

Chapter – IV

Jayaprakash Narain –

Concept of Development for All.

Jayaprakash Narain a leader who carried out the methods of Gandhi by keeping himself away from power politics, and gave himself for strengthening peoples power. He symbolized 'lokshakti', peoples power and his life was dedicated in expanding the power of the people in his quest for a better society. He represents one of the tallest leaders in Indian history. Though his life was an awful experience of contradictions and conflicts, yet we cannot overlook those historical facts which has made him one of the most important figures in Indian history. In JP's life his ideological journey assumes paramount importance. In search for truth and in his attempt to establish an egalitarian society, he changed his ideologies several times, trying to fit each of them into the then existing society.

The welfare of the masses constituted the fulcrum of all his philosophy. In his concept of democracy, he gave utmost concentration to the concept of 'demos'. But his political ideas were not sudden outbursts of his times. It took the whole of his life to frame his ideologies, with changes here and there from time to time. His multi-dimensional look out was meant only for the masses, the downtrodden. To trace his political ideas we should draw attention towards the political scenario of his times together with the prominent personalities of his generation. He was very much affected with the rising terrorist activities in Bihar which

had successfully left an impact on his young mind. He lived and grew up from boyhood to adulthood at a time when the spirit of nationalism was growing in the hearts of millions. Again this period witnessed the emergence of militant nationalists who were not satisfied with the programmes and policies of the congress, especially the division of Bengal in 1905. He was very much moved by the extremists and he was deeply fascinated by persons like Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo Ghosh and Lala Lajpat Rai. He was influenced by Tilak's slogan of 'swaraj' and he also was inspired by the Geeta. Though not a pious man, he was inclined towards it, because the Geeta proved to be a saga of a great war. It was with these influences that the spark of patriotism was lit in him.

At a very early age he came into contact with national activities through his constant visits in Saraswati Bhawan, which was then a center of national leaders. Gandhi's simplicity and his favour for non-violence attracted him. He was drawn towards Gandhi and his technique of Satyagraha. He was so much moved by Gandhi and his ideas that he formed an association among his friends to discuss national issues, social reforms, politics of the day etc..... and his friends used to call him "Our Rajendra Prasad". He took out time to attend all the public meetings and he for the first time saw Gandhi in 1920 in a vast public meeting. He actively took part in Gandhi's call for non-cooperation. He also gave up his habits, shifting them totally with the cry of the Swadeshi movement. He took to wearing khadi and also learnt the use of the 'Charkha'.¹ He therefore gave up his heart and mind in the working of the freedom movement.

Jayaprakash Narain had a longing to pursue higher studies in science and he wanted to go to the states for this desire. With the consent of his wife and family he left for USA. He worked day and night, took up all kinds of work for his studies. He studied in different universities due to his unstable financial condition and here to there he gathered many friends. In USA he met the East European intellectuals and this brought him into close proximity with Marxism. With this friend circle he drank deep into the philosophy of Marxism. At the same time he was influenced by the writings of M.N. Roy which drew him more deeper into his study of Marxism. Jayaprakash Narain was very impressed by the Marxian Philosophy of revolution and in Marxism he found a surer and a quicker way to social problems, rather than Gandhi's civil disobedience and non-cooperation techniques. He was keen in learning and knowing about the activities of the American Communist Party. Side by side, he again thought that it was necessary to have a knowledge about social science in order to deal with the problems of India, namely the socio-economic developments. He then joined the Ohio University thus completing a thesis on "Social Variations".

On his return to India, he played a significant role in her struggle for freedom. In spite of his Marxist ideologies, his inclination towards Gandhi remained and with his attraction towards Nehru, he joined the Congress as a secretary of the Labour department. As a revolutionist he did not like the functioning of the Congress, and landed up organizing the Congress Socialist Party. But in spite of his programmes and actions he was liked by many leaders of the congress along with Gandhi. With all these

ideas and activities he always was in a search for 'all round development' of the society. This quest drew him closer to the idea of partyless democracy and sarvodaya. The theory of sarvodaya sprang up from Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave came up with his idea of Bhoodan. Vinoba Bhave was another great man under whose spell he was fascinated. He realized that Bhave was an original thinker and he had a power to inspire others. Vinoba gave him the lesson that only the spinning wheel would help all Indians to get employed. Jayaprakash Narain had discussed many a times about village industry with Bhave. He was enlightened with the ideas of a self-dependent village. Bhave stressed on the importance of lokshakti for the real welfare and progress of the society. Bhave also stressed on the point that people should take care of themselves in their own work. Jayaprakash Narain was of the view that people's polity should be so framed so that it is all encompassing and a society in which development for all prevails. Thus Bhave reinforced the idea of lokniti and lokshakti into his political ideas.

Jayaprakash Narain was a man who conflicted with his own thought process, and it was natural for him to have differences with his contemporary leaders. For example, he was not in good view with so many nehruvian policies and programmes, but at the same time he did not deny his leadership qualities. It is interesting to note here that the two loved each other tremendously. The statements made by each other had the power to disturb and hurt one another, but the spark of love was always there for one another. In respect to ideologies, he never was comfortable with Sardar Patel. He took Sardar to be the biggest blockade in

Congress's step towards socialism. But it was only after the death of Patel, that Jayaprakash Narain was moved and influenced by his thinking. He was in good harmony with Dr Rammanohar Lohia and he admired his vision towards social and political developments. Jayaprakash Narain was addressed to as an elder brother by Lohia. They set up a plan to cooperate the two principles of Sarvodaya and Socialist Party to achieve equity and their goals for a socio-economic revolution.

With so much of involvement and interest in creating a new society and his never quenching quest for truth, forced him to live till his end for the downtrodden. He was intelligent enough to organize several parties and merge them into Janata Party which was the first ever non-congress party. He made sure that he stood outside the realm of power politics, but nevertheless credit goes to him from all the angles.

II

Philosophy of “development for all”

Jayaprakash Narain with his long political experience came to the conclusion that an egalitarian society could be achieved only if there was a radical change in the society. This social and economic change could be brought about with the follow-up of the Gandhian methods. At this time Acharya Vinoba Bhave had started his campaign of Bhoodan and Sarvodaya in the country. In Bhave's Bhoodan Movement he could foresee a practical solution to the land problem. Narain viewed that the philosophy of Sarvodaya was a moral programme for collective welfare. He was

of the opinion that Sarvodaya was a political revolution, by peaceful means through a free expression of ideas. The Gandhian idea of Sarvodaya denotes collective welfare in which there was respect for all individuals and all types of jobs were respectable in their spheres. True life was attached with the motto of 'simple living, high thinking'. A Sarvodaya society would be free from centralised authority, usually a loose federation of self governing villages. There was no place for parties and forces to govern these villages and instead of 'Raj neeti', the principle that ruled would be 'Lok neeti'. JP's great love for freedom was the reason for his embracing Sarvodaya.² He felt this method more effective and original as compared to the old socialist ways of thinking. He felt that democracy needed the rule of the masses. In order to achieve liberty, equality and justice the masses themselves should participate in the affairs of the state. He was of the opinion that democracy could not be achieved unless it works in the lives of the people. He was of the strong opinion that the power of the masses is to be materialized in order to enable the people to be self-reliant. For him, that government was the best, which governed the least.

Sarvodaya, for him was people's socialism, which sought to achieve the goals of a socialist state through the participation of the masses, themselves. Sarvodaya's main aim was to establish a non-violent, non-destructive society. This society would be based on cooperative economy, thus erasing out the concept of competitive economy. Sarvodaya for him was a universal theory in which Gandhi stood in the middle with his model for social reconstruction. In this social reconstruction the society would be free from centralized authority, with due emphasis on self

governing villages. The representatives would have no power to play the game of politics, but would have the dedication to serve that society. Absence of party system would be experienced with authority which would flow from the people themselves. Regarding the agricultural aspect, the land should be redistributed and the ownership should be vested to the tiller of the land. In this aspect JP was highly moved by Vinoba Bhave's Bhoodan movement. The Bhoodan movement proved to be successful which signified the distribution of land to the landless. In this movement JP found a fair and effective way of revolution, which was far better than the communist revolution where land was snatched away by forceful means. Here the Bhoodan movement was a totally agrarian revolution. In Bhave's Bhoodan movement, along with Gandhi's idea of Gramdan movement he found the true techniques of a practicable solution to India's economic problems. In his view, increase in production in the agricultural sector could be brought about by cooperative and collective farming. For him nationalization of industry was the not criteria for development, but decentralization of economic power was the necessity.³

Extending his philosophy of Sarvodaya to the democratic system, followed in our country, he stressed should involve the masses, and should do away with party politics. Democracy cannot survive amidst differences on the basis of economic status, social status and caste system. He stressed on the decentralization of authority. He put forward his concept of participating democracy in his pamphlet 'Swaraj for the people'. Here he emphasized that if people were to participate in the government procedures, the government should be brought very close to the people. This

closeness can be brought about only with the political and economic decentralisation. The basis for his idea of participating democracy was the successful working of village panchayats, and therefore he explained that Panchayati Raj should be recognized by one and all. Infact Gandhi's ideas on decentralization were formulated by JP in his theory of participating democracy on sarvodaya democracy. he stressed on the creation of a welfare society, based on self-help and hard work.⁴

Sarvodaya as preached by JP inclines towards the establishment of a non-violent technique to provide development in all the spheres of life. A society where there is the development for all.

JP's experience in life may be described as a search for a political system, which would exactly fit into the then existing system of Indian politics. His life, he spent in finding a political system for a better society – a society which would embrace the all round development of the Indian masses. All his writings and thoughts show us clearly his concern for the freedom of the masses. It was his quest for freedom and the downtrodden masses that he could not stick to any one ideology, and he shifted his ideologies from one to another trying to figure out which was the best for a total reconstruction of the Indian society. His ideologies, though they lacked consistency were based on the power of the people, for which he earned the title 'prophet of people's power'. He was never ashamed of these 'shifts', though they brought him a lot of criticism. He was strong enough to battle these criticisms and pave his way in search for a better society, for which he spent all his life.

He gave all his heart and mind to the Indian society and because of this perhaps it would not be wrong to admit that besides Gandhi and Nehru, there has perhaps been no one in contemporary Indian politics who occupies an important position as JP. In his long political career he has been a Marxist socialist, a die-hard revolutionist, a democratic socialist, a Gandhian, a Sarvodaya leader and finally an exponent of total Revolution. His constant quest for a better society brought him closer to the people, thus earning for himself the title of 'lok nayak'. He was a personality who had the germs of leadership in him; a personality who had the unquenching thirst to view human problems from a bigger perspective. His life was a continuous process of development with various ideologies replacing one another. His political course appears to be full of controversies, but yet if one sits down to study the various ideologies that he gave, and attempts to understand his quest for truth and in his urge towards developing a better society, one may find in his experience, a uniform line of development.

He spent his life in search of a new political order, not for any personal reason, but for the sake of human progress and individual freedom. He studied his society and the problems therein and spent his days finding solutions to these problems. He did not move back in admitting his ideologies and their irrelevance as pointed out in view of the changes that occurred in the social, political and economic context. He had the power to judge and study every political system on the basis of the progress of the people, especially in the Indian conditions. He did never feel sorry for changing his ideologies from one to another, because he

admitted that every shift or turn in his ideologies provided him with a better and more detailed picture of his thoughts and ideas.

Scholars have divided JP's ideologies into 'shifts' or 'phases' – Marxian socialist phase (1945-'46), Democratic socialist phase (1946-'54) and Gandhian phase. He adopted the Sarvodaya philosophy and embraced the concept of 'Total Revolution'.⁵ Infact it is an impossible task to divide his ideologies into phases and put them into categories. His life was a continuous process of development, with overlapping tendencies. It is difficult to put his shifts into strict boundaries, as one phase of his ideology is a continuous process of development into another phase.

As mentioned earlier it is difficult to categories JP into one single 'phase' or ideology. He was very much moved by the principles of Marxism, but he was not a blind follower of the Marxist ideologies. In his own subtle ways he tried to redefine and revitalize Marxism. He also could not remain a Marxian for his entire life, thus shifting his mind and ideology to a Democratic socialist. During his stay in the USA he came under the influence of Marxism. Here he met a group of students and in their company he read books on Marxism and studied the philosophy it presented. He was in close association with a friend Abraham Landy, a Polish Jew who was well versed and refined in Marxist literature. It was with his help that he studied the deeper part of Marxism. It was with his close friends in USA that he drank deep at the fountain of Marxism. Besides the European friends he was driven into this philosophy by the writings of M.N. Roy. He was so much influence by Roy that he almost gave himself to Marxism. He

slowly held the ideology of Marxism and related it with the socio-economic situation of India. He analysed the point that would India's socio-economic problems be resolved by adopting the Marxian ideology? Marxism then appeared to be a surer and a quicker way of achieving the goals of the Indian society. Under the spell of Marxism he had turned out to be a die-hard revolutionist. He took the Gandhian techniques into consideration, but found that they could not fit into the Indian context at that particular time. At this juncture he found that Marxism was the only way to reach our goals in a faster and quicker way. His faith in Marxism was strengthened more by Lenin's success in Russia which gave his mind a turn towards Marxian Revolution. Instead of Gandhi's civil disobedience and non-cooperation movements, he found that the technique of Revolution given by the Marxist philosophy was far more positive. In Marxism he found that there was a place for equality and brotherhood which were the twin motives for JP's egalitarian society, from Marxism he received his actual truth regarding freedom. The concept of freedom for him was freedom from exploitation, from hunger and poverty. For him it was only Marxism that embraced them all.

The factor that attracted him towards Marx was that Marx had a great passion for social and economic justice, which was also JP's passion in life. He was moved by Marx's philosophy of freeing the labour class from the capitalist class. Marx freed the workers and gave them hope for a free living from the oppression of the capitalist class. Due to all these positive marks in Marxism, JP was not hesitant in confining himself as a Marxist. He confessed that he had no place for kings or princes in his thought

process. He was so much moved by Marx's interpretation of politics that he was firm to believe that development had its roots in the economic condition. He explains that in a capitalist society, political institutions cannot work effectively for the welfare of the masses. They fail to provide either liberty or economic security to the masses as exploitation by the property owners is the main force behind the system. Therefore the real danger was not any kind of state authority but the propertied class. With such an urge for freedom he undertook the Marxian Ideology for attaining the goals of the Indian society. He mentioned in his 'The Foundation of Socialism' that there exists only one type of socialism and that is Marxism. He summed up the philosophy of Marx as a system of social reconstruction to combat the inequalities – social, political and economic. He felt the real need for a revolution and did not move back in accepting that Gandhi's sober techniques would not be very much effective. He believed that the idea of good and bad varies from one individual to another depending on the economic background from which they come. The Marxist view is that men's ideas and values are determined by their class-ideologies, class interests and their privileges. He had a strong conviction in the theory of Dialectical Materialism and agreed with the Marxian principles regarding the material forces in the society. He also believed in the Marxian interpretation of history. He held the view that all the political institutions were a result of the economic conditions. Social division according to him was an organic process, whereby men earned their livelihood. Marxism for him was a scientific theory, which was engaged in the discovery of truth. But apart from his deep love for Marxism, he had a belief

that truth cannot be found only in one single theory, however scientific it may be.⁶ He had written in his book "From Socialism to sarvodaya", that man is an ever progressing being. In his search for truth, he will never be able to confine himself to the ultimate truth, unless he eliminates the untruth and unfolds the truth. It was in this thought process that JP realized Marxism and its interpretation of history could not hold the truth at all times and under all circumstances.

JP analysed the difference between Marxism and Gandhism and pointed out that the content of the two philosophies did not lie in material or the spiritual factor, but the philosophies made difference with regard to the enquiry into the causes of economic inequalities and human exploitation. According to him Marxism sought to find out the above causes, but Gandhism had failed to take note of the above. He came to the conclusion that it was difficult to establish socialism in India which was ignorant of the industrial developments. Socialism could not be achieved with mere persuasion and non violent means as preached by Gandhi. Regarding the failure of the first phase of non-violent action during the Quit India Movement, he planned out to hit the enemy by trained fighters under the title 'Azad Dasta' and therefore he was the first one to introduce guerilla tactics through this trained fighters.⁷

These trained fighters should be technically trained to understand the policy of warfare. He also mentioned about an organization, an underground organization for secret activities and said that in order to fight our way, we should somehow organize manpower and materials. He was influenced by the Russian

Guerillas and wanted to prepare his Azad Dasta in a similar way. He however mentioned here, that their activities were not confined to looting and killing. He suggested possession of arms, not for harming others, but for self-defence. He also suggested that these weapons should include country weapons like spears, lathis, spades, axe, hack-saws, ropes, copper wires and the like. JP experienced practical methods of guerilla war-fare and stood like a commander for the Azad Dasta. His methods have proved to be successful in various parts of the country. His nationalist and revolutionary spirit was active and strong enough to stir many young men of his time. The Quit India Movement, 1942 witnessed JP to be the legendary hero of the movement as a guerilla leader.⁸

JP had a great liking and respect for Karl Marx and regarded him as one of the greatest man, ever produced by human race. He considered Marx as a path finder in socialism. For him Marxian philosophy was a science of the society; it was a scientific approach to social change which included within it the concept of a social revolution. He emphasized that socialist movement in India should be arranged in the Marxist line of thought, taking into account the conditions of the Indian society.⁹

With his return from USA, JP was so much observed with the Marxian philosophy that Marxism ran like blood in his veins. When the whole of India participated in the Salt Satyagraha of Gandhi, the communists moved back from this participation. They denounced this movement as "bourgeoisie and Mahatma Gandhi as a lackey of the Indian bourgeoisie".¹⁰ A Freedom fighter like Narain could not stand this reaction of the communists and this marked his first step towards alienation from the communists. The

communists in India were following the policy laid down by the Third Communist International, under Stalin. He felt that the communist party of India was not a tool for the Indians but paid its loyalties to the Russian government just and then to others. These observations made him indifferent towards the communists. He refused to accept the dictatorial regime of Russia and somehow tried to ideologically alienate himself from her policies. The developments made so far by the Indian communists and the rise of leaders like Hitler and Stalin made JP to rethink about the Marxian philosophy. He further argued that in Russia there was the concentration of both economic and political power, and because of her economic set-up the Soviet State emerged as a dictator. In Russia, he observed the denial of formal freedom, social justice and equality. He then accepted boldly that the philosophy of Marxism was being misused throughout the world. He also analysed the fact that the Russian Revolution was a revolution of the masses, but ended up as a revolution of the few – the minority. All these events forced JP to re-examine the basic doctrines of Marxism.¹¹

Hence, his conclusion was “Asia must find its own road to socialism and its own pattern of industrialization. It would be an illusion to think that the pace of industrialization would not matter if the process were carried out under democratic aegis; beyond a certain limit the pace itself would give rise necessarily to conditions of dictatorship”.¹² As JP began to observe the defects of over centralization, as in Soviet Russia, he turned his attention towards the idea of decentralization. Marxism, therefore could not be implemented for a good cause and it was immoral in its actions.

Thus he finally took refuge under Gandhi and shifted his Marxian ideology towards a more sober form of socialism – a kind of socialism which would transform the whole society, keeping intact human values of freedom, justice – social, economic and political.

III

JP was in search of a political faith for the sake of freedom and human progress. He was always ready to revise and revitalize his ideas to suit the situation of the society. He considered socialism as a theory for socio-economic reconstruction of the society. His fight for an egalitarian society would not reach its goals unless and until change would occur through democratic means. He sought to establish a society with economic and political democracy. Therefore he came to the conclusion that democratic socialism is preferable to revolutionary socialism. After the illusion that Marxist ideologies would help him set up an egalitarian society, he mentioned that free India meant for him, a socialist India in which the poor and the downtrodden would be free from the chains of exploitation, economic and political. With this objective he set himself to a new target in forming the congress socialist party. This party he mentioned would give a new shape and content to the policies of the congress in view of socio-economic reformation.

This party was formed in 1934 with persons who were professional politicians, like Dr. Rammanohar Lohia, Ashok Mehta, Acharya Narendra Deva, Ganga Sharan Sinha etc.... They

took up the principles and ideologies which were influenced by Gandhi's concept of decentralization and non-violence. For him the objectives of socialism were not only nationalism of industry and redistribution of land, but it meant the exploitation of poverty should be totally eliminated with the twin objectives of equal opportunities and full development of the material and moral resources of the society, along with the best use of these resources for the needs of the society. While forming the congress socialist party, he played a very decisive role, keeping the love for Marxism alive in his heart. He logically rejected the dictatorship of the proletariat, thus rejecting the dictatorship of the bureaucratic oligarchy. He was in favour of the populist revolution, which was based on the consent of the people. He, along with this fought for a social revolution where freedom could be achieved in its full democratic form. The congress socialist party set itself, under the thoughts of JP, certain objectives with a view in putting the national struggle on revolutionary lines and helping the congress leaders along with the masses to embrace the socialist values. JP held the view that socialist values should be embraced by India, not only to fight out foreign rule, but to free the peasants and labourers from exploitation. He made the congressmen realize that the whole plan had to be broadened from the base itself, which should include the participation of the working class and the peasants. They should be convinced that their struggle for a better standard for living and working conditions had close connection with their freedom struggle. He struggled hard in his own ways to make the congressmen to realize that unless they sought to improve the social and economic conditions of the people, no

objective can be attained. The party's trade union movement along with the youth movement got its seeds largely from the policies of the Marxist ideology, which was framed and sorted out by JP. Though JP had misunderstandings with Marxism, he just could not erase out the influence of this ideology in the formation of other ideologies and plans. His efforts were directed in reconciling the aims and techniques of Marxism with the struggle for freedom.

He set himself to achieve such vast objectives, with the follow-up of Marxism, particularly the dictatorship of the proletariat, which he says had been totally misunderstood. He explains that according to the Marxists, Marx and Lenin, the dictatorship of the proletariat was not a socialist society, but it was a phase between socialism and capitalism. This concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat according to JP was necessary for certain circumstances, but this concept was different from the dictatorship of the party as in Soviet Russia. The Marxist ideology of the dictatorship of the proletariat meant the dictatorship of the working class, with a suppression of the ruling classes and their institutions. JP had completely understood that socialism without democratic freedom would be without any meaning and base. His picture of socialist India would be a picture of economic and political democracy where man would neither be a slave to capitalism nor to a party. Man would be free with a more or less equal distribution of wealth. He laid emphasis on the fact that the method for social transformation would depend on the conditions of the country. He did not move back in proclaiming that democratic socialism was the only true socialism. Turning away from his theory of violence and its practice through the Azad

Dastas, he engulfed the idea that democratic and peaceful methods would be more suitable to the Indian society.

But with these peaceful methods and plans, the role of a powerful socialist party should be the main focusing point. This party should be organized with the help of workers and peasants, along with the students and youth, and also supported by the downtrodden. It struck him here, that the Marxian interpretation of history was not suitable at all times and in all places, especially in industrially poor countries. He then advised that Asia should help itself by finding its own way to socialism, and help themselves to build up their own pattern of industries.

In his article "Transition to Socialism", he argued that Marx was not against democratic methods, nor were democratic means opposed to Marxism, rather the fact lay in the point that democracy and socialism were two sides of the same coin, which were inseparable from one another. From the very beginning he was influenced by Gandhi and his techniques of social reconstruction. Even during his Marxian days, he could not overlook this strong influence of Gandhi. He began to realize in course of time that mere control of the state over the means of production and distribution could not serve the real purpose of socialism. For him socialism was the instrument to pave the way for true freedom. Complete democratic government should be set up in the framework of abolition of social distinctions and equality among all the classes. Political and economic organizations of the state should be based on the principles of social justice and economic freedom. In addition to this mileage reconstruction should be encouraged by making them self governing units and

self sufficient. There should be the reformation of the laws of the land, where land should be given to the actual tiller of the land alone. One should possess only that certain amount of land which is needed to support his family. Further he emphasized on the establishment of cooperative forming maintained by gram panchayats. He advocated for the establishment of large scale as well as small scale industries, with agricultural improvements. He visualized a society where there would be freedom for the individuals and men would in turn serve the society providing his means of livelihood. Individuals would have the freedom to express his thoughts. It was his quest for a better society to shift from one thought to another. In his close association with Marxism and the workings of CPI, he was not satisfied with the outcome of the principles which did not fit into the society. It was the happenings in Soviet Russia where there was no freedom, no social justice, and no equality. This led him to re-examine Marxism. He also did not move away from the view that CPI was a tool of Moscow. Here he found the necessity of looking back at the Gandhian principles, and reopening the chapters of Bhoodan and Gramdan movements. To him freedom the mark of a socialist society and for freedom, he urged the necessity of the freedom of the press. The economic power should be scattered in trade unions, cooperatives and other such bodies. He also spoke for the abolition of special principles for the higher classes. He also urged for the freedom of religion and stated that religion should be kept away from the interference of the state. His thoughts and beliefs were backed up by studying the Indian people and the Indian society in depth. He stressed upon the initiative of the masses for achieving

social change. He suggested methods which would include, “.... vital large, mass movements, mass action of a non violent character, unconstitutional but at the same time peaceful”¹³.

IV

‘Participating Democracy’ or self-government to him was an order which was free of party politics and power. Participatory Democracy would be the order for self government to which the foundations were to be found in Panchayati Raj. The introduction of Panchayati Raj after Independence, created an atmosphere for participatory democracy, but JP thought that in order to make Panchayati Raj serve as the basis of a participatory democracy, certain conditions should be taken into consideration and should be accomplished. The first element he mentioned in this connection was education. He suggested that the people should be educated in order to understand the democratic values and ideals. He suggested that education should be imparted by those who are engaged in social activities and rural development. Political parties would also be a great help if they educated the people in a non-political manner. He mentioned the importance of schools, libraries, cooperative societies etc.

Another condition for the smooth functioning of Panchayati Raj was its aloofness from political sphere and groups. Parties should be allowed only to impart educational values. Panchayati Raj, according to JP meant the real dissolving of power. People should be handed the real power and should be allowed to understand their responsibilities. He mentioned about the three tier

administration of Panchayati Raj – the village Panchayat, Block Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad. These three tiers should as far as possible give responsibilities and opportunities for the people.

Along with this he mentioned that the local authorities should be given its own minimum resources. He said that land revenue, should be the first resource to be placed at the disposal of the village panchayat. At the sametime local authorities should be given real authority over civil servants. In the three-tier system, gram panchayat which fell at the foundation of the system would serve as the basis, and the strength of the whole structure would depend on the gram panchayat.

Therefore JP successfully implemented Gandhi's ideals of decentralization in his idea of participating democracy also known as 'partyless democracy' or 'Sarvodaya democracy'. In order to keep the masses active and participating he suggested the concept of village community with all the elderly people, as its members.

JP, and other socialist workers aimed at the decentralization of power in a real democracy. They propounded for a welfare society, rather than a welfare state. Personally, he was critical about the role of the state even during the days of love with Marxism forced him to feel strong for a stateless society and human freedom could be realized in this society. According to him a welfare state abolishes human goodness and love, shaking and caring. He therefore suggested a welfare society, based on the ideals of self help, self dependence and hard work. People in a welfare society would plan out for themselves and initiate the plans according to their own ways. A welfare society and not a

welfare state would be the best instrument to achieve a socialist society. He thought of a society which would be free, with basis of equality, which justice would prevail where mutual cooperation would work for progress and development of the people. On the basis of technology and advanced industrialization, a false conception has arisen between industrialization and agriculture. According to him both industry and agriculture was essential for development. And therefore he wanted to abolish the difference between rural and urban. He said that the evils of science should be replaced by the science of humanity, leading to peace and happiness.¹⁴ This ideal of a happy and peaceful life could be achieved only in small communities, and one had to sacrifice city-life to get a taste of humanitarian science. This communitarians society would succeed only if people show a sign of belonging to the community.

JP was totally dissatisfied with party politics along with the role of the state. He was a man of action, rather than a man of theory. His life was a quest for a better society and upliftment of the downtrodden. For this quest he moved from one philosophy to another, beginning from Marxism and Marxian Revolution to Democratic Socialism, with the Gandhian techniques of Sarvodaya, Satyagraha, following Bhave's Bhoodan and Gandhi's Gramdan. He was equally attracted to Vinoba Bhave's concept of Bhoodan and realized that Bhoodan meant the sharing together of land while Gandhi's Gramdan meant communization of land, this concept of Bhoodan was therefore an agrarian revolution, which had a different taste from other revolutions. A revolution which had a mutual surrender to the community only, through love and

sharing. Thus the outer social change was accompanied by inner human change.¹⁵ In Bhave and Gandhi, JP found the best practical expression towards a socialist state. The ugly face of power politics pushed JP into sarvodaya – the politics of the people. He expressed sarvodaya to be the socialism of the people which could be achieved through peaceful revolution. JP was in close association with the people and he worked hard for the upliftment of the masses, he advocated for people's active participation in democracy which he hoped would help regenerate a new social order.

Further, he believed in the 'government that governed the least'. He pointed out that mere economic development was not the only measure of socialism, because from experiences he found out that though large scale developments in the economic spheres took place both in capitalism and fascism could not yield to socialism. He said that socialism was a moral attitude of the mind, it was a kind ethical behavior in man which was, his inward by some external agency, for JP a socialist society would be one in which the people would voluntarily submit their interests for the interest of the society, when people would voluntarily submit their interests to the society that would be the reawakening of morality in man. The more voluntarily people sacrificed their self-interest, the less would be the state power.

He also advocated for a group of selfless workers who would help in reorganizing the masses. This idea was also taken in refuge of Gandhi's 'Lok Sevak Sangh'. He had faith in this idea that the view of party-politics would be erased and that society would be given a different face altogether. With his emphasis on self

government he came up with the phrase 'Participatory Democracy' – or 'Lokniti', that is the politics of the people.¹⁶

V

With his long experience in the effort of establishing socialism in India, he became aware of the fact that socialism in Europe was different from that in India. Europe was a well established industrial society, whereas India was weak in modernization. She was an agrarian community with very little knowledge in industries and other techniques of European style. The Indian leaders themselves were responsible for planning out their thoughts and ways towards socialism. JP therefore set out his mind to think and rethink about a new philosophy, which he found in the doctrine of Sarvodaya. In 1954 he took up the decision to sacrifice power politics and give his days for the success and achievement of Bhoodan and Sarvodaya Movements. After his magnetic attraction towards Acharya Bhave, he realized that socialism could not give us the basic needs of freedom, equality and peace. These necessities could be achieved by transforming socialism to Sarvodaya. Thus from his faith in Democratic socialism he moved to a new philosophy, thus embracing Sarvodaya. Through this doctrine he wanted to establish peace and prosperity for the individuals in the society. He realized that other philosophies only generated a tendency towards material prosperity. He laid stress that only material prosperity could not bring any benefit to India. In his 'The Ideological problems of Socialism' he said that socialism was more of a practical

philosophy than a theoretical one. He gave us several practical problems of a socialist society, especially the Soviet Russia. He explained that after the socialism in Russia, there was more of capitalism in that society, which led to a lot of corruption and upheaval in the party politics. Again he mentioned that there was a problem in creating a proper political framework for the development of a socialist society. Taking the situation in Russia, he pointed out that there was one party dictatorship with a corrupt and demoralized political framework. Automatically there was the absence of all democratic values and participation of the masses, were closed down to the active participation of party dictatorship. He also shifted his attention towards the economic structure necessary for a socialist state. The system that existed in Soviet Russia, was nothing more than centralization and bureaucratic rule, which undemocratic and exploitative nature of the bureaucrats towards the peasants. As a solution to this centralizing nature, he suggested that ownership of land should be scattered at different levels, moving down towards the village and municipal organization. He spoke for villagilisation of land, instead of nationalization. JP was in favour of democratic methods and democratic opportunities. He put forward Vinoba Bhave's method of love and sober means, which was the need of a socialist state. All these problems which were carefully studied by JP and his solutions for the same, reflect his attachment with Gandhi and his sharp mentality to fight the ills of the day.

JP mostly took into his thought some basic values of Gandhi. First were his moral and ethical values, which were mainly focused on social and economic equally, thus concentrating on a

casteless and classless society. This value of Gandhi focused mainly on the total wiping away of exploitation of one class by another. It kept into consideration of opportunities for self development. Another aspect was Gandhi's sober technique of social revolution, through civil disobedience and satyagraha. He was also greatly influenced by Gandhi's urge for economic and political decentralization which are the kingpins of a socialist order. Therefore he tried to accumulate all the Gandhian ideals for securing a socialist society. He realized that in order to establish a true socialist state, Marxism was not the ultimate weapon. He found a better path in the philosophy of Sarvodaya – thus embracing it to the quest for 'his better society'.

Sarvodaya, according to JP was 'People's Socialism'. It was for him the best programme for a social revolution. Sarvodaya aimed at a new social order with objectives like non-violence, equality among all the classes and individuals. It aimed at a cooperative society, based on cooperative economy, instead of competitive economy. In the agricultural side, the land should be redistributed and ownership should be vested to the tiller of the society. Regarding the industrial sector, there should be both centralized and decentralized industries. Centralized industries should be owned by the society. But inspite of this he gave concern to village self government, or gram-raj.

This was followed by his principle of participating democracy. sarvodaya aimed at a society consisting of human values, rights and equality, but with the absence of political parties. According to him political parties give rise to leadership, leading to the destruction of political ethnics, backed by personal

greed, backed by finance, and corrupt ideals. He placed value on party system only in the field of education for the masses. He said that in order to strengthen Indian democracy, all should join hands to help one another in the art of self-governance. In view of partyless democracy, JP suggested some ideas also regarding election and election system. For this he suggested an Electoral council at the village level constituting two members from the village assembly. However he insisted on the methods of electing a candidate. He took out the idea of electing only one candidate and he thought the best way would be to persuade the members to choose one candidate for a particular constituency, thus avoiding the unnecessary wastage of money and energy. He thought that this method would be simple and less expensive. Again this method would provide every adult citizen to participate in the democratic process. He visualized a society with the establishment of people's democracy comprising elements of equality, rights and justice. JP a staunch follower of the Gandhian techniques wanted to create a society in which there were the development prospects for a moral and healthy upliftment of the people. He wanted to form a society which favoured people's power. He brought forward his view that only material aspects were not sufficient to establish an egalitarian society. He forced on the transformation of the inner self or inner being of the people. He realized the fact that centralization and democracy could not go hand in hand progress would be futile unless and until people learned to guide the affairs of the state themselves. This progress would be brought by the idea of total Revolution. From his techniques of Sarvodaya he tried to move his philosophy towards total Revolution. His call for total

Revolution was an extension of the Gandhian ideals for an ideal society.

He said that the philosophy of total Revolution need not be carried out of the way of governmental interference. It could be carried out with the assistance of the government. It was for this reason that he formed the Janta Party in 1977 and hoped that this party would help him to carry on this programme of total Revolution. Total Revolution is not a philosophy to be confined only to the political sphere – it would have to be scattered to other spheres other than political. His idea of total Revolution gives us a humanist version of a democratic society. Total Revolution may be defined as a means to reach the end of Sarvodaya. His philosophy was directed in bringing about a drastic change in the society. He wanted to bring about revolutions in all the spheres of life – social, educational, cultural Intellectual, Economic, Political. He wrote in his 'Prison Diary' that "Total Revolution is a combination of seven revolutions – social, economic, political, cultural, ideological or intellectual, educational and spiritual". (Prison Diary, p.87). In this context he mentioned that the number may either be increased by breaking up one revolution into different groups or decreased by combining two or more revolutions. In fact, the matter of increasing or decreasing the number of revolution depends on the way a person labours to analyse and interpret them.

His call for total Revolution was to be carried in cooperation with the government with peaceful methods.

SOCIAL REVOLUTION : Social Revolution meant the reconstruction and the restructuring of the entire society. T aimed

at a complete change in the existing social set up. This social change was targeted towards the process of Gramdan and Bhoodan movements. Through these movements he tried to initiate community ownership of land, regular sharing of labour and income. He wanted the regrouping of mileages, which looked unto the merging together of small villages and redistribution of large villages, as according to the needs of the people. As a supporter of Gandhi's Sarvodaya, he wanted to set up a change on the Sarvodaya lines. These Sarvodaya lines meant a society established on the basis of truth, non-violence, tolerance and equality. This new order would survive for the development of all, and no distinctions would prevail. He advocated the need for physical labour and also stressed on the point that all the members in the society should work for a living. The ideal would be that everyone would engage themselves in the agricultural activities. He was a man who stood for rural civilization. According to him urbanization was unhealthy and it lacked community feeling. But agriculture he realized could not stand alone. It has to be backed by handicrafts and industries. Thus, he advocated for agro-industrial community life.¹⁷

This new social order would be free from social and economic inequalities and injustices. This was his conclusion that there can be no peace, security and cooperation, unless economic equality is found.

Through this social revolution he wanted to create a new idea between the new and the old social values. For example, he wanted to fight over the caste system in the present form, but somehow wanted to preserve its healthy practices. He thus

favoured this old system, but without implying any feeling of high or low. He was of the view that the caste dimension in the Hindu society should first be eradicated. The hierarchical structure of high, low, outcastes, untouchables should be pulled out of its roots in order to have a just social order. For this he suggested inter-caste marriages. He wanted to eradicate this problem not by any violent or revolutionary means, but by peaceful methods.

Further, in his new society he wanted to eradicate the distinctions between man and woman. Every kind of social evil should be done away with. Women should be free enough to compete with men and live an independent life. He wanted to establish a classless society through social revolution, the revolution being a peaceful one.

ECONOMIC REVOLUTION: In the economic thought of ancient India, man and not wealth was the centre of all economic activities. According to Gandhi, truth and non violence were regarded as the key-stones to judge all the human activities. JP was highly fascinated by these ideas and also became critical of western economy and large scale industries. All these, he considered as features of highly destructive nature, both for the state and the individual. He even pointed out that money played a crucial role in terms of western economy and that human values did not get any place in the system. He worked hard for Gandhi's model of decentralization and agrarian small-scale industry. He thus advocated for decentralized economy based on village community. Both industry and agriculture were important to him for the development of the economy. Science and technology

should be so used to develop the economic structure of the society. This science and technology should serve as instruments for social and economic welfare, rather than tools in the hands of the rich to exploit the downtrodden. He thought about an economic order based on rural community having self-sufficient villages. There should be the existence of cooperative labour and human feeling should be given priority; There should be decentralized industries and economic development should be focused on man.

In both capitalist and state controlled economy, the worker has no right to choose, except to sell his labour. There is no place for him to show his skills. According to JP, this shuts the way to the development of intelligence and artistic values. The position of the worker is like a cop in a machine and has no say in the production process. Large scale industrialism leads to the concentration of power in a centralized form. Centralized production may be positive in a country, where manpower is limited, but in a country with abundance of manpower, it leads to unemployment and poverty. In view of all these facts JP was allergic to large-scale industrialism. He concentrated on a society with economic decentralization. Here he suggested that all enterprises should be in the hands of the individuals. The unit for which they produce should be a village unit or small group of villages. He was not against the use of science and technology. He was of the view that the decentralized units would be benefited if modern science and technology helped it to progress. He said "commercialization of science has to be replaced by humanization of science, instead of science being exploited for power and profit, it has to be used for peace and happiness." (JP, A Plea for

Reconstruction of Indian Polity, p.53). Economic decentralization would lead to a self sufficient order in his new society. Thus, his idea of economic revolution is building up a new social order, with importance on rural development, with decentralized industries. In place of competition and complexities, life would be based on cooperation and simplicity.

POLITICAL REVOLUTION : JP was not satisfied with the existing democratic system in India. His political revolution found an important part of his total revolution, which aimed at the reconstruction of the political structure. This reconstruction and restructuring the existing political system found expression in his theory of participating democracy, with its basis on Panchayati Raj System. He strongly opposed the role of parties in the political system. He therefore favours the establishment of partyless democracy.

He contradicted the Marxian version of a stateless society and he thought that a stateless society was beyond the reach of man. Hence, he was not in the favour of abolishing the state altogether. In a sense his advocacy focuses on a philosophy of society without the active interference of the state. Regarding his partyless Democracy, it may be taken into notice that Gandhi had nowhere mentioned about his liking for a partyless democracy, though he disliked the party system. But JP had his own experience and hence he pleaded for a partyless democracy. He also supported Gandhi's ideal of communitarian society. The new construction of his political ideas were more or less a state free and self regulated state system. He favoured a peaceful revolution

to bring about these changes. For this change he made it clear that the people were to be made fully conscious of their political rights and duties. It was the strength of the people that would help him succeed with his reconstruction of the Indian society. He was of the idea that without changing the present political system, it would be difficult to follow any constructive plans for a change. Unless the old system would be totally wiped off, the values of liberty, equality, brotherhood, peace and justice could not be achieved.

CULTURAL REVOLUTION: His Cultural Revolution aims at bringing about a drastic change in human values and he stressed that external change would be of no use unless internal change of the heart takes place. It was a moral revolution aimed at changing the habits and values of humans. He wanted people to come to self-realisation. It taught people to realize the basis of actions like tolerance, fellow-felling, love, sacrifice, truth etc.... He was very much concerned with the quality of an Individual as well as the society. He advocated for the achievement of Swadharma. He preferred the path of action to that of knowledge and devotion. This was because he believed that knowledge was within the reach of a very few and unless and until self-realisation is not focused upon, it is important to perform the right action. Without knowledge and devotion there can be no upliftment of the heart. There can be no knowledge in importing one's duty in the right way. Thus he says that knowledge as well as duty along with action forms the basis of human culture.

Swadharma, according to him consists of all the duties of an individual. Duties may vary from individual to another, depending upon the age of an individual. There is nothing high or low, big or small about one's duty. It is only while discharging his duties that man walks in the path to progress. According to JP Swadharma includes the activities of the citizens in performing their duties, i.e. participation in the productive activities of the society. Swadharma also includes the duty of parents, neighbours and the society. Alongwith the principle of Swadharma, JP laid down another maxim 'Sacrifice yourself for the others. Along with these he asked the individuals to follow strict disciplines of morality. These rules and regulations were termed as 'vows' which served as guidelines for the right path in the absence of guide, a teacher. Of these the most important ones are truth, non-violence, continence, non-seating and non possession.¹⁸

VI

EDUCATIONAL REVOLUTION: According to JP the most essential need of the day was education. Education was one of the foundations in turning oneself towards a new society. Here, he mentioned about the recommendations of the various commissions and advised for their implementation. He even stressed that Educational activities are in no way helping the nation as a whole. Planning of educational schemes failed to be implemented properly which was failed to cover the overall national policies and programmes. Education serves as the foundation of every society, and the best educated system

recognizes and serves the needs of the society. The educational planners in India failed to recognize the basic needs of our society, especially of the rural population.

Gandhi had the ideas of a new society along with the formulation of a new scheme of education. Education served as the cornerstone of his socio-political thought. Closely following Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave, JP also had the vision of a new social order, and while working for it, he spoke of a revolution in the educational field also. He accepted Gandhi's ideas of 'new education' or 'Nai Talim' and tried to move ahead with this idea. The two fundamental principles in Gandhi 'Nai Talim' was that all education be women round a craft, and the produce of the crafts be made to serve economically the cost of education. JP held that craft centered education would involve the harmonious development of head, heart and hands. Gandhi set a provision for education at every style of life, including the university level. However primary importance was attached to the education of children between 7-14 years. The subjects according to JP should be such so as to prepare the rural youth for all round development, and to make them fit for the new society which he was lying to formulate.

According to JP education should not be confined only to the school. Education should also take up adult or social education. Two fundamental principles about new education should be co-relation and self-support. This co-relation should be co-ordinated in such a way as to co-ordinate knowledge with like experiences. This principle of co-relation, when applied to the field of curriculum must provide knowledge of all basics of life.

He even advocated for self support. It stood for education, i.e. self sufficiency for education and for education through self-sufficiency.¹⁸ It means that education should train students to be capable of learning and earning their livelihood and acquiring self-sufficiency and control over their lives. Education should have a rural basis on the context of Indian conditions. This was done basically to knit together the rural and urban people in cooperation with one another.

INTELLECTUAL REVOLUTION: He was aware that an ideology was necessary for reconstructing a new socio-economical as well as political society. He wanted a radical change in the moral and intellectual perspective of people. And for this he advocated for Ideological revolution. He built up his ideological revolution, which was based on Sarvodaya principle of non-violence. Ideology is needed when something new emerges. And this should have within itself some kind of appeal to the reasoning capacity, so as to convince the masses. On the other hand, there should also be the appeal to the heart of the individual. The majority, according to him may have within themselves emotions that are weak and are unable to move their thoughts with new values. The emotions of such men should be shaken.

Conversion of people can proceed slowly, so that they can adjust themselves to new human values and ways of life. This process should take place with patience and should not be hastened to create confusions. At the same time, the programme of self government and self help is to be advocated as to make the people, embrace the new society, with new habits and values. The attempts

of this revolution should be double sided. Attempts should be made at the same time to transform the individual and to change the social system. His ideological revolution focused the values for bringing about a revolutionary change in the existing social order.

SPIRIRUAL REVOLUTION: Man is an animal, according to the materialists. But since man can sense intellect or spiritual hunger it appears wrong to call him an animal. If man was really an animal, he would be quite content with everything around him. But something in humans prompt them to seek beyond and to rise above. This something relates to the inner sense of man, his spiritual being. There is nothing bad in achieving material prosperity. Infact for man's existence, material prosperity is needed. It becomes evil when man uses his entire life in accumulating material pleasure, thus forgetting the values and needs of his society.

A good society can never be built on greed, and self-centered people, for which JP formulated his idea of spiritual revolution. To him humans are socio-organic, partly belonging to nature and partly to the society. For this reason man is both matter and spirit.

Thus, he visualized his concept of the seven revolutions in the nut-shell of his Total Revolution, for a change in the socio-economic and political sphere. But however he denied the attachment and role of any political party in his revolution. His revolution was people's movement, channelising them from one sphere to another. He gave his call for Total Revolution which is "all comprehensive – political, economic, social, cultural, religious

revolution in customs, manners, revolution in the individual's life as well as in the life of the group and in the life of the society".^{19.}

Notes and References

1. Dr. A. Seth – op. cit., p. 72.
2. J. P. Narain – **Socialism, Sarvodaya and Democracy**, op. cit., p 161.
3. **Ibid**, p. 161.
4. **Ibid**, p. 163.
5. R. C. Gupta, **J. P. – From Marxism to Total Revolution**, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, 1981, chap. 1.
6. J. P. Narain – **Why Socialism? All India Congress Socialist Party, Benaras**, 1936, p. 118.
7. J. P. Narain – **“To All Fighters for Freedom, 1st Letter**, December, 1942, Sind Congress Socialist Group, Karachi, pp. 7 – 10.
8. Ram Chandra Gupta – **J. P. From Marxism to Total Revolution**, Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1981, p. 73.
9. J. P. Narain, **Socialism, Sarvodaya and Democracy**, op. cit., p. 41.
10. **Ibid**, p. 143.
11. **Ibid**, pp 113 – 114.
12. **Ibid**, p. 163.
13. **Ibid**, p. 167.
14. **Ibid**, p. 170.

15. J. P. Narain, **Socialism, Sarvodaya and Democracy**, op. cit. pp. 162, 224 – 225.
16. Brahmanand, **J. P. Narain, Towards Total Revolution**, Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1978, Vol. 4, p. 115.
17. **J. P. Towards Total Revolution, 4th Vol.**, op. cit., p. 31.
18. **Ibid**, p. 62.
19. **Interview with Brahmananda**, op. cit., p. 203.