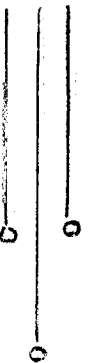
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World tensions make people conscious towards glaring inequalities on the macro and micro levels prevalent in human societies. This phenomenon has become acute in the under-developed world like India. Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao has recently very rightly emphasized that social planning has emerged as a very important aspect of development strategy. As such, social and economic objectives, policies and indicators should be built up into the overall development strategy from the very beginning. This approach lends great significance to ensure social welfare to the masses in the country. Growing disparities need to be minimised, failing which tensions are further bound to grow beyond limits.

Society exercises most durable influence on human environment. A remarkable transition has taken place in the basic structure of the society, and it has had significant bearing on human needs, value judgments, demographic variables and desire to possess. Change in human attitude is rather very fast. Accordingly, Alvin Toffler thinks, "a society fast fragmenting at the level of values and life styles, challenges all the integrative mechanisms and cries out for a totally new basis for reconstruction. When diversity converges with transience and novelty, we push the society forward towards an historical crisis of adaptation to create an environment so ephemeral, unfamiliar and complex as to threaten millions with adaptive breakdown."

## PROBLEM

Religious faith is superb in the minds of Indians but religion as an ideology gets mixed up with economics and politics. Extreme poverty, due to ignorance of our people, leads to communism and exploitation aggravates the problem. Mass illiteracy is the bedrock of prevalent evils in the society.



Seventy five percent of the people are not bothered about fundamental rights or freedom of speech. All they aspire for is two square meals a day, a roof above their heads and elementary education for their children. The march of the nation is problematic. The problem of poverty is deep-rooted in the under-developed world. To be very clear, one-half of the world area and population produces one-tenth of the world output. On the contrary, the developed world with one-fourth of the world area and one-fifth of its population produces three-fifths of the world output. This glaring difference between the two worlds is not because of inherent weaknesses but because of lack of social upliftment. Moreover, forty-eight percent of the population lives below the poverty line. It is a traditional feature with cumulative degenerating effects. Is not this absolute poverty a living reality of the masses ? Hence social transformation is a 'must' in the present context.

### APPROACH

Priorities, standards and goals should be determined after taking into consideration, the social and economic costs and benefits within the framework of social, economic and political values. Keeping this in view, social planning should be considered under four heads :

1. As a compliment of and a corrective to economic development;
2. As an integrated planning of the different social service sectors;
3. In order to fulfil specific social targets or to uplift specific backward sections.
4. And as overall societal planning for social change and reconstruction.

Of the above four heads, overall societal planning is the most ambitious but of least possible category. Any way this aspect is high sounding and idealistic but less in concrete policies and programmes.

Tolstoy, an international thinker, is of the view that in one sense, 'property is the root of all evil and all suffering and it implies danger of conflict between those who have too much property and those who have least.' The acquisitive type of society is fraught with mass revolution one day, sooner or later.

Cooperation is a cardinal principle which imparts new ideas, new outlook and enlightened behaviour based on higher values of life and that results into health and vitality of the society. In ancient times, Greece, two thousand years ago, observed this principle, a man who takes no interest in public affairs, he has no business at all.' 'Why not in India as in ancient Greece ? In democracy every segment of the population should be deeply involved in the process of change and growth.

### MEASURES

The evolution of society through successive stages of human civilisation brought out changing norms of societal behaviour and culture as well as moulded the possessive instincts of material needs and comforts keeping pace with time and change. A society, whose objective is growth with social justice, has a more fundamental problem of drawing reasonable balance between 'haves' and 'have-nots.' For, every one has social aspirations which cannot be denied.

There are very many glimpses of philanthropy, such as that of Jamna Lal Bajaj private enterprise which had introduced welfare measures even in 1950. In this land of religion, there are hundreds and thousands of charitable trusts, spread over the whole of India to bestow help.

in one way or the other. It is a matter of no less gratification, but the impact is not universal. Prof. Dandekar and Rath in their book, 'Poverty in India', have suggested certain measures to uplift the society, by way of opening hospitals, schools, orphanages, temples, dharamśālās and so on, as these are the places of common good and thereby cultural affinity strengthens.

Education enlightens the society. Adult literacy classes, public libraries, documentary films, sports and N. S. S. activities should form the part of village life. Health services should be accessible to the poorest lot of the people. Drinking water facility is basic. Family planning measures should not be lost sight of, if present and future generations aspire to live happily within the limits of national resources. However, optimistic we are, there are definitely limitations in national resources and future growth. Sir Norman Ipping points out that message for infusing life in rural folk should be wide-spread in various walks of life. Although it is great challenge, 'be friend to all' is the need of the time. Similarly, Rajesh Tandon mentions that there are several voluntary agencies—government, semi-government and private—are already working in the field of social welfare. Governments grants, gifts and private charity, coupled with community honorary work should make headway in desired channels. Unhealthy politics is the main constraint.

On economic front, machines invaded all spheres of social life. The trend of universal automation and mechanisation is penetrating into the society. Its percolation is felt by all, and the method of living has been undergoing change. From a long term aspect, it is a forecast of the 'Dooms Day' for the destruction of man in the process. Mountains of ink and pressures are the order of the day. Leisure civilisation has brought about a society of mass consumption, ousting men from the sphere of social production. Pseudo-humanistic factors are disrupting the very fabric of social order, where as man's stature is a vast potential. Mahatma Gandhi visualised it long ago to achieve harmony and peace in the world. How long this dilemma of material welfare versus real human happiness should perpetuate, is a question mark for all right thinking people in its perspectives.

### EGALITARIAN SOCIETY

The main aim is to create a more cohesive, balanced and intergrated society, maintaining dynamic status-quo and keeping in view to provide happiness to the largest number of mankind. To-day sharp contrast exists between the urban and rural areas and the gap widens with the progress of time. Education and technology are the main ingredients of a modern society and they are more urban-based. And the society is heterogeneous. To a larger extent, casteism, poverty, disease and illiteracy are rampant particularly in traditionally-ridden-people of the society and they act as a polarisation among the peoples of the land.

According to the latest census of 1981, the percentage of literacy is 36 percent against 29 percent in 1971. It has increased five times from 1947 to 1980 and its expenditure has multiplied from Rs. 57 crore to Rs. 3000 crore. This change is also noticed in expansion of health services, with the result the average span of life has increased from 32 years to 53 years. It is noteworthy that an average Indian now lives longer than his/her fore-father.

Urban people are comparatively more benefitted in educational advancement. 70 percent of enrolment of the upper and middle class is in secondary education, and 80 percent of those, in University education. Whereas 60 percent of illiterates could give their children 25 percent of elementary education. It was laid down in the Constitution that elementary education ought



to be compulsory and universal by now. The British nation is far ahead in providing social security measures to every individual since 1942, an eye opener to all lagging nations. Although this prescription is not equitably suitable to teeming millions of India, even then redistribution justice can no longer be ignored.

### CONCLUSION

Aristotle, a great philosopher, believed in natural order of things, since man lives in communities, which are organic solidarities and where persons are manufactured. In reality, there are contradictions of values. During the last two centuries, ecological balance is much disturbed and the environment is polluted. Peace and happiness are replaced by growing tensions. The world is torn by two super-power rivalry in arms race and huge expenditure goes to unproductive side. All religious philosophies—Vedic, Buddha, Jain, Muslim and Christian preach emphatically to lead an aesthetic life which would minimise tensions and human miseries. To my mind *Aṇuvratas* and ethical values must be given top priority to ensure social justice to mankind. And the lot of bottom 30 percent of the population is to be looked after in urgency.



None else bestows pain and pleasure.  
‘Love’ and ‘Anger’ are grief’s treasure.  
‘Self’ from ‘Non-Self’ distinguish  
And then there is no anguish.

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Whose name Rama, Buddha, Ishwar, Jina,  
Brahma, Vishnu, Hari or Shiva,—  
Leaving passions, reach ‘the Goal’  
No distress then in the Soul.

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World does function by itself  
What work of it does myself ?  
Alien influence ! Do get away !  
In Bliss for e’er may I stay !!

—Sahajānanda