

Prout in a Nutshell

Part 21



Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

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ROMAN SAṂSKRṬA ALPHABET

Realizing the necessity of writing swiftly and of pronouncing the words of different languages correctly, the undernoted Roman Samskrta (Sanskrit) alphabet has been adopted.

Those not familiar with either the Devanagari alphabet or the Bengali alphabet, and those not familiar with Bengali pronunciation, please see the pronunciation keys starting on page x.

অ	আ	ই	ঐ	উ	ঊ	ঋ	ঌ	ু	ূ	এ	ঐ	ও	ঔ	অং	অঃ
অ	আ	ই	ঐ	উ	ঊ	ঋ	ঌ	লৃ	ল্লৃ	এ	ঐ	ও	ঔ	অং	অঃ
a	á	i	ii	u	ú	r	rr	lr	lrr	e	ae	o	ao	am	ah

ক খ গ ঘ ঙ চ ছ জ ঝ ঞ
 ক খ গ ঘ ঙ চ ছ জ ঝ ঞ
 ka kha ga gha ŋa ca cha ja jha ña

ট ঠ ড ঢ ণ ত থ দ ধ ন
 ট ঠ ড ঢ ণ ত থ দ ধ ন
 ṭa ṭha ḍa ḍha ṇa ta tha da dha na

প ফ ব ভ ম
 প ফ ব ভ ম
 Pa pha ba bha ma

য র ল ব
 য র ল ব
 ya ra la va

শ ষ স হ ক্ষ
 শ ষ স হ ক্ষ
 sha śa sa ha kśa

অ ঙ ঋষি ছায়া জ্ঞান সংস্কৃত ততোহং
 অ ঙ ঋষি ছায়া জ্ঞান সংস্কৃত ততোহং
 aṅ jṇa rśi cháyá jñána saṁskṛta tato'ham

a á b c d é e g h i j k l m n
 n n̄ o p r s ś t t̄ u ú v y

It is possible to pronounce the Samskrta, or Sanskrit, language with the help of only twenty-nine letters of Roman script. The letters " f ", " q

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“, " qh “, " z “, etc., are required in the Arabic, Persian, and various other languages, but not in Samskrta.

" áda " and " ádha “, occurring in the middle of a word or at the end of a word, are pronounced " r̥ “ and “r̥ha “, respectively. Like " ya", they are not independent letters. When the need arises in writing non - Saṁskṛta words, "r̥ “ and “r̥ha" may be written.

Ten additional letters in Roman Saṁskṛta, for writing non-Sanskrit words:

ক	খ	জ	ড়	ঢ	ফ	য়	ল	ৎ	অঁ
ক্	খ্	জ্	ড়্	ঢ্	ফ্	য়্	ল্	ত্	অঁ
qua	qhua	za	r̥	r̥ha	fa	ya	lra	t	aṅ

Publisher's Note:

Prout, an acronym for “Progressive Utilization Theory”, is a comprehensive socio-economic philosophy developed by the author from the beginning of 1955 until his passing away in October 1990. The author defined Progressive Utilization Theory as the “progressive utilization of all factors”, and those who support this principle as “Proutists”.

Translated from original Bengali.
Meaning of Bengali words are given
in footnotes.

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How to Unite Human Society

While trying to bring about the development and prosperity of individuals and society, we should encourage the common points only among different communities – not the points of difference. It is natural that there are differences in society concerning dress, customs, cultural expressions, food habits, language, etc. But if these points of difference are given undue importance, social problems will only be aggravated, and as a result the unity and very existence of society will be jeopardized. If nothing is done immediately to check the deterioration of contemporary society, then as a result of different factors, in due course society will automatically evolve some common principles. So the points of difference should never be encouraged in any way.

Social and political leaders should refrain from harping on the points of difference in society. Rather, they should continually

emphasize that it is not the appropriate time to bring up complicated divisive issues. For example, take the case of Indian languages. There are many people in India who unnecessarily fight over the issue of language, but is now the proper time to raise this issue when there are so many people suffering from hunger, famine, disease, educational backwardness, economic distress, etc.? Can the people of India afford to waste their valuable time over the comparatively unimportant issue of language? On the contrary, they should immediately launch a campaign against exploitation, as this will keep the divisive forces under control. If this is not done, the fissiparous forces will create impediments and dissension in society, and the important burning issues confronting the people will remain unsolved.

Points of Unity

The progress of a country depends on unity, so emphasis should be placed only on unifying factors. To eliminate fissiparous forces, we will have to fight a relentless war against disunity in the following three spheres.

The Socio-Economic Sphere

While some people are enormously rich, a large percentage of the population is languishing in poverty. Naturally, to build up a strong society, socio-economic disparity must be completely eradicated.

With the eradication of socio-economic disparity, the collective wealth of society will have to be increased progressively. Only then can the growing demands of the population be successfully met. Let us take the example of Orissa. Agricultural production, particularly in the rainy season, depends almost entirely on the

monsoons. But if the irrigation system was properly developed, the total agricultural production in the state would increase 300 percent, and an additional 40 million people could be fed. Today only 15 million people are being fed with the present levels of production. Orissa is also rich in mineral resources.

Abundant coal, bauxite, manganese and other minerals are readily available in the state, but many of these minerals are being exported to other countries. If these raw materials were properly utilized to manufacture finished goods in the state, Orissa could establish at least four large-scale steel plants. This would substantially increased the purchasing power of the people. Unfortunately, the incompetent political leaders of the country do not think in a rational way. On the contrary, they formulate plans that neither remove socio-economic disparity nor increase collective wealth. These leaders have committed

a major blunder by placing the cart before the horse.

In all countries of the world, economically deprived people can be united through a common programme of socio-economic struggle and by fighting against cruel capitalist exploitation on the one hand, and by implementing developmental programmes to enhance the amount of collective wealth on the other. By undertaking extensive irrigation, mining, agriculture and industrial development, the collective wealth of a country can be easily increased.

Self-sufficient socio-economic zones should be established throughout the world to smoothly eliminate social disparity and increase collective wealth. The formation of states on political grounds should be carefully avoided. In one political unit there may be several socio-

economic zones which can live unitedly together with their respective problems. For example, the state of Bihar is a political unit but while the Chotanagpur Hills are confronted with the problem of irrigation, the plains of North Bihar are suffering from the problem of drainage. In Royalseema, Srikulam and Telengana areas of Andhra Pradesh are situated in the political unit of Andhra Pradesh, but their socio-economic potentialities are quite different. To derive the maximum benefit from these areas, distinct socio-economic zones should be formed, regardless of whether or not they remain in the same political unit. It is a great mistake to form states on the basis of politics or language. If a capitalist and a labourer speaks the same language, who will think that they are friends because of their linguistic affinity?

The Psycho-Sentimental Sphere

In the psychic sphere, there are certain factors that serve to unite different linguistic groups of people. For example, all North Indian languages and a few South Indian languages originated and developed from Saṁskṛta. These languages have been greatly influenced by Saṁskṛta. In such circumstances, the study of Saṁskṛta should not be opposed by anybody. This may appear to be a trivial matter, but if it is encouraged it will be a great unifying factor in Indian society.

In social traditions also, some common points may be developed. Research and archaeological excavation on glorious past civilizations and great personalities will help arouse a strong national sentiment. For example, the excavation of the Mahenzodaro and Harappa civilizations highlighted the accomplishments of ancient Indian culture.

The study of history should also be encouraged. Itihása is not synonymous with the Saṁskṛta word itikathá which means “history” and is the chronological record of past events. The word itihása means that part of history which has great educative value. The study of itihása or the cultural history of a country arouses a sense of unity amongst the members of society, and they become aware of their impact on cultural legacy. For example, the study of the historical epic Mahábhárata creates a sense of pride and inspiration in the minds of the people, and this fosters the spirit of collective unity.

The memory of illustrious, saints, and sages also binds people together with common bonds of affinity. When people cherish their past leaders and saints, it creates a strong foundation for collective unity.

The Spirituo-Sentimental Sphere

The sentiments of a common spiritual heritage and a common spiritual goal are the only sentiments which can bind people together permanently. Socio-economic and psycho-sentimental issues are extremely useful for creating social unity and cohesion, but the sentiments arising out of these issues are temporary. Cosmic sentiments are permanent. By inculcating universal sentiments, socio-economic unity and fraternity will be based on a strong fundament. People will think in terms of cosmic paternity and universal fraternity. My firm conviction that we have all come from the same Entity and we will all merge in the same Entity will generate a unique unifying sentiment. All people will feel united by the ties of universal love and friendship, which will ultimately pave the way for a universal society. The poet Satyendra Dutta, the great universalist, has

eloquently expressed this sentiment in the following poem:

***Ráge anuráge nidrita jáge
 ásal mánuś prakat hay
 Varńe varńe náhika visheś
 nikhil bhuvan Brahmamay!
 Nivir aekye yáy mishe' yáy
 sakal bhágya sab hrday
 Mánuśe mánuśe náiko prabhed
 nikhil mánava Brahmamay.***

[When love awakens in sleeping souls, then true human beings will emerge.

There is no difference between one person, one race, and another, for the entire universe is pervaded by one Infinite Consciousness!(1)]

Wherever there is a common point among people it should be encouraged, while the points of difference have to be discouraged and

eliminated. For fostering unity and enhancing the prosperity of the people, this must be the fundamental approach. We should always remember:

Jagat juṛiyá ek jāt áche
 Se jātir nám mánuś jāti
 Eki prthiviir stanye pālita
 Eki ravi shashi moder sáthii.

*[There is only one race in the entire world,
 And the name of that race is the human race.
 We are bound together with the same breast milk
 of mother Earth,
 And the same sun and moon are our common
 companions.]*

Points of Difference

There are conspicuous variations in four main areas of human society – food, dress, language and religion.

Food

In India there are four distinct food zones where either coconut oil, mustard oil, sesame oil, or vegetable oil or ghee are used. In the Punjab and Uttar Pradesh, most people prefer bread, whereas in eastern and southern India, people prefer rice. The food that people eat depends upon geophysical conditions. If all the people of India are made to eat the same food, regardless of their geophysical necessities, it would be a great mistake.

Dress

Similarly, dress and customs also depend upon various geophysical factors. For example,

take the case of the Arabs who live in dry deserts. Hot winds and burning sands are their constant companions. Naturally, they are compelled to cover their bodies from head to foot and build their houses underground, otherwise it is next to impossible to survive. On the other hand, the people who live in North Bihar have to be careful that their clothes are not soiled by mud or dirty water caused by the heavy rainfall. Obviously, the 1 dress that people wear in a particular area is largely determined by climatic considerations. It is ludicrous to prescribe uniform dress for people, disregarding environmental conditions. People living in extremely cold countries automatically wear warm clothing, while people living in tropical regions do not.

Language

In every country, languages originate and develop according to racial and cultural factors. Though the origin of languages is fundamentally the same everywhere, languages vary from place to place.

Racial characteristics are defined by the nature of the blood and the structure of the nose, eyes, hair and skin. The differences in the formation of these factors account for the variations in racial characteristics. There are four main races in the world – Aryan, Mongolian, Austric and Negroid. Aryans have red or fair complexions, Mongolians yellow complexions, Austrics dark brown complexions and Negroes black complexions. Austrico-Negroids are called “Dravidians”.

The Aryans can be divided into three groups. First, the Nordic Aryans have reddish white skin, reddish or golden hair, brown coloured eyes like

those of cats, warm blood and parrot-like noses. Secondly, the Alpine Aryans have milky white skin, brackish blue hair, blue eyes, slightly cooler blood than the Nordics and hawk-like noses. Thirdly, the Mediterranean Aryans have fair skin, black hair, black eyes, ordinary noses, cooler blood than the Alpines and are of medium stature. The people living in southern France, Arabian countries and the Balkan states belong to the Mediterranean sub-race.

The Mongolians can be divided into five groups. First, the Nipponese have big faces, flat noses and big bodies. Secondly, the Chinese have flat noses and slanting eyes. Thirdly, the Malays have small bodies and flat noses. Fourthly, The Indo- Burmese have flat noses and comparatively big bodies. Fifthly, the Indo-Tibetans have flat noses and are quite good looking. All the people in these groups have yellowish skin and little hair on their bodies.

The Austriacs have medium-sized bodies and mud-black coloured skins.

The Negroes have black skin, kinky hair, thick lips, slightly colder blood than the Aryans and are often tall in stature.

There are several racial divisions in India which include the Indo-Tibetans, such as the Ladakhans, Kinnariis, Ga'rhwalis, Nepalese, Sikkimese, Bhutanese, Newaris, Mizos and Garos; the Mediterranean Aryans, such as the Kashmirii Brahmins and those with a reddish or fair complexion; and the Dravadians, such as the Andhra Pradeshiiis, Kanatakas, Keralites and Tamil Nadus.

In the pre-historic past the entire North India – that is, the entire area north of the Vindhya Hills up to Tibet – was under the sea. The area

south of the Vindhya, the present Arabian Sea, South Africa, Australia and Southeast Asia formed the Gondwana archipelago. The Austriacs inhabited the southern portion of Gondwanaland, the Negroes inhabited the southwestern portion and the Austrico-Negroids, the Dravidians of today, inhabited the central portion. The bio-racial structure of different ethnic groups indicates the race to which they belong.

As a rule, a strong culture exerts a great influence on a weaker culture. When people with different cultural backgrounds live side by side, the language spoken by the people of the stronger culture automatically influences other groups. For example, though there were marked differences between the Aryan and non-Aryan cultures, the Aryan language was so powerful that all the languages of eastern and northern India had to depend mainly on Saṁskṛta. The

influence of Saṁskṛta was so widespread that even in southern India it exerted a tremendous influence on the Dravidian languages. The following statistics demonstrate the extent to which the eastern and northern Indian languages were influenced by Vedic Saṁskṛta. In Bengali there are 92% Saṁskṛta words, in Oriya 90%, Maethilii 85%, Tamil 13% and Malayalam 75%. Some people from North India travelled to the western part of Madras by sea and settled there, hence Malayalam is full of Saṁskṛta words, although the verbs are from Tamil.

The influence of Aryan culture was prominent on the upper classes of the society, although it had a general influence on the other classes. There are some Austric communities such as the Saha, Dhangrsh, etc. who speak an Austric dialect at home but Bhojpurii outside their family circle. Similarly, the Singhmundas and Sarkars of Ranchi district and the Tinneras

of Tripura speak their own dialect at home and Bengali outside. The people of Gaṛhwal and the Kumayun have started speaking Indo-Aryan languages instead of Tibetan and Chinese. The Dravidian languages include Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada and Tulu. The alphabets of the Tibetan, Chinese and Indo-Chinese languages are the same, although the Chinese and Japanese scripts are pictorial. The inhabitants of Ceylon speak Sinhalese (which contains 87% Saṁskṛta words) and Tamil (13% Saṁskṛta words). Members of the Gunatilak and Bandar Nayak communities of Bengal migrated to Ceylon and became the Sinhalese community. The people of Burma speak several languages – Burmese, Chin, Kachin, Shun and other important and unimportant languages. Like the Sinhalese, their alphabets are based on the Indo-Aryan alphabet.

The Indo-Aryan languages are Marathi, Rajasthani, Gujarati, Punjabi, Kashmiri, Khari, Bali, Vraja, Bundel Khandii, Avadhi, Chattishgarhi, Bhojpurii, Angika, Magahii, Maethilii, Bengali, Oriya, Assamese, Garhwali, Kumaynani and Gorkhali. The Austric languages include all the Munda languages, Santal, Kerai and the Mankhamer group of dialects. The Tibeto-Burmese languages include all the languages and dialects of Assam except Assamese, and the Manipuri and Nagar dialects. The Tibeto-Chinese languages include Ladakhi, Bathii, Kinnari, Kirat, Lepcha, Tahru, Newari, Garo, Kashi and Mizo. The Sino-Japanese languages include Mandarin Sinalese, Cantonese, Japanese, Cambodian, Indonesian and the Malaysian languages and dialects.

Basically there are four types of script – Indo-Aryan, Roman, Semitic (alpha, beta, gamma, etc. in Greek correspond to aleph, beth, gimel, etc. in

Hewbrew) and Chinese or pictorial script. The oldest script was invented 6,000 years ago and is called “Samalhaptii” script. Kharosthi emerged after 1000 years. Brahmi is written from right to left and Kharosthi from left to right.

Kuthila was used in Allahabad and east Allahabad. In Rajasthan, Bihar, eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bengal, Orissa and Assam Brahmi script was widely used. The old rock inscriptions of Emperor Ashok were written in Kuthfia. Ancient rock inscriptions found at Allahabad, Dacca, Calcutta, Patna, etc., are all written in Kuthila script. Later, the script came to be known as “Sri Harsa script” after King Harsabardhan who used Kuthila in his rock inscriptions or official seals. The present Bengali script is Sri Harsa script.

Sáradá is used in northwestern India while Naíráda or Nagri script is used in southwestern

India. The Nagri script does not use a mátrá or a line over the letters. When such a line is used, it is called “Devanagri script”. The Sárasvata Brahmins of Kashmir and the Punjab use Sáradá script, and the Nagar Brahmins of Gujarat used Nagri script. The present Sri Harsa script is about 1,300 years old and the Nagri script is about 300 years old.

In ancient India, Vedic Saṁskṛta tried to suppress the Dravidian and Austric languages, just as in Europe Latin tried to destroy all the other European languages. In the Middle East, Arabic tried to destroy all the Persian languages, and in India Saṁskṛta tried to suppress all the Prakṛta languages. When Buddha began to propagate his philosophy in Pali, the Saṁskṛta scholars advised him to use Saṁskṛta, but Buddha refused. In Medieval India, Kabir revolted against the use of Saṁskṛta as the medium of expression. He said,

Saṁskṛta kúpodaka bhákhá bahatá niira.

“Saṁskṛta is like the stagnant water in a well, whereas the people’s languages are like fresh, flowing water.”

In Bengal, Saṁskṛta scholars tried to suppress the Bengali language, but Nawab Hussain Shah extended all kinds of help and encouragement to the development of the Bengali language. Till then, the Rámayaṇa, the Mahábhárata and the Bhágavat Gītá were written only in Saṁskṛta. Later, the poets Krittivas, Kashiramdas and Malladhar Basu (Guna Raja Khan) translated the Rámáyaṇa, the Mahábhárata and the Bhágavat Gītá respectively into Bengali. The Saṁskṛta scholars began to spread the false rumor that the Nawab Suhen Shah was conspiring to destroy Hinduism because the holy scriptures of the Hindus were

being translated into Bengali. They imposed social restrictions on Krittivas Oja and excommunicated him from the Hindu religion. This took place about 450 years ago. Recently, some people in Canada and Wales revolted against the imposition of English because they wanted to use their own language as their medium of expression. Likewise, Bhojpurii, Maethilii, Magahii, Chattishgarhi, Angika, Avadhi, Bundeli, Marawari, Konkoni and many other important Indian languages are being suppressed by different vested interests.

Religion

Not everyone follows the same religion, nor is religion a common factor in human society. Rather, the opposite is the case, and very often it divides human society. The Arabic word for religion is majhab whereas dharma in the etymological sense means “characteristic” or

“property”. In fact, if dharma is understood in the true sense of the term, it is one and indivisible for the entire human race. Dharma is a psycho-spiritual faculty. It gradually brings out the latent divine qualities of the human heart, and helps human beings attain oneness with the Supreme Entity. It has nothing to do with material objects. On the other hand, religion is a psycho-sentimental factor. It is a collection of physical and ritualistic observances. There may be many religions, but dharma is one.

Religions always prescribe various ritualistic observances like lighting lamps in a particular way, holding candles in a specified manner, sitting one way or standing another way, counting beads a certain number of times, etc. Only approved people are supposed to worship particular deities, fixed sacerdotal fees are to be charged, prescribed animals are to be sacrificed to the deities, alters are to be built in a particular

way, and so on. While following such rituals, the mind is engrossed in religious rites and material objects, so how can it move in an ideational flow to a devotional goal? Those who follow a particular religion are supposed to kneel down and stand up a specific number of times, so naturally they are always counting their movements, consequently their minds cannot be withdrawn from physical movements and external activities.

There are some people who vehemently believe that only temples are holy places, and that mosques, churches and synagogues are not. The followers of other religions look upon themselves as the chosen disciples of God, and regard others as heathens or infidels. But how can the bricks, stones, mortar, etc. be holy or unholy? They are only material objects. Most of the masons and carpenters who were employed to build temples belonged to other religions, yet

once a temple was constructed, it was declared holy, regardless of who built it. Is this not ludicrous?

Religions are based on external ritualistic observances, so they are preoccupied with physical objects. In the course of time, these physical objects become the objects of ideation. Take the example of cows. Cows are considered sacred by Hindus because they provide milk. Now, if cows are considered sacred for this reason, then what about buffaloes which provide more milk? They should be considered more sacred than cows. The followers of religious dogma do not like to discuss such issues. As a result of ideating on religion, the human mind becomes inert. No amount of discussion or intellectual persuasion can shake that psychic inertia. From childhood, human beings are taught irrational ideas, so when they grow up it is extremely difficult to remove preconceived

notions. For example, students conversant with science know that a solar or lunar eclipse is caused by scientific factors and has nothing to do with the mythological demons Ráhu and Ketu. But even then, due to their inherent reactive momenta, they go to the Ganges and take a holy bath. Is this not due to ingrained religious beliefs?

When people's ideas are so fixed that they will not entertain any discussion or argument it is called "fanaticism". It is said that religion is a question of faith, not logic. In India, there are many religious fanatics. Due to religious fanaticism and bigotry, there have been innumerable violent clashes in the past. How repugnant that thousands of people were killed on the pretext of a single strand of hair! These fanatics never bothered to listen to the beliefs of others, and moreover, for them it is a sin to listen to others. In one sense they are worse

than animals, because animals do not harbour any communal feeling. Physical sentiments are predominant in such religious expressions. People should keep aloof from the bondages of religion. Behind all religious dogma, physical considerations are dominant. One community considers it a sin to eat beef but not goats or deer. The custom of wearing a vermilion mark on the head and forehead by Indian women is an expression of religious sentiment. The women of other countries do not follow this practice. It does not matter at all if Indian women stop using vermilion. All religions exploit people by appealing to religious sentiments.

There are many people who worship particular scriptures. These scriptures were most likely composed, printed and bound by the followers of other religions. As soon as a book of scripture has been published, Hindus regard it as the goddess Saraswati. There are many

people who spend money extravagantly to build idols, then after a day or two, a long procession and a lot of fanfare, the idol is immersed in a river. If a member of another religion accidentally damages any part of the idol, an undesirable incident of unprecedented magnitude may occur.

Fanaticism occurs when physical considerations outweigh rationality. Religious fanaticism occurs when fanaticism centres on a particular religion. A powerful intellectual appeal rather than the application of force is required to bring religious fanatics onto the right path, because force will only create a reaction which will intensify religious fanaticism.

Certain practices were not originally religious rituals, but traditions or customs. Long ago the Jews started practising circumcision. When

Moses converted some of his contemporaries to Judaism, and later when Mohammed converted some local people to Islam, neither prophet dared to instruct their new followers to discard the old customs they followed, consequently the old customs continued after their conversion. In ancient times, the Austrics used to worship the sun god because they believed that if it was propitiated it would send abundant rays and produce rich harvests; In Austric society, women have a very important role, consequently the role of the priests is not so important. The Austrics believed that the sun was a female god and that the moon was a male god, so they addressed the sun as mother. They introduced Chat Puja, the worship of the sun goddess. In olden times, people used to worship the sun goddess only once a year, but in Magadh it is worshipped twice, during the two major harvests. The tradition of Chat Puja became so strong among the inhabitants of Magadh that

despite the enormous influence of the Aryans, Buddhists and Muslims, the custom of Chat Puja continued unchanged. Even today, the Muslims in some areas of Magadh worship the sun goddess. In some places they perform the worship themselves, and in other places they get it done with the Hindus. Similarly, in Bengal the Muslims worship the deities Satya Narayana and Olabibi. These are expressions of traditional beliefs which have been passed down from one generation to another.

The only way to combat religious fanaticism is to strengthen the logical wave. Through the study of science, we know that an eclipse is a physical phenomenon. The deities Ráhu and Ketu have nothing to do with it. Although this sort of superstitious belief is no doubt diminishing, there are some people who still worship mythological deities because they believe that the deities can be propitiated to

release the sun and the moon from an eclipse. The reason is that the fear psychosis in human beings is stronger than logic. When human rationality is strengthened, irrational ideas will vanish from society.

Many people today advocate the formation of theocratic states (dharmarasta). But when they use the term theocratic states, they mean religious states, not states which uphold the cause of righteousness. We should strive to establish states which uphold righteousness (dharma), and for this the physical sentiments that are the basis of religion should be ignored. People must remain aloof from dogmatic religious ideas. Some people perform religious observances which relate to the moon – after sighting the moon, they start their religious penance. But what will happen to those who will live on the moon itself. Rational thinking will

remove the fear psychosis from the human mind
– rationality will defeat fanaticism.

In India, the Aryans tried to establish the Vedic religion by destroying the Austric religion. In the Buddhist period, particularly during the reign of King Binbisai of Magadh, Buddhism was imposed upon non-Buddhists. Later, the Hindus forcibly converted Buddhists and Jains to Hinduism. During the Muslim period, the Islamic rulers forcibly imposed Islam in India, Iran and Egypt. In false contemporary Egypt is a mixture of Arabian civilization and Islamic religion. Countless Jews were forcibly converted to Christianity. During the British rule of India, the Christians propagated Christianity in a very psychological way, consequently thousands of Hindus became Christians. Before the British came to India, there were hardly any Christians in the country. In the Muslim period, many Hindus were converted to Islam by both

psychological pressure and physical force. Besides this, many Hindus embraced Islam because they were disgusted with the defects in Hinduism. At that time, along with severe religious upheaval, there was also extreme social disparity, and as a result many people turned to Islam. Even today, some missionaries are converting people into their respective religions by taking advantage of the peoples educational backwardness, superstition and poverty. The medieval crusades are also burning examples of the suppression of one religion by another.

January 1970 RU, Patna

Footnotes

- (1) [[Translation of first two lines only. The poem is by Satyendranath Dutta. –Eds.]]

Intoxicants

Guṛotpanna. Guṛotpanna means “liquor” or “alcoholic beverages made from fermented molasses.” If you walk by some sugar mills in India, you will sometimes smell a particular type of molasses. This type of molasses is used to make liquor in government controlled distilleries. Mrtasainjiivanii surá and mrtasainjiivanii sudhá [varieties of wine which make a sick person well] are also prepared in such factories. In my youth, I observed that these distilleries were often located beside sugar mills in North Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. However, as molasses is valuable as a food, it is undesirable to use it in the preparation of liquor, although it

may be used to manufacture alcohol for use in medicines.

Fermented rice gruel can also be used to make a kind of rice wine, although this is less intoxicating than wine or date wine. Besides its use as a liquor, fermented rice gruel has medicinal value. It induces sleep, sometimes aids digestion, and removes physical weakness to some extent in pregnant women. Wine or date wine can sometimes relieve irregular kidney functions. When wine ferments it is transformed into vinegar, losing its intoxicating power and developing a few sentient qualities. The sediment from the production of wine is called “yeast” and is particularly useful in the bakery industry. When a pregnant woman is on the verge of death because of labour pains, she may survive if she is administered drákśá riśtá, a kind of wine, mixed with the sugar of gurichi [an Indian variety of maple syrup]. If drákśá riśtá is

not available, then mrtasainjiivaniijabaii [a type of wine which makes a sick person well] can be used.

Although country rice wine is considered to be the cheapest liquor available in India, liquor made from barley pulp is cheaper. Country rice wine has done tremendous harm to the rural population of Bengal. Many tribals and people from the economically backward classes have become poverty-stricken under the spell of country liquor. It disturbs the peace of their families by causing unnecessary quarrels in the home and eventually brings about their degradation.

State control alone over the preparation and distribution of alcohol is not enough. Strict social controls are also required. In fact, both the state and the society will have to work hard in this regard. The poisonous nicotine in tobacco

creates cancerous ulcers in various parts of the body; wine is enormously harmful for the liver, and opium destroys vitality. Intoxicated by opium, people sit idle and doze off. Hemp destroys general intelligence and the faculty of understanding. None of these intoxicants are good for human beings. The use of wine should be restricted in the name of religion or on any other pretext. No one should drink liquor without the permission of a physician, and only then as a medicine. A physician should prescribe liquor only after securing the written approval of another doctor.

As a result of taking liquor, twenty percent of the latent potentialities in a student is destroyed. Extreme intoxication leads to inertness. Youths lose their dynamism, and their spiritedness disappears. In such a state, the nerve cells cannot be fully utilized.

I request those who use wine as part of their religious rituals to desist from this practice if there is no recognized alternative. In certain Tantric practices, there is a provision that the water from a dry coconut can be left in a brass pot for some time and used as an alternative to liquor. In such cases, coconut water should be used instead of liquor.

People practise meditation to make their intellect and intuition sharper and to achieve greater expansion. The use of liquor destroys these faculties and is detrimental to the all-round development of human beings. Alcohol destroys the glands, sub-glands, nerves and nerve cells in the human body. If one consumes alcohol, it is partly ejected from the body through perspiration, partly through defecation and partly through urination. Poisonous nicotine from tobacco is ejected in a similar manner after harming the body in various ways. This is why

the perspiration, faeces and urine of those who are intoxicated by liquor smell very bad. If a drunkard or a heavy smoker enters a room, one can easily understand that he or she is addicted to intoxicants.

When a person smokes tobacco through a hooka, the tobacco smoke is mixed with the water in the hooka so it is slightly less harmful for the body, but this does not mean that it is harmless. You must have noticed that after a hooka has been used, the water is a balckish yellow colour. Those who smoke bidis [indigenous Indian cigarettes] and cigarettes – particularly cigarettes – develop a reddish yellow layer of nicotine on the lining of their lungs, and in many cases the lungs also get carbonated. Lungs which have been damaged by smoking are very vulnerable to cancer.

If someone indulges in chewing tobacco, when the tobacco comes in contact with the tongue it creates an unpleasant sensation, and consequently the person starts spitting repeatedly. This clearly indicates that chewing tobacco is detrimental to health. Dohṭa and jardā used in India with betel leaves are also types of small tobacco leaves.

It is desirable that people keep themselves free from intoxicants and stimulants and move steadily towards the higher realms of physical, mental and spiritual development through all possible ways.

As stimulants, tea, coffee, and cocoa are less harmful. Of these three, cocoa has some food value. Tea has little food value. It causes temporary stimulation, decreases the need for sleep and lessens the digestive capacity of the body. Coffee also has the same effects, but as a

stimulant it is more powerful than tea. Coffee has slightly more food value than tea. The excessive use of tea is almost poisonous. If tea that has already been used is boiled again, it will have a poisonous effect on the body. The name of the poison contained in tea is “tannic acid”. In ancient India, ordinary people were not acquainted with tea. Only itinerant monks, who crossed intractable mountains and lived in remote caves, would take tea by extracting the juice from certain leaves.(1)

27 September 1990, Calcutta

Footnotes

- (1) Other meanings of “guṛotpanna” omitted here. –Trans.

Nuclear Revolution

A society may be described as the collection of numerous parallel psychic waves which originate due to the psychic tendency of moving together in unison. The glory of human society lies in the formation of a universal collective structure inspired by exalted ideas.

Dynamicity and staticity are inseparably associated with both individual and collective movement. Society is constantly moving; inertia means death. Social movement is the active effort to demolish a static structure and construct a dynamic structure in its place, and the characteristic of this movement is that it is rhythmic or systaltic, not linear.

All arenas of individual and collective life undergo changes with the changes in time, place and person. In comparison to the speed of change in social, economic, political and cultural life during the last 500 or 600 years, the speed of social change has greatly accelerated in the twentieth century. In the future, changes in society will take place with accelerating speed.

One of the scientific processes of social change is viplava or revolution. The Saṁskṛta word viplava is derived from the Vedic root verb vi minus plu plus al. In the wake of every revolution, radical changes occur in individual and social life, and far-reaching changes take place in the collective psychology.

The main factor in revolution is the application of tremendous force to move society forward. PROUT defines revolution as,

***Tivrashaktisampátena
gatibardhanaṁ viplavah***

*[Revolution is the application of tremendous force
to accelerate the speed of the social cycle.]*

Replacing one age by another by crushing exploitation and bringing about a change in the collective psychology within a short period of time through the application of tremendous force is what is called “revolution”.

If the reverse takes place, and the social cycle moves in the opposite direction by the application of tremendous force, it is called “counter-revolution”. In counter-revolution, society is taken backwards to the previous age. PROUT defines counter-revolution as,

***Tiivrashaktisampátena
vipariitadhárāyaṁ prativiplavah***

[Contents](#)

[Counter-revolution is the application of tremendous force to turn the social cycle in the reverse direction.]

The main task of revolution is to overcome the barriers of staticity and inertia in the collective psychology of one age and establish the next age in the order of the social cycle. Society moves according to the inexorable laws of the social cycle, yet those who are concerned for the collective welfare will always endeavour to accelerate the speed of social movement by fighting relentlessly against exploitation so that all can move forward together in unison.

When the psychic balance in social life undergoes a revolutionary change, certain factors remain inseparably associated with that change. Some of those factors are the collective upsurge against exploitation; revolt against the

status quo; effective struggle to the benevolent forces against the malevolent forces; and the longing for a new collective psychology among the people.

Human civilization has now reached a critical stage of transition. Exploitation of one human being by another has assumed alarming proportions. At critical junctures in the past, when exploitation had reached the zenith point, history witnessed the emergence of mighty personalities who were able to overcome the problems in society. Today also, the guidance of mighty personalities with a comprehensive ideology is required to lead humanity away from the edge of disaster towards a glorious future. The emergence of such personalities is an indispensable necessity of history.

The Social Cycle

There are predominantly four types of collective psychology. These psychologies are the shúdra, kśatriya, vipra and vaeshya. They have nothing to do with casteism and are completely psychological phenomena. Shúdras are those who are influenced by materialistic waves; they cannot overpower materialistic waves by their individual psychic waves. Manual power is their only means of social security. Kśatriyas bring the materialistic waves under their control through their physico-psychic waves. Vipras do the same thing through their penetrating psychic waves. For the kśatriyas, physical strength or valour is the principal means of attaining social security, while the vipras rely on their intellects. A perusal of history illustrates that the vipras, by dint of their intellectual acumen, created a sense of reverence and subordination in the minds of the kśatriyas, and were thus able to control their physical strength and prowess. The vaeshya

psychology is somewhat different. The vaeshyas do not want to enjoy material objects; rather they get enjoyment at the thought of accumulating them.

Primitive society was guided by shúdra mentality. Gradually society became compact under the influence of kśatriya mentality, and the kśatriya era was established in the world. This was an era of heroes and kings. The kśatriya age was subsequently replaced by the vipra age – the age of intellectuals and priests. Next came the age of the vaeshyas. The difference between the former two classes and the vaeshyas is that the vaeshyas seldom come to power directly. They put the kśatriyas or vipras in power, and control the society, economy and polity from behind the scenes. Generally, the amount of physical and psychic clash is less during the kśatriya and vipra eras

compared to the vaeshya era, where poverty, deprivation and exploitation are extreme.

The transition from one age to the next may take place through natural change, evolution or revolution. Natural change or evolution can bring about change from the kśatriya era to the vipra era, and from the vipra era to the vaeshya era, but to eliminate vaeshya exploitation, the application of tremendous force is absolutely essential.

As a result of vaeshya exploitation, those having kśatriya or vipra mentalities are transformed into the disgruntled slaves of the vaeshyas. They have no alternative but to toil at the behest of the vaeshyas to fill their bellies. Those kśatriyas and vipras who are turned into shúdras under circumstantial pressure carry a simmering discontent in their hearts. This group are known as the “vikśubdha shúdras” or the

“disgruntled workers”. These disgruntled workers – the exploited vipras and kśatriyas – give systematic expression to the frustrations of the masses to end vaeshya exploitation. This is the class with revolutionary distinction.

The revolution which terminates the capitalist era requires the united struggle of the disgruntled workers. Shúdras can never be the actual revolutionaries because they lack sufficient moral stamina, responsibility and fighting spirit. They are vulnerable to many vices and are not well-established in human values, hence they cannot develop the requisite revolutionary character. The vikśubdha shúdras develop into genuine revolutionaries because they acquire the moral courage and discipline to oppose exploitation.

The revolution against capitalist exploitation is termed “shúdra revolution”. Although the

kśatriyas and vipras are turned into vikśubdha shúdras due to capitalist exploitation, immediately after shúdra revolution, the vikśubdha shúdras revert to their kśatriya and vipra psychologies. Because of the martial character of shúdra revolution, the leadership of society passes into the hands of the kśatriyas, hence a new kśatriya era emerges. Even during the kśatriya era, the vipras try to establish their influence through force of intellect and attempt to move society along the path of vipra psychology. The vipra era is followed by the vaeshya era and then again by shúdra revolution. So, the movement of the social cycle and revolution are inseparably related.

The four types of psychology dominate the social cycle in cyclic progression. Towards the end of an era, the collective psychology undergoes marked deterioration. Moral degeneration and social retardation cause

psycho-social stagnation. Exploitation becomes rampant. This sort of unhealthy situation signals the end of an era. The different classes try to usurp social power and establish their hegemony by trampling on the rights of others. This conflict has been discernible from the dawn of human civilization. Through this clash and cohesion, human beings try to find the path of emancipation.

In the modern world, capitalist exploitation is rampant almost everywhere. Capitalism is now rapidly moving into the final stage of degeneration. In the early part of the capitalist era, society experienced certain advantages, but towards the end, society has become the victim of insatiable rapacity, unbearable hardship and heartless deprivation. Those countries suffering under the weight of capitalist exploitation are rapidly moving towards shúdra revolution.

Types of Revolution

According to their form and character, it is generally considered that the types of revolution include palatial change and pyramidical revolution. Palatial change and pyramidical revolution are not revolutions in the true sense because they may or may not result in the change of the collective psychology and the forward movement of the social cycle.

PROUT advocates another type of revolution called “nuclear revolution”. In nuclear revolution, every aspect of collective life – social, economic, political, cultural, psychic and spiritual – is completely transformed. New moral and spiritual values arise in society which provide the impetus for accelerated social progress. The old era is replaced by a new era – one collective psychology is replaced by another.

This type of revolution results in all-round development and social progress.

Nuclear revolution can only be brought about by sadvipras who reside in the nucleus of the social cycle. Through their concerted effort, moral and spiritual power and all-round endeavour, they mobilize the exploited sections of society to overthrow the ruling class – the exploiters. This very struggle for mass upheaval liberates society from exploitation and ushers in a new era of peace and prosperity.

Sadvipras will control the key points at the nucleus of the social structure. In nuclear revolution, there is minimum loss of life and property, and the transformation of society is accomplished within a very short span of time.

Requirements For Nuclear Revolution

There are several requirements for the success of nuclear revolution – the presence of exploitation in any form, revolutionary organization, positive philosophy, revolutionary cadres, infallible leadership and revolutionary strategy. All these requirements are necessary.

The presence of exploitation. There are various types of exploitation in society. The form and character of exploitation changes as per changes in time, place and person. In every era of the social cycle, there are various kinds of exploitation. For example, in the economic sphere there is feudal exploitation, colonial exploitation, capitalist exploitation, imperialist exploitation and fascist exploitation.

Exploitation may also manifest in such spheres as the physical, psychic, economic, political and cultural spheres. In the past the slave system was prevalent in the Greek and Roman Empires. The rulers sucked the blood of the vanquished to

bolster their own interests. In psychic exploitation, the masses are misled with the help of pseudo-philosophies which encourage dogma and narrowmindedness. Democratic socialism and the theory of peaceful coexistence are examples of the hypocrite's psychology. In economic exploitation, vested interests deprive people of their minimum requirements. Money lending, charging exorbitant interest rates, compelling poor farmers to sell their produce through distress sales, etc., are examples of economic exploitation. Regardless of the type of exploitation used by the exploiters, when society is moving towards revolution, the role of the exploiters is exposed. The exploiters are unable to disguise their exploitation any longer.

The existence of exploitation in society can be ascertained through the prevalence of such factors as extreme poverty; social insecurity; injustices against the common people; lack of

purchasing capacity to acquire the minimum requirements of life; huge economic and social differences between various classes; the irrational distribution of wealth; etc. The present social, economic and political conditions in India exemplify all these ailments. India is on the verge of revolution.

Revolutionary organization. Revolution and war are almost the same. Revolution is a type of war. The difference between the two is that in war force is applied on behalf of a person or state, but in revolution, force is applied by a group of people to establish a society free from exploitation. A revolutionary organization is essential for revolutionary war. During the psychic preparation for revolution, the disgruntled sections of society will have to build a revolutionary organization which will create a congenial environment for revolution.

A diverse, multifarious organization is required to conduct revolution. The responsibility of the organization is like that of a government. The revolutionary organization must be operational from the highest level of the state down to the village level. Local activists or coordinators are connected to every level of the structure. All the activities of the revolution are directed by the highest body.

If a revolution is started without building a proper structure, or if loopholes are left in the formation of the structure, the results will be disastrous. In the struggle for Indian independence, for example, the revolutionary leaders failed to build a structure down to village level, and the British seized upon this organizational weakness. Such loopholes cause unpardonable losses. This occurred in recent Indian history.

Positive philosophy. The revolutionary organization must follow a positive philosophy. A progressive, comprehensive ideology is the invincible weapon of the revolutionary organization. It counteracts negative ideas in society and generates a powerful, positive psychic flow in the collective psychology. People become revolutionary-minded, yet vested interests determinedly try to resist positive change, hence polarization occurs in the collective psychology. The duty of the revolutionary leaders is to create polarization through the propagation of a positive philosophy.

The philosophy of the revolutionary organization should be free from all kinds of narrow defects and dogma. If there are any defects in the philosophy or if it is not comprehensive, there is the danger that the leadership of society will go out of the control of

the revolutionaries. This will be extremely harmful for the progressive development of the society.

In addition, the philosophy must be based on practice, not on theory. If there are any defects in the practical implementation of the philosophy then can be rectified, but if there are fundamental defects in the philosophy itself, the philosophy can never be implemented, nor can it be rectified.

The theories of Marx and Gandhi are examples of defective philosophies. The fundamental principles of Marxism are unpsychological, irrational and anti-human. Marxists say that revolution is the only solution to capitalist exploitation. This is a positive idea. But the concepts of dialectical materialism, the materialist conception of history, the withering away of the state, proletariat dictatorship,

classless society, etc., are defective ideas which can never be implemented. That is why the post-revolutionary stage in every communist country has suffered from turmoil and oppression. There is not a single country in the world which is established according to Marxist ideals.

Gandhism is also defective. Instead of guaranteeing liberation from exploitation, it favours the interests of the exploiters, hence it is a negative philosophy. Liberation from exploitation is impossible when the exploiters themselves find shelter in the philosophy. The co-existence of the exploiters and the exploited can never lead to a society free from exploitation. No revolutionary organization can accept Gandhism as an ideal philosophy. If any organization does, then it will no longer be a revolutionary organization, and it will break apart within a short time. This is an historical inevitability. Thus, the revolutionary

organization must adopt a positive philosophy which is without defects.

Revolutionary cadres. Before the revolutionary organization gives the clarion call for revolution, there must be intensive preparation. In spite of the presence of all the conditions for revolution, revolution may not take place unless the exploited masses are psychologically prepared for revolution. If the people do not support revolution, the clarion call for revolution will not be heeded. Ideologically educated revolutionary workers will have to channelize the psychology of the common mass towards revolution and inspire them to undertake revolutionary struggle! Such workers must adopt a rational approach inspired by the positive philosophy, have a well-developed socio-economic-political consciousness, and be dedicated to uplifting the standard of the common people. The duty of these workers is to

inspire the frustrated masses along the path of revolution. Through their dedication and dynamism, they will be able to bring the collective psychology in their favour. The first and foremost duty of the revolutionary organization is to create dedicated workers.

Infallible leadership. The success of the revolution depends on the leadership. Loss of life and property will be minimized to the extent to which the leadership is free from defects. Ideal leadership is the wealth of the society as well as of the revolution. It will not only lead to a successful revolution, but will also fulfil the hopes and aspirations of the people in the post-revolutionary phase of society.

In many countries a well-knit and prosperous society could not be built in the post-revolutionary phase due to the defective leadership. Concepts such as Plato's philosopher

king, Confucius' sage, Nietzsche's superman, Marx's proletariat dictatorship, etc., were prepounded to develop ideal leadership, but all these concepts have failed. There is a vast difference between a theory of leadership and the practical, human qualities of a leader. Due to intelligence, acumen, social awareness, oratory skill and some other qualities, a few leaders were successful in the instigating revolution, but later on they became the objects of slander because they were unable to guide society along the path of real progress. They were unable to solve the pressing problems confronting the people or eradicate exploitation.

Sadvipra leadership is the ideal form of leadership. Such leaders will be physically fit, mentally developed and spiritually elevated. With their help and guidance, revolution will be materialized.

Revolutionary strategy. The forces opposed revolution possess immense military power. In spite of it, the revolutionaries achieve victory. This victory is due not only to a well-knit organization, progressive ideology and exemplary leadership, but also to revolutionary strategy.

Leadership is not imposed from above, rather it establishes itself through dedication, sincerity, ideological zeal, fighting spirit and all-round capacity. Leaders gradually acquire such capabilities – step by step.

A common base of integrity and unity amongst the exploited members of society will have to be established. This is essential because at the time of revolution there will be an all-out fight against antisocial activities and corruption. The revolutionaries will have to fight against three forces – outside exploiters, internal

exploiters and other inner evil forces. All these three forces are powerful. Yet the moral, psychic and spiritual strength of the revolutionaries will be the cause of their victory, because physical weapons are not the only source of power. Moral and spiritual power is infinitely stronger than physical force.

Although the primary duty of the revolutionaries is to drive out the exploiters, they also have to ensure that these exploiters do not get new opportunities to capture power or undermine society in the future. The greatest achievement of a revolution is to eradicate exploitation and bring about a progressive change in the collective psychology through the minimum loss of life and property.

The Role of Sentiments

Revolution always takes place around a sentiment. If there is no strong common sentiment, a revolution cannot take place. Sentiment is always stronger than logic.

Communism propagates sentiments like workers of the world unite. Initially, people were attracted to such sentiments, but after some time they discovered that they were hollow, consequently intellectuals became dissatisfied with them. Communism is now unable to fight against the local sentiments that are coming up in different parts of the world because these sentiments are stronger than communist sentiments.

PROUT is based on a universal sentiment which is applicable for the whole cosmological order, and it is systematically moving towards the implementation of this sentiment. Who will make the local people conscious of their local

sentiments keeping universalism in mind? Only PROUT can do this. Communists have no such idea. Only PROUT can tackle all local sentiments and lead everyone in the world to universalism by gradual stages.

Revolutionaries must be well-versed in arousing the sentiments of the people and channelizing the sentimental legacy of the society towards universalism. During the preparation for revolution, unstinting effort must go into arousing the sentimental legacy of the people, because sentiments inspire popular support for the cause of revolution, and infuse the revolutionary workers with tremendous power and conviction.

According to PROUT, there are two types of sentiments – positive sentiments and negative sentiments. Positive sentiments are synthetic in nature. They unite society and elevate humanity,

enhance collective interests and encourage progressive development. Negative sentiments are narrow in scope and divide society.

Some important positive sentiments include anti-exploitation sentiment, revolutionary sentiment, moral sentiment, cultural sentiment, universal sentiment and spiritual sentiment. Some negative sentiments include communalism, patriotism, nationalism, provincialism, lingualism and racism.

Negative sentiments should never be used to divide people into castes and communities – to create artificial fissiparous tendencies in society. Rather, they should always be used to bring unity amongst people. Hitler used racism in an effort to unite the German people and he succeeded in the short-term, but because he used negative sentiments only and had no positive sentiments, his approach resulted in a

world war and the near destruction of Germany. The path of negativity is extremely dangerous and harmful for society. Positive sentiments are the real weapons to build society. This must never be forgotten under any circumstances.

1969, Ranchi

Decentralized Economy – 1

The most important economic issue before the leaders of all the countries in the world today is how to increase the standard of living of their citizens through the economic prosperity of the state. This is a burning question, especially in those countries which are economically backward. The matter is not very simple because in many countries people are still directly dependent on nature for their subsistence. Only in a few countries have people been able to utilize their knowledge and wisdom to solve their economic problems.

Most countries in the world – whether capitalist or communist – have adopted the policy of economic centralization. While the economies of the capitalist countries are centralized in the hands of a few capitalists or a few capitalist institutions, the economies of the

communist countries are centralized in the hands of the party. After so many years of economic centralization, how successful have these countries been in improving the standard of living of the people? To assess this, the main issue is whether or not economic exploitation has been eradicated and the common people have been guaranteed ever increasing purchasing capacity. The fact is that in a centralized economy there is no possibility that economic exploitation can ever be eradicated or that the economic problems of the common people can ever be permanently solved.

As far as India is concerned, the common people have been led astray time and again by vested interests. Innumerable promises have been made by political leaders, but they have proved to be nothing more than cruel hoaxes. The policy of economic centralization stands exposed as merely a strategy to accumulate

increasing capital in the hands of the capitalists. On the one hand the incredulous masses are kept in good humour by promising them something negligible, and on the other hand the capitalists go on amassing enormous wealth. If we examine why this is happening, we will find that the cause is clearly evident. All the economic policies in the country are formulated by a handful of people who are pillars of capitalism.

There is only one way to stop economic exploitation and alleviate the plight of the common people, and that is to implement a policy of decentralized economy in all the sectors of the economy. Successful planning can never be done by sitting in an air conditioned office thousands of miles away from the place where planning is to be undertaken. Centralized economy can never solve the economic problems of remote villages. Economic planning

must start from the lowest level, where the experience, expertise and knowledge of the local people can be harnessed for the benefit of all the members of a socio-economic unit. All types of economic problems can be solved only when economic structures are built on the basis of decentralized economy.

The basic question is how to remove the unhealthy influence of centralized economy. The real issue is, who will bell the cat? If the vested interests fail to be guided by righteous intellect, then people will have to take matters into their own hands. They will have to create circumstantial pressure from all sides, uniting around the slogan: “Abolish centralized economy to end exploitation; establish decentralized economy.”

Decentralized economy is the only way that people can attain all-round welfare because it

will not only guarantee economic prosperity, but also pave the way for individual and collective psycho-spiritual progress. Once people's mundane problems have been solved, they will have greater opportunities to develop their potentialities in the psychic and spiritual spheres. With the establishment of decentralized economy, economic and psycho-economic exploitation will be eradicated, the gap between the rich and poor will be minimized and individual and collective welfare will be greatly enhanced. This in turn will create greater opportunities for the psychic and spiritual progress of all members of society.

Principles of Decentralized Economy

The first principle of decentralized economy is that all the resources in a socio-economic unit should be controlled by the local people. In particular, the resources which are required to

produce the minimum requirements must be in local hands, and all the industries based on these resources will have to be controlled entirely by the local people. Local raw materials must be fully utilized to produce all kinds of commodities necessary for the economic development of a socio-economic unit.

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. Clearly, this concept of local people has nothing to do with physical complexion, race, caste, creed, language or birth place. The fundamental issue is whether or not each person or family has identified their individual socio-economic interests with the collective interests of the concerned socio-economic unit. Those who have not done so should be branded as outsiders.

No outsider should be allowed to interfere in local economic affairs or in the system of production and distribution, otherwise a floating population will develop, causing the outflow of economic wealth from the local area. If this occurs the area will become vulnerable to outside economic exploitation and decentralized economy will be undermined.

The surplus wealth, after meeting the minimum requirements of the people in the local area, should be distributed among the meritorious people according to the degree of their merit. For example, doctors, engineers, scientists and other capable people engaged in various activities require extra amenities so that they can perform greater service to society. While a common person may require a bicycle, a doctor may require a car. But there must also be provision in the economy for reducing the gap between the minimum requirements of all and

the amenities of meritorious people. To increase the standard of living of common people, they may be provided with scooters instead of bicycles. Although there is some difference between a scooter and a car, the gap that existed between a car and a bicycle has been partially reduced. The economic gap between common people and meritorious people should be reduced as much as possible, and ceaseless efforts must be made in this regard, but this gap will never vanish altogether. If the gap increases, the common people will be deprived and exploitation will re-emerge in society in the guise of amenities. Decentralized economy leaves no such loophole because on the one hand the standard of the minimum requirements must be increased, and on the other hand the provision of amenities will be assessed from the viewpoint of the collective welfare.

The second principle of decentralized economy is that production should be based on consumption, not profit. Most countries in the world have adopted economic systems which are profit oriented – that is, production is undertaken for profit. Producers give first preference to those items which bring maximum profit, so everywhere there is keen competition regarding the production of the most profitable goods. India is no exception. To increase the standard of living of the people, a new system of production will have to be introduced. Consumption, not profit, should be the underlying motive in the field of production.

In a decentralized economy the commodities produced by a socio-economic unit will be sold in the local market itself. As a result, there will be no uncertainty in the local economy or the economic life of the local population. In addition, money will be circulated within the local market

so there will be no outflow of local capital. The possibility of an economic catastrophe in the local economy will be largely eliminated. In such a system, people's income will have an upward trend and their purchasing capacity will continuously increase. No economic system in the world has been able to continuously increase the purchasing capacity of the people, because economic power is concentrated in the hands of a few.

The third principle of decentralized economy is that production and distribution should be organized through cooperatives. One of the principal reasons for the past failure of the cooperative movement is economic centralization. It is extremely difficult for cooperatives to succeed in an economic environment of exploitation, corruption and materialism, so people cannot accept the cooperative system wholeheartedly.

Cooperatives are forced to compete with the monopoly capitalists for local markets, and the rights of the local people over their raw materials are not recognized. Such circumstances have undermined the success of the cooperative movement in many countries of the world.

On the other hand, decentralized economy is one of the principal reasons for the success of the cooperative system. The availability of local raw materials will guarantee constant supplies to cooperative enterprises, and cooperatively produced goods can be easily sold in the local market. Economic certainty will create increasing interest and involvement among the cooperative members, and as the local people will be confident of their economic security, they can wholeheartedly accept the cooperative system.

As far as possible, agriculture, industry and trade should be managed through cooperatives. In these sectors of the economy private ownership should be abolished in stages. Only where production cannot be undertaken by cooperatives because of the complex nature or small scale of operations should it be undertaken by private enterprises. The distribution of commodities should be done through consumers cooperatives. Adequate safeguards for cooperatives will also have to be arranged.

The cooperative system is a must, and it is only possible through decentralized economy. The cooperative system and decentralized economy are inseparable.

The fourth principle of decentralized economy is that the local people must be employed in local economic enterprises. Unless

the local people are fully employed in the local economy, unemployment can never be solved. Local people should determine the quantum of minimum requirements and the basic policies connected with their own economic well-being. If this principle is followed the problem of outside interference in the local economy will not arise at all.

Cooperatives will provide employment for local people, and also ensure that the skills and expertise of the local people are fully utilized. Educated people should also be employed in cooperatives so that they do not leave the local area in search of employment or move from the countryside to the cities.

For the development of agriculture there is a great need for specialists and technicians, so cooperatives will have to train unskilled rural people so that they can acquire the necessary

skills to develop the agricultural sector. In addition, all types of agro-industries and agrico-industries will have to be developed according to the needs and resources of the local area, and these industries should be managed as cooperatives.

The fifth principle of decentralized economy is that commodities which are not locally produced should be removed from the local markets. As decentralized economy aims to develop local industries and create employment for the local population, those commodities which are not produced within the local area should be banished from the local market as far as possible. It is essential that the local population utilize the commodities produced in their own area to ensure the prosperity of the local economy. Initially, local commodities may be inferior, more costly or less readily available than outside commodities, yet in spite of this,

locally produced commodities should still be used by the local people. If local commodities do not meet the needs and aspirations of the people, immediate steps must be taken to increase the quality, reduce the price and increase the supply of local goods, otherwise illegal imports will be encouraged.

In a decentralized economy, the application of this principle is very important. If it is neglected, the local industries will gradually close down, local markets will go out of the hands of the local people and unemployment will increase. Once locally produced goods are accepted in principle, not only will local industries survive, but with their further development the local economy will thrive. The outflow of capital from the local area will be checked, and because it will remain in the local area, it will be utilized to increase production and enhance the prosperity of the local people.

With the increasing demand for local commodities, large-scale, medium-scale and small-scale industries will all flourish.

Economic Transformation

The agricultural, industrial and trade policies of a socio-economic unit will have to be formulated according to the principles of decentralized economy. The maximum utilization and rational distribution of local resources and potentialities to ensure full employment should be given priority, keeping in view that there should be uniform economic development in all regions of a socio-economic unit.

The members of the cooperatives should decide the policies concerning such things as agricultural production, price fixation and the sale of agricultural commodities. Local people

should not only control cooperative bodies, but supervise all activities related to the local economy. The local administration will have to assist the economic development of cooperatives. The price of agricultural commodities should be fixed on a rational basis by taking into account the price of commodities; the cost of labour, raw materials, transportation and storage; depreciation; sinking funds; etc. In addition, this price should include a rational profit of not more than fifteen percent of the cost of production. In a decentralized economy agriculture will have the same status as industry.

The industrial system must also be reorganized according to the principles of decentralized economy. If a certain part of a country is over-industrialized, it will impede the economic progress of other regions. Economic decentralization will not allow such a situation to arise. In a decentralized economy, key

industries, medium-scale industries and small-scale industries will be managed by different groups of people. In a centralized economy – whether capitalist or communist – these industries are usually managed as either private companies or state enterprises. Most key industries should be managed by the local government but they should be guided by the principle of “no profit, no loss”. Most medium-scale industries should be managed as cooperatives, but they should not be guided by monopoly production and profit. The cooperative sector will be the main sector of the economy. Cooperatives are the best means to organize local people independently, guarantee their livelihood and enable them to control their economic welfare. Most small-scale and cottage industries will be in the hands of individual owners. Small-scale industries should be confined mainly to the production of non-essential commodities such as luxury items.

Though privately owned, they must maintain adjustment with the cooperative sector to ensure a balanced economy.

A rural economy should not depend solely on cottage industries, otherwise the economic welfare of the rural population will be jeopardized. If cottage industries are properly organized, rural women will also get ample scope to earn a decent livelihood. Cooperatives and the local administration will have to take the responsibility of supplying cottage industries with raw materials so that they do not suffer from scarcity.

The local administration will also have to arrange for the supply of sufficient power to facilitate industrial production. Every region in a socio-economic unit must strive to be self-sufficient in power generation. The local administration will have to supply locally

generated power such as solar energy, thermal energy, bio-gas, hydroelectricity, nuclear energy, pneumatic energy, electromagnetic energy and tidal power, or any other power which is easily available locally. The generation of power is a key industry which should be run on a no profit, no loss basis so that the cost of production is minimized and the purchasing capacity of the people is increased. For example, if batteries are produced through cottage industries, power should be supplied on a no profit, no loss basis, but the battery producers will be able to sell their batteries at a rational profit. Here the power that is used to manufacture the batteries is not an industrial commodity but a raw material. The power for such things as transportation, communication, schools, colleges and hospitals should also be supplied on a no profit, no loss basis to maintain social dynamism. The immediate government or the

state government will have to take the responsibility to supply power as a key industry.

All kinds of industrial activities from key industries to cottage industries should be organized with the cooperation of the local population. Care should also be taken so that private enterprises are set up by the local people. Local people must be given preference in employment, and all local people should be locally employed. If this policy is followed, there will be no surplus or deficit labour among the local people, and if many people do come from outside areas, they will not find a place in the local economy. Where a floating population exists in a particular region, the outflow of capital remains unchecked and the economic development of the area is undermined.

Trade in a decentralized economy should be organized by distributing commodities through

consumers cooperatives. There will be no income tax, but there should be a tax levied on the production of each commodity. Commodities should be exported from one region or socio-economic unit to other regions or units through cooperatives.

In the decentralized economy of PROUT, exporting local raw materials is not supported. Only finished goods should be exported under certain circumstances. After all the requirements of the local people in a socio-economic unit have been met, the surplus goods may be exported, but only to a socio-economic unit which has no immediate opportunity or potential to produce them, in order to meet the requirements of the people in that unit. And even then, the whole transaction of importation and exportation should be undertaken directly by cooperatives, and the exportation of commodities must not be motivated by profit. If there are insufficient raw

materials in any socio-economic unit to meet the minimum requirements of the local people, the necessary raw materials may be imported from another socio-economic unit providing it can be carefully verified that the raw materials in the latter unit are surplus. Free trade should be encouraged once self-sufficiency is attained, as this will help facilitate increased prosperity and encourage economic parity among socio-economic units, and lead to the formation of larger socio-economic units.

Another important characteristic of decentralized economy is that money will always remain in circulation, hence the economy will move with accelerating speed. The value of money depends on the extent of its circulation. The more frequently money changes hands, the greater its economic value. The greater the value of money, the greater the prosperity in

individual and collective life, and the greater the opportunities for all-round welfare.

There is a close relationship between the economic prosperity of people and their psychic and cultural development. Improvements in individual and collective life will lead to the all-round welfare of people. If local people do not develop a sense of self-confidence in their economic activities, then they become mentally weak, and this inherent weakness becomes an impediment to their economic well-being. Such a community will become an easy victim of economic, political and psycho-economic exploitation by vested interests. This unhealthy situation must be firmly resisted. Thus, the local language is to be used in all local dealings and transactions. That is, the local language should be used in the administration, the education system, the economy, and in cultural activities. All official and non-official bodies and offices of a

particular socio-economic unit should use the local language as the medium of communication.

The overall well-being of society is the ultimate goal of decentralized economy. This is a comprehensive ideal and should be established in each and every socio-economic unit. It will bring about economic prosperity as well as ensure greater opportunities for the psycho-spiritual elevation of all members of society.

16 March 1982, Calcutta

Economic Democracy

Nearly all the countries of the world today have come under some sort of democratic structure. Liberal democracy has been

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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.

June 1986, Calcutta

The end

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