

REVIEWS

Sub : Management Systems in India and Marxism : Reply to Rejoinder.

Prof. Chakraborty's Rejoinder ('Decision' Volume 8, No. 1 January 1981) has combed through my paper in the same issue and rightly focused on certain ambiguities.

1. My point was to distinguish between "Management Philosophy" which is essentially an intra-organisational matter, capable of precision, and political or economic philosophy, which is discursive. The latter while being vital and important tends to blur one's concentration on issues of Management. It tends to shift the responsibility to the "environment" rather than facing up to the task. My observation was on such (political or economic) discussions and not on (Management or Operational Philosophy) as surmised by the professor.

2. I do not agree with the professor's equating the Indian caste system, which was a method of coercion used by the upper class with political parties which are means of making explicit class or group conflicts. I certainly do not commend the latter, though I do feel that an understanding of this could be improved by psychological researches of the much-maligned Western social thinkers. This *democratic disorder* has greater hopes of evolving into something better.

3. I admit that my cryptic reference to comparative functions across economic systems has failed to convey what I had in mind namely that the utility function (as a conceptual function) has to be maximised. This

needs to be clearly spelled out, so that when we compare any two cultures we know *what* we are trying to compare as well as *why* we are trying to compare and how different cultures go about trying to achieve this *what*.

4. The fourth point made by the professor is that the crystalization of Management Philosophy comes first before techniques are chosen. I agree. I thought my reference to the relevance of the Management Philosophy to techniques said the same thing but without committing on which comes first as I did not want to enter into an 'egg and hen controversy'.

5. My observation on didactic literature would not have been vague if the professor had checked the Chambers Dictionary. 'Didactic' is described as 'fitted or intended to teach'. It has been used by me to distinguish it from literature which lets the reader learn through experience of observation and come to his own independent conclusion rather than get moral aphorisms spoon-fed to him with an air of condescending finality.

6. When I commend the scientific method I mean the cyclic process of understanding truth by a cyclic process of observation, preparation of a hypothesis, conducting an experiment, checking it, in varying conditions and refashioning the hypothesis or the theory by defining the boundary conditions. It also means that the opinions of those with the "halo" are not accepted on the face value. Lastly, truth should be verifiable by any person who goes through the

same process of experimentation. I do not mean to run down Swami Vivekananda. I was only trying to say that his going back to the ancient Indian tradition could at least partly have been conditioned by the emergence of the need for the identity for the Indian bourgeoisie in their opposition to foreign domination. This is certainly not a particularly bad thing in itself provided we constantly review our thoughts and actions and distinguish between eternal truths and transient reactions. I am sure the Swamiji himself would not have shrunk away from such an analysis of his teachings or their application to specific situations.

7. I have not said that Western Fascism owes its inspiration to Manusmriti or Arthashastra. I have only said that a reiteration of the Philosophy of Manusmriti and Arthashastra, today, can be only an evidence for a desire to enforce the Fascist methods in India. Fascist philosophy does not become less fascist by a facade which commands the ruler to follow the law with punitive penalties if he does not. The Prof. has reacted sharply to my criticism of the mystic language. I was critical of the side-stepping of logic as an avowed philosophy. Availability of good translations in English or vernacular will surely not solve the intrinsic problem of mysticism to confound straightforward thinking.

8. In the eighth point of criticism, the Prof. has again pleaded for "evolving", on the basis guidelines of the ancient Indian organisations by "intuitive insight". He has given himself away by ignoring the fact that intuitive insight is usually in response to or in solution of the specific problems of the times and or of the classes to which the thinker belongs. Such insights, cannot in my view, be treated, as words of eternal

wisdom. The modern scientific approach is superior to the intuitive insight in as much as the latter could be a dangerous camouflage for class oppression.

9. I do not hold any theory including Theory "Y" as the sacred cow though I am frank enough to admit a bias in its favour. But I disagree that a classificatory psychology of "sattva" "rajas" and "tamas" has any practical utility. It is a typical product of a caste-ridden society with a bigoted philosophy which pigeon-holes human beings into types. This typing is the greatest impediment to two-way communication. That is precisely intended by the "seers". Secondly, it does not allow for change. Thirdly, it does not study the problem of interaction. Lastly, it fails to note that human beings are an amalgam of all the three qualities, if at all a classification is required to be done.

10. I must also clarify the semantic problem in the use of the word "professional". I use it in the sense of "a hired mercenary" who carries out the policies and philosophy of the owner effectively for monetary rewards, and does not question the premises. If he does it is again only for his own personal rewards. My theory is that this hired mercenary philosophy is not alright for the public sector. Lastly, I would certainly disagree with the Prof's hypothesis that we are already having too much inter-cultural influences. I would go along with him only to the extent of saying that the process of absorption of inter-cultural influences has been unsatisfactory. A throw-back to Indianism all the way and uncritically is really opting for the abhorrent ways of caste oppression and mumbo-jumbo. No wonder, that such a movement is largely financed in India by the feudal rich

of the villages and the black-marketing traders of small towns. It is such a sinister nightmare that pushes many well-meaning of an opposite conviction to over-react.

R. C. Sekhar
National Manager,
Gramophone Co. of India Ltd.

A Note on 'Reply to Rejoinder'.

I feel very encouraged and happy to notice the seriousness with which Sri R. C. Sekhar has attempted to counteract some of my observations on his paper in his reply. I may again take this opportunity to set about some more authentic communication with Sri Sekhar (and may be others who are interested in this theme).

(1) If we read the history of India, especially since the onset of Muslim invasion, we will find that Hinduism survived as a society and religion precisely because of the caste system. So, a balanced benefit/cost analysis is called for. He may like to read Swami Vivekananda's—whom he has quoted approvingly—little volume on *Modern India*, or similar writings on the role of the caste system in India. The happenings in Gujarat and elsewhere are today a far more sinister manifestation of politicalised casteism of which there is perhaps no equivalent in past Indian history. Democratic disorder—Yes. But by whom? What is the quality of the 'unit' which engages in disorder? Constructive disorder has come only from a few individuals at different turning points of history who have undergone the most rigorous self-discipline, preparation and dedication. If mere disorder instigated by selfish political parties is better, then God bless us. Formal democracy is largely a myth. It is given only to a rare few to change and inspire whole generations and nations.

(2) It is good to have the sense of independent thinking in us. But intellect and thinking have definitely finite capabilities in human problem solving. There is in Indian psychology the concept of the superconscious which is beyond conscious intellect and reasoning. When our confused, confounded faculties of intellect, reasoning (this implies a spirit of humility to accept that such capabilities have serious limitations) are stilled, we become ready to receive the superior light of superconscious wisdom. That today we are not at all guided by this light is probably proved by the fact that we have increased our ability to multiply our problems far more than our capacity to solve them. And why dub those who offer us the ways and means and truths about such light as 'condescending'. They were men with no worldly or social ambitions. The whole of humanity was their goal, the whole universe their focus. Is it not scientific that the moment one becomes totally unselfish and altruistic, one's intuitive insights are bound to be superior than the products of intellectual gymnastics? Let us experiment and observe here too—the two planks of science. Direct apprehension of truth and reality (practical in every sense of the term) by such self-abnegating souls is bound to be 'final'. Let us only compare the sayings of the true mystics of the world. We will find they have all uttered the same psychological truths about human conduct over the countries. That is an index of finality—nay more final than scientific truths. Let us be humble, and not condescending in our own turn, to dismiss these altruists who have borne the cross for us.

(3) There is a need to understand comprehensively what 'ancient Indian tradition' is, and not to rely on mere scientific pretensions.