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GANDHIJI - 'THE PRACTICAL IDEALIST'

"I claim to be a practical idealist," said Mahatma Gandhi once. Explaining how life and its problems taught him many lessons, Gandhiji dismissed any claim of having discovered a new philosophy or message for humankind. "I have nothing new to teach the world," he declared, "truth and non-violence are as old as the hills." In his tireless pursuit of truth he learnt from his experiments and errors as well. Truth and non-violence constituted the main tenets of his philosophy. But in a discussion with a Jain seer Gandhiji admitted that by instinct he was truthful but not non-violent. Said the Mahatma: "I have been truthful but not non-violent. There is no dharma higher than truth. Ahimsa is the highest duty".

Cautioning his disciples and followers against making an attempt to promote 'Gandhism' and publicising his ideas, Gandhiji said: "There is no such thing as Gandhism. I do not want to leave any sect after me." Nor was there any need to promote Gandhian ideals through propaganda. "No literature or propaganda is needed about it. Those who believe in the simple truths I have laid down can propagate them by living them. Right action contains its own propaganda and needs no other," he explained. As Ronald Duncan put it Gandhiji was the most practical man who would always drive any thought to its personal implication and practical application.

Satyagraha or Sarvodaya, truth or ahimsa --- every ideal he set for himself was first tested in the laboratory of his mind. Science was as important for him as religion. There was no conflict between them. His spirituality synthesized science, religion and philosophy. If Satyagraha ennoble the human spirit, Sarvodaya brings all people--the rich and the poor, the employer and the employee, the tallest and the lowest--together 'in the silken net of love.' The need is to control the root of all problems--the human mind. "The mind," wrote Gandhiji, is a restless bird; the more it gets, the more it wants and still remains unsatisfied." Simple yet meaningful life is possible only when the mind is tranquil. Restraint holds the key to human development. Highest perfection is unattainable without highest restraint, he stated. Explaining the meaning of selfless action, the Mahatma quoted from the Gita and said: "The sages say that renunciation means foregoing an action which springs from desire and relinquishing means the surrender of its fruit."

Politics and economics are vital for human progress. Politics cannot be a taboo for ever. Eschew politics of power but not politics of service, he exhorted. Politics without religion (ethics) is dirt. True economics stands for social justice. It promotes the good of all equally including the weakest and is indispensable for decent life. The goal of both politics and economics is the welfare of all, not of a particular section or even the majority of the people for that matter.

In a land of paradoxes, Gandhiji conceded, he was the biggest paradox. The man with a modern outlook wore just loin cloth and carried the spinning wheel wherever he went. His capacity for enduring pain and suffering and insults and indignities was boundless. That was why Einstein called him 'the miracle of a man.' Gandhiji had also that extraordinary gift of laughing at himself. Referring to the spinning wheel he once said: "People have laughed at my spinning wheel and an acute critic once observed that when I died the wheels would serve to make the funeral pyre. That, however, has not shaken my faith in the spinning wheel." But Gandhiji was quick to add that if "the government can provide full employment to our people without help of khadi and village industries, I am prepared to wind up my constructive work in this sphere." A poignant endorsement of the Gandhian approach was made three years after Gandhiji's assassination by Acharya Vinoba Bhave who declared that if the state could find other avenues of employment he would have "no hesitation in burning his wooden charkha to cook one day's meal!"

The Mahatma was not against machines and modernization. He would welcome the machine that lightens the burden of the people living in cottages and would 'prize every invention made for the benefit of all'. What he opposed was the craze for the multiplication of machinery and accumulation of wealth without any concern for the starving millions. He practised what he preached and preached ideals that can be acted upon. His 135th birth anniversary is an occasion for us to reflect on the everlasting relevance of his work and ideals and offer our gratitude to the Mahatma for bequeathing to us such a treasure. May we grow to be worthy of it !

- The Editor

"Gandhiji's philosophy has a meaning and significance far beyond the confines of his country or of his time" - U THANT

Role of Intellectuals in Indian Democracy

Hon'ble Justice Shri K. Jayachandra Reddy
Chairman, Press Council of India

We are in the year 2004, on this Sunday we would be celebrating 57th Independence Day. There is development. Millions have cell phones, including students both girls and the boys. We have TVs with as many as 100 channels. There are now 57000 newspapers including magazines and other journals. We are getting modernized very fast. With modernization, correspondingly the consumerism is growing very fast. Vizag is not the same old Vizag - but comparatively the heritage is kept up to a large extent. Andhra University has been acclaimed as a center of knowledge culture and learning. People are civilized (of course, the mental hospital is also an old one).

Yet there is something bothering us; uneasiness, lack of harmonious and peaceful way of life, unrest regarding the ways of governance in the democratic country by the people forgetting our heritage, the sacrifices made to achieve Independence thus distancing themselves from human approach, moral values and so on and so forth, forgetting that a society depends more on its citizens' character. Why should this happen! What is the solution?

The Center for Policy Studies, Vizag launched in 1995 has been providing a valuable forum for the intellectuals, the academics and the experts to interact, focusing on issues and policies of contemporary relevance. I know my limitations very well and that am not one who can fit into their format being capable of such interaction.

However a request is made to say a few words about role of intellectuals in Indian Democracy - I thank Professor Prasanna Kumar and the governing body of the Centre for Policy Studies for giving me this opportunity. The subject is of living interest, importance and concern too. The living interest of today was not the living interest of yesterday. Perhaps it may not be living interest of tomorrow. In this context let us have a quick look at the present scenario. The problems that country faces even after 57 years of independence are staggering threatening to affect the democracy. The republic is affected badly by criminalisation of politics, populism, inefficiency, corruption, greed, drift and complete absence of transparency in the functioning of the institutions..

The Report of National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution contains the following pertinent observations:

(a) "We, as a nation, appear to have dropped some fundamental values of a free and self-governing people and are finding it extremely difficult to retrieve and restore these values to their proper position in our national life."

- (b) "... the democratic processes have not promoted self-governance. People of India, under the dispensation, have no effective control over their social, political and economic destiny or emancipation. The system of administration designed and practiced by the political executive with the active support of the permanent civil services has reduced and limited the sovereignty of the people to a mere right to exercise their franchise at the elections....democratic processes are, it is true, trained by the impurity of the electoral processes and pervasive corruption in the working of the democratic institutions. They detract heavily from, and threaten survival of democracy."
- (c) "The people of India are more divided amongst themselves than at the time of the country's independence; the noble purposes of public life have degenerated than ever before into opportunistic and self-seeking politics of competitive personal gain."
- (d) "Crisis of leadership, corruption, insensitivity and inefficiency of administration have resulted in extra-legal systems and parallel economies and even parallel governments. Bureaucratic pettifoggeries which cause frustration among the people in their daily lives as a more serious fallout of pushing more and more people into extralegal system."

It is unfortunate that ideology has given way to opportunism since long, generating a sense of insecurity, gloom and frustration all over the country. We have forgotten that it is law and morality that sustain the world.

In the concluding session of the Constituent. Assembly, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar expressed his apprehensions about the future of India. He said: "My mind is so full of the future of our country that I feel I ought to take this occasion to give expression to some of my reflections thereon. On 26th January 1950, India will be an independent country. What would happen to her independence? Will she maintain her independence or will she lose it again? What perturbs me greatly is the fact that not only India has once before lost her independence, but she lost it by the infidelity and treachery of some of her own people... Will Indians place the country above their creed or will they place creed above country?But this much is certain that if the parties place creed above country, our independence will be put in jeopardy a second time and probably be lost for ever". Dr. Rajendra Prasad in his concluding address observed: "If the people who are elected are capable and men of character and integrity, they would be able to make the best even of a defective Constitution. If they are lacking in these, the Constitution cannot help the country. We have communal differences, caste differences, language differences, provincial differences and so forth. It requires men of strong character, men of

vision, men who will not sacrifice the interests of the country at large for the sake of smaller groups and areas and who will rise over the prejudices which are born of these differences. We can only hope that the country will throw up such men in abundance.” This has remained only as a pious hope.

The N.N Vohra Committee’s Report reveals the unholy and powerful nexus between the bureaucracy, politicians and organized criminals. Mass illiteracy, stark poverty and wide spread unemployment are staring at us. Educational standards have fallen at all levels. The professions once regarded as noble, have drifted away from their ethical moorings and no longer command the respect of the people. Lawyers, doctors and teachers resort to strikes unmindful of public interest. The result is the sovereignty in the democracy is reduced and limited to a mere right to exercise the franchise at the elections. A mechanical process of elections is not the spirit of democracy. Electing the right and deserving representatives is the real spirit. The farsighted statesmen C. Rajagopalachari had anticipated the present state of affairs. He wrote in his prison diary on July 24, 1925 “Elections and their corruptions injustice and the power and tyranny of wealth and inefficiency will make a hell of life as soon as freedom is given to us. Hope lies only in universal education by which right conduct, fear of God and love will be developed among the citizens from childhood.”

The forethought of Rajaji and concerns expressed by Dr. Ambedkar have come to be true. Are we not being shaken by the fear that the freedom we have attained after a great struggle and sacrifice is slowly slipping from our grasp? Should we remain as mute spectators? Political activities have lost their therapeutic value and have only cosmetic value. The need of the hour is for a movement to stir the people to unite and weed out communalism, terrorism and corruption, and to put an end to the activities of anti-social men and anti-national organizations. A rebirth of our republic is necessitated! That has to be achieved by launching another freedom struggle! Not by violence! But by becoming duty minded! By rededicating ourselves single mindedly to uphold moral values! By being responsible citizens. By being honest. By striking a sound and healthy balance between need and want and by keeping away the greed. We should not forget that greed and selfishness will surely take us to a point of no return and to the resultant frustration. The spirits of tolerance, secularism, magnanimity and sacrifice have to be revived again? Otherwise there is nothing we can give to our children - to the future.

GRATEFUL THANKS TO Prof. B. SARVESWARA RAO

Centre for Policy Studies offers its grateful thanks to the outgoing Chairman of Gayatri Vidya Parishad, Prof. B. Sarveswara Rao for his valuable support and guidance. The towering scholar and academic seer continues to be a source of inspiration to CPS.

Future is the continuation of the past, but should be properly remedied and rectified, at present, by us. This is the concern being voiced by right thinking people.

It is noteworthy what Sri N.A. Palkhivala said in his lecture on the topic “The State of the Nation and the Four Costly Failures” I quote: - “The four costly failures of the government and the people, which are the direct causes of the present sorry spectacle, are:

1. Failure to maintain law and order. We have too much government and too little administration; too many public servants and too little public service; too many controls and too little welfare; too many laws and too little justice.
2. Failure to bring the unbounded economic potential of the country to fruition.
3. Failure to make human investment - investment in education, family planning, nutrition and public health, in contradistinction to physical investment in factories and plants. Gross national happiness should have been given priority over gross national product.
4. Failure to provide moral leadership. We do not live by bread alone, and we are greater than we know.

The blame must be shared by the people along with the government; because it is the public who elect politicians to power, and because private initiative of the citizenry could have gone a long way towards counteracting the deficiencies of the government”.

Good leaders serve the nation and the bad make the nation serve them.

Providing moral leadership can awaken the people and put them on the right path. It is not late. One redeeming feature is that the people have not lost awareness completely. They understand what is what, who is corrupt and who is not. All that they are required to do is to eliminate immoral people from power, of course, by democratic process.

The chaos which has caused fissures and cracks damaging the democracy is created only by the educated and the intellectuals, who having enjoyed the benefits given by the society have forgotten their duty and moral obligation to serve the society and the country at large. India still continues to be the poorest. But rich are becoming richer, leaving the poor as they are, forgetting that the have nots contributed to what the haves have. There is a moral obligation on the part of the educated and the richer class and the leaders to alleviate the miseries of the have-nots. Let us not forget that the poorer

WELCOME TO PROF. B. SWAMY

CPS offers its felicitations to the well known educational administrator Prof. B. Swamy and best wishes for his success as the new Chairman of Gayatri Vidya Parishad.

sections who constitute 80% of the population are the fifth pillar of democracy who can change the governments. A wide gap between the have nots and the haves poses a dangerous threat to the democracy. It is not too late. We would do well to remember that Mother earth provides for man's needs but cannot satiate his greed. Sun is rising, oxygen is there, mother earth gives the food to survive. One can earn honestly and live honestly, making life's voyage meaningful. Let us move in that direction. Instead of merely cursing the darkness around, it is always better to light a lamp, however small, to shed light, from which many lamps can be lit (which this Centre is piously doing). Put aside personal interests wherever they are in conflict with national interests, and strive to build up the nation. Let the unholy anesthetic effect and insensitiveness, created by the unquenchable thirst to amass wealth by illegal and unlawful means wear away. Let the moral consciousness awaken and remind that the national interest is supreme. It is useful to remember what Gandhiji preached to be seven sins,

1. Politics without principles
2. Commerce without morality
3. Wealth without work
4. Education without character
5. Science without humanity
6. Pleasure without conscience
7. Worship without sacrifice

A time has come to put the mandate into action and the intellectuals have to give a lead. But this cannot be done overnight. We have to adjust to certain things, which we cannot change. There is a good caution.

“Oh Lord! Give me the serenity to adjust to the things which I cannot change.

Oh Lord! Give me the courage to change the things which I can.

But Oh Lord! Give me also the wisdom to know the difference”

(Address delivered at the Centre for Policy Studies on 13.8.2004)

TOWARDS A HEALTHY SOUNDSCAPE

Dr. T.V. Sairam

Chief Commissioner of Customs & Central Excise, Visakhapatnam

Science acknowledges that sound propagates by virtue of the space.

Sound waves are the pressure waves of compression and rarefaction, moving at a speed of 738 miles per hour. A soundwave is a pure motion, involving changes in the pressure of air around, as it is born out of the creation of space, due to sudden separation between particles or objects. When a pressure change occurs at a particular point, it is handed over to the immediately adjacent point and so on, in the form of longitudinal compression wave.

While physicists view sound as a mechanical disturbance from a state of equilibrium that propagates through an elastic medium, the traditional view of sound is rather different.

In ancient times, sound and vibrations formed a scientific discipline. Babylon, Egypt, India and Persia were the study centres. Secular and sacred practices, including simple communications, rituals, healings etc involved the application of sounds.

The Bonpos of the Himalayas had a rich history of elaborate sound practices. They recited mantras through out their practices. As alchemists, they had elaborate prescription for making metallic bowls, emanating ripples of harmonics. Shamanic practices around the world used a simple formula:

Vibration+Visualization=Manifestation

Several modern day ailments such as stress and stress-related disorders can be directly linked to our minds.

It is quite well-known that our minds get affected by the power of music and noise around us.

As music tends to help us, by harmonizing and calming our minds with healthy patterns of rhythms and resonance, noise with its sudden and irregular sounds can prove harmful to us. It can work as slow poison, leading to psycho-physiological deficiencies in the long run, causing not only deafness (if the decibels are too high) but also affecting our metabolism and mind.

Wolfgang Rauh of the Austrian Traffic Club has noticed that the birds in noisy urban environment such as robins, sparrows, wrens and blackbirds are fast losing their singing and chirping talents, thanks to the automobile and construction site noise-levels. This has seriously affected their breeding pattern, as at mating time, the male had to sing certain notes to attract the female!

The Ear-Brain System

The ear-brain system is one of the many astonishing features we find in our body.

The range of sensitivity to loudness and sound frequencies is so wide that pressure variations of as little as a few parts per 1 00 000 000 can be perceived by the brain. Variations upto 1 part per 1000 can cause pain and even loss of hearing!

Indian system of music-particularly the raga system-acknowledges such subtleties in human hearing. It makes use of oscillations of notes (gamakas of the carnatic system of music) to convey even the subtler nuances involved in expressing one's emotions.

Pathogenic Sounds

Sounds can be categorized into two classes: those for which the pressure changes have a random, irregular or

unexpected characteristics, and those for which pressure changes are regular, following a pleasant or aesthetic pattern.

It is the complex sound which includes unrelated partials. Certain sounds (eg., sudden, screeching noise of the doors, metallic noises of high frequency tones, aerodrome noises, irregularly leaking taps etc) can cause tension and headache. They are capable of creating emotional as well as physiological disorders in the human system, causing restlessness, insomnia, stress, hypertension and a host of diseases related to them.

Such noises have also been found to be dangerous for the growing embryos, as their growth pattern gets affected seriously.

Noise Management

It is therefore necessary that the noise, which is regarded as a completely random collection of pulses, is managed efficiently not only for the benefit of individuals but for the human society as a whole.

Like land reclamation, wasteland management and landscaping the garden to improve and enrich the physical environment of people, it is essential that noise management also forms part and parcel of human ecology.

There is a dire need to filter the high-frequency and irregular noises in the urban areas, and getting them replaced with infrasonic sounds as we find in nature, viz., sea-coast, forests water bodies and what not that soothe our hearing sensation and mind. Soft and steady, low-decibel music, appropriate to the spots where humans congregate, such as work-place, leisure centres, old age homes, prisons, children activity centres can be tailor-made by a team of psychologists and music therapists and introduced, intermittent with a dose of silence.

For, soundscape refers to a great escape from the pathogenic sounds, caused by urbanization and industrialization.

SOME THOUGHTS ON EDUCATION

Sri KVV Subrahmanyam, IPS (Retd)
Former Home Secretary Govt. of AP

Modern education lays considerable emphasis on Science and Technology. This is right from primary level. The wonders of the computer world are unraveled before the child crosses

FELICITATIONS TO Prof. K.C. REDDY

Prof. K.C. Reddy, Director, SAARC Centre, Andhra University and Member, Governing Body of Centre for Policy Studies, has been elevated as Chairman of the Andhra Pradesh State Council of Higher Education. CPS offers its felicitations to Prof. Reddy and wishes him every success as the Chairman of APSCHE.

its first decade of existence. This is as it should be or else we will become a benighted race, left behind in all areas of progress. Even in forties when Enrico Fermi achieved nuclear fission, we used to read Dalton's atomic theory defining atom as the smallest indivisible particle, when atom had been split. Knowledge has not only expanded but exploded, far beyond the predictions of futurologists like H.G. Wells and Jules Verne. Today's school going children are studying in their syllabus things which were taught in collegiate classes. Absorption of information, formulation of hypothesis, coordinated thinking, intense competitiveness, deep parental concerns all these take a heavy toll of the growing child. Even the heavily mind oriented, video games, leisure time hobbies, reading Jeffrey Archer and the likes have a cerebrotonic overtone.

This leads us to the question, does the modern youngster really relax? Even the outdoor games like shuttle badminton are programmes with high degree of precision. The magnificent obsession is to recall the goal indicated in a popular quiz programme in the tele screen 'Quicker, Faster, Higher', Something like that. Even adolescent characteristics like hormonal changes and their impact on relationships are governed by a high degree of neurosis. The lines of Mathew Arnold in rugby chapel - 'we gather, chatter, love and hate and most men eddy about' reminds one of the crisis of the age. Thick glasses are worn by children in their early teens. The concern voiced by Alvin Toffler in the inaugural chapter of his 'Future Shock' about conditions like progeria- a condition of premature aging, appears very real. The stresses and strains of modern day schooling were foreseen by the eminent novelist and writer R.K. Narayan who cautioned against children carrying loads of books, nearly two decades ago. Rabindranath Tagore when he was queried on his concept of schooling in Shantiniketan said. 'I do not mind my students watching the squirrels running up the trees in the open air schools in Viswa Bharati.' Thoreau's *Walden and Rousseau's 'Noble Savage'* present the picture of living in tune with nature. Wordsworth wrote 'Books-it is a dull and endless strife. One impulse from a vernal wood will teach you more of man, of moral evil and good than all the sages can'; the present day learning driven by high tech has created a hiatus between man and his moorings.

The other disquieting feature is the total divorce from real life situation in the Indian scenario, especially the rural picture. Dr. Radhakrishnan said 'an education that brings up a young man in entire indifference to the poverty and misery surrounding him, to the dumb pangs of torture millions and lives submerged in darkness and to the general stringency of life, is essentially a failure', Viewed from this angle, the computer geeks and micro chip professionals, the professionals, the products of the ivy league are devoid of education of the realities the rural hinterland. It is quite true a few of them salvage their conscience by handsome donations

to their native soil and for charitable causes. But this cannot be a substitute for the real thing - the feel of the societal malaise bureaucracy, political persons, judiciary and the academicians have to share the blame for this plight. The neglect of study of humanities is indicative of the undesirable change in value systems. An evenly balanced liberal education with appropriate modification of the syllabi is a sine qua non, for a healthy social structure. A society bereft of moral values is moribund. Goldsmith said 'where wealth accumulates, men decay'. This decadence has to be arrested betimes. The various mega level scams and massive corruption in high places are symptomatic of this decadence. It is time well-meaning citizens committed to the eternal verities and core virtues come together to sound caution and provide sane counsels on variegated issues that confront the nation.

Value based education should induct into the younger generation, an urge in pursuit of excellence. This excellence may be a compartmental excellence, to start with. But with the passage of time, accrual of experience and accumulation of perceptive skills, should mature and blossom into all round excellence. This type of excellence should not be confined to individual advancement alone. It should transmit, permeate and radiate around those with whom one moves, like a flower whose fragrance pervades around it. We always used to ask from which school they came and whenever it was told that he or she came from a particular school, the exclamation used to be 'Oh, That is a wonderful school. If you had come out of it, you should be quite good': a plus point is added to the evaluation. Mathew Arnold defining culture made, its motive curiosity. He went on to expatiate what is curiosity and it is not. 'A liberal and intelligent eagerness after the things of the mind - not a frivolous and unedifying activity': 'culture' he said 'is perfection, general perfection, harmonious perfection.' One cannot be cultured if he has ignorant persons around him. One cannot be cultured if his development is unidirectional 'not a having and a resting, But a growing and a becoming'! culture is not mere learning it is discrimination and understanding of life in this Birovac of life, 'the abstract rationalism of the revolutionary would make a clean sweep of the past: the equally abstract historicism of the reactionary would make an equally clean sweep of the present. Our inward unity is lost out of the past, by our actions in the present. We have to build the future' said Dr. Radhakrishnan. Old people have a tendency to extol age old values; younger generation similarly scoff at old fashioned virtues. A harmonious blending of solid, sustainable and enduring values is urgently needed for debate and meaningful interaction. Either we find oldies gathering and muttering their cynical asperities of the lack of warmth or compassion of the younger generation or teenagers or younger people indulge in persiflage, idle gossip, vain, transient indulgences. Ultimately what can and should be attempted is something on the lines of what Bernard Shaw

said in these words of eternal validity. 'this is the true joy of life, the being bred for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one, the being thoroughly worn out before you are thrown into the scrapheap, in stead of being a feverish, selfish, little clod of ailments and grievances, ever complaining that the world will not make you happy'.

WHITHER HIGHER EDUCATION ?

Shri T. Hanumantha Rao

(Retd. Lecturer, AMAL College, Anakapalli)

While speaking at his felicitation function on A.U. Campus on 16, August 2004 and later in an exclusive interview with 'The Hindu', Prof. K.C. Reddy, the newly appointed Chairman of Andhra Pradesh State Council for Higher Education (APSCHE), rightly observed that in the current context of globalisation and stiff competition, quality was a pre-requisite for creating level playing field for those pursuing higher education and stressed the need for changes in curriculum and introduction of job-oriented courses.

Higher education has no doubt made impressive advances in this country due to the process of development taking place since the attainment of independence and the quantitative expansion would be obvious if we note that the total student enrolment now has placed India just below the U.S. But a major casualty of development in the field of education has been the quality. At best, our educational institutions at various levels have so far succeeded in producing moral dwarfs, spiritual bankrupts and social recalcitrants if not feeble intellects. But the position is not altogether irretrievable, if only we have a mind to mend it.

At any rate, there is a need for overhaul of higher education in Andhra Pradesh. Unfortunately 88 percent of the students are left to the care of affiliated college for their higher education but there are no proper facilities like good laboratories, teaching equipment or libraries, leave alone qualified faculty members and this state of affairs has resulted in the watering down of quality. It is equally disheartening to note that a sizable portion of the student population go to colleges just as a pastime and they are interested only in acquiring the label of a degree after spending a stipulated period.

So, an admission policy directed to siphoning off the unsuitable from entering the college and absorbing them in job-oriented vocational courses, will not only relieve the pressure of numbers but will also avoid considerable wastage in the economy. The Council would do well to frame rigid rules of admission and instruct the universities to think twice before granting recognition or affiliation to the ill-equipped colleges, most of which have ventured to commercialise education.

Even the recruitment policy leaves much to be desired. Many college management have made it the practice to appoint some of their teaching staff on a temporary basis and terminate their service at the commencement of the summer vacation. The teachers could not discharge their duties with devotion due to the economic insecurity and this is one of the contributory causes for the deterioration in quality. Further, gross irregularities in faculty selections and tailored advertisements to faculty positions have seriously affected the quality of academicians.

Under the present dispensation, the fate of part-time and contract lecturers in junior and degree colleges is hanging in the balance for want of regularization and they are being treated as nothing short of cinderellas for whom any treatment is good enough. Even the fool-proof system of recruiting teachers to higher educational institutions through SLET has been made a mockery. The Council would do well to think over the matter in all seriousness and take up corrective measures at the earliest lest it should assume alarming dimensions and result in further deterioration in quality.

Another axe on the quality is the fancy for regional language as the medium of instruction. Already the standards of our undergraduate and postgraduate education is below the international standards and the regional medium muddle has further deteriorated it. The future is still bleak for the Telugu medium graduates of AP universities. In this age of Information Technology, it is our duty to provide the younger generation the facility and freedom to learn English to face a frighteningly competitive world. It is heartening to note that Sri Y.S.R. Reddy, Chief Minister of AP while speaking at the Teacher's Day function on September 5, 2004 at Hyderabad rightly stressed the necessity of learning English. The APSICHE would do well to give a serious thought to this aspect.

Also, to bring about an improvement in the quality, our curricula should be modified to suit the ability of the individual instead of aiming at a dead uniformity. It is advisable to work out a two-tier curriculum- a general one for all students and special courses for the bright ones. This task is no doubt difficult but a beginning has to be made in right earnest.

Then, there is the question of autonomy of the universities and this has been the cause of concern on the part of educationists and rightly too. The academic atmosphere is often vitiated by constant conflict of teachers with the university authorities and the government over issued and non-issues. The considerations and lobbies that work for appointments of vice-chancellors and their dismissal are disgraceful and antithetical to the very concept of university autonomy. Politics is not a new feature of university life in India but it was never the politics of gutters as it is today. Steps should be taken to protect the autonomy and it is gratifying to note that Prof. Reddy intends to utilize the wisdom

of vice-chancellors and induct them as members of the Council for policy evolution etc.

It has often been suggested by many that the problem of funding would melt away with the participation of private sector. The Ambani-Birla report combined with the concept of self-financing recommended by the Punnaiah Committee (1993) was a flash point in this regard. But unfortunately, several self-financing institutions that were started in the wake of the report did not represent the mobilisation of private resources for producing quality education but the use of education as an area of profitable investment. The authorities would do well to develop necessary control and monitoring mechanism to ensure quality education at reasonable cost from the private sector if invited.

Finally, it is to be clearly understood that educational institutions form the tap root of national life and if they deteriorate, the nation is bound to perish. So, quality approach is the need of the hour.

RADHAKRISHNAN **'teacher to and for humanity'**

By A. Prasanna Kumar

"We cannot always control events, but we can always control our attitude towards events," said India's President Radhakrishnan when his American counterpart John F. Kennedy expressed disappointment at the rain that spoilt the warm reception the latter arranged to receive India's Head of State in 1963. It was not the first time for John Kennedy to make note of such words of wisdom. Ten years earlier as Senator, Kennedy had made a note of a sentence from India's Vice President Radhakrishnan who in a memorable speech before the U.S. Congress said: "No society is static: no law is unchanging; and no constitution is permanent. Given time and patience, radical changes may happen both in human nature and in systems of society which reflect human nature." At the other end of the ideological spectrum, Soviet Union's Chief and the coldest of cold warriors Joseph Stalin was moved to tears when Indian Ambassador Radhakrishnan patted him on the cheek and advised him to take care of his health. "He is the only man" the stone-hearted dictator confessed, "who treats me not as a monster but as a human being."

Radhakrishnan's arresting personality and 'evocative oratory' cast a spell not just on rulers and princes but also on the most enlightened minds of the twentieth century. Even his silence made an impact as C.E.M. Joad, bowled over by Radhakrishnan's eloquence, records how at a dinner hosted by H.G.Wells and attended by celebrities like J.W.N.Sullivan, "the silence of a completely integrated personality, deliberately absorbing an atmosphere" evoked the appreciation of all those present. The builder of "the

rainbow bridge” between the age-old wisdom of India and the new knowledge of the West as Radhakrishnan was hailed became almost a ‘cult figure’ in Europe and America. His philosophy stemmed from a fusion of Indian and Western thought and his outlook presented a harmonious blend of tradition and modernity. Muirhead aptly called him a philosophical bilingualist. Sir Francis Younghusband who listened to Radhakrishnan’s lectures in London, wrote that the lectures delivered in perfect English on the profoundest problems enchanted all those who heard them. Sir Anthony Eden who addressed the Indian Parliament was so greatly impressed by Radhakrishnan’s “beautifully phrased introduction” that he admitted, “Few Englishmen could match his eloquence. I certainly could not and felt rather like a little boy stumbling across a ploughed field after a leveret has shown its swift, light paces.”

Philosophy chose Radhakrishnan in 1904 to be its student when the sixteen year old passed the intermediate examination in first class. That his cousin passed on his textbooks in psychology, logic and ethics was an accident that prompted the poor youngster to choose BA course in philosophy. If he had money Radhakrishnan might have chosen some other course. Poverty made his early life hard. But it could not corrode his spirit or dampen his zest for intellectual pursuits. Poverty had once saved him from the jaws of death when a highway robber searched in vain for gold ornaments on the young boy before pushing him into a well. Finding only peanuts in the poor boy’s pocket the robber changed his mind and let him go. The family was so poor that there was no money to buy banana leaves on which food was served and the members of the family ate off the floor after cleaning it. Radhakrishnan borrowed money and even auctioned his university medals to maintain the family. The “unseen hand” as Radhakrishnan chose to describe God’s will always guided his life. Equally interesting it was that later for want of a post he was first appointed in a temporary vacancy as Malayalam Master in the Madras Presidency College. Years of hardship preceded the young lecturer’s meteoric rise.

The young scholar’s output was prolific and of a high quality. His article on the Gita secured for him the appreciation of Bal Gangadhar Tilak and writings on Tagore ‘the grateful admiration’ of India’s first Noble Laureate. Tagore’s work ‘a mystical torrent’ that paved the way towards transcendence synthesized “the ideals of Indian philosophy, religion and art.” Radhakrishnan was convinced that Tagore was God’s gift to India. Another great influence on Radhakrishnan was Gandhi. The volume that Radhakrishnan brought out on Mahatma Gandhi in 1939 is a masterpiece. Radhakrishnan wanted to revise it and present it to the Mahatma on the latter’s 80th birthday on October 2, 1949. But as the editor wrote “Fates

decreed otherwise and it has now become a memorial volume.” When Radhakrishnan went to Gandhiji for permission to dedicate the volume to him, the Mahatma said: “Who am I? What is my service? You are my Krishna, I am your Arjuna.”

Professorship at Mysore and Calcutta and lectures at Oxford proclaimed his credentials as a philosopher and teacher of rare eminence. The farewell he received at Mysore in 1921 was one of the most memorable events in his life. Detaching the horses from the carriage in which he was to travel to the railway station, the students pulled it themselves to the destination. The platform was flooded with flowers and people and the compartment with roses as Mysore gave a tearful send-off to the young Professor of 32 summers. Calcutta honoured him no less and as King George V Professor, Radhakrishnan earned the admiration of such stalwarts like Asutosh Mukherjee and Brajendranath Seal.

Radhakrishnan delivered the first convocation address of Andhra University in 1927 and received an honorary degree at its convocation in the year that followed. Even now people recall with pride and nostalgia the outstanding work he did at Waltair shaping the infant Andhra University into a famous center of learning. Radhakrishnan’s son S.Gopal, the eminent historian who passed away recently at Chennai, records in his biography of his father that he brought to the Andhra University campus eminent teachers and researchers from far and near. Sir C.V.Raman was co-opted as a member of the syndicate and made honorary professor of physics, Sir M.Visveswarayya was put incharge of technology. S.C.Chawla was brought from Lahore for mathematics and T.R.Seshadri for chemistry beside Humayun Kabir, Hiren Mukherjee and VKRV Rao for humanities. Interestingly Radhakrishnan invited C.K.Nayudu, the Tendulkar of those times, to coach cricketers at Waltair and the legendary Nayudu accepted the offer though the plan did not materialise as Radhakrishnan left Waltair in 1935. The greatest tribute to Radhakrishnan as Vice Chancellor came from Sir C.V.Raman himself: “He waved a hand and a University has sprung up; in his frail body is enshrined a great spirit - a great spirit which we have learned to revere and admire, even to worship.” What an intellectual feast it was when in 1934 Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore lectured at the University on Man (Sir Alladi Krishnaswamy endowment lecture) with Radhakrishnan in the presidential chair! The Andhra University’s pride in celebrating Teacher’s Day does not need any justification. Recalling the glory of those halcyon days is, of course, a matter of pride to the city of Visakhapatnam also.

(Courtesy : The Hindu, Visakhapatnam, Sept.2003)

ARISTOTLE (384-322BC) - I

Sri Challa Sivasankaram

Aristotle was a born philosopher and scientist. His intellectual pursuits were numerous, so to speak. He was versatile, a personality of rich quality and enduring erudition. No ism. no philosophy nay, no school of thought of the west has been out of the influence of Aristotle since the day he emerged as a scintillating author directly linked with Plato and came to be known as his favourite disciple.

Aristotle was born in 384 BC at Stagira in Thrace a country in western Greece. His father had inherited the position of the family physician to the king of Macedonia. When Aristotle came to the Academy of Plato in Athens he was a youth of seventeen years. He was forty years younger than Plato. He was an unusual student of the Academy. Plato was the middle of the three gigantic souls-Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Aristotle lived with Plato without departing the Academy until the savant-saint and philosopher (Plato) breathed his last in his ripe eightieth year. Plato used to lavish praise on Aristotle for his brilliant brains and teaching ability. No wonder, Plato called Aristotle the brains of the school and the best "Reader" or "Lecturer". Plato remained devoted to Socrates till the father of quiz fell victim of Hemlock. Likewise Aristotle remained spotlessly dedicated to Plato, the world's original philosopher. Socrates practised asceticism. Plato lived a life of utter calm, perfect serenity, Spartan purity, dignity and noblesse. Restraint and discipline of a rarest nature marked his life. Plato laughed seldom aloud. Compared to his and his Master, Socrates, Aristotle was noticeably different in appearance and attitude. He was well-dressed, aesthetic and fastidious and highly advanced and civilized and quite in keeping with the behaviour trends of the times while consciously keeping his individual identity as a man born to bequeath an unsurpassed legacy to humanity. Socrates strove for the rule of Truth and dialectics and extinction of tyranny, root and branch. In the pursuit of the fruition of the said ideals he valiantly sacrificed his life at the altar of the highest. Truth so that his martyrdom might have borne the fruit of the triumph of the ends for which he strove all his life till he drank Hemlock. Plato sought to give the Athenian city-states a novel message aimed at civilizing or humanizing the near barbaric instinct and savage culture of state. He strove for a transition of power from the individual to the collective and from tyranny to philosopher-statesman-rule.

Athens passed through a sad millennium of violent upheavals crushing the vital element of democratic institution sought to be laid firmly by Plato and his Guru. Change if there were any was short-living and eluding. Athens remained as it had been.

Aristotle unlike his predecessors did not directly meddle with the norms of the governments and the tenor of their governing. God meant him for something much higher, more ennobling, most lasting and education, to educate and enervate the generations to come to imprint on mankind the tenets that uproot the barbarian and reinstate the order that God best likes. He was the most influential scientist among the Greeks. He was primarily an empirical philosopher who assembled Truths and organized them in the whole field of science. World of science recognized him and assigned to him the honour of being called the founder of modern science. Jawaharlal Nehru in his book "Glimpses of world History", a compilation of classic letters to his daughter Indira Priyadarsini commented that Aristotle was essentially a scientist not a philosopher. Aristotle founded logic, zoology and botany. He wrote on physics and poetics, psychology and cosmology, astronomy, geography, ethics and politics. It is evident that no subject under the sky was left untouched and undelved by Aristotle. Plato foresaw this mighty unprecedented aspect of the prince of scientists that Aristotle. was. The Greek mind as represented by Aristotle was responsible for endowing the western culture with the spirit of science. Bertrand Russel the famous mathematician of 20th century was uncharitable in his estimation of works of Aristotle. Humanism of Greece got a wonderful votary in Aristotle who was regarded as the unchallenged representative of it. In his Nichomachean Ethics, Aristotle says along with Svetasvatara Upanishad that man's chief end is to put off mortality as far as possible. He argues that where there is a better there must be a best. Further he says, Man's highest nature is identical with God's. Cultivate it and emulate the immortal. We must not, says Aristotle, obey those who counsel us, because we are mortal and human to think human and mortal thoughts; we must practise immortality, and omit no effort to live in accordance with the best that is within us. Inspired, probably by this life-sustaining pronouncement of Aristotle the immortalist, Pandit Nehru in his Discovery of India writes in the same vein and fervour: "Though we may be weak and erring mortals, living a brief and uncertain span of life, yet there is something of stuff of the immortal gods in us." Nehru's words precede the quotation of the pronouncement of the immortal philosopher. Nehru was an admirer of Aristotle like Alexander the Great of Macedonia. Aristotle was the tutor of the great Alexander who was a benevolent despot. Aristotle's life pattern speaks profusely that he was not a believer in self-effacement and religious passivity. Alexander's esteem for Aristotle lasted till the inveterate invader's premature death.

Aristotle gave us the key to life of hope, life of beauty and goodness, life of knowledge, self-confidence and scientific temper and philosophical abandonment. Aristotle moved by

his works ageless and timeless, and inspired beyond a limit many a great men over the ages. His greatness reflected on Jawaharlal Nehru of twentieth century who undoubtedly was one of the world's outstanding by great men. Nehru was born 2211 years after Aristotle's exit to the luminous domain of Sun.

Philosophy is science of sciences as the age-old saying reverberates. Aristotle developed the phytosophy that regards the fundamental truths of religion as eternal and unpeirshable like the Indian seer's mind as enunciated in the Upanishad. Aristotle seems convinced that all things are made of water. Here he is in harmonious accord with the Hindu appraisal of water as life itself. Once again Nehru had to say that Aristotle exercised a powerful influence on the Arab mind; and since then, and upto the present day (April 13th, 1944) the Greek philosophy-much of the Aristotelian philosophy and science have become, more Arabic commentaries than in original versions, standard subjects for study in Islamic Schools.

Aristotle's philosophy and science spread far and wide penetrating deeper and still deeper into science, philosophy, medicine and Knowledge of the spirit to the Awakened world.

Averroes (1126-1198) was one of the exemplary masterminds of Islam wrote erudite critiques (commenataries) on Aristotle and the doctrine of the amazing inimitability of the human soul. The enlightened minds of the thirteenth century irrespective of geographical boundaries were charmed by the Greek philosophy and Islamic retreats where Aristotle was an object of special study and they endeavoured to imbue Aristotle in the medieval synthesis.

For Aristotle man and the sun conceive man. Aristotle places the idea of supreme contemplation above metaphysical insight. For Aristotle the soul of the man is in a way all-comprehensive. There is nothing beyond and apart from it. The necessity of all sciences is there says Aristotle but no

science is more supreme than philosophy. Like Indian Vedantin's mind that recognized purusha as immanent in the universe, Aristotle emphatically asserts that matter and idea are integral and inseparable as much as fragrance and the flower.

Aristotle saw the object as imbued with its form, endowed with the capability to develop inwardly and exclusively. We have to concede the first place to Aristotle as the scientist who detected the unity between the general and each individual particle in the material world, the absence of this specific unity even the most insignificant form is deprived of the purport of its existence. Aristotle was a lively philosopher who always sought meaning of reality and ably formulated the truths he comprehended. In his philosophical theory as well as in his unique life he exhibited demonstratively the high principles of living that shall alone make sense of life and living.

In Aristotle there was conspicuous consistency and loyalty. Although he himself was a genius able to devise his own theories, he kept himself as an unshaken pillar steadfastly adhering to the Academy until the embodiment of universal wisdom and paragon of virtue and illustrious son of Appollo, Plato, departed from the sensory world to the highest state of Freedom. Aristotle who was the direct disciple of Plato stepped into the shoes of the great master, would stroll the avenues under the cool, serene shady trees surrounding the Academy and discourse with his students. Thus the Aristotelian school of philosophy came to be known as peripatetic.

(to be continued)

NINTH ANNIVERSARY DAY

Centre for Policy Studies, launched on Gandhi Jayanti day in 1995, celebrates today its ninth anniversary. CPS offers its grateful thanks to all its patrons, members and well-wishers.

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