

A WAY TO MOVE FORWARD

What should be the way to move forward in building such an enlightened world?

An approach to accommodate all ideas, thoughts, belief and practices as equally valuable to human progress would be a naïve and an ignorant man`s approach. To ascertain the right path one must have knowledge about the nature of the world and the dynamics which operate in shaping history and accordingly take steps in building a progressive society.

The particular approach in a particular place should depend on the social and historical context where one intends to bring changes. In the society, where hunger and basic needs are the most pressing problems of survival, the issue of freedom should revolve around the way human life can be secured against these needs. The most meaningful social engagement in this situation should be to bring people out of hunger and needs first before anything else. We do not need societies, which profess democracy as the power of the individual to cast vote in the ballot boxes, but do not allot resources and adopt methods to free the poor from hunger and needs. It will be misunderstanding of democracy if the rich can buy votes of the poor and manipulate the social system by exploiting illiteracy and ignorance of the insecure people. Practicing democracy while keeping the wealth and access to resources only in a few hands, and conducting a formal show of equal participation of all in a voting process, will be against the aspiration of freedom of the suffering people. They need rulers who have love and concern for their freedom.

How to establish a political order of the enlightened rulers, while the political culture throughout history has been a history of oppression and exploitation? Without curbing the greed of the wealthy and the power hungry players, and setting conditions which may empower the poor to challenge injustice and manipulation, the politics of instituting a process where all are entitled to vote, will not bring any meaningful development of freedom. One must ensure methods to empower the disadvantaged with means that can halt the ambitions of greed that has corrupted the development of humanity and hindered mankind to evolve in a higher way. The way the idea of democracy is professed by the capitalist societies, is certainly not conducive to freedom of the

poor. For democracy to have any meaning in furthering freedom of man, it has to be given direction and control. It will bear a vision that individuals must understand the value of compassion and share the suffering of the others in order to ensure the security and freedom of all. An ideology of a brutal competition must be replaced by the idea of the brotherhood of man.

The way to an enlightened world is a progressive path: One needs to build it step by step. The societies, who have been able to secure all life against basic needs, and created conditions where creativity can flourish, the individuals should be stimulated to seek freedom of individual self-realization. In this level of progress of freedom, knowledge, information and openness to the outside world are great assets. In societies where individuals enjoy similar economic strengths and opportunities to access knowledge and get stimulation to realize their higher potentials, the ideas of human rights take altogether different dimension. All ideas, which project to bring advancement and evolution of humanity, must remain open to discussion and scrutiny in a progressive society. Where this process is mired by the imposition of particular view, and sanctity of traditions bearing a particular culture, the possibility of human freedom becomes stagnant. Without creating an openness and respect for freedom to challenge ideas of human progress, the path of democracy will fail. When democracy can be manipulated by a dominating culture and belief, while seeking its superiority over other cultures and ideas, it will lose its meaning. In a true democracy that seeks to create freedom of man where individuals may contribute to the advancement of humanity, one must take distance from any fundamentalist view whether of religious or philosophical nature. Here all dialogues and discussion must pivot around the question of building an enlightened world.

Democracy should not be dragged into the quagmire where all views, ideas and cultural prejudices and superstitions may claim equal rights and clog the advancement of the society. Although one may identify oneself with a particular culture and belief, where one feels comfortable and happy because one is brought up in this environment, everybody should be taught to seek a greater perspective beyond one's own narrow parochial world. Dialogue should not mean the path of regressing back in the dark ages of history by accepting the developments which has led us to wars and conflicts in the past. The developments based on religions, and extreme views, which may threaten the security of others, should be discarded if humanity must

progress and be free. Instead of letting all cultural practices and prejudices occupy the cultural stage of the world with equal status, one should generate a process of dialogue among all cultures to set up guiding rules that will help mankind to seek a path of evolutionary progress. In the name of democracy when ideas, bearing superstitions and prejudices against other culture and people, may aspire to rise to take hold of power in the society, one must win over them and strike hard to foil such evil aspirations. Instead, they should be confronted with the views and aspiration of the universal man seeking the enlightened path. However, one should not be naïve about this superior form of democracy: To institute its reign one will need courage to challenge the powers of the diverse power-hungry groups, who have dominated the history in the past.

ENLIGHTENED DEMOCRACY

Enlightened democracy is a vision based on the view that mankind needs guidance and direction to move in order to achieve social and political order which can be the foundation of peace. It sees the necessity of the world to move forward to higher and higher stages of evolution, where every human being has the responsibility to participate. It views situation of the world existing at this moment of history, where diverse stages of social evolution live together (some societies are still in a primitive stage bound to hunger and basic needs, while a few has progressed), as an unsuitable arena for growth of greater aspirations of man as creative beings, searching meaning and greater possibilities of self-realization. These aspirations can be realized only by building a foundation of enlightened democracy.

Enlightened democracy professes the view that human beings are endowed with the power to realize themselves in ways that may fulfill the meaning and purpose of human existence. Once they are equipped with knowledge of nature, better understanding of the dynamics of history, and become aware of the power of the higher consciousness, human beings have the possibility to evolve in the direction of the “higher-man”. This aspiration to evolve towards the “higher-man” will be able to steer human civilization towards harmony, beauty and peace. Instead of ushering in chaos, which may arise when one tries to understand the evolution of history as a process emerging in a random way resulting from of interactions of diverse interests, it will fulfill the

meaning of life as bearer of cosmic mind.

However, it is not something one may achieve in the same pace everywhere. The varied historical conditions will decide the starting position from where one would need to set the goal of bringing changes.

As said before, it should be viewed as a progressive path: First, one should free man from hunger and needs, and then from ignorance, prejudices and superstitions derived from tradition and belief which may bind man to a particular culture. Then one should seek to empower human beings with understanding and vision, with which they may be able to appreciate the values and ideas of the enlightened-order accepted by all people and cultures of the world. In this process they should be guided in freeing themselves from the narrow views inherited from the culture where one may have been born and brought up. It is a way to march forward by breaking away from views and practices of an ignorant world, and instead make a journey as a part of the whole of humanity moving towards a common goal by sharing same values and visions.

Enlightened democracy prescribes the values and visions that can be accepted by human beings of all nations, cultures and races once they are equipped with knowledge and information about the nature of the world, the dynamics of the social and political cultures and the inner nature of themselves as creatures possessing higher power of consciousness. It can pave meaningful paths of freedom leading to higher and higher ways. It is a path which needs to be trodden by using the power of knowledge and visions of the unity of all living beings with the cosmos, permeated by a meaning that one needs to explore. It is an exploration and journey towards higher heights of the mind towards freedom that may liberate us from bondages that the mechanical world imposes on our existence.

In this journey we may find many of our fellow human beings still struggling to free themselves from the basic needs. Enlightened way is a way to act to bring changes in the world that will create conditions of freedom for them. Beyond pursuing the path of knowledge, the enlightened democracy teaches man to be compassionate about the suffering world. Success of enlightened democracy hinges on the prerogative that societies produce teachers and guides who will

transmit knowledge and vision and inform people about the direction and goal one should pursue.

With it, one needs to promote the growth of an enlightened Civil Society i.e. the community of teachers, trainers and guides, who will form the backbone of security and peace in the world.