

## From the Editor's Desk



**WORK ETHIC :** *To work without attachment is to work without the expectation of reward or fear of any punishment in this world or the next. WORK so done is a means to the end, and God is the end. – Ramakrishna Paramhansa*

‘KNOWLEDGE’ without ‘PRACTICE’ accompanying it is “SUPERIOR” to Practice without KNOWLEDGE  
“Practice” with Knowledge, is superior to Knowledge without Practice accompanying it.

**SHEER HABIT:** *Moral Excellence comes about as a result of habit. We become just by doing just acts. Temperate by doing temperate acts, brave by doing brave acts. – Aristotle*

*Commit or Complain: Invariably we find people who are powerful, are those who operate from commitment. And those who are powerless, always operate from complaint. – Swami Sukhabodhananda*

**AUM SHANTI:** *O Brahmn, lead us from the unreal to the real. Lead us from darkness to light. Lead us from death to immortality. Shanti, Shanti, Shanti, Aum. – Bhadaranyaka Upanishad*

**YOUR REWARD:** *The reward of deeds depends upon the intentions and every person will get the reward according to what he has intended. So whoever emigrated for worldly benefits, his emigration was for what he emigrated for. – Sahih Al-Bukhari Hadith*

**CHOOSE WISELY:** *With an open mind, seek and listen to all the highest ideals. Consider the most enlightened thoughts. Then choose your path, person by person, each for oneself. – Zoroaster*

**HUMAN EVOLUTION:** *Human evolution has two steps - from being somebody to being nobody; and from being nobody to being everybody. This knowledge can bring sharing and caring throughout the world. – Sri Sri Ravi Shankar*

**ONE & MANY:** *Nations are many, but EARTH is one. Beings are many, but Breath is one, Stars are many but Sky is one. Oceans are many, but Water is one; Religions are many, but God is one; Jewels are many, but Gold is one. Appearances are many, but Reality is one. – Sri Sathya Sai Baba*

**TRULY FREE:** *A man can be himself only so long as he is alone, and if he does not love solitude, he will not love freedom, for it is only when he is alone that he is only free. – Arthur Schopenhauer*

*(continued from the previous issue)*

**To Qualify for Public Office:** In modern times, it would seem that the best attribute of a would-be aspirant to political office in India, is not that of brain but of brawn. The local bully, thug, liquor contractor, coal-mafia man, dominate not only in the ruling party but in all other parties. This was particularly true during the Emergency era of Indian politics. It would appear (to the unthinking) that this order has changed yielding place to the new. But only in appearance. What started as a government touting its cleanliness is now a government only of cronies, whose position remains secure, despite documentary evidence of foreign exchange violations; luxury palaces beyond their known means of livelihood, and complicity in pogroms against a particular community. In this atmosphere, what can the intellectual do? In the past, the former Prime Minister made it a practice to "consult" with intellectuals. She took care to choose these tame and captive intellectuals who danced to her tune. Sadly, this included artists like M.F. Hussein. He has now reaped his reward with a nomination to the Upper House. Other kept-intellectuals profited similarly, sooner or later. Virtually non-existent is the intellectual, who in today's political set up, can stand for election and win. To get a party nomination in the first place, he needs to ponder whether he will change the system, or the system will change him. Since no party today is ideologically polarized, we will assume he joins one or the other major political party without a deep conviction in its ideology. If he disagrees with it and says so, he will be expelled. If he disagrees and mutes his writing or expression, he is false to himself. Cho Ramaswamy is an example of an intellectual briefly moving from the role of commentator to activist, without marked success. Few notable intellectuals have triumphed at the hustings, ever since 1952. Evidently, India, like Republican France, which executed Lavoisier "has no use for savants". Intellectuals could enter the Upper House of Parliament. But this is possible only through nomination, or selection by a party which has that number of seats. Where is the party, ruling or otherwise, which will disinterestedly choose an incumbent for his eminence and expertise unrelated to his utility as a party man? Last year's Rajya Sabha nominations have, after a long time, focussed on persons of known achievement in their fields. But one, already mentioned, is belatedly reaping the rewards of his "Emergency" support, while two others, Amrita Pritam and R.K. Narayan, are totally apolitical and safe from the ruling party's point of view.

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In a Presidential system, intellectuals may fare better as they can be chosen by the President, without going through the electoral process. However, it is also possible that in this guise, the President can induct mere favorites to positions of power. In today's political climate, though the anti-defection Bill was necessary to avoid unprincipled defection only for the fruits of office, it is also a cramp on principled dissent. Assuming an intellectual does get a party "ticket", and also gets elected on the strength of the Party's organizational machine, he is then bound "to vote at his Party's call" and never think or speak for himself at all. The central quandary already posed, emerges again as a central issue.

**Not Politicians Alone:** Today's political conditions have thus made Parliament almost irrelevant. Parliament, as we have seen in recent years, is reduced to a rather lacklustre debating society. The Cabinet (featuring in India the more virulent form of a disease-afflicting even Britain, judging from Crossman's diaries) obeys the diktat of one man, advised by a handful of backroom boys, bypassing the Cabinet and the principle of collective responsibility. Nonetheless, in a hangover from the freedom struggle, when Gandhiji battled both for a transformation of the social ethos, and a transfer of government, we tend to look only to politics and politicians, for a lead on important issues. As these have developed, there are issues, certainly: caste, linguistic states, controlled media, and the like. Some of these drive people to inflamed passions igniting in the streets, without bringing them together, as the quest for freedom did. Ironically, while few politicians personally command respect, politics and politicians are perceived as the source of power and patronage, and are courted by people and institutions to the exclusion of leadership in any other field. Mother Teresa and Baba Amte may have achieved more in altering attitudes than any politician, but receive a miserable fraction of the attention paid to any minister, liable anytime to be ousted from his chair with less ceremony than a peon in an office. It is a pity that the focus of our expectations for change centres only round politics. It must be sought elsewhere too, so that our attack on evils which need redress is a multi-pronged strategy enlisting people in other walks of life. There also needs to be an awareness of the fact that each of us is responsible for our destiny, and that we do not need to await the coming of a messiah to make our influence felt at least within the immediate circle of those with whom we are personally in touch. The ripple effect of a stone thrown into water, can gradually revive society through individual effort, although such strivers-after-betterment will only be able to see such improvement in their personal milieu. It may be some time before the total impact of such individual work is perceptibly seen and felt. But eventually, that day must come, as night follows day. The professions, two in particular, vie with Parliament as formulators of public opinion and possible instruments of change. They are the Law and the Media, which need to compensate for the deficiencies of Parliament. Apart from the fact that one Party has a two-thirds voting strength, even speaking time in Parliament is calculated on the basis of Party representation, so that both in the expression of views, and voting, only one point of view prevails.

**Reforming Election Law:** Parliament nonetheless remains an important national forum, and it should be the task of the intellectual to ensure that reform of the election law does take place, so that the electoral process does not make it impossible for an intellectual to stand as an Independent, outside the Party system, and win. All societies need the gadfly of the State, such as Socrates used to be, and such people may generally be found outside the iron clamp of a Party system. It will need sustained pressure to clean up the electoral law. In a step lauded by the public as an earnest of his good faith (for example the swift passage of the long-pending Anti-Defection Bill) the Prime Minister was apparently moving only to safeguard his own position at a time when he might have had reason to doubt the solidarity of the party. If his motivation was the public good, then it is surprising that Bills to free the Media, or clean up elections have not followed. Sadly, as Justice Hidayatullah pointed out, even the Judiciary has been politicised, with one former Supreme Court Judge congratulating Mrs.

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Gandhi on her electoral victory, and others ignoring lackluster but necessary cases for disposal, to take up only those issues which hit the headlines. The latter are no doubt necessary, but not more so than the cases which do not make headlines, but nonetheless deny justice by delaying it. A special responsibility revolves on the media, as this has now become the most high-profile of the professions. Here too, we have seen surprising defections from strange quarters, with noted critics of the Establishment becoming its champions for no obvious reasons. Occasionally, this could be a genuine change of heart. This is generally the exception to the rule. While no one expects the Press to take on an adversarial role it needs to err, if it does, on the side of scepticism. An Establishment with a two-thirds majority at the Centre or in a state, already has everything going for it. The Press must be alert to overt threats, and more insidious ones which come in the form of subtle or not so subtle bribes to the venal. It is good to remember the classical saying *Timeo Danaos et Dona ferentis* (I fear the Greeks when they come bearing gifts). Favours are to be resisted as much as black legislation like the Bihar Press Act.

**If...** If election law can indeed be made the vehicle for free, fair and inexpensive elections; if every thinking person practises his calling pursuing the eternal norm and not a temporary gain, if forums outside Parliament, including the Law and Media can become alternative sounding boards of the people's problems and aspirations, the role of the intellectual in our society is not without hope. Its translation into an effective presence depends on each of us, "the marginal men playing our part fully, in the station of life to which we are called." This piece has been selected for publication. by IndianLiberals. in, an initiative of Centre for Civil Society. It is an online library of all Indian liberal writings, lectures and other materials in English and Indian regional languages, with an aim to preserve an often unknown but very rich Indian liberal tradition. Source: April 1987 issue of Freedom First

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the discharge was finished and crude oil washing completed, the sampler would be retrieved before loading the next cargo into 3P to avoid any potential damage to the ship's equipment from the sample bucket or tape.

Once empty, the tank was ventilated. Over several days the tank atmosphere of tank 3P was measured using an explosimeter and sample hose. Although oxygen was near normal levels, HC was at 57% of LEL on day one of ventilation and 38% of LEL on day two. After discussion, it was agreed that entry into 3P tank would start the next morning (day three) if the gas levels were 'less'.

The next morning, the tank atmosphere of 3P tank was found to be 20.6% oxygen, with HC at 26% of LEL. Tank entry equipment was prepared and placed near the tank access hatch; breathing apparatus (BA) sets, emergency escape breathing devices (EEBDs), stretcher and heaving lines. The Master was shown the risk assessment and work permit for enclosed space entry and although the HC LEL was indicated at 26% he stated that the oxygen content was good. It was decided that two crew should go in, each wearing an EEBD.

Two crew members entered the cargo oil tank via the tank access hatch each with an EEBD worn over the

shoulder, a torch and a personal gas meter. Several other crew members and the Master were in attendance at the tank access hatch. The lead crew member proceeded down to the first platform and checked the atmosphere across the platform with his gas meter. The second crew member then proceeded down the stairs to meet him.

This was repeated for the remaining platforms until they reached the tank bottom almost 20 metres below the main deck. The lead crew member then reported feeling dizzy and heard his personal gas meter alarming. The second crew member reached the tank bottom and instantly felt the effects of the gas inhalation; he also heard his personal gas meter alarming. The lead crew member shouted and gestured to the second to wear his EEBD and leave the tank. The lead crew member felt dizzy and immediately proceeded to exit the tank. The second attempted to don his EEBD and activate it but collapsed soon afterward. Meanwhile, on deck, the Master entered the tank with an EEBD worn over his shoulder.

Although another crew member warned the Master not to enter the tank the Master nonetheless proceeded into the tank. Two crew members on deck donned the BA sets already available at the entrance.