

DEFICIENCIES OF DEMOCRACY TODAY

However, democracy and human rights have many faces. Democracy, which implies rights to vote and elect people to govern the society, without any restrictions based on race, gender, belief, ideas and views, has become the demand of the western countries as expressions of freedom. However, freedom needs a context in which it may receive a meaning. The context is often framed by the conditions in which one competes to survive and seeks to secure life, property, opportunities of self-realization etc.. More insecure the human life is, more restricted the arena of freedom becomes. Only in conditions where human life experiences greater securities, freedom to choose and realize oneself receives greater meaning. Freedom for a man in hunger is first to satiate his/her need for food. In exchange of food he/she will submit the other dimensions of freedom to others.

After the insecurities of food, shelter and health are overcome, human beings seek freedom to explore the possibilities hidden within themselves as creative beings. This freedom extends beyond biological necessities to realms of the mind where one dreams, and strives to realize new possibilities of living. Only in a social order, which succeeds in freeing man from the basic needs, one can create ground for freedom where creative spirit of man may emerge. Creativity evolves according to the cultural environment where one lives, and the way the society inspires people by providing information and knowledge, and freedom to explore new frontiers of intellectual and emotional life, which are necessary for self-realization opening a new dimension of freedom. Once this higher freedom is guaranteed by a society by creating cultural environments, where new ideas can be brought forth, old views can be challenged and a climate of openness and respect for all ideas and beliefs can be ensured, the role of the human beings in building a social order becomes more meaningful.

In societies that are based on inflexible ideology, or fundamentalist religious beliefs, or cultural prejudices and superiority of one group over the others, and where people may be coerced to follow the premises of freedom imposed by dogmatic rulers, the meaning of freedom will lie in breaking away from confinement.

Only in a social order, where human beings are free from the basic needs, and liberated from the cultural dogmas and prejudices, and enjoy opportunities of engaging in the pursuit of higher freedom, which may open richer dimensions of life, human beings are able to descry the next realm of freedom representing the higher stage of evolution of society. This expanded freedom will bring transcendence of the human life through the emergence of a higher form of consciousness, which may open the doors to explore beyond the limited understanding of life by using the knowledge and methods available to man. This is a way to move beyond the world of material bondage and enter into a union with all that exist in the cosmos. The first step of realizing this freedom is the compassion, and respect and love for all. In realizing one`s oneness and connectedness with all beings, who exist as wonders of the universe, the life may move forward to reach an enlightened stage of evolution. It is like moving out of darkness to light that opens the vision of existence, not ascertainable by knowledge and reason alone. This consciousness is the source of true peace and harmony in the world.

The way the development of human society is still bound in its primitive stage while hunger is not eradicated and the basic needs for survival are lacking for a large part of humanity, it is a long way to go.

Democracy is in a doldrums except in few societies belonging to the advance economies of the world. Even in these societies, narrow parochial views about the superiority of their own cultures over the other are symptomatic. Holding on to the ground of economic and military superiority they preach values of human rights and democracy to the rest of the world. In turn, to maintain this superiority they make alliances with nations where democracy and human rights may be in a dire state. They support dictators or democracies according to their own strategic necessities. When it is necessary to get supply of resources of other nations, or they need access to military bases, which may be beneficial for their economic and military dominance, they change allegiance to democracy or dictatorship as opportunistic means. Except in very few countries, like for example, the Nordics, the preaching of democracy and human rights have become hypocritical means to find ways to control the political rivals. The capitalists use it to fervently counteract the advancement of socialism and communism in countries where they have military

or economic interests.

The instruments of human rights and democracy developed by the UN as Declarations of Civil and Political Rights, and Declaration of the Cultural Social and Economic Rights are the only mechanisms which inspire the Civil Society today to engage in spreading information and building awareness about democracy and human rights in the world. These Declarations are results of a political tug-of-war between the capitalist and the socialist camps. So the elements of these Declarations are an amalgamation of individual rights where capitalist interests are preserved, and the rights of the people where the collective rights of the poor and the disadvantaged are guarded against capitalistic exploitations. They are highly politically motivated and used by both camps as means to furthering their political influences in the world.

The Declarations builds a ground for all people and cultures to claim their rights equally with all others and inspire minority culture to engage in a political battle to free them from the hegemony of the majority. On one hand it stimulates the growth of the political rights of the minority which, instead of forging understanding and harmony among different conflicting groups, tend to splinter the cohesion necessary to build a society of peaceful coexistence. Similarly the Declarations also provide the contrary view and profess the rights of the people and nations before the narrow interests and cultures of minorities. They argue that by this way one may guarantee the security to people as a whole. It, in turn, can be abused as means to wipe out traditions and cultures of the minorities and encroach on their resources in an undemocratic manner.

By declaring all human beings are free and equal in a world, while freedom does not exist for the majority of mankind (in the way explained), and equality is only a statement of utopian nature, which has no resonance in real life for more than 99% of mankind (except in Scandinavian), the UN builds on the ideas of freedom which have little substance in reality. By declaring the civil liberties, without any moral guidance to follow, and professing rights of all cultures and people to practice their traditions and beliefs in the way they wish, the international community promotes the problems and challenges mentioned above. It does not provide any guidance and project any vision of how to resolve conflicts and forge harmony among individuals, nations and cultures. It does not profess the necessity of higher evolution of man, and point to any particular path of building an enlightened world. By declaring that all religions, beliefs, traditions and practices enjoy the same rights to develop without giving any warning about the

misgivings which they may produce, the UN declarations appear to open a stage for competitions that will generate more chaos than bring peace.