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**CIVILIZATION AT THE  
CROSS-ROADS OF DESTINY**

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## PREFACE

Sri V. V, GIRI, Vice-President of India, delivered two lectures at the Indian Institute of World Culture, Bangalore, under Major-General Bhatia Endowment Lectureship on 29th and 31st October 1968.

"Civilization at the Cross-roads of Destiny" is a *resume* of these lectures.

A wider dissemination of these lectures is obviously in the interest of the better intercultural understanding so important for World Peace.

## CIVILIZATION AT THE CROSS-ROADS OF DESTINY

### I

At the outset I thank my esteemed friend Madame Sophia Wadia for asking me to deliver the Major-General Bhatia Endowment Lectures. My association with late lamented B. P. Wadia dates back to the early twenties when Wadia and myself worked together in the Trade Union movement. He was, indeed, a dynamic figure and one of the earliest leaders, who took upon himself the responsibility of bringing together the members of the working classes into Unions for promoting their interests. In this process, Wadia had to suffer many difficulties, and he was even dragged to the Court of Law when he formed the Madras Labour Union. Apart from that, Arundale of revered memory, Wadia and myself collaborated to bring the Scouts movement under one umbrella for we could visualise, even then, its great potentialities and also the need of its unity. More than all these, Wadia also suffered incarceration in the cause of the Nation, when he participated in the Home Rule Movement under the inspiring leadership of Annie Besant. In the circumstances, when Madame Wadia made this request I reckoned it as an affectionate command of an esteemed sister which I could not decline.

There is yet another reason why I accepted the invitation with alacrity. General Bhatia, in whose name these Endowment Lectures have been organized, is a man of dedication and dynamism whose endeavour has always been to promote better understanding between the people. His life is one of devoted service towards enlarging the interests of humanity. Hence I felt it would be befitting for me to share with you the pride of participating in today's significant event, and sharing some of my thoughts with you. The Indian Institute of World Culture has been in its own way endeavoring to focus the attention of the world on the burning problems of the day and in a silent, but none the less effective manner, it has been rightly laying stress on the fundamental values of cultural contacts and exchange of thought between the peoples of the world.

The broad, theme that has been assigned to me for my lectures is "Science and Humanities." I have somewhat modified the title as "Civilization at the Cross-roads of Destiny." In fact, the basic conflict that is trying to rear its ugly hood in the minds of the people all over the world—the lack of reconciliation between Science and Humanities—poses a serious threat to the orderly and peaceful march of the world towards the establishment of a society based on goodwill among men and peace on earth.

I do not claim any special privilege to speak on this subject other than that I have been throughout my life an humble student, gathering pebbles of knowledge strewn all over the vast shores of the Ocean—human ingenuity—which is, indisputably, unfathomable. The few pebbles that one is able to pick up show the immeasurable wisdom stored up in the world and highlight our own limited capacity to comprehend and assimilate it. Once this realization dawns on us, it gives rise to a sense of humility and any! Trace of arrogance or superiority is totally lost.

My active and abiding association with the National Regeneration Movement ever since I came under the influence, first of Mahatma Gandhi—the Father of the Nation—way back in 1914 in England, and secondly, of the Father of Irish Revolution—De Valera—a little later has kindled in me a profound interest in Science, its phenomenal progress and its all-pervasive influence in modern times. In particular, the tremendous implications of automation and marvelous innovations vis-à-vis Labour Welfare programmes have acted as a spur goading me to delve deep into the realm of Science and technology and to gain an insight into

the treasure-house of scientific knowledge with the aid of humanistic telescope. Speaking from my personal experience, as a Trade Union Leader, spanning a period of over half a century of ceaseless services towards the cause of our working classes, I am firmly convinced that the salvation of mankind lies in accelerating the tempo of scientific revolution, judiciously tempering the same, however, with the invaluable ingredients of ethical and spiritual humanism.

The impact of scientific discoveries is universal in character, implying thereby that no individual can fail to be influenced by them. Cybernetics and Computers, to illustrate just one instance, eloquently demonstrate how modern man has brought this whole world to an awe-inspiring threshold of the future. He has reached new and astonishing peaks of scientific success. He has produced machines that think and instruments that peer into the unfathomable ranges of interstellar space. He has built gigantic bridges to span the seas and huge buildings to reach the skies. His (aeroplanes and space-ships have dwarfed distance, placed time in chains and carved highways through the stratosphere. Yet, mankind is still groping in the dark striving ceaselessly after lasting happiness, mental equipoise, universal peace, brotherhood and equality. It is at this stage that the philosophy of humanism can come to the rescue of mankind.

Science is universal and so can be its benefits. There is no area of human activity which has escaped the impact of scientific progress and innovations. If one were to venture to catalogue the list of astounding discoveries and inventions which have caught the imagination of the people all over the world, the process would be interminable. However, I cannot refrain from referring to some salient facets of scientific revolution in the fields of medicine and nuclear science to illustrate examples. The far-reaching implications of heart-transplantation technique are too obvious to be dilated upon. A coloured man's heart, when alive, was contemptuously despised under Apartheid Law; but the same heart of a coloured man or woman, who is just dead, becomes the saviour of a 'white man' who till now was seized with racial prejudice. Transplantation of organs has, thus, acted as a double-boon to mankind. On the one hand, this scientific innovation has opened up a vast vista of avenues for extricating many a life from the jaws of imminent death. In addition, the discoverer of this epoch-making technique has rendered humanity yeoman service by exploding once for all the myth of racial superiority and in demolishing the artificial walls of prejudice, bigotry, and intolerance separating man from man. A 'Union of hearts' no doubt, after death and under very tragic circumstances, between the 'white' and 'non-white' is an achievement of no mean order. This can become the fore-runner of conducting scientific research soaked with humanitarian spirit and thereby cementing the bonds of kinship prevailing between Science and Humanities.

During the last 350 years, Science—the relentless quest for truth—has made great strides; and especially during the last quarter of a century, scientists all over the world have chiselled, with the tools of discovery, things we considered to be mere figments of imagination in the past which have become realities today. Landing on the moon now is not a distant possibility; the conquering of space and time and distance has become the order of the day. These discoveries and inventions, more particularly in the field of medicine, have perceptibly helped to prolong the life of man.

In the technologically advanced countries, the average span of human life has increased by more than a third over the last hundred years. Even in a developing country like ours, wherein democracy has just come of age, the average span of life has shot up from a meagre 23 years to nearly 50 years within a short period of two decades since Independence. Dreadful diseases, which were once fatal, have been totally eradicated from most parts of the world. Taking our own country, scourges like typhoid, malaria and tuberculosis which

have been causing high incidence of mortality in the past, are controlled, if not totally eliminated. Material comforts in the form of better modes of transport and systems of communications have been very nicely developed. In a matter of seconds, events in one part of the country or the world reach the remotest corners through the radio and the television. Better amenities and improved conveniences have been made available to mankind, more so in developed countries where the material comforts and conveniences have reached their zenith. What appeared to be the exclusive privilege of the rich and the affluent, 50 years ago, have become things that are available to the common man today. At the same time, we find that the distance between man and man is growing more and more and the wide disparities in the economic life of the people— the yawning gulf between the ‘haves\* and the ‘have-nots’— make us sometimes wonder in spite of all the achievements as to whether civilization has really progressed. For, after what is progress, if it cannot promote the greatest welfare and happiness of the greatest of mankind ? What is? The use of all our knowledge and wisdom if we cannot eradicate the basic ills of poverty, squalor and ignorance from our midst? It is the responsibility of each and every affluent individual and nation to see that the riches and prosperities are shared between all, if not equitably at least with a certain amount of justice and fairness.

The twentieth century has often been .described as a triumph of science and reason over superstition and sentiment, but can we honestly say that we are victorious in our efforts ? The promotion of the tools of destruction, especially of the nuclear weapons poses a serious threat to humanity. It is a Damocles’ Sword that is perpetually hanging over the heads of nations both big and small, and even those that are in possession of it cannot consider themselves to be totally safe. This proliferation of nuclear weapons is perhaps the greatest danger that the world today is threatened of.

It is not Science that is responsible for this sorry state of affairs. In their search for discovery of truth, the Scientist does not at any time intend that the fruits of his discovery should be utilized for the annihilation of mankind or destruction of property. The knowledge that is unraveled and the mysteries that are unearthed by the discoveries of scientists are unfortunately in the hands of a few nations and individuals. They in their superiority of power exhibit their strength not so much for doing good but in using their brute force that can destroy the entire hopes and aspirations of mankind by the mere push of a button. This is [the most unfortunate tragedy of the twentieth century.

Our ancient sages and savants had in their own way scaled lofty heights of attainments by realizing in no inconsiderable measure their yearning for the conquest of self—the toughest battle to be won by man. The Scientists as well as the humanists are partners in a ' grand alliance ' dedicated towards promoting the progressive march of civilization knit together by a unity of purpose and action to increase human welfare with the tools of scientific innovation and techniques and sublime ideals enshrined in the sacred scriptures, lofty utterances and writings of erudite Litterateurs, Statesmen, Saints and Social Reformers.

In order to bring peace and happiness to mankind, which is presently torn with strife and discontent, it is necessary to define the correct philosophy of life and what it means to every human being. For fulfillment of life, that is, for inward peace and sublime happiness both religion (which in essence is nothing more than humanism) and science are absolutely essential. Science deals with exploitation of material gifts and nature for the economic prosperity of man, and religion is concerned with a correct philosophy of life and leading a moral life—a life of truth, charity and goodness.

The cold war between 'Science and Humanities' is, as you will easily appreciate, uncalled for. There is an unfounded misgiving in some quarters that the relationship between the sciences and humanities may well become considerably more strained in the future. Such misapprehension tends to neglect the many new and old areas of mutual help and mistakes the shadow for the substance. It highlights the fact that there has always been some 'playback' noise of mutual invective. At the same time, one can ill afford to be self-complacent in the light of the observation made by one concerned scientist: "We may not have seen anything yet of the row that is really going to develop, e.g. one may expect drastic advances in the possibilities of increasing control over the human environment as well as over psychological and 2 physiological functions as by the action of drugs and transplantation of organs—the benefits of which transcend barriers of race, color, language, creed or caste—and this Will have *a.* deep impact on what it is to be a human being."

Revolutionary though these changes are, the fact that has left an indelible imprint on human consciousness is the invention of lethal weapons of war. It is the emergence of missiles and nuclear weapons—atom and hydrogen bombs—which holds today the human race in awe. So far as the destructive capacity of these weapons is concerned, they are capable of holding humanity at bay; and as for the potentialities of these inventions in terms of rendering positive good, they promise a real El Dorado for the entire humanity. The double-edged nature of the scientific discoveries is the most important aspect of the advance in human knowledge. And thereby hangs a moral which man ignores at his own peril. I would like to call it the paradox of knowledge.

The power that man has acquired through technological innovations for harnessing the forces of Nature is so stupendous that its wrong use can make a short shrift of the whole race of inventors. Yet it is difficult to imagine how such a catastrophe can be avoided if the reliance on violence and aggression as the sole arbiter of national and international disputes continues to hold the field. We shall have to eschew the use of force and banish the concept of balance of terror if we want to steer safe of these weapons and the chain reactions their use will set in—which is bound to sound the death-knell of human civilization.

The need of the hour therefore is to rejuvenate the humanistic assets of the kind that would give a new direction to the efforts of mankind, instead of giving further lease of life to the primitive instincts reflected in the operation of the 'survival of the fittest,' 'law of the jungle attitude' or 'might is right,' Political progress and economic structure of industrially advanced states should not be allowed to degenerate into the military brutality exhibited by the belligerent nations.

The most inequitable and unfair distribution of material resources between the 'have' and 'have-not' sections of human society, vast populations crowded together in narrow areas on the one side, and sprawling territories on the other, fenced off from "trespassers"—these constitute the seeds of conflict and tensions. The Apartheid, economic strife, the competition for augmenting one's military might and to crown it all, the ever-increasing propensity for taking recourse to the doctrine of nuclear deterrent as a means of averting world war mirror the fundamental line of cleavage between the technologically advanced countries on the one hand and economically backward countries struggling hard to provide for their teeming millions the basic and elementary necessities of life, *i.e.*, food, raiment and shelter. Moral, altruistic and aesthetic considerations are, no doubt, there in the consciousness of humanity, but they have less than a fraction of the power and strength of the instinct to possess. On one side the development of law and parliamentary institutions assure for us a measure of justice in our mutual dealings, while on the other the majestic

strides made by technological changes and electronics present to us the prospect of a fuller and more abundant life. We have to realize that our primary responsibility is to provide for the basic wherewithal for the common man throughout the world. Unless and until all nations together try to attack the problems of poverty, ignorance and disease, our pride in the achievements of science and technology and talk of satisfying the higher instincts of man—his mental and spiritual urges—become a mere shibboleth.

When one thinks of all this and tries to take stock of the strides that science has taken in the present century, resulting in unprecedented material progress, a sense of peculiar helplessness creeps over us. Without developing some other faculty which may assure for us that these inventions will always be used for the good of man, we may well feel that the world could be a better place to live in without the so-called advancement. We are faced with a dilemma: is the modern man's scientific knowledge to be his incubus or a blessing helping him to lead a happier and fuller life? It is obvious that the only way to harness the discoveries of science into the service of man is by developing a sense of values, call it moral or religious or spiritual. Without it all this advance and the consequent material progress, however good in itself, will ever continue to hold before us the threat of extermination.

The stress on the material or spiritual values may have differed from time to time but the relationship between material and spiritual principles is as old as human thinking. Among the foremost present-day protagonists of spiritual approach are included some of the most celebrated scientists. Developing a humanistic outlook is, therefore, not merely an expedient but also in keeping with the highest ideals. Whatever one might think of the potentialities of scientific knowledge or of science straying into the fields of morality or spiritualism, it should be conceded that there is no inherent incompatibility between science and human values. Both are two different aspects of the same reality. They are not mutually exclusive but largely inter-dependent and complementary.

In this connection, it may well be worth remembering that the social system as it obtains in the technologically advanced countries and even in the backward communities, is based on a system of competition rather than of co-operation. It has naturally laid emphasis on acquiring material objects which give comfort rather than on cultivating those virtues which give contentment and happiness. Inevitably, the acquisitive tendency in man has acquired a predominant position in his life and thought. If really a society in which all will be happy and contented, has to be created, the emphasis has to be shifted from competition to co-operation and the acquisition of a sense of contentment and sublime bliss. It may well be that it will require revolutionary change in human thought. Not that it is altogether new, because all philosophers, radiant path-finders and socio-religious reformers, have accentuated this aspect and pronounced it to be a higher and nobler virtue of man than his power and strength to acquire material affluence. Now that time and distance have ceased to play an important role in the life of men and especially of nations on account of the tremendous changes and advances in science and technology, we cannot help reverting again and again to the desirability of re-capturing the ancient values of love, charity and goodness and re-enthroning them in the hearts of men.

One of the main reasons why common man has been so hard hit by the discovery of nuclear fission is the problem of adjusting one's ideas and beliefs to the new view of the universe which modern physics, quantum mechanics and the genetics have built up piece by piece. The atomic age demands a new orientation of our ways of thinking and feeling. It has magnified the split in our lives; it has forced upon us the precarious nature of our plight; the

feeling that we have been cast adrift in a frail bark on the uncharted seas—without compass, rudder or map—has turned into an apprehension that human civilization might founder on the rocks of war. One cannot attribute the increasing destructiveness of modern war only to the rise of science and technology. Science and technology provide the surplus; the atomic revolution gives us hopes of a greater surplus but the decision to use this surplus for mass production of war material, was the decision of human minds. The illusion that war is the necessary condition of survival of the nation-state, that the world can be made safe for democracy by war, that there can be war to end all wars, or that one can permanently establish the superiority of certain values by force has been permanently shattered by the weapons of mass- destruction. War can no longer be the means to any end whatsoever. It can only mean one thing in the atomic age — the complete destruction, if not of the whole human race, at least of the whole apparatus of modern civilization as well as the very conditions in which a new civilization might be born.

Another great force which adds to the instability of the world is the presence of wide economic and military disparities between nations. The powerful nations, through a revolution in the means of production, have acquired tremendous influence for good or evil over the world. They have the strength of the giant but wisdom lies in not using it like a giant. There is the illuminating example of Asoka the Great who renounced his desire towards waging wars after the gruesome bloodshed in Kalinga War. So also the noble example set by the Father of Nobel Prizes—Alfred Nobel—the discoverer of Dynamite, who earned fabulous wealth from this single innovation but felt repentant upon realizing the destructive potentialities of his discovery. To compensate for this unpalatable result, Dr, Nobel instituted several prizes as an incentive for promoting peace and human welfare.

The scientist is as much a victim of the modern crisis in the mind as any other cultural or intellectual worker. It should be understood by all that poverty and prosperity cannot co-exist for long. This cannot be the concern of a few but of all. We are all committed whether we want it or not, and none can escape it. The primary function of science as well as culture is social and the scientist cannot claim the irresponsibility of living in an isolated world or leading an ivory tower existence. Science is not merely the disinterested pursuit of knowledge or discovery of Truth but it is also a continuous application of knowledge to human needs. The scientist is as much in a situation as anybody else. His decisions and choices are the decisions and choices of the society to which he belongs. It opens a new window on the Universe by presenting facts and human experiences in terms of entirely novel combinations. Every scientific discovery is a physical as well as a mental and emotional fact and affects the basic attitudes of men towards themselves and to their environment.

The awareness of Man is, as far as Science as a collective endeavour is concerned, an awareness in society. One of the essential ingredients of this awareness is Faith—the belief that society as a means of creative self-expression is an effective medium of human effort. “Faith,” says Barbara Ward, “led to material achievement; not that material achievement led to Faith. Man split the Atom not as a proof but as an expression of the faith in his own uniqueness.” Science is merely one of the vehicles of creative self-expression evolved in society for the satisfaction of the instinct to create inherent in man. The scientist and society are at cross-purposes; both lose the spur to creative endeavour. Let us remember that the rise of science is due to the rise of commerce. Science contributes to the faith which a society evolves and is very often unconsciously coloured by its preoccupations. Humanities and Science can gain most when this fact of cross-fertilization between the two is realized. In a

spiritual crisis like our own, it is the first duty of a scientist to realise the dependence of his own sphere of knowledge upon all other spheres of life. Science without philosophy—in the sense of connoting the structure of priorities and values which govern our attitudes—is not possible. This was the reason why Socrates gave up science and came over to philosophy. Philosophy is the quest for the absolute Truth—and implies an insight into man's essential nature, his personal, social, political and economic relations as well as attitudes to the Universe as such.

Too much science and too little humanism is the bane of the present-day society. In material well-being born of scientific discoveries and technological innovations, a point of satiation is reached when man ceases to be thrilled by further addition to enjoyment. Men in the advanced countries are no longer excited when they hear of more convenient appliances or development of new gadgets to promote household comforts. Life is thus exposed to boredom and the zest for living is diminished. We should be careful that we do not deviate from our path of spiritual affluence and recklessly hanker after material pleasures alone; lest in the process of pursuing such a course we lose our identity as human beings. We have to avoid the tensions and turmoil inherent in a complex industrial life founded on scientific developments. For human happiness one has to create and maintain peace within and without, not as a symbol but as a way of life.

Gandhiji measured progress in terms of human happiness. He endorsed neither the utilitarian view of the greatest good of the greatest number nor the modern view of an affluent society in which material development is the sole criterion of progress. He wanted a social order “which would secure the greatest good of *all*, i.e. Sarvodaya. He wanted a society in which every member would have equal status, opportunity and freedom to develop. He wanted a simple society in which economic progress and social justice would go together. He wanted us to control the pleasures of the senses because sensual pleasures have no known bounds.

Gandhiji demonstrated to the world the strength of man's invincible soul when it was pitted against physical force or military might or moral values as against material ones; and of service and sacrifice as against selfishness and acquisitiveness. He taught us the beauty of truth and the sublimity of the human spirit. Gandhi ji wanted machines to be for man, not man for machines. He was not opposed to material prosperity nor did he reject the use of machines in all circumstances. He felt that machinery should save time and labour, not for a fraction of mankind but for all. He did not want man to become a slave of the machine and lose his identity altogether; he wanted machines to be servants of humanity and not their master.

May I as a firm believer in the spiritual and moral values, say that even for the realization of this objective, the world owes a debt of gratitude to science ? Having brought moral values indirectly into new focus, let us hope this will forge powerful sanctions in support of this aspect of knowledge and experience. The world looks to science for conquest of want and eradication of human suffering. Let us hope the new knowledge man has acquired will bring the promised kingdom of heaven on earth. May science continue to serve mankind by removing the cobwebs of ignorance and misery from the world and may its inventions ever remain a blessing for all living beings. In the preceding lecture, I have attempted to deal at some length with the issues which, in my opinion, confront humanity that stands at the cross-roads of destiny. There is an urgent need for tackling them with boldness and honesty if really we are to take pride as rational human beings with developed faculties of analysis and cogitation. We have to understand

the true nature of the *malaise* afflicting humanity. Once we diagnose the disease, the cure of it becomes easier. In my view, the basic issues responsible for the prevailing crisis could be summed up as:

1. The existing and increasing disparities between the 'have' and 'have-not' sections of human society.
2. Undue, perhaps needless, emphasis on military and more particularly on nuclear strength, to resolve the disputes and problems between nations.
3. Religious intolerance and bigotry.
4. Woeful lack of world-wide perspective and global outlook.

This is indeed the present situation which calls for a radical treatment of the economic, political and spiritual maladies plaguing the peoples all over the world.

First and foremost, the economic disequilibrium and imbalances between nations and even among people inhabiting the same nation pose a serious challenge and imminent threat to peace, progress and stability. The Philadelphia Charter of the I.L.O. has rightly stressed that "poverty anywhere constitutes a source of danger to prosperity everywhere." This is a truism whose meaning should be clear to all, but is often ignored by individuals and nations. The many ills affecting the world can either directly or indirectly be traced to the prevailing poverty, squalor and hunger of millions of peoples living in every part of the earth. As one looks at the wide disparities in the conditions of living and the yawning gulf between the affluent who revel in their riches, indulging in conspicuous consumption and wasteful expenditure and the pathetic plight of the poor who are in the abysmal depths of degradation and impoverishment, it is well-nigh impossible to reconcile the two 'poles' in such a situation. Coming across such a contradiction, no sane man can remain calm. Nor will we be allowed for long to watch the deteriorating situation with a placid complacency. Let us not forget that there is only a thin line that divides a hungry man and an angry man. If things are allowed to go on this way one cannot totally rule out tensions and conflicts and even violent upheavals. The solution to this lies within our reach: an all-pervasive humanistic philosophy will alone save the world from its fatal fall.

After all, we have got to realise that we should be responsible to look after our fellow human beings and we cannot abdicate this duty. If once we realize that all men are born equal and go out of the world equal, and in between this period of a few decades of existence we are only players in the drama of life, we will shed much of our complexes and truly regard every position—big and small—as opportunities of service to mankind and our own riches as that of society.

The advance of science and technology has created conditions that have opened the floodgates of opportunities along with urgent problems of great magnitude. However, the opportunities and the problems are not of the same importance. There may not be an urgent need to melt down the polar ice or to irrigate the Sahara desert. Not so the problems that face mankind everywhere—nuclear war, the need for food, for combating over-population, for encountering the drawbacks of automation, the loss of values and many others. Not only do they require an urgent solution but a solution that, if it is to be effective, must be comprehensive enough to embrace all the major problems. The problems are universal; they concern the entire mankind. Sectional or segmental solutions cannot pave the way for everlasting results. They can at best act as mere palliatives.

As Bapu has so sagaciously pinpointed, the seven sins discernible in the present-day

society are: "Politics without principles, wealth without work, pleasure without conscience, knowledge without character, commerce without morality, science without humanity and worship without sacrifice."

The world must therefore assume the responsibility for combating poverty, ignorance, hunger, unemployment, disease and squalor. Violent upheavals are born of the impoverished and hungry millions. It is, therefore, of paramount importance to fortify the citadel of World Brotherhood dedicated towards bringing into fruition improvement in the living conditions of mankind irrespective of race, colour, creed or caste. Gandhiji's ideas of economics are particularly relevant as much to economic reconstruction that is going on in the developing countries as to the countries that are fully developed. Babu invested economics with a new perspective and insisted that economic activity should enrich the life of the individual. It should remove poverty, build up the resources of life making use of the talents of man allied to the natural resources, with the judicious harnessing of the tools and techniques provided by scientific research and technological innovations. Gandhiji did not subscribe to the usual concept of economics that man's wants are unlimited. He believed that man's wants are limited and man's economic pursuits should not hinder the development of his cultural and spiritual life. A sound economic system according to his conception should give balanced diet to the individual, give him other necessities of life like a shelter, enough clothes to wear, educational opportunities and other essential conditions and facilities for the building up of his personality and enough leisure for him to pursue his cultural and spiritual values. This can be translated into a reality only when every member of the human family is given equal opportunities for creative work.

The economic system should be so evolved and planned as to create work for everyone. In Babu's words: "Economic equality is the master key to nonviolent independence. Working for economic equality means abolishing the eternal conflict between Capital and Labour. It implies the leveling down the few rich in whose hands is concentrated the bulk of the nation's wealth and the means of production on the one hand and leveling up of the semi-starved naked millions on the other Economics that hurt the moral well-being of an

Individual or a nation is immoral and therefore sinful. Thus the economics that allows one country to prey upon the other are immoral This ideal can be universally realized only if the means of production of the elementary necessities of life remain in the control of the masses. These should be freely available to all as the God's air and water are or ought to be; they should not be made a vehicle of traffic for the exploitation of others. This monopolization by any country, nation or group of persons would be unjust and inequitable."

Gandhiji was fully alive to the fact that the motive underlying the Western type and Eastern type of Economic structure is the same—the greatest welfare of the whole society and the abolition of the hideous inequalities resulting in the existence of a handful of \*haves' and millions of 'have-nots.' He believed that this end can be achieved only when non-violence is accepted by the best minds of the world as the basis on which a just social order is to be constructed.

When we talk of socialism, we generally have in mind two aspects of it, economic and social, but there is another aspect which is far more meaningful, comprehensive and dynamic, namely, moral and spiritual. The difficulty in understanding the true concept of socialism is that it is associated far too much with the problem of inequality of opportunity, economic exploitation, social injustice and full-blooded materialism and of the problem of removing them by a system of political and economic planning alone.

The concept of socialism springs from a sense of socio-economic justice. According to the Vedas as mentioned by Satvalekar, " True socialism is essentially an ideal of sociability and it invokes a conception of life lived with and among other men. That this living with other men in understanding co-operation is a basic and fundamental part of the concept, not even those who would emphasise the economic aspect only, will deny. The very word suggests the principle of sociality, of association, of fellowship and fraternity. True socialism has its roots, therefore, not in any system imposed from without, but in the hearts of men." If our hearts are suffused with love for our fellowmen, if we are inspired by a consciousness of the human brotherhood and unity, then we naturally become incapable of doing injustice or harm to others. Such a feeling would create a real bond of unity among mankind and remove all ills, including economic. True socialism is, therefore, as much a spiritual ideal as an economic creed and draws its sustenance from the innate human tendency to fraternise.

Swami Vivekananda and Gandhiji also advocated the cause of 'Daridranarayana'—Service of the downtrodden and destitute—as a sublime vehicle of worshipping the Almighty—the Invisible Force. They perceived divinity in the welfare of mankind particularly the vulnerable and oppressed sections of humanity.

Thus, both Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi—the twin-prophets of Modern Era—did not decri material pursuits. They certainly did not wish to deny the society the conveniences brought to its door by the advance of science and technology. However, what they deplored was that the rapid advance of science and technology had made life competitive, functional, mechanical and materialistic. The urge to possess wealth, property, and conveniences is ever increasing. While the onward march of science cannot be halted, acquisition of serenity, equipoise and mental and physical welfare is a prerequisite for living a life of fullness. Spiritual enlightenment and ethical rejuvenation offers these mental and physical capacities. The ennobling values of life act as a soothing balm to the suffering, struggling humanity valiantly trying to surmount the stresses and strains, tensions and turmoils born of the unprecedented tempo of modern civilization wedded to scientific resurgence.

In the final analysis, socialism, therefore, is not only an economic concept but has got a definite ethical and spiritual basis. Moreover, the entire philosophy is founded on the bedrock of humanism, which can take advantage of the technological and scientific innovations, fortunately available in an abundant measure in the present era.

The second major factor that is responsible for the present crisis is the piling up of armaments and more particularly of the nuclear weapons by many of the scientifically advanced nations of the world, especially the West. It passes one's comprehension as to how these affluent nations unhesitatingly permit colossal, but priceless resources, to go down the drain in merely producing the destructive weapons and swelling the nuclear arsenal when these resources could be utilized for positive purposes — to alleviate the suffering and to eradicate poverty from the face of our Mother Earth I This wasteful expenditure on armaments is not only monstrous but is nothing short of sheer madness and shows that the world is yet to become fully civilized. Disarmament is, by itself, not the final solution to the problem because the armaments can be replenished within no time. What is essential is to arrive at a global understanding and to settle all international disputes by negotiations.

The peaceful use of atomic energy depends upon a re-definition of national self-interest and the demand that the surplus created by technology and science must be used for creative

and not for destructive purposes. No international atomic authority or world atomic pool will be effective unless there is a revolution in the minds of men.. "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed also."

The atomic age implies that individuals should demand the same moral strenuousness from the State which they expect from other individuals, the ultimate yardstick with which the utility of power must be measured is by its relevance to the creative needs of all men. There is only one answer to the nuclear menace, and it is not an institutional, but a creative and imaginative approach of the people.

The Atomic Revolution has placed in the hands of man a very powerful weapon in the transformation of his environment. The energy released by fission in a controlled chain reaction in a pile or a small reactor fed on concentrated fuels like U-235 or plutonium can be phenomenal. One gram of matter can provide the electric output of the Boulder Dam for a whole day. The uses of radio isotopes from an atomic pile in the field of medicine and bio-chemistry are manifold. Cobalt-60 which has the same intensity of emission of gamma-rays as radium can be produced much more cheaply and can be used in radium therapy. Phosphorus is beneficial in the case of blood disorders, radio isotopes in the case of hyperthyroidism and in limited cases of cancer of the thyroid.

On the one hand, we are trying to conquer outer space with the aid of the Zond-V, Apollo-7 and Soyuz-3 •expeditions orbiting the Earth and the Lunar Planet, which have brought within the realm of reality the age-old aspiration of man for keeping a date with the Moon, in the foreseeable future ; while on the other hand, humanitarian projects designed towards ameliorating the conditions of millions of destitute citizens, who are languishing for want of two square meals, apparel to clothe their naked bodies and medicines and surgical facilities to combat disease, find themselves bogged in the morass of financial stringency. Lest I should be misconstrued, I do not in the least wish to belittle the spectacular achievement of Soyuz-3, Russia's first man in space-ship who succeeded with his manoeuvring to establish a rendezvous with an unmanned space vehicle launched in secret from the Soviet Union a couple of days ago bringing the two space-crafts within 200 metres of each other automatically and the subsequent operations performed by the spacemen—indeed, a soul-stirring deed in itself. Likewise, the three gallant Cosmonauts of the United States of America have demonstrated marvelous skill, endurance power, and technical proficiency in attaining the highest point in the Earth stratosphere and orbiting continuously for eleven days.

With the judicious utilisation of the resources and energy at the disposal of the world we can transform deserts into fertile lands and create a social order which might cater to the material requirements on a global scale. But the new peaceful revolution, the possibility of which we are gradually and painfully discovering, demands a new sensibility. It requires a new Civilization, a new Culture, a new Man, essentially different from the pre- Atomic Era. He must assimilate the new Universe into his consciousness. The atomic age demands a new level of creativity in all spheres of life. The creative resources needed to plan and control the new changes will demand from us a greater imagination and a more rational will.

The third major factor that stands in the way of unity and promotion of international outlook is a lack of tolerance and charity. We should understand that all religions are like different streams trying to reach the same ocean. In this connection, the realization of true religion is possible only when one realizes that all religions uphold the universally acclaimed teachings of Truthfulness, purity of conduct and brotherhood, and imbibing the virtues of

being good and of doing good to others, kindness, charity, selflessness and spirit of self-abnegation. It is not the sole prerogative of any particular faith or the exclusive sphere of any particular religion to preach and practice righteousness. To quote Vivekananda: "Vedanta as I understand proclaims unity of all religions, and therefore preaches one principle and admits various methods. It has nothing to say against anyone—whether you are a Christian, or a Buddhist, or a Jew, or a Hindu, whatever mythology you believe, whether you owe allegiance to the Prophet of Nazareth, or of Mecca or of India, or of anywhere else, whether you yourself are a prophet, it has nothing to say. It only preaches the principle, which is the background of every religion and of which all the prophets and saints and seers are but illustrations and manifestations. Multiply your prophets if you like, it has no objection. It only preaches the principle and the methods it leaves to you. Take any path you like ; follow any prophet you like ; but have only that method which suits your own nature, so that you will be sure to progress."

This calls for a certain sense of duty. We should consider that all our actions are performed for their own sake not expecting fruits thereof. I would place the man who lives in the world and yet remains a detached being superior to one who retires to the forest in search of the ultimate reality. As Swami Vivekananda said rightly: "The real Sanyasin lives in the world, but is not of it. Those who deny themselves live in the forest, and chew the cud of unsatisfied desires are not true renouces. Live in the midst of the battle of life. Anyone can keep calm in a cave or when asleep. Stand in the whirl and madness of action and reach the Centre. If you have found the Centre, you cannot be moved." Unfortunately\* it is intellectual dogma and cult-egoism, which has blinded the vision of man and prevented him from treading this noble path, which the radiant Saints and Seers had carved out for us. Rational outlook and scientific temper should be soaked with spiritual humanism; As Maharshi Aurobindo declared: "Each religion has helped mankind. Paganism increased in man the light of beauty, the largeness and height of his life, his aim at a many-sided perfection. - Christianity gave him some vision of divine love and charity. Buddhism has shown him a noble way to be wiser, gentler, purer; Judaism and Islam how to be religiously faithful in action and zealously devoted to God; Hinduism has opened to him the largest and] profoundest spiritual possibilities. A great thing would be done if all these God visions could embrace and cast themselves into each other; but intellectual dogma and cult-egoism stand in the way."

Swami Vivekananda was one of the makers of modern India and has been a lasting and still a vitally living influence on Indian life. The blend of patriotism with spirituality, of vigorous action with supreme renunciation, and the popular exposition of the Vedantic system and the fact that he enriched the lustre of Religion of Humanism —all these have evoked world-wide admiration. At the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago, Swamiji thunderously declared: " I fervently hope that the bell tolled this morning in honour of this Convention may be the death knell of all fanaticism, of all persecution with the sword or with the pen and of all uncharitable dealings between persons wending their way to the same goal." He pleaded .for tolerance and compassion as distinct from sectarianism and bigotry. It is to the credit of such a technologically advanced and affluent nation like the United States of America that she offered Swamiji the first world platform for the gospel of universal love and service to mankind.

Like all religions in their purity, if we set aside the gross superstitions and the mean practices that disfigure them, Buddhism is compact of wisdom and compassion. Its philosophy of life and code of conduct appeal to the« modern mind steeped in the spirit of

science, for Buddha's approach is rational and empirical. He evolved the five-fold code of conduct—Pancha-Sheela—with which he resolved to discover the secret of life eternal. He was more aware of human unhappiness than of human sin. He taught the very gist of the philosophy of the Vedas to one and all without distinction, he taught it to the world at large, because one of his great messages was the equality of man. Men are all equal. No concession is there to anybody. Buddha was the great preacher of equality. Every man and woman has the same right to attain spirituality—that was his teaching. The difference between the priests and the other castes he abolished. Even the lowest were entitled to the highest attainments; he opened the door of Nirvana to one and all. This tenor of thought is enshrined in *Dhammapada*: " Let man overcome anger by non-anger, let him overcome evil by good, let him overcome the miser by liberality, let him overcome the liar by truth." Gandhiji went ahead of Buddha and Jesus Christ by advocating conquest of hatred by positive love: to vanquish violence by non-violence. Love overcomes and endures, hatred destroys. Universal Brotherhood is enshrined in the following precepts of Christianity: "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and everyone that loves is born of God, and knows God. Beloved, if God loved us we ought also to love one another. He that loves not his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? How can he forget the Commandment which has emanated from Him? That He who loves the God, loves his brother also."

If the common ideal of human unity is universally acclaimed and accepted by all, the civilized nations of the world would endeavour to extend a helping hand to those -of their fellow-nations which are weaker, less equipped, less fortunate and more backward than their own in the name of humanity, goodwill and fellow-feeling. They would not, then, be actuated by any racial feeling, nor would they be guided by the time-worn and almost primitive consideration of the so-called national prestige, power and glory, but they would be mostly influenced by the lofty ideals of human unity, and consider it a privilege to uphold the cause of truth and justice, and stand by the people in distress.

Religious people, if they realize fully the underlying -essence of sublime ideas embodied in their respective religions, should absolutely believe in universal toleration and accept all religions as true—one would then recognize the Divinity in the founders of all religions.

I must confess here that I am not well-versed in any of the religious scriptures nor can I claim myself to be truly 'religious ' in the orthodox sense. But I believe in ' Truth' which, according to many prophets and seers, is 'God What we must essentially crave for is to reach the ideal of sublime humanism ; transcending all barriers of caste, colour, creed or race and to consider the entire humanity as one, irrespective of any distinction.

The urgency to consider the whole world as one single unit and to promote an international understanding has become an immediate necessity. The nationalistic outlook of various countries will soon disappear and whatever they think or do will be governed by a spirit of internationalism. It is, therefore, clear that national isolation has to be discouraged as an ideal and it must be recognized as a fact that the world is daily turning towards unity. Gradually narrow nationalism has to be discarded and the forces which will lead to the establishment of a world order ushering in a World State recognized. The national struggle for political freedom of particular countries will soon resolve itself into a social straggle for economic freedom and a World Socialist State will become the ideal and objective. One thing is certain that the struggle hereafter will be based on economics and will be between forces of "haves" and "have-nots." What happens in India, Egypt, China, and Russia or elsewhere, whether it is in the east or west or south or north, affects the world and world

events will change the future of every country.

Today the United Nations is striving to achieve political unity among nations. Let us all hope and pray that it will not go the way of the League of Nations which was a mere league of notions. The U. N. can succeed only if all the member States regard themselves as independent within their own territories and accept the Rule of Law as the basis of their behavior in international affairs. All nations big and small should eschew the use of force to settle differences. In fact I will even go to the extent of suggesting that a time should come when all States should place their entire military at the disposal of the U. N. and have only a police force to maintain peace and order within their jurisdiction. If any nation were to cast its evil eyes on others, it should be the responsibility of the U. N. to bring the erring nation to its senses. The United Nations and its various agencies could then alone become the bulwark of peace.

Nations, big and small, should realize that the formation of blocs would only result in schism and unhealthy rivalry. There cannot be a better council than the U. N. which can effectively represent the views and aspirations of the millions of ordinary citizens of the world, who want to foster international brotherhood,, that would ensure peace, progress and plenty to all men residing on this earth.

The time will come soon when the governments of the various countries will have to work for one ideal, that is, a World State, with the sole object of abolition of exploitation of all kinds and assuring every individual his fundamental rights.

The construction, therefore, of a new world order differing radically from the old and ensuring peace and plenty on a universal scale is immediately necessary. In such a new world order, international peace and concord will be the real objective of all nations of the world\* National governments must accept the rule of morality and the stronger ones must give up all attempts to dominate and exploit weaker nations. Equality among human beings must be finally recognized and no special privilege or superiority must be assumed by or attached to any race or nation.

This radical change in human outlook can be brought about by injecting into the minds of men—the young and grown-up alike—the ingredients of tolerance, brotherhood, aesthetic beauty, noble values and sublime ideas and ideals. Such a process of intellectual renaissance can alone serve to provide the much needed ballast to the ship of Scientific Revolution so as to enable the latter to sail ahead on an even keel, steering clear of the shoals and eddies of nuclear proliferation, apartheid, ideological dominance, and territorial aggrandizement. If human civilization has to surge forward on the right track, a congenial climate of progress has to be engendered so that the members of the rising generation may imbibe the fervour for friendship, camaraderie, and co-operative endeavour, and the older ones may realise the sheer futility of aspiring for enduring happiness founded on unbridled material gains.

In essence, the only hope for the world is to spread the philosophy of humanism. Considerable harm will be done if we merely seek satisfaction in the achievements of the past forgetting our responsibilities. It is however the future that is beckoning us. We have to make our own contribution towards the building of a genuine and all- comprehensive culture so that the present civilization may pave an illuminating path of ennobling ideas and of welfare-producing attainments, bear the torch, sublimate the soul, combine knowledge with wisdom, temper science with humanism and peace with prosperity.

Let the words from Ishopanishad ring in our ears: “He who sees all creatures in himself and himself in all creatures—such a one does not dislike or hate anybody.”