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Sadbhavana

DIGEST



Corbett National Park, 1981

Through the eyes of Rajiv Gandhi

Sadbhavana Digest

Issue # 4, August 2021

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Editorial

The Sadbhavana Digest is a new format, multiple perspective, multi-media publication. As the 20 th August is late Shri Rajiv Gandhi's birth anniversary, this issue of the Sadbhavana Digest is based exclusively on his writings, interspersed with photographs taken by him and short video links to his speeches.

We continue to focus the Sadbhavana Digest on the three key themes of our times, namely:

Theme 1 - How can we relate to ourselves better?

Theme 2 - How can we relate to other human beings better? And,

Theme 3 - How can we humans relate to nature better?

The first section, on the theme, How can we relate to ourselves better? begins with a speech by Shri Rajiv Gandhi at the 60 th Indian Philosophical Congress at Hyderabad in Dec 1985. He spoke on the topic – The Unity of Mind and Matter. He said: "There are three basic questions that we must face today. The first, perhaps, must be the question of the motivation for growth, for development. The second which we in India are already faced with is that of a westernisation, a materialism, a consumerism. The third, perhaps, the most important is the question of how we relate scientific and technological development to the more philosophical, the more human side of development, and how we are to narrow the gap between these two streams of development."

In the second speech in the first theme, we hear Rajiv Gandhi speaking about Art as a Means of Social Change. He said: "Our values must be based on a certain self-confidence in our system's ability to cope with the inputs from other systems without losing its character and without losing its direction, values which give strength to absorb without fear, to assimilate with profit and to enrich through synthesis. For us, outside influences are not seen as alien or hostile but as an opportunity for interaction, as an opportunity for cross-fertilisation."

In the third speech, which was at a symposium on Dr Radhakrishnan and World Unity, he makes the point: "We tend to equate development with economic development and forget that there is another large area. The thrust for economic development has made us neglect spiritual and moral development. The knowledge that we are gaining from science and technology is not being balanced by spiritual and moral wisdom. The rate at which science and technology is progressing is far ahead of the development of human being as a person. This gap is causing tremendous social tension."

On the second theme, How can we relate to other human beings better? Rajiv Gandhi stated clearly that Secular India Alone can Survive, and said: "In every village of India, in every basti and in every mohalla, there are people of different faiths, of different languages, of different cultures who live together as neighbours. Secularism is a condition of our existence. It is the essence of our tradition. Secularism and our nationhood are inseparable. We are a multi-religious society, we are a multi-lingual society, we are a multi-cultural society, but we are not a multi-national society. We are one people, we are one nation, we are one country and we have one common citizenship."

In the second article, he talked with enthusiasm about the then a year old South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC): "Information and knowledge, acquaintance and familiarity, an instinctive turning to each other are the bricks with which an enduring structure of co-operation can be built. There can be no devaluing of the importance of forums which bring together our experts from myriad disciplines and fields of activity. Like embroidery, regional co-operation will have to be fashioned patiently, stitch by stitch."

The third speech deals with Rajiv Gandhi's vision for Disarmament and World Peace. He said: "At this crossroads in human history, where the international community has to decide which road to take, we have presented to the United Nations an Action Plan designed to usher in a world free of nuclear weapons and committed to nonviolence... The Action Plan aims at reducing conventional arms and forces to the minimum levels required for defensive purposes only, even as we progress towards the elimination of all nuclear weapons... Integral to sustaining a world free of nuclear weapons would be, as proposed in our Action Plan, the establishment of a system of comprehensive global security under the aegis of the United Nations. This will call for changes in institutions, doctrines and modes of thought."

On the third theme, How can we humans relate to nature better? in a message to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature on its 40th anniversary, he writes: "Nature with its bounty sustains us and constitutes the basis for our progress. If treated with respect and consideration, nature can contribute to our progress while sustaining us with the loving care of a mother. Yet, in our shortsightedness, we have so irresponsibly exploited nature that we have imperiled our very survival. Increasing denudation of forests, pollution and degradation of the ecosystems are the harbingers of a disaster that is already upon us. This is a situation that must be checked. It is a duty we owe ourselves and the generations that will follow us. We must ensure sustainable development."

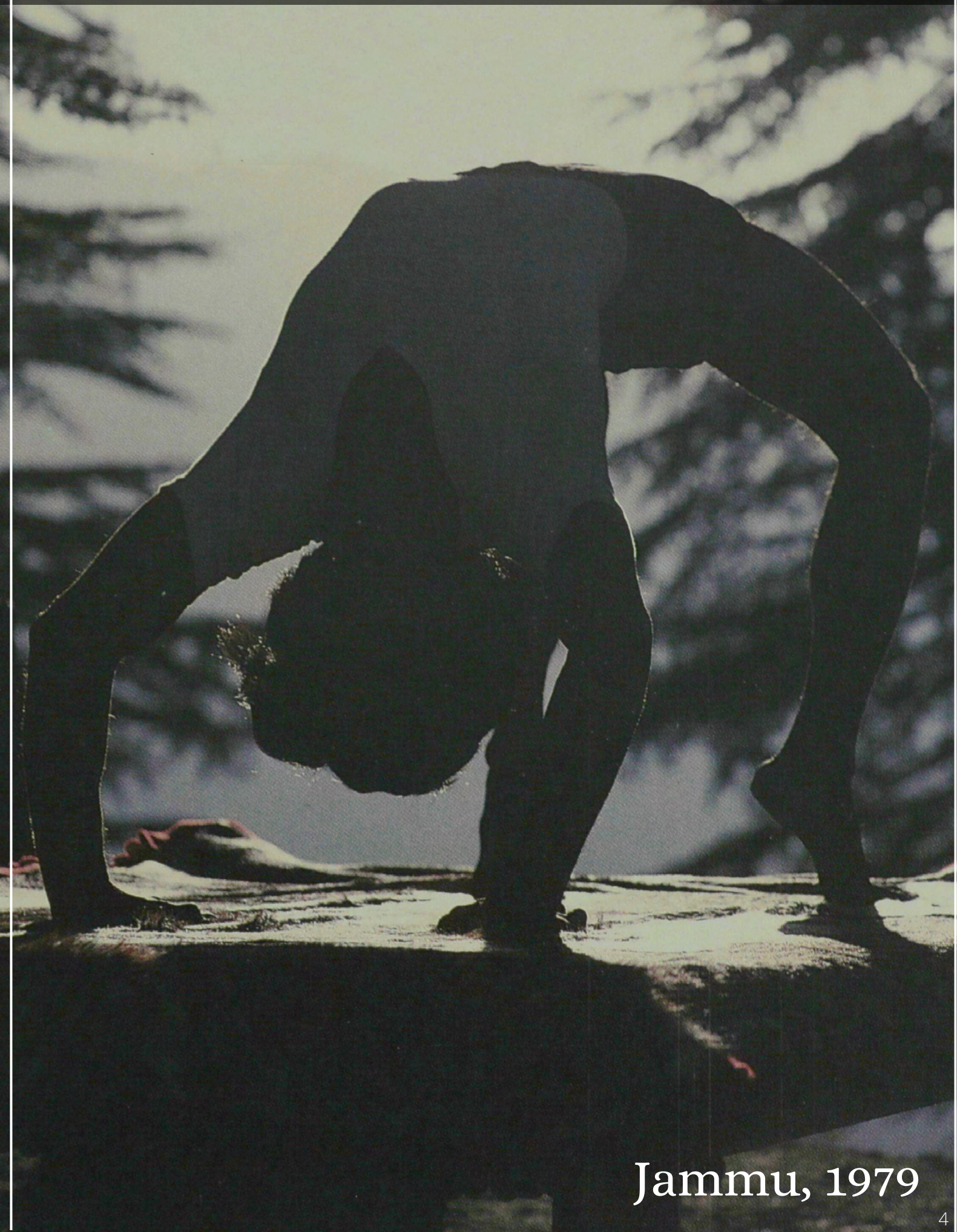
The second article is a collage of three brief messages. In a message on the World Environment Day, 1985, Rajiv Gandhi said: "Pollution of air and water, large scale denudation of forests, the extinction of ecosystems, have become the standard bearers of apocalypse. We must preserve and pass on to coming generation an environment purer even than that which we have inherited. It is encouraging that large number of people across the world particularly the young, have dedicated themselves to restoring the environment. This is an affirmation of faith in life."

In the final article, while talking about the external world and how to deal with it, he returns to the first theme – how to deal with ourselves. Giving a speech titled "Spiritual and Material Development - The Right Balance", while inaugurating a science and technology institute after visiting the Adiparasakti Temple, Tamil Nadu, in Nov 1988, he said: "I feel that one of the most important challenges that we face in India today, perhaps not just in India but all over the world, is how we give priorities to various things. Today it is simple and easy to give all our attention to economic development, in other words, to material uplift, but, I feel, there is tremendous danger in this. Because the real strength of any civilization, of any people, comes from the spiritual strength and inner strength that they have and any devaluation of this for material gain or benefits, weakens the whole system."

We hope you enjoy this issue of the Sadbhavana Digest, which was put together by Dr Ankush Gupta, Coordinator of the Rajiv Sadbhavana Media Labs, with the support of Pankaj Kumar from the Memories and Archives of Rajiv Gandhi (MARG) and Srishti Kamra of the Jawahar Bhawan Trust.

Vijay Mahajan,
Secretary and CEO, Rajiv Gandhi Foundation

Part I— How do we deal with Self?



Jammu, 1979

Unity of Mind and Matter¹

LET ME FIRST congratulate you on six decades of the Indian Philosophical Congress, in these sixty years, you have been the meeting ground of intellects in India and you have contributed towards the directions of our development.

Today, our country stands on the verge of rapid development. The world is already seeing a very fast transformation of scientific and technological knowledge. There are three basic questions that we must face today. The first, perhaps, must be the question of the motivation for growth, for development. The second which we in India are already faced with is that of a westernisation, a materialism, a consumerism. The third, perhaps, the most important is the question of how we relate scientific and technological development to the more philosophical, the more human side of development, and how we are to narrow the gap between these two streams of development.

First, the motivation. We have seen that the prime motivation for the industrial revolution in the West has been a dissatisfaction, a dissatisfaction with one's lot, a dissatisfaction with the rate of progress, with the speed of progress and this has resulted in a tremendous will to work, a tremendous force, a thrust for development, a scientific knowledge for technological development, for industrial development. But has it really given the thrust that humanity needs? It has resulted in a perfection, in a pursuit of perfection. It has given a drive for excellence; it provided food, clothing, health care, entertainment or a wide base of amenities and facilities. But the real question is: are these the end of this pursuit? Are these facilities, this knowledge, what we are really aiming for? Will these give a fulfilment, will these give a happiness to the people? We must think about the direction this is taking. I would submit that these gains in science and technology, in medicine, in entertainment, in health care, in transport right across the field are only the prerequisites for happiness, for a fulfilled human being. They cannot be the end in themselves. Unfortunately, today, we take them to be the end and we find that they do not, in fact, lead to happiness or to a fulfilment.

The question we must debate is: Is there an alternate path? Our traditions in India have been slightly different. Our ancient philosophy, our thought have given a different direction. We have not relied on a want, on a dissatisfaction. We have relied on a duty. Perhaps, I could give you a thought from the Gita where Lord Krishna had said that those that are actuated by desire for rewards cannot find happiness and they will remain miserable.

The industrial revolution has taken everybody from poverty towards prosperity, in some countries more so and in some countries less; but has it taken them towards a fulfilment, towards a happiness and can economic prosperity be equated with an inner strength spirituality, a certain fulfilment? The precept for an individual must be tested

on our whole society. We have seen over these years that an achievement based on dissatisfaction breeds only further dissatisfaction at a higher degree, at a bigger level and it leads to frictions amongst our people, peoples of the world, sometimes amongst people within a nation.

Material progress is necessary. We must have it and that is why we are giving this thrust in India for science, for technology, for development but the question we must face is: Can we afford to miss out the other forms of development? Can we replace a negative incentive with a positive incentive for work! Again, Lord Krishna has said in the Gita that equanimity constitutes adeptness in action. This philosophy, this tradition, this inherent spirituality that has been a part of our Indian heritage has been India before we came under colonial rule to heights of development, to heights of culture, art, dance and music. Two hundred years ago we were on the verge of an industrial revolution. We were amongst the most advanced countries in the world. And if you think back, that was the period when the whole world sought out India. It has been 200 years of depreciation that has killed the economic side of this development. Fortunately, the spiritual side has survived and that is what has given us our strength today. That is really the inner strength of India.

The question today is: Can we revitalise this in our thrust for economic development? Can we use this as a motivating factor for our science, technological development and for our industrial development? Perhaps, you could spend a few moments over this.

The second question that I have put was that of industrialisation, westernisation, a consumerism, a materialism coming into our society. In the West we saw the industrial revolution take place. They were the first countries to go through this revolution. It was their own culture, their own civilisation that developed into the industrial revolution, that developed a civilisation from that industrial revolution.

In India, we are not the flag-bearers. There has been an industrial revolution in other countries and we are under the pressure of that culture, that civilisation overwhelming our own culture and our own civilisation and the question that we must put to ourselves is: How will we blend this technological and scientific industrial revolution with our tradition and culture, our heritage, and not lose our Indianness through this development process. Our civilisation is, perhaps, one of the few that have maintained a continuity for thousands of years and that is our strength, that is our inner strength that keeps India together, that keeps India Indian. That has absorbed many conquerors who have come and made them Indian. How will we preserve this under the pressure of the onslaught of the western technological or scientific culture? Our means of production, our new technologies, the new relationship that this produces between various groups, between classes must be areas about which we must think. Will our civilisation be able

to counter the pressure from "coca-colonisation"? Perhaps, that is the crux of the second question that I have put to you. This does not mean I am talking of the superficial. I do not mean suits instead of dhotis or trousers instead of kurta-pyjama. These are only the superficial manifestations which can change, maybe, will change. But will we be able to maintain that inner strength that we have? Will we be able to maintain our heritage, our traditions? We must. This is not the question. The answer is in front of us. It is the way to that answer that we have to find.

Technology is not something that must be in pockets at the top. Pandit ji had talked about the scientific temper. Scientific temper is not having a few good scientists who are really tops in their fields. It is a way of thinking. It is a state of mind and in fact I would go as far as to say that even some of our top scientists who are amongst the best in the world in their particular field may not have that scientific temper when it comes to the more mundane matters outside their field and this is something that must come if our thrust of science and technology is to really bear fruit. We cannot have pockets or bubbles of excellence. They must be supported by the pyramids below them, with a wide base which will give them stability and something to draw upon.

We have achieved these pinnacles but we have not achieved that broad base to give stability. We must look at these areas. A scientific temper is not a western or westernised way of thinking. Scientific temper came to the ancient civilisations long before the western civilisation had flourished. When we look back to the ancient Egyptians, to the ancient Chinese, to our own Indian civilisation, we find that great heights have been achieved in science and technology. These are not something new for us today but we have had a gap of a few hundred years where this development has not taken place. Panditji had said that a medieval mind cannot be applied to a modern machine. We must produce modern minds in India. The challenge is to reconcile an inner spirituality with the imperative of progress and growth of science and technology.

We have a very good example in Japan. I say Japan because I have just been there. They have been able to blend modern sophisticated technology with their traditions, their heritage and their inherent Japaneseness. Will we be able to do the same and what are the directions that our educational institutions must take to produce this integrated development of the human being in India?

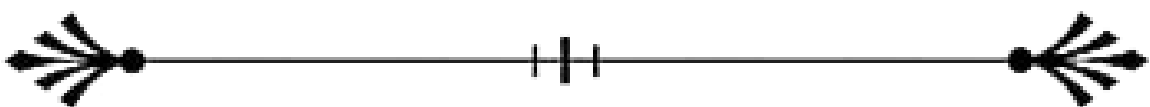
Will we ultimately be able to have continuity in Indian civilisation, not just from 5,000 years ago to today? But will we be able to take it ahead for the next 5,000 years or will we because of our lack of initiative or drive finish our civilisation at some point and blend it into a western civilisation? Will Indian civilisation continue in its tradition of continuity or will it become like Thebes and Babylon? These are the questions that we must consider today. Perhaps, the most important is that of the blending of the two cultures, of science and technology and philosophy and the humanities. How best can we do this?

In our striving for development, for progress, for a better life for our people, we must canalise both these energies, the spiritual energy and a scientific and technological energy.

I was at Kalpakkam a few days ago and as you know it is just a few hundred metres from Mahabalipuram. How beautifully they both bring these energies together—the spiritual at Mahabalipuram and a scientific and technological energy at Kalpakkam. Both at one place and both representing India, ancient and new and as Panditji has said, the temples of India, the old and the new. These two energies must be blended, must be used in parallel to take our country into the next phase of our development process. Perhaps, Adi Shankara's Advaita, the unity of mind and matter is what we are looking for. We must maintain this harmony. Technology is a tool of man's creation, a creation of the human mind. It must not be allowed to become the master. Many of the frictions, many of the tensions, many of the fears that we have today, whether it is of nuclear weapons, or of disarmament, are born of this. Are we going to develop the human mind faster than we are developing science and technology and will the human mind ultimately still be in a position to control the science and technology that it is discovering? Ancient India had a certain philosophy which gives us tremendous strength. Our philosophers were not just sitting in ivory towers but their philosophy turned almost every Indian into a philosopher and that is again our strength today. We must not let this change with the induction of science and technology, of what we call modern temper.

Philosophy has always been in the warp and woof of Indian life, of our system. It must not be allowed to climb up from there into ivory tower. I would not like to ask our philosophers to come down from their ivory towers or like to ask our masses to go up into these ivory towers.

¹ Address to the special session of the Indian Philosophical Congress, Hyderabad, 19 December 1985



Art—A Means of Social Change²

DR ZAKIR HUSAIN represented what was best in our composite cultural traditions, an upright God-fearing Muslim who had a vast understanding of the many hues and colours in which our culture and our heritage is painted. He saw that our unity was strengthened and not weakened by the diversity of our country. Zakir Sahib said, "At a time like this when linguistic problems, communal disharmony and national indiscipline are rampant, it is the duty of those who produce works of arts to cherish and popularise the ideals of national unity and national cohesion. Arts should not only be a mirror of contemporary life but should function as an instrument of social change. There could be no better instrument than the medium of music, dance and drama to bring about national integration." Therefore, your seminar-theme is most apposite.

The performing arts are the most visible, most participative form of arts, since on all occasions of joy, whether it is at a birth, a wedding or a festival, we burst into dance and music. The performing arts link a powerful modern nation-building medium with all that is rooted in our cultural heritage, bringing the old together with the new and binding our country together.

India's civilization is distinguished by its antiquity and by continuing collectively in its heterogeneity. Both characteristics are interlinked. Many civilizations have developed but collapsed because of insufficient resilience, inadequate flexibility to cope with subtle changes that they were faced with at that time. Our civilization has developed and expanded without dislocation or discontinuity despite tremendous turbulence that it has seen during the past thousands of years. This is essential because our values have not been rigid or dogmatic, because they have not been inflexible. Our values must be based on a certain self-confidence in our system's ability to cope with the inputs from other systems without losing its character and without losing its direction, values which give strength to absorb without fear, to assimilate with profit and to enrich through synthesis. For us, outside influences are not seen as alien or hostile but as an opportunity for interaction, as an opportunity for cross-fertilisation.

It is in these circumstances that our civilization has maintained its continuity and its strength when others have collapsed. Ours has flowered and blossomed. Throughout history, we have coped with invasion and occupation, political turbulence and economic disruption, but the challenges that we are faced with today are more subtle, perhaps, even more serious than those we faced in earlier times. The challenge is to maintain and keep our traditional values despite the changes brought about by economic development.

For the first time, millions of Indians are leaving their traditional homes, going to new areas, new towns looking for different types of occupations, occupations which have not traditionally been their family or home occupations, going out to search for a better life, looking for new opportunities, and in doing this, creating a tremendous geographic uprooting of our society. In the past, the vast majority of our population spent their entire lives within a few kilometres of their homes and their villages. Long journeys were restricted to pilgrimages. Only those who joined the Army, went into business or into professions left their homes and villages and there were very few from the rural areas to get such an opportunity. Today there is mass-movement. It is a dominant fact of our national life. And because of this movement, economic development becomes faster and quicker, social progress takes place. But it causes the roots to be lost when people leave their villages for want of facilities and amenities. When they go to urban areas, they get cut off from their traditional culture. They are faced in their new environment with the breakdown of their traditional values, a breakdown of their links with their old cultures. It is this churning, this manthan, that causes many of the problems in our society today.

Our diversity is a practical reality. It is not a theoretical concept. But, for the first time in our history, that diversity is being challenged with this churning of our whole society, with development, with economic development, with movement, with this shifting from one home to another.

Millions who would not have come into contact with people from their own immediate environment are today going to different States, to different corners of the country, people from the north going to the south, from the north-east to the west, from every part of India to every other part. Millions are living with, meeting with, working with people from different castes, different religious communities, different regions, different linguistic groups, different cultural traditions. This to a degree has meant much greater knowledge of each other, a mixing of that diversity, a strengthening from that diversity, but at the same time, it has occasionally meant that people tend to go back to their community, their language, their religion, as a support. It has also led to millions competing with each other, quarrelling and striving with each other, which sometimes has brought them back to relying on caste differences, community differences, relying on linguistic groups or relying on cultural groups to look for their identity. So, the challenge to national integration is in preventing this great movement that is taking place to become a platform for individual rivalries, community rivalries or linguistic rivalries.

This must be made a base for building our integration, and the most suitable area for this is in the performing arts. The performing arts reach across all communities, all language barriers, and have a unique role to spread the values that we have inherited.

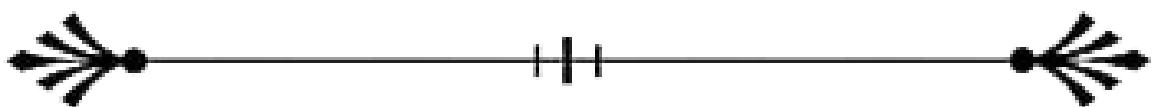
The performing arts cut across all the boundaries and barriers that we are building today. If we look a little deeply, we see that the linkages are there right across the nation, in music, in dance, in the instruments. The thread of our civilization runs right through our society, no matter which part of our country or which group we come from, cutting right across boundaries of customs, of traditions, of cultures. Thus participating in the performing arts is an osmotic process of building values, awareness, familiarity and respect and even reverence for different strands in the rich tapestry of our civilization and our heritage. Our art forms have long transcended regional barriers. Bharat Natyam and Kathakali are not limited to the south, Kathak and Manipuri not to the north or the north-east. Music and musical instruments have travelled widely and even the innovations in Carnatic, in Hindustani Jugalbandi cut across these boundaries. Our plays and dramas translated from one language, one region, to many others have linked our people together.

But integrating our country must also be seen as one of the functions of the performing arts today. This integration cannot take place if these performances are limited to a few, limited to urban areas, limited to those who have access to the relatively small halls and auditoria where these normally take place. It cannot be limited to the upper echelons of society in larger towns and cities. Even if we look at the big towns, there is not enough access for the average person to the performing arts. He is cut off by his financial situation, by the capacity of the halls, by a differentiation in the social status. These barriers have to be broken if the performing arts are to take their proper role in national integration. We have to reach out to the people, which means not waiting for the people to come to us but going out to the people, into their mohallas, into their villages, into their homes. This must be a new phase in our cultural development.

During the past years, we have tried to bring about this change. But much more effort is required and much more involvement of the people is required. We have to look at the systems that are available to allow us to reach out to the people and allow people to have inputs other than what they normally see as a cultural input into their lives. We have, during these two years tried to organise programmes where such interaction can take place, where the average person can come in contact with the culture of our nation, with culture from every different part of the nation. It is only with such interaction that our traditional values can be strengthened. It is only with such communication that in the rush for economic development, we will be able to retain that thread that links us with our heritage, with our past. We have to, perhaps, exchange or substitute the patronage of the Maharajas for the arts with the patronage of the people for arts. It is really then that we will bring about the cultural change that we are looking for in our society. We have to look after the needy artist and most of all we have to preserve various forms of art which are dying out because of lack of patronage.

I would like to congratulate the Zakir Husain Memorial Foundation for this seminar, also the Sangeet Natak Akademi, and congratulate both the organisations for bringing people's attention and focus to an area which is critical for our development today. It is critical for our survival and I look forward to the results of this function. The subject is challenging and is of great significance to building our nation today. We hope we will be able to use some of the thoughts that will come from this seminar, and incorporate them into government programmes and government policies.

² Speech while inaugurating the convention on the Role of Performing Arts in Promoting National Integration, New Delhi, 22 April 1987



Universal Vision³

INDIA'S PARTICULAR GENIUS has been in forging a unity out of differences without effacing them. This is how Dr. Radhakrishnan put it, which is a very important aspect of India and could relate very much to the situation in the world today. India synthesises a myriad influence. In India, we see the absorption and assimilation of the best in a number of cultures spanning many thousands of years. We see not a conflict or a race between systems, but the unity and strength of each system while interacting with the other.

Essentially, unity means rejection of exclusivism. It is an acceptance and understanding of the differences, cherishing of every type of manifestation without the feeling that our own particular system is endangered by a different system. Perhaps, this could be a basis of an understanding for world unity.

Dr. Radhakrishnan's eclectic mind and his catholicity of spirit was at home, in the East and in the West. Whether in Visakhapatnam or in Oxford, in Calcutta or in Moscow, he drew inspiration and made a deep impression on everyone around him. His philosophy of Ekaiv Manushajatih—oneness of humankind or human race—is a concept that we must learn to accept today. There are too many barriers that we have built within this human race of ours.

As Dr. Radhakrishnan pointed out, we have a common humanity, a natural kinship. The essential unity of the world is there despite the diverse and variegated creations that we ourselves produce, in art forms, in cultures, in different schools of thought. If the human race is one, the earth, the endowments and the fruits are common for the whole of mankind.

Some of these barriers are perhaps the result of development. We tend to equate development with economic development and forget that there is another large area. The thrust for economic development has made us neglect spiritual and moral development. The knowledge that we are gaining from science and technology is not being balanced by spiritual and moral wisdom. The rate at which science and technology is progressing is far ahead of the development of human being as a person. This gap is causing tremendous social tension. The pace of development is much faster in developing countries today than they were in the developed countries a hundred or two hundred years ago, when they were going through a similar phase in their development process. And this much faster rate of development does affect our society. The social tensions that are generated are sought to be contained by building a nationalist wall around ourselves. This is a very negative way of building unity. Unity fostered in such a manner can only lead to fear of another society, fear of a different system. It can only lead us ultimately to destruction and disaster. There is danger when nationalism tries to

assert its superiority, tries to pursue unrelenting rivalries, when it leads to an arms race, to concepts such as 'balance of power'. It cannot lead to peace or unity. The rivalries that we see today between various systems show a certain lack of respect for other people's sovereignty. In a way they limit the democratic process. We try to think of democratic processes as being confined to national boundaries and we feel that other countries cannot have a system with which we do not agree- This, surely, is going back on the very process of democracy.

The lack of respect for the integrity of small powers, for small nations, again, is a side-effect of the same attitude. Illegitimate pressures—economic, political, even military—are sought to be brought on developing countries, weaker nations, if they do not fall in line with a particular way of thinking. We have seen such pressures being used all over the world when a critical issue comes up.

When any nation tries to promote its own system beyond its borders, it is again threatening the oneness of humankind. National tensions spread and become international tensions. That is what we see happening today. Theories such as the balance of power and balance of nuclear terror are advanced to deal with international tensions. But can we really use terror to prevent its escalation? It can result only in an escalation of the arms race.

Concepts such as balance of power can never lead to actual peace and disarmament. Built into the concept is a race for bigger and more sophisticated weapons. The sophistication of weapons is reducing the decision time between the identification of threat and the response to that threat. Slowly, but surely, the decisions are being moved into the realms of machines. Already the time between launch and strike across the European borders has been reduced to 70 seconds in certain cases. We cannot expect adequate inputs and satisfactory human, political decision in that sort of time span. Slowly, but definitely, the button is going to be pushed by a machine. And we have seen how machines function. We have seen computers giving wrong information. We have had instances of the systems being fully armed, going to various stages of alert because of radar defects, picking up birds, picking up aeroplanes. Sometimes a small component worth only a few rupees fails and the entire system goes on full alert. One of the last examples was in a Star-War experiment in which the space shuttle was positioned 180 degrees out by a small error. It just shows that small errors can happen, do happen, and will happen all the time. When we reduce the time limit, we are really handing over the destruction of all mankind to a computer or some mechanical system.

All this arises because we refuse to accept another system. What we need is a basic change in values, a basic change in our thinking, perhaps, more self-confidence in our own systems, so that we do not feel threatened by other systems. Only this can lead to

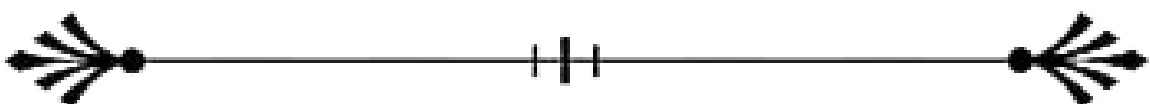
nuclear disarmament which is perhaps the first step towards world unity. Hatred, violence, fear and domination cannot lead to a mature nationalism which accepts other nationalisms and other countries and other systems. The first step in having such a mature, forward-looking nationalism would be to accept and understand other people's systems as they exist and accept the fact that others may want different system from the ones we are running.

Coexistence of different systems has to be the key change. We have to stop wanting to expand our systems or our ways of functioning. We have to stop trying to force our systems on other peoples - militarily, economically or in other ways. There can be no imposition. Threats cannot lead to unity.

Over the years we have built up a system under the umbrella of the United Nations. The system has many negative points and deficiencies, but it is perhaps the only system we have got.

But the UN cannot survive if there is cynicism and despair. There must be a positive attitude towards the UN—to correct its deficiencies, to strengthen the UN and to build the UN. Unfortunately, what we are seeing today is a totally different attitude towards the UN—the desire to bring the UN to heel, so to say, especially on certain issues which are important to humanity. There is an attempt to make the institution subservient to certain ways of thinking, and certain methods of operating. This only destroys or reduces the democracy of nations in the world. We have to move out of this process. We have to move into a much more positive process. We must see that the UN gains strength and we do not allow unilateral action to replace multilateral actions. What is required is a much broader vision for world peace, a vision which gives universal respectability to humanity, a vision which will bring about peaceful coexistence. This is perhaps the vision that Dr. Radhakrishnan thought and wrote about.

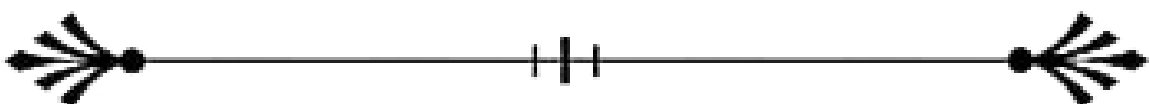
³ Address while inaugurating a symposium on Dr. Radhakrishnan and World Unity. New Delhi 24 March 1986



Inauguration of an exhibition on Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru by former Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi



Click link below to watch the video-
<https://youtu.be/YUuM06PqrJA>



Former Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi addressing a public rally in Andhra Pradesh (1989)



Click link below to watch the video-
<https://youtu.be/zMJnq4q5uD0>

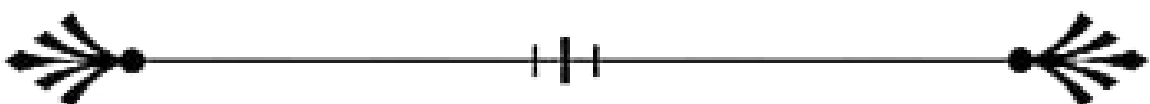


Former Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi attending a cultural event at Jawahar Lal Nehru Stadium, New Delhi

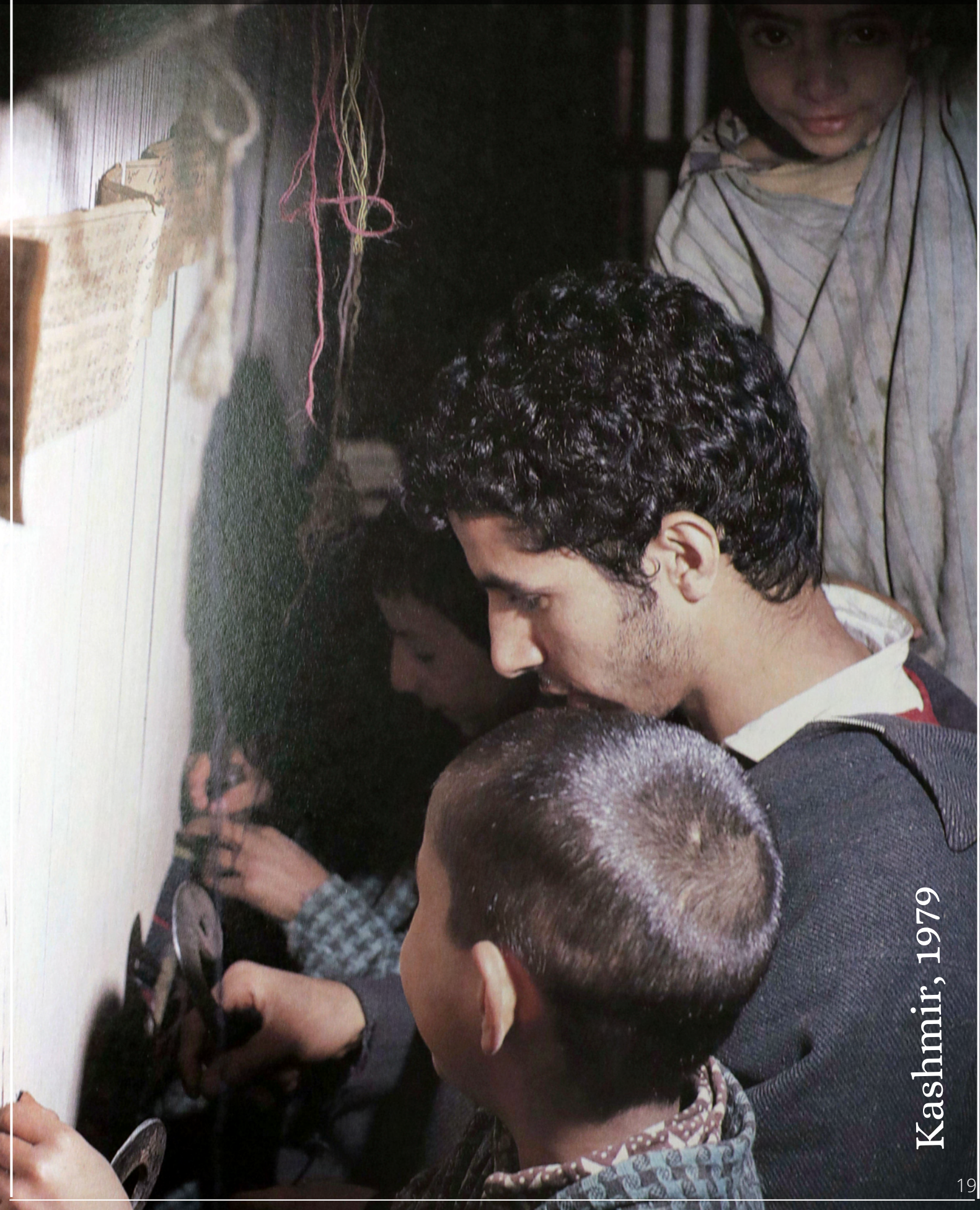


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Part II— How do we deal with Other Human Beings?



Kashmir, 1979

Secular India Alone can Survive⁴

A SECULAR INDIA alone is an India that can survive. Perhaps an India that is not secular does not deserve to survive. India and secularism must remain synonymous to assure the glory of our civilisation and the future of our country.

In every village of India, in every basti and in every mohalla, there are people of different faiths, of different languages, of different cultures who live together as neighbours. Secularism is a condition of our existence. It is the essence of our tradition. Secularism and our nationhood are inseparable.

We are a multi-religious society, we are a multi-lingual society, we are a multi-cultural society, but we are not a multi-national society. We are one people, we are one nation, we are one country and we have one common citizenship.

Most civilisations posit nationhood and diversity as antithetical. The single greatest contribution of India to world civilisation is to demonstrate that there is nothing antithetical between diversity and nationhood. Through 5000 years of living experience, we have demonstrated to the world that our unity in diversity is a vibrant reality.

Today's world is in desperate need of learning from India's experience. Peace and survival in the modern age depend on non-violence, on tolerance, on compassion and understanding, on peaceful co-existence between diverse philosophies and diverse ways of life. Through technological development, the world is becoming smaller and is growing into a global village. The world is equally in need of unity and diversity.

India's secularism is a global need because global secularism is inseparable from human survival, it is inseparable from global inter-dependence, it is inseparable from global co-operation.

The history of humanity is blood-splattered with the consequences of narrow-minded nationalisms equating community with nation, religion with nation, language with nation, ethnicity with nation. To escape history's trap of turbulence and tragedy, many countries and regional groupings are now seeking to escape the exclusivisms of past. They are reaching towards multi-cultural societies, where diverse faiths, languages and cultures can live together in harmony, equality and confidence, in the confidence that they can conserve their heritage and their culture, with the self-confidence to exchange ideas and experiences, to live together without the cross-fertilisation of ideas leading to cultural genocide.

In this world-wide effort, the world is learning from India's unity in diversity. No other civilisation has as long a record as ours in evolving a composite culture. No other country has as long a record as ours of a polity based on secularism.

Notwithstanding thousands of years of secularism, the forces of communalism have not been vanquished. The history of India is a kind of dialectic between the forces of secularism, tolerance and compassion versus the forces of communalism, fundamentalism and fanaticism. In the long run, secularism will always triumph. But the never-ceasing running battle with the opposing forces of communalism continues, which we must fight.

It is also important to understand how India sees secularism. How do we understand secularism?

First and foremost, our secularism is not anti-religious or irreligious. We have a deep and abiding appreciation of the rich vein of spirituality that runs through our culture, that runs through every religion of India. It runs through our history, it runs through every person who is an Indian. That rich vein of spirituality is the source of our moral values, of our ideals and our standards, of our goals and of our objectives. We venerate this spiritual tradition. We cherish its moral values. We respect all the different forms in which this spirituality manifests itself. The cardinal principle of our secularism is equal respect for all religions: *sarva dharma samabhaava*.

Our second great principle is that we respect all religions equally. No religious community is singled out for favors by the State, no religious community is subjected to any disability or disadvantage by the State. The State has no religion. The State is above religion. For the State, religion is a private and personal matter for the individual. Whatever religion an Indian professes, whatever faith an Indian propagates, for the State it is a personal matter. The State is concerned only with full protection for all, with equal opportunity for all, with equitable benefits for all. For the State, all Indians are Indians, equal in the eyes of the State.

The third principle, which flows from the first and second, is that religion has high value but must remain in the sphere of private and personal life. It has no role to play in the politics of the country.

Injecting religion into politics is the poisoning of our body politic. Mixing religion with politics is against the traditions of our civilisation, the canons of our Constitution and the survival of our State.

We have not forgotten, and we will never forget the terrible consequences to the Freedom Movement of the mixing of religion with politics. From the War of Independence that started in 1857 to 1940, Indians of all communities, except communalists, were together in the battle to free India, to make India independent. Soon after, the Lahore Resolution was passed by the Muslim League. Because of the

Quit India Movement, the secular leaders of all communities and religions at that time were mostly in jail or had gone underground. It gave an opportunity for the communalists to make inroads into the mainstream. Within less than a decade of the Lahore Resolution, India was partitioned.

We shall never let another partition of India happen again. We shall never again let the forces of communalism triumph over secularism.

A patriotic Indian is a secular Indian. A nationalist Indian is a secular Indian. A dedicated Indian is a secular Indian. A disciplined Indian is a secular Indian.

Through forty years of Independence we have shown that we are one nation. We have faced external aggression as a united nation. We have stood firm as one nation against the internal forces of fundamentalism and fanaticism. It is illustrated most dramatically by what has happened in Punjab. The protagonists of secession found common cause with religious fanatics. Together, they roped in terrorists, murderers, hired assassins, gun-runners, smugglers and common criminals, mixing politics with religion, mixing religion with criminality. Gurudwaras were turned into criminal dens till Operation Black Thunder, proving that terrorism was not for religion, not for religious purposes but for ulterior motives. The people were disgusted at the defilement of the shrines and the misuse of religion. They were disgusted with the intimidation of the granthis and the oppression of the sevadars.

The people of Punjab have not given in. The tolerance of our people has triumphed. The brotherhood of centuries has triumphed. The innate secularism of our people has triumphed.

But the forces of communalism have not accepted defeat. They are always on the prowl, always looking for an opportunity to make mischief, always trying to insinuate themselves into the political life of the country, working from behind the scenes or using others as a front. If the secular forces stand together communalism can be contained. The danger arises when political parties, for opportunistic reasons, lend the weight of their support to narrow causes.

As a Government, our foremost duty is to safeguard secularism. We invite the co-operation of every section of this House to join us in this great national endeavour. I welcome the suggestion that has been made by Shri Indrajit Gupta. I have already requested the Home Minister to call all the secular parties, all the nationalist parties and to talk with them and work with them to see how we can build a composite culture.

Our secular traditions began with the Vedas and the epics. The concept of the Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, further developed by the Buddha and Mahavira, was the basis for the development of Indian civilisation and of our society. We welcomed Judaism in Kerala; we welcomed St. Thomas and Christianity; we welcomed Zoroastrianism and today we have the largest Parsi community in the world; we welcomed the great Sikh Gurus from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh. We synthesized Islam and the great Sufi tradition of Amir Khusro and Kabir and Baba Farid and Shah Abdul Latif. Our religious festivals are festivals not of one community but of all Indians and all communities. We celebrate them together.

Over the last 40 years we have augmented our capacity to tackle communalism. It is reflected in the declining trend in communal incidents. It is reflected in the containment in the numbers of persons losing their lives and suffering injury in communal clashes. But the task has not ended. It will not end till there are no more communal incidents, till there is no more loss of life or limb or property. Indeed, even then, highest vigilance will be required to keep communalism at bay. We will have to fight communalism till it is defeated and ended and completely vanquished.

Law and order is a State subject. The Centre can at best consider the national perspective, issue guidelines and assist State Governments, but the primary responsibility lies squarely with the State Governments. The State Governments have been assisted time and again by the courts, and I would specially like to congratulate the Bombay High Court and Justice Barucha for their historic decision.

We have commended to the Chief Ministers the far-reaching recommendations of the National Integration Council's sub-group headed by Shri P.N. Haksar. There has been some effect, although the overall action has not been to our satisfaction. The overall communal situation has become better than in the past. But there is no room for complacency. The communal monster must be laid low.

Indiraji fell martyr to the bullets of communalism. She was the author of the 15-Point Programme which was to be implemented by all the State Governments. I have chaired a number of reviews of that programme and, although we have made much progress, I am not happy with the progress that has been made. Much more needs to be done and we will be seeing to it that the follow-up is up to the mark. With each session that we have had, the follow-up has worked better and the results are emerging. The curve is on the upswing. But it is too slow. It must be accelerated. We urge the protection of the minorities. We must work for multi-religious police forces. We must give special assistance for the education and economic advancement of the minorities.

The challenge to secularism is not from one quarter, but from fanatics of all faiths, stirring trouble in various ways. There are those who ignore our composite culture and

project to their followers, a distorted and motivated picture of India's history, creating grievances where there are none, making political capital out of distressed religious sentiments. It is for the State Governments to be alive to such attempts, to set up an intelligence system for advance information about trouble-makers and trouble-spots. It is for State Governments to take preventive action and quick, corrective measures.

No State Government, Congress or non-Congress, can claim an unblemished record. All State Governments, Congress and nonCongress, have attempted to tackle the problem. No State Government has ever been refused the full assistance of the Centre in preventing or tackling the problems in a particular situation. This is not an issue between the Centre and the State. It is not an issue between the Congress and other parties. It is a national issue, and it is an issue that demands a national response.

The elements of a response, formulated through a general consensus and the consent of the country, is what is needed. The secular injunctions of the Constitution must be carried out in good faith and with deep dedication. Religion must not be mixed with politics. No one doing so can run for elections today after our recent amendments. But still there are some political parties who have not amended their constitutions. These political parties must amend their constitutions and bring them into conformity with the nation's Constitution.

The minorities needing educational and economic help must be assisted to avail of equality of opportunity as guaranteed by the law. Genuine grievances must be tackled quickly. Imaginary grievances must be quickly exposed. The machinery of law and order must be insulated from all religious prejudice, from all communal overtones. The people of India must be involved in giving practical expression to their innate secularism.

This year we are celebrating the birth centenary of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. He was one of our greatest secular leaders, perhaps one of the greatest secular leaders of all time.

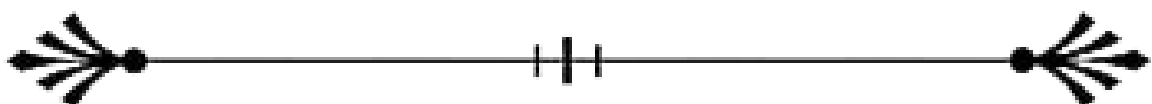
When Gandhiji was felled by religious fanatics, the national responsibility of carrying forward secularism fell on Panditji's shoulders.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru staunchly opposed the blood-letting of Partition, reassured the minorities, reformed the obsolete and oppressive mores of the majority community. He gave Indians of all faiths, the confidence that the State is above all prejudice, above all discrimination, above all narrowness. He assured every Indian of honour and opportunity.

We would soon like to call a meeting of the National Integration Council to discuss the issue of communalism and we would like that to be followed up after the Home Minister has his initial meetings with leaders and members of the Opposition parties.

In a few days, we will be commemorating the 25th anniversary of the passing away of Panditji. There can be no more significant manner of honouring Panditji's memory than in fulfilling his ideal, in re-dedicating ourselves, in re-dedicating India and every Indian, to the principles of secularism which Jawaharlal Nehru espoused, and the unflinching application of the principles to the political and social life of our country.

⁴ Intervention during a special discussion in the Lok Sabha on the communal situation, 3 May 1989



SAARC Has Moved from Intention to Action⁵

BANGALORE RENOWNED FOR its pioneering role in Indian science—home of C.V. Raman, India's first Nobel Prize winner for Physics—and the centre of some of India's most sophisticated modern industry, today adds another feather to its cap. The Declaration we are adopting will henceforth be associated with the name of this capital city of Karnataka, which has played host to us with its traditional gaiety, colour and warmth.

The South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation has moved rapidly from intention to action. We are today endowing the Association with an institutional structure which will help serve its ever-growing activities. We will shortly see also the establishment of regional institutes in the key sectors of agricultural information and meteorology, sectors closely related to the economic well-being and welfare of the vast majority of our peoples. We expect preparatory work in other areas—such as drug trafficking and abuse—to lead to additional links in the institutional network for regional co-operation.

Under the leadership of Bangladesh, commendable success has been achieved in the last twelve months in fostering contacts among professionals on a wide scale. It will be India's endeavour during the period of its Chairmanship to further intensify this work. Information and knowledge, acquaintance and familiarity, an instinctive turning to each other are the bricks with which an enduring structure of co-operation can be built. There can be no devaluing of the importance of forums which bring together our experts from myriad disciplines and fields of activity. Like embroidery, regional co-operation will have to be fashioned patiently, stitch by stitch. The strength of the fabric will be determined by the weakest of the threads. There are hundreds of South Asians who in the last year or so have discovered each other for the first time in decades of independence. The hundreds must grow to thousands and more.

Attention was drawn at the ceremonial inauguration yesterday to the SAARC region comprising a billion people, the most populous regional association the world knows. Tangible regional co-operation which impacts beneficially on the lives of people everywhere must, therefore, involve not thousands but millions of our citizens. We have to devise programmes and events which raise our peoples' consciousness of their identity as South Asians. Sports is a ready medium for mass participation— as the sports events in Kathmandu and Dhaka have already testified. During the year to come, let us explore how we might use culture and the mass media as vehicles for enhancing our awareness of each other without detracting in any way from our individual national identities.

For example, at the national level, we in India are currently organising popular festivals, both in Bangalore on the occasion of this Summit, and in Delhi. These are feasts of art and culture in which hundreds of thousands of children, youth and adults from every segment of society and every walk of life are being encouraged to avail themselves of the opportunity to participate in the panorama of our heritage, brought to their very doorstep. Perhaps our officials could explore how we might participate in such cultural festivals in each other's countries, or jointly mount manifestations that draw in all our people. The essential point is that for regional co-operation to become a palpable, living reality, we have to move out of government offices and bureaucratic channels of communication. Scientists and technologists, entrepreneurs and social workers, academicians and athletes—the list is endless—have to be drawn into these exchanges, reinforced by popular participation at all levels. With your cooperation, we hope, during our Chairmanship, to explore various possibilities in this regard.

The year to come must also be a year of achievement in regard to specific programmes, projects and institutions of regional cooperation. Consideration of issues at expert, official and ministerial level has in many cases matured to the point where we will, I hope, before we meet in Kathmandu next year, be able to find developments on the ground which take us beyond meetings and seminars. What we must do is to so reorient our priorities that we concentrate on areas with the greatest promise where results can be achieved without additional funds.

This Summit has identified several new areas where work is to be undertaken during our Chairmanship to concretise the modalities of co-operation. We will examine how the electronic mass media might be utilised for evolving radio and television programmes conceived on a South Asian basis. We shall examine how tourism by organised groups might be facilitated to make all of South Asia familiar ground for people drawn from different disciplines. We will consider the establishment of a documentation centre and data bank which will provide ready access to region-wide information germane to our economic, scientific and technical development.

Our planners will be meeting again. The intellectual underpinning to regional cooperation can only come through exchanges of students and scholars among our countries, which will mean seeing how to fund scholarships and fellowships. We shall also consider the establishment of Chairs for SAARC studies and studies relevant to the most pressing needs of South Asian countries. We will also examine how the idealism of youth might be harnessed to volunteer work in rural areas. We will endeavour to have studies in all these areas completed in time for decisions by the Council of Ministers at their meeting next spring. Some Technical Committees have gone further than others in giving concrete content to schemes of cooperation. Our effort will be to push forward where we can, deepen consideration where appropriate, and allow full reign to the imagination and innovativeness in each of us to think up additional dimensions to our multi-faceted co-operation.

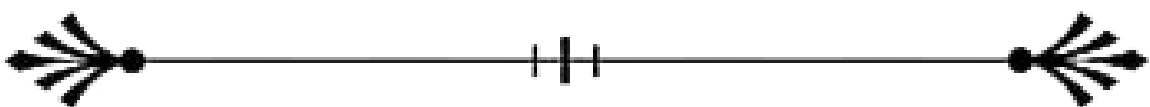
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The important statements made by each of you yesterday, and the discussions that followed at Nandi Hills, showed that, even as the mechanisms of regional co-operation are meshing into gear, matters of grave national import have impinged upon and permeated our deliberations—peace, stability and security, confidence-building and the nuclear threat, non-violence and coexistence, the unmitigated evil of terrorism. The lesson to be drawn is that the patient building of regional co-operation in identified areas of co-operation must take place in an atmosphere of good neighbourliness and responsible international behaviour.

No cause which tolerates terrorism can be high or noble, no violence which engenders hatred is compatible with the precepts of the Buddha and the Mahatma. Regional co-operation cannot be reconciled with acquiescence in, or encouragement to acts directed against the sovereignty, unity and integrity of neighbours. Our annual meetings at Summit level not only help to underline the importance we attach to SAARC but also afford opportunities for intimate informal discussion both among all Seven of us and bilaterally. Whether we will it or not, there is a symbiotic interchange between intensified regional co-operation and cordial bilateral relationship.

Thank you for having done us the honour of inviting us to host our second Summit. The citizens of Bangalore and the people of India have been delighted to have you among them. We have been able to give you only a brief glimpse of the many-splendoured riches of this part of India. We hope that as our co-operation grows there will be many more opportunities of welcoming you in all parts of our country. Of the Seven, India alone shares a land border or maritime boundary with each of the other Six. It gives us a special sense of commonality, of rapport, brotherhood and good fellowship with each of you individually and all of you together. Our people look forward to meeting yours at many different levels and in many different places around our region. In South India, one does not say farewell bluntly; one says; we part now to meet again. It is in that spirit we take leave of you here and look forward to our being together again next year in the lap of our common sentinel, the mighty Himalayas.

⁵ Concluding statement at the second SAARC Summit, Bangalore, 17 November 1986



Disarmament and World Peace⁶

WE ARE GRATEFUL to all of you for joining us in paying tribute to an outstanding personality of our time who has left an enduring mark on the history of India and the world.

The subject of nuclear disarmament and its nexus with an alternative world order based on non-violence and peaceful coexistence were issues close to Jawaharlal Nehru's heart. His immediate reaction to the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki was dismay at "the disastrous way that modern civilization is following". Further developments in nuclear weaponry added to his deepening sense of disquiet. His concern arose not only from accretions to the capacity for annihilation but specifically from the mindset which sought solutions in terms of violence rather than non-violence, of confrontation rather than coexistence. He said:

"Two great wars have brutalized humanity and made them think more and more in terms of violence. What progress scientific and cultural and in human values we have made is somehow twisted to the needs of violence."

Thus, the Indian approach to the challenge of the thermonuclear age linked, from the start, the mechanics of nuclear disarmament to the larger goal of a fundamental restructuring of human thought and human civilisation. The aim was to not merely rid humanity of these awful machines of war but, even more, to so recast the world order that there is no reverting to the concepts, doctrines and practices that have brought us to this dreadful pass.

Unfortunately, almost all discussion on disarmament concentrates on such specifics as phasing, balanced reductions and verification. The larger picture is missed. The implicit assumption is made that there is no alternative to the present order; no alternative to its rivalries and confrontation to its bitterness and hate, to the ready resort to violence and armed domination. We believe that it will avail us little if we dismantle nuclear weapons but leave in place the existing structure of international relations and the mentality that goes with it.

We would, therefore, hope this conference will go well beyond the issues of disarmament, per se. We would want you to address yourselves to the broader, more fundamental question of the parameters and contours of human civilisation required to sustain a world beyond nuclear weapons.

We have seen how through the course of human civilisation, humankind has proceeded from smaller loyalties to larger loyalties, from tiny units of mutually beneficial relationships to larger and larger units, from the lone individual and his family fighting

for survival against an entirely hostile world to small tribes, which lived among themselves in considerable harmony although entirely hostile to everyone else. Over the time, the size of the tribe expanded, growing to larger communities and the beginnings of a nation or a nation-State. Each stage of the development of civilization has been characterized by larger and larger numbers of people evolving norms of tolerant, cooperative, harmonious relations within themselves, although not extending the same norms to those whom they believe to be outside the pale. The logical culmination of this process of expanding areas of co-operation and shrinking areas of confrontation would be when the whole of humanity is regarded and treated as one human family which respects, indeed celebrates, the diversity of its constituent units, a family where relations within the entire international community are informed by peaceful, friendly, cooperative relations among the peoples.

It was in this direction that Jawaharlal Nehru pointed when he said:

"International co-operation means international tolerance.

We are today, by and large, sufficiently civilized in the context of our national communities to regard tolerance as the basis of communal life within our national societies...

For nations to learn to tolerate, to peacefully coexist is but the extension of this area into international relations. It means an attitude of live and let live, and a belief in the power of example and persuasion rather than in arbitrament by force."

Nehru's view of the larger destiny of humankind derived in large measure from our experience of the freedom struggle.

Confronted by the mightiest military empire in history, Mahatma Gandhi put forward the startling proposition that violent action was not the only way of achieving ends. Gandhiji demonstrated that violence need not be met with violence, that armed domination did not demand an armed riposte. Mahatma Gandhi succeeded not only in fashioning a political instrument out of a moral imperative, but in imbuing millions of people with the conviction, discipline and training required for the soldiers of a non-violent army. What is more, he succeeded. From non-violence derived the other great concepts of tolerance and compassion, of peaceful coexistence, of Vasudhaiva kutumbakam: the world as one family. Non-violence gave India its independence and also opened the way for the independence of others, including those who sought to wrest their freedom by other means. It laid the foundations for independent India's advocacy of Non-alignment founded in nonviolence and peaceful coexistence.

In 1940, as the forces of aggression were sweeping virtually unimpeded through Europe and East Asia, Nehru penned a remarkably prescient confidential note for the use of the inner councils of the Congress Party. He wrote:

"Both because of our adherence to the principle of non-violence and from practical considerations arising from our understanding of world events, we believe that complete disarmament of all national states should be aimed at, and is in fact an urgent necessity if the world is not to be reduced to barbarism."

Note that this was written years before the invention of atomic weapons. Note, too, the linkage made even then between disarmament and the world order required to sustain a world beyond weapons.

We are now at a fascinating new conjuncture in world affairs. For almost the first time since the advent of nuclear weapons and the onset of the Cold War we are beginning to see, on the part of the major military powers, a recognition that, perhaps, the path of rivalry and confrontation which they have followed all these years, is a barren path and that, therefore, new avenues must be explored. This new trend was first signalled when General Secretary Gorbachev visited Delhi in November 1986, and signed with me the document which has come to be known as the Delhi Declaration, affirming the Soviet Union's acceptance of the path of nonviolence. This was followed a year later with the INF Treaty, the first instance of nuclear disarmament, as distinct from nuclear arms control, since the invention of nuclear weapons.

There is a vast change taking place within the power blocs and in their relations with each other. There is new thinking in the air, new approaches, a fresh attempt at accommodation, a weaning away from old rigidities. Much of the new thinking resembles the considerations we have been urging since our Independence and before. Perhaps we could even go so far as to suggest that India's alternative world view and the Six-Nation Five-Continent Initiative have provided something of the inspiration for this new thinking.

Let us set this recent understanding between the rival military blocs in the longer perspective and larger context of growing groupings of Nations and States. I would like to begin with my own country. We came to Independence as a congeries of six hundred princely states and a dozen British administered provinces, dispersed in enclaves over the entire sub-continent. The consolidation of our nationhood began with the political, economic and emotional integrated unit. We are today one Nation, one State. We comprise a seventh of the world's population. We are the second most populous country in the world. We are the largest democracy. Elsewhere in Asia, similar processes of integration have taken place. The consolidation of nationhood has given nations the

confidence to take initiatives aimed at regional groupings. These regional groupings have various aims and objectives. Some have a wide scope, others a limited ambit. Some are more successful, others less so. The significant thing is not so much their goals as their degree of success. The significant thing is that in all parts of the world groupings of one kind or another are being attempted. ASEAN in Southeast Asia and SAARC in our part of the world are two Asian examples. In Europe, the disaster of quarrelling nation-States has led to the emergence of groupings for defence followed by groupings for economic integration. There is even talk of extending political co-operation to political unity. The European Community in West Europe aims at a single European market by 1992. The Council for Mutual Economic Co-operation in East Europe incorporated economic integration and political co-operation.

In North America, integration has proceeded perhaps even further than in the rest of the world. In Africa, the very name of the Organization of African Unity spells out its purpose. In Central America, the Caribbean and Latin America, the story is repeated. So, it is in Australia and the Southern Pacific. Overarching all continents, embracing two-thirds of international community stands the Non-aligned Movement.

This accelerating and worldwide trend towards a greater commonality of economic interests, political co-operation and peaceful co-existence will reach its natural conclusion when all the world is one and the human family is one, with respecting, of course, the diversity of the family and the importance of each constituent retaining its distinctive identity. Now, for the first time since curtains were rung down to divide the world into blocs, there is new hope in the air and new opportunities at hand which we must seize upon. If these impulses are pushed to their logical conclusion, we could emerge with a new world order which ensures durable peace and the survival of the humankind. If, on the other hand, we allow these new impulses to be stalled through incomplete or partial acceptance, we run the danger of international relations becoming even more complicated, difficult and dangerous than they are today.

That is why it is necessary for us to not only take stock of positive developments like the INF Treaty and the agreement in principle to consider strategic arms cuts, but to urge the international community to look broadly at the kind of world order that is needed to sustain a world freed from nuclear weapons.

Not only is further progress required beyond the INF Treaty, but all nuclear weapon powers must be drawn into the process, indeed all States must be party to the process. There must be an end to the absurd attempt at promoting peace by the use of language and the instruments of war, an end to the hiatus between means and ends, and to what Nehru described as "mobilized antagonisms".

At this crossroads in human history, where the international community has to decide which road to take, we have presented to the United Nations an Action Plan designed to usher in a world free of nuclear weapons and committed to non-violence. Our Action Plan is not only a practical programme for Nuclear Disarmament in suitable phases, or even only a programme for general and complete Disarmament. It is, in essence, an Action Plan for a quantum leap out of a world order which believes in confrontation and trusts in violence into a new world order rooted in nonviolence and anchored in peaceful coexistence. The mechanics of Disarmament are, of course, of operative significance. But Disarmament, by itself, is not enough. It must be, accompanied by profound changes in attitudes and approaches, in objectives and methodologies, in doctrines and strategies, which would displace armed rivalry and the search for domination. We need to see human civilisation itself advance to a new world order which assures durable peace and prosperity for all through peaceful co-existence.

The Action Plan envisages the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons by the year 2010. A time-limit is essential or it is only within a time-bound framework that confidence in disarmament will exist and the intervention of unanticipated events would not dissipate the momentum generated.

No goal which falls short of the total elimination of nuclear weapons is acceptable to us, for the existence of nuclear weapons implies the validation of the doctrine of nuclear deterrence. Deterrence is the antithesis of peaceful coexistence. While the goal might be attained in stages—we have ourselves proposed three phases—the end result must combine the dismantling of nuclear weapons with the dismantling of nuclear deterrence. As Jawaharlal Nehru pointed out, the advent of the thermonuclear power has: "Totally destroyed any validity that might have existed in the concept and policies of the balance of power...these weapons, and the magnitude in which they will be employed, have erased the differences between the capacity to inflict punishment and of receiving the same; for the side that employs them is not immune from the lethal effects of their own offence."

Whether such deterrence is described as minimal or maximal makes no difference because the very existence of nuclear weapons anywhere carries the threat of nuclear war and contains the seeds of a resumption of the nuclear arms race at the slightest provocation. More insidious still, and even more dangerous, are the refinements being attempted to the doctrine of deterrence the so-called doctrine of "discriminate deterrence"—which is aimed at non-nuclear weapon States in the name of combating terrorists who might possess nuclear weapons. No, there is no scope and no place in the new world order of our dreams for legitimizing any nuclear weapons, of any description or for whatever purpose. All nuclear weapons have to be outlawed. And all nuclear weapon powers must be part of the process so that every stage of disarmament enhances the security of all until, eventually, the attainment of general and complete disarmament assures comprehensive global security.

The invention of nuclear weapons has rendered obsolete all the old doctrines of war. That they have been invented is no reason for us to have to live with them. We must replace them with something better. As these weapons belong to the present world order, we propose a new order which renders nuclear weapons obsolete. We need to understand, as Nehru urged, that "violence today is not the violence of yesterday, but a violence which could exterminate all of us.

It is to this unprecedented new challenge that we need a new answer, an answer which gets away from the tired and irrelevant postulates of deterrence.

The process of disarmament must be facilitated by progress on a number of collateral measures. Primary among these is an immediate ban on all further nuclear tests, pending the conclusion as soon as possible, of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. There must also be swift movement towards the prevention of the development of weapons to be placed in outer space. Nothing is more potentially dangerous for the cause of disarmament than the extension of the arms race into new dimensions. It is also necessary that the international community interdict military applications of further advances in science and technology, that resources for science and the talents of scientists be harnessed to a joint endeavor for the fulfilment of human needs, not the extermination of humankind. This will require suitable international mechanisms.

Nuclear disarmament cannot be pursued in isolation from other aspects of disarmament. Beyond a point, nuclear disarmament will come to a grinding halt unless there is commensurate progress in conventional disarmament. The Action Plan aims at reducing conventional arms and forces to the minimum levels required for defensive purposes only, even as we progress towards the elimination of all nuclear weapons. It is as instructive as it is remarkable that, nearly three decades before we formulated our Action Plan, Nehru had foreseen it all:

"Disarmament," he said, "must include the prohibition of the manufacture, storage and use of weapons of mass destruction, as well as the progressive limitation of conventional weapons."

Integral to sustaining a world free of nuclear weapons would be, as proposed in our Action Plan, the establishment of a system of comprehensive global security under the aegis of the United Nations. This will call for changes in institutions, doctrines and modes of thought.

So far as institutions are concerned, Nehru had hoped that improvements in the world order would progressively emerge "as a growth of the idea underlying the UN." But the tragic irony of our time has been that, instead of moving towards world order, we have been stumbling from one disorder to another. Within months of the establishment of the United Nations, the commencement of the Cold War effectively prevented it from

assuming the role assigned to it in its Charter. As Nehru described it:

"The accumulation of destructive power and the military alliances which subserve them... cut right across the conception, the purpose, the procedures and the machinery provided and contemplated in the Charter of the United Nations."

Later, the United Nations came under severe attack for no fault other than its occasional attempts to assert its role. Fortunately, in recent time, the United Nations has been allowed to demonstrate remarkable vigour and vitality. It has responded promptly and effectively to the many calls made upon it of a complex and delicate nature. In the process, it has shown that it is capable of discharging the responsibilities entrusted to it by the Charter, provided the countries concerned and, in particular, the Permanent Members of the Security Council, want it to do so and allow it to do so.

The United Nations and its principal organs must be strengthened to enable them to play their role effectively in the three major areas which our proposed new world order must comprise: global peace, global economic co-operation and global environment conservation.

Global peace could be overthrown if any State is allowed to get away with aggression. There would, therefore, be need to sustain the world beyond nuclear weapons by institutions under the aegis of the United Nations which would be used by the international community as a whole to check any State which broke the rules to act as the rogue elephant.

The new world order would need an international capacity for monitoring, verification and enforcement which would ensure that no State deviates from the commonly agreed principles of the international community. In this nuclear age, with scientific development proceeding as fast as it is doing, the need for monitoring and verification becomes even more important and, of course, even more complex. To be really effective, the multilateral monitoring and verification system will require at its ready disposal a formidable array of the very best scientific and technological skills in the world.

It will also require, of course, the unflinching political will of the international community as a whole. Such a united political will can only emerge from a truly democratic world order. A common political will assumes democratic equality. Democratic equality is incompatible with colonialism or racism. So, the remaining vestiges of colonialism must go. And the unutterable evil of apartheid must be ended.

Democratic equality is also incompatible with a world order which purchases the prosperity of the North at the expense of the South. It is both true as a moral imperative and as an economic reality that there is no underlying conflict between the interests of

the North and the interests of the South. If there were such a conflict, then there might be some logic at least from the point of view of the developed countries in continuing the painful inequalities of the present. But as, in fact, there is a symbiotic relationship between continued prosperity and stability in the North and growth and development in the South, it makes sound economic sense to establish co-operative and mutually beneficial economic relations between the developed and the developing nations. It would also make for sound economic sense to divert the sums of money being spent on defence to development: development in the South as well as development in the North. Carl Sagan, in a paper prepared for this Conference, has estimated that since the onset of the Cold War, the US alone has expended something of the order of ten trillion dollars on defence, in current dollars. What an enormous difference would be made to global development and global well-being if development for all, not defence against each other, were to become the norm, as envisaged in the new world order we seek.

It is now common ground in the international community that development which leads to the depredation of the environment is not sustainable development. Therefore, the new world order must incorporate agreed principles for national action and international co-operation in preserving the inter-dependent global environment. Indeed, military or economic definitions of security might not do. More threatening to the survival of humankind might be the dramatic consequences of drastic climatic change or the melting of the polar ice-caps or the relentless advance of the desert. Short of these worst-case disaster scenarios, international cooperation is essential to contain the consequences of environmental degradation which spill across national frontiers or have to be debited to future generations. Equally, the costs of conservation must get built into the costs of development- or else the costs of degradation will eat away the benefits of development. This too calls for scientific and technological co-operation, underwritten by financial cooperation, to help the whole world move away from the greedy growth path to sustainable development for all.

More important even than institution-building is the replacement of doctrines of the balance of power by non-violence and peaceful coexistence as the basis of the new world order. Comprehensive global security is not possible without unflinching adherence to non-violence and unwavering faith in peaceful coexistence. Mahatma Gandhi was once asked whether the atom bomb had not rendered non-violence antiquated. He returned an emphatic "No", adding:

"On the contrary, non-violence is the only thing that is left in the field. It is the only thing that the atom bomb cannot destroy." And in the immortal words of Jawaharlal Nehru:

"If we desire peace, we must develop the temper of peace."

Building on this perception, Jawaharlal Nehru emphasized that the doctrine of

deterrence could never be elevated to that of the custodian of peace since the only possible custodian of peace was, he said, peaceful coexistence. He summed up the need for peaceful co-existence in the argument:

"All the peoples of the world have a right to life and progress and the fulfilment of their destiny.

They have the right to peace and security.

They can preserve these rights now only by living peacefully together.

They differ in their creeds, beliefs and ideologies.

They cannot convert each other by force or threats of force, for any such attempt will lead to catastrophe for all.

The only way is to exist peacefully together in spite of differences, and to give up the policy of hatred and violence.

The moral and ethical approaches demand this. But practical common sense points this way even more."

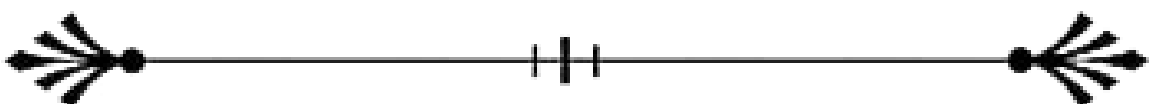
In discussing the establishment of a non-violent world order founded in peaceful coexistence we are on relatively unknown terrain. In mapping this terrain, our source of inspiration comes mainly from the teachings and practices of the leaders of our freedom movement. That is why I have quoted so extensively from Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru.

We seek no claim to original thinking in regard to our Action Plan. It is the result of a long history of accumulated thought and wisdom which began, perhaps, two-and-a-half millennia ago with Gautama, the Buddha. It was reinforced by the experience over the centuries of the futility of violence. It was conditioned by the practical experience of overthrowing military might by moral force. We regard it as the only practical way of ensuring the survival of humankind and of our planet Earth after the dawning of this dreadful era of total destruction.

Much requires to be done on translating these perceptions into practice in the difficult circumstances which pervade the conduct of international relations in today's world. We know the way is hard and long. There will be many setbacks along the way, many reverses, many steps backward leading to many more steps forward.

But persist we must, for, as Jawaharlal Nehru said: "The paths to peace are difficult, but pursue them we must. "

⁶ Inaugural address at the Non-Governmental Organizations Conference on "Towards a Nuclear Weaponfree and Non-violent World", New Delhi, 14 November 1988.



Former Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi ji addressing to the Nation (1985)



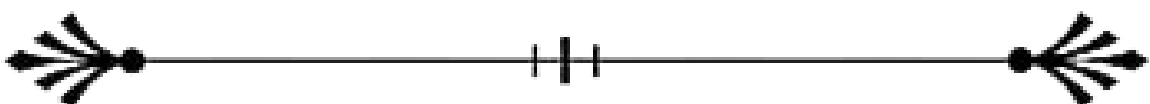
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Former Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi meeting with famous writers in New Delhi (1987)



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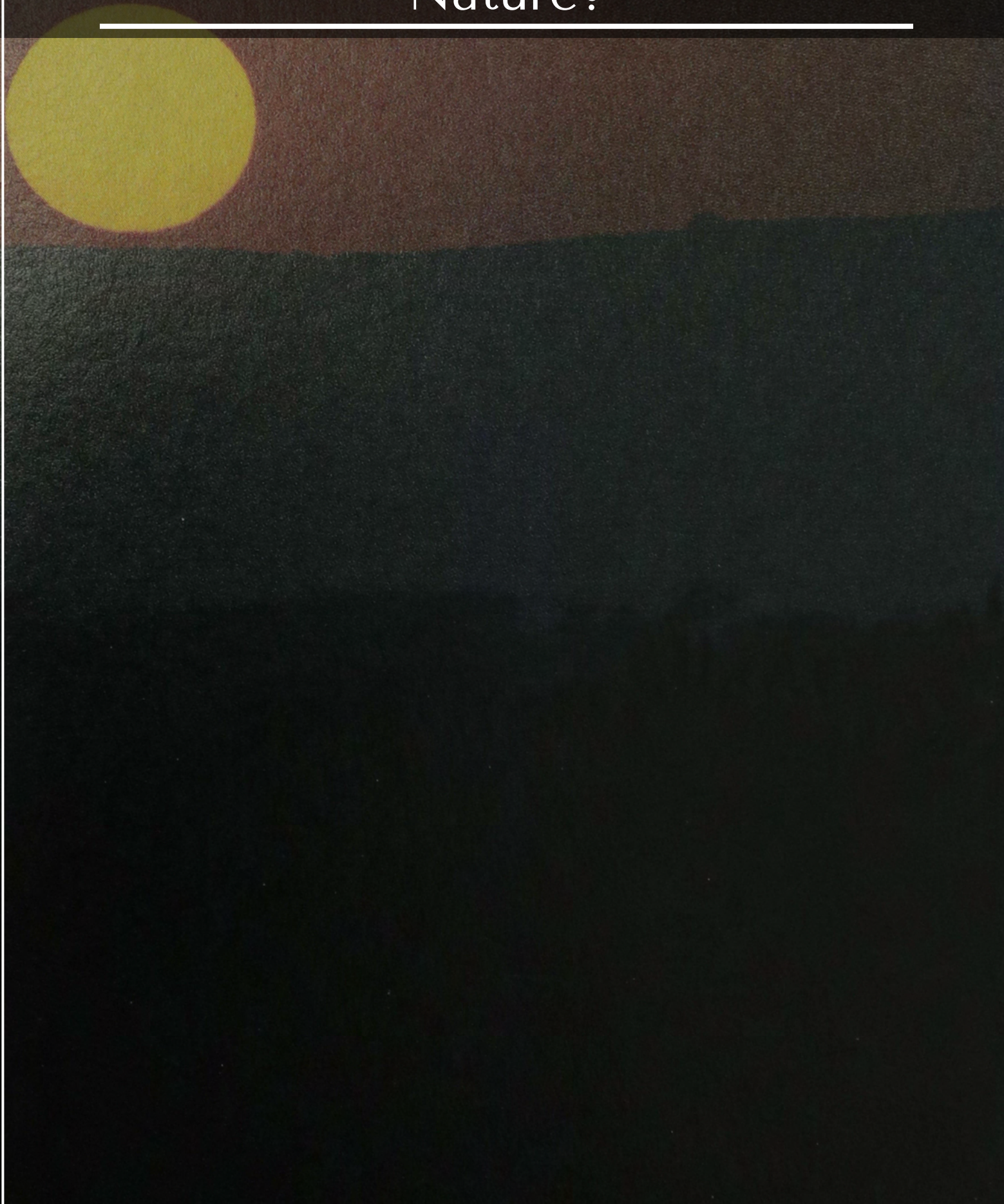
Former Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi attended the conference on Nuclear Weapons and Non Violence (1988)



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Part III — How do we deal with Nature?



Corbett National Park, 1978

Conservation for Survival⁷

NATURE WITH ITS bounty sustains us and constitutes the basis for our progress. If treated with respect and consideration, nature can contribute to our progress while sustaining us with the loving care of a mother. Yet, in our shortsightedness, we have so irresponsibly exploited nature that we have imperilled our very survival. Increasing denudation of the forest cover, pollution and degradation of the eco-systems are the harbingers of a disaster that is already upon us. This is a situation that must be checked. It is a duty we owe ourselves and the generations that will follow us. We must ensure sustainable development.

While the outlook is grim, there are at the same time signs of hope. There is increasing awareness of the environmental imperative on the part of governments. But more importantly, people the world over are rallying in increasing numbers and with ever intensifying commitment to the cause of conservation. There is growing realisation that we must conserve or else we shall perish.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature has been playing an important role in providing a forum for the like-minded to come together in the cause of conserving nature and her resources. The years ahead will be crucial in determining the success of our struggle for this cause.

I send my best wishes to the IUCN on its 40th Anniversary and also wish it every success in its future endeavours.

⁷ Message to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature on its 40th anniversary, sent on 21 September 1988



World Environment Day⁸

WE HAVE ONLY one earth. It has generously supported life through millions of years of evolution. Its remarkable powers of regeneration have kept it rich and bountiful even in face of human greed.

But modern instruments for the earth's exploitation delivered by science into mankind's possession, and the crushing weight of a growing population, threaten now to strain the earth's environment beyond endurance. Pollution of air and water, large scale denudation of forests, the extinction of ecosystems, have become the standard bearers of apocalypse.

We must preserve and pass on to coming generation an environment purer even than that which we have inherited. It is encouraging that large number of people across the world particularly the young, have dedicated themselves to restoring the environment. This is an affirmation of faith in life.

My good wishes for the celebration of World Environment Day.

India's Environment⁹

THE WELL-BEING of a country depends on the way in which it uses its natural resources. True development always strikes a judicious balance between immediate and long-term requirements. There is growing recognition that the watchword should be not exploitation but conservation. Development can hardly be sustained when the national resources of soil, water and vegetation, the basic economic capital of a country, are depleted.

Natural resources are being eroded at an alarming rate in India and other developing countries. Administrators and the people need to have deeper understanding of the causes of this process, and of the way to remedy it.

I hope this book, which consists of thoughtful contribution from people actively engaged in environmental conservation, will help the much-needed cause of enlarging conservation-consciousness.

Van Mahotsava¹⁰

NATURE HAS BEEN bountiful to mankind, providing the substance which has been the basis of all cultural and material progress. But we have been profligate in our exploitation of nature's resources. The denudation of our forests is an example.

Trees have sustained a wide variety of life forms and provide food, fuel and industrial inputs. They conserve and enrich the soil helping to maintain geological, geographical and climatic conditions. Without them the beauty of our earth would be seriously impaired. The regenerative capacity of forests could have made them a virtually limitless resource, but human vanity and greed, armed with the cunning of modern invention, have led instead to destruction. All over the world forests have shrunk, causing widespread concern. Our country now has only 2% of the world's forests with 14% of its population.

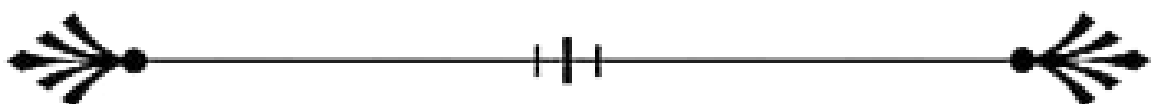
The Van Mahotsava is a reminder of our responsibilities to nature and to ourselves as its beneficiaries. Already the increasing intensity of drought and floods and the march of the desert give us an idea of the havoc that has been caused. We have to reverse this tendency. The programme of development of our wastelands through a massive programme of planting trees is being promoted as a people's movement.

On the 36th Van Mahotsava, let us renew our kinship with nature, by planting and rearing as many trees as possible.

⁸ Message on World Environment Day, sent on 25 May 1985

⁹ Foreword to India's Environment edited by N.D. Jayal for the Fredrich Nauman Foundation of FRG, 1 June 1985

¹⁰ Message to thirty-sixth Van Mahotsava, 24 June 1985



Spiritual and Material Development - The Right Balance¹¹

IT HAS GIVEN me great pleasure to be with you this morning and spend a little time with Guruji in your temple.

I feel that one of the most important challenges that we face in India today, perhaps not just in India but all over the world, is how we give priorities to various things. Today it is simple and easy to give all our attention to economic development, in other words, to material uplift, but, I feel, there is tremendous danger in this. Because the real strength of any civilisation, of any people, comes from the spiritual strength and inner strength that they have and any devaluation of this for material gain or benefits, weakens the whole system.

India has a tremendously rich heritage of spirituality and not getting drawn into a materialistic attitude. This perhaps can be our biggest contribution to today's world and the future generation. Our civilisation and heritage do not draw from any one religion or from any one saint or prophet. The strength of our culture and our heritage is that it has always synthesised, assimilated, absorbed what has been best anywhere in the world. It has also not hesitated to remove what is wrong in our own system. We have selfconfidence for introspection and for correction.

We have not separated ourselves on the basis of religion, we have tried to take the best from all. You have the living example here in your own temples where anybody from any religion can come and pray in whatever manner he may like. But our biggest challenge today in the country is to preserve this inherent spirituality that every Indian, especially every Indian woman, has and at the same time bring about material development for the removal of poverty. The biggest challenge in any such balanced development is to keep the right balance between material development and spiritual development. I am quite clear that if we do not keep the right balance between spiritual development and material development, not only our country but everybody can be in great danger.

The most difficult part is to see what is handed down to our coming generations. We have found that adequate attention has not been paid to our educational system, the process of bringing up the young. That is why we put in such an effort in bringing about the new education policy.

A right value system must be built into our education system. We must be very clear that religion and politics must be separated and there must be a very clear definition

of the difference between spirituality of the religion and its rituals and dogmas. We must be clear that secularism as we understand it is not anti-religion or non-religion, it is only the separation of government from religion. Religion has a great role to play in the development process of our nation and we should do nothing to undermine that.

One of the biggest challenges that we are facing in India today is to see how Indian women can be made self-reliant and brought into the mainstream of the nation-building process; how they can be made economically stronger; how they can be helped in developing. The attitudes of suppressing or keeping women down are very deeply ingrained in our society and go back to many thousands of years. You have taken a very bold step to break out of them. We will try to take such bold steps in many other activities to see that these old attitudes are broken. In fact, such attitudes are so deeply ingrained in our society that, sometimes, I find that even women are fully active in this discrimination process against women. So the challenge that is before us is truly very big. We have to start right from the home because that is where the first impressions mould and build the character of the child.

We still find that when there is not enough food in our homes, the mother gives the daughter less to eat and the son gets a full meal. When children have to go to school, the mother needs help in the home, so the daughter is kept at home and the opportunity that the young girl would have had in future is lost because she has been denied education. The first thing that we must do if we are to break these attitudes in our society is to give good attention to the girls and women of India and this has to start right from the home with the mother sending girls to school, continuing their studies and not letting them drop out. In the educational institutions we have to see that right type of education is given, that spirituality and the inner strength are not lost in the materialistic education that we sometimes give.

There are these and many more challenges and we have put these together for the first time in the National Perspective Plan for women to help them in all these areas. I have promised Guruji that we will send him the documents and we will look forward to valuable inputs from you in perfecting that document and making it better and stronger. The perspective plan deals with a good many aspects that relate to the everyday life of women in India, including economic, educational—in fact covering all areas. They are far too detailed for me to go into it now but as I shall be sending the plan to you, I hope that you will look into it in depth and give us your valuable contribution.

let me congratulate you on your new building and the work that you are doing to help educate women, help them stand on their own feet and help them participate in the great process of building our nation.

Lastly, I would once again like to say that the education process all over the country must be such that it looks at more than just what is needed for economic or material development. Growth cannot be translated or measured in numbers and statistics. The growth and development of a nation must relate to the development of the personality of each of its people, to the better fulfilment of the lives of its people, and that cannot come about only by material development. In fact, as we have seen in many countries bare material development would have a negative effect and gives less fulfilment. What gives us strength, and what will give us more fulfilment in life is a better spiritual mooring, preserving the traditions and our cultural heritage. The challenge is to keep both the spiritual and the material in the right balance while we move ahead.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to be with you. Vanakkam.

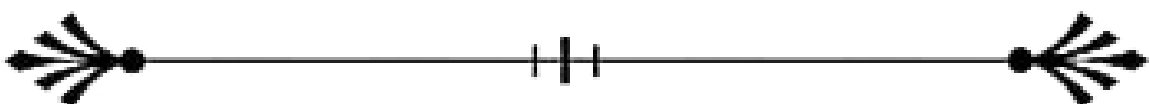
¹¹ Speech while inaugurating a science and technology institute after visiting the Adiparasakti Temple, Melmaruvathur, Tamil Nadu, 12 November 1988



Inauguration of a National Convention on Cooperation Union of India by Shri Rajiv Gandhi (21-22 April, 1987)



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<https://youtu.be/v2aHkLf8kwc>



Inauguration of an exhibition on Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru by former Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi



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