

PROUT

The New Socio-Economic And Political Theory



**Shrii Prabhat Ranjan
Sarkar**

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The New Socio-Economic
And Political Theory

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Presentator's Note:

Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar is also known by the name Shrii Shrii Anandamurti the proponent of "**Ánanda Márga**" ideology and the founder of the socio-spiritual organisation "**Ánanda Márga Pracaraka Samgha (AMPS)**". Ánanda Márga philosophy includes both spiritual and social philosophies. The social part of Ananda Marga philosophy is known as **Progressive Utilization Theory (PROUT)** which includes His ideas regarding economics, politics, education, culture, arts, literature, music, dance, drama, language, script etc. He not only played the role of a spiritual guru but also showed the way for all-round emancipation of the mankind.

According to Him spiritual elevation of the mankind in a large scale is impossible unless common people are liberated from economic, political and psychic bondages. In order to promote true spirituality in a massive way it is mandatory to make all people capable of

earning minimum necessities of life in an honest and easy way. All His ideas regarding social matters are compiled in a series of books called "Prout in a Nutshell". There are 21 parts in this series of books which contain 193 articles. This book "PROUT The New Socio-Economic and Political Theory" is a compilation of some selected articles taken from different parts of "Prout In a Nutshell".

Shrii Sarkar, because of giving PROUT, had to undergo lots of sufferings. His contemporary (1921 to 1990) prevailing economic systems were capitalism and communism. PROUT stands against both the systems. Consequently governments of all the countries of the world particularly USSR, USA and India were vehemently against PROUT and its proponent Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar. In nineteen seventies He was implicated with false murder case by CBI. He was kept in jail for seven years while He was under trial. In 1975 nationwide emergency

was declared by the then prime minister of India Mrs. Indira Gandhi. During that emergency period many organisations were banned including AMPS. Most of the monks of the mission were imprisoned and others were absconding. All the ashrams, schools, college, hospital, orphanage etc. run by the mission were sealed. There was no one to defend in the court case. In such a condition, on a farce of justice, He was sentenced to life imprisonment. In 1977 the state of emergency was terminated and ban order was revoked; a general election was held. Congress party lost in the election and Janata Dal formed the government. A retrial of the court case started in the Patna High court. Patna High Court acquitted Him of all charges in the year 1978. He was released from jail in the same year.

Inside the jail He was given poison in the name of medicine. Many attempts were made to terminate His life. However by His own

spiritual power He could win over all those attempts.

The Marxist party of West Bengal did much more nasty things. On 5th March 1967 the cadres of the party organized a mass attack on the headquarters of the organization in the district of Purulia, West Bengal and killed 5 persons. Many Marxist cadres including the local BDO, for being involved in the incident, were sentence to long term imprisonment.

On 30th April 1982 the top leaders of CPM party of Calcutta organized a massive attack on Ananda Marga monks and nuns while they were passing over the Bijon Setu (a flyover) on the way to their camp headquarters at Tiljala, Calcutta for attending an educational training camp. In this attack 17 monks and nuns were killed in broad day light in the city of Calcutta. (For details please search in Google for "Bijon Setu massacre")

These are only a few instances out of many attacks on AMPS arranged by capitalist and communist powers. And all these attacks on AMPS were because of PROUT given by Shrii Sarkar.

There are lots of evidences, in the history, of the fact that those who dared to speak against the contemporary systems and gave new ideas for the welfare of mankind had to undergo tortures. Take the instances of crucifixion of Christ, poisoning of Socrates etc. Similar thing happened with Shrii Sarkar too.

Newspapers, Radio, Television and all other types of media are controlled by capitalists. They have spread many wrong rumors against Ananda Marga like Ananda Marga is a terrorist organization; Ananda Margiis are child lifters; Ananda Marga has caused the Arms drop in Purulia etc. Please do not be misled by false propaganda against AMPS & PROUT; judge rationally the ideas and activities of theirs.

Truth can't be suppressed for long time. In spite of all sorts of anti-propaganda Ananda Marga is gaining popularity. Many well educated persons, being motivated by the ideology of Ananda Marga, are becoming monks and nuns for working as lifetime volunteers. These monks and nuns are originating not only from Asian countries but also from Europe, America, Australia and Africa. They are running school, college, hospital, orphanage etc. They practice highest form of Yoga and meditation, and also teach it to others free of cost. Teaching Yoga and meditation should never be a commercial venture. In the past it had been a service to the society and it should always remain that.

Shrii Sarkar did not write any book by His own hands. He used to deliver discourses in front of a gathering of His disciples. Each of those discourses used to be recorded and published in books as separate articles. Date and place of delivering a discourse is

mentioned at the end or beginning of each article.

Texts inside the square brackets [] are notes from the editor or publisher or translator.

Presented by Acarya Satyabodhananda
Avadhuta

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Social Values and Human Cardinal Principles

March 1970

Having progressively crossed the different evolutionary stages since the distant past human beings have at last reached the present stage. The journey has not been solitary: People have advanced together in society. Even in the primitive past, humans lived in clans and tribes, for alone they could not easily procure the means of livelihood. An individual who totally shuns collective life finds existence difficult, for humans are essentially social beings. Whenever one thinks of a human being one automatically thinks of the society in which he or she lives. Human existence is thus two-sided – individual existence and collective existence – and as

such it has two sets of values: social values and human cardinal principles.

The social values of human beings are ascertained on the basis of social responsibilities. As a member of society a person has to discharge certain duties and responsibilities. Those who shoulder great responsibility are naturally accorded due recognition and respect, because the good of all depends upon the proper execution of one's duties.

An analysis of history will show that in the Kśatriya era kings and emperors were honoured most. In their courts everyone bowed before them in spontaneous respect for they had conquered the hearts of the people by virtue of their heroism, valour and chivalry. During the Vipra era the Kśatriyas and other social classes were so overwhelmed by the Vipra's intellectual might – which they had used to invent various things to further human welfare – that they surrendered

before them. The Vipras were regarded as wise because their intellectual research benefited the common people. Out of awe and respect everyone prostrated at the lotus feet of these great people.

The truth is that human beings have always and everywhere paid tribute to social values, but never, not even for a moment, has anyone respected human cardinal principles.

Human Cardinal Principles:

Human cardinal principles are the silver lining between the psycho-spiritual and spiritual strata of human existence. The meeting point of the spiritual and psycho-spiritual strata is called the human cardinal stratum. Human existence is trifarious, a combination of three currents: physical, mental and spiritual. Most people cannot transcend the limits of their physical existence: crude worldly pleasures become the only enjoyment of their lives. They embody all that is beastly in nature, goaded and tormented as they are by carnal

desires. The subtle feelings of life, the subtle expressions and practices are beyond their reach. Their world is limited to their bodies and physical requirements.

Other people are more concerned with their minds. They feel that it is the supremacy of the mind that has differentiated them from animals. Their lives are guided by their desires for mental satisfaction. By virtue of their endeavours they create poetry, art, music, sculpture, etc. They express the finer human feelings of mercy, sympathy, love, friendship and pity. They believe that the mind flows for the sole purpose of attaining the Infinite, and hence they focus their energies on the contemplation of the Transcendental Entity. They are the spiritual aspirants, they alone are worthy of being called human beings. Drawn by the magnetic attraction of the Cosmic Consciousness they speed forward and reach the stage which marks the end of mental existence and the

beginning of spirituality. At that stage one is no longer a human being, one is a veritable god. It is the duty of every person to reach this confluence of the mental and spiritual strata. It is the pinnacle of human progress. The point where humanity ceases to exist as it merges in divine beatitude. The culminating point of animality is the commencement of humanity. The highest peak of human progress is the beginning of divine bliss. Where animality ends, humanity begins, where humanity ends, divinity begins. The meeting point of the highest attainment of humanity and the blossoming of divinity is the base on which the cardinal human principles are established.

A glimpse through human history reveals that nowhere have human values been truly honoured. What is worse, nobody has looked upon humanity with sympathy. Only those were respected who, by serving their self-interests, climbed onto the higher rostrum of

society. It is difficult to step down from the high position of vainglory to rub shoulders with the downtrodden. The neglect of humanity was particularly acute towards the end of each era of the social cycle. The progeny of the noble Kśatriyas, on gaining power, engaged themselves in the pursuit of pleasure and comforts, utterly neglecting their sacred duty to serve their subjects. They never cared to know people's suffering. They were not concerned by the bent old man, decimated by poverty in the Himalayas, being mercilessly beaten by a royal servant for defaulting on his tax payment. Kind-hearted and philanthropic kings did exist, but was there any king who, besides meeting the psycho-physical needs of his people, opened the gateway to realization of the Infinite? For self-aggrandisement and in a bid to conquer the world they invaded countries, one after another. How could they afford to inquire into the tragic plight of the common people?

The Vipra era illustrated the same thing: the scholarly Vipras were hardly accessible to the common people. The innocent masses were busy appeasing the Vipras with oblations, honorariums and floral offerings. Where was the time for them to take of the needy families of the poor neighbourhoods who were perhaps dying of starvation? And what would be the material benefit of such an action? Service to the poor would pay nothing, so let them go to hell, let them die en masse. So nobody had anything to do with the poor. And anyway, the Vipras were busy with worship, prayer and observance of sacraments. All their energies were spent in the appeasement of the gods and goddesses enthroned in the temples, churches or mosques. There was simply no opportunity to inculcate more humane qualities. According to Vipran scriptures, a temple made of bricks and wood was of more value than humanity itself. Suppose an old beggar, numbed with the cold chill of the night, is standing wearily

in front of a temple, his begging bowl empty. The temple is reverberating with ringing bells, and the deity is being worshipped in accordance with the scriptural dictates. While the devotees stand before the deity with hands folded in reverence, the beggar shivers bitterly outside. On completing the ritual, the people leave the temple one by one, followed by the priest. The beggar entreats him to let him sleep in one corner of the temple, but the priest replies emphatically, "I can't afford to pollute the temple for your sake." And the old man has to trudge into the world of uncertainty, and perhaps bury himself in the coffin of the cold. The sanctity of inert wood and bricks is valued more than a man's life.

Notions of vice and virtue, codes of justice and scriptural texts – which are claimed to be the word of God – have been formulated by different religions to further vested interests. Those who oppose the scriptures or the system they propound are subject to severe

punishment. To socialize with a person of a different caste is a great sin and those who commit such sacrilegious acts will be excommunicated. They have to make atonement according to scriptural decree, and sometimes the magnitude of their penance may be the cause of their death. If they plea for a milder dose of punishment, the priests express their helplessness: one cannot defy the scriptures!

Those who are ensnared by the scriptures cannot be expected to know the value of human life. It takes millions of years, lives and stages to get a human body. But nobody knows how many invaluable lives have been nipped in the bud, or how many innocent lives have been slaughtered at the altar of the scriptures.

Vice and virtue are the outcome of mental perversion under the influence of time, space and person. The mental perversion which is vice in one country or in one age passes for

virtue in another country or another age. Thus it is unwise to attach absolute importance to the notion of vice and virtue nurtured by some individuals at a given time. Vice and virtue have their origins either in religious faith or social prejudices, as a of natural or other causes, and they undergo changes in time, space and person. In ancient India grief-stricken wives, mourning the death of their husbands, were dragged pitilessly onto the funeral pyre and burnt to death. Those who did this remained unaffected because according to the their scriptures it was a virtuous act. Today, however it is treated as a vice.

These fabricated religious injunctions have been a repeated cause of exploitation. Placing blind faith in the scriptures people used to derive pleasure from cruel human sacrifice. The scriptures also proclaimed that to live the life of a virgin was a vice. Hence, it was not uncommon for a nine year old girl to be

forced to marry an old man waiting at the jaws of death. After the death of her old spouse, hymns were chanted to make the young bride believe that she was destined to return to her husband after her own death and had no right to turn a new leaf in this life by marrying again. What a tragic existence for a sentimental woman to have to live a life of austerity to ensure unison with a husband in the life hereafter.

Polygamy, on the other hand, was not forbidden for men. A woman who was married to a man having a number of wives suffered a life of misery due to her co-wives. The folk lores or doggerels bear an excellent testimony to this: "Peace will come with my co-wife's death. Oh what joy! I shall kill my co-wife and adorn my arm with bangles." Even today within the same social group the cutting remarks of the mother-in-law and the husband's sisters rob the wife of her zest for life. The story goes that a wife had her rice

rationed to one earthen cup full by her mother-in-law. One day, as luck would have it, that measuring cup broke into countless pieces. Oh, what joy the wife felt. But the mother-in-law cruelly remarked, "The small earthen cup has broken, but the big one is left for us. Your joy is in vain, daughter-in-law, for my hand will now be your measure." Can there be any greater cruelty than this? Even when supplying the minimum requirements meanness was perpetrated with such cruelty.

The inhuman rules and regulations and tortures inside the house filled a woman's life with bitterness. Nobody knows how many have wept away sleepless nights having suffered tortures for which no redress was possible. The dogma of the scriptures crushed their emotional feelings, their hopes and aspirations like a steam roller flattening soft clay. Nobody has paid any heed to their sobs and tearful outbursts. The irrational social

dictates based on vice and virtue have been a perennial source of injustice for human beings. Humanity has always been hated and trampled.

I repeat that no scripture should gain supremacy by slighting or neglecting humanity. Scriptures should be written to further human progress. They should provide rules, but these rules should in no way send humanity to its grave. Their utility lies in promoting freedom from bondage and leading humanity along the path of union with Cosmic Consciousness, the source of everything. Scriptures that throttle society to death or arrest its natural movement, should never be accepted.

Vice and virtue should be defined in the interest of human values not on the whims of certain individuals. People must move towards that stage which is the zenith point of human progress and from which no further advancement is possible. That which blocks

this movement is vice and that which facilitates it is virtue. To exploit an individual, a group or the entire society for one's own interest or the interest of the group is vice. To rob a person of the right to exist is also vice. There should be scope to punish such acts; but punishment is not an end in itself. If punishment kills or prevents one from progressing along life's path, it may also be treated as vice. Punishment should be for rectification. The penal code will be based on human values. Ananda Marga's social treatise states: First use sweet words and inform the offender of their mistake. Then use harsher words to convince them of the social damage caused by their actions. In the third stage, inform them about the possibility of penal measures. And in the fourth stage, if the situation warrants such action, take penal measures against him, but remember, punishment should be inflicted humanely.

Those who commit acts of vice, for whatever reasons should be given scope for rectification. If they fail to realize what they have done, they should be convinced by logical argumentation. If they ignore such reasoning they will be liable for punishment. Only the offenders themselves will be punished – under no circumstances will their relatives be punished too. Penal measures will be withdrawn as soon as the offenders have corrected themselves. An entire life should not have to be wasted over a single act of vice. On no account should anybody be branded forever.

Those who worship a marble deity in the dark corner of a temple and neglect the poor multitudes – who are themselves an embodiment of God – gain nothing in this life nor for the life hereafter. The neglect of a person who is the embodiment of God is tantamount to neglecting God Himself. A truly righteous person realizes that God does not

confine Himself to the temple, but manifests Himself in His creation.

“Why are you lying in the gloom of the temple?”

Raise your eyes. Look! God is not confined to four walls.

He has gone where the farmers are tilling and toiling all year round”.

–Rabindranath Tagore

In the Vipra era, humanity was affronted by the creation of divisions between high and low. People of high-birth would lose their caste if they merely stepped on the shadow of the so-called low-castes. Even worse, if a Vedic Brahman touched a person from a low family he was declared an outcaste. In no other age has humanity suffered such hatred and insult. Rabindranath says, “By standing aloof from your fellow man daily, you have hated the God enthroned in his heart.”

Instead of hating anyone, the Sadvipras will encourage everyone to build good careers. This will be Sadvipra's principle duty. None should feel that they have been doomed for good.

The Present Age and Human Values

At present life is valued on the basis of money.

Yasyástivittam sah narah kuliinah sah
panditah

Sah shrutaban gunagnah sa eva vaktá sa ca
darshaniiyah

Sarve gunah kancanámá trayanti.

That is, these days, a person who possesses wealth is respected and revered whereas a person without money is a person honoured by none. The poor, whoever they may be, have to woo the rich just for the sake of earning their livelihood. Human values have become meaningless, for human beings have become the means for the rich to earn

money. The rich, having purchased the human mind with their money, are busy playing a game of chess with the other members of society. Bereft of everything, people toil round the clock to earn a mere pittance. Today the motto of people is, "I have to send some food particles into the apathetic stomach after somehow taking a dip in the muddy water amidst hyacinths."

Those who are at the helm of society, constantly suspicious of others, forever count their losses and profits. They have no desire to think about the plight of humanity. Rather, to gratify themselves they are ready to chew the human bone, and suck human blood. For the self-centred there is no place for feelings of mercy, sympathy or camaraderie. The railway stations and market places are full of half-clad beggars and lepers desperately stretching out their begging bowls, earning their livelihood in the only way they know. They are fortunate if anyone contemptuously

flings them a copper coin. The old blind beggars sitting all day long on the steps of a bridge automatically lift their bowls whenever anyone walks past. But their hungry pleas fall on deaf ears. On the other side of the social coin, sumptuous dishes are being prepared to entertain the rich dignitaries. These contrasts ridicule the present human society.

Today, those who occupy high posts are also respected. Dignity is attached to post or rank. A station master will take great pains to prepare the railway minister's visit, but will never trouble himself with the inconveniences faced by the ordinary passengers. Luxurious houses are built for high-ranking officers while the poor live in shanty towns, barely protected from the elements. I don't say that large houses should never be built, but that everyone should be provided the minimum requirements. "I admit that both rice and tasty dishes are necessary for people, but I shall not demand a sumptuous dish from the

goddess of food until I see that India has been overflooded with an abundance of rice.”

These days educated people are so proud of their erudition that they detest illiterate people and avoid the company of commoners. Thus they shun village life and live in towns. When the question of returning to the village crops up, they say, “What on earth would we do in a village? There's not a single person to talk to. Only idiots live there.” This explains why almost all attention is focused on the urban areas to the detriment of the villages. While soliciting votes, political leaders pay a short visit to the villages with a mouthful of attractive promises. They promptly inform the ignorant populace about their great achievements in constructing huge dams; though perhaps village cultivation is becoming impossible due to want of irrigation. They give detailed descriptions about their plans to build bridges and bungalows and install television sets, though perhaps in that village

people die for want of medicine, or beg for food in poverty-stricken desperation. And yet the common villagers constitute the backbone of society. Even in the towns not everyone gets equal opportunities. The pavements have become the home for so many people.

Rabindranath says, " There are always a number of uncelebrated people in the human civilization. They are the majority, and they are the medium, but they have no time to become human beings. They are raised on the leftovers of the national wealth. They are poorly dressed and receive little education, yet they serve the rest of society. They give maximum labour but are rewarded with ignominy – they die of starvation or are tortured to death by those they serve. They are deprived of all life's amenities. They are the candlestick of civilization: they stand erect with the candle resting on their head.

Everyone gets light from it, while they suffer the discomfort of the wax trickling down their sides. In this way, the dishonest of humanity

or the neglect of human values has become a social malady.”

Another glaring example of the neglect of human values is the present judicial system. When arrested, people have to stand in the dock for the accused and face a trial based on evidence and the lawyer's eloquence, no matter if they are guilty or not. A criminal who can afford to hire a reputable lawyer may emerge from the legal processes unscathed, whereas an innocent person of meagre financial means who is unable to appoint a good counsel, may end up in prison. If a thief is set free it is a crime, no doubt; but if an innocent person is punished it is a severe dishonour to humanity.

One of the primary causes of crime today is the lack of virtuous people. Those who are honest try to follow moral principles in their private lives, but at times have to abandon moralism under the pressure of poverty. Eventually they may find themselves in the

dock of the accused, charged with committing theft. The law is not concerned with the poverty which forced them to steal, nor, indeed, does the law make provisions for the maintenance of their families if they are given a prison sentence. As a consequence, their children will have to become pick-pockets and petty thieves and their unfortunate wives have to embrace an ignoble and sinful life in the underworld, for survive they must. On being released from jail, the men will meet social discrimination and alienation and, with little other choice, will be forced to select crime as their profession. In this way hundreds of families are being ruined each day. Nobody feels their agony or offers them sympathy; for today the common people are not anybody's concern.

The black marketeers who escape punishment by virtue of money are now occupying the commanding positions in society – the more

one is devious and hypocritical, the more powerful one becomes.

[This last section was also printed separately as “The Neohumanism of Sadvipras” in Neohumanism in a Nutshell Part 1. This is the Neohumanism in a Nutshell Part 1, 2nd edition, version.]

To sadvipras [spiritual revolutionaries] the value of human life surpasses all other values. So states and scriptures, societies and religions, acquire significance only insofar as they develop humanity to the maximum through learning, culture, physical health and economic plenty. It is for the sake of developing humanity that civilization has so many institutions of different kinds, that states take their various forms, that theories proliferate, and that the scriptures abound in ordinances and regulations. What in the world does the state stand for, what is the use of all these regulations, and what are the marvels of civilization for, if people are prevented from

manifesting themselves, if they do not get the opportunity to build good physiques, to invigorate their intelligence with knowledge, or to broaden their hearts with love and compassion? If, instead of tending to lead human beings to the goal of life, the state stands in the way, it cannot command loyalty, because humanity is superior to the state. According to Rabindranath Tagore, "Justice and law at the cost of humanity is like a stone instead of bread. Maybe that stone is rare and valuable, but it cannot remove hunger."

It is customary to give preference to social value over human value. Sadvipras want to strike at the root of this custom. For them, human value takes precedence over social value. Human beings form the society, and hence human value must lay the foundation for the social value. In other words, those who show respect to human value will be entitled to social value. It was mentioned earlier that human value means nothing but

to treat the joys and sorrows, hopes and aspirations of human beings sympathetically, and see them merged in Cosmic Consciousness and established in divine majesty. And if one is to elevate oneself to that sublime height, he or she will have to be supplied with an environment suitable to his or her physical, mental and spiritual existence. It is the birthright of everyone to make headway in their trifarious existence. It is the duty of society to accord recognition to this human right. Society has failed to do its duty, and that is why life is full of sorrow and suffering.

No one can say for certain that no great person might have emerged from among those wayward urchins whom we are wont to slight and hate. Women who have turned to prostitution for the sake of their physical existence might have grown into noble personalities if their agony had been appreciated sympathetically, and if they had

been rehabilitated by society. But since society has nothing to do with human value, a good number of great personalities are withering away in their embryonic stage. The sadvipras will undertake to revive this neglected section of humanity. To them no sinner is contemptible, no one is a rogue. People turn into satans or sinners when, for want of proper guidance, they are goaded by depraving propensities. The human mind goaded by depraving propensities is satan. If their propensities are sublimated, they will no longer be satans; they will be transformed into gods. Every course of action of society ought to be judged with an eye to the dictum "Human beings are divine children."

Thus the purpose of the penal code which will be framed by the sadvipras will be to rectify, and not to punish, a person. They will knock down the prisons and build reform schools, rectification camps. Those who [are] inborn criminals, in other words, those who

perpetrate crimes because of some organic defects, ought to be offered treatment so that they may humanize themselves. And regarding those who commit crimes out of poverty, their poverty must be removed.

The significance of society lies in moving together. If in the course of the journey anybody lags behind, if in the darkness of night a gust of wind blows out anyone's lamp, we should not just go ahead and leave them in the lurch. We should extend a hand to help them up, and rekindle their lamps with the flames of our lamps.

Vartiká laiyá háte calechila ek sáthe

Pathe nibe geche álo pare áche táí

Tomrá ki dayá kare tulibená háth dhare

Ardhadańda tár tare thámibená bhái.

[While marching together with lamps in our hands, someone's lamp has gone out, and he is lying beside the road. Brothers and sisters, will you not stop for a moment to lift him up?]

Stop we must, otherwise the spirit of society is in jeopardy.

A r̥sí [sage] has said: Samamantreña jáyate iti samájah [“Society is the collective movement of a group of individuals who have decided to move together towards a common goal”].

That is, whether people are pápii or tápii [sinners or victims], thieves, criminals, or characterless individuals, they are so only superficially; internally they are filled with the potential for purity. The principal object of the sadvipras is to explore and bring this potentiality into play. They will accord human value to everyone without exception. Those who have done hateful crimes must be punished, but sadvipras will never hate them, or put an end to them by depriving them of food, because sadvipras are humanists. The pandits puffed up with vainglory could turn their attention to their books instead of attending on the ailing non-Hindu Haridas, but Chaitanya Mahaprabhu found it

impossible to remain indifferent to him. He took Haridas in his arms and nursed him carefully, and thus showed respect to human value.

However, when the question of social responsibility arises, it must be considered with great care. Irresponsible people cannot be entrusted with social responsibility, because those who shoulder social responsibility will have to lead humanity on the path of development, and correct the ways of sinners. If they themselves are of evil mentality, it will not be possible for them to discharge their social responsibility. It has been said: "The collective body of those who are engaged in the concerted effort to bridge the gap between the first expression of morality and establishment in universal humanism is called society." (1) So social responsibility should be entrusted to those who are capable of discharging it creditably. If moralism is the starting-point of the

journey of society, then those who are at its helm must be moralists. And since society aims to establish universalism, those people must be universalists. And if the gap between moralism and universal humanism is to be bridged, spiritual sádhaná is a must, so those people must practise rigorous sádhaná. Their philosophy of life must be, "Morality is the base, sádhaná is the means, and life divine is the goal."

This great responsibility must never be entrusted to those who are themselves criminals. Unless and until such people correct themselves, they will not be given any social value, though in no way will they be denied human value. At present social value is given importance, but those who are selected to discharge social responsibility do not possess the aforesaid qualities. They have occupied their posts on the strength of their money or on the basis of patronage, but this has not

resulted in any collective welfare. That is why there is an instruction in our social scripture: Do not be misled by anyone's tall talk. Judge merit by seeing the performance. Remember, whatever position one is in offers sufficient opportunity to work. One whose character is not in accordance with Yama-Niyama should not get opportunity [[to become]] a representative.... to [[vest]] an incompetent person with power means to push society towards destruction knowingly and deliberately. ("Society" in Caryacarya Part 2, 1999)

The sadvipras will install qualified persons in power, and the social order which will be evolved by virtue of their leadership will give due importance to one and all. In this new society based on Neohumanism, everyone will find their life worth living. All will regain their lost positions of honour.

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The Cosmic Brotherhood

5 June 1959, Jamalpur

Spirituality is not a utopian ideal but a practical philosophy which can be practised and realized in day-to-day life, however mundane it be. Spirituality stands for evolution and elevation, and not for superstition in action or pessimism. All fissiparous tendencies and group or clan philosophies which tend to create the shackles of narrow-mindedness are in no way connected with spirituality and should be discouraged. That which leads to broadness of unison alone should be accepted. Spiritual philosophy does not recognize any distinctions and differentiations unnaturally made between one human being and another, and stands for universal fraternity.

In the present environment many fissiparous tendencies are working to divide humanity into mutually-belligerent groups. Spirituality must inculcate sense in human psychology, and develop a natural affinity amongst this species of the creation. The approach of spirituality should be psychological and rational, and should offer a touching appeal to the deepest psychic sentiments of human beings. Human beings should appreciate by a rational analysis their relationship with the Cosmic Entity and recognize the most benevolent kindness of the most beloved Entity. Spirituality should lead human beings to the one Cosmic truth from which they have derived their selves,(1) and which is the ultimate destiny. That ultimate and absolute ideal is the Cosmic ideal – an ideal beyond the scope of time, place and person. It is the Absolute, without and beyond relativity. It stands with its own lustre for all times and for every factor of the Cosmos, may it be a human being or a less-

evolved animal. The Cosmic ideal alone can be the unifying force which shall strengthen humanity to smash the bondages and abolish all narrow domestic walls of fissiparous tendencies.

All the sentiment-provoking ideas should be firmly opposed. This does not mean an attack on those sentiments, traditions and habits which are innate in human beings and which do not hamper their Cosmic development. For example, the movement for uniformity in dress for all people will be but a ridiculous and irrational approach. Different selections of dress are the result of climatic factors and corporal necessities. Moreover, dissimilarity in dress is not detrimental to world fraternity.

There will also be many zonal or regional differences as regards other traditions and customs. These should be appreciated and encouraged for the indigenous development of society. But under no circumstances should

there be a compromise in principle or yielding to tendencies detrimental to the inculcation of Cosmic sentiment.

The inspiration of Cosmic sentiment will depend upon certain objective physical problems which must be solved on a collective humanitarian basis. In the relative objective sphere the following few fundamental problems must be attempted at [tackled] and solved. These are:

Common philosophy of life

Same constitutional structure

Common penal code

Availability (production, supply, purchasing capacity) of the minimum essentialities of life

Common Philosophy of Life

A common philosophy of life demands a clear conception in the human mind that the development of the human personality means an evolution in all the three spheres –

physical, metaphysical or mental, and spiritual. Some objective materialist thinkers have held the opinion that spirituality is a utopian philosophy, bereft of practicalities pertaining to actual problems of life. Other thinkers conceived it as a wise and intelligent device to befool the toiling mass. But the logical analysis given above must have clarified to thoughtful readers that spirituality is the summum bonum of life in all its aspects.

Those who think dharma to be an individual's concern conceive it in a very narrow sense. Dharma leads to Cosmic unity, inculcating in the individual mind Cosmic idealism. Religion, in the sense of dharma, is the unifying force in humanity. Moreover, spirituality provides a human being and humanity at large with that subtle and tremendous power with which no other power can be compared. Therefore, with spirituality as the base, a rational philosophy should be

evolved to deal with the physical, psychological and socio-philosophical problems of the day. The complete rational theory dealing with all three phases – spiritual, mental and physical – of human development shall be a philosophy common to humanity in general. This will be evolutionary and ever-progressing. Of course, small details may vary according to the relative environment of the age.

Nationalism is fast getting out of date. Not only has national sentiment given humanity rude shocks in the world wars of the present century, but the social and cultural blending of the present age also shows the domination of cosmopolitanism in world affairs. Vested interests, however, continue to cause certain fissiparous tendencies. There are some who fear loss of their economic or political domination and are directly responsible for these detrimental or retrograde reactions.

Same Constitutional Structure

Despite these obstacles, a social blending of humanity is in progress and needs a common constitutional structure to be evolved to cement the solidarity of the world.(2) A world government is also very essential for exercising full control in certain spheres; for example, there should be only one world militia.

The world government should form certain autonomous units, not necessarily national (based on problems of education, food supply, flood control, public sentiment), which should look after mundane and supramundane problems. The boundaries of these units may be readjusted to suit any change in the environment – for instance, development in the techniques of communication. Development in the means of communication brings the different remote parts of the world nearer, and the world, therefore, grows smaller. With this well-

developed swifter means of communication, units with bigger areas can work smoothly and efficiently.(3)

Common Penal Code

A common penal code must be evolved. Legislation must be progressive and capable of gradual adjustment with the prevalent conditions. Any theory which does not hold a parallelism with the ever-changing conditions of time, place and person, is sure to decay and be lost in oblivion. Hence, there must be a never-ending effort for amendment with a view to rectification.

Crimes are acts forbidden by the law of the government concerned, and virtue and vice (puñya and pápa) are the outcome of traditional customs. The sentiments of the lawmakers are very much influenced by the prevalent traditions and customs regarding the concept of virtue and vice of the locality or of the people concerned. The sense of

crime, therefore, has a parallelism with the concept of virtue and vice. The idea of virtue and vice is different in different countries. The aspirants of world fraternity should try to lessen the difference and reduce the gap amongst cardinal, moral and human laws. All those actions which help in the growth of the spiritual, mental and physical aspects of human beings in general should come under the category of virtuous deeds, and those actions which go against humanity in its spiritual, mental and physical development must come under "vice". This conception of virtue and vice applies commonly to humanity in general.

Minimum Essentialities of Life

The availability of the minimum essentialities of life plays a vital part not only in achieving world brotherhood, but also in the development of human personality. This should be tackled on a world footing, and should be based on certain fundamental

presumptions. Every human being has certain minimum requirements which he or she must be guaranteed. Guaranteed availability of foodstuff, clothing, medical assistance and housing accommodation should be arranged so that human beings may be able to utilize their surplus energy (energy up till now engaged in procuring the essentialities of life) in subtler pursuits. Side by side, there should be sufficient scope for providing other amenities of the progressive age. To fulfil the above responsibilities, enough purchasing capacity should be created.

If the supply of requirements be guaranteed without any conditions of personal skill and labour, the individual may develop the psychology of idleness. The minimum requirements of every person are the same, but diversity is also the nature of creation. Special amenities should, therefore, be provided so that the diversity in skill and intelligence is fully utilized, and talent is

encouraged to contribute its best towards human development. It will, therefore, be necessary to make provision for special emoluments which can cater for special amenities of life according to the age and time. But at the same time, there should be a constant effort to reduce the gap between the amount of special emoluments and the bare minimum requirements of the average individual. The guaranteed supply of minimum requirements must be liberalized by increasing the provision of special amenities pertaining to the age and also, simultaneously, by bringing about a decrease in the provision of special emoluments given to the few. This never-ending effort of proper economic adjustment must ceaselessly continue at all times with a view to assisting the spiritual, mental and physical evolution of human beings, and to let humanity develop a Cosmic sentiment for a Cosmic ideal and world fraternity.(4)

In this socio-economic set-up people are at full liberty in the spiritual and mental spheres. This is possible because the spiritual and psychic entities for which people can aspire are themselves unlimited, and the extent of possession in this sphere does not hamper the progress of others in their quests. But the supply in the physical sphere is limited, and hence any effort for disproportionate or unrestricted acquisition of physical objects has every possibility of creating a vast majority of have-not's, and thus hampering the spiritual, mental and physical growth of the larger majority. So, while dealing with the problem of individual liberty, it must be kept in view that individual liberty in the physical sphere must not be allowed to cross a limit whereat it is instrumental in hampering the development of the complete personality of human beings; and, at the same time, must not be so drastically curtailed that the spiritual, mental and physical growths of human beings are hampered.

Thus, the social philosophy of Ananda Marga advocates the development of the integrated personality of the individual, and also the establishment of world fraternity, inculcating in human psychology a Cosmic sentiment. The Marga advocates progressive utilization of mundane and supramundane factors of the Cosmos. The society needs a stir for life, vigour and progress, and for this Ananda Marga advocates the Progressive Utilization Theory (Prout), meaning thereby progressive utilization of all factors. Those who support this principle may be termed "Proutists".

The principles of Prout depend upon the following fundamental factors:

[Five fundamental Principles of PROUT]

No individual should be allowed to accumulate any physical wealth without the clear permission or approval of the collective body.

There should be maximum utilization and rational distribution of all mundane, supramundane and spiritual potentialities of the universe.

There should be maximum utilization of physical, metaphysical and spiritual potentialities of unit and collective bodies of human society.

There should be a proper adjustment amongst these physical, metaphysical, mundane, supramundane and spiritual utilizations.

The method of utilization should vary in accordance with changes in time, space and person, and the utilization should be of progressive nature.

Hence, ours is a Progressive Utilization Theory (Prout).

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Social Justice for Women

1959

In the sphere of society building we come across different sections of people moving in different ways. Looking at the whole social structure, these diversities carry a special significance. Had there been no diversities, human society would not have even arrived at the Stone Age, let alone the present civilization. We will have to recognize, we will have to consider with equanimity, every idea, form and colour of diversity which facilitates the process of people's inner growth. If we fail to do so, the part of society that has been nurtured with that particular idea, form or colour shall wither away for good. I don't say

this only for those who think deeply about the welfare of society, but for every member of society, so that no one may ever give indulgence to injustice through thought, word or deed.

If ever any physical, mental, social, moral or spiritual weakness is discernible in any particular act or sphere of life, it is incumbent on the rest of the members of society to exterminate that weakness with all the sweetness of their hearts. Due to lack of true humanism or spiritual outlook however, people do just the reverse of what they should do. The moment opportunists discover any weakness in anybody, they trespass into that vulnerable crevice of weakness and try to devour the whole harvest – that person's life savings. They take it to be their own weakness to reflect over the woes and wailings of the weak.

As in most other living beings, in human society too, females are physically weaker

than males. Because of the weakness of their nerves, their minds, too, are weak to some extent. Nevertheless, in society their value is not an iota less than that of men. Selfish men, however, without caring for this value, have taken advantage and are taking advantage of women's weakness to the fullest extent. Although they publicly declare women to be a community of mothers, actually they have relegated them to the status of domesticated cattle and sheep.

The rights of women: In every sphere of their lives men have either substantially curtailed women's rights or kept women wholly subservient to their own whims and caprices. At the dawn of creation such an attitude never existed among primitive people. Man's diplomatic proclivity to spread his paramountcy by keeping women in bondage in the guise of social purity had never found its way into the brains of ancient men. That is why even today we don't find any substantial

lack of magnanimity among primitive races in respect of women's freedom.

By nature human beings are not profligate; rather the majority of them are indeed peace loving. In fact all have a sort of predisposition to personal purity, and this very individual disposition keeps the collective mind pure. In spite of women's freedom in those days, of the amount of social purity that we find in the so-called backward races, not even a hundredth part exists in the so-called progressive ones. The forcible curbing of freedom produces a hostile reaction in the human mind, and as a consequence purity takes a short cut to the devil. This is one of the causes of the lack of purity in the so-called developed societies of today. Society will not reap any real good from the endeavours to camouflage this impurity behind elegant phrases or religious exhibitionism. Those who want to keep women subservient to men in this life by

holding out a bait of affected sympathy and the false prospect of heavenly bliss in the following life, fail to understand that although such fake sympathy and the lure of heavenly prospects may be conducive to making women inert and servile to men, actually no real good will come to human society. If half the society is steeped in inertia due to superstition, the other half will undoubtedly find the journey tough going with this heavy load of inertia. In individual life purity is equally necessary for both men and women, and to justify that necessity real spiritual vision is indispensable. This necessity is impossible [to attain] so long as injustice to either of the two sexes exists.

It is necessary for every human being to understand that to construct anything or keep anything alive, a close coordinated cooperation among the different parts is essential. Human beings are not inert, so it is not that each and every cooperative structure

of society exists on cooperation alone. There is also some speciality in that sort of cooperation. The speciality is that this cooperation should be built in a warm cordial environment of free human beings, and not on a master and servant relationship. That should be coordinated cooperation and not a subordinated one.

Let us see what sort of treatment has been meted out to women so far. It is very true that for lack of competence in certain spheres women have gradually forfeited their rights or freedom, and for this reason, those who think that some special abilities are the only criteria of attaining rights really want to see women in the role of wageless slaves under the strong supervision of men. But is it completely due to their lack of ability that women have lost their rights Haven't the overflowing emotions of their hearts also been partly responsible Haven't they gradually surrendered their all – even their fascination

for high social status – to their husbands, sons and brothers, attaching no importance to their own petty self-interests Is it not reasonable for the society of men and women, and not of animals, to pay its proper respect to this large-heartedness with all humility In the event of the accidental arrival of a guest at home, whose share of the meal is dished out Who deprives oneself first, when a dainty dish is prepared Who goes to keep another's house, giving up their paternal property rights (regardless of what the law says) Are not these observations true of the majority of women in the world I don't say that men are ordinary human beings and that women are divine. Human as a woman is, I have only mentioned the good qualities of her heart.

Does the husband tend and nurse his wife during her illness as much as she does during his Taking advantage of women's affectionate heart, if men want to stop the remarriage of a

helpless widow and convince her that she will be reunited with her late husband after her death, then how can her remarriage be possible Chi, chi, chi! How shameful this is! These words may perhaps make sentimental women more sentimental. The prospect of getting reunited with the spirit of her deceased husband after her death perhaps induces her to take to lifelong penance, and fast on every ekádashii, [the eleventh day of the lunar fortnight]. But are not those who force women to be subservient to their fantastic ideas guilty of unscrupulousness

The very idea of heaven and hell is sheer bunkum anyway, and is in fact hatched in the brains of the authors of mythologies. Such people don't have the capacity to implant a peg in the solid ground of logic. Yet in order to humour the ignorant, if I accept the existence of such things as heaven and hell, I would ask, if the spirit of a wicked husband goes to hell and grazes about the field as a

bull, would his virtuous wife also go to hell and, becoming a cow, start grazing beside him

Let us move on. What I mean to say is that those who take advantage of people's simplicity or ignorance are veritable demons in the form of humans, and those who deceive people by taking advantage of their emotions, inspired by the ideal of sacrifice, are even worse than demons.

Freedom is restored through struggle. No one just offers it on a platter, for freedom is no gift; it is one's birthright. But the rights that women have lost today, at least so it seems in most of the countries of the world when put to socio-psychoanalysis, shows, I am constrained to say, that women have not really lost their freedom, rather they have delegated their own destiny into the hands of men as a sacred trust and on good faith. This is the plain truth. I cannot but laugh when I see a pedantic, high-browed lady, with a

proud uplift of her nose, entrusting her children to the charge of a maid-servant, going about in her husband-earned motorcar, attending meetings and making lengthy speeches on women's liberation. Candidly, when there is no question of women's rights having been snatched away, it hardly calls for an agitation reminiscent of the trade union movement.

Whatever responsibility there be on this account, it is entirely men's own. If any agitation is called for at all, the initiative must come from the men themselves. Today, having realized the necessity of women, it is now the responsibility of men to gradually restore rights to women, which one day women surrendered to men in a weak moment of helplessness or in response to their heartfelt sentiments.

It must always be remembered that liberty and license are not the same thing. Freedom of women is good, but that does not mean

that license in the name of freedom should be given indulgence to. License, be it on the part of men or women, can break the social structure in a short time. Hence, those who talk a bit more volubly about women's liberation should carefully ponder the possible forms of this proposed liberation.

One should not be even a little sentimental while recognizing a simple truth. Nothing except rational judgement backed by humanitarian considerations shall be acceptable. Women should have as much unbarred liberty to enjoy the light, air, earth and water like children of nature as men have. 'The law of inheritance: Take, for example, the right of inheritance. There are diverse views on the matter among different social groups in the world. Some are in favour of women's right of inheritance, depriving men. Some favour equitable distribution between men and women, while still others support men's total rights of inheritance with

a minimal share for women, which would comprise a few trinkets and crumbs, offered out the men's offals. Behind all of these systems it is glaringly evident that there is the evil attempt to preserve male supremacy rather than demonstrate rational judgement and humanitarian considerations.

In fact, the fundamental principle that is needed for arriving at some definite conclusion in the matter is that we shall not deprive anyone. We shall give equal opportunities to both men and women in respect to the rights of inheritance. At the same time, we shall enact laws in such a manner that will help in the administration and preservation of properties in an orderly fashion, and lessen the possibility of the breach of domestic peace.

In most of the countries of the world, human families are based on the patrilineal order. The patrilineal system has more advantages than the matrilineal one. There are two main

advantages of this patrilineal system. First, the determination of the father's identity is not as easy as that of the mother's and in the absence of any direct blood relationship, the mother's affection for a child is generally greater than that of the father's.

In the circumstances, the patrilineal system is much better, for it awakens a proper sense of responsibility in the father for his children, and it precludes the possibility of the child's identity remaining unknown or concealed. Under pressure of circumstances, (among creatures inferior to human beings, fathers never bother about their offspring because of the absence of this sort of circumstantial compulsion), the father, being compelled to take the responsibility of bringing up his child, becomes careful to properly preserve the domestic framework.

The second advantage of the patrilineal order is complementary to the first. Because the relationship between the father and the child

is not unknown, the mother does not feel entirely helpless in rearing the child, as is her natural tendency. The physical and mental structure of a woman is such that in spite of her having the requisite ability in the fullest measure for the upbringing of her child, it is extremely inconvenient and difficult for her to give her child all-round grooming and make adequate provision for food, clothes, education and medical care all by herself, and yet she must keep her child with or about her, or else it becomes difficult for the child to survive. Hence in this respect, if men, instead of women, take over the main responsibility of food and clothes, and where possible or in cases of necessity, if women, after duly attending to the needs of the child, earn money in exchange for their labour whether at home or outside, neither the child nor society is put to any inconvenience.

I cannot support the "lofty wisdom" of those people who advise women to spend their lives

at home cooking with appliances such as ladles, tongs and pots, because this runs counter to reality. The pressure of necessity often compels those confined to the home to transgress such a standard of "morality". Such a system may suit a handful of rich or upper-class women but it is worthless in the lives of the poor or day labourers. The class of people who indulge in tall talks about women's liberation and equal rights actually keep women behind the purdah or burka. Here, too, I notice that poor housewives go out with their husbands to the market either for buying or selling, or to the fields or farmyards or coal mines, picking up light work for themselves. Evidently they cannot afford to play Madame Prude Debonair behind a lace curtain.

But while giving equal rights to women in all spheres of life, there are people who want them to be engaged in heavy physical and mental labour not suitable for women. Such a mental outlook is highly deplorable indeed. It

must be admitted that physically and neurally, the strength of women is less than that of men, and so the spheres of work cannot be identical for both. Apart from this, diathetically women cannot work every day of the month. During pregnancy and post-delivery periods, the scope of their working ability becomes very restricted – these points must not be lost sight of.

Due to ideological extravagance, there are many who think that merely making a few women ministers or members of parliament will serve as glaring examples of equal rights and women's progress. But is it a correct outlook Will it not be detrimental to the whole society, if, by acknowledging a right or by going all out for the acceleration of progress as a matter of principle, we disregard the competent and overlook their claims The recognition of rights is a legal as well as a collective psychological phenomenon. To expedite progress an expeditious educational

system is the only way. A woman of any country who becomes a minister or an ambassador is not an index of the real status of women in that country. To elevate women's dignity in society is not so easy or so cheap.

By logical reasoning, when we know that the patrilineal system is better than the matrilineal one, the law of inheritance should be framed accordingly. Of course, at the time of framing the law of inheritance, special care and precautions must be taken so that in the name of the patrilineal system nothing should be framed that will compel any woman to become a slave for her own existence in her brothers' or brothers-in-law's house. In other words, after having recognized the women's rights of occupation and lifelong enjoyment of income and properties on the basis of equality, the law of inheritance should be based on a patrilineal system.

The dowry system: Many people regard the existing dowry system, prevalent in some countries of the world today, as something created out of lack of judgement or liberalism towards women's society. But actually this is not so. The question of justice or injustice to women in relation to the dowry system does not arise.

This particular problem is primarily economic. There are, however, a few more subordinate causes as well. Where women do not earn money they go to their husband after marriage only as an economic liability, and that is why at the time of marriage the groom's guardians realize a substantial amount from the bride's guardians for her maintenance for the rest of her life. This is the real picture of the dowry system.

Similarly, in a society where men do not earn money, the bride's guardians realize a substantial dowry from the bridegroom's guardians. Of course, there is yet another

subordinate cause, and that is the disparity in the number of men and women in any particular community or country. So the complete picture is that the bride's party gives a dowry only when in a particular society the woman's subsistence is dependent on the income of her husband, or where the men are less in number than the women. If in a particular society mainly women are earning money or the number of women is less than that of men, then the situation is reversed.

Those who think that the dowry system will be a thing of the past with the recognition of women's equal rights to paternal property are mistaken. For it is noticed that in societies where daughters are heirs to paternal property, there too the dowry system has gradually come into prominence due to economic and other reasons. Generally, few daughters get covetable properties from their parents nowadays. So it is an idle dream to expect that the groom's party will let go their

claim of dowry in the hope of getting those properties. A few daughters, belonging to some rich or upper-middle class families, who are heirs to really covetable properties, do not have any cause for worry, dowry or no dowry. By force of money, even the ugliest daughter of a rich person easily gets her consort.

Social interaction: There are divergent views among lawmakers about free mixing of men and women. It does not require the harnessing of any elaborate logic or reasoning to convince people that the result of free mixing in society, without self-control, is bad. But it is also true that the absence of intermixing creates, just as other wants and cravings do, a suppressed hunger – a particular yearning or curiosity. In other words, attempts are made for illicit mixing which ultimately do not remain at the level of purity. The kind of system which permits no mixing at all amounts to an attempt to smother the mind. In such circumstances men

are harmed only morally, but the loss to women is more tremendous. As a result, they may be compelled to lead a life of shame as social outcasts. Hence, along with the recognition of the freedom of the two sexes, a well-judged code of self-control will also have to be associated with their mutual mixing.

Those who want to keep their daughters away from the "infection of modernity", and so are reluctant to send them to schools and colleges, perhaps do not realize that modernism had already entered into the privacy of their households quite a long time ago without their knowledge. So their efforts to save their daughters as well as themselves by hanging window curtains or by covering their daughters with veils are entirely farcical.

The trend of the age is irrepressible, for in this too there is dynamism. It is the duty of the wise to channelize it to the path of benevolence by applying their own wisdom to

the task. To thwart the spirit of the age is beyond the power of any individual or any collective force. That dynamic spirit of the age – that Zeitgeist – speeds ahead unabated with all force, throwing down anyone who tries to stand and thwart it, and that floored, sprawling creature with imbecilic and glum eyes keeps staring vacantly at progress.

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Some Specialities of Prout's Economic System

June 1979, Calcutta

There are several specialities of PROUT's economic system. These include guaranteed minimum requirements, increasing purchasing capacity, cooperatives, industrial development, decentralization and

developmental planning. PROUT also has its specialities in trade and commerce.⁽¹⁾

Guaranteed Minimum Requirements

PROUT's economic system guarantees the minimum requirements of life – that is, food, clothing, accommodation, medical treatment and education – to each and every person. Once the minimum requirements have been guaranteed, the surplus wealth is to be distributed among people with special qualities and skills such as physicians, engineers and scientists, because such people play an important role in the collective development of society. The quantum of the minimum requirements should be progressively increased so that the standard of living of the common people is always increasing.

The concept of equal distribution is a utopian idea. It is merely a clever slogan to deceive simple, unwary people. PROUT rejects this concept and advocates the

maximum utilization and rational distribution of resources. This will provide incentives to increase production.

Increasing Purchasing Capacity

To effectively implement this, increasing the purchasing capacity of each individual is the controlling factor in a Proutistic economy. The purchasing capacity of common people in many undeveloped, developing and developed countries has been neglected, hence the economic systems of these countries are breaking down and creating a worldwide crisis.

The first thing that must be done to increase the purchasing capacity of the common people is to maximize the production of essential commodities, not the production of luxury goods. This will restore parity between production and consumption and ensure that the minimum requirements are supplied to all.

The Cooperative System

According to PROUT, the cooperative system is the best system for the production and distribution of commodities.

Cooperatives, run by moralists, will safeguard people against different forms of economic exploitation. Agents or intermediaries will have no scope to interfere in the cooperative system.

One of the main reasons for the failure of the cooperative system in different countries of the world is the rampant immorality spread by capitalist exploiters to perpetuate their domination.

Cooperatives develop in a community which has an integrated economic environment, common economic needs and a ready market for its cooperatively produced goods. All these factors must be present for cooperatives to evolve. Properly managed cooperatives are free from the defects of individual ownership.

Production can be increased as required in cooperatives due to their scientific nature.

For their success, cooperative enterprises depend on morality, strong administration and the wholehearted acceptance of the cooperative system by the people. Wherever these three factors are evident in whatever measure, cooperatives will achieve proportionate success. To encourage people to form cooperatives, successful cooperative models should be established and people should be educated about the benefits of the cooperative system.

The latest technology should be used in the cooperative system, both in production and distribution. Appropriate modernization will lead to increased production.

Cooperative managers should be elected from among those who have shares in the cooperative. Members of agricultural cooperatives will get dividends in two ways – according to the amount of land they donated

to the cooperative, and according to the amount of their productive manual or intellectual labour. To pay this dividend, initially the total produce should be divided on a fifty-fifty basis – fifty percent should be disbursed as wages and fifty percent should be paid to the shareholders in proportion to the land they donated. Local people should get first preference in participating in cooperative enterprises.

Developmental planning should be adopted to bring about equal development in all regions instead of just some particular regions. Local wealth and other resources and potentialities should be utilized in this developmental plan.

The controversial problem of the ownership of land can be solved by the phase-wise socialization of land through agricultural cooperatives. Cooperative land ownership should be implemented step by step in adjustment with the economic circumstances

of the local area. During this process the ownership of land should not be in the hands of any particular individual or group.

Industrial Development

PROUT divides the industrial structure into three parts – key industries managed by the immediate or local government, cooperatives and private enterprises. This system will eliminate confusion regarding whether or not a particular industry should be managed privately or by the government, and will avoid duplication between the government and private enterprise.

In many undeveloped and developing countries of the world there is excessive population pressure on agriculture. It is improper if more than forty-five percent of the population is employed in agriculture. In villages and small towns a large number of agro-industries and agrico-industries should be developed to create new opportunities for employment. In addition, agriculture should

be given the same status as industry so that agricultural workers will understand the importance and value of their labour.

According to the wages policy of PROUT, wages need not be accepted only in the form of money. They may be accepted in the form of essential goods or even services. It is advisable to gradually increase this component of wages in adjustment with the monetary component of wages.

PROUT supports maximum modernization in industry and agriculture by introducing the most appropriate scientific technology, yet modernization and rationalization should not lead to increased unemployment. In PROUT's collective economic system, full employment will be maintained by progressively reducing working hours as the introduction of appropriate scientific technology increases production. This is not possible in capitalism.

Decentralization

To materialize the above economic programme, PROUT advocates a new and unique approach to decentralization based on the formation of socio-economic units throughout the world. Socio-economic units should be formed on the basis of factors such as common economic problems; uniform economic potentialities; ethnic similarities; common geographical features; and people's sentimental legacy, which arises out of common socio-cultural ties like language and cultural expression. Each socio-economic unit will be completely free to chalk out its own economic plan and the methods of its implementation.

Within each socio-economic unit there will also be decentralized planning, which is called "block-level planning" in PROUT. Block-level planning boards will be the lowest level planning bodies.

One political unit such as a federal or unitary state may contain a number of socio-

economic units. For example, the state of Bihar in India can be divided into five socio-economic units – Angadesh, Magadh, Mithila, Bhojpuri and Nagpuri. Based on the above factors the whole of India may be divided into forty-four socio-economic units. These units must be guaranteed full freedom to achieve economic self-sufficiency through the implementation of their own economic planning and policies.

If the local people in these units organize large-scale programmes for their all-round socio-economic and cultural liberation, there will be a widespread socio-economic awakening in the whole of India. Regardless of whether they are rich or poor, old or young, educated or illiterate, if the local people are inspired by anti-exploitation and universal sentiments, they will be able to start powerful movements for socio-economic liberation. When people merge their individual socio-economic interests with the collective socio-economic interest, the outflow of

economic wealth from a region will cease and exploitation will be completely rooted out. The right of full employment for all local people will be guaranteed, and the employment of local people will take precedence over non-local people.

Where there is no proper economic development, surplus labour develops. In fact all undeveloped economic regions suffer from surplus labour, and when the surplus labour migrates to other regions the region remains undeveloped forever. In areas of surplus labour provision should be made to immediately employ the local people.

While providing employment to local people, local sentiments should also be taken into consideration. Maximum agro-industries and agrico-industries should be established on the basis of the socio-economic potential of the region, and various other types of industries should be established according to the collective needs. This approach will create

enormous opportunities for new employment. Through such an employment policy, increasing the standard of living of the local people will be possible.

In a decentralized socio-economic system the modernization of industry and agriculture can be easily introduced, and the goods that are produced will be readily available in the market. As each socio-economic unit develops its economic potential, per capita income disparities among different regions will decline and the economic position of undeveloped regions can be raised to that of developed regions. When every region becomes economically self-reliant, the whole country will rapidly achieve economic self-sufficiency. Economic prosperity will be enjoyed by each and every person.

Developmental Planning

PROUT's decentralized economy follows a specific guiding principle. That is, effective economic planning should be based on four

fundamental factors – the cost of production, productivity, purchasing capacity and collective necessity. Other related factors include natural resources, geographical features, climate, river systems, transportation, industrial potentialities, cultural heritage and social conditions.

Due to the lack of a well-defined principle of economic planning and the dominance of various narrow sentiments, India's economy has been paralysed by inertia. Steel plants have been built where there is no supply of cheap power, and huge oil refineries like those in Mathura and Barauni have been constructed where there are no raw materials within 1,000 miles. Such a policy is not only a great waste and misuse of resources, it also illustrates the lack of foresight and ignorance of India's planners.

This situation is reminiscent of the British period when raw jute from Bengal was sent to Dundee in Great Britain to develop the British

jute industry. When the supply of raw jute from Bengal was stopped, all the jute factories in Dundee were closed down. If the finished jute products made in Dundee had not been sold in Bengal, the Dundee jute industry would not have survived.

This economic history is relevant to the dying jute industry in Bengal today. The present political climate is full of slogans like, "Let the closed jute factories be nationalized," and, "Stop the lock-out." Trade union leaders are amassing great wealth by exploiting this depressed industry while thousands of unemployed workers are being subjected to deprivation, starvation and untold suffering. Bengal does not even supply sufficient raw jute to run its own jute mills, so raw jute has to be imported from outside the region to supply the existing mills.

If people want to make the jute industry healthy some clear-cut, bold steps have to be taken. The number of jute mills should be

reduced so that they correspond to the dwindling supply of raw jute. The additional mills should be closed down or converted to the production of other essential commodities. The mills engaged in jute production should produce mainly jute thread rather than other jute products, and jute thread should be distributed among farmers and weavers through a system of jute cooperatives. If such a policy is adopted the large demand for thread in Bengal will be met, and the surplus production can be exported. As the industry will be decentralized the wealth generated from thread production will be spread among the local people, ending large-scale exploitation by wealthy jute merchants and raising the standard of living of the local people.

So, on the basis of the above factors, each socio-economic unit should draw up its own developmental plan for socio-economic self-sufficiency and then implement it. Grandiose planning which is irrelevant or inappropriate

for the local economic conditions should not be imposed from the outside. It will not be allowed.

Centralized planning has totally failed in all countries of the world, including India. In PROUT's system of decentralized planning, there should be one coordinated plan for the whole socio-economic unit on the basis of block-level planning. For example, for the entire western Rárh, including Bankura, Purulia, etc., there should be a sub-plan. Similarly, there should be another sub-plan for Jalpaiguri, Coochbehar, Siliguri and Goalpara. In addition, there should be proper block-level planning throughout the socio-economic unit. Thus, the seed of economic centralization will be destroyed.

Trade and Commerce

PROUT also has its own specialities in the fields of trade, commerce, taxation and banking. The distribution of essential commodities will have to be done entirely

through consumer cooperatives, not through the government, businessmen or different levels of middlemen. This will not leave any scope for manipulation by profiteers. As far as possible barter should be the basis for trade among self-sufficient socio-economic units.

Essential commodities will have to be entirely tax free. There will be no income tax. Instead taxes should be levied at the starting point of production.

The banking system will have to be managed by cooperatives. The central or federal bank will be controlled by the immediate or local government.

The maxim of PROUT's productive economy is, "Increase the purchasing capacity of the common people above all." If this maxim is followed in practice, it will be easy to control the prices of commodities through the cooperative system and economic decentralization.

June 1979, Calcutta

[This discourse was given by the author in June 1979. Subsequently, more discourses were given on PROUT which can also be considered specialities of PROUT's economic system. These include: "Economic Dynamics", "Decentralized Economy", "Economic Democracy",]

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Socio-Economic Groupifications

In today's world large animals are on the verge of extinction. Environmental conditions do not support the existence of big animals any longer. In the past many large creatures inhabited the earth, but as environmental conditions changed and human beings extended their domination over the planet, giant animals became extinct.

Similarly, small states are struggling to survive. People are more interested in forming

larger and larger socio-economic units to ensure the welfare of all than in maintaining many small states. Narrow sentiments are gradually fading away and a universal outlook is arising in the minds of human beings. Science and technological development have exposed the blind faith and dogma that have suffocated many sections of society, and gradually humanity is advancing towards an age of rationality and common interest. The present age is not the age of large animals and small states.

In accordance with this trend, PROUT advocates the formation of self-sufficient socio-economic units throughout the world. They will work to enhance the all-round welfare of the people in their respective areas and unite humanity on a common ideological base. The interests of all local people will be guaranteed and gain proper recognition. As each unit becomes strong and prosperous it will merge with other units. The formation of a world government will assist this process of

integration. Socio-economic units will thus facilitate the comprehensive, multifarious liberation of humanity.

Liberty

Since the beginning of history there has been an incessant fight for freedom from natural, social, economic and political bondages. This fight is inherent in human nature. Human beings want freedom both as individuals and as members of society, and to achieve this freedom they must fight against all types of oppression. Yet we find that when any oppressed group or class gained some measure of freedom it in turn oppressed others.

Whatever liberty exists in society today is the result of prolonged struggle by many individuals and groups. At the root of this struggle is the innate human desire for happiness – the longing to establish oneself in the supreme flow of bliss. To fulfil this longing in individual life, human beings have to attain

the absolute state and break all shackles of relativity. It is a natural human tendency to liberate the mind from the bondages of time, space and person, but only the attainment of the absolute can fulfil the innate desire for happiness.

Society will have to encourage the individual search for absolute freedom because the psychic and spiritual realms are unlimited, and possession in these spheres does not hinder the progress of others. But unrestricted freedom to acquire wealth in the physical sphere has every possibility of permitting a few people to roll in luxury while hampering the all-round growth of the majority, because physical resources are limited. Individual liberty in the physical sphere must not be allowed to hamper the development of the complete human personality, and at the same time it must not be so drastically curtailed that the all-round growth of society is impeded.

Freedom is a right of every human being. To encourage comprehensive, unbarred human expression in the different spheres of social life a congenial socio-economic environment has to be created, because as such an environment does not exist today.

Criteria for Groupification

While forming socio-economic units, several factors should be considered. These include same economic problems; uniform economic potentialities; ethnic similarities; the sentimental legacy of the people; and similar geographical features.

“Same economic problems” refers to the common economic problems confronting people in a particular unit and may include the lack of markets for locally produced goods, surplus or deficit labour problems, communication or transportation difficulties and lack of irrigation water. Ascertaining whether or not a similar set of economic problems exists in an area is the first thing

which should be clearly analysed when forming a socio-economic unit. The economic problems of the socio-economic unit, and their solutions, should be well understood.

Secondly, there should be uniform economic potentialities in the unit. Despite natural variations from place to place, overall the people throughout a unit should enjoy similar opportunities for economic prosperity. Disparity between the haves and the have-nots and the rich and the poor will have to be progressively reduced so that the collective wealth will increase and society will become bountiful.

Thirdly, there should be ethnic similarities. In the past many races and sub-races have been suppressed and exploited by powerful or dominant races. Racism has been propagated by those with evil designs in order to divide society and establish their own pre-eminence. Society must guard against such narrow and dangerous sentiments. This can be done only

if every ethnic group has adequate scope for its expression and development. The multi-coloured garland of humanity will be enriched to the extent diverse human groups blend together from a position of strength and independence out of a genuine love for each other, and are not forced together through fear or compulsion.

Fourthly, sentimental legacy includes factors such as language, historical traditions, literature, common usages and cultural expressions. It is the common chord in the collective psychology of a particular group of people which gives them their unique identity and sense of affinity.

Human beings are predominantly sentimental by nature. They establish some kind of relationship with the many objects of the world through their day-to-day activities. If the sentiment for a particular favourite object is adjusted with the collective sentiment then that sentiment can be utilized

for establishing unity in human society. The human sentiment for many objects may sometimes run counter to the collective sentiment and create great disunity, so those sentiments which are conducive to human unity should be encouraged, and the sentiments which divide human society should be rejected. This is the approach adopted by PROUT's socio-economic units.

Finally, similar geographical features such as topography, river systems, rainfall and irrigation water should also be considered in the formation of a socio-economic unit.

Socio-economic units will give expression to popular sentiments and fight against all forms of exploitation to meet the demands and aspirations of the local people. Movements will have to be launched throughout the world to establish self-sufficient socio-economic units based on the maxim, "Know the area, prepare the plan and serve the people." Local people are those who have merged their

individual socio-economic interests with the socio-economic interests of the socio-economic unit they live in.

Self-Sufficient Socio-Economic Units

Each socio-economic unit should prepare and implement its own developmental programmes. Factors like natural resources, topography, river systems, cultural conditions, communication and industrial potential need to be considered to facilitate proper planning and development so that each unit will become economically self-sufficient and prosperous. If a significant part of the production of a unit is misutilized or capital is sent outside, the unit cannot increase its prosperity, hence there should be maximum utilization of all resources and no drainage of capital.

The Indian state of Orissa is very rich in mineral resources such as coal, bauxite and manganese, but the present leaders export these mineral resources to other countries. If

the raw materials had been utilized for indigenous industrial production, then four big steel plants could easily have been established. This would have substantially raised per capita income. But the leaders, instead of paying attention to those things, whimsically frame five year plans. These plans neither remove economic disparity nor increase collective wealth.

To achieve these objectives, the Indian economy has to be thoroughly overhauled. At the very outset, to facilitate socio-economic development, the country should be divided into socio-economic units. If state boundaries are demarcated on the basis of political and linguistic considerations, then socio-economic plans can never be properly prepared and implemented, and various economic problems will not be given due attention. Self-sufficient units are indispensable for expediting the country's economic progress.

Merging Socio-Economic Units

Where there is economic parity, cultural mixing, communication facilities and administrative efficiency, it will be easy and natural for two or more adjoining units to cooperate, because they will have attained a high degree of socio-economic uniformity. In such cases they should merge to form a single larger unit. This will further the welfare of their respective citizens and enhance their socio-economic interests.

In some places regions with different economic problems are located within the same political unit. For example, in the Chotanagpur Hills in Bihar there is an acute problem of irrigation, whereas in the plains of north Bihar there is the problem of water drainage. These two regions should be formed into distinct socio-economic units. Royalseema, Shrii Kakulam and Telengana have all been annexed to the one political state of Andhra, although their economic problems are different. In the interests of the people living in these three regions, each

should be formed into a distinct socio-economic unit. If these three regions are converted into a single economic unit right now simply for administrative purposes, it may lead to complications.

Thus, in some cases one political unit may be divided into two or more socio-economic units. That is, there can be more than one socio-economic unit in a political unit. This approach will enable different socio-economic units to develop to a level which fulfils their potentiality.

If a particular state in a federal system cannot get economic justice, it may agitate for the separate allocation of funds within the federal budget. If, after launching such an agitation, it still fails to secure proper justice, it will have no alternative but to demand the formation of a separate state.

However, PROUT does not favour the formation of many small states, each with its separate budget and administration.

Numerous state divisions will only compound socio-economic problems, causing unnecessary duplication, and are costly and wasteful. Rather, small states should be expanded into larger socio-economic units.

When two units reach a similar level of development, they should merge together to form a larger unit. This process of unification will gradually result in the formation of one socio-economic unit for all India. In the next phase, through continued growth and development, the whole of South and Southeast Asia will become one socio-economic unit. Eventually, the whole world will function as one integrated socio-economic unit. After reaching this stage of development, socio-economic groupifications will have attained a state of equipoise and equilibrium, and universal fraternity will become a reality.

Universal in Spirit, Regional in Approach

Socio-economic units are bound to gain great popularity all over the world within a short time. While there may be diverse cultural expressions and socio-economic potentialities in different units, the points of difference should not be allowed to divide humanity. If the common sentiments of human beings are given prominence and the points of unity are made the basis of collective development, diversity will enrich humanity rather than tear it asunder. If each socio-economic unit is inspired by a comprehensive ideology and a universal outlook, human society will move ahead with accelerating speed towards a sublime ideal.

A sound ideological base is a prerequisite for socio-economic groupifications. Such a foundation is provided by universal humanism, which has the potential to unite all humanity. Universal humanism will not be established on the hard crust of the earth overnight, but will come to fruition gradually, stage by stage. It will include each and every

person in the world, as well as animals, plants and inanimate objects. If a single person remains outside the influence of universalism and becomes a victim of exploitation, then the foundation of universal humanism will be undermined. Hence, PROUT has adopted a rational method to solve socio-economic problems which may be characterized as universal in spirit but regional in approach.

Protection from Exploitation

Once socio-economic units are established throughout the world, how will exploitation be avoided in the future? Society will enjoy lasting protection from all types of exploitation only if an integrated ideology, an empirical spiritual base, spiritually oriented cadres and proper institutions are well established in social life.

An integrated ideology should have several aspects. It must be the basis for the rational analysis of socio-economic problems and the formulation of comprehensive, appropriate

and logical solutions. Secondly, it must not ignore the human need for psychic expansion and spiritual emancipation. And thirdly, it should be imbued with inherent dynamism and vitality so that it can guide humanity forward in its quest for all-round progress.

An empirical spiritual base will protect society from all fissiparous tendencies and group or clan sentiments which create shackles of narrow-mindedness. Spirituality does not recognize any unnatural distinctions between human beings. It stands for evolution and elevation and not for superstition or pessimism.

Spiritually oriented cadres will provide a moral check against all forms of exploitation, and propagate moral and spiritual values throughout society according to the maxim, "Self-realization and service to humanity."

Finally, proper institutions are necessary to reflect the needs and aspirations of the people and work for the cause of human

welfare. The need for a world government is already apparent to many people, and in the future, once it is established, its powers should be progressively strengthened. Each socio-economic unit will have to get ample scope for its integrated development within the framework of the world government.

PROUT's system of socio-economic groupifications is a comprehensive approach to the socio-economic problems confronting society. If people adopt such an approach, society will move along the path of progress with increasing speed, overcoming all bondages and hindrances. Human society will enjoy a bright and glorious future.

October 1979, Calcutta

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Keep Money Rolling – Excerpt

A

If a business is built with the help of loans from any source, then that enterprise is termed kátiká in Sanskrit. Suppose someone has no capital but wants to start a business by taking a loan, then that business is called kátiká vyavasá. You might have noticed that there are many countries which suffer from financial stringency, so they take loans from other countries. These loans are then used for ventures like constructing large dams on their rivers.

The science of economics teaches that the rolling of money should never be blocked by any sort of non-productive investment. Sometimes people misuse loans to construct an unnecessary building or a new showroom for their business, and thus prevent the possibility of reinvesting the capital and increasing their wealth. Economics teaches that loans taken for business investment

should always be utilized for productive purposes, and should never be utilized in any unproductive venture. Foreign loans, for example, should never be invested in constructing large railway stations instead of railway lines.

23 March 1986, Calcutta

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Keep Money Rolling – Excerpt

B

The value of money increases with its mobility. That is, the more that money changes hands, the greater its economic value. On the other hand, the more that money is kept immobile in a safe, the more it loses its utility, and thus its economic value decreases. This is the most fundamental principle of economics.

The banking system is indispensable for promoting both collective welfare and the all-round economic advancement of people. The maxim, "Keep money rolling," is as true as the proverb, "Keep the wagons moving."

The banking system must be vigilant about two important points. First, the intrinsic demonic greed of the banks must not be allowed to jeopardize the life of the common people. In the past in most countries of the world the banks threatened the life of the common people. This more or less still occurs today not only in undeveloped countries, but also in developing and developed countries. Secondly, the banks must not allow unwise administrators or governments to print monetary notes indiscriminately without reserving the proportionate amount of bullion in their treasuries.

The first defect not only ruins low and middle income groups, but also impoverishes wealthy people. The second defect destroys

the very life of society. It leads to widespread inflation, which in turn jeopardizes internal trade and commerce as well as foreign trade and barter. Even if there is abundant production in a country, the common people do not benefit. The rich become richer and get more scope to continue their merciless exploitation. In state capitalism, the exploitative rulers tighten their grip over society even more. State capitalism may call itself capitalism, socialism or communism, but ultimately it stands before the masses as more dangerous and bloodthirsty than bloodsucking ghouls and demons.

The banking system must continue, otherwise the mobility of money will be hindered. If people oppose the banking system because they are guided by selfish whims or any other sentiment, then their economy will stay in the dark ages. They are bound to lose equipoise and equilibrium in the physical sphere, remain lopsided in the psychic and spiritual spheres, and reduce

themselves to objects of ridicule. It is very sad to imagine such a state.

So you see, the fundamental aim of the banking system is, "Keep money rolling." Let governments be active. Let people purchase as much rice, pulses, vegetables, oil, salt, sugar, etc., as they can with money. Let money go to the grocers, the sugar cane vendors, the confectioners, the factory workers, the labourers and the weavers. And let the colourful saris of the weavers be purchased and worn by the newly married brides, adding to the beauty and prosperity of society.

21 December 1986, Calcutta

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Principles of Balanced Economy **– Excerpt A**

There are three main reasons why cities and states in the past lost economic balance and declined after achieving the height of

prosperity. First, if the city or state developed following the course of a river system and the river suddenly changed direction or dried up, its economy was adversely affected.

Secondly, if industries moved away from rural villages, the balance of the economy was also destroyed. The third reason was a defective educational system. If there are defects in the rural educational system and the social system, economic balance is lost.

In order to build a sound economy thirty to forty percent of the people in an area – neither more nor less – should depend directly on agriculture. If the percentage is smaller, agriculture is neglected. Conversely, if the percentage is greater, there will be a heavy strain on agriculture. This is exactly what happened in Rárh – and not only in Rárh, but throughout Bengal, India, China and Southeast Asia. To solve this problem today a new socio-economic analysis is required.

Just as agriculture will have to be based on a scientific system, industry will also have to be organized in perfect adjustment with agriculture. It is not proper under any circumstances if the percentage of the population depending directly on agriculture exceeds forty percent. Because rural industries have been destroyed, a major part of the population once engaged in that sector has now moved towards agriculture. For a perfectly balanced economic environment, it is required that some thirty to forty percent of the people should depend directly on agriculture, and about twenty percent on agro-industries, twenty percent on agrico-industries, ten percent on general trade and commerce, and ten percent on intellectual or white collar jobs.

In India village industries have been ruined, and those who depended on these industries have turned towards agriculture. While the percentage of traders has not increased much, the opportunities for further growth

have decreased. In addition, the number of white collar job seekers has increased, resulting in soaring unemployment. The sons of rural peasants who have had a little education are no longer willing to labour in the fields. They want to become so-called gentlemen thriving on the labour of others. They consider agricultural work inferior. As a consequence, on the one hand there is a dearth of educated youths in agriculture, and on the other hand an increasing number of people from the ruined rural industries have moved towards agriculture. In rural areas the percentage of the population depending on agriculture has gone up to seventy or eighty percent. What an unbearable situation!

Non-agricultural industries (such as steel plants, the brass industry, the metal industry, oil refineries, the salt industry and non-herbal pharmaceuticals) mean those industries which are not directly agrico-industries (such as the production of picks, axes, spades and tractors) and industries which are not directly

agro-industries (such as flour mills, jute mills, oil mills, cloth mills, paper mills and herbal medicine factories). The percentage of people engaged in non-agricultural industries should be formed by reducing the percentage of people depending directly on agriculture, agrico-industries and agro-industries. The percentage of people engaged in non-agricultural industries will have to be kept within twenty to thirty percent of the total population.

If the percentage of the population engaged in non-agricultural industries in a country is less than twenty percent, the country is said to be industrially undeveloped. The per capita income of the people cannot be very high. The standard of living also cannot be very high because people's purchasing capacity remains very limited. Because of the low capacity for purchasing consumer goods, the import index always remains lower than the export index, or in other words the area has to remain a satellite of a developed country.

Consequently, the balance of power in the world is jeopardized and war is always possible.

If the percentage of people engaged in non-agricultural industries is kept within twenty to thirty percent of the population, this is the state of balanced economy – a really balanced socio-economic structure. If the percentage goes beyond thirty percent, the area becomes industrially developed. Then, the more this percentage increases above thirty percent, the more over-industrialized the area becomes. In order to procure agricultural produce, over-industrialized countries try to grab productive agricultural regions or countries and make them their satellites. These over-industrialized countries also find it necessary to keep industrially undeveloped countries within their control in order to use them as a market for their finished goods. If they do not get a market to sell the consumer goods produced in their countries, they will

suffer from economic depression and growing unemployment.

In this regard there is no difference between the communist and non-communist countries. They are equally aggressive in their approach. They desperately look for the kámadhenu. (Dhenu means "cow" and káma means "desire". Kámadhenu is a mythological cow which gives as much milk as its master demands.) They want to keep it tied to the door, feeding it the minimum amount of fodder. They want the maximum output with the minimum investment. This is why there is so much war psychosis and sabre-rattling in the world today.

Efforts must be made so that each and every country of the world can enjoy socio-economic balance in both agriculture and industry, otherwise the socio-economic equilibrium of the world is bound to be destroyed.

The harmful internal consequences of over-industrialization not only affect the personal, social and national health of the people, they also precipitate gradual individual and collective psychic degeneration. A type of psychic epidemic may arise which can poison almost all expressions of life and destroy them. This may not happen today, but it will surely happen in the very near future.

Where the industrial system – the agro-industries, agrico- industries and non-agricultural industries – depends on outside labourers, it will lead to an extremely precarious situation. The speed of psychic degeneration will rapidly increase, and people will face permanent scarcity of food. There will be little possibility of expanding the markets for their consumer goods. Rather, the existing markets will gradually contract.

As examples we may cite Howrah, Hooghly, 24 Parganas and Burdwan in West Bengal. Most of the manual labourers in these districts

are outsiders, hence the local people will never experience a good standard of living. However industrially developed or over-industrialized these districts might become, they will be seriously affected by the harmful internal consequences of over-industrialization, and will never enjoy any of the benefits of industrialization. This miserable picture can be seen every morning and evening in Howrah District.

On the other hand, there are many areas in India where ninety percent of the population is dependent on agriculture. There is no industry whatsoever in these areas. They are areas of surplus labour. In a balanced socio-economic structure there will be no such thing as surplus labour or deficit labour. Such a condition will never be allowed to arise.

The agricultural system should be structured as an industry. That is, the prices of agricultural produce should be determined by considering basic factors such as agricultural

income, expenses and necessities. The farmers of Burdwan and Birbhum must not be forced to sell their rice at throw away prices; the growers of Hooghly district must not be compelled to sell their potatoes at very cheap rates; and the peasants of Nadia district must not be made to sell their jute at extremely low prices to pay off their debts.

6 April 1986, Calcutta

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Principles of Balanced Economy **– Excerpt B**

You know, in a balanced economy there should be proper adjustment among agriculture, industry and commerce. For example, a fixed percentage of people should be engaged in agriculture, another fixed percentage in industry and some percentage

in commerce. Otherwise there will be no equipoise or equilibrium in the socio-economic sphere of life.

Unfortunately no such adjustment exists in any country of the world today. Even in industrially advanced countries like Great Britain there is no proper adjustment. While England is developed, Scotland is backward. Even among the counties of England, some are developed and some are backward. Lancaster, for instance, is highly developed but Yorkshire is undeveloped. Sussex, Essex and Kent are not equally developed.

In Bengal some districts are highly developed whereas other districts are backward. The economic structure is not properly balanced, and due to this people suffer. For example, Calcutta, Hooghly, Howrah, Burdwan and 24 Parganas are industrially developed, but the neighbouring districts of Midnapore, Bankura, Birbhum and Murshidabad are backward. So you must try

to bring about an industrial revolution in the country. Just as there was a French Revolution, there should be an industrial revolution in Bengal.

For this industrial revolution we must not depend upon raw materials from foreign countries. Remember that no country should depend on imported raw materials for development. Indigenous raw materials, that is, materials available within the country itself, must be used for this purpose. Those who love society – those who love the people of their country and are keen to bring about their socio-economic elevation – must think in terms of an industrial revolution based on the raw materials available in their own socio-economic unit.

The districts of North Bengal – Coochbehar, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling and West Dinajpur – can produce and supply enough raw materials for industrial development. We must utilize the available raw materials. For example,

Coochbehar district can supply jute and tobacco; Jalpaiguri district can supply pineapple fibres; and western Jalpaiguri district can supply jute fibres. Malda district can supply mango; textiles; silk; rice bran for producing edible rice bran oil; and jute and maize which can be used to make paper. The Malda silk industry can successfully compete with Chinese and Japanese silk, but unfortunately Malda, which has so much industrial potential, is the third poorest district in Bengal.

These things should be done, and they should be done in a short span of time. No industry in Bengal should depend on raw materials imported from outside.

You should bring about this revolution. You should collectively chalk out plans and programmes and demand such a change, such a revolution. Do not delay.

17 September 1987, Calcutta

Quadri-Dimensional Economy

A developed economy should consist of four parts – people's economy, psycho-economy, commercial economy and general economy. This quadri-dimension of the economy is a vast expansion on the contemporary and co-contemporary conceptions of economic activity.

Most economists today understand only a little of the principles of general economy and something of commercial economy, but both of these parts are still in an undeveloped stage. People's economy and psycho-economy are totally overlooked by modern economists, and as such could find no place in the present mode of economic thinking.

People's Economy

People's economy deals with the essential needs of the people in general – the production, distribution, marketing, shipping, storage, pricing, sales, freight charges, pro forma costing, and all related activities of such essential needs. Most importantly, it is directly concerned with the guaranteed provision of minimum requirements such as food, clothing, housing, medical treatment, education, transportation, energy and irrigation water. Continuous improvement in and ready availability of these requirements is the key factor in people's economy.

The minimum requirements can be assured through guaranteed purchasing capacity which should be enshrined in the constitution as a fundamental or cardinal human right. This will give the citizens of the country legal power if their minimum requirements are not met, hence the necessity of purchasing capacity will be reinforced by constitutional law. As people's economy will deal with minimum requirements and people's

subsistence problems, it must take precedence over other parts of the economy.

People's economy should also be concerned with the development of both private and cooperative industries. Private industries would be limited in size and scope to prevent monopoly production and exploitation, and would be required to function as cooperatives once they grow too large. Cooperative industries are the best means of independently organizing people so that they take collective responsibility for their livelihood.

People's economy also includes employment for all; the eradication of mass poverty; the development of rural economy; the phase-wise socialization of land into the hands of those who work physically or intellectually for proper production; practical training programmes to impart skills which enable people to find employment in their immediate urban or rural locality; work placement; and

the transportation, trans-shipment, loading and unloading of any materials, even if they are not economically viable in the short-term. It is also concerned with the generation of cheap power and the supply of water, which are essential if people are to control their local economies. Finally, it includes economic decentralization, cooperative dynamo and block-level planning.

Take the example of Bengal. The following programme based on the provision of the minimum requirements may be adopted to improve the economic standard of Bengal.

Food: Although Bengal is fertile it is divided into two parts – areas short of rainfall, and areas with no shortages of rainfall but which experience water shortages in winter. In both parts water conservation is required. The irrigation problem can be solved by any of several methods, including shift irrigation, lift irrigation, tank irrigation and small-scale river projects. The quality of water varies among

different rivers. Some water is sweet, and discriminating use of this water can improve agricultural production. Different crops, fruits and vegetables can be grown all over Bengal, which is capable of feeding its entire population of around seventy million people through its own resources if they are properly managed.

Clothing: The type of clothing that people wear depends primarily on climatic conditions and the availability of raw materials. In Bengal, four major raw materials are available for clothing – cotton, mulberry silk, non-mulberry silk, and synthetic silk and other materials. Bengal can become self-sufficient in cotton, silk and synthetic materials, and can even produce a surplus for export to other regions. Mulberry silk is ideally suited to Bengal because it requires a slightly dry climate which is found in eastern Bengal. Non-mulberry silk can also be grown throughout Bengal. Fibres can be produced from copra, rice husks, bamboo, coconut

shells, banana leaves and pineapple leaves, which are all widely available. Bengal can also grow wool, and even jute can be used for clothing.

Housing: Construction materials are abundantly available throughout Bengal. Three essential requirements are sand, lime and cement. The clay soil of Bengal is suitable for manufacturing bricks, fire-bricks and tiles, while enormous limestone deposits have been discovered. Bengal can be self-sufficient in the production of building materials, and can also export to other regions. Industries which manufacture construction materials can be quite profitable.

Medicine: Bengal is richly endowed with both herbal and mineral medicines. The major ailments of Bengal are fever and stomach diseases. It is the practice of nature to abundantly produce those herbs which cure the common diseases of the people in that locality. Some districts in Bengal are suitable

for herb cultivation, while other districts are rich in mineral medicines.

Education: One's mother tongue is the natural medium of expression, hence Bengali should be the medium of instruction in Bengali schools. English, which is presently the global language, should be the second language, so higher education should be imparted in English. Sanskrit should also be taught to enrich the cultural heritage of Bengal.

Education materials such as paper and ink are also available in Bengal. Paper can be manufactured from different grasses and plants which can be readily grown in several districts. Ink can be manufactured from synthetic processes or from indigo.

Energy and transportation: Until solar energy can be manufactured cheaply, other energy sources such as hydroelectricity, thermal power, tidal power and wind power can be utilized. All the raw materials

necessary for transportation are also available, including rubber, steel, mica, mercury, silver, copper, quartz and manganese. Hence, Bengal can develop all kinds of transportation.

Psycho-Economy

While people's economy is concerned primarily with the provision of the minimum requirements of life, psycho-economy is concerned with increasing the psychic pabula of the individual and collective mind through appropriate economic activity. People's economy will be the main concern of undeveloped and developing countries, but psycho-economy will gain increasing importance in the future once the problems of subsistence are gradually solved. Psycho-economy will be of major importance in a highly developed and mechanized economy where people may only work a few hours a week and have much spare time.

Psycho-economy has two branches. The first branch endeavours to eradicate exploitative and unjust economic practices, behaviours and structures. It will counter all economic and psycho-economic exploitation and make people aware of how capitalists, in their singular or collective roles, exploit society and create unhealthy, artificial demands which not only poison the mind but encourage dangerous habits detrimental to psychic sanctity and expansion. The first and foremost duty of psycho-economics is to wage a tireless fight against all degenerating and dehumanizing economic trends in society.

The second branch of psycho-economy develops and enhances the psychic pabula of the individual and collective minds. This branch is virtually unknown today, but it will become an extremely important branch of economics in the future. It will ensure equilibrium and equipoise in all levels of the economy. It will find new and creative solutions to economic problems to nurture the

maximum utilization of psychic and spiritual potentialities. Psycho-economics will add to the glaring glamour of economics.

Commercial Economy

This part of the economy is concerned with the development of scientific, efficient methods of production and distribution which will not incur loss and where output will exceed input. The aim of commercial economy is to ensure the maximum utilization and rational distribution of resources for the benefit of all.

General Economy

Although some development has occurred in both commercial and general economy, there is scope for much greater development.

PROUT advocates a three-tiered industrial structure which includes key industries managed by the immediate government, cooperatives, and privately owned enterprises. Key industries will function on a

“no profit, no loss” principle. General economy includes the organization of the industrial structure and the coordination of economic planning at all levels to ensure collective welfare.

These four parts of the economy should be integrated and adjusted according to Neo-Humanistic principles to ensure the maximum utilization and rational distribution of all resources, and to harmonize human progress with all creation.

5 June 1986, Calcutta

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Minimum Requirements and Maximum Amenities

There are many attractions in society, and it is the nature of human beings to run after these attractions. Communism exploited this

human tendency by promising to give equal wealth to all. But the mundane resources in the world are limited, so is it possible to provide equal wealth to all? No, and the attempt to do so is nothing but a dazzling ostentation. Now communism has met its end. Communism was nothing but a “bogusism” – a mere ostentation of verbose language and nothing else.

Rather than trying to give equal wealth to all, the proper approach is to ensure that everyone is guaranteed the minimum requirements of life. As the income of people increases, the radius of their minimum requirements should also increase. Just to bridge the gap between the more affluent people and the common people, we have to increase the minimum requirements of all. In addition, the maximum amenities should be provided to meritorious persons to enable them to render greater service to society. This should be done by setting aside some wealth for those with special qualities, but the

provision of the maximum amenities should not go against the common interest.

However, something more can be added. Besides increasing the maximum amenities of meritorious people, we also have to increase the maximum amenities available to common people. Meritorious people will earn more than common people, and this earning will include their maximum amenities. But the common people should not be deprived of maximum amenities, so there should be efforts to give them as much of the maximum amenities as possible. There will still be a gap between the maximum amenities of the common people and the maximum amenities of the meritorious, but there should be constant efforts to reduce this gap. Thus, the common people should also receive more and more amenities. If maximum amenities are not provided to common people, no doubt there will be progress in society, but there will always remain the scope for imperfection in future. What constitutes both the minimum

requirements and the maximum amenities should be ever increasing. This idea is a new appendix to PROUT.

If the maximum amenities of meritorious people become excessively high, then the minimum requirements of common people should be immediately increased. For example, if a person with special qualities has a motor bike and an ordinary person has a bicycle, there is a balanced adjustment. But if the person with special qualities has a car, then we should immediately try to provide the common people with motor bikes.

There is a proverb which refers to plain living and high thinking, but what is plain living? Plain living eighty years ago was not the same as it is today, so plain living changes from age to age. The standard of value also varies from age to age. Thus, both the minimum requirements and the maximum amenities will vary from age to age, and both will be ever increasing. If this were not so,

there would be no economic progress in society.

So, our approach should be to provide the minimum requirements of the age to all, the maximum amenities of the age to those with special qualities according to the degree of their merit, and the maximum amenities to the common people as well. The minimum requirements of the age as per their money value plus the maximum amenities of the age as per their money value are to be fixed and refixed, and fixed again and refixed again, and so on. In this way you must elevate the standard of the people – you must go on elevating their standard of living.

The Amenities of Life

The amenities of life are those things which make life easy. The word “amenity” comes from the Old Latin word *amenuis* which means “to fulfil the desire” or “to make the position easy”. Amenities mean physical and psychic longings. Whatever will satisfy the physical

and psychic longings of the people will be the amenities of the age. Common people should be favoured with maximum amenities. For example, previously people used to dig a well to get drinking water, and then they carried the drinking water to their houses. Later water tanks were constructed, and now drinking water comes through pipes. In this way the amenities of life have increased and life has become easier. Though the aim is to get water, the system of getting it has become more effortless and more convenient.

Take another example. Suppose school children receive the minimum requirements of life. If they are provided with free snacks, this amenity will be over and above the minimum requirements. Again, in most trains there are first and second class compartments. First class passengers already get special facilities, but if free tea or coffee is given to the passengers in the second class compartments, it will be considered an amenity.

More and more amenities will have to be provided to the common people with the progress of society. This process will generate the impetus to collect and utilize more and more resources, and the proper utilization of the collective resources will elevate the standard of living of both the common mass and the meritorious people.

As the need for the minimum requirements is fulfilled and the supply of the maximum amenities increases, the struggle for daily subsistence will gradually decrease and people's lives will become increasingly easy and enjoyable. For this reason PROUT guarantees the minimum requirements and the maximum amenities to all.

The root vidh prefixed by su and suffixed by ac and tá equals suvidhá which means "the pabulum asked for". Kuvidhá means "the pabulum not asked for". If you are travelling by train and you see someone take a snack of delicious food, you will have a natural urge or

longing to enjoy the same delicacies. This is a natural longing for physical pabulum. Those things which your body wants are the natural amenities. Natural amenities include all the longings of nature. They include all natural physiological longings such as urination, defecation and eating when one is hungry. Common people should be provided with more and more natural amenities to make their lives easy.

They should also be provided with more and more super-natural amenities. Common people experience much stress and strain – they should be freed from this tension. For example, the rural people of India always worry about their crops. If the rains are late or if they fail, paddy production will suffer; if the climate is too cold or not cold enough, the winter crop will be adversely affected. The common people should be freed from all these stresses and strains. This can be achieved through the provision of super-natural amenities which can be developed

artificially through science and technology. For example, better agricultural techniques and the construction of small-scale dams to conserve water and improve irrigation can help relieve poor rural people of their stresses and strains. Even simple techniques can increase crop yields. For instance, if the smoke from burning wood chips is made to pass through a field of mustards seed, the flowers of the mustard seeds will bloom immediately and increase the production of the crop.

We should provide common people with both natural and super-natural amenities according to the physical capacity, the psychic capacity and the technical capacity of the state. This approach will ensure that human beings get enough amenities so that their lives become satisfying and congenial.

The minimum requirements must be guaranteed to all human beings, and under the environmental conditions concerned –

that is, the existing environmental conditions – there should be maximum amenities. You should satisfy the thirst for physical and psychic longings – for physical and psychic pabula – under the concerning conditions. So maximum amenities are to be guaranteed to all under the environmental conditions concerned, which means keeping in view such factors as the temporal, topographical, geographical, social and psychic conditions.

What is the difference among surroundings, atmosphere, and environment? “Surrounding” means “everything physical, either directly physical or psycho-physical, that surrounds.” “Atmosphere” means “the nature of different expressions in the surroundings, such as water, air, air pressure, temperature, etc.” “Environment” means “that which controls the characteristic of inanimate and animate beings.”

One age will go and another will come, and human longings will also change. In one age

a particular type of breakfast is accepted as the standard, and in the next age it will be considered substandard. Today people eat bread and butter, but according to the standard of the next age people may eat fried rice or sweet rice. Thus, the maximum amenities of life should be guaranteed to each and every individual, and their standard should be continuously elevated.

The jurisdiction of maximum amenities will go on expanding with the progress of human beings. Human beings are marching ahead, and their longing for different psycho-physical pabula is also increasing. The minimum requirements of the age must be guaranteed, and the maximum amenities must also be guaranteed. Maximum amenities must be provided in the existing environment.

Can human thirst be fully quenched? Can human hunger be fully satisfied? Why is it that human thirst knows no limitations? From PROUT we are moving to psycho-philosophy.

In the relative world human thirst cannot be satisfied. Human beings are the progeny of the Supreme Progenitor, therefore human thirst is unlimited. All the properties of the Supreme are ensconced in human existence, and not only in human existence, but in each and every entity of the expressed universe. Can physical thirst, psychic thirst and spiritual thirst be quenched? Only spiritual thirst can be quenched. Unification of the unit with the Cosmic can quench the spiritual thirst. The physical body has certain limitations. It functions within very strict limitations. The mind has a far bigger jurisdiction, but it is also limited.

Future Progress

Every system has its merits and demerits. The demerit of this system is that as life becomes easier and easier, the physical capacity of human beings will gradually decrease. In ancient times people used to walk great distances with bare feet, carrying

only a single cloth, but today people rarely move without footwear or without taking proper provisions. It is a fact that human strength will decrease in the future, but with the progress of society we have no alternative but to accept this situation. A day will come when the eyes and the bones in the human body will become weak. Almost all people will wear glasses and have false teeth. In the future there will also be tremendous changes in the structure of human beings. Human intellect will become sharper, the cranium will become larger and the nerve fibres will become more complex. Not only will such changes occur in human beings, similar changes will occur in animals and plants too.

The African elephant has a large body and a small head and it cannot be easily domesticated. In comparison the Indian elephant has a small body and a large head. It is more intelligent and it can be easily domesticated.

As life becomes increasingly easy, there will be greater opportunities for intellectual pursuits. A day will come when there will be hardly any need for human beings to work. This may sound strange today and perhaps we might not like to hear such a thing, but that day will surely come. Physicality will be transformed into more and more intellectuality, and intellectuality will be transformed into the culminating point of spirituality. To move ahead from physicality to intellectuality is the Proutistic order. It is the surest movement of human life – it is the surest movement of human destiny.

This type of movement to intellectuality will also take place in certain kinds of animals, such as dogs, monkeys and cows. It may be that in 1,000 years monkeys will reach the stage of evolution that human beings have achieved at present. At that time human beings will be making tremendous progress in the realms of intellectuality and intuition. The human beings of that future age will be very

sensitive. The efferent nerves will be more active than the afferent nerves, and subtle experiences will be more common than they are now. Today human beings seldom have subtle experiences, but in the future they will occur naturally and spontaneously. The functional jurisdiction of the brain will also increase. Similarly, many animals will become more sensitive and their vocabulary will increase. With intellectual development vocabulary increases, and the number of words in a language also increases. The functional jurisdiction of the brain of animals will increase too.

With the help of spiritual practices, the human beings of the future will increase the functional jurisdiction of their brains with accelerating speed. People may think that they cannot make rapid spiritual progress unless the size of the brain, and hence the size of the cranium, is increased. But this is not so because human beings can increase the jurisdiction of their thinking.

Today human beings are progressing in the realm of intellectuality. To attain the culminating point of spirituality the human beings of today have to face less obstacles than the people of the past such as Maharśi Vishvamitra, Maharśi Agastya, etc. The development of the glands and the amount of the hormone secretions is much greater than 100,000 years ago, and the glands will develop and increase their secretions by much more in the next 100,000 years. In 100,000 years, human beings will conceive of things which are beyond the conception of the human beings of today. These types of changes will occur within the social and economic jurisdiction of PROUT.

As human beings gradually move along the path of evolution, they will come to increasingly understand that humans are more psychic than physical. In fact human beings are machines, but they are physico-psychic machines. With psychic changes physical changes will also occur. The human

beings of the future will feel strange when they see the structure of the human beings of today. Similarly, the humans of today would feel disturbed if they could see what the humans of the future will look like.

According to human psychology, people do not like to think much about the future. Rather they prefer to dwell on the past. The reason is that the future may or may not happen as human beings plan, so there is always a risk involved in speculating about the future.

One day the physical and psychic structure of human beings will become divine. It may happen that human beings will not like this mundane world anymore. They will then lose their fascination with the transitory world. They will think that it is better to merge into Supreme Consciousness and leave the world forever. This transformation in human psychology will come about through spiritual practices. So I advise each human being that

as long as you are alive, you should try to build yourself in a nice way, in a complete way. But you should not only build yourselves, you should also build human society in the same way. To achieve this you will have to take the help of PROUT.

The progressive availability of the maximum amenities of life will be guaranteed in PROUT, satisfying physical needs. The satisfied physical needs will lessen the physical obstacles which inhibit human progress, and human beings will experience all-round development, especially in the intellectual stratum. Human beings will get the opportunity to develop in the intellectual stratum without any hindrances.

The truth of humanity, the veracity of humanity, will go on increasing in different areas of expression. That is why I say that there must be guaranteed minimum requirements and guaranteed maximum amenities for all human beings, and that

these must go on increasing. These amenities must be good for the physical and psychic development of human beings, or at least for one of the two.

Neo-Humanistic Approach to Economics

As you know, physical pabulum is limited, so the mind continually runs from one thing to another. This process goes on in a never ending order. But in the realm of intuition the goal is infinite. When aspirants come into this realm, their desires, their longings, are fully satisfied. Thus the controlling point is the spiritual order. Because the spiritual order is infinite, human beings have no control over it, but as the physical realm is finite, human beings can increase their sphere of activity in this realm. The attempt to do this is a never ending process, and there are infinite permutations and combinations in this endeavour, but the latent hunger in human beings will never be satisfied in this realm.

The quest to satisfy this hunger can at best only lead to the threshold point of spirituality.

As human beings progress towards the realm of spirituality, they are helped on the one hand by PROUT, which guarantees minimum requirements and maximum amenities, and on the other hand by Neo-Humanistic outlook, which removes disparities. These two approaches help human beings in their progress and elevation. Finally the existential faculty merges in the Supreme.

PROUT touches the threshold point of spirituality. It also helps to lessen the obstacles in daily life. For example, many daily commuters have to leave their homes at 6:00 a.m. and return at 10:00 p.m. to secure their minimum requirements. But PROUT will guarantee the minimum requirements to all, so their daily burden will be lessened.

Neohumanism also touches the threshold point of spirituality. It helps the existential

faculty reach the pinnacled state.

Neohumanism will bring equality in the social sphere and remove all sorts of disparities, therefore human progress will be greatly accelerated.

When PROUT and Neohumanism are established, the whole existence of human beings will become effulgent in the attainment of the Supreme.

The world is moving ahead with its merits and demerits. The movement from imperfection to perfection is progress. In the physical and psychic realms progress is never ending, but because everything in these realms is limited, the hunger of human beings remains unsatisfied. In the spiritual realm, at the point of culmination, human hunger is fully satisfied. To satisfy human hunger in the physical and psychic realms there is PROUT and Neohumanism. But how can human hunger be satisfied in the subtlest realm? For this Ananda Marga philosophy is there.

Movement beyond the threshold point of spirituality is beyond the scope of PROUT but within the realm of Ananda Marga philosophy. Our ideology is a happy blending of rationality and spirituality.

The human requirements of every age must be guaranteed. The minimum requirements must go on increasing according to the physical and psychic standard of human beings and according to the changes in climatic conditions, environment, etc. Thus the range of minimum requirements will go on increasing according to the range of human social conditions.

At present human beings are thinking about their own minimum requirements more than about the minimum requirements of animals and plants. A day is coming when some of the animals, if not all, will come within the realm of our social membership. Today we say that each and every human being will get the minimum requirements. Tomorrow we will say

that the minimum requirements will also include the needs of dogs, cows, monkeys, etc. To fulfil these requirements, there should be more and more production.

The earth is not only for human beings, it is for other living beings also. So we will have to do something for them. The minimum requirements and maximum amenities should also be given to animals. Today cows, dogs and monkeys are developing; tomorrow more and more animals will be in this category. Animals will also develop longings for different psycho-physical pabula, so they should be guaranteed minimum requirements and maximum amenities too. We will have to do something for them also. This is the demand of Neohumanism, of Neo-Humanistic ideas. This demand should be fulfilled by PROUT.

According to the enlargement of human existential value and jurisdiction, psychic pabula will also increase. There should be

maximum amenities for one and all, with more longing for physico-psychic objects of enjoyment. These amenities should be increased for the entire social order. There cannot be any full stop, any comma or any semi-colon in this progress.

Progress is never ending. Pabulum is also never ending. We should understand this. There cannot be any stop in the march of human progress. And not only in human progress, but in the physical and psychic worlds also. Geo-sentiment will die out; socio-sentiment will disappear; socio-economic sentiment will be eradicated. Finally a day will come when sentient sentiment will dominate. A day will come when human beings will get the maximum amenities, then human beings will reach the zenith. But is the provision of maximum amenities the zenith of service? It may be looked upon as the zenith; but because circumstances change, maximum amenities change. The provision of maximum

amenities should be treated as a relative zenith point and not the supreme zenith.

So maximum amenities of life under the conditions concerned should be guaranteed, and they should go on increasing. We should communicate this idea to the masses and encourage them to help us in our noble mission.

Whenever we are thinking of implementing a theory we should feel that we are living in the present, then we should implement the theory. The order of Shiva was to march ahead maintaining association with present reality. This was the order of Shiva. Marxism completely violated this fundamental principle, which is why Marxism has been broken into pieces under the impact of the present circumstances.

*Bheun̄ge geche mor svapner ghor
Chiñré geche mor viiñár tár*

[The intoxicating effect of my dream has been lost,
The string of my lyre has been broken.]

Suppose there is a bright lamp. Hundreds and thousands of insects will rush towards it and get burnt. Similarly, communism was like a bright lamp. Marxists built castles in the air. They propagated many tall talks but they never thought about the practical application of their socio-economic approach. They killed many innocent people and sent countless others to concentration camps in the name of so-called ideology. Stalin killed hundreds of thousands of people instead of helping them by providing amenities for all. In the name of doing good for the masses he killed so many people. This is not humanism. Today people have kicked communism out. In China the people recently demanded "common human liberty". That was considered an offence, so they were crushed. Do not people have every right to demand common human liberty?

Whatever is feasible and practical has been said in PROUT. Marxism built castles in the air and encouraged the people to dream a meaningless dream. PROUT has not done this nor will PROUT do it. PROUT will do that which is feasible and practical.

If the common people and the meritorious people are treated as the same, the capable people will not be encouraged to develop their higher potentiality. This is the reason why the brain drain is happening in India. When talented people leave India, they leave it for good. Providing special amenities for those with special capabilities will stop the brain drain.

PROUT's approach is to guarantee the minimum requirements for all, guarantee maximum amenities for all and guarantee special amenities for people with special capabilities. This approach will ensure ever increasing acceleration in the socio-economic sphere. The question of retardation does not

arise; even the question of maintaining speed does not arise. There must be acceleration. Acceleration is the spirit of life, the spirit of existence, the spirit of the existential faculty. One may not be a genius, one may simply be a member of the ordinary public, and not properly accepted or respected by all, but even then one will get the minimum requirements and maximum amenities in an ever increasing manner according to the environmental conditions concerned, according to the demands of the day.

So what is the significance of this new approach?

- 1) Minimum requirements are to be guaranteed to all.
- 2) Special amenities are to be guaranteed to capable people. Special amenities are for people of special calibre as per the environmental condition of the particular age.
- 3) Maximum amenities are to be guaranteed to all, even to those who have no special

qualities – to the common people of common calibre. Maximum amenities are to be guaranteed to all as per environmental conditions. These amenities are for those of ordinary calibre – the common people, the so-called downtrodden humanity.

4) All three above are never ending processes, and they will go on increasing according to the collective potentialities.

This appendix to our philosophy may be small, but it is of a progressive nature and a progressive character. It has far-reaching implications for the future. I hope you will realize its impact and all its potentialities.

13 October 1989, Calcutta

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Capitalism in Three Spheres

While trying to fight against any sort of exploitation, first we must have a clear understanding of the nature of the

exploitation. Today human society is subjected to ruthless exploitation by capitalists. Capitalist exploitation has brought humanity to the brink of disaster by spreading its exploitative tentacles into every aspect of human life.

According to PROUT, capitalist exploitation is perpetuated in three spheres – the physical sphere, which we are well aware of, and the intellectual and spiritual spheres. Each of these types of capitalist exploitation is equally dangerous.

To solve the problem of capitalist exploitation in the physical sphere, we will have to ensure that the movement of money does not become restricted or immobile in the hands of a few capitalists. The present economic system should be thoroughly transformed, and a comprehensive and completely new economic system should be built in its place. In this new system money will not be restricted or immobile in the hands

of a few capitalists. The more the optimum mobility of money is kept unrestricted, the more it will strengthen and invigorate the socio-economic life of the collective body.

Intellectual Capitalism

In the psychic sphere there is a noticeable lack of motivation and effort on the part of intelligent and educated people at present to properly utilize their acquired knowledge for the collective welfare. This is the psychology of an apathetic and elitist class who do not like to move from their privileged position to work for the welfare of the common people. This psychology gives rise to a special type of intellectual capitalism.

Intellectual capitalism causes several pressing problems in society. First, the literacy skills of a large part of the population are not developed. Secondly, the socio-economic consciousness of the indigenous people is not encouraged. Thirdly, unhealthy inferiority complexes and fear complexes influence the

minds of the people so that they are kept psychically weak. Fourthly, the intellectual and moral development of human beings is hindered, so intellectual backwardness and irrationality become rampant in society.

Finally, narrow sentiments like geo-sentiment and socio-sentiment start exerting a destructive influence on society.

Consequently, intellectual exploitation, dogmatic theories and doctrines, and religious superstition and rituals become widespread.

Intellectual inertia has assumed dangerous proportions. Taking advantage of this intellectual stagnancy, rapacious capitalists deviously spread a subtle web of exploitation and suck the vitality of society. Through this process capitalists are able to perpetuate their insidious rule of exploitation.

People have been loudly protesting against capitalism for a long time, and on numerous occasions have launched agitations against capitalist exploitation. Remaining vigilant

about people's dissatisfaction with the capitalist system, capitalists have continually changed their methods of exploitation. For instance, they have bought off disgruntled intellectuals and used them as tools of exploitation in their economic schemes.

Capitalism has always adapted to changing circumstances. Thus we see that in different periods there have been different forms of capitalist exploitation such as feudalism, laissez-faire capitalism, imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, mixed economy, multinational corporations, etc. Today even communism, which was once a deadly weapon against capitalist exploitation, has become a blunt and obsolete tool.

Psycho-economic exploitation is the latest form of dangerous and all-devouring capitalist exploitation. It is a special type of exploitation which first weakens and paralyses people psychologically in various ways, and then exploits them economically. Some of the

methods of psycho-economic exploitation include, first, the suppression of the indigenous language and culture of local people; secondly, the extensive propagation of pseudo-culture, exemplified by pornographic literature which debases people's mind and particularly undermines the vitality of the youth; thirdly, the imposition of numerous restrictions on women, forcing them to be economically dependent on men; fourthly, an unpsychological education system with frequent political interference by vested interests; fifthly, the negation of dharma in the name of secularism; sixthly, the balkanization of society into numerous castes and groups; seventhly, the damaging of society by the use of unnatural and harmful methods of birth control; and eighthly, placing the control of different mass media, such as newspapers, radio and television, in the hands of capitalists. Both intellectual exploitation and psycho-economic exploitation are great dangers to the human race today.

To counteract this threat, powerful popular sentiments will have to be generated immediately for the liberation of intellect. For this, the first requisite factor is that intellectuals must keep their intellects pure and unblemished. Casting aside all their inertia and prejudices, intellectuals will have to mix with the common people and engage themselves in their welfare. They will have to assist the common people in their development and extend their support to all anti-exploitation movements. This approach will help to root out exploitation, stabilize the structure of society and expand the intellectual standard of the common people. Human society will move forward to a brilliant future with rapid steps.

Spiritual Capitalism

Besides the physical and intellectual spheres, capitalism also exists in the spiritual realm. Some people neglect their family and society and go to caves in the mountains and

perform arduous penance to fulfil their longing for spiritual emancipation. Because of their selfishness, they keep spiritual knowledge to themselves and do not bother to arouse spiritual awareness in individual and collective life. This is capitalism in the spiritual sphere. It is ultravires to the very spirit of spiritual practices, which is:

Átma mokśártham jagaddhitáya ca

[Self-realization and service to humanity.]

To a spiritualist, everything – right from the Creator down to a small blade of grass – is the manifestation of Supreme Consciousness. The state of equanimity is one of the main characteristics of spirituality. Without attaining this quality, one cannot establish oneself in the supreme state, and one's movement towards Supreme Consciousness will be hindered at every step. In ancient times many people found themselves in this tragic predicament.

Genuine spiritual practice is the birthright of all people. In all spheres of collective life – economic, political, social, etc. – a scientific and rational outlook is essential. The inculcation of cardinal human values is an urgent necessity. This is the demand of the age. Because such higher values are lacking in social life, there are many incongruities and confusions in society.

Today there is an urgent need for an all-round spiritual revolution in individual and collective life under the leadership of a group of accomplished and idealistic leaders. These leaders should be endowed with spiritual power, and their ideology should be based on the solid rock of spirituality. Such highly qualified leaders are called sadvipras. They will ensure social progress in all countries in all ages.

All genuine spiritualists will have to adjust with the level of the dusty earth inspired by the spontaneous love of their hearts. They

will have to share the wealth of their developed intellects with others to lighten the sorrows and sufferings of humanity. Through their guidance and leadership, human thinking will take a new turn and move along an entirely new path. The latent spiritual power in human beings will be awakened. Through their effort and inspiration, the new people of a new generation will be armed with a bold new optimism and vision of the future, and march forward triumphantly.

1981, Calcutta

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Defects of Communism – **Excerpt A**

There are some people who deliver hollow lectures on economics or philosophy and make others believe that these ideas or theories will be able to bring about the economic emancipation of the people and

unite them. They view everybody else in terms of their utility without creating in them any incentive or inspiration for or interest in work, and without recognizing the special value of an individual's efficiency. By delivering superficial talks and propagating empty slogans, they in fact surreptitiously create artificial divisions among human beings. Whenever there is even a slight blow to these divisive sentiments, they protect themselves by claiming that because they are engaged in political affairs which cannot be called social crimes, punishment is not possible.

Many people blindly follow the dogma of so-called religions. A religion is a collection of "isms", and an "ism" is a collection of dogma. (In common language "religion" is equivalent to the Sanskrit word dharma, but in philosophical language "religion" and dharma are not the same thing.) A religion which deals in abstract ideas related to unit consciousness, Supreme Consciousness and

the manifest world is not the only type of religion. There are some "isms", based upon various types of dogma, which sound and function as religions in the socio-economic sphere. And just as religions often impart defective teachings to human beings and incite them to communal conflict, likewise these particular "isms" cause human beings to degenerate to the level of animality in the name of class struggle.

The people belonging to the same religion are divided into various groups and sub-groups. For example, Jainism has Shvetámbar, Digambar and Therápanthii sects. Among the Buddhists there are Maháyánii, Hiinayánii, Lámávádii, Sthavirváda, Sammitiiya, etc., sects. Likewise, in socio-economic religion you must have seen how a particular political or economic party fragments into many branches due to minor differences of opinion.

This has happened, is happening and will continue to happen. It should be clearly understood. Just as the present world suffers from intense oppression due to religion, so does it face disintegration due to the intimidating threats of socio-economic religion.

Peace-loving, civilized human beings will have to find a way to protect themselves from these problems. They will have to act. Following the path of morality, human beings will have to move towards liberation with perseverance and rationality. There is no other way.

10 April 1988, Calcutta

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Defects of Communism – **Excerpt B**

Another meaning of the word *acala* is *dharma*, righteousness. *Dharma* always remains established in its position, whereas human beings waver. Sometimes human beings go beyond the domain of *dharma* and bring great harm upon themselves and society due to misguided intellect, defective philosophies, evil company or faulty direction.

Recently you may have noticed that Marxists sometimes shout at the top of their voices and cry themselves hoarse to proclaim that they do not accept *dharma*. They have now been caught in the trap of their defective philosophy, and their leaders have been caught in the same trap. They liquidated hundreds of thousands of simple, innocent people on flimsy charges without even the pretense of a trial. Was this a humanitarian act? This bestial genocide occurred because Marxists deviated from the path of *dharma*.

Today such people deserve severe condemnation by humanity. It is a sin to

waste public money to build huge monuments or construct roads in memory of these people. Until they capture political power in a country, these hypocrites repeat the sweet slogans of democracy like parrots merely for public consumption. But once they are in power, they unscrupulously throw democracy in the dustbin and grind subtle human sensibilities and higher human values to dust under the steamroller of a ruthless party dictatorship.

10 July 1988, Calcutta

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Defects of Communism – **Excerpt C**

The term “communism” is derived from the word “commune” which comprises the prefix “co” and the root “mune”. “Co” means “together” and “mune” means “to do something”, so “commune” means “to do something together”. “Commune” plus “ism”

equals "communism". The term "communism" is only applicable where the commune system exists. Those who follow the commune system are communists. In the commune system there is no relationship among people doing something together as everything is imposed from the top. Hence, the word "commune" as used by Karl Marx is improper and misleading.

While Marx said many things, our discussion here is only concerned with those things in his philosophy which went against human psychology. That is, we are only concerned with that part of his philosophy which attempted to build castles on quicksand.

Communism is based on crude materialistic philosophy. Its goal is to enjoy whatever you get, depriving others. There is no scope for preparing the mind in an intellectual flow towards the pinnacled entity. When the mind reaches the body of its object – when the mind takes the form of its object – whether

the object is crude or subtle, the mind is powdered down. The natural tendency of the mind is to go downwards, but when the mind ideates on the subtlest entity it is slowly converted into spirit. A spiritual aspirant has to take his or her mind upward.

When the object is subtle the mind becomes subtle, and when the psychic structure becomes subtle the thinking power is developed and higher ideas are created. If one meditates on materialistic ideas the mind will become crude and materialistic. If the mind always meditates on the commune system, will it become subtle or crude? It will surely become crude because in the communist system there is want of humanity and want of morality. The very theory of communism makes the mind crude.

Communism is unable to provide the proper environment for the creation of a strong, solid psychic and intellectual structure. That is why moral stamina – moral sanctity – is lost in

communist countries. Such a phenomenon took place in India just before the Buddhist Age because of the influence of Cárvaka philosophy. Cárvaka philosophy was a protest against Vedic “bogusism”, although it was materialistic in nature. During that period there was not even a pinch of morality – society had lost all its moral stamina. Today the same thing is happening and will continue to happen in communist countries. In communist countries there is no sanctity in moral life – society is devoid of moral principles.

In the name of this defective theory one of the leaders of the Soviet Union killed more than 500,000 people and sent many more to labour camps in Siberia. Among all the anti-human and homicidal theories that have been created in this world, communism is the most barbarous. The day has come for it to be thrown on the scrap heap forever.

Several days ago it was reported in the newspaper that in communist China one million illegitimate children are born each year. This proves that communism encourages immorality. If this immorality goes unabated it will eat away human society and cause doldrums in the social order. Eventually the entire social structure will be destroyed. We cannot tolerate such a philosophy. The very thought of this philosophy is nauseating.

Countries which have both laborious and intellectually developed citizens have never accepted communism. For example, Karl Marx was born in Germany but his theory was not accepted there. Similarly, England gave shelter to Marx but did not accept his theory. The cooperative movement first started in England and the spirit of cooperation is reflected in many aspects of British society; consequently, Marxism has not been able to get a foothold in Britain. Japan is surrounded by communist countries like the Soviet Union, North Korea and China but it did not accept

communism. The citizens of these countries, as well as of some other countries, are both laborious and intellectually developed, hence they have rejected Marxism.

Previously in India some meritorious students accepted Marxism as the best theory out of a bad lot, but they did not embrace it as their ideology of life. Now the cream of the university students are not attracted towards Marxism because Marxism is the symbol of intellectual hollowness.

The relationship between communism and intellectuality is like the relationship between a snake and a ferret. Just as it is the nature of a ferret to devour a snake, intellectually developed people can easily expose the defects in Marxism.

The philosophy of Gandhi died before India got independence – it died long before Gandhi died. But communism has survived long after the death of Marx. It survived only due to the force of arms and constant

booming. If constant booming is done for something, then people start thinking that there must be some truth in what is being propagated. For example, if someone continually says that Gopal is a very bad boy, then people will eventually believe what they are being told. Gopal will become a bad boy in their eyes. Communists are doing constant booming about their theory. Due to this people are being brainwashed, and at this stage it is very easy to inject incorrect ideas into their minds. By constant booming of their wrong theory they are creating their supporters, but these cadres suffer from intellectual bankruptcy. When intellectual people ask them anything they fail to answer, and this causes them to revolt.

In communist countries the party leaders used all their strength and every possible approach – force of arms, terror and control over freedom of speech – to keep the people oppressed. But today the conscience of the party leaders has revolted against these

methods. This was the reason why the student movement in China was not suppressed for a long time.

Communist countries are abandoning the defective commune system because it is causing suffering from food shortages. Communists are abandoning the commune system because this rotten system is adversely affecting the health of society. Communist leaders, who used to give so-called guidance to the people, have themselves abandoned the path of communism. It is clear that Marxism has failed theoretically, but now it has also failed in practice in those countries which follow Marxism. The sins which Marxism has committed have resulted in its annihilation.

Any theory, principle, idea or proposition must have a firm foundation to stand upon. This is a fundamental necessity. Everything in the physical or psychic spheres moves within the periphery of the three supreme relative

factors – time, space and individuality. Theories or propositions are not exceptions to this rule.

Democracy is a sort of procrastinated progress – progress is not speedy or accelerated. In capitalist democracies votes can be purchased, thus poor people cannot fight elections. Can there be any adjustment between pseudo-capitalism and pseudo-communism as was tried by Euro-communism? Pseudo-communism was once tried by Adolf Hitler and Mussolini. Pseudo-communism means it seems to be communism but practically it is not. The national socialists of Europe included Mussolini in Italy, Hitler in Germany and Franco in Spain.

The proposition of communism has got no fundamental foot to stand upon. Its very base is oscillating. It is neither a theory, nor a principle, nor a proposition. Communism today may be termed “revisionism” or

“pseudo-revisionism”. “Pseudo” is a Latin word of German origin. It does not mean “false”. It means “to some extent like the original but not exactly like the original”. Any policy of pseudo-revisionism is ultravires to the principle of the vital faculty – it is ultravires to the existential faculty. It is a counter-psycho motion and against the seed of a living sprout, therefore it can never be accepted. It is like the temporary glow of a flame – it only exists for a short period, then after its sad demise, it leaves behind no permanent mark in human history. This will be the fate of communism. It is a policy or proposition based on pseudo-revisionism. Such pseudo-revisionism is detrimental to the existential faculty, and that is why pseudo-revisionism should be discarded at the very primordial phase. Such a phenomenon has taken place in the world of intellectuality. Communism has died a premature death.

If any wrong theory continues for a long period, when the reaction against it finally

starts the reaction will only last a short time and will be intensely destructive, like a hurricane. Today communism is burning in the fire of its own failure, and your work is to add some fuel to that fire.

All human society will have to undergo atonement for the sins committed by communism – not even the innocent will be spared. This dangerous theory has committed many atrocities against society, and it will continue to do so until it is finished in name as well as in theory. Although communism is dead in theory, it continues to exist in name. As this theory is extremely detrimental to human existence, you should ensure that it is eradicated in name as well as soon as possible.

14 July 1988, Calcutta

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Economic Dynamics

Each and every movement in this universe is systaltic. Nothing ever moves in a straight line. Due to this systaltic motion, internal clash and cohesion take place. The ups and downs of socio-economic life in different phases of the social order are sure to take place due to this systaltic principle. When the period of pause is long, society goes through a phase of extended staticity, and it may lose all its dynamic movement or even cease to exist. If there is lack of dynamic force in the phase of pause, then the stage of dynamicity may not come in the subsequent phase.

The downfall of both capitalism and communism is inevitable due to their inherent staticity. Both capitalism and communism are on the verge of extinction from this world. The external and internal spheres of capitalism have ordinary acceleration, but there is a contradiction between its internal and external spheres. The contradictions in

capitalism are due to the self-centred profit motivated psychology and the accumulation of wealth for the benefit of a few rather than for the welfare of all. Hence, capitalism is not congenial to the integrated growth of human progress. A day is therefore sure to come when capitalism will burst like a fire-cracker.

Marxism, too, is a transitory phenomenon. In the external sphere of Marxism there is only ordinary acceleration, and in the internal sphere there is staticity. The result is negative dynamicity. That is why Marxism will never be a success either. Marxism is just like a comet on a parabolic path – it is not of hyperbolic order. Marxism can only bring society to an omni-static state; that is, the state of nihilism or cynicism – a sort of negation.

Economic Depressions – The Result of Staticity

In the economic sphere depressions are inevitable in both capitalist and communist countries due to this very inherent, intensive

and innate staticity. Economic depressions are actually the net result of suppression, repression and oppression – that is, exploitation. When exploitation reaches the culminating point, the mobility and the speed of the society become virtually nil. In such a stage, that is, in this culminating point, a natural explosion takes place. In the case of the material world the explosion is of a material nature, and in the psychic sphere the explosion is of a psychic order, and so on. Depressions may happen in any of the four eras – the Shúdra, Kśatriya, Vipra or Vaeshya Eras.

Depressions may also take place in the cultural life of society due to suppression, repression and oppression. As a result, every aspect of cultural life becomes perverted and degenerates. This is why we get perverted literature, music, dance, art, architecture, etc.

In both social and economic life this depression becomes unbearable for one and

all. Such a depression took place between 1929 and 1931. During this depression in Bengal, five kilos of brinjal were sold for one paisa, and forty kilos were sold for eight paise in the Burdwan market, but there was no one to purchase these items. There were also big curtailments in salaries, and people had to accept salary cuts of ten percent or more.

Today also the stage has almost come for such a severe reaction. The explosion will come in two, three or five years. It will surely come within ten years. The difference between the previous depression and the future depression will be that in the previous one there was little inflation, but the future depression will be associated with inflation. Hence, it will be more detrimental to the integrated development of human society.

This depression will occur in the industrial subsection of the commercial economy. It will have widespread and devastating consequences for humanity.

An endeavour should be made to shorten the span of this economic depression. Before the final culminating point comes, it is possible to avert the disaster and accelerate the speed of social movement. We can do so by creating a socio-economic and cultural impact on the entire social structure through PROUT. As the world is passing through a most critical phase, we should be more active and create an impact. If the positive impact we create coincides with the explosion, the effect will be excellent.

It must be borne in mind that both inflation and depression result from the ailment of staticity. If the production in a country is abundant and the gold bullion reserves are in proportion to the country's economic position, there is no possibility of inflation. However, if the circulation of the capital decreases as a result of staticity and the quantum of production also goes down, then inflation is bound to take place.

If a country has a constant deficit in foreign trade, in that case also there is the possibility of inflation. In addition, if foreign trade is not conducted according to the barter system and the country has to import foodstuffs and export raw materials, inflation will certainly occur.

On the other hand, if there is sufficient production and adequate supply, but suddenly the quantum of demand falls, then the value of money suddenly increases for the buyer. This is called "negative inflation" or "deflation".

The Causes of Depressions

There are two main causes for economic depressions – first, the concentration of wealth, and secondly, blockages in the rolling of money. If capital is concentrated in the hands of a few individuals or the state, most people will be exploited by a handful of exploiters. As a result of this process of severe exploitation, a serious explosion takes

place. This explosion is known as a depression in the economic world. The concentration of wealth, and particularly the concentration of the value of wealth, is the fundamental cause of a depression.

Secondly, a depression may occur when money that is in the possession of individual or state capitalists stops rolling. Money remains inert or unutilized because those capitalists think that if the money is allowed to roll freely then their profits will decrease, even though it will bring relief to the common people. The very psychology of capitalists is to make profit from the rolling of money. When they discover that the investment of money does not bring profit up to their expectations, then they stop rolling money. This keeps money immobile or inert; consequently, there is no investment, no production, no income and hence no purchasing power. The situation becomes so dangerous that there are few buyers to buy commodities.

If there is surplus labour and deficit production, the effect of depression is more acute. Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, especially the Telengana region, and Orissa are surplus labour areas, so during a depression these areas could face indiscriminate closure of business houses and lay-offs. When wages fall, the people in surplus labour areas who used to go to deficit labour areas for employment will be subjected to more hardships. This will aggravate the unemployment problem in surplus labour areas. In such situations, restricting the transfer of food among different socio-economic units could lead to an acute scarcity of food in the deficit production areas, and therefore a cordon system should not be introduced. Countries and regions with surplus production and deficit labour usually suffer less hardships during depression.

The Effect of Economic Depressions

An economic depression in capitalist countries will not spare communist or so-called socialist countries, India and the Middle East. India exports many raw materials to industrially developed countries and their satellites. India also purchases raw materials such as raw cotton from other countries, although it used to export such materials in the past. Therefore, to the extent to which India is dependent on other countries for its exports or imports, it will be affected. India also has immense loans, and these loans will put a strain on the Indian economy during the depression. The fire sparks of depression will not spare India. If the financial or monetary trade – or say the trade that affects bullion – is lessened, and barter trade is increased, then the effect of a depression on India will not be much. Therefore, India should try to increase its range of barter trade.

Bangladesh exports manufactured goods, raw jute and hide, and imports foodstuffs and almost all other articles. If Bangladesh wants

to avoid a depression, it will have no alternative but to increase its barter trade.

In time the Arab countries – those selling oil – will be the most affected. Even the communist countries will not be spared from the onslaught of a depression. These countries have not been able to solve their food problems. Although they have huge buffer stocks, they depend on Canada, the USA and Australia for wheat. If these dollar-based countries suffer from a depression, the communist countries will certainly be affected by a depression, although not much.

Depression is not a natural phenomenon. Pause is a natural phenomenon. In a Proutistic structure pause may occur but depression will not occur. To save society from depression, the approach of PROUT is to increase purchasing power by increasing production, reduce disparities in the value of wealth, and increase the circulation of money; that is, by keeping money rolling. Empty

slogans will not do. Attention will have to be given to increasing the level of production.

In capitalist and communist countries, the mode of production is defective. In capitalist countries, labour does not work in the interest of the management and management does not allow the rolling of money due to the concentration of wealth. In communist countries, labour does not feel one with the job and that is why there is sluggish production.

The cooperative model of PROUT is free from both sets of defects. PROUT is well-adjusted with human ideals and sentiments. Other socio-economic systems are ultravires to human existence and all-round elevation.

Bullion Inflation

In capitalist economies, production is for the profit of the capitalist and the profit goes to individuals, groups and the state exchequer. In socialist economies or so-called communism, the profit goes to the state

exchequer and a microscopic fraction of the profit goes to the actual producers. In both cases capitalism exists, and whenever fresh financial investment is required, inflation takes place.

In a Proutistic economy, production will be solely for consumption. As there will not be any profit motive, there cannot be any fresh inflation, and the existing inflation will gradually die out. In Proutistic production or consumption, in the first phase the money value remains constant and full-fledged purchasing capacity will be guaranteed to the people. In the second phase, when production increases in the revised economic order, money will get back its natural market value. Finally, after consumption, money will get back its actual value. Inflation will be checked and purchasing capacity and the minimum requirements of life will be guaranteed to the people.

The second phase will continue for ten to fifteen years. After the expiry of this period, that is, in the third phase, minimum requirements of life will increase and people will acquire more purchasing power. This power will increase at an accelerating rate.

The printing and issuing of monetary notes having no bullion value must stop immediately, and new notes having bullion value should be issued in new colours and shapes. No monetary notes should be issued by the government from then on without a clear assurance that it is prepared to pay the requisite amount of money in gold coins. This can only be implemented by a Proutistic government.

Production Inflation

The problem of production inflation cannot be ignored either. Production inflation may occur in two ways. First, owing to the application of scientific methods, the production of certain commodities may

increase in excess of the demand or need in particular socio-economic regions. Then it becomes a problem how such excess production or overproduction can be marketed or consumed. Secondly, it may also happen that all of a sudden under certain circumstances the production of commodities increases, then it becomes difficult to find a market for such production.

Now a question arises whether or not such production will increase purchasing power as well as elevate the standard of it. In general circumstances such production is not a big problem, not a chronic problem, but if no measure is taken to find a market for such overproduction, then it may take the form of an acute problem. This problem can be tackled by taking three measures.

First, there should be a free trade system so that overproduction can be consumed by other countries or other economic units. In India, excepting the Punjab and Haryana,

there is underproduction of milk. In other states, common people cannot get a sufficient amount of milk. But there are many countries, such as certain European countries, where there is overproduction of milk. In England, Germany and Sweden the authorities even give orders or encourage the public to kill cows. If in these circumstances free trade is allowed among different countries, the countries having overproduction or underproduction can make respective adjustments among themselves so that the overproduction of commodities may be consumed by under-producing countries. In that case the concerned countries will be benefited. Here free trade means that there should not be any imposition of export or import duties, and thus the prices of these commodities will benefit the consumers when they reach the market for actual consumption.

Secondly, there should be proper arrangement everywhere for the preservation of products which are in excess production. In

Malda in Bengal there may be overproduction of mangoes which are perishable commodities. As there is no system of preservation, the ordinary mango growers will have to sell their mangoes at throw away prices. But if they could sell the same products four months later they would get remunerative prices. Moreover, if processing factories are established, they can then produce dried mango, mango candy, mango juice, sauce, jam, etc., which can be preserved for a longer time. There are many countries in Europe or other parts of the world where there is no mango production. If a system of preservation were available, then mangoes could easily be sold in those European countries, and the mango growers could earn a good amount of money.

In many places in India abundant vegetables are produced in the winter season; for example, in Nadia district, at Ranaghat, Nagi, Bago, etc. In European countries at the same time there cannot be any vegetable

production due to the excessive cold. If vegetable processing factories could be installed in those places, then perishable vegetable products could be easily preserved by such processes as canning, and exported to other countries. From Calcutta it takes a maximum of twenty days for a ship to reach Europe, so preservation arrangements could be made for that period. Similar arrangements could be made for betel leaf. If this were done, then the poor growers at Tomluk, Mecheda, Bagnan, etc., would be able to live a well-to-do life.

Thirdly, new diversified styles of consumption should be invented. That is, consumption should be of a progressive nature and the style of consumption should be diversified. For example, there is only limited utilization of linseed at the moment in India. If the oil extracted from the linseed is deodorized, then it can be widely used as an edible oil. Also linen thread can be manufactured from linseed plants, which

generally go to waste. Okra is abundantly produced in India, but it is only used as a vegetable. Oil can be extracted from okra seeds, and this can be processed and marketed as edible oil. Also, fine thread can be manufactured from the okra plant, and good quality clothes can be prepared from that thread.

In Bangladesh and West Bengal there is overproduction of jute, which is an acute problem today. This problem can be easily tackled by diversifying the methods of jute consumption. For example, we can get fine thread from raw jute to produce good quality clothes.

In the existing world structure geo-sentiment is an obstacle to the implementation of free trade. Neither the capitalist countries nor the communist countries like the free trade system because it is detrimental to their respective self-interests. But there are some free trade zones

in the world which are very bright examples of the success of this sort of system.

Singapore is one such example. There was a good proposal to declare Calcutta a free trade zone, but it was not implemented for many reasons, including the failure of the concerned leaders. Bengal could have been greatly benefited by such a system.

In a revised economic structure – that is, PROUT – there must not be any import or export duties on consumable commodities. If this is done, then this earth will be converted into a golden earth.

The commune system suffers from the acute problem of chronic shortages of food products, so the communist countries always import food products from capitalist countries, in spite of all sorts of hue and cry raised by them regarding their “isms”. Therefore, they oppose the free trade system.

In case there is overproduction of non-perishable goods or raw materials, these raw

materials must not be allowed to be exported to other countries. Instead, raw materials must be immediately converted into manufactured goods at the place where they are available. For example, Orissa, the western portion of Rááh, certain portions of Madhya Pradesh, and certain portions of southern Bihar and Telengana are rich in different kinds of raw materials. These economically undeveloped places can easily be converted into advanced areas like the Rhine region of Germany. Poverty stricken people will live an affluent life if factories in these areas convert raw materials into manufactured goods.

The export of raw materials is a sign of an unhealthy economy in a country. If overproduction is caused due to the scientific application of improved methods in industry and agriculture, such as good manuring, then consumption may be adjusted through different methods as suggested above. This will also increase the purchasing power of the

people. In such a stage the bountifulness of nature will ultimately prove to be a boon for the common people. Hence, in a Proutistic structure production inflation would not be regarded as a problem.

The Panacea

PROUT is the panacea for the integrated progress of human society. It aims to bring about equilibrium and equipoise in all aspects of socio-economic life through totally restructuring economics. Without PROUT, socio-economic emancipation will remain a utopian dream. Only PROUT can save the world from depression.

Furthermore, only PROUT is free from the inherent and exherent staticity. In capitalism there is exherent and inherent staticity. In communism there is extensive and intensive innate staticity. People suffer from the ailments of staticity. These ailments will destroy all forms of "isms" in the very near

future. Wise people should utilize this moment.

We are near the last stage of the Vaeshya Era. If an impact is created, it will help the suffering humanity. It is the most opportune moment for creating an all-round revolution. This is a new sub-theory under Proutistic theory and may be called gati vijiñána – the science of dynamics in PROUT.

13 September 1987, Calcutta

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Economic Depressions

In the economic sphere, you must know that two factors are very important. The first is that money will have to be kept in circulation. It must be understood that the more the purchasing capacity of money is not utilized or money is kept stagnant, the more

the economic stratum is damaged. The second is that money, and indirectly its interest, can bring about disparities in wealth if it loses its ability to be the unit of economic equilibrium and stability. If these two fundamental factors of economics are even partially forgotten, a worldwide economic depression will result.

Even if countries or socio-economic regions which have been maintaining a stable economic standard engage in trade related to bullion with other countries, they will have to suffer such a depression partially if not totally. If countries which are prosperous in various spheres and economically unrelated to other countries undergoing a depression, invest their wealth in enterprises of a non-yielding nature such as excessive defence spending, superfluous construction of large buildings, luxury goods, etc. – investments which do not earn any income in return – these countries will also suffer from economic depression.

However, if a country discontinues trade related to direct or indirect economic transactions and commences barter trade instead with other countries, it will not suffer much from such an economic depression. In this case only a very slight economic depression, which is hardly felt, takes place at the end of every financial year due to imbalances in economic transactions. This type of depression is felt slightly every three years, a bit more every thirty years, and still more every 350 years...

When something, for some reason or other, descends from its universally accepted position, or its natural value is reduced or brought down, we call it "devaluation". When the leaders of the state find it difficult to balance the value of the currency with bullion, sometimes they officially reduce the value of the currency. This is called "monetary devaluation". But, an economic depression is felt throughout a country or the world due to

some inherent defects in the existing economic systems.

17 January 1988, Calcutta

Block-Level Planning

In a decentralized economy, economic planning is to be undertaken for the welfare of the local people. Economic planning will utilize all the mundane and supramundane potentialities of the local area to meet the local requirements.

Factors of Planning

Economic planning should include the following factors – the cost of production, productivity, purchasing capacity and collective necessity.

Cost of production: In many rural economies, it is a traditional practice for farmers and their family members to work in the fields to grow crops. At the time of fixing the price of their produce, they do not

calculate the labour costs involved in cultivating the land or pay wages to their family members. Nor do they determine the cost of the tools or machines they use in the fields, or count the other expenses incurred in producing their crops. Hence, they fail to systematically calculate the per unit cost of production. As a result, they incur losses or perpetually get low prices for their produce.

To solve this problem, agriculture must be reorganized and established on the same basis as industry through the cooperative system. According to PROUT, agriculture should be treated as an organized industry. Only then can the per unit cost of production be systematically determined and the poverty of farmers end. Farmers will get proper prices for their commodities and stability in the agricultural sector will be achieved.

In a Proutistic economy, the cost of production should be systematically determined and kept at the minimum level. All

industries, including agrico-industries and agro-industries, must see that the cost of producing a particular commodity does not exceed its market value. Every production unit must be economically viable.

Productivity: The economy will have to be organized in such a way that it has its own innate power to produce more and more. Money should be invested – money should be kept rolling rather than hoarded – so that the collective wealth of society is continually increased.

This principle guides planners so that maximum production will occur according to the collective needs. There should be increasing production based on consumption and full employment for all local people. Products should be developed wherever raw materials are available, and under utilization of any production unit should not be allowed.

If people are guided by the needs and potentialities of their socio-economic unit, the

law of productivity is benign. Maximum production in the economy will provide a congenial environment for more investment, more industrialization, more employment, increasing purchasing capacity and increasing collective wealth in an ever progressive manner.

Purchasing capacity: Planning should also result in the increasing purchasing capacity of every person. PROUT does not support the existing practice of considering the per capita income as the index of people's economic standard. Per capita income is a deceptive and defective measure of collective wealth popularized by capitalist economists to fool people and cover their exploitation. The genuine measure of people's economic advancement is increasing purchasing capacity.

To increase people's purchasing capacity, the easy availability of the minimum requirements, stable prices, progressive,

periodic increases in wages and salaries, and increasing collective wealth must be ensured.

In a Proutistic economy, there will be no limit to purchasing capacity – that is, purchasing capacity will be ever increasing. The minimum requirements must be guaranteed and should always be increased according to time, space and person, and this can best be done by continuously increasing the purchasing capacity of the people in relation to the economic development of the concerned socio-economic unit. The greater the purchasing power of the people, the higher their standard of living.

Collective necessity: Planners will also have to consider the existing collective needs as well as the future requirements of a socio-economic unit, and chalk out their developmental programmes accordingly. In India, many industries have been established but the production of electricity has not been increased. Through lack of proper planning,

power production has lagged behind industrial development. This is especially evident in Bengal and Bihar.

Most importance should be given to the production of the minimum requirements, so planners will have to make provision for the minimum requirements of all, but the requirements of both meritorious people and those with special needs should not be neglected, otherwise the requirements of the age will not be met.

Block-Level Planning

Planning should function on various levels such as the block, district, state, national and global levels, but block-level planning will be the basic level of planning. Block-level planning is essential for economic decentralization, so it should be adopted in all blocks. There should be provision in the constitution for block-level planning for socio-economic development.

The amount of natural and human resources varies from block to block, hence separate economic plans will have to be made for each and every block. There should be a block-level planning board in every block for this purpose. The block-level planning body will prepare a plan for the development of the block and accordingly implement the local developmental programmes. Above the block level there will be a district-level planning board. Thus, from the block level upwards, there will be planning boards to prepare and implement the local plans and programmes. It must be remembered that planning should be of ascending order, starting at the block level, and including all the levels of a socio-economic unit.

Most blocks are currently demarcated on the basis of political considerations. PROUT does not support such divisions. Block divisions should be reorganized according to such factors as the physical features of the area (including river valleys, varying climatic

conditions, topography, the nature of the soil, the type of flora and fauna, etc.), the socio-economic requirements and problems of the people, and their physico-psychic aspirations. Thus, blocks should be scientifically and systematically demarcated as the basis for efficient decentralized economic planning.

Each block should be made economically sound so that the entire socio-economic unit will be self-sufficient. Only then will a country or federation become economically strong and developed in the real sense. This is a unique feature of PROUT's decentralized economic planning.

When planning is prepared for the all-round growth of a single block exclusively, it is called "intra-block planning". Each block must have its own developmental plan, adjusting with the overall plan of the socio-economic unit at its various levels.

However, there are problems which traverse block boundaries and cannot be tackled or

solved by one block alone, such as flood control, river valley projects, communication systems, higher educational institutions, afforestation projects, the environmental impact of development, the establishment of key industries, soil erosion, water supply, power generation, the establishment of an organized market system, etc. So, cooperation among blocks is necessary. Planning among blocks is called "inter-block planning". Inter-block planning is an economic venture into some selected fields to organize and harmonize socio-economic development in a few adjoining blocks through mutual coordination and cooperation.

At each and every level of planning, there should be short-term and long-term planning. In all cases, the maximum time limit for short-term planning should be six months, and the maximum time limit for long-term planning should be three years. Short-term and long-term plans should be drafted in such a way that they are complementary to each other.

The immediate goals of planning at each level are to guarantee the minimum requirements of the local people, eliminate unemployment, increase purchasing capacity and make socio-economic units self-sufficient.

Benefits of Block-Level Planning

There are many benefits to block-level planning. The area of planning is small enough for the planners to understand all the problems of the area; local leadership will be able to solve the problems according to local priorities; planning will be more practical and effective and will give quick, positive results; local socio-cultural bodies can play an active role in mobilizing human and material resources; unemployment will be easily solved; the purchasing capacity of the local people will be enhanced; and a base for a balanced economy will be established.

The development of local industries will provide immediate economic benefits. The unemployment problem will be rapidly solved,

and in a short time it will be possible to create a congenial environment for permanent full employment. In fact, the only way to solve unemployment and bring about full employment throughout the world is by developing block-level industries. The growth of local industries will provide social security to the local people and create greater opportunities for their all-round advancement, because all their basic needs will be met.

The population of every socio-economic unit should be organized on a scientific basis. The problem of a floating population should be tackled on the block level itself. Where there is a floating population, it should be either permanently settled or returned to its original region.

Differences in Planning

It is inevitable that there will be differences in planning for different regions. Let us take an example. Will the planning for the Punjab and the Cauvery Valleys be the same? The

planning cannot be the same in these areas for three main reasons.

First, the Jehlam, Chenab, Ravi, Beas and Sutlej Rivers in the Punjab are all of Himalayan origin. They provide a perennial source of water because they are ice fed. The Punjab rivers maintain their existence with the help of molten ice. But the rivers of the Cauvery Valley – the Tungabhadra and Cauvery – are of Ghat origin; that is, they originate in the Eastern Ghat and the Western Ghat. They depend upon seasonal rainfall. Although there are two rainy seasons in a year in the Cauvery Valley, they are not perennial sources of water because they are not ice fed. No hydroelectricity can be generated from the Cauvery Valley rivers because of the uncertainty of the water supply, but hydroelectricity can be generated at the Bhakhra Nangal Dam because the rivers in the Punjab contain water throughout the year.

Secondly, the Cauvery Valley, being nearer to the equator, has an extreme climate. The Punjab also has an extreme climate, but this is due to the different winds coming from the northwest and the east. The Cauvery Valley does not depend on any winds. Climatic variations will have to be considered in areas such as agriculture and power generation.

Thirdly, the central portion of the Cauvery Valley consists of wavy, laterite soil and is called the Deccan Plateau. There is a small slice of land situated between the hills and the sea which is comprised of alluvial soil and plain land. Only a small portion of the Deccan Plateau contains alluvial soil. The Punjab is plain land. The Deccan peninsula consists of four coasts – the Utkal Coast, stretching from the Mahanadi to Godavari; the Coromandel Coast, from Godavari to Cape Comorin; the Malabar Coast, from Cape Comorin to Goa; and the Konkan Coast, from Goa to Gujarat. These coastal areas are not composed of wavy land. These coastal portions are known

as the granaries of India. In the Telengana area of the Deccan Plateau, there is a chronic shortage of food. In the Cauvery Valley, the eastern coastal area – the Coromandel area – should chalk out a developmental programme. The Deccan Plateau can grow palmyra trees but not coconut trees, whereas the coastal areas can grow both.

A proper approach to planning will take into account all the relevant factors before development schemes are implemented.

1981, Calcutta

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Agrarian Revolution

The economic development of a country depends on the collective labour of different social groups. This is the reason that the system of the division of labour gradually

evolves out of the practice of domestic economy. The value of the labour of all groups, including industrial labourers, peasants, carpenters, blacksmiths, goldsmiths, potters, physicians and clerks, is equal in the collective development of the economy.

The Economy of Ancient India

In ancient India a form of elastic economy was prevalent which supported the collective economic endeavour of the people. In the Vedic Age the economic system of India evolved on the basis of social classes (varṇa). The shúdras, kśatriyas, vipras and vaeshyas – these four social classes evolved and remained content with specific economic activities of their choice. One particular class engaged itself in farming, while other classes undertook different occupations. People did not rush towards agricultural work as is happening today. As this class system

(varnāshrama) was hereditary, there was little scope for socio-economic imbalance.

In that age agriculture reached a high degree of expertise and efficiency. Kings used to be directly involved with the different aspects of agriculture such as planting multiple crops according to the different seasons, large-scale and small-scale agriculture, the use of manure, the application of insecticides, irrigation systems through rivers and canals, and dairy farming. In those days the state had the duty to confiscate land from landlords who kept land unutilized, and transfer it to those who could properly utilize it for agricultural purposes. The value of land was determined by the extent of its productivity. The state used to fix the price of agricultural produce, and as a result there was little scope for the business class to exploit farmers.

The Impact of the British

After the arrival of the British in India economic balance was lost, mainly because the British government was totally indifferent to the development of indigenous industry and agriculture. It did not even realize the necessity of planning for this type of development. Instead, it introduced a new system of education which mainly produced a class of clerks which was utilized by the British government to consolidate its administrative power. Many people gave up their hereditary occupations and sought posts in the British administration. This seriously damaged the agricultural system.

The second cause of economic imbalance was the gradual collapse of indigenous industrial enterprises, notably the hand weaving industry. As a result of the supply of cloth from the Manchester cotton mills, the demand for hand woven cloth began to dwindle. The supply of aluminium utensils also destroyed India's pottery industry. The factories established by the British severely

affected indigenous industries because they used the latest technology. Consequently, those employed in these industries gradually gave up their traditional occupations and crowded the agricultural sector for a livelihood.

This problem was compounded by growth in the population, which led to the subdivision and fragmentation of agricultural land. This in turn resulted in decreased production. Food was imported from outside India to feed the population. During the Second World War the importation of food was stopped, causing a severe shortage of food in the country.

To overcome the great famine that struck Bengal in 1943, the Wavell administration introduced a rationing system. Wavell also tried to alleviate the famine by restricting the movement of food from one province to another. But these measures did not solve the problem – rather most people became trapped in the food rationing system.

Post-Independence India

Even after the departure of the British in 1947, about 145,000 people were included in the rationing system. This resulted in the gradual increase of black marketeering, profiteering and other corrupt practices. The central government suddenly abolished the food rationing system in an attempt to solve the problem of corruption. This precipitous step caused the price of food to rise to exorbitant heights. Later the food rationing system had to be reintroduced.

The Indian leaders tried to solve this food problem by calling for a “grow more food” campaign, but the campaign was a failure because the system of agriculture was not changed to increase output. The government adopted the policy of increasing the area of arable land and not the productivity of the existing land. There was no planning to determine whether or not the new land was suitable for agriculture, and no proper

irrigation facilities to improve productivity. But above all, in the democratic system bureaucrats had ample scope to neglect their responsibilities, and due to defective administration much agricultural potential was wasted. Consequently, dishonest traders conspired to make the agricultural sector ineffective. They perpetuated the food problem to satisfy their own selfish interests. So from all points of view the agricultural system in India is extremely weak.

The fundamental characteristic of any developed economy is this: about thirty percent to forty-five percent of the people should remain engaged in agriculture and the rest of the population should be employed in industry or other sectors of the economy. Excessive pressure on agriculture is not a sign of a healthy economy. At present about seventy-five percent of the Indian population is dependent upon agriculture for its livelihood. This is a very dangerous situation for the Indian economy. Those who are

engaged in agriculture remain unemployed most of the year and this is an enormous waste of human labour. This unemployment problem in agriculture must be solved immediately – it brooks no delay.

Differences Between India and China

Recently, a particular group of politicians raised the slogan of “agricultural revolution” to solve the problem. They wanted to solve India’s agricultural problems by following the example of China. However, there are vast differences between the agricultural problems confronted by India and those confronted by China. The problems of India can never be solved by following the policies of China.

The basic problem in China is that despite considerable agricultural progress, China has not been able to feed its huge population. Moreover, in China there is not even sufficient land to accommodate its huge population – and its population is continually increasing. In the industrial sphere China has already

exhausted most of its natural resources. It hopes to preserve its remaining scant resources for industrial development, thus preventing a dark future.

There are three main economic problems in China. First, China must feed its increasing population through agricultural development. Secondly, the percentage of the population employed in agriculture is too high. And thirdly, employment must be provided to the non-agricultural sector of the economy through industrial expansion. Because none of these problems could be solved immediately, China under Mao Zedong adopted a policy of grabbing land from neighbouring states. The recent Chinese attacks in Tibet, India and the Soviet Union were motivated by an insatiable hunger for land.⁽¹⁾ This is a very ingenious plan for agrarian revolution!

The agricultural problems in India are of a different nature. There is ample scope for agricultural development and industrial

revolution in India. India suffers economic hardships today because its economic potential has not been properly harnessed.

There are two fundamental economic issues in India. First, the agricultural potentiality of the country must be developed by reducing the percentage of the population working in agriculture. Secondly, the excessively high percentage of the population dependent on agriculture must be reduced by developing industries.

Infusing in people the sentiment of grabbing land from other countries will not solve India's agricultural problems. The only solution is to increase productivity within the country. Those who raised the slogan, "China's agrarian revolution shows the way for India" are labouring under the illusion of defective thinking.

The Defects of Distributing Plots of Land

Another political group in India wants to bring about radical changes in the economic

sphere by transferring all power to the masses. According to them every citizen should own a certain portion of land – no one should remain landless. Poor people are easily won over by these sentiments. Politicians espouse these ideas merely to lure people so that they can fulfil their own political aspirations. Poor landless peasants become overjoyed at the prospect of owning their own land, then politicians use them to achieve their objectives.

A particular political party today advocates forcibly depriving landowners of their land and distributing it to the landless peasants. By creating a rift between the landowners and agricultural workers, these politicians try to cultivate a philanthropic image.

Let us analyse to what extent this approach would be conducive to the overall economic growth of India. First, if surplus land were distributed among landless people, no one would get more than an acre of land at the

most. This acre of land would not be an ideal economic holding because it could not be cultivated with the latest scientific methods. A sizeable portion of the land would be wasted in demarcating boundary lines, so it would be impossible to increase productivity. Increased productivity is the most important agricultural requirement in India today. Besides this, if land were distributed in this way, land would be further subdivided with the increase in the population, further aggravating the problem.

Secondly, this approach would have the effect of increasing the number of petit bourgeoisie. By petit bourgeoisie I mean those who derive unearned income by giving their land to others for cultivation because they are in economic difficulty. If landless peasants acquired a plot of one acre, they would certainly get some psychic satisfaction, but when they failed to earn anything after cultivating the land, they would definitely become disheartened. It would require all their time, energy and money to cultivate one

acre of land productively because the land would be too small to utilize modern agricultural techniques. The amount of produce they would get in return would not be enough to maintain their families. They would have to lease a portion of the land and try to earn their income through other methods. By this process, the number of landowners would increase and they would all become part of the petit bourgeoisie. Politicians who claim that they hate landowners and raise slogans for their destruction deviate from their professed platform, because such an ideology only results in the creation of more landowners.

Thirdly, before the redistribution of the land, these politicians forcibly occupy the land, steal the produce, set fire to the crops, and through a host of other subversive methods, instigate hostilities against the landowners. Consequently, landowners become increasingly indifferent to the agricultural production of their land as they have no

economic security. When these factors are combined together, they only aggravate the agricultural problem rather than solve it.

Thus, in order to solve the agricultural problems in India, the Chinese system, which is based on the principle that the one who works the plough should own the land, is not applicable. Rather, to solve India's agricultural problems, there must be a radical change in the entire agricultural system.

Economic Landholdings

According to PROUT, to facilitate increased production economic holdings must first be reorganized. An economic holding means a holding where output exceeds input. It is not possible to predetermine the size of this economic unit. While considering input, output, productivity, etc., to determine the optimum size of an economic unit, factors like the fertility of the soil, climatic conditions, etc., will have to be considered.

Today many people believe that increased production is possible even if landholdings are small. Increased production depends upon the expertise of farm managers and their correct, timely decisions. If managers are competent, then even very large farms can increase production. Of course, it is not necessary that all farms should become large. The main thing is that the holdings should be economically viable. There is no valid reason why there is a fifteen percent loss in the annual production of the large collective farms in the Soviet Union.

To increase productivity and prevent the growth of large exploitative cultivators, the minimum and maximum size of an economic landholding should be determined. The minimum size of a landholding should be equal to the size of an economic holding in a particular region. Thus, the minimum size of an economic holding will vary from place to place. The maximum size of a landholding will depend upon the fertility of the soil, overall

production and the expertise of the management. Economic holdings will generally comprise land of the same topography having adequate irrigation and other agricultural facilities. The size of economic holdings must be progressively increased keeping all these factors in mind.

The size of economic holdings may vary from country to country. At the same time the size may also vary within a country. In the Indo-Gangetic plains, a five acre holding is abundantly productive, whereas in Ladakh or the Chotanagpur Hills, even fifteen or sixteen acres of land may not yield enough produce for subsistence. The size of economic holdings in these two places is bound to vary.

The following should be remembered. First, distributing land to people will not solve their problems. The ownership of the land is inconsequential; what counts is the production from the land. Secondly, merely delegating the management of land to

someone will not yield the desired production. It is not always possible for one person to invest the money necessary to cultivate the land according to the most modern methods, so the production of the land is bound to decrease. Above all, in a healthy economy, economic decentralization is essential.

The Cooperative System

For decentralization, agricultural land should be managed through the cooperative system. However, it is not wise to suddenly hand over all land to cooperative management because cooperatives evolve out of the collective labour and wisdom of a community. The community must develop an integrated economic environment, common economic needs and a ready market for its cooperatively produced goods. Unless these three factors work together, an enterprise cannot be called a cooperative.

After creating a congenial environment, land will have to be handed over to cooperative

management. Then, with the help of appropriate scientific technology, it will be possible to increase agricultural production.

There should be a two phase plan to introduce cooperative land management. In the first phase, all uneconomic holdings should be required to join the cooperative system so that they will become economic holdings. In this phase, cooperatives will only consist of those people who merged their land together to make uneconomic holdings economic. Private ownership will be recognized. For instance, one person may own one acre, another two acres and a third person three acres within the cooperative. Each cooperative member will be entitled to a dividend based on the total production in proportion to the land they donated to the cooperative. Each individual will retain the deed of ownership of their land, but agricultural activities will be conducted cooperatively. Consequently, land which remained utilized as boundary lines will no

longer be left uncultivated. In certain places in Bihar and Bengal the total area of arable land is less than the amount of land wasted on boundary lines. If this system is implemented, all will benefit.

In the first phase of the plan, those owning land which is productive as an economic holding need not be persuaded to join a cooperative. But if an economic holding comprises land which is dispersed in small plots, the scattered plots should be consolidated into one holding. Alternatively, wherever small, scattered, uneconomic plots are located, they will have to be joined together under cooperative management.

In the second phase all should be encouraged to join the cooperative system.

In the third phase there should be rational distribution of land and redetermination of ownership. In this new system two factors will determine the rational distribution of land – the minimum holding of land necessary to

maintain a family, and the farmer's capacity to utilize the land.

In the fourth phase there will be no conflict over the ownership of land. A congenial environment will exist due to psychic expansion because people will learn to think for the collective welfare rather than for their petty self-interest. Such a change will certainly not come overnight. Unless there is suitable psychic preparation through internal urge and external pressure, adjusting with the time factor, people will never accept this system, and it cannot be forcibly imposed on them.

The leaders of the Soviet Union were ignorant of the collective psychology of the people, so they tried to impose collective farming by force. This produced severe famines and massive civil unrest. While trying to cope with these problems, the administration resorted to brute force instead of adopting psychological measures, and as a

result they annihilated many people.

Sadvipras will never go against the spirit of a country and cause its ruin.

Many people raise questions regarding cooperatives because in most countries the cooperative system has failed. On the basis of the examples to date, it is not appropriate to criticize the cooperative system. This is because most countries could not evolve the indispensable conditions necessary for the success of the cooperative system.

Cooperatives depend upon three main factors for their success – morality, strong supervision and the wholehearted acceptance of the masses. Wherever these three factors have been evident in whatever measure, cooperatives have achieved proportionate success.

Take the case of Israel. Because the country is surrounded by enemies on all sides, the people are extremely aware of the need to be self-reliant. People want wholeheartedly to

consolidate the national economy. Thus, they have converted arid deserts into productive agricultural land through the cooperative system.

As this kind of mentality was never created in India, India is a classic example of the failure of the cooperative system. Indian cooperatives were not created for economic development but for the fulfilment of political interests. Under such circumstances it was impossible for the cooperative system to succeed.

Good examples must be established to encourage people to adopt the cooperative system. There should be pilot cooperative projects, machine stations, adequate irrigation systems, and improved seeds and insecticides. At the same time people must be educated about the beneficial aspects of cooperatives. Instead of educating people how to increase the productivity of their land, the leaders of India show films on birth

control in the market place. I call such people the greatest enemies of humanity.

Modernization

PROUT advocates maximum modernization in agriculture and industry. In the cooperative agricultural system, modern equipment must be utilized because such modernization will facilitate increased production. For example, tractors can dig the land very deeply, bring low level soil to the surface and force the the top soil below. The fertility of the top soil is diminished as a result of continuous cultivation, so when the lower soil is brought to the surface through the use of tractors, the productivity of the soil increases. In addition, the depleted top soil has the opportunity to become revitalized for future utilization. This is one benefit of tractors. A second is that farmers do not need to maintain cows for ploughing the fields. Where cows are kept for farming, they are unutilized for six months in a year. During that idle period, many costs

occur to maintain them properly. The present age is not the age for utilizing large animals. In Europe horses and elephants are no longer used. To adjust with the times, tractors should be utilized today. One tractor equals the service of at least eight pairs of bullocks. Those who have half an acre or three acres of land need to maintain a pair of bullocks. This is wasteful duplication.

If modern equipment is used in agriculture, agriculture will not remain labour intensive and people can be utilized in other activities to enhance the development of the country. For this, new arrangements will have to be created. If fewer people work in agricultural cooperatives, there will be substantial savings. Simultaneously, women and children will be freed from related work so they will get scope to develop themselves. In addition, increased mechanization will link the villages to the cities and towns, and as a result the standard of living in the villagers will be increased.

No Intermediaries

In PROUT's system of agriculture there is no place for intermediaries. Those who invest their capital by engaging others in productive labour to earn a profit are capitalists.

Capitalists, like parasites, thrive on the blood of industrial and agricultural labourers. Those who act as intermediaries in the agricultural sector are called "agricultural capitalists".

They get their own land cultivated by others and take the profits.

In India, intermediaries have been in existence since ancient times. Different types of landowners such as zamindars, pattanidars, darpattanidars, sepattanidars, jotedars, vargadars and adhikaris constitute the intermediaries. In modern India the zamindari and sharecropping systems have been abolished, but the feudal psychology has not disappeared. The present feudal rulers are not the actual owners of land. They take land on lease from others and pay a certain

percentage of the produce to the owner of the land, thus they exploit both the actual owner of the land and the agricultural labourers. The number of these intermediaries is steadily increasing.

PROUT does not support these kinds of intermediaries. Slogans like, "The land belongs to those who work the plough," or, "Those who sow the seeds should reap the harvest," are untenable. Policies based on such slogans lead to the creation of a petit bourgeois class.

Agrarian Revolution

According to PROUT, in the first phase of agrarian revolution private ownership of land within the cooperative system will be recognized. People should have the right to employ labour for cultivation, but in such cases fifty percent of the total produce should be distributed as wages to the agricultural labourers who work in the cooperative. That is, the owners of the land will get fifty percent

of the total produce and those who create the produce through their labour will get the other fifty percent. This ratio must never decrease – rather it should increase in favour of the agricultural labourers who work in the cooperative.

The managerial staff body of the cooperative should only be constituted from among those who have shares in the cooperative. They will be elected. Their positions should not be honorary because that creates scope for corruption. Managers will have to be paid salaries according to the extent of their intellectual expertise. In addition, the members of the cooperative may also employ their manual labour if they so desire, and for this they should be paid separate wages. Thus, cooperative members can earn dividends in two ways – as a return on the land given to the cooperative and on the basis of their productive labour. For this, the total produce of the cooperative should be divided into equal parts – that is, fifty percent

on wages for labour, and fifty percent for the shareholders of the land.

Solving Unemployment

For the development of agriculture there is also a need for agricultural specialists and technicians. Producers cooperatives should employ such skilled labour. Thus, educated people will not remain unemployed, and they will not leave the villages for the cities. This will ensure rapid agricultural development.

PROUT believes in a decentralized economy. So policies must be adopted which not only develop one particular region, but accelerate all-round development at a uniform pace throughout the entire socio-economic area through the planned utilization of all local resources and potentialities. To achieve this aim, local people must first be employed in agricultural cooperatives.

In modern India there are two distinct areas – one of surplus labour and the other of deficit labour. That is why people usually

migrate from surplus labour areas to other regions. However, the very concept of surplus labour is a relative one. Where adequate opportunities for proper economic development have not been created, there is surplus labour. Labour becomes surplus in all undeveloped socio-economic areas. When surplus labour moves to another region, the undeveloped area has every chance of remaining undeveloped forever.

According to PROUT, wherever there is surplus labour, top priority must be given to creating employment for all local labour. This policy will raise the standard of living of the local people and the whole area. If this policy is not implemented and surplus labour is allowed to move to other regions, and the Marxist policy that, "those who sow shall reap" is followed, then all tea plantations, coal mines and other natural resources will be controlled by outside labour. Local people will lose control over their natural resources. This will create a very dangerous situation.

PROUT's opinion is that local people must have first priority in employment opportunities. As long as there is not full employment for local people, continuous efforts must be made until all local labour is fully employed. In addition, no fresh developmental programmes will be started until there is further demand for labour. Scandinavian countries did not commence any new development schemes for this reason.

While creating employment for the local people, consideration must be given to local sentiments. For instance, many areas of India are regions of surplus intellectual labour. People in this category are ready to work as clerks for the very low wage of thirty rupees a month, but they are not prepared to work as porters and earn more money. The problem of surplus intellectual labour is a special one and should be solved in a proper way. In these areas industries which require less manual labour should be established. Thus, different development schemes will have to

be adopted in different socio-economic units depending upon time, place and person.

Agricultural Taxation

The present system of collecting revenue on agriculture cannot be supported because it is inconvenient for both the tax collectors and the farmers. Even the zamindari system which was established during the British period for tax collection was defective. Farmers had to pay a specified amount each year to the treasury for the land given to them by the zamindars. In cases of flood, crop failure, or any other reason, this fixed amount still had to be paid to the treasury. The zamindars enjoyed life as social parasites. Even today land tax is determined by the area of land. In cases of crop failure in any year, the government has to reduce its taxes. In cases of abundant harvests, the government has to increase taxes through levies. This system causes great inconvenience to the farmers.

The best system of taxation was in vogue in the ancient Hindu Age. In those days only twenty-five percent of the entire produce was given to the king as taxes. The farmers could also give cows, horses or sheep as taxes. In such a system farmers did not face any inconvenience. Today, however, farmers face much inconvenience because they have to pay their taxes in cash. Farmers cannot always arrange cash by selling agricultural produce, because a proper market does not always exist.

According to PROUT, a certain percentage of the farmers produce should be collected as direct taxes. It is also convenient for the government to realize taxes in the form of goods, because it needs to store produce as insurance against future contingencies. Taxes in such a form can easily be distributed from government stores when the people are in need. Moreover, this system will easily meet the requirements of people in the towns and

cities. Such a system can rapidly transform the Indian economy.

If agricultural labourers only raise slogans of agricultural reform and assault and kill the landowners, they will not change the agricultural system. It is only possible to consolidate the economy through a constructive approach. Sadvipras will have to shoulder the great responsibility of implementing this approach to ensure the welfare of all.

date not known

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Cooperatives

18 February 1988, Calcutta

As you know, human society is one and indivisible. A human being cannot live alone. If a person wants to drink water from a well,

he or she needs a rope and a bucket, and to tie the rope one needs a hook. For all these things, the help of the others is indispensable.

In society human beings have to work jointly with others so that everybody can move forward collectively. Samánam ejati iti samájah. That is, society is the collective movement of a group of individuals who have made a unanimous decision to move towards a common goal. If human beings move closely together in all aspects of life, except for those few aspects which are very personal, the better it will be for the welfare of society. Only those things which cannot be done collectively should be done individually.

So, it is always better for people to work together as far as possible – the more that human beings work together, the better it is. If this principle is not followed the spirit of society will be broken, adversely affecting the very existence of human beings. People have to eat food individually – another person

cannot eat your food for you – however a meal can be shared collectively. Where individuality dominates human life, the environment, the welfare of different groups and even the continued existence of humanity may be adversely affected.

Coordinated Cooperation

“Operation” means “to get something done through any medium or media”. Suppose you are operating a tool machine. If this type of operation is done with collective effort then it is called “cooperation”. In the case of cooperation, something is done with equal rights, equal human prestige and equal locus standi.

In every field of collective life there should be cooperation among the members of society. Where this cooperation is between free human beings, each with equal rights and mutual respect for each other, and each working for the welfare of the other, it is called “coordinated cooperation”. Where

people do something individually or collectively, but keep themselves under other people's supervision, then it is called "subordinated cooperation". In each and every stratum of life, we should do everything with coordinated cooperation and always avoid subordinated cooperation.

In the world today different socio-economic systems are in vogue, but none of these systems are based on coordinated cooperation. Rather, in these systems social relationships are mainly based on subordinated cooperation, resulting in the degeneration of society's moral fabric. For example, in some countries there is a glaring lack of racial parity and no coordinated cooperation among the different ethnic groups whatsoever. This lack of proper equilibrium and equipoise in social life is causing the whole structure of society to crumble down.

In those countries that follow the commune system there is also lack of coordinated cooperation. In the commune system society is reduced to merely a production-distribution mechanism under a regimented system of control. Rather than increase production, the commune system forces production down. The consequences can be seen in nearly all communist countries: food shortages. Capitalist countries such as Australia, Canada and the USA are selling their food grains to the Soviet Union and China. Moreover, the workers in a commune do not feel oneness with the job, nor do they have the freedom to express all their potentialities. Such a suffocating and mechanical system fosters a materialistic outlook and produces atheistic leadership.

In the commune system there is no personal ownership. Without a sense of personal ownership people do not labour hard or care for any property. If farmers feel they have

permanent usufructuary rights to the land they will get a better out-turn. Such a sentiment is suppressed in the commune system, resulting in sluggish production and psychic oppression. Intelligent people are forced to do work which is unsuitable for them and are paid the same wages as ordinary workers. There is no incentive system and individual initiative by meritorious people is not encouraged, so naturally people do not work hard. Such a system can never solve society's economic problems, either in agriculture or in industry. Rather, it will only aggravate existing problems and create fresh social problems. The production and distribution systems of the commune system are fundamentally defective, exploitative and anti-human.

The commune system is based on subordinated cooperation – the relationships are those of supervisor and supervised or master and servant. Such relationships are

detrimental for human progress and retard any possibility of progressive movement. They are ultravires to the wonts of the human mind.

PROUT supports the implementation of the cooperative system because its inner spirit is one of coordinated cooperation. Only the cooperative system can ensure the healthy, integrated progress of humanity, and establish complete and everlasting unity among the human race. People should work to enjoy sweeter fruits by establishing the cooperative system. PROUT raises the slogans: "We want cooperatives, not communes," and, "We are not slaves of communes."

Cooperation in Agriculture

If the spirit of cooperation is followed, those commodities which are essential for supplying the minimum requirements such as food, clothing, housing, education and medical treatment will have to be cooperatively

produced. Food is the most important commodity, and because of the importance of food, agriculture is the most important sector of the economy. It is generally the case that the staple food of a country is also its main food crop. In Bengal, for example, the main food is rice and so paddy is the main crop. Similarly, the main crop in the Punjab is wheat, in Ireland potato, and in Scotland rye, oats and barley.

For the proper reorganization and maximum utilization of agricultural land, the cooperative system is most preferable. The fertility of the soil depends upon the natural terrain of the countryside, and the size of a harvest depends largely upon the water content of the soil. High land will not generally produce very much, even if it is fertile, but it is often possible to produce good crops on less fertile soil at lower levels because water usually accumulates there. Even on relatively flat land, agricultural plots should be arranged

depending upon the level of the field in relation to the flow of water, or water should be channelized from upper levels to lower levels. Cooperatives will follow such an arrangement.

Land is extremely important in the psychology of farmers because they are very attached to their land. Farmers may give away hundreds of kilos of produce, but they would never voluntarily give away even a few square metres of their land. Suppose many small farmers own a total of 200 acres. If they form a cooperative and keep a record of their shares based on the size of their individual holdings, a sense of ownership is maintained. If all the land is on the same level then the boundaries between the small plots can be broken down, increasing the area of arable land. In such a system the psychology of the farmers will not be affected and they will not feel any insecurity. They will be able to increase the area of land under production by

clearing away the boundaries which needlessly divide the land into many individual holdings and by scientifically cultivating infertile land.

Farmers who own only several square metres of land cannot keep bullocks and a plough. They have to give their land to someone who can cultivate it, as in the sharecropping system. If they do give their land to a sharecropper, they rarely get anything in return. This predicament arises because the size of the land is so small. If cultivation is done on a cooperative basis many small plots can be merged into one large plot. This will be of great collective benefit to the farmers.

In India in the time of Akbar a system was in vogue whereby boundaries were constructed around plots of land. Akbar introduced a new system in which the northern and western boundaries of each plot were owned by the owner of that plot. When cooperatives remove boundaries to form larger areas of

agricultural land, the land occupied by the northern and western boundaries of each plot should revert to the owner of that plot.

Today for the cultivation of land farmers need things such as fertilizer, a tractor and irrigation water. Animal fertilizers are insufficient – farmers need chemical fertilizers. But wherever chemical fertilizers are used intensively, the land becomes infertile and useless after some time.

Chemical fertilizers eventually destroy the vital energy of the land and it becomes lifeless, like cement. Intensive research should be conducted on how to use chemical fertilizers in agriculture without any ill effects on the land.

In the system of individual farming it is not possible to escape the ill effects of chemical fertilizers. However, in the cooperative system there is great scope for agricultural research and development to discover new ways to better utilize and prolong the vitality of land.

The benefit of a cooperative is that it combines the wealth and resources of many individuals and harnesses them in a united way.

There was a time when farmers used to leave their land unused for a year after several years of continuous cultivation, but this is not possible today. So it is necessary to adopt a system whereby either chemical fertilizers will be used which will not decrease soil fertility, or high yields will be achieved without using chemical fertilizers at all. I am confident that this will be achieved in the very near future.

Agriculture should have the same status as industry. This policy is not followed in many undeveloped and developing countries today, and can best be implemented through the cooperative system. For example, the apple orchards of Himachal Pradesh should function as cooperatives rather than private farms, and so should the packaging industry for apple transportation and marketing. The processing

and packaging of apples should be regarded as part of the farming industry. Those employed in agriculture should get bonuses in the same way as those employed in industry. Thus, farmers or agricultural cooperatives should organize the whole agricultural sector of the economy on the basis of industry.

Farmers Cooperatives

PROUT advocates the reorganization of all agricultural land according to a phase-wise plan. In the first phase all uneconomic landholdings should be taken over by cooperative management for the benefit of both those who previously owned the land and agricultural labourers who work in the cooperative. In the second phase all landowners should be requested to join the cooperative system. In the third phase there should be rational distribution of land and redetermination of ownership. Finally, in the fourth phase there will be no conflict over the ownership of land. People will learn to think

for the collective welfare rather than for petty self-interest. This psychic expansion will create a more congenial social environment. However, such a change in the collective psychology will not come overnight, but will occur gradually according to the sentiment of the people. When such a system has been introduced the present conflict among landowners and landless rural workers will no longer exist.

In the initial stage agricultural cooperatives will be formed with the mutual cooperation of groups of farmers. Suppose A, B, C and D are four farmers who have consolidated their land into a cooperative in the following proportions: A two acres, B five acres, C ten acres and D fifteen acres. The profits from the sale of their crops should be shared in proportion to the amount of land each gave to the cooperative, and the service each rendered for the production of these crops. Farmers will receive produce and profits

according to the number of their shares in the cooperative and their labour. As the yield of land increases due to the continuous development of improved scientific techniques, farmers can expect increased productivity and greater prosperity.

A record should be kept of the productive capacity of all the land included in the cooperative. Shares should be allocated on the basis of this productivity. For example, if a farmer has thirty acres of land of which fifteen acres are highly productive and fifteen acres are of low productivity, then his or her shares should take into account the differences in productivity. If some landowners do not want to work in an agricultural cooperative their land should still be included in the cooperative. They should also be considered as cooperative members and should get shares based on the size and productivity of their land. Of course,

landowners who do not work in the cooperative will not be entitled to wages.

In the cooperative system farmers need not sell their produce immediately after harvesting due to pressure of circumstances. In the individualistic or private enterprise system, most farmers have to sell their produce immediately in order to get sufficient money to survive. But in the cooperative system farmers will enjoy more financial security as the cooperative can advance money to individual farmers and sell the crops at the most favourable time for the best price. That is, the cooperative can determine how much to sell and when to sell in order to get the best profit. Cooperatives will also be able to fix the price of their own produce within certain price limits. Thus, cooperatives will get the profit which is taken by middlemen and profiteers in the individualistic or capitalistic system.

In the present system after the harvest poor farmers have to pay off the loans they took for such things as irrigation, seeds and labour to produce their crops. In addition, they often purchase clothing for their families for the following year. Due to their urgent need for money they are frequently forced to sell their harvest at virtually give away prices. This type of sale under the pressure of circumstances is called a "distress sale". To protect the farmers from distress sales, the cooperative system is essential. In a cooperative, farmers will keep the necessary quantity of farm produce to meet their food needs for a year and will sell the excess produce to the cooperative at the rate fixed by the cooperative. When the market price is reasonable, the cooperative will sell the produce. The farmers will then receive their percentage of the profit which will be proportional to the amount of their land shareholding in the cooperative.

Taxes, levies, excise duties, etc., should be collectively paid by the cooperative, thus freeing individual farmers from financial pressure and economic exploitation. In many economically developed countries, there are no land taxes because the revenue collected from such taxes is only a very small part of the total revenue.

The workforce in the cooperative system will be composed of the shareholding farmers and non-shareholding labourers. Both groups will benefit: the shareholding farmers will get regular salaries for their work plus a return on their shares, while the labourers will enjoy stable employment and favourable wages.

There are two types of non-shareholding labourers working in agricultural cooperatives – those who are permanent labourers and those who are casual or contract labourers. The permanent labourers will get bonuses as incentives besides their wages, while casual labourers will only get wages for their labour.

Those labourers who give the greatest service to the cooperative should get the greatest bonuses. Skilled workers should get paid more than unskilled workers. This will be an incentive for all to become skilled labourers and to work harder. Bonuses should be paid according to the amount of wages which should reflect both the skill and productivity of the labourer.

Members who purchase shares in the cooperative should have no power or right to transfer their shares without the permission of the cooperative, but their shares may be inherited. If some cooperative members have no descendants, then their shares should pass on to their legally authorized successors who will become members of the cooperative if they are not already members. The reason for this policy is that it prevents capitalists from purchasing large numbers of shares in a cooperative and speculating in the market

place. This type of economic activity can easily lead to a depression.

In different countries there are different systems of inheritance, so the right of inheritance should be decided according to the system in vogue in a particular country. For example, in Bengal the Dáyabhága system is followed, in other places in India the Hindu Code is the established system, while in other countries other systems are practised. If this arrangement is followed, cooperative members will not need to go to court or get involved in litigation as the zamindars of the past used to do. As all members of the cooperative will be from the same vicinity or members of the same village, they will all know each other, and thus there will be little difficulty in deciding who should be the legally appointed recipient of the shares. The members of the cooperative themselves will be able to decide who can

claim the right of inheritance to the shares owned by the deceased members.

Disadvantaged or minor landowners will also benefit in the cooperative system. A widow, a disabled farmer, or a minor boy or girl who owns some land will derive an income from the land based on the number of shares in the cooperative. In the system of private ownership their land would have remained unutilized, and they would have remained poor. Therefore, even if cooperative members are unable to do any work, they will still be entitled to an income from the total profit of the cooperative.

Farmers may also create producers cooperatives to produce items for various industries. Thus, some farmers cooperatives may function as both farmers and producers cooperatives. Raw materials which are of non-farming origin, such as limestone for the production of cement, should be processed by producers cooperatives. Cooperatives which

are only agricultural should sell their produce directly to the producers cooperative which in turn can manufacture a variety of consumer goods. Farmers cooperatives which also function as producers cooperatives can increase their profitability in various ways. For example, such cooperatives could produce oil from rice husks. The money earned may be reallocated and reinvested in the farmers-cum-producers cooperative or used for research and development.

Farmers in agricultural cooperatives will be able to exert collective pressure on the local, state or federal governments for different benefits and facilities. For example, in India individual farmers who grow fruit normally use deep well irrigation. But this can adversely affect fruit production because if the water-table drops too far below the roots, the fruit trees will gradually wither and die. In such circumstances shallow tube wells are better, but these wells cannot supply

sufficient water for irrigation. Farmers need ponds, barrages and lift and shift irrigation facilities, and for these things they may need government assistance.

It is the cardinal right of the people to be guaranteed the minimum requirements of food, clothing, housing, education and medical treatment. The proper supply of irrigation water is also a cardinal right, because without water, food, which is the most important of the minimum requirements, cannot be produced. Irrigation water is like the apex of a spinning top – without it the top cannot spin.

Producers and Consumers Cooperatives

Besides agricultural or farmers cooperatives, PROUT advocates the formation of other types of cooperatives, including producers and consumers cooperatives. Producers cooperatives include agro-industries, agrico-industries and non-agricultural industries. The total profit of such cooperatives should be

distributed among the workers and members of the cooperative according to their individual capital investment in the cooperative and the service they render to the production and management of the cooperative.

Similarly, consumers cooperatives should be formed by like-minded persons who will share the profits of the cooperative according to their individual labour and capital investment. Those who are engaged in the management of such cooperatives will also be entitled to draw salaries on the basis of the services they render to the cooperative. Consumers cooperatives will distribute consumer goods to members of society at reasonable rates.

Commodities can be divided into three categories – essential commodities such as rice, pulse, salt and clothing; demi-essential commodities such as oil and antiseptic soap; and non-essential commodities such as luxury goods. If hoarders create artificial shortages

of non-essential commodities common people will not be affected, but if they accumulate essential commodities then common people will suffer tremendously. This situation can be avoided if consumers cooperatives purchase essential commodities directly from producers cooperatives or agricultural cooperatives.

Capitalists hoard essential commodities and create artificial scarcity to extract the maximum profit. As a result consumers pay inflated prices for essential commodities, and sometimes they even find that such goods are not available at all. Middlemen and profiteers create artificial shortages of essential commodities knowing that people will certainly purchase them, even by taking loans, but few people take loans to purchase luxury goods. If the distribution of essential commodities is done through consumers cooperatives, middlemen and profiteers will be eliminated.

Consumer cooperatives should be supplied with commodities from both agricultural and producers cooperatives. Commodities which do not go directly from agricultural cooperatives to consumer cooperatives should be produced by producers cooperatives. In addition, non-farming commodities should be compulsorily produced by producers cooperatives. For example, agricultural or producers cooperatives which produce cotton or silk thread should sell the thread to weavers cooperatives which can produce cloth on their power looms. Hand looms can also be used where intricate design work is required, but generally weavers cooperatives should install the latest power looms. The weavers cooperatives will in turn supply consumers cooperatives.

The number of items considered essential commodities should be continually and progressively revised and expanded with the changes in time, space and person. Such

revisions should be made by the government and not by the board of directors of a particular cooperative. What is considered a demi-essential commodity today may be treated as an essential commodity tomorrow. Demi-essential commodities which may be affected by artificial shortages causing suffering to common people, should be produced by producers cooperatives. The production of luxury goods can be left in the hands of the private sector. Essential commodities or services of a non-farming nature coming within the scope of producers cooperatives, and which require huge capital investments, should be managed by the government. The railway system is an example.

So, for the establishment of a healthy society, agricultural cooperatives, essential commodity producers cooperatives and essential commodity consumer cooperatives are a must.

Cooperative Management

Cooperative members should form a board of directors for each cooperative. The board should decide the amount of profit to be divided among the members; that is, the dividend to be paid to each shareholder. However, the total profit should not be distributed in the form of dividends – some should be kept for reinvestment or purchasing items such as tractors, manure, etc.; some should also be used for increasing authorized capital; and some should be deposited in the reserve fund. The reserve fund should be used to increase the value of the dividend in the years when production is low. If this system is followed the authorized capital will not be affected.

The board of directors should be elected from among the cooperative members – their positions should not be honorary. Care should be taken to ensure that not a single immoral

person is elected to the board. All directors must be moralists.

To stop black-marketeering strong steps need to be taken by the government. For example, to protect the clothing industry, the government should pass a law which prevents the sale of any clothing without the trademark of the producers cooperative where it is made. Thus, if black-marketeers try to sell any clothing without trademarks, they can be easily caught. This simple but effective remedy is known to many intelligent people, but still they do nothing. This is because they are the agents of capitalists who need money from these black-marketeers and hoarders to fight their election campaigns. This kind of corruption in the electoral system is part of democracy, so we can say that democracy is not the best form of government. Hoarding, profiteering and black-marketeering cannot be stopped in the democratic system because those who try to stop it will be thrown out of

power. In the high point of the Kśatriya Era smuggling and hoarding were controlled, but as soon as the influence of the vipras or vaeshyas emerged, the control over these corrupt practices slackened.

Many small satellite cooperatives should be formed to supply various items to large producers cooperatives. Take a car factory, for example. The many different parts for a motor car can be locally manufactured in small cooperatives. The members of these small satellite cooperatives may even carry on their work from their homes, involving all their family members. The main function of large producers cooperatives will be to assemble the different car parts. This will have two benefits: the large cooperative will not require many labourers hence labour unrest will be minimized, and labour costs will be reduced and thus the cost of the commodities will be kept low.

The problem of a floating population and immigrant labour will not occur in the cooperative system, as cooperative members will have to be local people. Floating labourers should have no right to be cooperative members – migratory birds have no place in cooperatives – as they can disturb a whole economy. Howrah district, for example, produces sufficient crops in a season to feed the local people for seventeen months, but due to immigrant labour the produce is consumed in six and a half months. The elimination of the floating population will also protect the social life of the cooperative from the possibility of adverse social influences.

In the cooperative system unemployment will be solved. As production increases the need for more facilities and resources will also increase. Educated people can be employed as skilled workers. There will also be a need for tractor drivers, labourers and cultivators, and cooperative members will naturally do

this work. Village people will not need to move to the cities for employment. In the cooperative system there should be no compulsory age for superannuation. People should be free to work as long as they like, providing their health permits.

Those socio-economic units which do not have a sufficient supply of raw materials will have to manufacture synthetic or artificial raw materials. Suppose a unit or region does not have an adequate supply of fodder to feed its cattle or sheep. Will it import fodder from another unit or region? No, it should manufacture artificial fodder instead.

Similarly, it takes a substantial volume of cotton to produce one dhoti [the traditional lower garment worn by men in northeastern India]. To transport large amounts of cotton also requires much energy, and so if it is not readily available, synthetic fabric can be produced instead.

As science advances, cooperatives will develop and manufacture a great variety of commodities from synthetic raw materials. In the capitalist system, raw materials are imported from other countries or regions in order to manufacture finished products. Cooperatives will not follow this system. They will develop their own raw materials through research so that they are not dependent on foreign raw materials.

Integrated Progress

Through the cooperative system human society will progress with accelerating speed, ushering in a new revolution in science. No part of the universe will be left unutilized – every nook and corner will be properly used. Where fodder is available, grazing land, dairy farms and milk production can be developed. Where fodder is not available, synthetic milk will be produced. In this way progress and development will be maintained in every field of life.

The day is very near when science will be guided by spiritually oriented intellectuals. When this day comes, science will move forward with leaps and bounds, causing the intellectual capacity of human beings to increase immensely. Cooperatives will greatly assist this psychic and spiritual advancement.

To enhance the unity in society we should encourage all common factors and discourage all fissiparous factors. For example, in India there are many common factors which help create unity, and there are many fissiparous factors which create disunity. The most fundamental point of unity in India is that the Indian mentality is God-centred; that is, it is intrinsically based on theism. It accepts divine providence as a cardinal human factor. Even Indian communists are theists in their hearts, but on a political platform they speak as atheists. Although the spiritual standard of the people is high, the moral standard is lower than in western countries. Thus, the

moral standard needs to be increased. Moralists should be created. For this a universal ideology should be propagated in every nook and corner of the country.

Another point of unity in India is the Sanskrit language. The Indian people may or may not know Sanskrit, but they all certainly have a deep love and respect for it. If Sanskrit had become the national language of India instead of Hindi, all the present problems relating to the national language would have been avoided.

Take another example, the calendar system. In North India and some parts of South India the lunar calendar, called Saṁvat, which depends upon the movement of the moon, is followed. In this system the seventh aśárh is in the morning, the eighth aśárh is at noon and the ninth aśárh is at night. A lot of problems arise with such a calendar. In Bengal, Assam, Manipur, the Punjab, Jammu, Kashmir, Orissa and some parts of South

India the solar calendar, called Shakábda, which depends upon the movement of the sun, is used. According to this system, in Bengal the first Vaeshákha is on the fourteenth of April and in the Punjab the first Vaeshákha is on the thirteenth of April. Should we encourage this difference in the calendar system? No, so either the Shakábda system or the international calendar system should be followed. So, to integrate the entire human race, unifying factors should be encouraged and fissiparous factors should be discouraged.

The sweetest unifying factors are love and sympathy for humanity. The wons of the human heart are joy, pleasure and beatitude. In the physical realm the best expression of this human sweetness is the cooperative system. The cooperative system is the best representation of the sweet nectar of humanity.

18 February 1988, Calcutta

Farmers Cooperatives

Providing food, clothing, housing, education and medical treatment is most important for social security. These five minimum requirements are indispensable to raise the living standard of the people. To guarantee these, the principle of production based on consumption has to be adopted. Special emphasis should be placed on agricultural production because the provision of food is of vital importance, and for this the cooperative system should be rapidly expanded.

According to PROUT, too many people should not be engaged in agriculture. Rather, a major part of the population should depend on industry. Not more than thirty to forty-five percent of the population should be employed in the agricultural sector.

Land is usually divided into economic holdings and uneconomic holdings, according to productivity. Economic holdings are those where the market price of the produce will exceed the cost of production including capital, labour and machinery. Lands which produce economically viable agricultural wealth – that is, where output exceeds input – are called “economic holdings”.

Uneconomic holdings are those where the market price of the produce is less than the cost of production after including the costs of all the inputs. As uneconomic holdings are not profitable, the landowners usually refrain from producing any crops. In the rural economy of a country such as India, if a village is accepted as a production unit, then there may be many plots of land in a village which are not used for producing crops because they are uneconomical.

While implementing PROUT, the question of agrarian revolution will automatically arise. As

I have already said, agricultural land should be brought under cooperative management, but the cooperative system should be introduced in two stages. In the first phase of the socialization of land, PROUT will not raise the demand for land ceilings, but the sale of agricultural land will be prohibited and uneconomic landholdings will be brought under cooperative management. The responsibility for cultivating this land will not lie with the landowners but with the cooperatives under the aegis of the immediate government, and with its assistance.

The landowners of the uneconomic landholdings in each village will become the members of the cooperatives in this phase. Thus, cooperatives will only consist of those who merged their land together to make uneconomic landholdings economic. The landowners will give their land, and in this phase they will remain the owners of the land. In cases where the landowners employ

labour for cultivation, fifty percent of the net profit will go to the landowners and fifty percent to the labourers who work in the cooperatives.

In this phase, the rivers and streams in a village should be harnessed for the collective welfare. For instance, by constructing embankments and small dams on the rivers, large-scale irrigation, electricity generation, and industries based on local needs should be established.

The first steps must also be taken to alleviate the population pressure on land. An increasing percent of the rural population will have to be employed in industry by establishing agrico-industries and agro-industries. There should be provision for the preservation of crops by building stores and cold-stores under the control of local administrative boards. The cooperatives should be supplied with tractors, manure, seeds, water pumps and other farming

equipment through producers cooperatives. Consumers cooperatives will supply the commodities necessary for daily consumption to the rural population.

In the very first phase of establishing cooperatives, agricultural labourers, landless labourers, day labourers and sharecroppers will come within the scope of cooperatives. From this phase, the education system in rural areas should be thoroughly reformed. To arouse the cooperative spirit among the people, there should be extensive training and education, but moral education must take precedence over everything else so that people do not give greater importance to individual interests at the expense of the collective interest.

In the second phase of implementing agricultural cooperatives, the economic holdings of the landowners should be brought under cooperative management. Only after all the uneconomic holdings in a village are

brought within the scope of cooperatives should the economic holdings be brought under cooperative management. In this phase it will be easy to apply science and technology extensively in agriculture, increasing the amount of production.

In this second phase, all should be encouraged to join the cooperative system. The net profit will be increased in favour of the labourers working in the cooperatives so that twenty-five percent of the net profit will go to the landowners and seventy-five percent to the labourers. Here labourers means those who employ either their physical or psychic labour in the cooperative. The landowners will benefit in two ways. First, as landowners, they will get twenty-five percent of the net profit of the produce from the land, and secondly, if they are part of the cooperative labour force, they will be entitled to a portion of the seventy-five percent of the profit distributed among the cooperative members.

In this phase, there must be emphasis on the rapid and large-scale establishment of agrico-industries and agro-industries so that the rural population will be dependent more on industry than on agriculture. With the development of such industries, there should be simultaneous emphasis on educational and cultural reforms to further develop the cooperative mentality of the rural population.

From this second phase, production for consumption will increase the standard of living of the rural population, and the basic criteria of social security – that is, the minimum requirements of life – must be arranged for the people.

In the third phase, there should be rational distribution of land and redetermination of ownership. The rational distribution of land will depend on two factors – the minimum holding of land necessary to maintain a family, and the capacity of the farmer to utilize the land. In this phase, the landowners

will not be able to employ individual labourers, landless labourers or sharecroppers for the cultivation of land, so it will be more beneficial for them to participate fully in the cooperative system.

In this phase, it will be easy to establish big cooperatives with the extensive application of science, but these cooperatives will not be anything like the huge collective farms of the Soviet Union or China. If cooperatives are allowed to become extremely large, it will be difficult to utilize natural resources efficiently and this will lead to complications in the sphere of production. One of the main defects of the collective farms in socialist countries is their unmanageable size.

In PROUT, the farmers cooperatives themselves will determine the size of the cooperatives. But while building up the cooperative system, two factors should be kept in mind – first, the high quantity and quality of production should be ensured

through the application of science and technology while keeping production costs at a minimum; and secondly, the cooperative members must be encouraged to attain maximum psychic and spiritual development at their highest level in exchange for their minimum physical labour.

In the third phase of implementing the cooperative system, one hundred percent of the net profit will be distributed among the cooperative members. The former landowners will identify fully with the cooperatives in this phase.

Through these three phases it will be possible to reduce the excessive population pressure on land and to engage thirty to forty-five percent of the population in agriculture. In the second phase, the problem of unemployment will be tackled through the large-scale establishment of industry, and by the third phase there will be no unemployment problems for the agricultural

labourers. By the end of the third phase, the rural sector will be freed from the vexing problems of agricultural and industrial production, unemployment and social security.

In the fourth phase of implementing the cooperative system, there will be no conflict over the ownership of land. The agrarian problems of every village will be solved. All the social security arrangements concerned with food, clothing, housing, education and medical treatment will be easily provided to the people. In this phase it will be possible to make the maximum utilization of the collective physical, psychic and spiritual wealth of every village.

For the total implementation of the cooperative system, there must be proper psychic preparation through internal urge and external pressure, adjusting with the time factor, because people will never accept a system which is forcibly imposed on them.

Such a change in the collective psychology will not occur overnight, but will depend on the sentiment of the people.

The time period from the first phase to the fourth phase of the implementation of the cooperative system can be called the transitional period for the implementation of PROUT.

February 1982, Calcutta

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The Place of Sadvipras in the Samája Cakra

Primitive human beings had no society and the whole set-up was individualistic. Even the concept of family was absent. Life was brute and non-intellectual. Nature was the direct abode and physical strength ruled the day. The strong enjoyed at the cost of the weak, who had to surrender before the voracity of

the physical giants. However, the sense of acquisition had not developed in them, and they worked manually, and there was no intellectual exploitation in that age. Though life was brute, it was not brutal.

If shúdras be defined as those who live by manual work or service, this primary stage of nature's brute laws could be named the Shúdra Age, because all were manual workers. The reliance on physical power gradually led a chosen few to lead the rest by the strength of their muscles. They were the leaders of the shúdras.

Simultaneously, the family developed. And the above-mentioned leadership, once based upon the superiority of muscles, passed on from the father to the son or from the mother to the daughter, partly due to the momentum of fear and power commanded, and partly because of superiority of animalic breed.

Superior strength requires the assistance of other superior strengths in the neighbourhood

for all to maintain their status. Generally such superior neighbours belonged to the same parenthood or were related through matrimonial ties. Gradually the leaders by physical might started a well-knit group, and ultimately formed a class known as the kśatriyas. The age when the power to rule, or supremacy in arms, was the only material factor that mattered, was the Kśatriya Age. The leaders of the Kśatriya Age were Herculean, huge giants who depended on the supremacy of personal valour and might, making little or no use of intellect.

With the development of intellect and skill as a result of physical and psychic clash, physical strength had to lose its dignified position according to the growing intensity of intellectual demand in the kśatriya-dominated society. One had also to develop skill in the use of arms, and even for this the physical giant had to sit at the feet of some physically-common men to learn the use of arms and strategy. A reference to the mythology of any

ancient culture reveals numberless instances where the hero of the day had to acquire specific knowledge from teachers.

Subsequently this learning was not confined to the use of arms only but extended to other spheres, such as battle-craft, medicine and forms of organization and administration, so essential for ruling any society. Thus the dependence on superior intellect increased day by day, and in the course of time real power passed into the hands of such intellectuals. These intellectuals, as the word implies, justified their existence on intellect only, performed no labour themselves, and were parasites in the sense that they exploited the energy put in by others in society. This age of domination by intellectual parasites can be called the Vipra Age.

Even though the vipras came into the forefront by the use of their marked intellect, it is more difficult than in the case of the kśatriyas to maintain a hereditary superiority of intellect. In an effort to maintain power

amongst the limited few, they actively tried and prevented others from acquiring the use of the intellect by imposing superstitions and rituals, faiths and beliefs, and even introducing irrational ideas (the caste system of Hindu society is an example) through an appeal to the sentiments of the mass (who collectively cannot be called intellectual). This was the phase of human society in the Middle Ages in the greater part of the world.

The continued exploitation by one section of society resulted in the necessity for the collection and transfer of consumable goods. Even otherwise, need was felt very badly for the transport of food and other necessities of life from surplus parts to deficit parts. Also, in the case of clan conflicts, the result of the resources of one community or class versus another gained importance. This aspect was confined not only to the producers but also to those handling the goods at various stages up to the point of consumption. These people became known as vaeshyas, and ingenuity

and summed-up production began to enjoy supremacy and importance, till an age was reached when this aspect of life became the most important factor. These vaeshyas, therefore, began to enjoy a position of supremacy, and the age dominated by this class is said to be the Age of Vaeshyas.

Individualistic or laissez-faire sense develops [into] capitalism when the means of production pass into the hands of a few who are more interested in personal exploitation. At this stage it can be said that the instinct of acquisition has developed tremendously. The thirst for acquisition instigated them to [develop] the psychology of complete exploitation of the human race also, and this resulted in a class by itself. In the race for greed and acquisition not all could survive, and only a few remained to dominate the society in general and the economic set-up in particular by their capital. The great majority were either duped into believing that they would be allowed to share such resources, or

were neglected and left uncared-for for want of strength and did not survive the race. Such people in society ultimately occupy the place of exploited slaves of the capitalists. They are slaves because they have no option other than to serve the capitalists as labourers to earn the means of subsistence.

We may recall the definition of shúdras as persons who live by manual work or labour hard for their livelihood. This age of capitalism is the age when the large majority of society turn into such shúdras. This develops into dejection and dissatisfaction on a large scale because of an internal clash in the mind, because the psychology of society is essentially dynamic in nature and the mind itself exists as a result of constant clash. These conditions are necessary and sufficient for labourers, whether manual or mental, to organize and stand up against the unnatural impositions in life. This may be termed “shúdra revolution”. The leaders of this revolution, also, are people physically and

mentally better-equipped and more capable essentially of overthrowing the capitalistic structure by force. In other words, they are also kśatriyas. So, after a period of chaos and catastrophe, once more the same cycle – Shúdra Age to Kśatriya to Vipra, and so on – recommences. ⁽¹⁾

In this cycle of civilization one age changes into another. This gradual change should be called “evolution” or kránti. The period of transition from one age to another can be said to be yuga saṁkránti – “transitional age”. One complete cycle from the Shúdra Age evolving through the other [three] ages is called parikránti. ⁽²⁾

Sometimes the social cycle (samája cakra) is reversed by the application of physical or psychic force by a group of people inspired by a negative theory. Such a change is, therefore, counter-evolution – that is, against the cycle of civilization. This may be termed vikránti. But if this reversal of the social cycle

takes place, due to political pressure or any other brute force, within a short span of time, the change thus brought about is *prativiplava*, or "counter-revolution". It is just like the negative *pratisain̄cara* of *Brahma Cakra*.⁽³⁾ Thus the progress and march of civilization can be represented as points of position and as the speed of approaching *Puruśottama*, respectively, by a collective body in *Brahma Cakra*.

The world is a transitory phase or changing phenomenon within the scope of the Cosmic Mind. It is going in eternal motion, and such a motion is the law of nature and the law of life. Stagnancy means death. Hence no power can check the social cycle of evolution. Any force, external or internal, can only retard or accelerate the speed of transition, but cannot prevent it from moving. Therefore progressive humanity should cast off all skeletons of the past. Human beings should go on accelerating the speed of progress for the good of humanity in general.

Those spiritual revolutionaries who work to achieve such progressive changes for human elevation on a well-thought, pre-planned basis, whether in the physical, metaphysical or spiritual sphere, by adhering to the principles of Yama and Niyama, are sadvipras.

The principles of Yama are ahimsá, satya, asteya, aparigraha and Brahmacharya. Ahimsá means not causing suffering to any harmless creature through thought, word or deed. Satya denotes action of mind or use of words with the object of helping others in the real sense. It has no relative application. Asteya means non-stealing, and this should not be confined to physical action but [extended] to the action of the mind as well. All actions have their origin in the mind, hence the correct sense of asteya is "to give up the desire of acquiring what is not rightly one's own". Aparigraha involves the non-acceptance of such amenities and comforts of life as are superfluous for the preservation of the physical existence. And the spirit of

Brahmacarya is to experience His [the Supreme Entity's] presence and authority in each and every physical and psychic objectivity. This occurs when the unit mind resonates with Cosmic will.

The five rules of Niyama are shaoca, santośa, tapah, svádhyáya and Iishvara prañidhána. Shaoca means purity of both physical and mental bodies. Mental purity is attained by benevolent deeds, charity, or other dutiful acts. Santośa means "contentment". It implies accepting ungrudgingly and without a complaint the out-turn of the services rendered by one's own physical or mental labour. Tapah means efforts to reach the goal despite such efforts being associated with physical discomforts. Svádhyáya means study of the scriptures or other books of learning and assimilating their spirit. The whole universe is guided by the Supreme Entity, and nothing that one does or can do is without His specific command. Iishvara prañidhána is an auto-suggestion of

the idea that each and every unit is an instrument in the hands of the Almighty and is a mere spark of that supreme fire. Iishvara prañidhāna also implies implicit faith in Him irrespective of whether one lives in momentary happiness or sorrow, prosperity or adversity.⁽⁴⁾

Only those who by their nature adhere to the above ten commands in their normal and spiritual conduct are sadvipras. Such a morally- and spiritually-equipped sadvipra has to perform a fundamental and vital duty to society.

In the cycle of social evolution, during each age before it is succeeded by another age, one particular class enjoys the position of domination and superiority. Such a class, while in political power, has every chance of exploiting the society. History has shown that this is not mere chance, but has been repeating itself. Now the duty of the sadvipra is to see that the dominating class does not

take recourse to exploitation. The four classes – shúdra, the toiling class; kśatriya, the warrior class; vipra, the intellectual class; and vaeshya, the capitalist class – have remained well defined in the cycle of human civilization, and the gradual domination and decline of each class shall continue to occur in this cycle.

Life is a dynamic principle, and the movement of the samája cakra continues without any break or pause. The cycle cannot be checked, as stagnation implies death. The function of a sadvipra shall, therefore, be to see that the dominating or the ruling classes do not have any scope for exploitation. The moment one class turn into exploiters, the life of the majority becomes miserable; a few enjoy at the cost of many whose lot is only to suffer. More than that, in such a state of society both the few and the many get degenerated. The few (exploiters) degenerate themselves due to [an] excess of physical enjoyments and the many (exploited) cannot

elevate themselves, because all their energy is taken up in mundane problems and all their mental waves are always tending to attain psycho-physical parallelism, thus getting day by day cruder. Hence, for the physical, mental and spiritual welfare of the administrator and the administered of the society as a whole, it is essential that no one be given any scope to exploit the rest of the society.

Sadvipras are not inactive witnesses. They are active participants to see that no person or class exploits the rest. For this they may have to resort even to physical violence, because the sadvipras will have to strike at the source of the power [of the class] which is tending to become the exploiter. In case the kśatriya class are becoming exploiters, the sadvipras may have to resort to physical force, and in an age where the intellectual or vipra class are dominating, they will have to bring about a revolution in the intellectual field. In case the vaeshyas are dominating, the sadvipras may have to contest and win

elections, because the vaeshya class rules by democracy, and the democratic set-up enables them to accumulate undue gains.

4 June 1959

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Sadvipra Boards

1969, Ranchi

On several occasions I have said that Sadvipras are those who follow the principles of Yama and Niyama – the principles of spiritual morality – and are devoted to the Supreme Consciousness. People will recognize Sadvipras by their exemplary conduct, selfless service, dutifulness and moral integrity. Only Sadvipras can serve all human beings selflessly and lead others along the path of all-round advancement. These Sadvipras – those who follow a correct philosophy of life and practice a correct system of sádhaná or spiritual practices – will be the leaders of the society in the future.

Today democracy is the most preferred system of government throughout the world, but democracy is not an ideal system because it is full of loopholes. Intelligent people have already started working to overcome these short-comings. In the present world PROUT supports restricted democracy, because in the future a better system of government will be evolved.

What is that better system of government? According to PROUT, the rule of Sadvipras is the ideal form of leadership. The establishment of Sadvipra leadership will require the systematic and rational application of PROUT by the collective effort of many highly intelligent people. Sadvipra rule cannot be established by blind physical force or idle intellectual extravaganza.

Sadvipras will fight ceaselessly against all corruption and exploitation – they will wage a never-ending struggle against immorality and fissiparous tendencies. The fullest possibilities

for the establishment of peace and human progress lie only in the collective endeavours of the Sadvipras.

Democracy can not solve human problems because in a democracy one particular class gets the scope to dominate the society while the other classes are deprived of their freedom. To ensure the all-round welfare of the society, the benevolent dictatorship of Sadvipras is an absolute necessity. Sadvipras alone can represent the genuine aspirations of the people.

What form will the benevolent dictatorship of the Sadvipras take? PROUT supports centralization of political power and decentralization of economic power, but centralization of political power does not mean centralization in one person or one institution. Sadvipras shall elect and form several boards consisting of persons who are conversant and experienced in the various

branches of administration. These boards will include the following:

- 1) **The Supreme Board of Sadvipras:** The Supreme Board of Sadvipras shall be an elected body of Sadvipras. It shall be the supreme body for framing policy and supervising the functions of different other boards in society.
- 2) **The Legislative Board of Sadvipras:** The Legislative Board of Sadvipras shall consist of those Sadvipras who are experienced in the work of legislation. It shall frame laws according to the principles of PROUT and the policies laid down by the Supreme Board of Sadvipras.
- 3) **The Executive Board of Sadvipras:** The Executive Board of Sadvipras shall consist of those Sadvipras who are experienced in the work of administration. It shall be responsible for getting the policies and laws framed by the Legislative Board of Sadvipras materialized. It shall supervise the work of

selecting and nominating the personnel who shall be employed in the bureaucracy. It shall also supervise the work of the various sub-boards established for different branches of the administration.

4) The Judicial Board of Sadvipras: The Judicial Board of Sadvipras shall be elected by Sadvipras and consist of those Sadvipras who are experienced in the work of the judiciary. It shall frame the rules and procedures for the appointment of judges and different personnel of the judiciary.

5) Sub-boards of Sadvipras for various branches of the administration: Sub-boards of Sadvipras shall be appointed by Sadvipras and shall consist of those Sadvipras who are experts in the respective branch of the administration. The lists of names for the representatives of the sub-boards shall be prepared by the Executive Board of Sadvipras and forwarded to the Legislative Board of Sadvipras. The Legislative Board of Sadvipras

shall recommend the list, after amendments if necessary, to the Supreme Board of Sadvipras. The Supreme Board of Sadvipras shall finally approve this list.

However, if the Supreme Board of Sadvipras does not approve the list, it will send the list back to the Legislative Board of Sadvipras with amendments if necessary. In this case, the Legislative Board of Sadvipras shall either send the list back to the Supreme Board of Sadvipras after accepting the amendments, or send their own opinion again to the Supreme Board of Sadvipras.

The Supreme Board of Sadvipras shall be the final authority, so it will make the final decision concerning the appointment of the members of the sub-boards.

1969, Ranchi

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The Excellence of God-Centred Philosophy

15 January 1990, Calcutta

No two entities of this universe are equal in all respects or in any respect. This universe is a collection of a mesh of varieties. Diversity is the law of nature and identity is not possible.

Although theories, propositions, hypotheses and different formula or formulae are the creations of different types of persons, they must not go against human psychology. One of the greatest treasures of human beings is rationality, and anything that goes against this human characteristic is bound to be eventually destroyed.

The philosophies that human beings follow can be divided into four categories: (1) dogma-centred philosophy, (2) matter-centred philosophy, (3) self-centred philosophy and (4) God-centred philosophy.

People who follow dogma-centred philosophy believe in dogma, wrong sentiments and foolish ideas. In the past I said that many religions are dogma-centred, but in fact all religions are dogmacentred. That is why no religion can tolerate any other religion. People who follow dogma-centred philosophy exploit others in the name of providence for their own self-interest. For example, the proponents of dogma often claim that they have been blessed with divine revelation. They say that they had a dream in which God appeared before them and commanded them to do particular work, and on this pretext they exploit others to the full.

People who follow matter-centred philosophy want to enjoy anything and everything for their own interest. The atom bomb is the creation of matter-centred people. In matter-centred philosophy, enjoyment of material objects is the main motive, as in Marxism. The proponents of matter-centred

philosophies often resort to brute force to exploit others when it suits their purpose, as do the followers of dogma-centred philosophies.

The followers of self-centred philosophy do everything only for self-interest, self-pleasure. In this case, as in the previous two, the psychic radii may vary. A big radius means that one thinks about oneself in each and every sphere of life. In self-centred philosophies, individual selfishness is the motive, as in capitalism.

Dogma-centred philosophies are a blending of self-centred and matter-centred philosophies. A blended theory is not a cult. A cult has something to do with practice – where there is no practical reflection there is no cult.

Those who follow God-centred philosophy serve humanity and the entire living world with equal love and affection according to Neohumanism. Even amongst God-centred people the radius may vary, but the centre is

God. In God-centred philosophy God is the nucleus, and the radius of one's selfless love and devotion goes on increasing towards God.

Of these four, dogma-centred philosophies are the worst. Next are matter-centred philosophies, followed by self-centred philosophies. Dogma-centred philosophies have been responsible for the greatest bloodbaths in human society, followed by matter-centred philosophies then self-centred philosophies. There can be no blood bath in God-centred philosophy. In God-centred philosophy, human projection is the external projection of internal tranquillity or composure, so there cannot be sanguinary clashes or bloodshed. Common human beings are self-centred; missionary workers are God-centred. The work done by God-centred people elevates the standard of human beings. In the past they elevated humanity, in the present they are elevating humanity and in the future they will continue to elevate

humanity. But until now, the world has not experienced any God-centred philosophy.

The scope, avenue and jurisdiction of the God-centred universe is far, far, far bigger than that of the other three. In any clash amongst these philosophies, finally the God-centred theory will win. Similarly, whenever there is clash between self-centred and matter-centred theories, the self-centred philosophy will win. The matter-centred theory will never win. It comes as it goes after creating enormous devastation, and it dies a black death.

Communism

Communism is an unhappy blending of matter-centred and dogma-centred philosophies – a theory of matter-centred and dogma-centred brutality. It is the worst type of demons' dance, and is on the threshold of a black death.

Communism is not logically based. It occupies a certain portion of the physical world, some portion of human sentiment and some logic. A few logical minds were influenced by it, but it is a highly defective philosophy which will cease to exist in the very near future. It will cease to exist within the range of this century.

Communism is irrational, illogical, unscientific and unpsychological. What is the immediate cause of the demise of communism? There may be many causes, but what is the immediate cause? Take the example of a drunkard. If a man drinks much alcohol, he will contract liver disease and eventually die. But if one day he drinks an excessive amount, say ten bottles, this will be the immediate cause of his death. Communism should have died a few decades from now, but it is ultimately dying in the last decade of the twentieth century. Ravana's greatest blunder was that he abducted Sita. The greatest

blunder of communism was that it attacked God-centred philosophy. This is the immediate cause of the death of communism.

Communism created a field at one time; now it has left a vacuum behind. There is an ideological vacuum in the world – a physical, mental and intellectual vacuum has been created by the death of communism – but it will be filled up in a short time. This vacuum has to be immediately filled with a strong guiding and controlling force. You should fill it with your intellectuo-intuitional strength. If you sit idle some other demonic non-spiritual theories can become active and occupy that vacuum, so do not encourage lethargy and procrastination. You must leave the six defects of sleep, drowsiness, fear, anger, lethargy and procrastination if you want to work for the Self and for the society.

PROUT is the only panacea. If the God-centred philosophy of PROUT does not come forward immediately to fill this vacuum, some

other ideology will, because it is a law of nature that something will fill a vacuum once it has been created. If this ideological vacuum is not filled by PROUT, a great catastrophe will take place in the future because other defective philosophies will come forward. Some dogma-centred, matter-centred or self-centred theories will occupy the space. We cannot allow this to happen.

Tito let Ananda Marga work in Yugoslavia because he understood the defects of communism. Now students of Poland are also joining Ananda Marga. The ideas of PROUT are spreading throughout the world. This new day is yours.

Self-centred philosophies create differences among human beings and balkanise the human society. Matter-centred philosophies create disparity, destroying peace in the universe. In the present world we are seeing two theories moving side by side – the self-centred theory of capitalism and the matter-

centred and dogma-centred theory of communism. Capitalism cannot serve humanity, while communism failed to serve humanity. Both capitalism and communism are dying. Capitalism will die a natural death, while communism died an unnatural death.

Religion

What is religion? Religion is based on dogma-centred philosophy. Dogma-centred philosophy is a blending of matter-centred and self-centred philosophies. So religions are a blending of partly matter-centred philosophies and partly self-centred philosophies. Matter-centred philosophies are mostly pure dogma, while selfcentred philosophies are a blending of dogma and sentiment.

Religions sometimes survive for a long time, even though they are full of dogma. This is because they know how to twist their teachings to deny the truth and adapt to different circumstances. Their purpose is to

secure the interests of a special, privileged class. Some religions have also survived because they have associated themselves with God-centred ideas, although they are not God-centred. They make some dogmatic propositions about God an important part of their teaching, and on this basis they sentimentalize the minds of the people. These sentiments penetrate deeply into the human psyche.

The main weapons of dogma-centred philosophies are:

- 1) The propagation of stories, myths and parables to create superiority complexes;
- 2) The propagation of stories, myths and parables to create inferiority complexes;
- 3) The propagation of fear complex and inferiority complex amongst the people, especially the Shúdras.

All religions use these three types of complexes to inject superiority complexes,

inferiority complexes and fear complexes into the minds of the people. They propagates parables, myths and stories to inject complexes into people's minds. Is it not a fact? All religions are based on dogma – they are not based on logic – and they propagate their dogma through stories, myths and parables. All religions propagate that “My God is the only true God. Other Gods are false gods.” When some religions claim that their god is the only true God, it is an example of a dogma-centred proposition. All world religions are based on such dogma-centred theories.

Take the case of Hindu myths. The authors of Hindu mythologies say that the Brahmans are born from the mouth of Parama Puruśa, the Kśatriyas from the arms, the Vaeshyas from the trunk and the Shúdras from the feet.

Bráhmaño'sya mukhamásiit
váhurájanyo'bhavat

Madhya tadasya yadvaeshyah padbhyám
shúdra ajáyata

[Brahmans came out of the mouth, Kśatriyas were born out of the arms, Vaeshyas came out of the trunk of the body, and Shúdras were born out of the feet.]

Some people say this sloka came from the Puranas, not the Rg Vedas. Teachings like this create an inferiority complex and fear complex amongst the Shúdras. What does the word "Shúdra" mean? It means "slaves of black complexion".

There are innumerable examples of religious dogma. Communism left behind a deep negative impression in the material world, and never followed the path of shánti or peace. Materialism or matter-centred theory is more developed in communism than in Cárvaka. Cárvaka did not make any wrong interpretation against God, but communism did.

To counteract the malevolent effect of dogma-centred philosophies, the two most important factors are the development of

rationality and the spread of education. Merely attending school and university classes will not necessarily have the desired effect. Stress should be placed on education which produces a high degree of rationality in the human mind, and this type of education should be spread amongst the people.

So, to counteract religious dogma we have to adopt a two-fold approach. First, the path of logic and reason must be adopted, and for this we have PROUT and Neohumanism. Simultaneously, the spiritual sentiment must be inculcated in human minds as this is more powerful than the religious sentiment. For this people should be properly educated in the way of spirituality. So what should be our proper strategy? First, we should work to oppose matter-centred philosophies, which are already on the verge of extinction. Once matter-centred philosophies have been vanquished, the strength of religious dogma will be naturally weakened and finally

eliminated. This will be the proper step-wise approach.

So, a vacuum has been created by the sudden, unnatural death of communism. The reason behind this is the sudden expansion of consciousness among human beings, among human minds. That sudden expansion of consciousness was created due to PROUT, Neohumanism and spiritual philosophy. Communism has almost died everywhere. The stage of convulsion is going on, so we have to fill up the vacuum.

In human life socio-economic items are very important, but they are not the only thing. Those dedicated to the service of humanity and the establishment of God-centred philosophy should be strong in PROUT, especially in those countries where there was the brutal rule of communism. But socio-economic life is not the only life. There are other aspects of life, other spokes of expansion. Through PROUT and selfless

service we may render temporary service to human beings as they move along the flow of life, but our spiritual philosophy is above the flow of life. Spiritual philosophy is the hub. By propagating spirituality, implementing PROUT and rendering selfless service to suffering humanity, you will be able to elevate the standard of human beings in a very short time.

As I have already said, dogma-centred, matter-centred and self-centred theories will have to be replaced by a God-centred philosophy in the very near future. So you should prepare yourself physically, intellectually, morally, intuitionally and spiritually to fill up the vacancy of the dogma-centred theories of religion, the matter-centred theory of communism and self-centred theory of capitalism, Time will not wait for us. Time will not wait for our convenience, our feasibility. This moment is the most opportune moment. There is no

need to look at the calendar. Do not wait for tomorrow.

15 January 1990, Calcutta

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Requirements of an Ideal Constitution

22 September 1986, Calcutta

With the changes of the social cycle, the human society has developed several social institutions to carry out its duties and responsibilities. The state is one such vital institution which organizes a group of people in a certain area of land, rules them, promotes their welfare and oversees their good. This institution is powerful because it also enjoys sovereign power.

Accumulation of power is dangerous if it is not guided by some rules and basic principles. The guide book in which all such rules,

regulations and principles for the proper conduct of a state are codified is called a constitution. A constitution guides a state with policies and principles to render all-round services to the people for their rapid progress.

The first written constitution was framed by the Licchavi Dynasty of Vaeshali (in northern Bihar) in ancient India over 2500 years ago. Prior to that, the words of the king were law and kings ruled according to the advice of their ministers. The first republican democracy was established by the Licchaviis. The Licchavi Republic comprised some portion of Muzzaffarpur, portions of Begusharai, Samastipur and Hajipur between the Gandaka and Kamala rivers, all in the present state of Bihar. It was the first democratic state and they had their own written constitution.

Differences Amongst Some Constitutions

There is no British constitution – it is only a collection of traditions and conventions and not a written document. The theoretical head

is the crown queen or king. All power is vested with the crown but practically it is exercised by the prime minister in a parliamentary form of government. The French system is a presidential form of government where the president appoints the prime minister and all other ministers. The USA also has a presidential form of government. In France and the US there is a written constitution. In the US the president exercises power or rules the country through secretaries appointed by the president who is directly elected by the electorate. There are no ministers, only secretaries in the US system whereas there are ministers in the French system. When there is no ministry in Britain a lame-duck ministry is formed by the crown and the crown can head that ministry until a new parliament is elected. In India the president has no power and is only a signatory authority or rubber stamp. The Indian president cannot even head a caretaker government. The Indian prime

minister can remove the president but the president cannot remove the prime minister. Although the prime minister is powerful according to the constitution, he or she is not directly elected by the electorate, that is, by the people. The prime minister is elected only as a member of parliament and then is made prime minister by the party.

The US presidential form of government is a better form of government, but there is a shortcoming in the US constitution and that is that individual rights are given maximum scope: this leads to an unrestrained capitalist order. Now India is also going to suffer the same disease and this is leading to regionalism. Too much individual freedom should be curtailed in an ideal form of government. PROUT will introduce social controls so that collective interests will be supreme. In the US constitution purchasing power is not guaranteed to the people. The best form of government is the presidential

form where the president is elected directly by the electorate and there is less individual liberty.

Common Constitutional Defects

Everyone has the right to physical, mental and spiritual development. But all constitutions have been written in such a way that they do not ensure the all-round welfare of all citizens. A constitution should be fair and just. The least bias on the part of the framers towards any particular ethnic, linguistic or religious group may undermine the unity and solidarity of the concerning country and thus disturb the peace and prosperity of the society as a whole.

Judged from this perspective some of the defects of the Indian constitution are easily discernible. India should have a new constitution to establish unity in diversity in a multilingual, multi-social and multi-national country.

While drafting the constitution of a country the framers should keep in mind the population structure of the concerning country. The population of India is a blended population of the Austric, Mongolian, Negroid and Aryan races. But the Indian constitution, due to inherent defects, has not helped establish social amity, cultural legacy, equality and unity among these races. As a result fissiparous tendencies have developed in the country.

There are several fiscal and psychological loopholes in the Indian constitution. The fiscal loopholes include the following. First, there is no check on unbarred capitalist exploitation. This is because the leaders of the independence struggle did not give any economic sentiment to the people. The only sentiment was an anti-British sentiment. Thus the independence struggle was only a political movement and not an economic movement. After 1947 instead of white exploitation,

brown exploitation emerged. 1947 brought only capitalist political liberty but not economic freedom. As a result, unbarred economic exploitation continues today.

Secondly, the constitution gives no guarantee for increasing the purchasing capacity of every individual. Thirdly, the president has no constitutional power to check financial or fiscal matters. The Indian economy is controlled by a few business houses through some chambers of commerce. The president has no constitutional power to check either the price level or the degree of exploitation. Neither the president nor the prime minister can check these. Fourthly, there is no provision for inter-block planning for socio-economic development. Fifthly, there is no clear concept of balanced economy.

The psychological loopholes in the Indian constitution include the following. The first is the imposition of a regional language as the national language. English imperialism has

been followed by Hindi imperialism. Hindi is only one of many regional languages. The selection of one such regional language as the official language adversely affects the psychology of people who speak other languages. As the consequence of such a defective language policy in the constitution, the non-Hindi-speaking people face unequal competition at the national level and they are forced to use a language, either Hindi or English, which is not their natural language. Hence they are relegated to "B class" citizens. No regional languages should be selected as an official language in a multi-national, multi-lingual and multi-cultural country like India. Such a selection would affect the minds of other non-Hindi-speaking people. Hindi is just a regional language like Tamil, Telegu and Tulu. It is a good language but it should not be forcibly imposed on others.

India is a secular country but Pakistan is a Muslim state and Nepal is a Hindu state. They

may or may not impose a language on their people, but in India this imposition should not take place. The spirit of secularism provides equal scope and equal avenues for all for the maximum psycho-social-economical development of every individual.

When the Indian parliament debated the issue of official languages, the constituent assembly was equally divided into two. The then chairman of the Constituent Assembly at that controversial stage cast his all-important vote in favour of Hindi. Thus Hindi becomes the official language of India by a single vote.

Saṁskṛta may be the national language of India. It is the grandmother of almost all the modern languages of India and has a great influence on the languages of India. It may take five, ten, fifty or hundred years to spread this language to all people. Roman script should be used since Saṁskṛta has no script of its own. All groups of people including

linguists of India should join together and decide this controversial matter.

The second psychological loophole is that there are several disparities in the law. The constitution of India proclaims that all are equal in the eye of the law. But in practice, this principle is not followed, and as a result disparity is growing in the arena of law and justice. Such disparity is adversely affecting the different groups of people in the country. For example, there are disparities between the Hindu Code and the Muslim Code. Hindu women and Muslim women, although they are all Indian citizens, do not get equal advantages of law. For instance, according to Hindu law, a man cannot have more than one wife, but a Muslim man is entitled to have more than one wife. A Hindu husband or a Hindu wife is required to approach the court to secure a divorce, while a Muslim man is entitled to divorce his wife without the permission or approval of the court.

Moreover, a Muslim husband can divorce his wife but a Muslim wife cannot divorce her husband. Besides, a Muslim husband is not required to show [[any reason for the divorce]].

Disparity in the eye of the law is creating all these problems. The root of all these evils lies in the psychological loopholes of the Indian constitution. Why is the constitution allowing the Hindu Code and Muslim Code to stand side by side? Let there be only one code – the Indian Code. This Indian Code should be based on cardinal human values, with a universal approach and Neo-Humanistic spirit. Then only equality before the law can be established in practice, and equal protection of the law for all can be guaranteed. So the constitution should remove the psychological loopholes by eradicating existing disparities in the eye of the law.

The third psychological loophole is that there is no law against the indiscriminate destruction of flora and fauna due to the absence of Neo-Humanistic sentiment. In the Cosmic Family of the Parama Puruśa, humans, animals, plants, and inanimate objects exist together and maintain a harmonious balance. However, human beings, because of their superior intellect, are indiscriminately destroying plants and animals for their own narrow, selfish ends. In the constitution, there is no provision for the safeguard of the plants and animals. In a constitution, there should be safeguards for the lives of plants and animals. The absence of such provisions in the constitution creates psychological loopholes which should be corrected without delay.

Fourthly, the relation between the centre and the states in a confederation should be clearly defined in the constitution. Otherwise, there will be centre-state conflict and the whole

country will be psychologically affected. Among all other aspects of this relation two important aspects should be clearly defined; the right of self-determination, and the right of secession of a particular component of the confederation. In the constitution of India these are not clearly stated. As a result, the relation between the centre and the states is always strained and pressured.

Fifthly, in the constitution of India, no clear definitions of scheduled tribes and scheduled castes are given. Rather, these lists have been wrongly prepared on the basis of racial considerations. Instead of this unscientific approach, Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Caste lists should be based on economic backwardness and educational backwardness.

Constitutional Reforms

To overcome these fiscal and psychological loopholes, all constitutions in the world today

need to be reformed. The following reforms should be implemented.

(1) Dissolution of the ministry or parliament. The president may discharge the ministry or dissolve the parliament under certain circumstances: in case of inimical action within the country; in case of disorder or the breakdown of law and order; in case of external inimical activity; and when a democratic ministry is rendered a minority in the parliament. When a democratic ministry is discharged because it is a minority in the house, the president has to explain the reasons for his or her actions before the parliament within one month from the day of taking such action against the ministry. If the parliament is already dissolved then the president will have to arrange a general election within six months and explain the position before the newly elected parliament within one month of the election.

(2) Period of emergency. The president may continue the period of emergency with the approval of parliament for a period of six months, and with such a parliament the president may continue a period of emergency for not more than two years.

(3) Advice of a lame duck ministry. The president may or may not act on the advice of a lame duck ministry. If the advice of a lame duck ministry is not honoured by the president then the parliament will be dissolved. A new parliament will have to be formed through a general election, and the president will have to explain his or her position before the new parliament within one month of its formation.

(4) The moral standard and character of the president and prime minister. The president or prime minister must be of high moral character. The president or prime minister must not divorce his or her spouse, marry a divorcee or have more than one spouse.

(5) The power of the president to issue any statement. The president must not issue any statement under normal conditions without consulting the parliament or the prime minister. In normal conditions when there is a ministry, the president will have to act according to the advice of the ministry. In case the ministry is dissolved the president will have to act according to the advice of parliament.

(6) Parliament in the role of constituent assembly. The parliament will play the role of constituent assembly only with a majority of $\frac{7}{8}$ of the members, because changing the constitution at regular intervals reduces the status of the constitution.

(7) Language. All living languages of a country must have equal status before the state or the government.

(8) Equal rights. All citizens must have equal rights before the law. Physical requirements are to be equally considered for all citizens so that all citizens will have equilibrium and equipoise in collective life.

(9) Review board. To review economic progress and development of different parts of the country, a high-level review board should be constituted by the president. If there is any difference between the ministry and the board, the president must act according to the advice of parliament. And if there is any difference between the parliament and the board, the president should seek advice from the supreme court of the country and act according to their official advice, according to the provisions of the constitution.

(10) A case against the prime minister or president. A case may be filed in the supreme court against any person in the country including the prime minister and president,

because every citizen in the country is equal before the constitution.

(11) The right of self-determination and plebiscite. The right of self-determination for a part of the country may be recognized only on the basis of a plebiscite held in that area with the permission of the parliament functioning as a constituent assembly. If the plebiscite is to be held, it should be held under the strict control and supervision of the central government by the chief election commissioner of the country.

(12) Education. Primary education for all must be guaranteed and education should be free from all political interference.

(13) The law and the constitution should be the same. The law and the constitution should be the same for the entire country, as each and every individual is equal before the law and before the constitution. According to the constitution, each and every part of the country will enjoy the same power. For

example, special rights or facilities for Kashmir should not be allowed. Today a Kashmiri can go to Bengal and purchase land, a house, etc. but a Bengali in Kashmir cannot enjoy that facility. This kind of discrimination must end.

Charter of Rights

The formation of a World Government will require a world constitution. A charter of principles or bill of rights should be included in such a constitution and encompass at least the following four areas. First, complete security should be guaranteed to all the plants and animals on the planet. Secondly, each country must guarantee purchasing power to all its citizens. Thirdly, the constitution should guarantee four fundamental rights – spiritual practice or Dharma; cultural legacy; education; and indigenous linguistic expression. Fourthly, if the practice of any of these rights conflicts with cardinal human values then that practice

should be immediately curtailed. That is, cardinal human values must take precedence over all other rights. All the constitutions of the world suffer from numerous defects. The above points may be adopted by the framers of different constitutions to overcome these defects.

22 September 1986, Calcutta

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Economic Democracy

Nearly all the countries of the world today have come under some sort of democratic structure. Liberal democracy has been established in such countries as the USA, Great Britain, France and Canada, while in the Soviet Union, China, Vietnam and Eastern Europe socialist democracy is the dominant system. The plight of the people in liberal

democratic (so-called democratic) countries is not as miserable as it is in communist countries, because in communist countries the political and economic system is imposed on society by party officials, causing untold human suffering and severe psycho-economic exploitation. Both liberal democracy and socialist democracy may be considered forms of political democracy because these systems are based on economic and political centralization.

Political Democracy

In all countries where democracy is in vogue today, people have been deceived into believing that there is no better system than political democracy. Political democracy has no doubt granted voting rights, but it has snatched away the right of economic equality. Consequently, there is gross economic disparity between the rich and the poor, immense inequality in people's purchasing

capacity, unemployment, chronic food shortages, poverty and insecurity in society.

The type of democracy prevalent in India is also political democracy, and it has proved to be a unique system of exploitation. The Indian constitution was created by three groups of exploiters: the British imperialists, the Indian imperialists and the ruling parties representing the Indian capitalists. All the provisions of the Indian constitution were framed keeping an eye on furthering the interests of these opportunists. Just to hoodwink the masses, the people were granted the right of universal suffrage. Millions of Indians are poor, superstitious and illiterate, yet the exploiters, through such practices as making false promises, intimidation, gross abuse of administrative power and vote rigging, repeatedly win over the electorate. This is the farce of democracy. Once they form the government, they get ample opportunity to indulge in rampant corruption and political tyranny for five years.

In the subsequent elections – whether on the provincial or state level – the same absurdity is repeated.

This type of political opportunism has been going on in India since independence. For the last thirty-five years, the political parties have maintained that in order to attain economic parity with the industrially developed countries of Europe, India must follow the democratic system. To support this argument, they cite the examples of America and Great Britain or China and the Soviet Union. The political leaders urge the electorate to vote in their favour at election time so that the country's starving masses can reap the benefits of a developed economy. But once the elections are over, the exploitation of the common people continues unabated in the garb of political democracy, and other areas of social life are completely neglected. Today millions of Indian citizens are being deprived of the minimum requirements of life and are struggling to procure adequate food, clothing,

housing, education and medical treatment, while a handful of people are rolling in enormous wealth and luxury.

One of the most obvious defects of democracy is that voting is based upon universal suffrage. That is, the right to cast a vote depends on age. Once people reach a certain age, it is assumed that they have the requisite capacity to weigh the pros and cons of the issues in an election and select the best candidate. But there are many people above the voting age who have little or no interest in elections and are not conversant with social or economic issues. In many cases, they vote for the party rather than the candidate, and are swayed by election propaganda or the false promises of politicians. Those who have not reached the voting age are often more capable of selecting the best candidate than those who are entitled to vote. So age should not be the yardstick for voting rights.

Whether or not a candidate gets elected usually depends upon party affiliation, political patronage and election expenditure. In some cases it also depends on antisocial practices. Throughout the world, money plays a dominant role in the electoral process, and in nearly all cases, only those who are rich and powerful can hope to secure elected office. In those countries where voting is not compulsory, often only a small percentage of the population participates in the electoral process.

The prerequisites for the success of democracy are morality, education and socio-economic-political consciousness. Leaders especially must be people of high moral character, otherwise the welfare of society will be jeopardized. But today in most democracies, people of dubious character and those with vested interests are elected to power. Even bandits and murderers stand for election and form the government.

In almost all the countries of the world, the masses lack political consciousness. Cunning, erudite politicians take advantage of this shortcoming to confuse people and attain power. They resort to immoral practices such as bribery, vote rigging, booth capturing and buying of votes, and stand unopposed for elections. Consequently, the standard of morality in society is declining, and honest, competent people are relegated to the background. Moral leaders have less chance to win elections because election results are rigged through financial inducements, intimidation and brute force. In the present democratic system, all sorts of immoral and corrupt practices are given the opportunity to pervert society. The very nature of the present system is that it favours the capitalists and exposes the administration to immoral and corrupt forces.

The farce of democracy has been likened to a puppet show where a handful of power hungry politicians pull the strings from behind

the scene. In liberal democracies, capitalists manipulate the mass media such as the radio, television and newspapers, while in socialist democracies the bureaucrats lead the country to the brink of destruction. In both forms of democracy, there is little scope for honest, competent leaders to emerge in society, and virtually no possibility for the economic liberation of the people.

Political democracy has become a great hoax for the people of the world. It promises the advent of an era of peace, prosperity and equality, but in reality it creates criminals, encourages exploitation and throws common people into an abyss of sorrow and suffering.

The days of political democracy are numbered. PROUT demands economic democracy, not political democracy. To make democracy successful, economic power must be vested in the hands of the common people and the minimum requirements of life must be guaranteed to all. This is the only way to

ensure the economic liberation of the people. PROUT'S slogan is: "To end exploitation we demand economic democracy, not political democracy."

Economic Decentralization

In economic democracy, economic and political power are bifurcated. That is, PROUT advocates political centralization and economic decentralization. Political power is vested with the moralists, but economic power is vested with the local people. The principal goal of the administration is to remove all the impediments and obstacles which prevent the economic needs of the people being met. The universal aim of economic democracy is to guarantee the minimum requirements of life to all members of society.

Nature has been kind enough to provide abundant natural resources to every region of this earth, but she has not given guidelines on how to distribute these resources among the

members of society. This duty has been left to the discretion and intelligence of human beings. Those who are guided by dishonesty, selfishness and mean-mindedness misappropriate these resources and utilize them for their individual or group interests rather than for the welfare of the whole society. Mundane resources are limited but human longings are limitless. Hence, for all the members of society to live in peace and prosperity, human beings have to adopt a system which ensures the maximum utilization and rational distribution of all resources. To achieve this, human beings will have to establish themselves in morality and then create a congenial environment for morality to flourish.

Economic decentralization means production for consumption, not production for profit. Economic decentralization is not possible under capitalism, because capitalist production always tries to maximize profit. Capitalists invariably produce at the lowest

costs and sell at the highest profits. They prefer centralized production, which leads to regional economic disparity and imbalances in the distribution of the population. In the decentralized economy of PROUT on the other hand, production is for consumption, and the minimum requirements of life will be guaranteed to all. All regions will get ample scope to develop their economic potentiality, so the problems of a floating population or overcrowding in urban centres will not be allowed to arise.

Unless a country attains optimum development in industry and other sectors of the economy, it is impossible for it to be highly developed. If more than thirty to forty-five percent of a country's population is engaged in agriculture, there will be excessive pressure on the land. Such a country cannot become highly developed, nor can there be balanced, decentralized development in all sectors of the economy. India is a classic example of this. About seventy-five percent of

India's population is dependent on agriculture for its livelihood.

In some democratic countries such as Canada and Australia a large percentage of the population is engaged in agriculture, and although these countries are regarded as agriculturally developed, they depend on industrially developed countries because they themselves are industrially undeveloped. For instance, Canada has traditionally been dependent on the USA, and Australia on Britain.

As far as India is concerned, as long as around seventy-five percent of the population is engaged in agriculture, the unbearable economic plight of the people will continue. Any country confronted with such circumstances will find it very difficult to meet its domestic and international responsibilities. The purchasing capacity of the people will keep decreasing, while economic disparity will go on increasing. The social, economic and

political environment of the whole country will degenerate. India is a clear example of all these evils.

So, economic decentralization does not mean that the majority of the population will be dependent on agriculture for their livelihood or that the other sectors of the economy will remain undeveloped. Rather, each sector of the economy must strive for maximum development, and all sectors must strive for maximum decentralization.

In all the democratic countries of the world, economic power is concentrated in the hands of a few individuals and groups. In liberal democracies economic power is controlled by a handful of capitalists, while in socialist countries economic power is concentrated in a small group of party leaders. In each case a handful of people – the number can be easily counted on one's fingertips – manipulates the economic welfare of the entire society. When economic power is vested in the hands of the

people, the supremacy of this group of leaders will be terminated, and political parties will be destroyed forever.

People will have to opt for either political democracy or economic democracy. That is, they will have to choose a socio-economic system based on either a centralized economy or a decentralized economy. Which one will they select? Political democracy cannot fulfil the hopes and aspiration of people or provide the basis for constructing a strong and healthy human society. The only way to achieve this is to establish economic democracy.

Requirements for Economic Democracy

The first requirement for economic democracy is that the minimum requirements of a particular age – including food, clothing, housing, education and medical treatment – must be guaranteed to all. Not only is this an individual right, it is also a collective necessity, because the easy availability of the

minimum requirements will increase the all-round welfare of society.

The second requirement for economic democracy is that increasing purchasing capacity must be guaranteed to each and every individual. In economic democracy local people will hold economic power.

Consequently, local raw materials will be used to promote the economic prosperity of the local people. That is to say, the raw materials of one socio-economic unit should not be exported to another unit. Instead, industrial centres should be built up wherever raw materials are available. This will create industries based on locally available raw materials and ensure full employment for all local people.

The third requirement for economic democracy is that the power to make all economic decisions must be placed in the hands of the local people. Economic liberation is the birthright of every individual. To

achieve it, economic power must be vested in the local people. In economic democracy the local people will have the power to make all economic decisions, to produce commodities on the basis of collective necessity, and to distribute all agricultural and industrial commodities.

The fourth requirement for economic democracy is that outsiders must be strictly prevented from interfering in the local economy. The outflow of local capital must be stopped by strictly preventing outsiders or a floating population from participating in any type of economic activity in the local area.

For the success of economic democracy, PROUT must be implemented and the economic welfare of all people must be enhanced step by step. This in turn will lead to greater opportunities for the spiritual emancipation of human beings.

Finally, it should be remembered that economic democracy is essential not only for

the economic liberation of human beings, but for the universal well-being of all – including plants and animals. Economic democracy will devise ways and means to effect the smooth progress of society by recognizing the unique value of both humans and non-humans alike.

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Block-Level Planning

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In a decentralized economy, economic planning is to be undertaken for the welfare of the local people. Economic planning will utilize all the mundane and supramundane potentialities of the local area to meet the local requirements.

Factors of Planning

Economic planning should include the following factors – the cost of production,

productivity, purchasing capacity and collective necessity.

Cost of production: In many rural economies, it is a traditional practice for farmers and their family members to work in the fields to grow crops. At the time of fixing the price of their produce, they do not calculate the labour costs involved in cultivating the land or pay wages to their family members. Nor do they determine the cost of the tools or machines they use in the fields, or count the other expenses incurred in producing their crops. Hence, they fail to systematically calculate the per unit cost of production. As a result, they incur losses or perpetually get low prices for their produce.

To solve this problem, agriculture must be reorganized and established on the same basis as industry through the cooperative system. According to PROUT, agriculture should be treated as an organized industry. Only then can the per unit cost of production

be systematically determined and the poverty of farmers end. Farmers will get proper prices for their commodities and stability in the agricultural sector will be achieved.

In a Proutistic economy, the cost of production should be systematically determined and kept at the minimum level. All industries, including agrico-industries and agro-industries, must see that the cost of producing a particular commodity does not exceed its market value. Every production unit must be economically viable.

Productivity: The economy will have to be organized in such a way that it has its own innate power to produce more and more. Money should be invested – money should be kept rolling rather than hoarded – so that the collective wealth of society is continually increased.

This principle guides planners so that maximum production will occur according to the collective needs. There should be

increasing production based on consumption and full employment for all local people. Products should be developed wherever raw materials are available, and under utilization of any production unit should not be allowed.

If people are guided by the needs and potentialities of their socio-economic unit, the law of productivity is benign. Maximum production in the economy will provide a congenial environment for more investment, more industrialization, more employment, increasing purchasing capacity and increasing collective wealth in an ever progressive manner.

Purchasing capacity: Planning should also result in the increasing purchasing capacity of every person. PROUT does not support the existing practice of considering the per capita income as the index of people's economic standard. Per capita income is a deceptive and defective measure of collective wealth popularized by capitalist economists to

fool people and cover their exploitation. The genuine measure of people's economic advancement is increasing purchasing capacity.

To increase people's purchasing capacity, the easy availability of the minimum requirements, stable prices, progressive, periodic increases in wages and salaries, and increasing collective wealth must be ensured.

In a Proutistic economy, there will be no limit to purchasing capacity – that is, purchasing capacity will be ever increasing. The minimum requirements must be guaranteed and should always be increased according to time, space and person, and this can best be done by continuously increasing the purchasing capacity of the people in relation to the economic development of the concerned socio-economic unit. The greater the purchasing power of the people, the higher their standard of living.

Collective necessity: Planners will also have to consider the existing collective needs as well as the future requirements of a socio-economic unit, and chalk out their developmental programmes accordingly. In India, many industries have been established but the production of electricity has not been increased. Through lack of proper planning, power production has lagged behind industrial development. This is especially evident in Bengal and Bihar.

Most importance should be given to the production of the minimum requirements, so planners will have to make provision for the minimum requirements of all, but the requirements of both meritorious people and those with special needs should not be neglected, otherwise the requirements of the age will not be met.

Block-Level Planning

Planning should function on various levels such as the block, district, state, national and

global levels, but block-level planning will be the basic level of planning. Block-level planning is essential for economic decentralization, so it should be adopted in all blocks. There should be provision in the constitution for block-level planning for socio-economic development.

The amount of natural and human resources varies from block to block, hence separate economic plans will have to be made for each and every block. There should be a block-level planning board in every block for this purpose. The block-level planning body will prepare a plan for the development of the block and accordingly implement the local developmental programmes. Above the block level there will be a district-level planning board. Thus, from the block level upwards, there will be planning boards to prepare and implement the local plans and programmes. It must be remembered that planning should be of ascending order, starting at the block level,

and including all the levels of a socio-economic unit.

Most blocks are currently demarcated on the basis of political considerations. PROUT does not support such divisions. Block divisions should be reorganized according to such factors as the physical features of the area (including river valleys, varying climatic conditions, topography, the nature of the soil, the type of flora and fauna, etc.), the socio-economic requirements and problems of the people, and their physico-psychic aspirations. Thus, blocks should be scientifically and systematically demarcated as the basis for efficient decentralized economic planning.

Each block should be made economically sound so that the entire socio-economic unit will be self-sufficient. Only then will a country or federation become economically strong and developed in the real sense. This is a unique feature of PROUT's decentralized economic planning.

When planning is prepared for the all-round growth of a single block exclusively, it is called "intra-block planning". Each block must have its own developmental plan, adjusting with the overall plan of the socio-economic unit at its various levels.

However, there are problems which traverse block boundaries and cannot be tackled or solved by one block alone, such as flood control, river valley projects, communication systems, higher educational institutions, afforestation projects, the environmental impact of development, the establishment of key industries, soil erosion, water supply, power generation, the establishment of an organized market system, etc. So, cooperation among blocks is necessary. Planning among blocks is called "inter-block planning". Inter-block planning is an economic venture into some selected fields to organize and harmonize socio-economic development in a few adjoining blocks through mutual coordination and cooperation.

At each and every level of planning, there should be short-term and long-term planning. In all cases, the maximum time limit for short-term planning should be six months, and the maximum time limit for long-term planning should be three years. Short-term and long-term plans should be drafted in such a way that they are complementary to each other. The immediate goals of planning at each level are to guarantee the minimum requirements of the local people, eliminate unemployment, increase purchasing capacity and make socio-economic units self-sufficient.

Benefits of Block-Level Planning

There are many benefits to block-level planning. The area of planning is small enough for the planners to understand all the problems of the area; local leadership will be able to solve the problems according to local priorities; planning will be more practical and effective and will give quick, positive results; local socio-cultural bodies can play an active

role in mobilizing human and material resources; unemployment will be easily solved; the purchasing capacity of the local people will be enhanced; and a base for a balanced economy will be established.

The development of local industries will provide immediate economic benefits. The unemployment problem will be rapidly solved, and in a short time it will be possible to create a congenial environment for permanent full employment. In fact, the only way to solve unemployment and bring about full employment throughout the world is by developing block-level industries. The growth of local industries will provide social security to the local people and create greater opportunities for their all-round advancement, because all their basic needs will be met.

The population of every socio-economic unit should be organized on a scientific basis. The problem of a floating population should be tackled on the block level itself. Where there

is a floating population, it should be either permanently settled or returned to its original region.

Differences in Planning

It is inevitable that there will be differences in planning for different regions. Let us take an example. Will the planning for the Punjab and the Cauvery Valleys be the same? The planning cannot be the same in these areas for three main reasons.

First, the Jehlam, Chenab, Ravi, Beas and Sutlej Rivers in the Punjab are all of Himalayan origin. They provide a perennial source of water because they are ice fed. The Punjab rivers maintain their existence with the help of molten ice. But the rivers of the Cauvery Valley – the Tungabhadra and Cauvery – are of Ghat origin; that is, they originate in the Eastern Ghat and the Western Ghat. They depend upon seasonal rainfall. Although there are two rainy seasons in a year in the Cauvery Valley, they are not

perennial sources of water because they are not ice fed. No hydroelectricity can be generated from the Cauvery Valley rivers because of the uncertainty of the water supply, but hydroelectricity can be generated at the Bhakhra Nangal Dam because the rivers in the Punjab contain water throughout the year.

Secondly, the Cauvery Valley, being nearer to the equator, has an extreme climate. The Punjab also has an extreme climate, but this is due to the different winds coming from the northwest and the east. The Cauvery Valley does not depend on any winds. Climatic variations will have to be considered in areas such as agriculture and power generation.

Thirdly, the central portion of the Cauvery Valley consists of wavy, laterite soil and is called the Deccan Plateau. There is a small slice of land situated between the hills and the sea which is comprised of alluvial soil and plain land. Only a small portion of the Deccan

Plateau contains alluvial soil. The Punjab is plain land. The Deccan peninsula consists of four coasts – the Utkal Coast, stretching from the Mahanadi to Godavari; the Coromandel Coast, from Godavari to Cape Comorin; the Malabar Coast, from Cape Comorin to Goa; and the Konkan Coast, from Goa to Gujarat. These coastal areas are not composed of wavy land. These coastal portions are known as the granaries of India. In the Telengana area of the Deccan Plateau, there is a chronic shortage of food. In the Cauvery Valley, the eastern coastal area – the Coromandel area – should chalk out a developmental programme. The Deccan Plateau can grow palmyra trees but not coconut trees, whereas the coastal areas can grow both.

A proper approach to planning will take into account all the relevant factors before development schemes are implemented.

1981, Calcutta

Developmental Programmes

In ancient times bullion was used as the medium of political and commercial transactions. In most countries gold was the preferred bullion, but in some countries silver bullion was also used. Of the countries which used gold bullion, some recognized silver bullion and some did not. If a country which used gold bullion refused to recognize silver bullion, commercial bullion transactions between the countries were not possible because of the bullion differences. Such countries engaged in barter trade.

*Kuranga badale lavanga nibo kumkum
badale chuyá*

*Gáchphal badale jáiphal pábo baherar
badale guyá.*

[We shall accept cloves in exchange for stag. We shall accept paste for pollen.]

We will accept hot spices in exchange for fruit. We shall accept medicinal fruit in exchange for nuts.]

In olden days Bengal used to conduct barter trade with countries such as Sri Lanka and Burma. Much of the commercial trade in rural Bengal was conducted through barter and only a negligible portion through the exchange of bullion. Farmers used to buy commodities from people of different vocations in exchange for their agricultural merchandise. Even 150 years ago there was hardly any exchange of bullion in the Birbhum district of Rárh. Peasants used to buy mangoes, lambs, lamps, dhotis and saris in exchange for rice. Carpenters used to buy cutters and knives in exchange for wooden articles or beaten rice. The village people of Bengal called this system "barter trade". Where there was a difference in the standard of bullion, commodities were not sold through gold or silver bullion.

The rulers (monarchy was the system in those days) used to deposit gold or silver bullion in the public exchequer. Some portion was spent on the salaries of government employees and to meet the expenses of the government's developmental programmes.

The place where the rulers produced bullion was called *ṭankashá* – in English, "mint". The words *ṭanká*, *tanká* and *tankha* have come from the word *ṭanka*. Even today in northern India, the word *tankha* is used in the sense of "salary" or "pension". In the *Shubhauṅkarii* [mathematical charts used for calculations], *Shubhauṅkara Dás*, a *káyastha* from *Bankura* district in *Rárh* said, *Maṅprati yata tanká hoibek dar...* That is, "For every *maṅ* [maund, thirty-seven kilos] the price in *tanká* will be..." The amount of money which the government releases for public use in the market is called *gaṅatanka*.

Though it is a slight digression, I would like to add the following. The clay modelling and

temple construction industries have left many beautiful relics of subtle art which demonstrate the finer sensibilities of the human mind. In ancient India, especially in southern India and Orissa, many kings used to spend bullion on building temples instead of spending it on developmental programmes. It is said that not even a penny of the total revenue collected over four years in the ancient kingdom of Utkal was spent on developmental programmes. The entire amount was spent on building the Konarka temple. As a monument and an architectural achievement, the Konarka temple is unique. Nevertheless, I hope that the present educated generation of Orissa will deeply analyse the extent to which it was justifiable to build this temple at the cost of food for the impoverished masses of Orissa.

The more that government revenue is spent on developmental programmes – not including the salaries of government employees – the better it is for the country's

economy. This policy will render great service to the masses and lead to increasing socio-economic development. As a result of the constant circulation of capital, national wealth will increase. While the government must think about the bare necessities of government employees, increasing the salaries of government employees by reducing the amount of money spent on public services can never be supported. The more that money is invested in developmental programmes, the better it is.

This policy will also indirectly lead to an increased standard of living for government employees. If any government increases the salaries of government employees without investing money in public services, the market will go out of control. Consequently, government employees, even if they are paid higher salaries, will not be benefited. If the market price of a commodity is five rupees and if the salaries of the government employees are doubled with the intention of

providing them greater amenities, will the purchasing capacity of the government employees also be doubled? If they go to market with more money in their pockets they will find that everything costs more. Such an approach is like adding fuel to fire. If the market price of commodities goes sky-high the country will be thrown into the clutches of high inflation.

So, increasing the expenses of a government department at the cost of developmental programmes amounts to committing economic suicide. If production is increased through investment in developmental programmes instead, the purchasing capacity of the people can be increased without increasing their salaries. When purchasing capacity is increased, both government and non-government employees will benefit.

In pure economic terms developmental programmes are those programmes which

directly increase national wealth and indirectly support this increase. Programmes which only increase national wealth indirectly, not directly, cannot be regarded as developmental programmes until the minimum requirements of the people are guaranteed.

17 April 1988, Calcutta

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Multi-Purpose Development Schemes

The forward march of human beings requires an internal approach and an adjustment with external objectivities. That is, it requires an internal, spiritual approach, as well as an external approach which maintains balance, equilibrium and equipoise in the different arenas of our social, economic and cultural life.

Humanity is presently suffering from two problems – one is affluence or bountifulness, and the other is shortages of not only physical but also psychic pabula. Most of the developed countries suffer from bountifulness. If the flow of affluence is regulated, then an adjustment may be made so that physical shortages and psychic deficiencies can be minimized before they become chronic problems. In most countries of the world there is a tendency towards this type of adjustment. Everybody admits that there should be such an adjustment; consequently, you will find hardly any blind capitalism in the world today. Nevertheless, despite this tendency, there is still maladjustment and misutilization of resources in developed countries.

The second problem is shortages of physical and psychic pabula. As every intellectual knows, Marxism is a psychic ailment. Those who suffered from physical shortages or psychic deficiencies were once attracted by

the high-sounding gospels of Marxism. Still today, the people living in Marxist countries suffer from these deficiencies because communism itself encourages them.

There is a worsening global situation and humanity is in danger because of these problems. Both the propounders and preachers of capitalism and communism suffer from psychic ailments, and both systems also suffer from physical shortages and psychic defects, although those living under communism are no doubt worse off. The whole world is victimized by capitalism and communism. In capitalism there is misutilization or misallocation of human energy, resources and money, and in communism people do not have free access to different types of resources to ensure their all-round development. The problem is one of social, economic and cultural maladjustment. So what should be done?

There are [hundreds] of millions of hunger-stricken people throughout the world. [[AMURT⁽¹⁾]] must come forward and do something concrete for them – we must give them substantial food, otherwise they will continue to suffer from malnutrition. We must give nutritious food; simply feeding them will not suffice. For instance, giving them sweet potatoes is of no use, since they have got very little food value. Sweet potato has less food value than tapioca. People will still suffer from malnutrition even though their bellies may be full.

Poverty Belts

In many parts of India, the major portion of China, and certain portions of South America and Africa, people suffer from hunger. The staple food of the people in the Purulia district of West Bengal for four to five months of the year is grass seeds. In major parts of Africa people live on rats and mice. In India, the seeds of grass, in Africa, rats and mice!

In India there are four main areas – east, west, north and south. In the east, there is maximum poverty. In Bengal the per capita position is number thirteen in India. Only seventeen percent of Bihar is developed. In the west, Ambikapur in Sarguja district and the Bilaspur and Baster districts of Madhya Pradesh are poor. In the north, there is Kumayun in Uttar Pradesh, as well as the hilly areas of Nepal. The Mirzapur district of eastern Uttar Pradesh is also poor. Only sixteen percent of Uttar Pradesh is developed. In the south, the poor regions include the tribal areas of Vizag district and the Telengana region in Andhra Pradesh. Tamil Nadu has coastal belts, but its plateau region is not so productive due to shortages of water and lack of a proper irrigation system. While most of Kerala has no shortage of water, there is population pressure and no industry. Water is scarce, however, in the northern border of Kerala and the southern portion of Tamil Nadu. The Malayalam speaking portion

has no industry, while the Tamil speaking area has some industry. Kerala is more or less self-sufficient. Dharmapuri is backward, though the rural economic structure of Tamil Nadu is good.

Thus, the poverty belt of India includes Palamu district and Lohardaga in the Ranchi district of Bihar; Kalahandi and Koraput in Orissa; Bilaspur, Baster and Ambikapur in eastern Madhya Pradesh; Mirzapur in eastern Uttar Pradesh; the Telengana region of Andhra Pradesh; and Dharmapuri in Tamil Nadu.

In Orissa, Maharashtra and Rárh in West Bengal, farmers sell the wheat and rice they grow and eat coarse grain and grass seeds instead. Consequently, they suffer from severe malnutrition, and as a result, leprosy. Purulia district is one of the main leprosy affected areas of India. Leprosy is mainly caused by malnutrition.

In Southeast Asia, Indonesia and Vietnam are poor, while Malaysia and Singapore are rich. Thailand's condition is relatively good. In Indonesia, people live mostly on rice; soup is a food of the [[rich]] people. Malnutrition is found throughout almost all of China.

There is not much malnutrition in North America. Mexico, in Central America, is poorer than India, and Honduras is also poor. In South America all the countries are poor. Venezuela is better off than the rest of South America, but unless it makes more effort to become self-sufficient it will face economic difficulty when its petrol runs out. Brazil, which is a large country, and Peru, are the countries which are the worst off. There are also hungry people in Paraguay and Uruguay. In Peru rice is one of the staple foods.

In the Middle East, there is socio-cultural maladjustment in the oil producing countries, even though they have enough wealth.

In Africa, there is much poverty and suffering among large sections of the population. There are hungry people throughout all of Africa. In a few countries, the staple food is rice, but these days rice is mostly for the rich.

Even in Europe, in certain parts of Wales and central Scotland, there is an acute shortage of substantial food. The people live off potatoes, and when the crop fails they suffer from malnutrition.

We must do something concrete for these people, otherwise the hunger of these downtrodden and distressed people will destroy the peace and tranquillity of the entire globe. You must not forget this fact. There should be an immediate influx of food from outside to these malnourished areas.

Tackling Malnutrition

When you are taking responsibility for the entire globe, solving the problem of malnutrition is also your sacred duty. What is

the cause of this problem? The cause is irrational distribution in the economies of the world. The long-term solution to this economic problem is PROUT, but the immediate food shortages themselves must be solved as an urgent necessity. What are you doing about this? You cannot shirk your responsibility. The entire globe is waiting for you. It is the sacred responsibility [[of our AMURT and AMURTEL⁽²⁾ – let them shoulder their]] responsibility.

The only solution to the world-wide problem of malnutrition and of the maladjustment and misallocation of resources is to implement multi-purpose development schemes. Multi-purpose development schemes are based on the degree of poverty in a country and aim to immediately elevate the standard of living of the people and bring about integrated development throughout the world. Such schemes are for the entire globe, and include undertaking temporary and permanent relief and upgrading the standard of education

wherever required. In Europe, for example, in Rumania, Albania and the Balkan states we should concentrate on temporary relief; in Portugal on permanent relief; and in Greenland on education. The Basque area of Spain is poor, while Greenland has few people. Work should start in the areas of greatest need and radiate out.

Italy is developed but not highly developed. It has crossed the threshold of a developing country – that is, the threshold of developing and developed. It is more developed than Portugal and almost as developed as Spain. Horticulture, forest resources and terranean wealth can be further developed. Sericulture, especially mulberry silk, can be developed. Oil can be found in the southern portion of Sicily and Sardinia. Italy is potentially rich in paddy production, and it should grow a little bit of wheat. The Po Valley is a paddy growing area. The southern portion of Italy grows Mediterranean fruit. This industry can also be further developed. Large industries such as

the oil and steel industries no doubt exist, but other big industries are imported from various countries.

All-Round Service

So, how should we proceed? First, to solve the critical problems of the world, all-round service should be carried out in all the countries of the world without a single exception. But special stress should be given to solving the problems of all communist countries, as well as those capitalist countries where people are exploited because of physical and psychic shortages. These countries, or some portions of countries which fall into this category, should be selected as special places and receive special service because of shortages such as food.

Rendering all-round service to the people is an extension of the multi-purpose development schemes. Different types of service, both extensive and intensive, have to be done in all the poor countries. Extensive

service means that service must be provided down to the village level, while intensive service means that as many people as possible must be benefited. This programme is necessary due to defective economic management in many parts of the world, and has nothing to do with party politics.

We have to help people in their local areas in times of calamity and distress. We can also take help from others who want to serve people selflessly. Mass feeding and cheap kitchens are appropriate everywhere, as are other items such as the distribution of clothes, medicines and school supplies, and special housing schemes for the poor, according to the situation. If you cannot enter a country immediately to render service, you can go to the border and the people will jump over.

We have shown by rendering all-round service the type of society governments should establish to elevate the standard of living of the common people. In this

programme, essential items are provided to the poorest and most needy people in each locality. If any government follows the spirit of this programme it will be just like following our Proutistic system.

Thus, for the all-round progress of society, we are to select all communist countries and the poor undeveloped and developing countries for this purpose. But as I have already said, we must not neglect the developed countries because they also suffer from shortages. By adopting such an extended and expanded approach to service, good people can do something for the suffering and downtrodden humanity. You will have to elevate the standard of both the downtrodden mass and the down moving mass. You should chalk out a plan and materialize it as soon as possible.

One of the most important reasons for psychic ailments, defects and deformities is the lack of proper education. Education

means proper psychic training and exercise. This training is initially imparted by teaching literacy. That is, it is done through teaching the letters of the alphabet: A-B-C, ka-kha-ga, etc. You can see that in most of the countries in the world – in almost the entire world – the vast percentage of the downtrodden people are illiterate. They are lagging behind in the realm of education. Everywhere, especially in Muslim countries, you will observe that the major portion of the population is downtrodden. Even where there is no shortage in wealth, in Muslim countries and certain other countries, the people are still in a downtrodden condition.

So, education is a must – education is mandatory – and you should do something to spread education in each and every village throughout the world. You should do something clear and concrete in the realm of education. Proper education means elevating the standard of downtrodden humanity.

5 April 1989, Calcutta

Footnotes

(**1**) Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team. – Eds.

(**2**) Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team – Ladies. –Eds.

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Water Conservation

At the beginning of this earth, there was absolute silence – there were no living beings or even plants. This condition continued for hundreds of millions of years, until the earth was properly formed. Then a phase came when rain and storms started, and by a gradual process, life emerged. As a result of the rain, carbon atoms got infused with vital energy (práña shakti). Carbon atoms along

with protoplasmic clash and cohesion formed this vital energy.

Water was an essential factor in the evolution of the planet, and now it is most essential for the survival of human beings, animals, plants and the planet as a whole. If it does not rain anywhere on earth for only one year, all life on the planet will be destroyed. This is because all creatures – from the smallest organisms to the largest animals – need water. If there is no water, first the small creatures will die, then the ecological balance of the planet will be lost. Next, human beings will also die, and soon the earth will become a barren wasteland.

Global Water Crisis

In the near future there will be a severe crisis in many parts of the world. Many large rivers like the Ganga, the Jamuna and the Thames are already very polluted. People cannot drink this water, and if they even wash their hands in it they can become

infected. The only solution is to rely on rainwater. We must collect the rainwater, develop the science of making artificial rain through helium or any other process, and bring the clouds which rain over the ocean onto the land. Constructing more deep tube wells is not the answer. Rather, we must catch the rainwater where it falls. Many ponds, canals, dams, lakes and reservoirs should be immediately constructed to catch the rainwater and store it for drinking water. This is the only way out of the water crisis that will confront humanity in the very near future.

In the physical sphere there are two types of calamities – natural calamities and those caused by human beings. Today most calamities are caused by human beings, but sometimes natural calamities like typhoons, floods, droughts, earthquakes, etc., also occur. Although different types of calamities may confront humanity, doomsday will never

happen. The very idea of doomsday is based on dogma.

The calamities caused by human beings are mainly of two types. First, many calamities are caused by the bifurcation and trifurcation of society. The bifurcation of society is exemplified by the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians and the recent war between North and South Vietnam. The division of India into India, Pakistan and Bangladesh is an example of the trifurcation of society.

Calamities are also caused by the destruction of the environment and the indiscriminate exploitation of subterranean resources such as coal, oil and water. One of the greatest causes of environmental destruction is deforestation. Due to deforestation, the rain clouds coming from the Bay of Bengal travel all the way across India and rain on the Arabian Sea. That is, clouds which once rained on Magadh now rain

on the Arabian Sea. Consequently, the water level in the Arabian Sea is gradually rising and the Bay of Bengal is becoming more salty. The result is that the water level around the coast of India is rising, the land area of the Indian subcontinent is decreasing and soil erosion is increasing. Approximately two-thirds of the surface of the globe is water and one-third is land, but due to deforestation the water portion is increasing and the land portion is decreasing.

Another cause of environmental destruction is the exploitation of subterranean resources. Deep cavities have been formed in the earth after extracting subterranean resources, and these cavities should be properly filled. In some countries it is the practice to use sand to fill the cavities created by mining underground coal. If these cavities are left unfilled, the surrounding regions are more likely to experience earthquakes than other areas. Moreover, the unfilled cavities can

severely weaken the surface structure of the earth, causing whole regions to collapse.

In some Arab countries, huge amounts of money have been made by extracting oil from under the ground. Several years ago the leaders of these countries realized that the supply of oil would not last forever, so they started to think about the future of their countries after the supply of oil was exhausted. They became concerned that the level of the water-table was falling and the sizes of the deserts were increasing. To solve this problem, they decided to import soil and sweet water to create dense forests. Now the trees that they planted are eight to ten years old, and last year it was reported that they experienced floods for the first time. Many of the local people had never seen floods before, and young children even cried in alarm at the sight of the rain!

The exploitation of subterranean water reserves is contributing to desertification in

many parts of the world, and as the subterranean water level recedes, the soil near the surface dries out and plants wither and die. This has already happened in many parts of Rajasthan. Afforestation is the only solution to desertification. Human beings have suffered from water scarcity and drought in the past, and this problem will continue unless proper care is taken in the future. If deforestation and the indiscriminate exploitation of subterranean water reserves continue, it is likely that many parts of the world will face severe water shortages from 1993 to at least the year 2000. The only way to avoid such a catastrophe is to immediately implement a decentralized approach to water conservation.

The Causes of Drought

Why do droughts occur? What are the most important causes of drought? There are three main causes. The first is the wanton destruction of plants or indiscriminate

deforestation, the second is low pressure systems over oceans and big seas, and the third is sudden changes in the angular movement of the sun and other celestial bodies like comets, nebulae and galaxies.

Deforestation causes drought because it prevents the plants from nourishing the earth. The fibrous roots of plants absorb and hold considerable amounts of water which is slowly released into the soil. In the paddy fields of Bengal, for example, during the dry season water will trickle down the channels beside the fields. Where does the water come from? It is released from the roots of the standing crops. But when the paddy and the associate crops are harvested, the supply of water dries up. Deforestation is caused by human beings, and it is within their power to solve this problem through their own efforts.

The second and third causes are presently beyond human control. In the future, with the development of the meteorological and

marine sciences, human beings will be able to partially influence and overcome the second cause, but not fully. The third cause can only be controlled by Supreme Consciousness. However, if human beings follow the path of positive microvita and have the grace of Supreme Consciousness, they can also control the third cause.

How do the sudden changes in the angular movement of celestial bodies cause drought? The paths of some comets are predetermined and astronomers can ascertain their arrival dates and possible effects on the earth, but there are other comets that appear suddenly without warning. When there is the sudden appearance of powerful celestial bodies or a sudden change in their angle of rotation, their gravitational pull may disturb the seasons and the natural order of creation. For example, as a result of the strong gravitational pull of a powerful comet or meteor, clouds may not be formed. This phenomenon is called bakudashá in Sanskrit.

Certain deviations of celestial bodies like meteors, comets and satellites take place due to the concentration of a huge number of positive and negative microvita. Movement in universal space is subject to the movement of positive and negative microvita, and this also affects life on earth.

The angularity of the movement of celestial bodies also affects the minds of human beings. Suppose you are outside enjoying a cool breeze on a calm full moon night. A soothing, painless feeling will arise in your mind. But if the feeling continues, the nerve cells in your body may become dull, and if the experience of dullness goes beyond a certain limit, your thinking power may be impaired, even causing some psychic ailment. This occurs because the ecological balance within the human structure is lost.

Say a certain incident took place in your life at the age of eight. Now we know that there is nothing identical in this universe, only

similarities. If similar circumstances reoccur after a gap of say eight years, a similar incident could take place when you are sixteen. You have to ensure that people are not put into an environment which is similar to one that caused them pain and suffering in the past, as this may adversely affect their progress in the spiritual sphere. This also applies to the physical and psychic spheres.

Human movement is movement towards ecological equipoise – towards the supreme synthesis. In the inner world, balance must be maintained as this leads to spiritual progress. Ecological order is not only for the earth but for the entire universe, and it must be maintained both within and without. The angular displacement of any celestial body may affect the human mind as well as the physical universe, so balance must be maintained between the internal and external spheres. In all aspects of human life this subtle balance must be maintained. This is ecological balance.

The Defects of Well Irrigation

I have already said that constructing more deep tube wells is not the solution to the water crisis. What are the drawbacks of well irrigation? Well irrigation causes the level of the water-table to drop, while the continuous use of well irrigation dries up the subterranean flow of water. Initially the effects of continuous well irrigation may not be easy to perceive, but eventually a fertile region will be transformed into a desert. In fact, if the subterranean water level stays at above twenty to twenty-five feet, the surface vegetation will not be affected, but if it drops below fifty feet, the surface of the earth will become a barren wasteland.

The negative effects of well irrigation include the following:

- 1) Neighbouring shallow wells dry up creating the problem of lack of drinking water.

2) Trees, orchards and large plants do not get sufficient subterranean water so they wither and die. Green countryside will become a desert after thirty to forty-five years of intensive well irrigation.

3) In some deep tube wells enemy elements – that is, elements which are harmful to the soil such as heavy minerals and mineral salts – get mixed with the water, causing problems such as salinity. As a result, the land eventually becomes infertile and unfit for cultivation. When the flow of well water stops, irrigation tanks supplied by these wells also dry up.

Well irrigation should be used only as a temporary measure because of the devastating effects it can have on the surrounding environment. Alternative methods of irrigation include river irrigation, irrigation from reservoirs, dams and small ponds, shift irrigation and lift irrigation.

Irrigation water is like the apex of a spinning top. Without it, agriculture is not possible.

The Best Methods of Irrigation

The best method of irrigation is the conservation of surface water through a system of ponds, canals, dams, lakes and reservoirs.

Take the example of Rárh and Orissa. The potentialities of this region have not yet been fully developed and utilized. The major portion of the wealth is subterranean, and these treasures should be properly harnessed, but practically nothing has been done in this respect. The surface potentialities should also be properly developed, but these too have been neglected.

How should the surface water potentiality in this region be utilized? The rainfall in this area is very meagre – rain only falls part of the year, and the rest of the year it is dry. Well irrigation is underdeveloped, and there is hardly any lift or shift irrigation. Sixty-five

percent of the land is rocky and sandy, and traditionally only coarse grain is grown there. So in Rárh we have to do two things – construct many new small-scale ponds, dams and lakes, and undertake large-scale afforestation on the banks of all water systems.

Rárh has undulating land, so large-scale reservoirs cannot be easily constructed, but many small lakes and ponds can be built. Large, deep reservoirs will not be as beneficial as small-scale ponds and should not be encouraged. Moreover, large reservoirs rely on lift and shift irrigation to supply water to a system of canals. In such a system the water pressure will fall because as the water travels along the canals leading from the reservoirs to the fields, the canals will be obstructed by the hilly terrain. So, if there is a big investment in reservoirs, the money will be wasted. Instead, many small ponds and dams can be constructed with the same investment. If many small-scale dams are constructed at a

cost of about one hundred thousand rupees each, this investment will give a return of hundreds of millions of rupees.

In a system of small-scale ponds and dams, any surplus water in the canals leading to the fields can be rechannelled back to a main water source to avoid wastage. Water will only be carried a little distance in a small-scale canal system, so most of the time the surrounding fields will be properly irrigated. Sometimes however, as in the rainy season, surplus water will be created which should be rechannelled back to the water source or used further downstream. Such a system will also help check flooding in the rainy season and avoid damage to the small-scale dams constructed along the rivers. Farmers should take care that they do not use excessive non-organic fertilizers, because the chemicals will pollute the water system and have a harmful effect on humans, animals, fish, plants and the environment. Organic fertilizers are preferable to non-organic fertilizers.

What is the method to irrigate a rain-shadow region? When the rain clouds move from the sea and strike high mountains on the land there is rain. The part of the mountain range which faces the sea gets ample rain, whereas the region on the other side of the range facing inland gets little rain. The region which gets ample rain is the rain-front area, while the region which gets little rain is the rain-shadow area. The entire Telengana region is a rain-shadow area, and so is the Pune region of Maharashtra.

How can the Pune region be irrigated? There are two main methods. One is to pump water up the coastal side of the mountain range so that it can run down the inland rivers, and the other is to dig a tunnel through the mountains from the rain-front area to the rain-shadow area. The second method of irrigation is far cheaper. A well constructed tunnel should last about 150 years.

Rivers

There are three types of rivers – ice fed, rain fed and subterranean fed. Ice fed rivers cause flooding when there is an increase in the temperature, whereas rain fed and subterranean fed rivers only cause seasonal flooding when there is heavy rain. However, an increase in the temperature can dry them up.

Are the rivers in Rárh perennial or seasonal? Are they ice fed or rain fed, or do they get water from subterranean sources due to the high level of the artesian water? Many rain fed rivers are only supplied with water in the rainy season and not in other seasons. The rivers in central Rárh are rain fed but they are also supplied with artesian water. We should not depend only on rain fed rivers, because while they may accumulate water in the rainy season, in other seasons they may dry up. And even if rain fed rivers are also fed by subterranean sources which supply water

throughout the year, there should still be every effort to conserve the surface water.

There are four categories of rivers – small rivulets, rivulets, rivers and big rivers.

Rivers also have three stages – the hill, plain and delta stages. Some rivers, however, do not have their delta stage in the ocean because they expire before reaching the sea. Take the example of the topography of Mithila and Magadh. In Mithila in the rainy season, sufficient water passes through rivers such as the Bagmati, Gandak and Koshi. The hill stage of these rivers is in Nepal, the plain stage is in Mithila, and the delta stage is in Bengal. The plains of Mithila contain very soft soil, which is why these rivers always change their course. No rivers have their delta stage in Mithila. To tame these rivers, the cooperation of Nepal and Bengal is required.

In Magadh, unlike Mithila, the hill and delta stages of the rivers are in Magadh, except for the Suvarnareka, which flows just on the

border line between southern Magadh and northern Chattisgarh. The Koel River should be tamed through cooperation between Magadh and Kaoshal. In fact, Magadh and Kaoshal share many common problems.

In controlling or taming rivers, powerful boards of experts should be established which contain representatives of all three stages. This will ensure the successful implementation of river projects. Under international law no country should be allowed to use water according to its own wish. The hill stage must consult with the plain stage and the plain stage must consult with the delta stage. Nepal, for example, must consult with the plain and delta stages of its rivers which flow through India. If there is want of cooperation among the three, the river water coming from the hills or blocked at the delta may submerge a large area of plain land. Magadh is in a relatively convenient position as both the hill and plain stages of its rivers are in Magadh.

Afforestation

The banks of all water systems should be covered by dense forests. The science behind this is that the roots of the trees retain water. When the water-table subsides, the roots of the trees slowly release water. Hence, a pond surrounded by trees will never run dry. The foliage of the trees also minimizes evaporation. Besides this, the leaves of the trees have very small pores which attract clouds, so the trees help to increase the rainfall. Only one hundred years ago there were large rain forests in Rárh, and at that time in the Manbhum district the rainfall was seventy to eighty inches per year. Now it is hardly forty to forty-five inches.

A scientific programme of afforestation should include two aspects. In the first phase fast growing trees should be planted. Trees which grow to their full height in six months to two years and provide dense green cover should be selected. In the second phase,

trees which take longer to grow but also provide dense green cover should be planted. This approach will quickly restore the ecological balance of a region.

Afforestation must be carried out both intensively and extensively. The best approach is to plant both fast growing and slow growing trees together. Planting only slow growing trees is uneconomic because we will have to wait thirty, fifty, seventy or one hundred years to get the desired result. And planting only fast growing trees will not provide any long term benefits. So both intensive and extensive afforestation should be done immediately. After reaching maturity, the trees can be selectively cut and sold.

Afforestation should be carried out on the banks of ponds, canals, dams, lakes, rivers and reservoirs. For example, babula [*Acacia arabica* Willd.] or kheyer [*Acacia catechu* Willd.] should be planted. In between these trees we can plant bukphul [*Sesbania*

grandiflora Pers.]), and in between these, Indian rosewood. The reason for this is that bukphul grows very fast and within five years it will be a tall tree, but babula takes a little longer to grow. Indian rosewood grows very slowly but it lives a long time. Thus, first bukphul will grow fast and attract rain which will help the other trees to grow. When it has fully matured after five or seven years it can be cut, and by this stage we will have a dense forest of Indian rosewood trees.

These trees are very useful in other respects also. For example, bukphul leaves increase the milk supply in cows, while thread can be produced from the leaves and stem. Indian rosewood trees increase the rainfall and hold water in their roots. The flowers provide a plentiful supply of honey, the leaves can be used to make plates, the sap is used to produce gum for the incense industry, and the tree may be used in sericulture to produce tasar silk. The seeds are also edible and are taken by poor people, while the honey has

medicinal use and economic value, so it can earn foreign exchange as an export commodity. Piyasal [*Pterocarpus marsupium* Roxb.] can also be planted in between Indian rosewood trees if need be. In this way, step by step, we have to proceed.

Scientific crop management is also an essential aspect of water conservation. For example, a field of barley requires less water to grow than a field of vegetables. If there are two fields side by side, one of barley and the other of vegetables, the vegetable crop will consume only seventy-five percent of the water normally used to irrigate it. If the other twenty-five percent is allowed to run off to the barley crop, that water will be sufficient to irrigate the barley. The barley crop will not require any special irrigation facilities.

Fruit trees can store a large amount of water in their roots, so they should be planted along river banks and near paddy fields to help conserve water. After the paddy harvest

at Ánanda Nagar, for example, the water flows into the two rivulets – the Alkananda and the Paragati – leaving the fields dry. After a short time the rivulets also dry up as their supply of seepage water from the fields stops. To solve this problem, fruit trees should be planted beside the rivulets. The water stored in the roots of the fruit trees will keep the soil moist and fertile. Care should be taken so that the branches of the fruit trees do not block the sunlight from the crops. If this system is followed, when the paddy is cut and the fields are drained of water, the rivulets will remain flowing. If fruit trees are planted along the banks of a river, it will always retain water.

Foolish human beings, however, have cut down all the trees along the river banks, so now many rivers have dried up. Who would believe that 150 years ago large boats used to travel along the Mayuraksi Rriver in Bengal? Today it is a small river, and in the rainy season small boats only ply along it. The

forests around the river have all gone. The forest trees contain water in their root systems and release it in a controlled way which enables the rivers to flow regularly. Now you understand the utility of the forests. Adjacent to the Mayuraksi River is the Katasu village where I once saw a fossilized mast of a ship. This proves that at one time large ships used to travel along the river. I have also seen the same thing along the Damodar River. Due to deforestation, these rivers are now drying up, and consequently there is less rainfall.

The inner spirit of our water conservation programme is that the amount of existing surface water should be immediately doubled. But it is preferable if it is increased tenfold. This can best be done by a decentralized approach to water management which increases the depth, the area, or both, of water storage systems. The first step is to increase the depth of those ponds, tanks, dams, lakes, rivers and reservoirs which are

already being used for storing water. The second step is to increase the area of these storage facilities, while the third step is to increase the plantations around them. How can these plantations be increased by a factor of ten? By increasing the number of rows of plants around each water storage system five times, and by reducing the distance between each plant by half. In addition to this, many new small-scale ponds, tanks, dams, lakes and reservoirs should also be constructed. As a general rule, surface water should always be utilized in preference to subterranean water.

You must prepare yourselves. The sphere of knowledge, the span of knowledge and the expansion of knowledge starts with the self. Humanity is waiting for you. You know what you are and what the world expects from you. You have to solve all the problems in the world today. You should prepare detailed plans and programmes and act accordingly. You must be the vanguard.

25 March 1989, Calcutta

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Questions and Answers on Economics – Excerpt A

1) Question: What do we want, increase in per capita income or increase in purchasing capacity?

Answer: According to PROUT, increases in per capita income are not a sufficiently reliable and scientific index to determine the standard and progress of a particular socio-economic unit. Rather, this approach is misleading and deceitful, because it refers to a simple mathematical calculation of total national income divided by total population. This does not give the correct picture of the standard of living of the people of a particular

socio-economic unit as the wealth disparity in society is concealed. Per capita income shows the mean and not the variation of income distribution. If inflation is also considered, the reliability of per capita income is further reduced.

Purchasing capacity, on the other hand, is the real index of how people's economic needs can be met by their income. All PROUT's plans and programmes in the socio-economic sphere should be aimed at increasing the purchasing capacity of the people. PROUT stresses increasing purchasing capacity and not per capita income.

Per capita income is not a proper indication of the increase in the standard of living of the people because while people may have very high incomes they may not be able to purchase the necessities of life. If the per capita income is low and people have great purchasing capacity they are much better off. So, purchasing capacity and not per capita

income is the true measure of economic prosperity. Everyone's requirements should be within their pecuniary periphery or purchasing capacity.

2) Question: Shall we support the recent cry for more power to the states? What is our policy?

Answer: We support economic decentralization. So, the amount of power which directly concerns economic decentralization should be in the hands of the states or the concerned lower level governments. Otherwise, how can they materialize the economic power that is vested in them by decentralization?

3) Question: What is the difference between agrico-industries and agro-industries?

Answer: Agrico-industries represent a set of pre-harvesting industries. Agrico-industries directly or indirectly promote the rapid qualitative and quantitative growth of

agricultural products. Agro-industries comprise those post-harvesting industries which depend on agricultural production.

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Questions and Answers on **Economics – Excerpt B**

4) Question: Should development schemes for the all-round elevation of an agricultural country or region and an industrial country or region be the same in theory or different from each other?

Answer: Development in the sense of all-round elevation is the summum bonum of economic activity. That is, development means integrated, compact and multi-purpose development.

Principles and theories remain unchanged although policies may vary. The agricultural portion of theory, the agricultural style of theory, should be the same. However, since

circumstances vary, the approach or the application of the theory will certainly differ.

Until now the structural locus standi of agriculture has not been properly developed. In fact, all aspects of the structural side of agriculture have been neglected.

According to PROUT, agriculture should be given the status of industry. In industry raw material costs, labour costs, interest on loans, depreciation, maintenance costs, profit, the rate of out-turn, etc., are fixed and included in costing. In agriculture this has not been done, so produce is usually uneconomically priced. Farmers are forced to sell their produce at low prices due to the pressure of circumstances. This is known as a "distress sale". If agriculture is treated as an industry, all the conditions of industry should apply to agriculture. When this occurs farmers will not be neglected, and there will not be any differentiation in the style of development and costing of agriculture and industry.

For example, Orissa produces a single crop of paddy per year. No proper irrigation exists so there is always a dearth of water, consequently peasants remain poor. But this poverty must be removed. If we recognize agriculture as an industry in Orissa, costing and pricing will be different. Costing will include the cost of seeds, labour, raw materials, pension funds, storage or inventory, depreciation, sinking funds, etc. Farmers should also include up to fifteen percent profit on their produce as part of their costs. Thus, the value of agricultural produce as an industrial output will be properly calculated.

In a Proutistic economy buyers will have to purchase agricultural produce at this newly calculated price. This is the proper approach to integrated development. In such a system, farmers will not be exploited or put to needless hardship.

5) Question: What is the significance of the value of wealth?

Answer: In the subtle economic sense, the value of wealth is the real wealth. Wealth, if not properly defined, may mean only riches. But the value of wealth is to be measured in terms of its capacity to purchase commodities. That is, the purchasing capacity of wealth is its real value. This real value of wealth has not yet been properly understood in numerical terms by economists.

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Questions and Answers on Economics – Excerpt C

6) Question: What should be the system of share distribution in cooperatives?

Answer: PROUT advocates the phase-wise socialization of agricultural land which should be managed by farmers cooperatives. In the

initial phase of transition to cooperative management, land shares should be in the hands of those who are landholders. That is, initially the shares in agricultural or farmers cooperatives should be distributed on the basis of the land vested in the cooperative. When the cooperative system is fully implemented in the agriculture sector, there will not be any distinction between landholders and non-landholders, as all members of the cooperative will be collectively responsible for the management of the land. However, this stage can only be achieved after the proper psychological preparation of the people.

In the cooperative system there should not be any scope for interest earning shares; that is, there should not be profit earning shares in cooperatives. Rather, shares should be according to the production of the land. If there are profit earning shares in farmers or agricultural cooperatives, then these shares will be sold in the share market, capitalists

will buy the shares, the rate of share prices will fluctuate according to share market prices, and cooperatives will become commercial enterprises.

Similarly, in industrial cooperatives there should be dividend earning shares and not profit earning shares as in bank interest, otherwise these cooperatives will also become commercial enterprises. If there are profit earning shares, the spirit of the cooperative system will be destroyed and cooperatives will go into the hands of the capitalists.

So, there must not be any preferential shares in any farmers, producers or consumers cooperatives, only dividend shares. Shareholders with preferential shares earn a fixed amount of interest from their shares regardless of whether the enterprise makes a loss or profit.

Preferential shares are like the sonja system in agriculture. In the sonja system, sharecroppers get a fixed amount from

landowners when they initially agree to cultivate their land. This is given regardless of the amount produced by the sharecropper, even if there is crop failure. Dividend shares earn a dividend which is defined as a return on the basis of the net profit earned by the enterprise.

Shareholders must be people of high morality. In cooperatives, voting rights should be on an individual basis and not on the basis of the number of shares a person holds. In capitalist countries shares can be purchased. Democracy in capitalist countries is a farce because votes can be purchased and poor people cannot fight elections.

Neither the commune system nor capitalism can solve human problems. Only the cooperative system can solve all sorts of social, cultural and national problems.

7) Question: What are service cooperatives?

Answer: This type of cooperative will not be in the arena of producers or consumers cooperatives. Service cooperatives are a subtle type of cooperative coming within the arena of cultural cooperatives.

Let us take the example of doctors. Doctors should start service cooperatives. These cooperatives may also be called "physicians' service cooperatives". Suppose a doctor is not able to open his or her own practice, he or she may form a service cooperative with five or ten other doctors. Such a cooperative is an intellectual service cooperative. Doctors who have little capital and cannot afford to establish their own practices can also work in this type of cooperative. Such a system will solve the unemployment problem of doctors. In addition, doctors can start research through these cooperatives, although a doctor's job is ninety-nine percent practical and hardly one percent theoretical.

Besides service cooperatives, there are several other types of cooperatives which include farmers cooperatives, producers cooperatives, consumers cooperatives, banking cooperatives, housing cooperatives and family annuity cooperatives.

The day is fast approaching when intellectuality will rule the earth. The commune system has failed – we do not want communistic mania or philosophical phobia. Intellectually developed human beings will rule the earth, and for this the cooperative system is indispensable.

8) Question: If the land is bountiful and the per capita income is very high, does it mean that the all-round micropsychic conations or the all-round micropsychic aspirations of the people are fully quenched?

Answer: No. To quench the all-round micropsychic longings of the people, there must be the following:

a) Psycho-spiritual education. There can be balkanization of society if there is no psycho-spiritual education. b) Rule by moralists. c) Ever increasing purchasing capacity. If the per capita income is Rs. 50,000 and the price of the quintal of rice is Rs. 80,000, the condition of the people will be very bad. d) A balanced socio-economic structure.

9) Question: Is barter trade suitable for undeveloped or developing countries?

Answer: It is suitable for both undeveloped and developing countries, especially where the number of surplus goods is limited or few in number. Bangladesh, for example, has a surplus in jute and hide. For that country, barter trade is suitable.

10) Question: What is the bonus system and the piece work system?

Answer: In capitalism production is for profit. The amount of the bonus is usually fixed. The actual profit is hidden from the workers and goes directly to the owner, so

workers do not get any incentive to work harder and better. In communism production is for the state. Workers do not feel oneness with the job so there is little incentive to work. In PROUT production is for consumption – our industrial system will be based on consumption. Profit will be minimized so capitalists will not get the scope to exploit the workers. There will also be rational distribution of wealth.

The time involved in the production of commodities can be viewed from three angles – the time allotted to complete some work; the time taken to complete some work; and the time saved to complete some work. In the bonus system the calculation of the bonus is on the basis of the time saved, and the money value of this calculation is given to the worker. This is the incentive in the bonus system.

In the piece work system the incentive is calculated in a different way. Suppose you are

manufacturing machines. The labour, etc., involved in the cost of production is set, so the market price will be the cost of production plus the profit. That is, price equals cost plus profit. The profit or part of it is distributed among those who manufactured the machines. This is their incentive. This is how incentives work in the piece work system. As workers get more incentive, they try to manufacture more machines. This is not the case in state capitalism because workers get fixed incentives which become part of their wages.

Incentives should encourage greater work and better quality work, so they should be directly linked to production. If this approach is followed, the per capita income and the standard of living of the workers will automatically increase.

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Declaration

All human beings, irrespective of gender, caste, creed, religion, rich or poor have equal right to learn and practice spiritual Meditation and get guidance to move along path of spirituality. The science of spirituality is also termed as 'Yoga'. Knowledge of Yoga should never be used for commercial purpose. It should be distributed free of cost. Anybody can learn Yoga meditation, free of cost, at any time from Monks and nuns of "Ánanda Márga Pracaraka Samgha".

The ultimate goal of human life is to experience absolute peace the bliss. Only through God realization one can achieve bliss.

God realization is possible only through Yoga meditation; there is no other way.