# A Case Study of Humanism, Secularism and Socialism Thoughts of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

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Abstract – A largely accepted enunciation to describe humanism as the supremacy of the spirit of man and the high ideals of justice and equity imbued with compassion, from all angles and in all walks of life. Today our society and the world have to remind themselves that the spirit of humanism which suffuses and radiates from Nehru's writings and speeches not only provides the healing touch but also paves the path constructively for peace, harmony and civilizational progress to which humanity aspires. Nehru was not a religious man in the ordinary sense, but was imbued with a profound love for and belief in the people of India, and indeed of the world. What he called secularism was in fact a combination of humanism and pluralism. "Human values through human self – reliance". Nehru's humanism brings out both these elements quite eloquently – his passionate empathy with the toiling masses of India, his advocacy of peace for the war and violence torn humanity in the world and his clear rejection of reliance on supra-human or supernatural powers or beliefs for pursuing any goals.

Keywords: Humanism, Secularism, Socialism Thoughts, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

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### INTRODUCTION

Nehru would like to see men and women of India going ahead in India's cause and not caring for pain or suffering. The struggle of India is a part of great human struggle to end the suffering and misery of the world. The magic of his message steals the hearts of millions of Indians and undoubtedly moulded the character of Indira and generations of Indians at large. Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore says about his book An Autobiography "Through all its details there runs a deep current of humanity which overpasses the tangles of facts and leads us to the person who is greater than his deeds and truer than his surroundings."(An Autobiography, cover page) Referring to Maeterlinck's "Life of the Bee" Nehru explains social organization of the insects, art of cooperation and sacrifice for the common good humanity. Further, he says "If mutual co-operation and sacrifice for the good of society are the tests of civilization, we may say that the White Ant and the Ant are in this respect superior to man." (Glimpses of world history, letter II) India has known the innocence and insouciance of childhood, the passion and abandon of youth, and the ripe wisdom of maturity that comes from long experience of pain and pleasure; and over and over again she has renewed her childhood and youth and age"(The discovery of India, p.343). He tries to prove that India- an ancient land that has been the base and headquarters of some of the world's greatest traditions of philosophy, science and art, and almost all its major religions. His brilliant intellect, deep humanity and lucid style make The discovery of India essential reading for anyone interested in India, both its past and present. Jawaharlal Nehru was impressed by socialism; it is an established fact. However, socialism was not only an idea for him, but essentially a matter of practice. Indian philosophical tradition and practice served as the undoubted basis of his socialism. It is well proved from his views expressed from time-to-time and also from the measures taken by him during his long tenure of seventeen years as the Prime Minister of the country. He was also influenced by the Western socialism; he loved Marxism, but his ideas related to mixed economy, democratic socialism and his active participation in the non-alignment movement present clear picture before us. Besides, Nehru's а agreement with Gandhian social and constructive programmes; his stress on bringing about change through non-violence based democratic process; and his efforts towards this end well affirms his commitment for the establishment of a socialist society of Indian tradition.

# GROWTH OF SOCIALIST AND COMMUNIST IDEAS:

The \_post-Non-Co-operation period witnessed another development of increasingly great significance in the history of Indian nationalist movement. It was the growth of socialist and communist groups and the rise of independent economic and political class organizations of the working class in the country.

The growth of socialist ideas, though on a very small scale, was a new phenomenan in India. Socialist ideas began to spread among the radical youths in subsequent years. 'Workers' and 'Peasants' Parties were formed in Bombay, Bengal and the Punjab. The parties popularized the programme of national independence: They supported the economic and political demands of the workers and peasants and organized them on class lines for their class demands.

The Genesis of A New Phase: The Working Class Movement: By 1928, the struggle against British imperialism .entered a new phase. The years 1928 witnessed remarkable developments. In diferent parts of India the working class was split and divided into advanced and backward groups. A relatively younger generation knew of the socialist ideals which were spreading from the USAR, and small groups of dedicated political workers began to diffuse their own interpretations of communism to industrial workers in some towns, primipally in Maharashtra and Eastern UP, and the peasants in the village, especially in the Punjab. They wanted a political programme to be accepted which was more radical than that of the congress, 44 On the other hand, sectional political groups were also beginning to establish contacts with the working class as well as the agrarian poor. These groups emphasized mainly communal interest and tried to influence the Muslim agrarian poor, as well as urban workers and lower castes among the Hindus. Meantime, labor involvement in the National struggle grew though the emphasis was on strengthening the trade union movement and improving the conditions of working class. The Trade Union Movement, led by the All-India Trade Union Congress, had become powerful. Industrial disturbances took place in various parts of the country. There were indications of peasants' unrest, especially in U.P. and Gujarat. The heroic struggle of the peasants of Bardoli, led by Vallabhbhai Patel against Government attempt to increase revenue earned the admiration of the whole country. The civil disobedience and no-tax campaign organized by Patel crippled the administration in the area.

#### NEHRU'S SOCIALIST IDEAS AND ORIENTATIONS

'In the realm of thought Jawaharlal Nehru has always been a lonely traveller seeking answers to a myriad of problems, answers that seem to elude his grasp. To his keen and receptive mind almost all the ideological currents of the past half-century apprealed at various stages in his growth to intellectual maturity ' observes Michael Brecher

Nehru was deeply influenced by socialism and communism. Nehru's world outlook took shape under the influence of many schools. His views on the laws governing the historical process and the role of the masses show the greatest influence of the ideas of scientific socialism. Nehru is an eclectic. Nehru wanted to know and assimilate as much as possible of the experience accumulated by mankind and to select the best of it. He inevitably tended towards eclecticism, which he wanted to avoid at all costs. He preferred 'a mental or spiritual attitude which synthesizes differences and contradictions, tries to understand and accommodate different religions, ideologies, political, social and economic systems.' 53 Nerhu imbibed the traditior:1s of ancient Indian culture and the rich experience of the national liberation movement. especially the philosophy and practice of Gandhism.

He assimilated all that West European bourgeois liberalism had to offer, and turned to socialist ideas, at first in their Fabian version. But having once turned to the ideals of equality and social justice, Nehru perceived many of the premises of scientific socialism. He eagerly studied the theory and practice of socientific socialism and found much there that was applicable in India. Nehru was one of the first national liberation leaders unafraid of speaking of the importance of Marxism-Leninism, seeing in it logic of historical devel opment, the call of the times.

Nehru was the leading exponent of socialism in India. Although there were other thinkers or activists more profound than Nehru, it was largely because of his influence that socialism found its roots in the congress. It was at his instance in 1927 that the congress committed itself to socialism. It was at his instance that congress adopted socialist economic programme at Karachi session. For Nehru socialism became the guiding and directing priniciple of the congress policy after independence.

Nehru did his best to spread the ideology of socialism in India. 'Nehru's socialism had three distinct features, individualism, Marxism and Gandhism. Its ultimate objective was to achieve individual liberty accompanied by equal opportunities and equality among people, through the scientific theory of Marxism applied with Gandhian techniques.' 56 Nehru writes. "What is Socialism? It is difficult to give a precise answer and there are innumerable difinitions of it. Some people probably think of socialism vaguely as something which does good and which aims at equality. That does not take us very far. Socialism is basically a different approach from that of capitalism. Socialism is after all not only a way of life but a certain scientific approach to social and economic problems. In 1936 Jawaharlal Nehru presided over the annual Congress session held at Lucknow. The session atmosphere was surcharged with socialist slogans, emphasising the rights of workers and peasants on the one hand and declaming against the forces of Imperialism and Fascism on the other.'

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In his Presidential address Jawaharlal said: "I am convinced that the only key to the solution of the world's problems and of India's problems lies in socialism, and when I use this word I do so not in a vague humanitarian way but in the scientific, economic sense. Socialism is, however, something more than an economic doc-. trine, it is a philosophy of life and as such it appeals to me. He further adds. I see no way of ending the poverty, the vast unemployment, the degradation and the subjection of the Indian people except through socialism. That involves vast and revolutionary changes in our political and social structure, and the ending of vested interests in land and industry. It means ultimately a change in our instincts and habits and desires. In short, it means a new civilization, radically different from the present capitalist order.

Nehru states further, "Socialism is for me not merely an economic doctrine. which I favour; it is a vital creed which I hold with all my head and heart. I work for Indian independence because the nationalist in m~ cannot tolerate alien domination; I work for it even more because for me it i\$ the inevitable step to social and economic change. I should like the congress to become a socialist organization and to join hands with the other forces in the world who are working for the new civilization."61 To quota Nehru, "How does socialism fit in with the present ideology of the congress? I do not think it does. I believe in the rapid industrialization of the country; and only thus, I think, will the standards of the people rise substantially and poverty be combated.

"The .Lucknow session was a landmark in the evolution of socialistic ideas and programme of the congress. But there was neither unanimous approval of Nehru's socialist ideas at the 1936 Lucknow Congress Session, nor substantial agreement about various other important political issues. Controversy raged ' to such an extent that there was even. talk of a 'within congress ranks, argues Dorothy "split" Norman. Nehru again states, "Socialism is an economic doctrine. It is a way of organizing the production and distribution and other activities of society. It is, according to its votaries, a solution of the ills from which society suffers today." Nehru observes, "The Marxian philosophy appeales to me in a broad sense and helps me to understand the processes of history.

I am far being an orthodox Marxist, nor does any other orthodoxy appeal to me. But I am convinced that the old Liberal approach in England or elsewhere is no longer valid. The only other way is the Socialist way." Nehru had a vision of life which was based on socialism, not as a doctrinnaire theory or as a textbook maxim but as a way of life. It is certain that Nehru provided the official ideology of socialism for the next thirty years. It could be said that 'it was Jawaharlal Nehru who set the tone in the 1930s.' Nehru's conception of socialism was inevitably tied to democracy. He believed that far from being antithetical both were complimentary to each other. To him, democracy and socialism are means to an end, not the end itself. He did not want socialism without freedom or freedom without socialism.

Nehru's ideas served as a bridge between democratic socialism and Gandhian idea of 'swaraj' and welfare.' It was largely under his influence that the doctrine of the welfare state came to be generally accepted creed within the congress. The ideal of swaraj was combined with that of socialism. Nehru firmly believed that •one could not exist without the other.66 Nehru was right in thinking that India's salvation lay in the adoption of socialist ideas.

# **NEHRU - THE SPIRIT OF HUMANISM:**

In principle Nehru was committed to socio-economic equality, the foremost and fundamental feature of socialism. But for this he favoured consent and not a revolution. His dream for the establishment of social democracy was to be realized through equal participation of people in governance. For this, he desired to remove all obstacles of the way to reach the goal. In this regard his following statement is worth quoting here:

"I am perfectly prepared to accept political democracy, only in the hope that this will lead to social democracy...Political democracy is only the way to the goal and is not the final objective." The objective is undoubtedly "social final democracy." (Speech at National Congress meeting) Further, Jawaharlal Nehru was also committed in both principle and practice, to bring about a fundamental change in the system under prevailing situation of the country and on the basis of available resources so that the mass poverty could be eliminated. Everybody could get an opportunity to rise even at an individual level. Works, particularly, related to land-reforms and schemes started in cooperative sector during his term as the Prime Minister of India, may be referred in this regard. These acts were in fact important to bring a good harmony between the fundamentals of the concept of socialism and prevailing circumstances of a country of diversities like India to fulfill the needs towards establishing a socialist society. In this regard we must notice the provisions, particularly, made in the form of allocation of funds for the co-operative sector and programmes related to the development of agriculture and small scale industries in rural areas in the Five Year Plans, we should also observe Nehru"s statement in which he had called upon the masses, especially poor, down-trodden and unprivileged of the country to step forward continuously, to strengthen the cause of socialism in India. He had said, "Leaders and individuals may

come and go; they may get tired and slacken off; they may compromise and betray; but the exploited and suffering masses must carry on the struggle, for their drill sergeant is hunger." (Speech at lucknow session 1942 July) Urging his party men, Nehru had said, "We have to plan at both ends. We have to stop the cumulative forces that make the rich richer and we have to start the cumulative forces which enable the poor to get over the barrier of poverty." (Speech at National Congress meeting)In India approximately forty percent of the total population is still under the poverty line. Participation of the masses in the governing of the system, control over resources and role in policy making is not satisfactory. In certain fields the situation is rather grim. Moreover, suicides of farmers are shameful and a matter of acute concern. This undoubtedly raises a question mark on our economic policies; in such a situation Jawaharlal Nehru"s warning refreshes our memory. He had said, "If the social and economic burdens of the masses continue and are actually added to, the fight must not only continue but grow more intense." (Speech in the(parliament ) Jawaharlal Nehru"s works has explored how he viewed India. Nehru is widely regarded as the architect of modern India. He set India on the path of democracy and nurtured its institution -Parliament, multi-party system, independent judiciary and free press. He also encouraged Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI). He was a great statesman and it was his foresight that he created institutions like Planning Commission, National Science Laboratories and laid the foundation of a vast public sector for developing infrastructure for industrial growth. Along with public sector, Nehru also wanted to encourage the private sector to establish a social order based on social justice that is why he emphasized on planned development. With Nehru"s vision India emerged as a leader nation with the policy of Non alignment and the principle of Panchsheel, the five principles of peaceful coexistence at a time when the rivalries of cold-war were playing with humanity. He was deeply involved in the political opposition and was imprisoned numerous times for civil disobedience. The nationalist movement achieved its goal when India gained its freedom at midnight on August 14, 1947. Upon Britain's withdrawal, Nehru became independent India's first prime minister (1947-1964) and a leader of the Nonaligned Movement during the Cold War. He had distinct vision that eradication of poverty and better living style is possible with the extensive application of science and technology and industrialization. Education to him was very important for internal freedom and development. He was a passionate advocate of education for India's children and vouth. believing it is essential for India's future progress. His government oversaw the establishment of many institutions of higher education, including the All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS), the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) and the National Institute of Technology (NIT). Nehru envisioned the developing of nuclear weapons and established the Atomic Energy

As the ideologue of the Indian Constitution and the Indian polity, Nehru's contribution cannot be denied. It is his doctrine of secularism and his approach to harmonizing the diversities of India. For Nehru secularism did not mean "a state where religion as such is discouraged. It meant freedom of religion and conscience, including freedom for those who may have no religion". For Nehru, the word secular was not opposed to religion. Jawaharlal Nehru played a key role in building modern India. He set up a Planning Commission, encouraged development of science and technology, and launched three successive five-year plans. As a result there was huge growth in agricultural and industrial production. He also had great contribution in developing independent India's foreign policy. He called for liquidation of colonialism in Asia and Africa. He played constructive, mediatory role in some disputes in international arena such in Korean crisis, Suez Canal conflict and so on. The term socialism gained unprecedented currency in the Nineteenth Century, amidst the escalating industrialization in Europe. It also affected the prevalent European tradition of thinking. However, the premise of socialism is not merely the outcome of the European tradition of thinking or a product of the process of European industrialization. Rather, the concept claims an antiquity in Indian social philosophy. Therein it was rooted in ideas like Sabe Bhoomi Gopal Ki [all land Gopal, i.e., God], Vasudhaiv belonas to Kutumbakam [the whole world is but one family] and Sarvodaya [progress of all].

#### SCIENTIFIC HUMANISM: JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

We attach so much importance to the notion of God that according to many thinkers like Voltaire, even if God did not exist it would be necessary to invent Him. According to them, God is a psychological necessity for "the mind of man has always been trying to fashion some such mental image or conception which grew with the mind's growth". In addition, it is our natural tendency to depend on someone else - who we consider to be superior to us in all aspects - in knowledge, competence, power and perfection, for instance. God is the paradigm of virtues and ideals cherished, on whom we can rely in times of crisis and whom we can blame for our failures. Countering the argument of those who upheld the necessity of God or a Godlike concept, Nehru argued, "Even if God exists, it may be desirable not to look up to Him or to rely upon Him." He argued, "Too much dependence on supernatural factors may lead, and has often led, to a loss of self-reliance in man." It would, according to him, ultimately result in "blunting of his (man's) capacity and creative ability". Nehru had a

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tremendous faith in the human. In order to show the supremacy of man over God he argued, "God we may deny, but what hope is there for us if we deny man and thus reduce everything to futility." Instead of having faith in God and religion Nehru advocated humanism which he termed as 'scientific humanism'. It represents 'synthesis between humanism and scientific spirit'. Scientific humanism advocated by Nehru "is practical and pragmatic, ethical and social, altruistic and humanitarian. It is governed by practical idealism for social betterment". The doctrine of scientific humanism rejects the philosophic, mystic or theoretical approach to humanism in which the quest is primarily for ultimate reality and for individual salvation. For scientific humanism on the contrary, "humanity is its God and social service its religion". It recognizes the fact that "every culture has certain values attached to it, limited and conditioned by that culture". It also recognizes that human nature is such that "every generation and every people suffer from the illusion that their way of looking at things is the only right way or is, at any rate, the nearest approach" to knowing and realizing the truth to which they accord permanent validity.

# POLITICAL IDEAS OF NEHRU

Jawahar Lal Nehru was a democrat and the high standards of majority rules system and Communism were exemplified in him. Nehru's law based idea comprised on amalgam of thoughts of Lock Rousseau, Montesquie, Bentham, J.S.Mill and Karl Marx, Nehru's accentuation on the all sided advancement of individual in the public arena transformed him into a sharp democrat. Nehru's confidence in the respect of the individual influenced him to create confidence in the general population of well. His profound feasted humanism intense independence and extraordinary confidence in the general population created in him an incredible hatred for tyranny and along these lines drove him closer to majority rule government. He decried extremism and socialism as totaliarism ideas. He obviously expressed prospered is equivalent society.

# NEHRU AND DEMOCRACY

Nehru was unmistakably a democrat, a solid hero of common freedoms. Majority rules system, as indicated by him, was a lifestyle, not just a political authoritative opinion, Without popular government, opportunity has no importance and opportunity, without common freedoms, has no significance at all.

He composed: "is a legislature is in accordance with the possibility of dominant part of individuals. It is law based government."2 He stressed that full acknowledgment of human identity was conceivable just in a popular government. He was a veritable champ of individual opportunity. In the solidarity of India, he stated, To pound a nation supposition He watched." We need to create a decent life, a great person." To this might be included the perspectives on Dr. Radakrishan who once watched: "Jawaharlal was an outstanding statesman whose administrations to the reason for human opportunity are exceptional. He put stock in the Freedom of all without refinement of class statement of faith or country."3

He commented that "there can be no equity in status and opportunities inside its casing work nor can be political majority rules system and significantly less financial popular government."

Nehru depicts "Vote based system resilience, resistance not simply of the individuals who concur with us but rather the individuals who don't concur with us."

He underscored the significance of serene strategies in popular government. He composed: "Capitalism and popular government are two conflicting terms. He communicated sees: It appeared to me obvious that in a perplexing social structure indidual opportunity needed to constrained and maybe the best way to genuine opportunity was through some such constraint in the social sphere."5 Nehru acknowledged encounter of individual opportunity with regularly developing patterns towards centralization.

He portrayed India's analysis in national arranging as an endeavor to fathom a standout amongst the most vexing issues of present day time for example the most effective method to keep up individual opportunity and activity and have centralized social control and arranging of monetary existence of the general population." 6 There can't be majority rules system without communism through serene and real technique. He watched:" There can't be majority rules system without communism and there can't be communism without vote based system." In his eyes, these are two appearances of a similar idea. Communism stressed the financial angle and majority rule government underscored the political perspective.

He said "Vote based system and patriotism ought to go to gather for the pith of majority rule government. It isn't only to think about one's self or of one's gathering however to work for the bigger gathering or network which is the country." 7 The responsibility to vote based guideline came to fruition in India under Nehru's direction, in the foundation of bureau, Government and a parliamentary framework. A majority rules system was not simply a political issue.

The nineteenth century idea of vote based system was that every individual must reserve an option to cast a ballot, and it was an adequate origination is those days. In any case, it was deficient and individuals started to think in term of bigger and more profound majority rules system. All individual are not equivalent in the feeling of capacity or limit. However, the essential point is that individuals ought to have chance of uniformity and that they ought to most likely go as they can go.

In this manner a clearer commitment was the 3 bigger and essential job that Nehru played to give through a parliamentary comprehensively arrangement government a strong establishment to Indian popular government. Summing up we may express that as indicated by Jawaharlal Political Majority rule government isn't adequate without anyone else. It may have fulfilled the necessities of European culture in the nineteenth century, yet isn't satisfactory to meet the prerequisite of the present day life. Political popular government should along these lines be supplement by financial majority rule government. As per him, notwithstanding singular opportunity, agent government, monetary and social uniformity, popular government additionally implies a tranguil way to deal with issue and the soul of social control. In spite of the fact that he respected that it provided the premise fundamental for monetary and social majority rule aovernment.

### NEHRU AND NATIONALISM

Jawahar Lal Nehru was an incredible patriot. He expressed in his autobiography: " I dreamt of valiant deeds of how sword close by, I would battle for India and help in liberating her

Nehru was a man of new political reasoning. He Changed feelings. His patriotism was from this time forward to be built in the more extensive setting of the world. In 1929 in his presidential comments he energetically expressed that "human progress endured because of thin patriotism and communicated the expectation that free India would respect the work for world co-operation. His patriotism was pervaded with a universal standpoint.

Standard of panchsheel constituted his prominent commitment to the world which at that point remained on the precarious edge of fountain of liquid magma. Jawahar Lal Nehru completely kept up his promise to patriotism, national solidarity and national autonomy after 1947. He needed to protect the political independent won in 1947, yet he had additionally to take India past simple political freedom; he needed to establish the framework of a law based and common libertarian country, and he needed to push forward the procedure of the creation of the Indian country. Nehru was a rodent patriot who dependably settled on a demonstration of penance. The Indian masses dependably felt that there was their man and that he was set up to do fight for them whatever the cost.16 Nehru's confidence in the dignity of individual influenced him to create confidence in the general population also. His profound situated humanism, worker independence and extraordinary confidence in the general population created in him an incredible disdain for dictatorship and hence drove him closer to majority rules system. He grasped the enrollment of home Principle Lague of Tilak and Annie Besant under the effect of the congress. Nehru "felt increasingly more that the battle for opportunity was a typical against what was government.

In household issues, the long stretches of hard reasoning had empowered Nehru to achieve firm end as the way along which free India should move the ideological state of the patriot battle, the impact of western liberal idea and the later fascination of Indian logic all blended in Nehru to frame a stone consideration of scholarly and good promise to majority rule esteems. Nehru was serving both the present and the fate of India by securing the national developments as an enemy of settler battle of all classes in which the least special ought to have the best weight submitting the development at any rate on a fundamental level, to the objective of communism and putting it in a world setting as a major aspect of general battle of mankind. He was to a greater extent a good than an unthinking progressive and looked for the best possible mix of unconstrained intentional effort's legislative force and authority interventionist action.

# CONCLUSION:

Scientific humanism wins over this general tendency and upholds a radically opposite view, namely that "the values of our present-day culture may not be permanent and final; nevertheless they have an essential importance for us for they represent the thought and spirit of the age we live in". In view of this Nehru concludes that "we have...to function in line with the highest ideals of the age we live in, though we may add to them or seek to mound them in accordance with our national genius". Nehru's view is that, man continually accepts the challenges faced by him in achieving the targets and goals chosen by him. "Life," according to him, "is a principle of growth, not of standing still, a continuous becoming, which does not permit static conditions." For man, life is a long adventure and an opportunity to test his will and his worth. He does not rest until goals are reached. From every disappointment and defeat, the spirit of man 'emerges with new strength and wider vision'.

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