

From Democratic Socialism to Neo-Liberalism: The Story of India's Democracy

AMBROSE PINTO SJ

The political freedom that was long awaited in India came through bloodshed, division and struggle. A vision for a new India emerged through those struggles. Though a section of the local population was won over through absorption into the culture of the colonizers, the educated and the politically conscious leaders and the people were aware of the designs of the colonial rule and they were determined to oust the British from the country. With Gandhi, Nehru, Ambedkar and many other significant persons and ordinary people that included peasants and workers, it was a struggle where different sections of people were united for the goal of national freedom.

Freedom from Discrimination

Our freedom struggle had two objectives—freedom from discrimination and complete equality. During the British reign one of the important sources of discrimination was racism. Hierarchy was maintained by claiming superiority of race and the colonized were made to internalise inferiority. That discrimination left psychological scars. The people of India were willing to be subordinated since they thought governance was a complex issue and they would not be able to govern themselves. As literacy spread and the elites were educated in institutions of higher learning both in and outside the country, the conscious and the educated came to realise that they could govern themselves much more effectively with greater benefits for people of the land.

Caste Discrimination

Caste was another form of discrimination that was in practice within the country. Those who suffered discrimination wanted a social revolution in India. They were of the opinion that political freedom was only one

aspect of freedom and political freedom without social freedom would not make any sense. If discrimination had to stop, what was essential was the establishment of right social relations. The challenge of freedom for them was how to create an egalitarian social order from a hierarchical society. Getting rid of foreign rule without commitment to a social order, without discrimination, would not make freedom complete as far as the subalterns were concerned.

Struggle for Equality

There were two aspects in the struggle for equality—apolitical and economic. Swaraj meant an end to all kinds of economic exploitation as well. Political freedom was to include economic freedom of the starving millions. Adoption of an economic programme with the objective to socialise the national struggle became the strategy of the national movement. "Equipped with a socialist ideology and immersed in the work of making the masses economically conscious and politically organised, we can, with confidence look forward to the future and hope in the fullness of time to lead the organised masses of India to freedom".¹ Though there were no claims for absolute economic equality, the battle was for minimum inequality. Not equal shares but fair shares; not equality but social justice.

Democratic Socialism as a Vision

Gandhiji's concept of socialism was "Sarvodaya"—welfare of all, a society in which there would be no exploitation, a state that would perform as few functions as possible and people would be proactive. Ambedkar proposed state ownership in agriculture with a collectivised method. But "socialism does not necessarily

Former Fellow, IAS, Shimla; Principal, St Aloysius Degree College, Cox Town, Bangalore

mean that every method of production should be owned by the state. But in order to take steps towards introducing a socialist structure of society it is inevitable that the major methods of production should be owned and controlled by the state,"² said Nehru. While he favoured socialism, he was against any form of dictatorship in the name of socialism. The Objective Resolution that he moved in the Constituent Assembly upheld the cause of socialism. "I stand for socialism and I hope India will stand for socialism and that India will go towards the constitution of a socialist state..."³

Stress on Production

In a speech in the Constituent Assembly, Nehru had said, "I am prepared to say that everything that we do should be judged from the point of view of production. If nationalisation adds to production, we shall have nationalisation at every step. If it does not, let us see how to bring it about in order not to impede production. That is the essential thing"⁴. He was insistent on production because he did not want the country to share in the poverty of the nation. The emphasis was on land reforms and abolition of landlordism in preference to state-owned industries. "We are a Zamindari and Taluqdari Province and the first question we had to face was that of the land. We declared that the existing land system must go and that there should be no intermediaries between the state and the cultivator"⁵, he had said. To give his socialist convictions an agrarian bias, he expressed his final will to scatter his ashes over the fields where the peasants of India toil, so that they may mingle with the dust and soil of India.

Stress on Grass-root Democracy

To make people involved, he advocated a "socialist cooperative commonwealth". "In a socialist cooperative, we cannot impose anything from above. It has to start at the root only, from the village, the village panchayat or the village co-operative"⁶. Gandhi opined that the Indian society should be built on the village system. "I would say that if the village perished, India will perish too. It will be no more India"⁷. The basic principles of village swaraj for Gandhi were trusteeship, swadeshi, full employment, self-sufficiency, decentralisation, co-operation and equality. What mattered for Gandhi was the quality of individual life in the village. "My ideal village will contain intelligent human beings. They will not live in dirt and drunkenness as animals. There will be neither plague, nor cholera nor small pox; no one will be idle, no one will wallow in luxury"⁸. Though, like

Nehru, for Gandhi the individual was of supreme consideration, the individual becomes an authentic individual when he or she sacrifices for the family, the village, the district, the province and the nation.

A Constitution for India

The Preamble of the Constitution, the fundamental rights and the directive principles of state policy provided the country a basic philosophy as well as a set of guidelines to transform India into a land of social democracy. While the original Preamble spoke of a sovereign democratic republic, it was in 1977 that Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister, added the terms of "secular" and "socialist" to the Constitution.

Our Achievements and Failures

What have been our achievements under the ideology of democratic socialism? The following are some of the notable achievements of the Nehruvian era.

A. SURVIVAL OF DEMOCRACY

When India became independent, there were doubts expressed about the future of democracy. "Chaos would prevail in India if we were ever so foolish to leave the natives to run their own show. Ye gods! What a salad of confusion, of bungle, of mismanagement, and far worse, would be the instant result. These grand people will go anywhere and do anything if led by us. Themselves they are still infants as regards governing or statesmanship. And their so-called leaders are the worst of the lot"—Sewell, a British civil servant had said. However, with one exception of the period of national emergency between 1975 and 1977 under Indira Gandhi, India has remained a representative democracy since 1947. The system of voting has provided a new awareness to subaltern communities. If one has to analyse the different social groups going to the polling booths during elections, one would discover an increasing number of India's discriminated and marginalised communities since they still hold that their destiny is linked with the electoral process.

B. MULTICULTURAL STATE AND SECULARISM

After more than sixty years of Independence, India can be regarded as an example of a multicultural state able to use resources such as democratic institutions or a federal structure to manage challenges and to incorporate dissidence and opposition successfully into the political

process. When Nehru was asked by the French writer, Andre Malraux, what had been his greatest difficulty since Independence, he had replied "creating a secular state in a religious country". In spite of threats and attacks on the secular nature of the state, we continue to be a secular nation.

C. IMPETUS TO AGRICULTURE

Food for every hungry person was a challenge. By the end of the fifth plan, India became self-sufficient in foodgrain production. By the early 1970s, after extensive legislation, large absentee landowners had, for all practical purposes, been eliminated. More than 20 million former zamindar-system tenants had acquired occupancy rights to the land they tilled. Dairy farming provided supplementary employment and an additional source of income to many small and marginal farmers. The increase in milk production permitted India to end imports of powdered milk and milk-related products. Fish production increased more than fivefold since Independence.

D. DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRIES

Nehru singled out two activities as providing the base for planning—the production of power and the production of steel. At the time of Independence, the country had only two privately-owned steel plants. Through foreign collaboration, he was able to help the country to meet its needs on steel. Large dams were another of Nehru's priorities for purposes of irrigation and drinking water. The industrial policy resolutions stressed the need for a large degree of self-sufficiency in manufacturing. Another early decision on industrial policy mandated that defense industries would be developed by the public sector. Building defense industries for a modern military force required the concomitant development of heavy industries, including metallurgy and machine tools. Industry grew at an annual rate of 6.6 percent and agriculture at a rate of 3.6 per cent.

E. ECONOMIC GROWTH

When one compares the growth of the post-independent economy in reference to those days of British India when economic growth was practically nil, the country grew. And the quickening was, indeed, significant, the growth rate of the period shooting up to 4.1 per cent a year. In spite of the devaluation of the rupee in 1966, the two wars with Pakistan, the oil shocks of 1973 and 1979 and the balance of payments crisis of 1980 and droughts of 1965-

66 and 1966-67, the performance of the economy could not be described as poor at all. The growth rate, which was between 3.5 per cent and 3.8 per cent per annum in the preceding three decades, moved up to 5.2 per cent during the decade of the 1980s, not far below the 6.1 per cent in the first decade after the 1991 reforms.⁹

Our Failures

In spite of the many successes of democracy and democratic socialism, the country could not make a tangible dent with socialist transformation. The following were some of the major failures of the implementation of the policy.

Neglect of Primary Education

The Constitution mandated free and compulsory schooling for children up to the age of 14 years. But to the planners, literacy was not a high priority. The literacy rate grew from 18.33 per cent in 1951, to 28.30 per cent in 1961, 34.45 per cent in 1971, 43.57 per cent in 1981, 52.21 per cent in 1991, 64.84 per cent in 2001 and 74.04 per cent in 2011¹⁰. The growth in literacy from 1951 to 1961 was significant with a 10 per cent increase. However, that increase did not keep pace for the next 30 years. How would people meaningfully participate in nation-building without primary education?

Disparity in Income

Sri H.N. Mukherjee on May 25, 1956, just nine years after the declaration of Independence, while participating in the debate in the parliament on ceiling of income of an individual, had said, "The Secretary gets Rs. 4,000 a month, while a fourth-class servant gets a salary of less than Rs. 40 per month, on an average. It is the ratio of 1:100; this is vulgarity".¹¹ The Planning Minister in the Government of Nehru, Gulzarilal Nanda, while expressing his disappointment on the vast disparities, had said, "I have never felt comfortable myself so far as the question of disparities is concerned."¹² In fact, the inequalities have only further increased from 1960s. In spite of various efforts undertaken by the authorities, the problem of inequality remained and remains as great as ever.

Attack on Social Justice

Caste prejudice and discrimination has continued to be rampant with frequent caste wars. Atrocities on SCs/STs have been on the increase. Successive governments in

states and the union have even failed to identify the poor. Land of tribals, forests and common properties is being indiscriminately acquired for setting up industrial units by multi-nationals, corporations, capitalists, influential sections of the political class and government in most of the states. Reservations to SCs, STs and other Backward Classes have not been completely implemented. Even the directives of judiciary under the laws and the Constitution are being violated on tribal self-rule law and Panchami land. Rural healthcare is a sham and almost non-existent. Women continue to suffer from historical, social and economic disadvantages. They are yet to get their representation in the legislatures and other decision-making bodies of the country. Secularism has been under threat and there have been increasing attacks on minorities. The carnage of the Sikhs in Delhi in 1984, the Muslims in Gujarat in 2002 and the Christians in Kandhamal of Orissa in 2008 are still alive in the memory of the nation.

Increasing Violence

Inter-caste conflicts have done away with thousands of lives. Then there is the violence among the intermediary castes for land and resources. Extremist violence is another kind of violence specially targeted against the capitalist class and the state. Ethnic violence is still prevalent in some parts of the country. The North-East regions have experienced both the brutalities of the armed forces and the underground militias. The war that has been going on for decades over Kashmir has led to bloodshed. Violence against the state has been the most common form of violence. "The first, and by far the most widespread and routinised form of public violence, is protests against the state, or any kind of official, by crowds, pelting stones, attacking and destroying public property. The increasing political violence in India during the 1980s and 1990s was clearly connected with the growth of Hindu nationalist sentiments".¹³ The register of public protests, of breaking the law peacefully—*dharna*, *rasta roko*, hunger strikes, etc.—are deeply embedded, even banalised, across the Indian political landscape as a set of possible languages of political expression and dissent.

Ideological Vacuum

The freedom movement threw up a leadership which put the country before everything else. With freedom attained, politics entered a new phase. "As rebels against the Raj the nationalists had been sacrificing idealists, but as governors they came rather to enjoy the fruits of

office",¹⁴ opines Ramachandra Guha. The government's policy of controlling the "commanding heights of the economy" through the National Planning Commission and the Five Year Plans resulted in the concentration of enormous political and economic power in the hands of the bureaucrats and politicians. The situation was summed up accurately by Achyut Patwardhan, an eminent participant in the freedom struggle. He said: "Today the State has lost all moral authority. It is viewed as the creation of crooks, by crooks, for crooks. Nothing seems to work without the use of money, muscle power or influence. So even if we have achieved a little prosperity, people think it is 'in spite' and not 'because' of the State. Back in 1947, one could distinguish between bandits and politicians, not now. That is a measure of how far we have fallen."¹⁵

PART II: FROM DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM TO LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

Why did the system fail? In a liberal democracy, the individual comes first. Did Nehru promote liberal democracy that stressed the development of individuals more than the development of society as a whole? Was he very inconsistent? Nehru admits of his inconsistency when he said, "You do not have to try very hard if you want to catch me in an inconsistency. This is the occupational disease of any philosopher who finds himself in a position of an operating leader."¹⁶ Once he became the Prime Minister, he was a philosopher-turned-operating-leader. Nehru was fully aware that the Indian society was far from being a just society. But he could not make a tangible dent on socialist transformation that he visualised. The reasons why he failed in promoting social democracy are the following:

a. Lack of Clarity on the Term

Dr. Gyan Chand said, "Jawaharlal Nehru did not define socialism as clearly and unambiguously and in the name of flexibility which is undoubtedly needed, compromising decisions were taken and carried out whose dangerous implications were overlooked, and the spirit of socialism did not inform the plans and their implementation."¹⁷ While the economy marked an upward trend with the increase of national income and per capita income, the gap between the rich and the poor increased. Ten years after the assumption of power by Nehru "nearly five lakh of persons were enjoying Rs. 600 crore after paying all their taxes when good number of people did not get enough to eat."¹⁸ After four months in the office as Prime Minister, Nehru himself admitted this

inequality when he wrote, "I have yet to understand, how, in spite of the tremendous and heavy taxation in India, these vast fortunes were made by certain individuals and groups. I just cannot understand it and we have to find some means and machinery to prevent this kind of shameful traffic in human beings and profiting at the expense of the nation."¹⁹ And yet, hardly four months later in the Industrial Policy Resolution of April 6, 1948, the Prime Minister opined that "private enterprise, properly directed and regulated has a valuable role to play."²⁰ Was it a retreat from socialism? Why was Nehru speaking differently at different times?

b. His Bourgeois Background

Born in an aristocratic family, reared in bourgeois surroundings with all the vices and inhibitions of sheltered life, there are some who have called Nehru a "bourgeois reformist". Nehru himself admits to it in his autobiography. "I am a typical bourgeois brought up in bourgeois surroundings with all the early prejudices that the training has given me."²¹ In no way does this mean that he was unconcerned but his background did influence his decision-making and administrative style.

c. His Willingness to Compromise

In one of his conversations with a foreigner he had said, "The politician has to compromise. That what makes him a politician."²² With the problems of Partition and others inherited, he wanted no paralysis of the economic system. To restore confidence in the business community, to invite foreign private capital and to make use of the industrial and technical knowledge he had to steer clear of the leftist and rightist roads. He thought of socialism as a system of abundance and not as a system of equi-distribution of poverty. Only when the country has enough of resources, they could be distributed. The wholesale socialisation of the economy was never his purpose.

f. The Nature of the Constituent Assembly

According to Subash Kashyap, the composition of the Constituent Assembly was elitist. While they thought of the poor, they lived their existence without any connection with them. As a result, "the poor, illiterate, hungry masses had no use for most of the rights like the right to property, freedom of thought and expression, equality of opportunity in matters of public employment, etc. In any case, they were in no position to claim any benefit from these rights. The rights they needed were those from freedom from hunger, right to education, right to a living wage, etc. All these were relegated to the non-

enforceable principles."²³ The constitutional model, all said and done, was premised on the British parliamentary liberal system. There were no rights to food, clothing, shelter, primary education and employment.

f. Western Model of Democracy

Paul Brass has argued that parliamentary democracy was unsuited for India since the social structure of the country was imbued with an ideology of hierarchy rather than equality. The parliamentary democracy, he opined, was meant for countries that are premised on egalitarianism. Caste Hindus and untouchables and other low castes could hardly be expected to work together as equals in a democratic political order. Those institutions and ideas could not be separated from the societies from which they had evolved. India had an entirely different social order unsuited to parliamentary institutions and egalitarian ideologies.

g. Bureaucratic Administration

Nehru gave his administration a bureaucratic form after the example of British bureaucracy and not a mobilisational form. The Congress in power demobilised the movement given the nature of its local and regional leadership for their own interests. It discreetly gave up its promises of distributive justice which was its central programme prior to the Independence. The huge state-controlled sector was controlled by a bureaucracy of economic and technical personnel, who were earlier with the British regime. The only path to economic progress, they had been taught was capitalism. The control by these bureaucrats was termed as socialistic.

h. The Congress Party

The Congress Party was another road block towards socialism. Once in power polarisation within the party became central. "After freedom was won, the Congress had degenerated into a *dharamsala* or rest-home, without any unity of purpose or principles, and open to all fools and knaves, friends and foes, communalists and secularists, reformers and orthodox and capitalists and anti-capitalists,"²⁴ said Ambedkar. Because of vested interests in the party, socialism was not practised. Under Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and his successors, the national and state-level governments liberalised licencing requirements and eventually rescinded rules on foreign ownership, while taking steps to scale down government market share in a number of high-technology markets. That was the beginning of the end of liberal democracy. The country later took to neo-liberalism.

i. The Bourgeois in India

What is clear is that power in India has been shared by industrialists, landlords, bureaucrats, politicians, managers and the intellectual elite since Independence. According to Kaviraj, the ruling bloc in India contained three distinct social groups—the bourgeois, particularly its aggressive and expanding monopoly stratum, the landed elites and the bureaucratic managerial elite.²⁵ With the growth of the public sector, there were irritants and conflicts between the bureaucratic elites in the government and the bourgeois entrepreneurial classes. It is the bureaucratic class that mediated crucially between the classes within the ruling coalition, promoting the entrepreneurial classes.

PART III: FROM LIBERAL DEMOCRACY TO NEO-LIBERALISM

From 1985 onwards, there were more and more pressures from the bourgeoisie to privatise the state for a linkage with global capital. The state and public sector were attacked for inefficiency and corruption. The cry was for the private sector to intervene and save the situation. It was a conspiracy that worked. The average citizen who experienced daily delays, corruption and red-tapism in the state and its institutions were unable to see the designs of capital beyond their statements. The Indian capital saw greater possibilities for accumulation if they moved beyond the nation into global capital. With conditions ripe and acceptance high for freeing the markets, the plan of the bourgeoisie was given shape.

Passive Revolution of Capital

Political economists of the Marxist school have characterised the phase from 1950 to 1985 as the phase of passive revolution of capital. Antonio Gramsci spoke of the passive capital as one in which the new claimants to power, lacking the social strength to launch a full scale assault on the old dominant classes, opt for a path in which the demands of a new society are satisfied by small doses, legally, in a reformist manner. This is done in such a way that the political and economic positions of the old feudal classes are not destroyed—agrarian reforms are avoided and especially the popular masses are prevented from going through the political experience of a fundamental social transformation.²⁶ Integral to passive revolution is the co-option of people from below. The Freedom Movement and Nehru's concept of "modern India" brought the subalterns into the agenda of the bourgeoisie. Capital was passive during this period in the sense that the state initiated, supported and

sustained capital through the planning commission. It was a form of "state capitalism" with hegemonic consensus. The capitalist class benefitted positively from the passive revolution of capital. As long as the state met the cost for infrastructure and the establishment of industries, the bourgeoisie during this period felt satisfied.

Active Revolution of Capital

The collapse of the regime of Rajeev Gandhi signaled the end of the complex structure of accommodation and negotiation between the grassroots and the top political leadership as well as between the centre and the states. The transition to the opening of the economy and the dismantling of constraint needed the assistance of the 1991 economic crisis. The bourgeoisie in India found the costs of sustaining the state centric capitalism too expensive with lack of benefits. The process of state planning, protected markets, maintenance of state bureaucracy were found to be too costly. Dissatisfied with state regulations, these vested interest forces called for de-regulations and the integration of the economy with the global. In political terms, globalisation created a global order with increasing denationalisation of the nation-state and its sovereignty. In the process, it steadily and critically changed the nature of the state.

The Post-reforms Period

What exactly did the reforms of 1991 do? The essential feature of the reforms was the opening up of the Indian economy to the rest of the world, in terms of trade, but essentially in terms of foreign capital. What has been its impact on growth rates? Not particularly striking in the first decade. In 2002-03, it was a dismal 3.8 per cent. From then on, as is well known, it has been a case of "India Shining"—growth rates of close to 9 per cent almost every year, even 9.7 per cent in 2006-07, suggesting that a double digit growth rate is both possible and necessary "to get rid of chronic poverty, ignorance and disease which still afflict millions of our people" as the Prime Minister stated in mid-2008.

Structural Adjustment Programmes

The country had to resort to structural adjustment programmes to re-structure its economy. The bourgeoisie who worked till now with local and state economy moved to establish a nexus with global corporations with support from the state. The states have to follow the path set by the World Trade Organization and other international

financial institutions, like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, aligned with global capital. The nations that are made to borrow have to supply information about their economies, submit their policy and plans to review by the World Bank and accept agency supervision of their use of loans with strict conditionalities. The state has no more direct control over the economy.

Neo-liberalism & Human Survival at Risk

By the 21st century, the corporations turned to several mechanisms to sustain global accumulation. One is militarised accumulation. Waging wars and interventions that unleash cycles of destruction and reconstruction generate enormous profits for an ever-expanding military-prison-industrial-security-financial complex. A second mechanism is the raiding and sacking of public budgets. Transnational capital uses its financial power to take control of state finances and to impose further austerity on the working majority, resulting in ever greater social inequality and hardship. The corporations have used its structural power to accelerate the dismantling of what remains of the social wage and welfare states. And a third is frenzied worldwide financial speculation—turning the global economy into a giant casino. The Transnational Corporations have unloaded billions of dollars into speculation in the housing market, the food, energy and other global commodities markets, in bond markets worldwide. The 2008 collapse of the global financial system was merely the straw that broke the camel's back. This is not a cyclical but a structural crisis—a restructuring crisis—that has the potential to become a systemic crisis, depending on how social agents respond to the crisis. A restructuring crisis means that the only way out of crisis is to restructure the system, whereas a systemic crisis is one in which only a change in the system itself will resolve the crisis. Times of crisis are times of rapid social change, when collective agency and contingency come into play more than in times of equilibrium in a system.²⁷

Impact on People

Neo-liberalism has resulted in more than 50 per cent of India's population being locked out of productive participation in the economy. The state's ability to function as a "factor of cohesion" within the social order has broken down. Displacement and exclusion have accelerated since 1991. Farmers have been committing suicide. Agricultural economy is in destruction. Unemployment has increased. Education and other

services, like health, are commercialised. We have had starvation deaths. There are revolts against land acquisition and establishment of dangerous nuclear and environmentally harmful industries. Special Economic Zones have faced problems from people. The system has abandoned major section of people caught in a deadly circuit of accumulation-exploitation-exclusion. The system has criminalised the poor and the dispossessed with the state working in nexus with the corporates.

Response of the Global Community

There has been resistance to the corporate hold. In India, we have the expansion of the Naxalite and Maoist movements. They are determined to subvert the state and have found it easy to recruit young people into their ranks given their impoverishment. The various social movements in the country are up in arms. There are agitations across the country against SEZs, nuclear establishments, Foreign Direct Investments, POSCO, Coco-Cola and other corporate companies. The Occupy Movements have declared war on 1 per cent of individuals or corporates who have taken the global economy for ransom in the US and Europe. The world social forum is uniting people across the globe for another world different from the corporate one. What is significant to note is that the fight against globalisation is taking the form of localisation, local people demanding right over their resources against the state which is in nexus with global corporations.

Who will win this war? The corporations and those who manage them have power of wealth, power of the states with military forces and the power of the international financial institutions. They have the backing of police and the armed forces of different countries. On the other hand, the social power of the masses is what we are witnessing on the streets and protests by ordinary people. The workers from various professions, indigenous people, trade unions, concerned intellectuals, women and people are struggling for the creation of a new social order. The victory will depend on the kind of direction the opposition to corporatization of the economy will take. It is wrong to look for a clear direction in these protests and movements since they are spontaneous. The one thing that is clear is that they are protests against corporatization. They point towards an immediate picture of dissatisfaction, resentment and anger and as well as a hope for a better tomorrow. People know that they are exploited and what legitimately belongs to them is robbed from them. They are demanding justice, a just share in the resources of the earth. From the various agitations, protests, resistances

and anti-corporate struggles, what they desire is a world where everyone's need is meant than satisfying the greed of a few.

Re-invention of Democratic Socialism

The search is for an alternative system. The slogan of the World Social Forum is "another world is possible". What are the characteristics of that another world? In sharp contrast to the existing world of inequality, division and lack of employment, opportunities and liberty, the globe is looking towards a world of equality, community and freedom. Though the names of Nehru or Gandhi are not bandied around, the search is for an alternative system of Swaraj, a call for re-organisation of economic relationships. Economy cannot be controlled either by the corporations or by the state. It should be managed by the people. Through their resistance to the corporate economy they are asking a simple question—how did you all get control over these resources? They do not belong to you but to all of us. The way in which you have accumulated the resources are dubious. You might say and believe that we cannot manage those resources. If we are deemed competent enough to select our political leaders why is it that you consider us unfit to be participants in our work place? Do you think that we are too ignorant or shortsighted to make rational decisions at the work place where we spend most of our daily time while we are considered competent to choose our representatives?

The global citizens have discovered deep dichotomy in the very concept of democracy. They opine that there is no meaning in a system that offers right to individuals to elect their representatives who have become powerless as far as economy is concerned or powerful enough to hand over their economy to corporate hands. The presence of the representatives in the legislatures is merely to support a global capital agenda that is already set by global corporations and international financial institutions. What use are individual political representatives if they are unable to intervene in the affairs of the local economy? After all, they have been

elected to provide better quality of life for the constituency. Mere representation or political democracy without economic democracy makes no meaning. All the occupy movements and protests against corporations have been local though they may have global networks. Economic democracy along with socio-political democracy is their call and it is a call for de-centralisation of the economy and the polity.

NOTES

1. Acharya Narendra Deva, *Socialism and National Revolution*, p. 29
2. Nehru J., *Souvenir of the Indian National Congress*, 1964, p. 2
3. Nehru J., *Speeches*, Vol.1. p. 11
4. Nehru J., *Speeches*, Vol. 1, p. 109
5. Nehru J., *An Autobiography*, p. 183
6. Nehru J., *Community Development and Panchayati Raj*, p. 68
7. *Harijan*, August 29, 1936
8. Gandhi M. K., *Bunch of Old Letters*, 5th October 1945.
9. Pulapre Balakrishanan, *Economic Growth in India: History and Prospects*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2010
10. <http://indiabudget.nic.in/es2001-02/chapt2002/chap106.pdf>
11. Mukerjee H. N., *Whither Social Justice?* A.V.A.R.D. News Letter, p. 5
12. Mukerjee H. N., *Whither Social Justice*, A.V.A.R.D., Delhi, 1965, p. 25
13. <http://samaj.revues.org/index1872.html>
14. Guha Ramachandra, p. 127
15. Patwardhan Achyut, (1971) *Ideologies and the Perspective of Social Change in India*, Issue 1 of Balwantraji Mehta Memorial Lectures, University of Bombay, 1971, p. 42
16. Nehru J., *Imprint*, Vol. IV, No. 8, p. 73
17. Chand Gyan, *Socialist Transformation of Indian Economy*, Allied Publishers, 1965, p. 612
18. Pradhan Benudhar, *The Socialist Thought of Jawaharal Nehru*, p. 280 & 281
19. Nehru J., *Speeches*, Vol. 1, p. 94
20. Nehru J., *Autobiography*, Vol. 1, p. 529
21. Nehru J., *Autobiography*, Vol. 1, p. 529
22. *Imprint*, Vol. IV, No. 8, p. 72
23. Kashap Subash, (ed.), *Reforming the Constitution*, p. 9
24. *Hindustan Times*, October 12, 1951
25. Chatterjee, Partha (ed.), *State and Politics in India*, Oxford University Press, Calcutta, 1997, pp. 41- 45 and pp. 271-288
26. *Gramsci Antonio: Selection from Prison Notebooks*, New York, 1991
27. Robinson William, *Al Jazeera*, August 5, 2011