

(This is correct only if we consider superficial meanings. 'Dictatorship of the proletariat' is necessary not simply to establish state power. It has to abolish all the property rights that favour rent, interest and profit. The class of owners too has to perform labour and become a part of the proletariat. The distinction between 'owners and proletarians' must vanish. Dictatorship of the proletariat is necessary to accomplish this task.)

10. These factors are irresistible and therefore Socialism is inevitable.

(This is right in the sense that we discussed above).

After enumerating these 10 points, Ambedkar said:

"I hope I have reported correctly the propositions which formed the original basis of Marxian Socialism".

Some of the points are right. Some are half-baked. Some very important points are totally missing. The missing points are the following:

1. There is no point which tells that the income of owners in the form of **rent, interest and profits**; taxes; unproductive expenditure; and all such things taken together constitute the surplus value of the proletariat. His not mentioning this point means not mentioning the means of exploitation.

2. There is no point which demands that all persons in society must perform labour.

3. There is no point which demands that we must transform division of labour in exploitative societies into 'socialist division of labour'.

4. Another point not mentioned is this: Circulation of money becomes redundant from the stage in which relations of equality are established. This means relations that involve only *use value* calculations and not *value* calculations are possible.

It is not a proper report of Marxism if such important aspects as these are not mentioned.

Ambedkar nowhere mentioned the books based on which he has reported that 'this is Marxism'. Even in the case of his elaboration of Buddhism, he did not show any evidence. Which means, the entire discussion has no basis whatsoever!

After report on Marxism by way of 10 points, he says:

"Before making a comparison between the ideologies of the Buddha and Karl Marx it is necessary to note how much of this original corpus of the Marxian creed has survived; how much has been disproved by history and how much has been demolished by his opponents" (p.444).

This means, Ambedkar is cautioning the readers to realize that Marxism had already been proved to be useless and 'demolished' by its opponents.

After this caution, he went into a mood of ecstasy and declared that Marxism had been criticised, had broken into pieces as a result of criticism by its opponents and the claim that 'Socialism was inevitable' had been completely disproved.

Marxism has been subjected to criticism, says Ambedkar.

It is very natural that those who are obsessed with exploitation develop antagonism toward a theory which has exposed the truth of exploitation and dump criticism against it. It would be a surprise if this did not happen. Does it mean that Marxism has turned out to be a false theory just because there was criticism against it?

Isn't there any criticism against Buddhism? Ambedkar himself mentioned that there were several kinds of criticism against Buddhism, didn't he? He said repeatedly that Brahmanism defeated Buddhism. (p.275). As soon as the force of Buddhism decreased due to the Hindu religion, why didn't Ambedkar conclude that Buddhism was defeated because it was not a correct theory? Why is he still preaching that Buddhism alone is the best theory and we have to follow it? This means, in the view of Ambedkar, there is one standard for Buddhism and another for Marxism! We don't find any 'honesty' in Ambedkar at any point even accidentally.

He showed 2 reasons to conclude that Marxism is proved to be useless:

1. Marx said that Socialism was inevitable and no human effort was needed. But Socialism in Russia in 1917 was not achieved without human effort. Revolution and bloodshed took place. Hence it was proved that the thesis 'Socialism is inevitable' is false.

2. The thesis that labourers are becoming poorer and poorer is not correct and no one agrees with this thesis.

Because of these 2 reasons, it was proved that Marxism is not a correct theory. This is Ambedkar's argument.

We have to discuss answers to these 2 points of criticism.

1. When we say that 'Socialism is inevitable' does it mean that it will come into being one day on its own without any human effort? Did Marx say so? Then what is the meaning of his suggestions, 'Form a Communist Party! Wage class struggle!'? Aren't they human efforts? Did Marx say that Socialism comes into being without any human efforts?

If these are changes in nature, they take place without human effort.

The sun and moon are revolving on their own. The Full moon nights and dark nights come and go on their own. Heat and rain come and go on their own. For this, people have no need to form 'associations for heat' and 'associations' for rain! They need not wage struggle for full moon nights or dark nights. No human effort is necessary for changes in nature. But it is not the same case with changes in 'society'. Here every change must take place due to human effort. Change takes place only when we make efforts. The old situation remains if no one makes an effort to change.

People who face a problem experience some difficulty. Hence they oppose the problem. If their opposition is adequately clear and strong those people will certainly be able to solve the problem. When there is a problem, the struggle to solve it is inevitable. We talk of 'inevitability' with reference to this struggle. Struggle itself is human effort.

When we say, 'Socialism is inevitable', it means Socialism is inevitable by means of the proletarian struggle against exploitation. It does not, however, mean Socialism is inevitable even without human effort.

When we say, 'Socialism is inevitable', it appears as though Socialism is inevitable without human effort only in the view of such people who do not know the distinction between 'natural phenomena' and 'social phenomena'.

This criticism would not have been so bad if Ambedkar had at least understood that Marxism proposed to wage class struggle and class struggle means human effort.

2. 'Nobody accepts that the proletariat has been progressively pauperised', says Ambedkar. Not 'nobody'. Those who do not accept this include owners—who are eager to consume the labour of labourers—their economists, their philosophers and their defenders. True that all these fellows do not accept this theory. That is natural. They do not accept the very fact that exploitation is taking place. 'Where is the exploitation? Every thing is fine and fair', they say. But what is actually required is not the acceptance by bandits. It is the Working Class who has to accept and understand it! It is this class which has to learn Marxism. When people speak of 'labourers' or 'workers', the usual practice is to consider only those who stand before the machines and work. This is a great mistake. Whatever be the nature of work, wherever be the instruments, all those who work for an owner and receive a 'wage' as income are labourers (workers). Whether the labour is manual labour or mental labour; productive labour or unproductive labour. Whether the person who does labour is a man or a woman, young or old, whether they work with large-scale machinery or tools. These distinctions are not relevant. All those who live on wages (salaries) are labourers.

In order to understand the proposition that labourers become more and more impoverished, one has to first understand the point that the labour of the labourers is split into 2 parts. One part goes to the labourers as their 'wages' and the other part goes to the owner and thereafter it gets distributed into several parts. The splitting of labour of the labourer into 2 parts does not always take place in the same proportions. It takes place depending on the increase in the productive forces and changes in the value of labour power and money and other such factors. This means the 2 portions vary according to the changing circumstances.

It is not possible to understand this unless one understands such categories as the value of labour, money, productivity and the value of labour power. When the productivity increases, the wage increases whether we see it (the wage) in the form of money or articles. This is seen externally. But the proportions of the 2 parts into which the labour of the labourer splits is not seen externally.

What happens when productivity increases is this: The portion which the labourer receives from his labour decreases compared to the past and the portion of 'surplus labour' that goes to the owner increases compared to the past. This kind of change takes place again and again whenever the productivity increases. Which means, the portion that the labourer could use from his labour decreases compared to the past while the portion that he loses increases compared to the past. This is not seen outwardly.

Let us see these changes through 3 examples. In all the 3 examples, we have to consider the labour time of the labourer in the same quantity. Let us suppose it to be 8 hours. Let us see how the portions of labour vary whenever productivity increases.

<u>Portion that the labourer receives</u>	<u>Portion that the labourer does not receive</u>
1) 4 hours	4 hours.
2) 3 hours	5 hours.
3) 2 hours	6 hours.

Though the portion that the labourer receives from his labour decreases, the decreased labour too gives more number of articles than in the past. Owing to the growth of productivity, the decreased labour is able to give more articles than in the past.

As the labourer uses more number of articles compared to the past whenever productivity increases, it appears as if the condition of the labourer has improved a lot. But what actually happens is that the portion

which he receives from his labour keeps declining and the portion which the master receives keeps increasing. This means, while labourers became impoverished, the owners become wealthy. All this is not clear if we see things superficially.

Observe any kind of labourers, we find that the present day labourers use more number of articles than the past labourers. The articles include cycles, scooters, radios, fans, washing machines, refrigerators, TVs and such other modern articles. Seeing this, the capitalist intellectuals ask, 'where is poverty of labourers in these days?' It would be more appropriate to call this perception 'mediocre' knowledge or 'superficial' knowledge.

These intellectuals merely see a few modern articles that the labourers use and ignore the various modern articles that enter the owners' homes, the number of mansions, their lands, bank accounts, shares and constantly growing wealth.

Though the variety of articles which the labourers use increase, those increased articles too are the fruits of their own labour. It is not something which they have exploited from the others. Hence, what one should see actually is not the articles which the labourers use but what they 'lose'.

A mere increase of the variety of articles which labourers use does not imply the disappearance of their servitude and poverty. The fact that the labourers work for their masters implies servitude and the fact that they are giving surplus labour implies poverty. If there was no servitude, the labourers wouldn't have a need to lose surplus labour in order to feed their masters.

Ambedkar says that nobody accepts the proposition that labourers are becoming more and more impoverished. This means, a leader who claims to be the representative of those who do the lowest labour is arguing that those labourers are not becoming more and more impoverished! Who will protect the field, to use a Telugu saying, if the fence itself grazes in the field, unless the field protects itself!

At every point Ambedkar exhibits a lot of hatred for Marxism. This is a very astonishing thing.

After observing that, 'nobody accepts that the proletariat has been progressively pauperised', Ambedkar concludes that 'the same is true about his (Marx's) other premises' (p. 444). In other words, nobody accepts other aspects of Marx's theory also. This is to say that nobody accepts Marx's concept of exploitation of labour!

Whatever is the view of other people, Ambedkar does not accept it! According to him, all arguments of Marx are wrong. Even the concept

of the 'exploitation of labour' is wrong. It does not exist at all. Labourers are not subjected to exploitation!

Well, then what do terms like 'economic exploitation' and 'safeguards from economic exploitation'?

Who knows? Does Ambedkar know anything about it?

3) The Buddha had already said all that Mārṅ said!

Ambedkar first refuted one premise of Marx's theory and then rejected all other premises by declaring, 'the same is true about his other premises'. Again in the next paragraph he immediately changed his argument and said:

"What remains of the Karl Marx is a residue of fire, small but still very important. The residue in my view consists of four items" (p.444).

He listed the four items as follows (p.444):

1. The function of philosophy is to reconstruct the world and not to waste its time in explaining the origin of the world.
2. There is a conflict of interest between class and class.
3. Private ownership of property brings power to one class and sorrow to another through exploitation.
4. It is necessary for the good of society that the sorrow be removed by the abolition of private property.

For Ambedkar these 4 items are "small but still very important". He, however, feels that the Buddha had already said all these points a long time ago much before Marx. Thus he began to cite examples from the Buddha's story to prove his argument.

1. The point that it is a waste of time to explain the origin of the world:

In fact, Marx did not say so. To prove that the Buddha had already said this point, Ambedkar cited one incident. Potthapada asked the Buddha the following questions: (1) Is the world not eternal? (2) Is the world finite? (3) Is the world infinite? (4) Is the soul the same as the body? (5) Is the soul one thing, and the body another? (6) Does one who has gained the truth live again after death? (7) Does he neither live again, nor not live again, after death? (p. 445).

The Buddha refused to express any opinion on these issues since they are not concerned with Dhamma, Knowledge or human conduct. For Ambedkar, expressing no opinion by the Buddha amounts to saying things much before Marx! Ambedkar thinks that Marx and the Buddha said the same thing since the Buddha dismissed these questions as irrelevant.

But what the Buddha talked was about 'nature'. Questions like, "Is this world eternal or not? What will happen after death?" are concerned with Nature.

Marx talked about issues concerning 'Society'. Marx says, "Philosophers have interpreted the world in various ways. The question, however, is to change it". As the existing society is based on exploitation, we have to change it, says Marx.

Ambedkar compared the Buddha's observations on nature and Marx's observations on society, concluded that both are the same and claims that the Buddha had already said a long time ago what Marx said. In this manner, his comparison and discussion are totally meaningless and useless.

2. The conflict between different classes:

Claiming that the Buddha had already made this point, Ambedkar cites an incident. The context is a conversation between the Buddha and Kosala king.

The Buddha said:

"there is always strife going on between kings, between nobles, between Brahmins, between house holders, between mother and son, between son and father, between brother and sister, between sister and brother, between companion and companion..." (p.445).

In the view of Ambedkar, the Buddha's observations amount to speaking of class struggle.

Even those who do not at all know anything about classes will not be in such a pathetic condition as this!

When we speak of 'classes', we assume the existence of 'owner-labourers' relationship. We also assume the existence of exploitation of labour.

In the slave-owning society, slaves constitute one class while masters constitute another class.

In the feudal society, feudal (tenant) peasants constitute one class while the landlords constitute another class.

In the capitalist society, workers constitute one class while capitalists and landlords together constitute another class.

Classes are based on exploitation of labour! Class struggle and different interests are based on classes.

Based on these principles, we understand classes in any kind of society.

We find different groups within the same class and conflicts among those groups.

Within the class of owners, there are conflicts for getting a larger share while distributing the surplus value exploited from the working class in the form of rent, interest and profit.

There exist groups within the working class because of the distinction: manual labour and mental labour. The manual labourers live in more poverty than the mental labourers. Societies based on exploitation widen this gap further. Moreover, for every group within the labourers, job security is absent. Owing to this fact, competition among labourers begin and conflicts arise. But these conflicts are NOT for the sake of exploiting others' surplus value. These conflicts are merely for the sake of livelihood.

We will be able to understand classes, sections within the classes and the entire set of social relations only when we clearly know about the exploitation of labour.

Ambedkar's claim that 'the Buddha had already talked about the classes' has nothing to do with classes. If we properly understand classes, we can understand the nature of conflicts which the Buddha observed.

Conflict between kings: Different kings do not constitute different classes. All constitute the same class: The class of exploiters. Kings who conflict with each other constitute different groups within the same class. The source of income of each king is: taxes. A large part of these taxes goes for the royal luxuries. A King has his own lands and business as well. He receives rent and merchant profit. These are sources of personal income of the king. Different kings fight with each other to snatch away the others' kingdom. If a king is able to take away the others' kingdom, the victorious king gets all the taxes and rents from the new kingdom. This is a conflict between the groups within the class of exploiters.

Conflict between nobles: Nobles are not 'labourers'. Those who do not perform any labour become nobles and great beings. Therefore these nobles are obviously lazy fellows. Conflict among such fellows is simply for the sake of properties. These are also conflicts among the groups within the class of exploiters.

Conflict between Brahmins: This conflict is meant to share the earnings received from conducting sacrifices and rituals and without doing any labour. They do not constitute different classes; they are different groups within the class of exploiters.

Conflict between householders: If these householders are propertied people, there may arise conflicts relating to the boarder of their agricultural lands or house sites. If these householders are poor people, there may arise conflicts relating to the article which they lend or borrow from each other. These conflicts arise due to either 'riches' or 'poverty'.

Conflict between son and father, between mother and son and between brothers and sisters: There is 'male domination' in society. Husbands and their family members dominate wives; sons dominate mothers and brothers dominate sisters. The conflicts between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law, which Ambedkar did not mention, also come under this category. These are the conflicts which arise due to the absence of equality in family relations. As 'equality' is absent in the very foundation of labour relations, its influence will be on the family relations in the form of male domination.

Conflicts between friends: This means either both or any one of the friends are behaving friendly with some selfish interest. When both friends are unselfish, conflicts do not arise.

Showing these kinds of conflicts, Ambedkar says that 'the Buddha recognized the existence of classes'. He says:

"As to the Buddha's own attitude toward class conflict his doctrine of Ashtanga Marga recognises that class conflict exists and that it is the class conflict which is the cause of misery" (p. 445).

If the Buddha recognized the existence of classes what solution did he suggest? Only Ashtanga Marga; not struggle. He didn't argue that there should be no classes. If the Buddha did not suggest the right solution despite his being aware of it, does it not mean that he was in favour of the class of exploiters?

It is difficult to imagine to what stage this attempt of Ambedkar—an attempt to prove that the Buddha said everything much before Marx—will take him! With this, the second point is over.

3. "That private ownership of property brings power to one class and sorrow to another through exploitation":

To prove that the Buddha had already talked about this point too, Ambedkar cited one incident.

The Buddha says to Potthapada:

"I have expounded, Potthapada, that sorrow and misery exist. I have expounded, what the origin of misery is ('avarice'). I have expounded what is the cessation of misery is ('absence of avarice'). I have expounded what is the method (Ashtanga Marga) by which one may reach the cessation of misery is" (p. 445).

Citing these words of the Buddha, Ambedkar says,

"That language is different but the meaning is the same. If for misery one reads exploitation the Buddha is not away from Marx" (p. 446).

Only the language is different but the essence of what both said is the same, argues Ambedkar! According to him, both the misery which the Buddha talks of and the exploitation of labour which Marx mentions are the same.

But according to Marx, the cause for the misery of working class is the class of owners.

According to the Buddha all people will have misery. Moreover the cause for their misery is their own avarice. The misery of the slave is due to his avarice! The misery of an untouchable is due to his avarice!

This is the meaning of the observation, the "Language is different and meaning is the same"!

Did the Buddha, who talked so much about wealth, tell anybody to reduce the wealth? 'If you reduce your wealth, your conflicts will decline and your sorrow diminishes. Give up some of your lands! Free your slaves!'—Did the Buddha advise wealthy persons like this.

'I will admit only those people who have little wealth and who have no avarice for wealth as my disciples'—Did the Buddha say so?

There is not a single incident of this sort. The Buddha simply recited sermons like 'Don't be avaricious' but he did not give the least trouble to wealthy people. With this, the third point ended.

4. "It is necessary for the good of society that the sorrow be removed by the abolition of private property":

According to Ambedkar, the Buddha had said long before Marx that private property should be abolished. Ambedkar said:

"On the fourth point no evidence is necessary. The rules of the Bhikshu Sangh will serve as the best testimony on the subject" (p. 446).

There is a rule that Bhikshus should not have more than 8 articles.

This rule, according to Ambedkar, implies that the Buddha argued that there should be no private property. Well, whom does that rule of using 8 articles apply to? It is so exclusively in the case of Bhikshus! How does this rule, which Bhikshus have to observe, apply to all people?

Did the Buddha advise kings, traders and the wealthy not to possess more property than those 8 articles? What did he say to all of them? He let kings rule their kingdoms; let traders carry on their trade and asked them to do their jobs more diligently. When Anathapindika asked whether he should give up his property, the Buddha became upset and discouraged him from doing so. One should be like a drop of water on the lotus and it is not bad to have property, said the Buddha. Well then, where did the Buddha say not to own property? To which wealthy fellow did he say so? If we explain this rule of possessing 8 articles to children aged about 5 or 6 years, they will say, "this is meant for sanyasis". If it is children aged about 7 or 8, they would even say, "the Buddha told Anathapindika not to give up business, didn't he?". These points are so simple that even children can think about them. But Ambedkar was not at all concerned about these points. He argued that the Buddha advised people not to have property and the rules for Bhikshus is the best evidence of the Buddha's stand. Then what about the Buddha's advice to Anathapindika? What sort of evidence is that? If the rule of 8 articles applies to all people then who will put alms in the bowls which all people carry?

While narrating the rules of Buddhist Sangh, Ambedkar said that 'upasakas' (lay followers) can have property. He also said that Buddhism provided great opportunities for shudras and women to acquire property, didn't he? But, here, he says Buddhism forbids private property.

How can one understand these strange bullying arguments? Moreover, even if we consider Bhikshus, they cannot have property individually but they can have any extent of common property. They can have common mansions, flower gardens, pleasure gardens and everything. Bhikshus can enjoy feasts with fish and meat until they say, "enough! Enough!" in the houses of wealthy people. They can live leisurely without doing work even for an hour in a day. Is all this not enjoying property? Doesn't all this mean possessing property? The rule of possessing only 8 articles is a superficial drama. The real essence is feasts and luxuries!

Claiming that the Buddha formulated very great rules concerning property, Ambedkar commented:

"These rules are far more rigorous than are to be found in Communism in Russia" (p. 447).

Here it is irrelevant to talk about the rules of Communism in Russia.

If we want to compare the Buddha and Marx, we have to examine the words of these two persons but not what others say in their names.

Marx says, 'there shouldn't be private property based on exploitation. Does the Buddha also say the same thing? It is not so. the Buddha did not say so. His rule regarding property applies only for Bhikshus and not others. Since it is so, how can Ambedkar say that the Buddha's rules are more rigorous than those of Communism? How can he argue that the Buddha and Marx are identical in their views in respect of property? It is very difficult to understand as to what happened to the commonsense of Ambedkar.

What we have examined so far is this: Ambedkar first concluded that there are only 4 items which are important in Marx's theory. Later, he attempted through fables that the Buddha himself said those four 'items' much earlier than Marx. But his attempts weren't successful.

Ambedkar did not understand the fact that his attempts failed. He proceeded forward enthusiastically thinking that he was able to prove successfully his claim that the Buddha too talked of Communism like Marx.

While using terms like 'Socialism' and 'Communism' in respect of the Buddha, Ambedkar concluded that the Buddha too proposed Communism just as Marx did. Therefore, Ambedkar began his efforts to prove that 'both talked of Communism; but to achieve it the Buddha's path is superior to Marx's path'.

4) Whose path is better?

Now the entire discussion concerns the path or means to achieve Communism! First he showed the Buddha's path and then showed Marx's path.

Before we begin to examine whose path is better, we may mention one point. Following Marx's path, movements toward Communism began in two countries 60 years after Marx's theory began. Those movements might have faced defeat temporarily. They might have committed many mistakes. It is a different issue. In many regions of the world, at least the first steps began along the path of Marx toward changing society. But such attempts toward Communism did not take place even in one country through the Buddha's Ashtanga Marga even after 2,500 years. Is Ambedkar not aware of this fact? He is. But it is his overconfidence that we need not consider that fact and Communism is possible some time or other through Ashtanga Marga. He has no idea, 'when will it happen since it has not happened even after 2,500 years? He doesn't have any need to answer this question as he does not have questions at all.

His discussion concerning the 'means' or 'path' proceeds as follows.

(1) The Buddha's means to achieve 'Communism'

"The means of bringing about Communism which the Buddha propounded were quite definite. The means can be divided into three parts" (p. 447).

We have seen many times what those three parts are: purity, righteousness and virtue! Or Pancha Silas, Ashtanga Marga and Paramitas!

Ambedkar cited these three parts and emphasized that this is the path to achieve Communism. This means, Ambedkar too wants Communism! It is amazing!

Though we know all about Buddhism, we have to patiently look at it again for the sake of Communism. Even for the purpose of discussion, we have to reexamine it carefully.

Ambedkar said that we have to divide the Buddha's path into three parts, didn't he?

"Part one consisted in observing Pancha Silas" (p. 447).

Ambedkar summarized this path as follows:

Buddhism is a 'new gospel'. Its foundation is that 'the world is full of misery and unhappiness'. The recognition of this fact itself is the path that leads to emancipation.

After saying so, Ambedkar observed that there are two reasons for misery.

1. "A part of the misery and unhappiness of man was the result of his own misconduct" (p. 447).

According to this sermon, the cause for the misery of a slave is his misconduct. The cause for the misery of an untouchable too is his misconduct. Well then, why have untouchables accused poor Hindus so far? Well, at least, tender apologies to Hindus! Tell them, 'It is merely our misconduct which resulted in our misery and suffering. You have not done us any wrong'.

Further, untouchables should declare that reservations are not necessary. Because: when their own misconduct alone has resulted in their suffering, the solution lies in changing their 'conduct'. Hence how can they demand reservations? What is the use in looking for a solution when the entire fault lies in their conduct?

Ambedkar himself suggests following Pancha Silas first to change

misconduct. As a result, their sufferings will go. Hence untouchables should do the same thing, shouldn't they? Here Ambedkar said something new about Pancha Silas. It is better to practise it after reading it and combine it with the old conception.

- 1) "To abstain from destroying or causing destruction of any living thing"

(Well, these are good words! But why did the Buddha and his disciples eat meat and contributed to the destruction of living animals? Oh, they do it but we can't do it! Now the point is clear!).

- 2) "To abstain from stealing i.e. acquiring or keeping by fraud or violence, the property of another".

('The property of another'! Which means, property belongs to those whoever possesses it! Property possessed by a king belongs to the king! Property possessed by the minister belongs to the minister! Well, Ambedkar is arguing that the Buddha preached that there should be no private property, isn't he? If property possessed by an individual belongs to individuals only, why can't that property remain with them as private property?)

- 3) "To abstain always from telling untruth".

(Why did the Buddha speak untruth? For example, in the story of a girl named 'Prakriti'!)

- 4) "To abstain from lust".

(To abstain from all kinds of lust except from lust for: knowledge, gifts, feasts? That too, should people other than the Buddha abstain from it?)

- 5) "To abstain from consuming intoxicating drinks".

(How much distance one should maintain? At what distance should one sit in the respected company of wealthy fellows who take intoxicants?)

One should first observe these 5 principles in order to change his misconduct and become free from misery.

On the whole, there are 2 reasons for misery and unhappiness, aren't they? We have seen the first reason. The second reason is:

2. "A part of the misery and unhappiness in the world was according to the Buddha the result of man's inequity towards man".

The master treats his slave as an inferior person instead of as an equal. Hence a slave becomes unhappy and the master happy. The slave too treats

his master as a superior person instead of an equal. Because of this also slave becomes unhappy and master happy.

Why does one person not treat another as an equal? Those who are not equal in their life conditions cannot treat each other as equals. The person who is in a superior position gets happiness while the person who is in an inferior position gets unhappiness.

But according to the Buddha, any two persons must treat each other as equals even if they (their station in life conditions) are not equal.

Ambedkar found a beautiful path in the Buddha for the solution of this 'inequality' question.

"For the removal of man's inequity towards man the Buddha prescribed the Noble Eight-Fold Path" (p. 447).

We have seen 2 reasons for misery and unhappiness, haven't we? The solution for the misery caused due to the first reason, namely, misconduct is Pancha Silas!

The solution for the misery caused due to the second reason, namely, inequity, is Ashtanga Marga!

Doesn't Ashtanga Marga solve the first misery and doesn't Pancha Silas solve the second misery? Nay, they don't solve! Do mustard seeds, instead of seeds of bishop's weed, cure indigestion? Each ailment should be treated with the appropriate medicine shouldn't it? This is like that too!

Okay, do you remember the elements of Ashtanga Marga? If you don't, let us recall them briefly: (1) Right views; (2) Right aims; (3) Right speech; (4) Right conduct; (5) Right livelihood; (6) Right perseverance in all the other seven. (Mentioning only 5 principles and proposing observance of 7 principles as the 6th principle!); (7) Right mindfulness; (8) Right contemplation. Ambedkar gave elaborate explanations for all these 8 elements. Those who want to eradicate their second kind of sorrow by means of Ashtanga Marga may see page 447 of volume 3.

"The aim of the Noble Eight-Fold Path is to establish on earth the kingdom of righteousness, and thereby to banish sorrow and unhappiness from the face of the world" (p. 448).

To follow Ashtanga Marga one has to face many difficulties and hurdles.

"The doctrine of Nibbana tells what are the difficulties in the way of realization of the Eight-Fold Path" (p. 448).

There are ten difficulties. They are: Delusion of self, Doubt and indecision, Dependence on the efficacy of rites and ceremonies, Bodily passions, Ill-will towards other individuals, Suppression of the desire for a future life with a material body, Desire for a future life in an immaterial world, Pride, self-righteousness and Ignorance. Even if we conquer all other difficulties the last one will remain unconquered. However, we can conquer these 10 Asavas (fetters or Hindrances or difficulties) by means of Nibbana.

The last part of the Buddha's new gospel is the doctrine of Paramitas. This doctrine tells us to inculcate the practice of ten virtues (p. 449). They are: (1) Panna (2) Sila (3) Nekkhamma (4) Dana (5) Virya (6) Khanti (7) Suddha (9) Aditthana (9) Metta and (10) Upekkha.

Ambedkar says that the Buddha's path makes all human beings become righteous people voluntarily by means of all these principles.

"It is clear that the means adopted by the Buddha were to convert a man by changing his moral disposition to follow the path voluntarily" (p. 450).

Not only slaves but also their masters too change! Not only untouchables but all Hindus too change! In this manner, Communism emerges!

"Such is the gospel the Buddha enunciated as a result of his enlightenment to end the sorrow and misery in the world" (p. 450).

So far, Ambedkar has tried to prove that this (the Buddha's path) alone is the best path to achieve Communism.

What more do we have to say about this attempt? If we want to comment there is only thing: Ambedkar perhaps knows very well about Communism which Ashtanga Marga brings about, but he doesn't know the ABCs of Communism which the class struggle brings about. This is the only comment one has to make!

What a strange experience to watch an educated person, who—though born in this modern world where the secret of exploitation of labour is exposed and though has acquired many degrees—did not allow a single ray of knowledge into his brain and lived with a 2,500 year-old orthodox soul!

So far, Ambedkar has shown us the Buddha's path to Communism, hasn't he? Now he will show Marx's path to Communism and would explain which is the better one.

(2) Marx's means to achieve Communism

On this issue, Ambedkar started his discussion as follows:

“The means adopted by the Communists are equally clear, short and swift. They are (1) Violence and (2) Dictatorship of the Proletariat. The Communists say that there are the only two means of establishing Communism. The first is violence. Nothing short of it will suffice to break up the existing system. The other is dictatorship of the proletariat. Nothing short of it will suffice to continue the new system. It is now clear what are the similarities and differences between the Buddha and Karl Marx. The differences are about the means. The end is common to both” (p. 450).

Though Ambedkar says that the end is common to both the Buddha and Marx, it is a meaningless observation. The end is not common to both. When the end is not common, there is no need of the discussion whether the means are the same or not. As Ambedkar too holds the same misconceptions of Marxism as many people do, we have to examine them.

Marxism is a theory that is antagonistic to the class of exploiters. Hence that class does not attempt to understand this theory. Though this is a theory which the labouring class likes, it is still in a stage where it has not reached the labouring class. That is why, the labouring population finds itself in a situation whereby it cannot answer the criticism of the opponents of Marxism. Moreover, many people within the labour class grope about in misconceptions like the opponents. For this reason, we must examine the questions of ‘violence’ and ‘dictatorship’ which Ambedkar has mentioned. To discuss Marxism, one has to rely on the writings of Marx and Engels not on what Communists say or do in Russia, China, India or some other country.

We should not totally equate a communist individual, a communist party or a communist country with Marx's theory. Individuals and organizations who claim to be followers of Marxism may commit many mistakes. They may function with many limitations. Those individuals themselves alone are responsible for the wrongs and defects and not the theory. We therefore should not cite individuals and sources other than the original writers.

Concerning Buddhism, Ambedkar argues elsewhere that the Buddha did not establish the Hinayana and Mahayana branches. Though these sects are considered to be Buddhist, he would recognize only the fundamental principles of the Buddha, says Ambedkar. Similarly, while evaluating a theory, one has to take into account the original writings of those who proposed the theory. We should follow the same method even in the case of Marxism.

Now let us examine the issues in Marxism which Ambedkar objects to.

On Violence: Ambedkar says that Marxism advocates violence as a means. On what basis does he say this? Has he shown anything from Marx's writings? He has not cited a single sentence. Though citing Marx from others' writing is not acceptable, he has not done even that.

We can discuss the matter if Ambedkar has cited any evidence from Marx. On what basis do we discuss the issue if he, without showing any evidence, argues that Marxism advocates violence as a means to establishing Communism? We, ourselves, have to search for the evidence of this point in Marx's writings. In Marx and Engels' work "The Manifesto of the Communist Party", there are some sentences where we find words like *forceful overthrow* and *violent overthrow*.

"In depicting the most general phases of the development of the proletariat, we traced the more or less veiled civil war, raging within the existing society, up to the point where that war breaks out into open revolution, and where the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie lays the foundation for the sway of the proletariat" (p. 59 in Moscow edition, 1973).

"The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions" (p. 96).

Sentences of this sort may appear at many more places in the works of Marx and Engels. Mr. Ambedkar, do you call this 'violence'? Then listen! This is not violence. Moreover this is a struggle against violence. This is a revolt against violence. The real violence is the exploitation of labour which owners carry on.

Attempt to resist violence is not violence! It is the self-protection of the working class! If you describe struggle for self-protection as violence, it means that you are advising the working class not to struggle and rebel for their own emancipation and asking them to remain as slaves by pouring out labour to their masters as before.

If your tender heart cannot bear the working class struggle, there is another beautiful path before you! If you can make the class of owners abandon their property rights without any struggle, why will the working class wage struggle and revolt? Why does a struggle take place when there is no need for a struggle?

Will the class of owners give up its property rights? Will it begin to perform labour for its own maintenance? It has to till the land along with the labourers! It has to do work in factories and mines. It has to

run buses and trains. It has to sweep roads and clean sewage. Not simply one kind of work but whole range of jobs. It has to perform all kinds of jobs including the lowest manual labour just as the entire labouring population has been doing for several thousands of years. Further, the government of owners has to abandon all the arms which it has kept with it in order to suppress the Working Class which rebels! It has to abolish the police and the army!

Why will the Working Class wage struggles or revolts if the class of owners voluntarily agrees for such a change? Is the Working Class crazy?

Don't you know whether the armouries are under the control of workers or owners?

Don't you know under whose control and for whose protection the police and the military stand?

Don't you really know that the class of owners is the birthplace of violence? While there are a variety of strange and odd instruments of violence and bands of employees trained in violence are at the disposal of that class of owners, you are equating the struggle of the working class for its self-protection with violence. This shows how well you have understood the basis for violence!

What did the Buddha say about violence? He said, "war is wrong unless it is for truth and justice" (p. 442). Which means, such a war (for truth and justice) will be a 'right' war.

The war which the Working Class wages is also a 'right' war. If human beings are killed in such a war and if it amounts to violence, the Working Class is not responsible for that violence. It is the class of owners that is responsible. There won't be any violence if that class gives up its domination. Otherwise, violence is inevitable. Self-protection is inevitable, isn't it?

Ambedkar always forgets his own words. Otherwise he would have remembered the fact that he emotionally preached violence for self-protection for the untouchables. That context was this: Ambedkar was a member in the beginning in the Anti-Untouchability League which Gandhi started in 1932. While writing a letter to Thakkar, the secretary of the League, Ambedkar argued that there should be an army of workers to wage struggles for the protection of untouchables' rights, that the programme of struggle involves 'social disturbance' and 'even bloodshed' and that no other programme will be effective.

Would you like to see it in Ambedkar's own words?

"I think the first thing that the League should undertake is a campaign all over India to secure to the Depressed Classes the enjoyment of their civic rights such as taking water from the village wells, entry into village schools, admission to the village chawdi, the use of public conveyance, etc. Such a programme if carried into villages will bring about the necessary social revolution in the Hindu society, without which it will never be possible for the Depressed Classes to get equal social status...First of all there will be **riots** between the Depressed Classes and the caste Hindus which will result in **breaking heads**...the League will have to have an army of workers in the rural parts, who will encourage the Depressed Classes to fight for their rights...It is true that this programme involves **social disturbance** and **even bloodshed**. But I do not think that it can be avoided. I know the alternative policy of adopting the line of least resistance. I am convinced that it will be ineffective in the matter of uprooting Untouchability...you must create a **crisis by direct action**" (Vol. 9, pp: 135-36, emphases added).

Thus Ambedkar gave suggestions throughout his very long letter. What sort of suggestions? That only a direct action organized by the army of workers involving even bloodshed will uproot Untouchability.

Further, see other examples which Ambedkar cited and where he suggested means to fight out any injustice anywhere! (Vol. 5, p. 375).

This is an occasion when Ambedkar criticised Gandhi. A clause in the constitution of Harijan Sevak Sangh which Gandhi established reads as follows:

"That no compulsion is to be used for securing rights, but that peaceful persuasion is to be adopted as the *only* means" (Vol.5, p. 375).

While criticising Gandhi for this clause, Ambedkar's argument defending the use of force ('even bloodshed') proceeded with great enthusiasm. After citing the clause, Ambedkar says:

"This is a basic principle of the Sangh. It has struck me as strange suggestion—Why has the Sangh limited itself to peaceful persuasion of the caste Hindus as the one and the only means of removing Untouchability?" (Vol. 5, p. 375).

In this manner he made a long argument and finally concluded that injustice should be 'resisted' and 'challenged' 'by power' (use of force).

"If justice is to be abolished it must be resisted and when injustice proceeds from collective power, whether in the form of imperialism or class domination, it must be challenged by power. A class entrenched behind its established power can never be dislodged unless power is raised

against it. That is the only way of stopping the exploitation of the weak by strong" (Vol. 5, p. 375).

He, thus, said 'this is the only way', didn't he? Then how can resistance to injustice be 'violence' and not revolt or resistance?

"I have mentioned only two of the many obstacles which the League will have to overcome if this campaign of civic rights is to be successful and the League will have to have an army of workers in the rural parts who will encourage the Depressed Classes to fight for their rights and who will help them in any legal proceedings arising therefrom to a successful issue. It is true that this programme involves **social disturbances** and **violent scuffle**. But I do not think that it can be avoided" (Vol. 5, p. 368, emphases added).

"The salvation of the Depressed Classes will come only when the Caste Hindu is made to think and is **forced** to feel that he must alter his ways" (Vol. 5, p. 368, emphasis added).

Why have these arguments of Ambedkar, namely, "violent scuffle", "forced", "crisis" and "direct action" turned upside down by the time he discussed Marx's theory?

Have 'violence' and 'use of force'—which were the best means to fight against Untouchability—become 'mean' means to fight against 'exploitation of labour'? What name would be more appropriate to this kind of argument?

If we discuss this issue in greater detail, we will find that these revolts and use of force do not at all function effectively in the case of Untouchability as they function in the case of exploitation of labour.

To put an end to the exploitation of labour, it is the working class that has to change. It is enough if it acquires new knowledge that the exploitative property rights should be abolished. Then the problem will be solved. But this is not the case with the question of 'Untouchability'. Here it is not untouchables who have to change but the Hindus. Unless Hindus realize that 'observance of Untouchability is wrong' and change themselves, the revolts of untouchables will not be effective.

Untouchables may acquire the right to use common wells. But what can untouchables do if Hindus stop coming to those wells? With what right can the untouchables compel Hindus to come to the well? What can untouchables do if the Hindu children don't attend the same schools to which the children of untouchables attend? If Hindus don't visit the same temples where untouchables enter? If Hindus don't employ untouchables as domestic workers? With what right can the untouchables fight against a Hindu to stop him from taking bath at home after he has touched an

untouchable? This is not something untouchables can achieve by using force against the Hindus. The solution lies in the hands of Hindus and not untouchables.

The nature of problems like Untouchability and caste distinctions is such that it is not possible to eradicate them unless their practitioners change. Others' rights do not matter here.

The fact that practice of Untouchability has diminished today implies that it is because of the culturally refined ideas of Hindus and not because the untouchables have stopped the Hindus from its practice.

Culturally refined ideas always arise due to the fight against the conditions that are opposed to the ideas. However, culturally refined ideas among the practitioners crop up because the sufferers of Untouchability fought against Untouchability in some way or the other. This is true. But why did the sufferers of Untouchability acquire ideas and struggle against Untouchability? Because of their suffering. This reason was there even in the remote past as well. In addition to the suffering, changes and struggles in the sphere of production relations—which form the basis of culture—influence the sphere of culture. Such changes and struggles prompt Dalits to fight against Untouchability. They also influence Hindus who practice Untouchability.

Ambedkar suggested the use of force in the case of Untouchability where it is not possible to eradicate the evil practice by means of force. Whereas he is arguing that 'force' does not apply in respect to the 'exploitation of labour'. He said that people have to resist with collective power in the form of class domination, didn't he? Then how could he say that Marxism advocates the path of violence and it is not a good path? Is it not surprising?

If we begin to be surprised by what Ambedkar says, then we will need eternity. We are constantly surprised, not just on one or two occasions. How long can we be surprised when we have to be surprised at every page?

It is wrong if others say what he said! Moreover, today he won't say what he said yesterday! He won't say the same tomorrow what he has said today! His arguments change without a change in the contents! There isn't any reason why his arguments change. He changes them as per his convenience! This is the only principle he seems to follow!

Well, let us now discuss the second point in Marxism which is objectionable to Ambedkar.

Dictatorship of the proletariat:

Ambedkar argues that Marx suggested the path of dictatorship instead of democracy whereas the Buddha preached the path of democracy and hence the Buddha's path is the better one!

We will discuss Marx's meaning of dictatorship later. What is the basis for the claim that the Buddha proposed Democracy? Ambedkar cites some examples in support of his claim.

1) "As to Dictatorship the Buddha would have none of it. He was born a democrat and he died a democrat. At the time he lived there were 14 monarchical states and 4 republics. He belonged to the Sakyas and the Sakya's kingdom was a republic" (p. 451).

All the countries which Ambedkar glorified as 'republics' were based on the exploitation of slaves. The class that performs labour and a class that exploits labour existed in those republics. The slaves did not have any rights. This is the best democracy which Ambedkar loved! On many occasions Ambedkar said that there is no democracy in India where we have untouchables and that whatever exists in the name of democracy is not democracy for untouchables. Then how could a society with slaves that existed 2,500 years ago be a democratic society? Look, once again we are surprised here!

2) Another example which Ambedkar cited to claim that the Buddha was a democrat: that the Buddha used to wear 'robes made of rags' along with all other Bhikshus! The reason for wearing the robes made of rags was to prevent aristocratic classes joining the Sangh, says Ambedkar. This means, persons joined the Buddha's Sangh not because they liked the Dhamma (path). They joined only if they were not afraid to wear robes made of rags! They wouldn't join if they had the fear of being dressed in rags!

If the Buddha didn't like to admit aristocrats, would it not have been enough if he had laid a condition that he wouldn't admit the rich? Is wearing 'robes made of rags' a solution?

Anyway the Buddha did not lay down the rule that members should not have 'money', did he? Then how could possession of money or aristocracy be wrong? What is the reference to money in order to admit a person into Sangh? However small an issue Ambedkar raises, it has no less than a hundred blunders!

While all Bhikshus were wearing these 'robes made of rags', Jeevika, a royal physician "prevailed upon the Buddha to accept a robe which made of a whole cloth. The Buddha at once altered the rule and extended it

to all the monks" (p. 452). The Buddha was a "thorough egalitarian" according to Ambedkar! It seems the Buddha liked the robe made of a whole cloth. As he didn't want to remove that robe, he permitted Bhikshus too to wear such robes. Oh, what a clever guy the Buddha was!

This democracy of 'robes' is wonderful; but wouldn't there be a problem of aristocrats joining the Sangh? The past rule of robes made of rags was meant to prevent such aristocrats' admission, wasn't it? If you remove that rule, how will you solve the problem of aristocrats joining the Sangh? Is it not once again surprising to note that Ambedkar cited this story without this question? It is a pity that Ambedkar landed into unwarranted trouble thinking that he could prove the Buddha's democracy by this fable of the robes!

3) "Once the Buddha's mother Mahaprajapati Gotami who had joined the Bhikkhuni Sangh heard that "the Buddha had got a chill..."

Having heard about it, she "at once started preparing a scarf for him". (This mother is perhaps a kind of person, to use a Telugu saying, who digs a well while the house is burning! Making a scarf after he has a cold!)

"After having completed it she took to the Buddha and asked him to wear it. But he refused to accept it saying that if it is a gift it must be a gift to the whole Sangh and not to an individual member of the Sangh. She pleaded and pleaded but he refused to yield" (p.452).

This means, the Buddha was a democrat! This is the third example.

But he could have taken the scarf for the Sangh and everyone—whoever needs it—could have used it, couldn't they? Now the Buddha could use it since he had a cold. Later, after washing it clean, others could use it. Is there any dearth of catching a cold? Whoever has a nose will get a cold, won't they? Using a scarf by the Sangh means each member has to use it individually, doesn't it? All the members of the Sangh can't tie the same scarf round their heads at a time, do they?

The Buddha could have told his mother clearly that he would accept it if she gives it to the Sangh and he wouldn't take it if it were meant only for him.

Did she say that she wouldn't give it if it were for the Sangh?

Ambedkar's Buddha appears to be a brainless guy. His mother too seems like him. She could have said, 'well, take it for the use of the Sangh! Whoever wants it can use it!' It didn't occur to her. How could it occur to her when it did not occur to an enlightened person, philosopher and democrat like the Buddha? Anyway, the Buddha did not take the scarf. He would have accepted it in the name of the Sangh if it were land or mansion. He didn't accept it because it was merely a scarf.

These fables of 'democracy of robes' and 'democracy of scarf' are the bases of Ambedkar's claim that the Buddha was a great democrat and his path is the best of all paths. How amazing this is? Can a theory become a 'democratic' theory just because of such stories?

Ambedkar has a lot of glamour for the term 'democracy'. He is not bothered even if there are slaves in that democracy. It is needless to talk of the term 'parliamentary democracy'—even if classes, exploitation of labour and everything is in tact.

A society based on exploitation can continue its relations of exploitation in the name of 'democracy'. Such a democracy exists as democracy between owners but not between owners and labourers. Hence the terms 'democracy' and 'republic' are meaningless in the context of 'exploitation'. These are simply good names.

It is wrong to defend or oppose anything by the name alone. Ambedkar was concerned merely with the names and not concerned with the 'essence' of the names. Hence, by looking at the names such as Sakya republic, Vishali republic, Magadha republic and so on and calls the rule of those kings 'democracies'. Similarly, looking at Marx's 'dictatorship', he exhibits serious opposition to it.

Yes, what Marx says is 'dictatorship'. But he called it 'Dictatorship of the Proletariat'. He described that dictatorship as follows:

Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the *revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat* (Critique of the Gotha Programme, p. 26. Moscow edition, 1971, emphasis in the original).

The Commune could not found a new form of class government. In destroying the existing conditions of oppression by transferring all the means of labour to the productive labourer, and thereby compelling every able-bodied individual to work for a living, the only base for class rule and oppression would be removed. But before such a change could be effected a proletarian dictatorship would become necessary (Marx. In 'Marx and Engels: Collected Works', vol. 11, pp: 633-34. Moscow edition, 1986).

Why is this proletarian dictatorship necessary, as per Marx's explanation? This is not a dictatorship that serves the class of owners in order to perpetuate exploitation; but exactly opposed to it. This is a dictatorship useful for the working class to remove exploitation.

When the working class can take the 'state power' through its struggle, society will still be in the old conditions. That is in the same conditions of 'owner-worker relations'. The working class has to change such a society into a 'new' society. Revolutionary restrictions will be imposed on the existing labour relations. Abolition of property rights over land and capital will begin in a stage-wise manner. Every individual has to perform labour compulsorily. Not only mental labour but also the lowest manual labour in turn as duties. Wage or salary that a person gets in return to the 'labour' is the income of that person. This means, no body should have the right to receive income under the labels of rent, interest and profit without doing any labour. 'Religion' should be an individual affair. No one should have the right to propagate religion openly, to form religious organisations and to live as religious preachers without doing labour. In this manner, the working class government has to abolish all the irrational aspects that continued in exploitative societies. To achieve all this the State has to impose many revolutionary restrictions.

Imposition of restrictions, namely, 'land under the possession of the landlord no longer belongs to him', capitals are not properties of capitalists and every individual must perform labour and live on their own labour—imply abolition of rights of the past ages. This abolition is a dictatorship against the propertied class. Whether we change its name in any manner and whether we call it 'proletarian democracy', it is dictatorship against another class if the restrictions have to remain. How is it possible to abolish the exploitative property rights in the absence of this dictatorship and these restrictions?

All the restrictions necessary to establish 'equality' are not confined to the class of exploiters only. Certain kinds of restrictions will necessarily be imposed on all people. For example, if the population engaged only in mental labour has to do manual labour, all the relevant restrictions should exist. Similarly, there should be certain restrictions in order to change division of labour between men and women. Marx had said that Communists should undertake revolutionary transformation of 'all existing social conditions'.

People belonging to all classes—who have been living for ages amidst relations of exploitation and corresponding ideology—have to 'transform' into relations of equality and ideas of equality. Relations of inequality must shatter into pieces and new relations have to be woven in all spheres of life. All this constitutes a struggle against the 'freedom' which the class of owners alone enjoyed. This is a revolt wherever there is domination. Hence, no other name except 'revolutionary dictatorship' applies. However, this dictatorship is not something that remains eternally. This is something

necessary until we change relations of exploitation into relations of equality. The period of revolutionary dictatorship constitutes only the period of transition. When there is no need of this stage, there won't exist class distinctions. When there are no class distinctions at all, class dictatorships too won't find a place.

Ambedkar did not pay attention to any of these explanations of Marx. In his view, the word 'dictatorship, itself is wrong! The dictatorship of the proletariat appears to be wrong to any one who does not keep in view the exploitation of labour.

Ambedkar does not like any of the restrictions which this kind of dictatorship imposes on the propertied class. According to him, all people will change by means of Buddhism without the need of any dictatorship.

What more do we need than this if such a change is possible? Can't we establish in a very short time the classless society without shedding a single drop of blood by any class, and to use a Telugu expressions, without losing a single hair on the head and without spoiling the clothes worn, if the class of exploiters gives up its property rights irrespective of the existence of restrictions and realises the responsibility of performing labour? Will this happen by means of the Buddha's path?

Opposing the proletariat dictatorship, Ambedkar's criticism proceeds as follows:

"Take dictatorship. The end of Dictatorship is to make the Revolution a permanent revolution. This is a valuable end. But can the Communists say that in achieving this end they have not destroyed other valuable ends?" (p. 452).

"They have destroyed private property...How many people have they killed for achieving their end. Has human life no value? Could they not have taken property without taking the life of the owner?" (p. 452).

Where did these 'killings' take place? When? On what occasion? He has not given a single piece of evidence; except saying 'they killed! They killed!'

If at all this had happened anywhere, it might have happened in a war. Or it might have happened when the owners tried to kill labourers while opposing their movement. How can we judge what is good and what is bad unless we know what happened and in what context it happened?

'Could they not have taken property without taking the life of the owner?', asks Ambedkar.

Yes, they could. In fact, it is wholly an ideal and desirable to do

so. But it will be possible only when the owner too cooperates! That is, when the owner voluntarily gives up his property in his possession and the attitude of an owner! If it so happens he will be very secure, or to use a Telugu figurative expression, 'even the flower which the owner wears on the head will not fade'. But no owner behaves so sensibly. "The entire land is mine", says he, though the land does not belong to any one person. "The entire capital is mine", says he, though the capital belongs to workers! "Why should I work when I possess property", he says. This conflict may go to any extent. If it leads to a struggle and killings, will that be the workers' crime? Will that be the workers' responsibility?

Are only owners dying in these struggles? Is nothing happening to the workers? Why do workers also take the risk of their lives? It is because there is a need for it!

'Can't they take property without killing the owner', asks Ambedkar with a great human heart. Can't we ask him the same question? What if we ask him, 'Can't untouchables use common amenities without breaking the heads of Hindus?' Why did Ambedkar advocate 'even bloodshed' with reference to Hindus? Ambedkar too did not think that only a drop of blood would delicately be shed and then stop shedding, did he? He himself said that heads may break, didn't he? Then can't the untouchables conduct 'movements' without breaking anybody's head? Why did Ambedkar himself say that there was no other way? Then how is he able to ask Communists, 'can't you take property without killing the owner'?

Untouchables as well as Communists know that killing is not ideal or desirable and they should not resort to that method. Such a thing happens only when the situation is unavoidable.

We have seen several dozen times at every point how Ambedkar's method works? It is right if he says something! It is wrong when others say the same thing! This is his principle! This alone is the guiding principle of all his investigations.

Do you remember what this democrat—who dismisses dictatorship and use of force—said in the context when he explained how to reform the Hindu religion? Let us go to the essay *Annihilation of Caste*. There he suggested many restrictions: that there should be only one standard text for the Hindu religion, that all Hindu religious texts like Vedas, Shastras and Puranas be abolished, that the propagation of anything from those texts be considered a crime and punished and so on. Will all these measures not amount to 'dictatorship over those who believe those texts as the Holy Scriptures? Will punishing such people not amount to the use of force?

If banning the freedom to propagate the Hindu religious texts is not dictatorship, how can the ban on exploitative rights be dictatorship?

According to Ambedkar, none of the bans and punishments that he suggested amount to dictatorship or illegitimacy. Whatever Marx said that alone is dictatorship and illegal!

Following this sort of attitude, Ambedkar concluded Marx's path as 'use of force'. Such a path, Ambedkar said, will not last longer though succeed temporarily and hence the Buddha's path will last long.

Here also Ambedkar began to narrate a fable in order to prove the difference between the 'rule by righteousness' and 'rule by force'. This is a story of righteousness which Ambedkar used as a weapon to defeat Marxism. Readers have to examine this very important 'scientific' discussion with great care.

Rule by Celestial Wheel:

According to Ambedkar, the Buddha narrated this story to Bhikshus (pp: 453-58). 'Long long ago, there was a Sovereign overlord named Strongtyre. He lived in supremacy over this earth to its ocean bounds, having conquered it'. He was such a conqueror. He conquered the earth 'not by the sword but by righteousness', says the Buddha.

The Buddha interprets that this emperor conquered the earth not by sword but by righteousness! "Yes, this is true", Ambedkar sings in chorus! Both the Buddha and Ambedkar are describing the emperor as a great righteous ruler and protector of people.

The Buddha's surrender to the emperor is indescribable! It is needless to talk about Ambedkar's surrender. The sight of a 'king' is enough! Abject submission! Total surrender!

The emperor had a 'celestial wheel'. He ruled people righteously for thousands of years. One day the Celestial wheel sunk a little and slipped down from its place. The emperor called his son immediately and told him, 'I have had my full of human pleasures. It is time to seek after divine joys. Take charge of this earth bounded by the ocean. I shall shave my hair and beard and become a sanyasi.' Saying thus the emperor 'went forth from home into a homeless state'.

On the seventh day after the emperor left, the Celestial Wheel disappeared. The son went and told his father about it. The father said, 'Don't worry! The Celestial Wheel is not a parental heritage' (The real parental heritage includes land and slaves only. What if one gets or does not get that stupid Celestial Wheel!)

The father gave great sermons to his son: 'Follow the Aryan duty! The Celestial Wheel remains where there is righteousness! Worship truth and righteousness! Righteousness is your master! Provide protection for the army, vassals, your own folk, Brahmins, people! Give money to the poor! Renounces the carelessness arising from intoxication of the senses!

This emperor does not use the sword but righteousness, isn't it? Then why does he have an army with him? This army also wages wars! Other kings become his vassals! They pay tribute! The king's own folk have special luxuries! Brahmins have special protection! This is the rule by righteousness which Ambedkar liked a lot!

The Celestial Wheel reappeared when the son went home and conducted 'puja' (worship) on the full moon day. If the Wheel appears, then the king will become a bigger king, a monarch and even a sovereign of the world. The king took in his left hand a pitcher and with his right hand sprinkled water over the Celestial Wheel saying: 'Roll onward, O Lord Wheel! (The son, it seems, is not happy with the kingdoms which his father gave him! He is asking the Wheel to conquer ("overcome") more).

The Celestial Wheel rolled onwards towards the region of the East and after it the king and his fourfold army moved. (Ambedkar swears that this is righteousness and not use of force!). All the kings from that region came to the emperor and obeyed his supremacy, "O mighty king! O mighty king! All is yours!'

Then his sovereign king gave those vassals sermons: 'don't kill living beings! Don't speak lies. Don't drink maddening drink. Don't steal!' (I will do all these crimes and steal all kingdoms. You don't do these things!)

Then the Celestial Wheel turned southwards. Here also the same thing happened. Many vassals surrendered. They were also given sermons.

The Celestial Wheel turned to all directions. "The Celestial Wheel had gone forth conquering over the whole earth to its ocean boundary and returned to the royal city and stood" (p. 456). (Recall, it is Ambedkar's strange interpretation that the Buddha—who narrated these stories of 'conquering over the whole earth'—had opposed 'private property'!)

In this way, seven emperors ruled in a righteous path. But one emperor, disregarding Aryan duty, began to rule as he wished. He stopped giving money to the destitutes.

The Celestial Wheel disappeared again. Poverty became widespread. A poor person committed theft. The king gave him money. All the poor people thought this was a nice way and began to commit theft. But the king this time had the thieves' heads cut off. Then the thieves turned into robbers and began to kill people.

Immoral courses of action and promiscuity increased. There began a lack of religious piety to holy men. (This is a good trend, isn't it?)

The Buddha continues to narrate what sort of abnormalities take place in such a situation. The life span of humans will come to ten years. Maidens of five years will be of a marriageable age. Among such humans knowledge of tastes disappear. (Why will it not disappear when there is nothing to eat?) Ten moral courses of conduct will altogether disappear and the ten immoral courses of action will flourish excessively.

The story goes on like this till the end.

The emperors were able to conquer many kingdoms when they followed the Aryan duty. Then the world conducted itself in a righteous manner. But the world filled with vices because one emperor abandoned his Aryan duty! This is the essence! This is a story that glorifies emperors, Brahmins and Aryan duty!

The Buddha narrates this story glorifying Aryan duty!

Ambedkar cited this story merely to show that a rule by righteousness is very great but the world will be full of vices if it follows Marx's concept of dictatorship.

Ambedkar did not at all feel ashamed to tell us that emperors— who invaded all parts of the earth with a fourfold army—ruled by righteousness and not the sword. He did not at least feel ashamed to glorify Brahmins and Aryan duty.

More on 'Proletarian Dictatorship':

Ambedkar's discussion is not yet over. It goes on in many ways. One of his arguments is as follows:

"The Communists themselves admit that their theory of the State as a permanent dictatorship is a weakness in their political philosophy... Dictatorship for a short period may be good and a welcome thing even for making Democracy safe. Why should not Dictatorship liquidate itself after it has done its work, after it has removed all the obstacles and boulders in the way of democracy and has made the path of Democracy safe" (p. 459).

"...no argument for permanent Dictatorship. Permanent Dictatorship has paid no attention to spiritual values and does not seem to intend to"
(pp: 461-62).

'The Communists admit that permanent dictatorship is a weakness in their theory', says Ambedkar! This means, Ambedkar does not know that proletariat dictatorship is not permanent, that it is temporary and that

it represents a 'transition period'! This also means that he entered the arena of theoretical discussion of Marxism without knowing what Marx wrote and without mentioning those Communists who admitted "the weakness in their political philosophy". Here we should be surprised once again.

The entire discussion of Marxism by Ambedkar is of the same sort. Nowhere did he discuss it by citing Marx's words and knowing properly what Marx has said. His entire knowledge concerning Marxism is 'hearsay' knowledge.

He agreed that Dictatorship for a short period may be good. He said it is necessary for making democracy safe. Marx too observed that it is only for a transition period and not permanently. Then why should Ambedkar have hatred for Marx's theory? Aren't his fables and fabricated stories wholly useless?

Even if some one does not know what Marx talked about 'dictatorship', he can understand it properly if he thinks even a bit. Even those who have heard about Marxism in a half-baked manner must have heard terms like 'classless society', 'abolition of classes' and the 'communist society'. If class distinctions were absent how could there be working class and its dictatorship? Against which class will this dictatorship? For whom does the theory of Communism propose permanent dictatorship? If one thinks this much, he can easily understand that proletariat dictatorship is not a permanent phenomenon and merely a temporary one.

But Ambedkar could not understand this small point. One can understand matters only if he makes an attempt to understand them. Ambedkar doesn't like at all to think in a positive manner. What he wants is to look for some fault or the other in Marxism even if there is no basis for it. All his energies and intellect are meant for that.

His hatred for Marxism is not yet over. It went on in many ways.

"They (Communists) take shelter under the plea that the State will ultimately wither away. There are two questions which they have to answer. When will it wither away? What will take the place of the State when it withers away?... The Communists have given no answer... Will it be succeeded by Anarchy? If so the building up of the Communist State is an useless effort. If it cannot be sustained except by force and if it results in anarchy when the force holding it together is withdrawn what good is the Communist State" (pp: 459-60).

This is how his argument proceeds.

If one understands the concept of classes and their conflicting interests, then it will also be clear what a State is and why it withers away.

If any one has not understood the concept of the withering away of the State, it means he has not understood the concepts of 'exploitation of labour' and 'classes'.

If he knows about 'exploitation', he will also know about 'State rule'. State is not a natural need of the society. It did not exist for a long time in the early stages of society. Only since the beginning of exploitation and the distinction of slaves and masters, this new phenomenon became necessary for the masters. They needed some arrangements and rules in order to occupy the entire land as their property and to make slaves labour for them. The same started the State rule. It was the rule of the Masters over the slaves. As exploitation of labour is still in existence, the present day State-rule too is meant for the interests of the class of owners.

When classes exist, State rule will be Class state rule. Even if it has the label 'democracy', it cannot be a rule that gives equality to both the classes.

In such a society, when exploitative property rights are abolished, when all persons begin to do labour and when distinctions gradually vanish, conflict will disappear. Dictatorship of any class will vanish Which means, there will be no need of any aspect connected with State rule. If elimination of exploitation takes place, withering away of State too takes place. Now, we can give answers to Ambedkar's questions.

(1) When will the State whither away?

Answer: Whenever its need disappears! Whenever class distinctions disappear! 'When this will happen' does not depend on the number of years. It depends on the changes that take place in the labour relations. The working class has to acquire new ideas for its liberation. It has to change the relations of inequality through its struggle. The State will wither away as soon as this transformation takes place.

**(2) What will come in the place of State when it withers away?
Anarchy?**

Ans: What will come in the place of 'ill-health' when ill health disappears? 'Good-health' comes into its position. It is the same case here also.

'Will anarchy appear when the State withers away?' This question assumes that anarchy is something bad and the State is very good! Both State and Anarchy arise from the condition of 'class distinctions'. When classes vanish, these two will also vanish.

When there is no need of a State, it will not be an anarchic situation. It is not anarchy if there is a situation where in you don't find a policeman

with a cane in his hand or a ruffian whose occupation is violence. It will be a situation that does not pollute the atmosphere of comfort and peace.

For the survival of human beings production and distribution (not sales) alone are natural needs. Human kind will not survive if these processes cease. Hence they are natural needs. State rule is not such a need. If it ceases to exist, it means that an unnatural phenomenon, which is not needed for the society, has ceased.

When the State rule withers away, there emerges a new system which is different from the class rule, which will have a classless character and which can organise labour relations. It does not amount to 'state rule' and further it does not at all amount to anarchy. It amounts to 'organising society'. It will assume a form suitable to that society.

When we speak of the disappearance of classes it sounds simply an imaginary ideal (Utopia). People will not have the confidence that this utopia is logical. Whatever is prevalent at a given point of time appears to be an eternal fact. Since class distinctions and State rule have been in existence for many thousands of years, these appear more eternal truths. But no phenomenon can be eternal just because it has been in existence for a long time. Only those phenomena are eternal whose absence makes human life impossible. Every phenomenon that is prevalent is not eternal. State rule came into existence only for the sake of class exploitation and it is not a natural need.

But according to Ambedkar, the entire State machinery is an eternal truth. It is above classes. That is, unconnected with classes. An emperor rules all people equally! Capitalistic parliaments, their democracies and everything is above classes. If State rule is absent anarchy prevails. Peace and security deteriorate in the absence of a policeman who uses a cane or a soldier who exhibits his war related valour. If it is by means of Marxism, State rule withers away and anarchy prevails. If it is by means of the Buddha's path, the State rule remains eternally and there will be no anarchy. This is what Ambedkar means.

Permanence of State power in the Buddha's path means that there will be an eternal need for the State rule. This means, distinctions, conflicts and oppression among men will always exist. This also means that human relations without them (distinctions, conflicts, oppression etc) will not emerge! Such a path is the best one! Very good! This goodness is excellent! This excellence is wonderful!

5) According to Ambedkar, **Communism is a 'Pig Philosophy'!**

Ambedkar repeatedly says that the Buddha's Ashtanga Marga is the superior path compared to the struggle path of Marx. Ashtanga Marga transforms human beings from the bottom of the heart without any use of force, says Ambedkar.

He describes the Buddha's path as follows:

"The Buddha's method was different. His method was to change the mind of man: to alter his disposition: so that whatever man does, he does it voluntarily without the use of force or compulsion. His main means to alter the disposition of men was his Dhamma and the constant preaching of his Dhamma. The Buddha's way was not to force people to do what they did not like to do although it was good for them. His way was to alter the disposition of men so that they would do voluntarily what they would not otherwise do" (p. 461).

Well, this is wonderful; but are there any incidents whereby wealthy persons changed by means of the Buddha's path? Were there kings who changed old thoughts, who developed cultural refinement and 'abandoned' their kingdoms by means of the Buddha's preaching of Dhamma? Were there any traders who decreased their wealth? Were there masters who abandoned their slaves? There is not even a single incident of this sort in the Buddha's history. Such a change did not take place in the heart of a single rich person.

As the Buddha's path does not compel anyone, it won't compel the rich persons either. It won't abolish their rights. It won't trouble them. There is nothing to change: Master remains a master! Slave remains a slave! Servitude and domination as before! Is the Buddha necessary to tell us this element of truth? Is the slave master not enough?

Anyway there is no mechanism of changing social conditions by means of the Buddha's path. Will it at least change a few wealthy persons? No, it won't! This means, in this path there is neither social reform nor individual reform. Both are untrue.

These two are present in Marx's path. According to Marx's theory, ideas and behaviour of an individual depend on and are interconnected with the class situations. The beginning of changes toward 'equality' imply the beginning of 'new ideas'. The process of unifying classes changes old ideas of the individuals and also the old conditions in society. This means, by means of Marx's path changes in society as well as individual take place.

Individual reform that changes a few individuals will not bring about class reform. The class reform that changes the entire society will bring about individual reform as well. This is the difference between the Buddha's path and Marx's path!

Ambedkar is not bothered about all this. As there is no term, namely, 'dictatorship' in the Buddha's path, Ambedkar describes it many a time as the best!

Well, won't the Buddha's path be effective in the case of Untouchability?

Okay, Ambedkar glorified the Buddha's method as something that changes the mind of man and alters his disposition, didn't he?

He also says that human beings change if we simply teach them without compulsion and hence the Buddha's path is the best for this reason. But how should the readers respond when they come to know that Ambedkar severely opposed elsewhere the path of reforming individuals and also said that such a reform would not do good to the class? Further Gandhi, while discussing the problem of Untouchability suggested not to use force against the Hindus but try peaceful methods, didn't he? Then why did Ambedkar reject Gandhi's suggestion?

At that time Ambedkar's arguments against Gandhi proceeded as follows:

"The silent infiltration of rational ideas among the ignorant mass of Caste Hindus cannot, I am sure, work for the salvation of the Depressed Classes. First of all the Caste Hindu like all human beings follow his customary conduct in observing Untouchability towards the Depressed Classes. Ordinarily, people do not give up their customary mode of behaviour because somebody is preaching against it. The salvation of the Depressed Classes will come only when the caste Hindu is made to think and is forced to feel that he must alter his ways... The great defect in the policy of least resistance and silent infiltration of rational ideas lies in this that they do not 'compel' for they do not produce crisis" (Vol. 5, pp: 368-69).

Further, see Ambedkar's argument which he made in his letter to Thakkar:

"In my opinion, there is also another method of approach to this problem. It starts with the hypothesis that the fate of the individual is governed by his environment and the circumstances he is obliged to live under, and if an individual is suffering from want and misery it is because his environment is not propitious. I have no doubt that of the two views the latter is the more correct, the former may raise a few stray individuals

above the level of the class to which they belong. It cannot lift the class as a whole. My view of the aim of the Anti-Untouchability League is that it has come into existence not for helping a few individuals at random or a few selected boys belonging to the Depressed Classes but for raising the whole class to a higher level. Consequently, I would not like the League to dissipate its energies on a programme calculated to foster private virtue. I would like the Board to concentrate all its energies on a programme that will effect a change in the social environment of the Depressed Classes" (Vol. 9, pp: 134-35).

Why has the argument which he made then—that we have to compel human beings to change and that it is of no use to preach rational ideas—become upside down? He said change does not occur by rational ideas. Well, then what happens due to the Buddha's preaching? Is it not change of ideas?

Moreover, here Ambedkar is arguing that the path of individual reform will not uplift the class as a whole, that we have to change the social conditions of the class and that there is no use of the programme that raises the level of individual's virtue.

The Hindu reformers like Gandhi, without concentrating on the problem of poverty among untouchables, focus their attention on changing the bad habits of individual untouchables with such slogans as 'stop drinking toddy'...and so on. In order to oppose reforms of this sort, Ambedkar argues that we have to change the class conditions and personal virtues do not lift the class. This argument suits to counter such reforms.

But Marx too talked of changing social conditions only, didn't he? Then why did Ambedkar oppose him?

While opposing the Congress, changing the social environment became more important than personal virtue! Whereas while opposing Marx, reforming the individual in order to raise personal virtue became more important!

If we want to reconcile that Ambedkar realized his mistake which he committed on an earlier occasion and hence spoke differently on another occasion, no where do we find such a clarification or explanation.

Does Ambedkar speak wrongly? No, it is impossible! Whatever he says is right! He spoke whatever he wanted and whenever he wanted! He is right whatever he says!

Here we may recall a little of what Ambedkar said earlier about Roman slaves. Did Ambedkar have the same view—that individual reform may raise the level of certain individuals but does not lift the whole class—when he discussed the condition of Roman slaves? How could he

describe that Roman slaves lived in comfort and joy with education, art and business? There why didn't he raise the question, 'will the condition of the few be the condition of all slaves?' There he talked so because he wanted to say that slaves lived more comfortably than untouchables. As he wanted to oppose Gandhi, he said that 'individual reform is not enough' in his letter to Thakkar. Whereas while opposing Marx he is saying here that the path that raises the level of personal virtue is the best way. What should we call all this? Do we have to call this, 'honest discussion'?

Ambedkar's suggestion to Communists:

In the same breath when he said that building up the communist state is useless, Ambedkar gave suggestions to Communists concerning the care that they have to take with reference to the state rule. According to him they may retain the state to some period by means of use of force but they have to abandon it and embrace some religion!

"The only thing which could sustain it after force is withdrawn is Religion" (p. 460).

Ambedkar's argument proceeds further along the following lines.

"Communists hate religion. They hate those religions which talk of gods and other world. Buddhism is not that kind of religion. There are no superstitious beliefs in it. It preaches good conduct. It prohibits murder, theft, prostitution, untruth, intoxicants etc. It shows the path of eliminating greed, avarice, ill will, sloth and drowsiness, distraction and flurry and doubt. The householder who acquires property lawfully will not only be happy but also make his wife, children and servants happy and hence Buddhism preaches acquiring property lawfully. Therefore we should not treat Buddhism like other religions. Buddhism is an ultimate aid to sustain Communism when force is withdrawn" (p.460-61).

What sort of argument is this? This means theft, prostitution, murders and all kinds of crimes remain in Communist society until it embraces Buddhism! Then if Communist society practices Buddhism, all people will become good people and all those vices will disappear! Even then the owners acquire properties lawfully and live happily with their servants and workers! How can it be Communism if all these relationships continue? Does Communism have to take the help of Buddhism only to sustain these relationships (of owners and servants etc.)?

There is nothing to pity the Buddha but there is lot to pity Ambedkar. Take any context in which he talked of Marxism, nowhere do we see him talking about it with any knowledge.

If a theory can initiate and sustain Communist society, that theory itself include in it a system that would take society forward. Proper

implementation of the theory is the only thing that is needed. It won't need the help of any 'religion'.

Well, let us see as per Ambedkar's view. He is saying that after changing society by means of Marxism, we have to follow Buddhism, isn't he? This means, Marxism is the first requirement. Only thereafter we need Buddhism. Did Ambedkar advise Dalits to learn Marxism before he advised Communists to follow Buddhism? There is no such thing. There is not a single context in which he talked a single good word about Marxism. Moreover there are many occasions on which he created opposition against Marxism.

Ambedkar's opposition to Marxism reached such a stage that he described Marxism as a philosophy that turns human beings into pigs! As Marxism does not accept any religion, Ambedkar's criticism proceeds as follows for the same reason.

"Carlyle called Political Economy a Pig Philosophy. Carlyle was of course wrong. For man needs material comforts. But the Communist Philosophy seems to be equally wrong for the aim of their philosophy seems to be fatten pigs as though men are no better than pigs. Man must grow materially as well as spiritually" (p. 462).

The essence of Ambedkar's view is this: Human beings need material needs; but they should also grow spiritually. Whereas for pigs, it is enough if they have food. They don't need spirituality. To think that human beings need only material comforts (like food etc.,) is to equate human beings with animals. Communism does not say that humans need spirituality. Hence it is a philosophy useful for pigs and not human beings. This is Ambedkar's criticism!

But what does 'growing spiritually' means? To be like a Buddhist monk. If a person gets his head shaven, wears saffron clothes, invades the householders in the village and enjoy feasts, collects gifts, sits with folded legs daily for some time, becomes an expert in breathing from one nostril and leave it through another—This is what growing spiritually means! Since there is no place for these mad things in Communism, it is a pig philosophy!

How comfortable is it to live like pigs if we are free from the menace of religious fanaticism?

From this preacher who understood Communism so beautifully, Dalits will learn only circus feats that enable them to experiment with their noses!

In this manner, Ambedkar went on saying, in his essay, *Buddha or Karl Marx?*, that Marxism is useless, didn't he? But in the very last paragraph he showed some 'mercy' on Communism!

"It has been claimed that the Communist Dictatorship in Russia has wonderful achievements to its credit. There can be no denial of it. That is why I say that a Russian Dictatorship would be good for all backward countries" (p. 461).

"It has been claimed", says Ambedkar with reference to "Communist Dictatorship in Russia". This means he only heard about it and he doesn't know to what extent it was true or not true. There is no attempt to know that theory. At one place he calls it a 'Pig Philosophy' and at another place he says 'it has wonderful achievements and it is good for all backward countries'! Finding fault and praising: both without knowing about it! Since Russia appeared to be a country that was striving for the working class people and since it would not look nice if it is not appreciated even that much, Ambedkar resorted to this appreciation!

But this appreciation too did not last longer, you know? As an antidote to that minimal praise for Communism, he concluded that Communism does not give other good features except equality. Here Ambedkar's argument proceeded as follows:

"Society has been aiming to lay a new foundation was summarised by the French Revolution in three words, Fraternity, Liberty and Equality. The French Revolution was welcomed because of this slogan. It failed to produce equality. We welcome the Russian Revolution because it aims to produce equality. But it cannot be too much emphasized that in producing equality society cannot afford to sacrifice fraternity or liberty. Equality will be of no value without fraternity or liberty. It seems that the three can coexist only if one follows the way of the Buddha. Communism can give one but not all" (p. 462).

Thus ended the essay *Buddha or Karl Marx?* We are yet to see the truth or untruth of the observations expressed at the end of this essay.

What is equality? Ambedkar is saying that the Buddha's path give all the good features whereas Marxism gives only one feature. But if a given theory is really able to give equality, it will be able to give other good features as well. Because equality is the basis for all good changes. All other features form from this basis only. To examine whether this is true or not we have to consider some illustrations.

According to Marxism, equality means performance of labour by all people and absence of any owner/master as such.

When there is equality, 'liberty' transforms into this equality in an appropriate manner. This is how it happens: whoever acquires property before the emergence of equality, he could be an owner. But if a person has the liberty to be a owner, many human beings have to enter servitude. In such conditions, the liberty which we find there is not that of labourers

but that of owners. As 'equality' is absent, liberty will also be unilateral in accordance to those conditions. But if we assume equality among all people, then no individual will have the liberty to be an owner. This means, every individual will have the liberty to lead a life free from servitude. In other words, the liberty of olden days now transforms in accordance with equality. If only some persons have liberty when equality is absent, all people will have liberty when equality is present.

Similarly, if we consider the issue of fraternity, it is brotherhood and sisterhood. This is a cooperative living together of people and sharing of comforts and as well as hardships. This also forms in accordance with equality wherever it exists. When there are 'owner-labourer relations' (for that matter in any relation involving mutually contradictory features, namely, domination and servitude), the owner does not bother about the labourers' hardships or comforts. But when all people do labour the hardships and comforts of all people will be the same. All persons will extend cooperation to each other.

Ambedkar is saying that Marx's path gives only equality and does not give the other good features (liberty and fraternity), isn't he? Of the three features—liberty, equality and fraternity—equality is the fundamental issue. If this exists other features too exist. If there was no equality the other features too will not exist. Ambedkar is also accepting that Marx's path gives equality. This means that this path also gives other good feature. The Buddha's path does not eliminate 'owner-labourer relations'. Hence, it does not give equality. Such a path will not give other good features.

So, what is the conclusion? Marx's path alone will give all the features. The Buddha's path does not give even one good feature. This is what is concluded—contrary to what Ambedkar said!

The incidents comparing the Buddha and Marx are found not only in volume 3 but also here and there in volume 11.

Ambedkar raised some questions, 'Did the Buddha teach liberty? Did the Buddha teach equality?... Could the Buddha answer Karl Marx?' and concluded that the Buddha's path is the best one (Vol. 11, p. 226).

All this confusion would not have been there had Ambedkar stopped raising so many kinds of questions and put to himself only one question, 'what is equality?' and search for the answer!

There is no short cut left out which Ambedkar did not resort to in order to denigrate Marx's path and glorify the Buddha's path.

He says that the Buddha's path is "not borrowed from any one, yet so true" (Vol. 11, p. 317). This implies that Marx's theory is something that has been borrowed whereas the Buddha's theory is not of that sort! This means that if a country has a good feature other countries should not learn it! Why did the same person praise that China, Burma, Tibet, Thailand and Indonesia had accepted Buddhism from India and it spread across many foreign countries? Can those countries 'borrow' from India? According to Ambedkar, all countries should borrow Buddhism but no country should borrow Marx's theory. This is the level of cultural refinement of Ambedkar! This is what 'growing spiritually' means!

When he had a strong belief that Buddhism gives liberty and equality, why didn't Ambedkar advise Dalits to give up all means like reservations and follow only Ashtanga Marga? Doesn't this question require an answer?

Ambedkar, here and there, keeps describing how contradictory the lives of rich and poor:

"Practically speaking in a class structure there is, on the one hand, tyranny, vanity, pride, arrogance, greed, selfishness and on the other, insecurity, poverty, degradation, loss of liberty, self-reliance, independence, dignity and self-respect" (p. 285).

But he gives the same sermon to these two mutually contradictory classes! Same path! Ashtanga Marga! He has no question, 'why does the rich class follow the same path which the poor class follows?'

"The caste system far from natural is really an imposition by the ruling classes upon the servile classes" (Vol. 9, p. 289).

There are both ruling classes and the servile classes! But the path is the same for both the classes! Ashtanga Marga! It is not the class struggle which the servile class should wage in order to overthrow the ruling class which dominates it! This, Ambedkar doesn't like!

Do we need to examine so many hundreds of pages in order to compare the Buddha and Marx? Any one page is enough! The Buddha was favourable to the propertied class! Marx is totally opposed to it! According to the Buddha, riches and poverty are natural phenomena like light and darkness. According to Marx they are the contradictions which emerge due to exploitation of labour. All that the Buddha speaks is 'status quo! What Marx speaks is 'revolution'! Total change! Where is the comparison between the two? Is it not the most surprising thing that any Dalit—who claims 'the progress of Dalits' as his objective— expresses so meaningless a hatred for a theory which explains the liberation of labouring class?

What good that this leader did to Dalits when he recommended them Ashtanga Marga, shaving of the heads, shameless lazy life of begging in the name of alms—without creating any positive attitude toward Marxism? Except a wrong path, what path did he show the people who believed that he would show them the path of liberation?

“Social reform in India has few friends and many critics. The critics fall into two distinct classes. One class consists of political reformers and the other of the Socialists” (Vol. 1, p. 38).

Whether it is ‘Socialists’, ‘Communists’ and ‘Marxists’, we have to take these words in the same sense. Ambedkar used all these three words in the same sense.

Social reform may relate to any problem. But Ambedkar is talking here about ‘annihilation of castes’ only. Socialists are totally in favour of this reform and not opposed to it. Then why does Ambedkar say that Socialists are opposed to social reform? Because, Socialists argue that total elimination of castes is not possible unless the ‘foundation’ or ‘base’ changes.

Ambedkar does not like Socialists’ conception of ‘society’. Socialists say that ‘labour relations’ constitute the foundation of society. They argue that the foundation is based on ‘exploitation’ and without shaking it, it is not possible to solve totally the problems that arise from it. But they don’t say that social reforms are unnecessary and should not be carried out. Wherever possible, to whatever extent possible, struggles should go on either in the form of reforms or temporary revolts. These struggles, however, should be linked with the struggles of abolition of classes. The labouring class should gradually acquire class-consciousness. This is what socialists say.

All this, Ambedkar doesn’t like. According to him, annihilation of caste must take place first. That is, intercaste marriages should take place in all directions on a large scale. Only after this happens, we have to consider the remaining changes. But Socialists do not undertake the programme of intercaste marriages as the primary programme. Hence, in the view of Ambedkar, Socialists too are opposed to annihilation of caste. All this criticism against Socialists is from the essay *Annihilation of Caste* (Vol. 1). Ambedkar did not show a single point of Socialists’ criticism.

Just as in the case of other issues, Ambedkar’s views on ‘castes’ too are not consistent. This, we have already observed earlier. At some places, he says that the problem of untouchables is the ‘land’ problem, that it is a problem of confinement to unclean jobs, that the occupation of property

is the weapon in the hands of upper castes and thus there is a link between property and castes. Again at other places, he talks as if there is no link between properties and castes. Ambedkar, who has no clarity regarding the question of 'property' keeps criticising Socialists (who have clarity of the issue) as if they are under illusion. For example, he says,

"The fallacy of the Socialists lies in supposing that because in the present stage of European Society property as a source of power is predominant, that the same is true of India..." (Vol. 1, p. 45).

This means, for Ambedkar property is not the source of power in India whereas it is in Europe, that too present day Europe only. But what exists in the present day Europe is developed capitalism. Therefore, 'capital' appears clearly as property. For Ambedkar, the small-scale capital or land do not appear as property. That is why, he thought the source for power is property only in Europe and not in India.

But anywhere in the world, at any point of time, the source of power is nothing but property. That is, exploitative property or property based on exploitation! Power is unnecessary if it is not for the purpose of exploitation (that is for the purpose of making others do labour for you). If all people are equal in the sense that all people perform labour, then power will not exist at all.

The same person who said that property is the weapon of upper castes did not hesitate to say that 'property is not the source of power in India'! Again he has not consistently held this view.

Arguing that power does not have a single source but has 3 sources, he mentions property as one of the three sources.

"Religion, social status and property are all sources of power and authority, which one man has, to control the liberty of another. One is predominant at one stage, the other is predominant at another stage. That is the difference" (Vol. 1, p. 45).

According to Ambedkar religion, social status and property—all the three are fundamental factors ('sources'). If we go by this understanding, religion is an autonomous factor independent of property. Therefore, it implies that we can solve the problems of religion without reference to property! Caste is a religious problem that arose from Hinduism. This means, in order to solve the problem of caste, there is no need to link it with the question of property! That is, we will be able to solve the caste problem without reference to property! Similarly, the question of hierarchical differences in the social status is also an autonomous issue unconnected with property. We can solve this question too without reference to property. This is Ambedkar's argument!

But all this is wrong. The correct understanding should be: the three issues, namely, property, religion and social status are not equally autonomous. Of the three, 'property' alone is the fundamental issue. The remaining two issues arise from property relations. We have to solve the problem of property first in order to solve the problems connected with the other two issues.

It is needless to say again and again whenever we speak of property, we refer to 'property of exploiters' or 'property based on exploitation'.

To examine the kind of link that property and social status have, consider chronologically the very first classes in society, namely, class of slaves and class of slave-masters! Master's social status is high and slave's low. If a person is a master, another person will be a slave. What is the reason for this? Possession of property by the master and non-possession of property by the slave. If we remove and keep that 'property' aside, one is not a master and the other not a slave. This means social status is not something unconnected with property.

Similarly, take any other example involving hierarchical differences in the social status! We can see that such distinctions arise only due to property.

The link between property and social status appears directly sometimes and with some modifications at other times. Some persons, though do not have property, may have high social status due to higher education and higher forms of arts. Seeing this fact, we should not think that there is no connection between property and social status. Higher education and Arts are different forms of property. They are acquired by means of property only. They in turn give power to acquire property. There is no question of acquiring them without any connection with property.

How was it possible for Ambedkar—who did not have property to study abroad and raise his social status? It was possible because Zamindars (Feudal lords/Landlords) gave 'money' to him. How did they get money? Did they give Ambedkar the money which they earned by means of hard work and sweat of their brow? They have been occupying hundreds and thousands of acres of lands as their properties for ages. They rent out their lands, live luxuriously with the money they squeezed from the peasants in the name of rents, gave a fistful of money as charity, supported artists and earned fame as persons of great charity. Such is the money which Ambedkar got. If there was no such property, Ambedkar would not have received education abroad and there wouldn't have been the corresponding social status. This means, whatever be the form of social status it is not something that does not emerge without any connection with property.

The same is the case with 'religion'. During the primitive times when exploitative property had not yet begun, the conception of nature which humans held consisted of ignorance and fear only. It was not yet a 'religion'. Religion began only after 'exploitation' began as an admixture of ignorance and the sermons that subjugate slaves.

A religious preacher or a Sanyasi may be a propertyless person. But, if that person preaches slaves, 'one who serves the master with loyalty will go to heaven. Gods will shower flowers on such a person', then this preaching is favourable to exploitative property. And this preaching itself is religion. Its function is to make slaves believe heaven and gods. Religion, even today, is performing the function of keeping working class in superstitious beliefs. When people believe the sermons of a propertyless Sanyasi, we should not arrive at the conclusion that there is no relationship between property and religion. The function that religion performs through Sanyasi is protection of property. This means, religion has emerged due to the problem of property and is not an autonomous factor. If there is no exploitation, there will be no need of religion; so also there will not be distinctions in the social status.

If we want to solve problems in society permanently but not temporarily and fundamentally but not superficially, we have to question the foundation of property relations. Those who do not agree with this understanding will only search for solutions superficially. This is what Ambedkar did. His criticism of those who emphasize economic matters is as follows:

"If liberty is the idea,...it cannot be insisted upon that economic reform must be the one kind of reform worthy of pursuit...social reform and religious reform must be accepted as the necessary sort of reform" (Vol. 1, p. 45).

"One can thus attack the doctrine of Economic interpretation of History adopted by the Socialists of India" (Vol. 1, p. 46). This means that Socialists are wrong and any one can defeat their argument. But, the surprising thing is, Ambedkar treats economic matters as the least important issues and all the demands that he asked for untouchables are economic demands only. Demanding water for untouchables is an economic demand. Demanding education is an economic demand. Demanding health care system is an economic demand. Demanding separate villages is an economic demand. Every change that frees the suffering of untouchables is economic in nature. If we view these demands as rights, rights too are economic in nature. Though certain restrictions—like 'shudras should not acquire property and should not receive education'—appear as rights outwardly, the essence of the matter is economic. Denial of rights to low castes by upper castes and confining them to free labour and unclean jobs imply

a gain for the upper castes. That is, gain to exploit their labour; and hence it is economic gain.

Take any other problem in society; whether it is concerned with ethnicity, religion, caste, gender or any other kind and even if it appears to be a problem of domination or politics, its roots will be in economic relations.

But, the question of labour relations or its another name economic relations does not at all bother Ambedkar. When one is not concerned with the root cause, what will remain? Only superficial things. That is religion, social status and politics. All discussions of Ambedkar always revolve around superficial things and are not concerned with the root causes.

Among those considered to be 'intellectuals', there are three main categories of people with reference to their attitude to Marxism. The first category of people do not know anything about Marxism. They are not even aware of the fact that there is a theory called 'Marxism'. These people do not speak either in favour of Marxism or against it. They do not at all talk about it. We may consider such people as Non-Marxists.

The second category of intellectuals too do not know anything about Marxism. But they have at least heard its name. They might have heard, though in a half baked manner, both positive and negative opinions concerning Marxism. Thus they grope about in doubt regarding Marxism. But they do not make any attempt to examine what is true and what is false in these opinions. But their opposition to Marxism is not very serious. We may consider such intellectuals too as Non-Marxists.

Now, the third category of intellectuals know something about Marxism. They are aware of the fact that Marxism opposes exploitation and it argues against the possession of private property that fetches exploitative income. But these intellectuals do not like all this. They defend the exploitative sources of income. They, however, do not openly declare: 'let there be exploitation'. They merely rephrase the term according to their convenience. On the whole, they are in favour of exploitative property relations. Thus these intellectuals maintain vehement opposition to Marxism. Such intellectuals will be Anti-Marxists and do not come under the category of Non-Marxists.

Ambedkar need not have spoken in favour of Marxism. He could have expressed doubts concerning the theory. If he had confined himself to such an attitude, one can categorise him as a Non-Marxist. But this was not what Ambedkar did. He had always demonstrated his opposition and hatred towards Marxism that defends the interests of the working class. A campaign against Marxism was one of the objectives of his life.

6) A letter that someone wrote to someone else!

Ambedkar made a great deal of criticism against Indian socialists, didn't he? What is the basis for it? What is the criticism of Socialists against social reforms? Did Ambedkar show any evidence that the Indian Communist Party did something wrong or said something wrong? Do you know what the single piece of evidence that Ambedkar had shown? "I give below a quotation from a letter which a prominent Socialist wrote a few days ago to a friend of mine"—saying this Ambedkar put a letter before readers as evidence. This means Ambedkar had a friend. To this friend, a Socialist friend wrote a letter. This friend had brought that letter and showed it to Ambedkar. Some words in that letter greatly annoyed Ambedkar. This 'letter' alone is the basis for all the criticism of Ambedkar against Indian Socialists in his essay *Annihilation of Caste*.

What is there in that letter? That Socialist wrote as follows:

"I do not believe that we can build up a free society in India so long as there is a trace of this ill-treatment and suppression of one class by another. Believing as I do in a socialist ideal, inevitably I believe in perfect equality in the treatment of various classes and groups. I think that Socialism offers the only true remedy for this as well as other problems" (Vol. 1, p. 46).

These are the words in the letter! There is nothing wrong in these words, isn't it? The writer of this letter argued against "ill-treatment and suppression of one class by another". He advocated "perfect equality in the treatment of various classes and groups". Why should Ambedkar be angry with these words? Because, the letter writer also said that "socialism offers the only true remedy for this as well as other problems". This is a wrong thing according to Ambedkar! This is what annoyed Ambedkar!

In his essay, *Annihilation of Caste*, Ambedkar shouted at that socialist who wrote such a letter: 'Is it enough if socialists say that all should be equal? Is it enough if they have belief in equality? Is this the way to think about castes?'

Does this mean, that the socialist should have written a few more things? Should he have enumerated what socialist theory says about castes and what his party did and will do in this regard? He would have definitely written all this in his letter if he knew before hand that his letter would go into the hands of Ambedkar and that Ambedkar would get very angry if the letter did not contain a programme for the annihilation of castes. But unfortunately the socialist did not know all this. He wrote couple of

things for his friend informally and received an admonition unnecessarily from Ambedkar.

Is it a believable thing that Ambedkar made his criticism against Socialists just because certain points were not there in a letter which someone wrote to someone else? How surprising this is! But how many times are we surprised and shocked? Surprise and shock have become common because of their frequent recurrence. How can we express our surprise again and again? How nice it would have been if Ambedkar had shown a few words somewhere from Marx just as he showed words from someone's letter! Why didn't Ambedkar do so? Is it because he didn't get hold of Marx's letter? Marx too could have written a letter to some one who lived either in front of or adjacent to Ambedkar's house? Somehow Marx did not do so. Should he always write all his letters to only Engels? Should he not have written at least one letter to Ambedkar's friend? Ambedkar did not quote Marx anywhere since he didn't get Marx's letter. This must be the reason!

It would be nice if somebody conducts research on why some individuals have unlimited arrogance? It is pity that the Buddha said several times at the top of his voice, or to use a Telugu idiom, 'put his mouth above the head and said', that some persons will have arrogance, pride, exaggeration and everything. Though he said that we find all these features, he didn't say why they exist. I think, those features exceed when there is none to question them! Anyway, this aspect of 'arrogance' is a very good topic for research.

7) A justified doubt of Ambedkar

Ambedkar has a big doubt concerning Socialist theory. Socialist theory proposes to eliminate exploitation by means of class struggles. To achieve this, all the working class people should get united. But, there are caste distinctions in India: There is Untouchability. Poor people too observe these distinctions. Under these circumstances, how will all these poor people get united? How will they wage struggles if they don't get united? —This is Ambedkar's doubt. This is a justified and right doubt.

In Ambedkar's words:

"The assurance of a socialist leading the revolution that he does not believe in caste, I am sure, will not suffice. The assurance must be the assurance proceeding from much deeper foundation...Can it be said that the poor in India recognize no such distinctions of caste or creed, high or low? If the fact is that they do, what unity of front can be expected from such a proletariat in its action against the rich? How can there be

a revolution if the proletariat cannot present a united front?" (Vol. 1, pp: 46-47).

This is a good question. But the way he put the question implies that Socialist theory wrongly assumes that 'it does not matter even if there is no unity within the working class' and hence Ambedkar is questioning such an assumption. Does Socialist theory say that 'we can change society by conducting class struggles even if there are difference within the working class and even if various sections in the working class do not unite? No, it does not say so. It says that the 'unity of the workers' is their strength. It in fact said, 'workers of the world, unite!'

Any organization whose objective is to raise the consciousness of the working people for class struggle, it must consider any problem that obstructs their unity. It has to formulate its programmes in the manner that helps to solve the problem. If it does not do so, we have to criticize that organization and not the socialist theory.

A theory gives general guidelines that apply to all regions and all situations. It also tells that the organizers should take into consideration the specific situations of specific places. It, however, cannot specify the situation at a given place.

When the socialist theory says that we have to change relations of exploitation into relations of non-exploitation, it is meaningless if some one criticises that this theory talked only of exploitation and did not say anything about social reform.

When exploitation exists in society, all sphere of life will have the same exploitative character. Wherever and whatever form of domination exists, it exist because of relations of exploitation and corresponding ideas of exploitation. Therefore elimination of exploitation implies changing all sphere of life. The same applies to either the problem of castes or any other problem.

Caste system in India is a problem that harms the unity of the working class. This is the specific situation of India. If the Socialist party (or, Communist Party) does not take this specific situation into its view, we have to definitely find fault with it and criticise it. The question, however, is did that party do like that? Didn't the party take into account either the caste problem or Untouchability? Didn't the Communist Party of Ambedkar's time conduct campaigns or preach against the caste system? Did it not undertake any activities?

Ambedkar should show if there are any such incidents. He has to expose its conduct saying, 'Look how the Communist Party acted in this

matter'. But Ambedkar did not give even a single piece of information. He did not cite a single incident (except the letter which his friend received!). All the time, Ambedkar's criticism is against Marxism, that too without any justification! Without knowing anything about 'exploitation of labour'!

How do working people get united when there are caste distinctions in India? How will they wage struggles?—This is the problem. Choosing appropriate programmes is the solution.

Even the low caste people observe caste distinctions among them. They do not participate in intercaste dining and intercaste marriages. Under these conditions, it is necessary to tell them that all this is wrong, ignorance and unjust. Campaigns infavour of interdining and intercaste marriages begin to change the old ideas of the people. However, the entire caste problem will not end only by doing this. As this problem is connected with 'exploitation of labour' and old division of labour, people should know about these aspects also. In other words we have to teach Marxism!

Ambedkar further comments as follows:

"Suppose for the sake of argument that by some freak of fortune a revolution does take place and the Socialists come into power, will they not have to deal with the problems created by the particular social order prevalent in India? I can't see how a Socialist State in India can function for a second without having to grapple with the problems created by the prejudices which make Indian people observe the distinctions of high and low, clean and unclean" (Vol. 1, p. 47).

This is the prejudice of Ambedkar toward the conception of Socialist State and Socialist theory. 'The fact that there are distinctions of high-low and clean-unclean among humans is not something which the Socialist theory does not recognize. These distinctions are the creations of property relations and division of labour prevalent in societies based on exploitation. There is no scope for equality among human beings unless we remove these distinctions.' All this understanding is part of Socialist theory. Ambedkar—without knowing what the Socialist theory actually says—had developed an aversion for the Socialist theory like the propertied class. Owing to this opposition he came to the conclusion that the Socialist State is not concerned with the distinctions of high-low and clean and unclean. Ambedkar's opinion—that the Socialist theory is not concerned with these distinctions—indicates the sense of (ir-)responsibility with which he tried to understand the theory. Who is at fault—Marxism or Ambedkar—if Ambedkar was not concerned with what Marxism said, namely, 'exploitative division of labour must be changed into Socialist division of labour'?

The principle that 'we have to abolish exploitative property rights, and 'every person should perform labour' will remove high-low distinctions. The principle that 'every person should perform not only clean jobs but also unclean jobs' will remove 'clean-unclean' distinction. It is the duty of class of labourers (proletariat) to put the new, revolutionary relations into practice. All those who do unclean jobs in India are part of the proletariat. —Without understanding all this what Ambedkar did was find fault with the Socialist theory.

Once, when there took place a strike in the textile mills of Bombay, Ambedkar laid down a condition to Hindu workers on behalf of Dalit workers. In those days, owing to Untouchability, the mill owners did not use to offer jobs to Dalit workers in all the sections in the mill. At this juncture, Ambedkar laid down a condition that Hindu workers too should demand their mill owners to offer jobs in all the branches of the textile industry. He said that Dalit workers would not participate in the strike if Hindu workers did not demand so.

Though Hindu workers initially did not like the idea of giving up the practice of Untouchability, they thought about it and agreed for the demand. The Hindu workers realized that struggle against the mill owner is primary and not the observance of Untouchability (Vol. 2, p. 474).

There are no details whether the mill owners agreed to the demand or not.

It was possible to weaken at least to some extent the superstitious beliefs because of argument and discussion with the Hindu workers. False ideas will definitely become weak if we teach new and reasonable ideas. These campaigns and preaching are not meant for a class that lives on exploitation. These are necessary for the people. These educative programmes are the first step toward changing either the Hindu people or the Dalit people.

If Ambedkar wishes for the emancipation of 'low' castes, he should create a negative attitude toward caste distinctions and a positive attitude toward Marxism among low caste people. But he has not done any one of these things. He has not done both the things. Since he did not have a positive attitude towards Marxism he did not create a positive impression among Dalits. He concluded that Marxism is useless and they should follow only Buddhism.

If we consider the 'caste question', he concluded that annihilation of castes is not possible and there is no solution for it since Brahmins do not lead the movement for annihilation of the castes.

This means, the 'low' caste people did not receive from Ambedkar either a programme to fight against the caste system or Marxism which is the path of their liberation. They received nothing useful from Ambedkar.

17

AMBEDKAR'S OWN ECONOMICS

Ambedkar occasionally tells us that he is a student of Economics (Vol. 2, p. 230). His Economics is largely a Capitalist Economics. The rest of it is his 'own' Economics. Nowhere do we see that he is aware of the existence of Marxist Economics.

There are heaps of problems of various kinds in society and Ambedkar tried to find out brand new solutions. He claimed that he had found them. But all his brand new solutions turned out to be the same old affairs that have been in existence since the days of 'slave masters'.

Once Ambedkar discovered a beautiful solution for the problem of 'Industrial disputes'. He even guaranteed industrial peace if it was followed. Ambedkar, who was a nominated member representing Dalits in Bombay Assembly spoke at length on the 'Industrial Disputes Bill' in September 1938. The Economics knowledge that Ambedkar exhibited in his speech surprises a lot.

Arguing that there is a lot of injustice being done, that the men managing the industries on behalf of their owners are enjoying the fruits and that the Prime Minister of Bombay should think about doing justice, Ambedkar said,

"A very good part of the earning of the industry is swallowed by these people. From the little balance that is left, the workers are asked to eke out their existence. If the Honourable Prime Minister wants to introduce equity, let him make the workers' wages the first charge on the profits of industry" (Vol. 2, pp: 230-31).

It is correct to see the large part of salaries which higher level employees—who control the workers on behalf of employers—receive are part of the profit. But what does 'payment of workers' wages from profit' mean? Do they pay wages from profit? Wages are a part of the capital. Means of production and wages together constitute capital. When a commodity is produced, more value than its capital will form. When it is sold, capital returns (that is, expenses of means of production and wages

return) and some additional value also comes. This is profit (Here we are calling the entire surplus value 'profit'. This profit too is the labour of workers only. But this goes to the owner). Here our concern is with the wages of the workers. It is part of the 'capital' but not part of the 'profit'. Even a junior student of Economics knows that wages are a part of the capital.

Ambedkar is telling the 'Honourable' Prime Minister of Bombay that he should bring out a new bill so that the workers will first take their wages from the profit of the industry and only thereafter can the owner swallow the remaining profit. In this manner, he is suggesting to the Prime Minister to be fair. This means, in the view of Ambedkar swallowing of some portion in the profit (whether he swallows it at the beginning or later) is fair. This is because Ambedkar is a student of capitalist Economics!

Regarding 'profit', Ambedkar's understanding is as follows:

"...the owner of an industry... gets his earning not entirely by his capital but also by the sweat of another man" (Vol. 2, p. 231).

This amounts to saying that the profit of the owner of an industry comes from 2 sources.

- (1) From the money that the owner invests. That is from 'capital'.
- (2) From the sweat of the workers. That is from their labour. (This means, while one portion of profit comes due to the sweat of workers, another portion comes due to the non-sweat of owners)

The two ways that Ambedkar mentioned relate to either Capitalist Economics or Marxist Economics.

According to Capitalist Economics, the entire profit comes from the capital that the owner invests. The workers will not have any role in getting the profit. They receive wages in return for their labour. The owner does not get anything from them. Hence, they have nothing to do with profit.

According to Marxist Economics, the entire profit comes from the labourers. Capitalist invests capital on (1) means of production and (2) the wages of workers. Of these two, means of production do not give more value than their own. Nothing extra comes from them beyond their value. The portion of 'wages' alone gives more value. True that workers receive wages in return for their labour. But, wage itself is not the value of labour. It is only a part of the value of labour. The remaining part is profit (surplus value). Only workers have a role and not the means of production in producing more value than the originally invested capital. This is the Marxist explanation.

This means that no variety of Economics agrees with Ambedkar's explanation that profit comes from 2 ways! Capitalist Economics does not agree if he says 'some portion of profit comes from the workers'. Likewise, Marxist Economics does not agree if he says that 'some portion of profit comes from the means of production'.

This means, Ambedkar's analysis that 'profit comes from both the sides (the means of production and workers) constitutes his own Economics!

This 'own Economics' appears at many more places.

"It would be difficult for any economist with any reputation to save who could deny that labour has as much claim on the wealth produced as capital if not more" (Vol. 1, p. 121).

This observation refers to the question, 'What are the respective rights of 'capital' and 'labour' over the wealth (value) produced?' The answer to this problem should be based on the question, 'What are the respective roles of capital and labour in producing that value?' Each factor should get the value proportionate to the amount of value that it produces. The rights of capital or labour over the value produced (should) depend on their respective roles in producing that value.

But, this understanding is absent in Ambedkar. In this problem, he suggests that 'labour should not get more than capital' and 'capital should not get more than labour'. The two sides should get equal shares. Should they receive equal shares or according to the respective roles that they have played in producing that value?

When children quarrel over some eatables elders say exactly the same: 'it is wrong to quarrel like this! Both should take equal shares!' This solution is right in the case of children. Is 'mediation by elders as in the case of children' a solution for capital and labour too? Idiosyncratic solutions such as these arise only when people don't have a proper understanding of 'value'.

Ambedkar discovered many more idiosyncratic ways. He suggested a way out for industrial peace. It is as follows: The owners of industry have to put before workers all their accounts! Workers will inspect them! For this purpose a new law is necessary. The workers have to inspect the accounts with a view that acknowledges the right of the owner to get profit! They have to accept all the accounts concerning interest, rent, commercial commission and profit. The owner can 'swallow' profit but the workers have to see that he does not swallow too much.

If the owner puts before workers all his accounts, workers will be able to inspect whether or not there remains a profit adequate to their wages!

Ambedkar is cautioning workers that they should inspect the accounts of the owner in that manner.

“Once a budget of that kind is presented by the owner of an industry, the workers would be in a position to realise and scrutinise whether the balance that is left to be divisible among the labourers is fair or whether the employer has taken an undue portion of the total profit. What is the use of having a conciliation board and asking the employers to produce their account books when the employee is not placed in a position to scrutinise what is really the state of affairs?” (Vol. 2, p. 231).

The law should put the workers in a position whereby they examine the accounts of their owner. The workers have to agree that the owner is entitled to get profit, interest, rent and everything of that sort—this is the new change that Ambedkar wished. This mean, workers have to harm themselves or to use a Telugu figurative expression, ‘they have to prick their eyes with their own fingers’.

Ambedkar is claiming as follows how his suggestion results in a great change.

“If the procedure I suggest is adopted, I am sure about it that there will be few labour troubles, the conciliation will be more effective and there will be more industrial peace” (Vol. 2, p. 231).

From this it is clear that Ambedkar is sure about one thing: that the owner can swallow profit, the money lender can swallow interest and the rentier rent. These are their respective rights! Whereas wages to workers!

When workers inspect all these accounts and okay it them saying, ‘we have checked everything sir! It is very nice! You can swallow your profit comfortably’, why will there be industrial disputes? Won’t there be unanimity among classes? Wont’ there be industrial peace?

Ambedkar comments on the government as if he is speaking very frankly about it:

“...the government in any dispute is always on the side of employers”
(Vol. 2, p. 231).

This means, he believes and wants all of us to believe that he does not side owners but sides workers.

Ambedkar becomes furious on the government’s use of the police against workers while they are on strike. A mill manager bribed the police to fire at the striking workers (Vol. 2, p. 235). Ambedkar wonders at this a lot, ‘Is this not injustice? Are the police meant to suppress workers? As if he does not at all know that the police are meant to suppress workers?’ He puts another question, ‘won’t the Home Minister does take such

incidents seriously! Again and again he reiterates his suggestions to maintain industrial peace. He says that real equality between owners and workers can be brought about if the government follows his two suggestions. According to the first suggestion, the government should compel the owner to reveal his budget. According to the second suggestion, the government should not use the police force every now and then. What does it mean to suggest that the government should not use police force every now and then? Does it mean that it can use force on major occasions like 'revolts' rather minor incidents like strikes? If this is not the meaning what does it mean? When should the government use police?

Referring to these two suggestions, he says:

"real equality between employers and employees can be brought about only by incorporating these two provisions" (Vol. 2, p. 231).

Where is the question of equality between two individuals when one of them is an employer (mill owner) and another an employee (mill worker)? Moreover 'real equality'! This means, 'unreal equality'!

According to Ambedkar, employers, workers and the police who defend the employers—every one is just as before! Profits to employers, wages to workers and arms in the hands of the police—every thing remains as before! Yet 'real equality' will emerge if workers inspect the profit quota as shown in the accounts of employers and if the government does not use the police force every now and then! If no intellectual has so far suggested this solution for industrial peace and equality between employers and workers, this is certainly a 'new' solution!

1) What is the aim of the political power of Dalits?

Some social scientists argue that injustice will disappear and an ideal society will emerge if people receive education. Rejecting such arguments, Ambedkar questions, 'All Brahmins are educated, but how many of them realized that caste distinctions are unjustifiable?' (Vol.5, p.397). This is a good question that can counter the arguments or to use a Telugu idiom, 'shut the mouths' of such social scientists. This answer is enough to counter their arguments. But, more than this, the fact that one should know is that 'education too has class nature'! The education of Brahmins is in accordance with their interests. Which means, it preaches the observance of caste distinctions. According to their education, observance of caste distinctions is justified. It alone is the ideal! Hence the question, 'why are educated people too observing caste distinctions?'—is meaningless. As the existing education taught people to observe caste distinctions, educated

people observe the same. In a society where people are split into different classes, every thing acquires class nature. If we don't take this fact into consideration, we cannot understand any thing.

Ambedkar sinks in contradiction at every point because he does not analyse any issue from the perspective of 'class distinctions'.

Ambedkar did not make any attempt to teach class outlook to untouchables even in those contexts when he suggested that the untouchables should strive for political power. Why does the Working Class population in fact need political power at all? To liberate themselves from economic exploitation and other problems that arise from it: But it is not the aim of Ambedkar. According to him, political power means simply achieving representation in bourgeois legislature. They have to achieve only that. If you ask why that representation, it is not to fight against exploitation but only to secure petty reforms. Regarding this 'political power', Ambedkar says the following in his *A warning to the Untouchables*.

"The second thing they must strive for is power. It must not be forgotten that there is a real conflict of interest between the Hindus and the Untouchables... What makes one interest dominant over another is power. That being so, power is needed to destroy power... the economic power of the working class is the power inherent in the strike. The Untouchables as part of the working class can have no other economic power. As it is, this power is not adequate for the defense of the interests of the working class. It is maimed by legislation and made subject to injunctions, arbitrations, martial law and use of troops. Much more inadequate is the Untouchables' power to strike. The Untouchable is therefore under an absolute necessity of acquiring political power as much as possible. Having regard to his increasingly inadequate power in social and economic terms the Untouchable can never acquire too much political power. Whatever degree of political power he acquires, it will always be too little having regard to the vast amount of social, economic and political power of the Hindus. The Untouchable must remember that his political power, no matter how large, will be of no use if he depends for representation in the Legislature on Hindus..." (Vol. 5, p.399).

If we understand these words with difficulty, what Ambedkar said here is the following.

1) Untouchables alone should go to the legislature as the representatives of untouchables and Hindus should not go as the representatives of untouchables.

2) Untouchables too are part of the working class. Yet, they can not achieve anything if they rely on struggles like strikes because the government imposes restrictions on strikes. It uses the military. It may lead

to military rule. There will be such obstacles. Though they are able to improve their economic condition to some extent, untouchables can not achieve political power by means of strikes.

3) Untouchables cannot achieve political power if they merely keep in view mainly the social and economic needs. Hence, political power is the "absolute necessity". They have to strive for that.

This is the essence of Ambedkar's words. This means, Ambedkar, without creating any positive attitude toward class struggle, taught Untouchables to push themselves into capitalist governments. He did not even think this as an immediate need. It is every thing for him: both immediate need and permanent need.

Well, Dalit candidates get some seats in legislatures through elections. What will they do with that power for the sake of the liberation of their class? Will they insist on laws that will change property relations? Will they insist that land be given to Dalits since they do not have land? Will they insist on laws that will change the situation, which is making Untouchables confine to unclean labour? No, there is no such attempt. There are no such changes in the view of Ambedkar.

Then what is the aim of political power of the Dalits? The aim of political power of Dalits is the same as that of the people belonging to the upper castes. That is, the Dalit candidates do the same thing that the Hindu candidates do in the legislature. This means that Dalits too, by means of their political power, participate in the ruling that continues the existing relations of exploitative property! In no context where he preached political power, did Ambedkar suggest that 'we should change these property relations by means of our political power!'

But Ambedkar uttered the term: 'economic exploitation!' 'economic exploitation!', didn't he? Then, is the political power of Dalits not meant for liberating from economic exploitation? Even after the entry of Dalits into legislature, land and capital would remain under the control of the same class as they were before. All the laws that protect them will also remain as before. New laws will also be made. If some of the labouring people—who do not believe that this government will do good for them—go on strikes or resort to revolts to occupy the properties, the government—of which Dalit representatives are a part—will lead its army against those struggles. It will impose many restrictions. It will take all the care necessary to keep property relations intact. Dalit legislative members too will be party to these steps, or, to use a Telugu idiom, 'will lend one of their hands'; not only one hand but both the hands!

Ambedkar—who cautioned the Dalits to remember the fact that the

interests of Hindus and Dalits are not identical—he himself, it seems, does not remember that fact. He did not give the Dalits any programme appropriate to their interests.

If they are able to *intrude* into the legislature, interests of all fellows (both Hindus and Dalits) in fact will become one and the same.

Owing to the membership in the legislative assembly, they can acquire as much property as possible. They can become capitalists if they secure government contracts. If they are lucky, they can get ministerships. They can even rise to the level of a President. Further, if it is possible, they can form governments aligning with Hindus. Then anyway, it amounts to identity of interests of Hindus and Dalits.

The Dalit population that can not enter the legislative assemblies is in millions in the outside world; outside the legislature and they have heaps of problems. What can Dalit legislators do even if they keep these problems in mind? Anyway their legislative assemblies cannot solve those problems. Then what is the use of remembering those problems?

Why do Dalits need political power if they cannot solve their problems? The aim of the political power is the same for Dalits just as for Hindus. Each will try their *luck*. When Ambedkar himself did **not** give a programme for the entire class of Dalits, what can a Dalit legislator do other than improving his own condition?

Ambedkar has boundless attention and interest toward capitalist governments. He keeps delivering long speeches in legislative assemblies concerning the kind of best programmes, which the governments should undertake for the welfare of the people. Without bothering at all about the great heaps of income, which the propertied class appropriates from the labouring class throughout the country, he gives emotional speeches concerning the fistful of income that the government gets in the form of taxes. Ambedkar gave many good suggestions that the government should take care of education and rural water resources, that it should not collect fees for education, that it should not commercialize education, that it should reduce allocation of funds to arms, that it should develop the backward classes and so on and so forth. These are his sermons to the government whose branches consist of laws and administrative machinery that protect exploitation!

This killing of time and talking much in legislative assemblies are meant to change some numbers in the taxes hither and thither while giving the freedom to the class of owners of extracting masses of labour daily from the working class!

Ambedkar delivers speeches even on the society where exploitation does not exist:

“In a society where there is exemption from restraint, a secured release from obstruction, in a society where every man is entitled not only to the means of being, but also of well-being, where no man is forced to labour so that another may abound in luxuries, where no man is deprived of his right to cultivate his faculties and powers so that there may be no competition with the favoured, where there is emphasis of reward by mento, where there is goodwill towards all...” (Vol. 12, p. 735).

He described such a society as a good society and such an environment as a good environment in which people ought to live.

Marxism also talks of the same kind of society, doesn't it? It also talks of a society “where no man is forced to labour so that another man abound in luxuries”. It wishes for a society where there is no scope for any one to acquire wealth and comfort by means of exploitation of labour, doesn't it? Then why didn't Ambedkar accept Marxism?

When they first hear that there is a theory that fights against the propertied class, all the poor labouring people belonging to the lower castes—who experience many sufferings and insults from propertied persons—should be amazed and their eyes are dazzled even if they don't know more about it! But Ambedkar did not respond so!

Those who hate Marxism, though they don't know anything except that it exposed the truth of exploitation of labour, hate it very seriously. Likewise, those who love it too may love it deeply just because they heard that it exposed the secret of exploitation of labour and showed the path of liberation for the poor.

But Ambedkar could not at all love Marxism. Moreover like the propertied class, he developed hatred for it.

Ambedkar too once in a while imagine a higher form of society where there is no economic exploitation. But the path that he shows is the bourgeois legislative assembly! The bourgeois governments! In other words, a path to exploitation-less society via exploitation!

Once in a while Ambedkar develops a feeling of despair and hopelessness towards his own path. While discussing economic issues, he says as follows:

“In spite of many social and economic changes, in spite of the abolition of legal serfdom, legal slavery and the spread of the notion of democracy... there remains and perhaps will remain enough cleavage in

'society into a learned and an ignorant class, a leisure and a labouring class" (Vol. 9, pp: 284-85).

Existence of "cleavage in society into a learned and an ignorant class, a leisure and a labouring class" implies the existence of relations of exploitation. The same thing happens if class struggle does not continue; capitalist society will remain.

If we preach that sharing of power in bourgeois legislative bodies alone is the aim of Dalits—without realizing how necessary it is to struggle against exploitation of labour and its exploitative division of labour—the present day inequalities will always remain as they are. How will changes take place if those who have to struggle do not struggle? But according to Ambedkar, all those inequalities may be natural and these inequalities may be inevitable! The cleavage between leisure class and labouring class too will remain forever, and that too is natural, according to Ambedkar.

Just as education of religious texts gave *knowledge* to Brahmins, the education of capitalistic degrees gave so much knowledge to Ambedkar!

18

ROLE OF AMBEDKAR IN 'DRAFTING' THE CONSTITUTION

There are two more important issues that we have to examine concerning Ambedkar. They are: the Constitution of India and Change of Religion.

There were many activities that Ambedkar undertook in his fight against Untouchability. For the sake of the Dalits, he published some journals; and started some organizations; some schools, colleges and hostels. He formed a union for the Dalit workers. He also formed a political party. He led some movements. We find all this information in detail in biographies of Ambedkar. I am not giving those details in this essay since the aim of this essay is not to narrate Ambedkar's biography. In this essay, I have mainly referred to writings and movements of Ambedkar concerning the Dalit question.

So far we have not mentioned Ambedkar's full name; so let us look at some information. The date of birth of Ambedkar is April 14, 1891. His native place is Ambavada of Ratnagiri district in Maharashtra. His full name is Bheemrao Ramji Ambedkar. Marathi is the mother tongue. Owing

to his father's job, they shifted from their native place to Bombay. There, Ambedkar passed the matriculation in 1907. Later he completed a B.A. at Bombay in 1912 with the financial help of the Raja of Baroda who used to give scholarships to poor students. As the same Raja extended him help to pursue education abroad, Ambedkar completed his M.A and Ph.D at Columbia University in America. From there he went to London in 1917. His aim was to do Bar-At-Law. As he stopped receiving financial help, he had to return to India without completing his Bar-At-Law. In 1918, he took up a teaching job in a college at Bombay. After two years, with the financial help of the Raja of Kolhapur, he again went to London and did not only his Bar-At-Law but also an M.Sc. Later he studied in Germany for a year. In 1923 he returned to India and started his practice as a lawyer in Bombay.

Since then the anti-Untouchability movements, politics and writings concerning these issues became his central activities. In 1926, he got an appointment as a representative of the Dalits in the Bombay legislative Assembly. This appointment continued upto 1934. Similarly he got an appointment in the department of labour in the Executive of the Governor General in 1942 (to 1946).

After India became 'independent' in August 1947, he got a place in Nehru's cabinet as the law minister. At this stage, the drafting of the Constitution of India began.

The British government decided to give 'freedom' to India and declared in March 1946 that India may form the Constituent Assembly and draft a Constitution.

At that time there were provincial Legislative Assemblies in all the states but there was no central legislative Assembly (Parliament). Now they had to form one. That is a 'Constituent Assembly'. During this period, all the people of India did not have right to vote. Only rich persons, professionals like doctors and lawyers and some people of the upper castes had such a right to vote. Elections to the provincial assemblies used to take place with the participation of one fourth of the country's population in voting. The legislative members whom only one fourth of the population elected have to now elect members of the 'Constituent Assembly'.

Elections to the 'Constituent Assembly' took place in July 1946. On the whole 296 members got elected from all the states. However, of these 296, 96 members came to this Assembly through nomination by virtue of their feudal right as representatives of princely states and not even by the then existing election procedure. The remaining members too included people with various kinds of properties, belonging to upper castes and with higher education.

Ambedkar was one such member. He was able to enter the Constituent Assembly with the support of the Muslim League members of Bengal since he did not get Congress Party's support from his native state, Bombay.

The Constituent Assembly began its meetings from December 9, 1946. Rajendra Prasad was its chairman. (Many things that we are going to see/cite hereafter are from volume 13 of Ambedkar's Writings and Speeches. This volume includes the draft copy of the Constitution and Ambedkar's speeches relating to the Constitution).

The very first speech that Ambedkar made in the Constituent Assembly on December 17, 1946 proceeded as follows:

"I know to-day we are divided politically, socially and economically. We are a group of warring camps and I may go even to the extent of confessing that I am probably one of the leaders of such a camp. But, Sir, with all this, I am quite convinced that given time and circumstances nothing in the world will prevent this country from becoming one. (Applause). With all our castes and creeds, I have not the slightest hesitation that we shall in some form be a united people (Cheers). I have no hesitation in saying that notwithstanding the agitation of the Muslim League for the partition of India some day enough light would dawn upon the Muslims themselves and they too will begin to think that a United India is better even for them. (Loud cheers and applause)...I propose to make this appeal. Let us leave aside slogans, let us leave aside words which frighten people. Let us even make a concession to the prejudices of our opponents, bring them in, so that they may willingly join with us on marching upon that road, which as I said, if we walk long enough, must necessarily lead us to unity" (pp: 9-10).

This is a strange speech from Ambedkar! This is a new kind of speech that could satisfy Congress politically and Hindus communally.

All the members of the Constituent Assembly were amazed by Ambedkar's ecstasy over India's independence and by his declaration of sudden unity with Congress because Ambedkar had been repeatedly declaring at the top of his voice that 'social reform like annihilation of caste should take place prior to independence' and 'the independence that India might get would be independence for Hindus and not the low castes'.

Ambedkar's appeal, 'let us be united', sounded to the Congressmen as if Ambedkar was saying, 'hereafter I will unite with you'. Further, Ambedkar was saying, 'I will keep my slogans aside'. Immediately, the clever Chairman of the Constituent Assembly who belonged to the Congress took Ambedkar into two committees connected with the drafting of the Constitution.

However, in the meantime, there arose a problem. Ambedkar lost his membership because earlier he had got elected from Bengal and now Bengal got divided due to the formation of Pakistan.

We don't know what advantage the Congress foresaw in assimilating Ambedkar into their fold. They did not want to lose this member. They asked a Congress member from Bombay to resign and immediately elected Ambedkar in that seat! Ambedkar—who did not get Congress support a couple of months ago in Bombay—did not have any problem now. The Congress fellows took care of everything. How strange is this? How did Ambedkar become such a 'closest-comrade-in-arms' of the Congress? Further, a second strange thing had happened. Ambedkar got a berth in the newly formed Nehru's cabinet. Ambedkar asked for Planning or Labour Ministry but Nehru gave Law ministry saying, 'let us see later'. Now, Ambedkar too has become part of the Congress government.

A few months before that, when Jagjivan Ram got a ministership in the interim government of Nehru before partition, the Federation of Depressed Classes gave a warning to Jagjivan Ram. They told him not to join the cabinet if the depressed classes did not get more representation (more number of ministerships). But Mr. Jagjivan Ram ignored that warning and continued in his ministerial position. The federation of depressed classes, which had earlier warned Jagjivan Ram not to join the government was now satisfied that the depressed classes had got full representation with the induction of Ambedkar into Nehru's cabinet!

Ambedkar's joining the Congress government makes us suspect Ambedkar's honesty a lot. In every speech, or to use a Telugu idiom, 'whenever he opens his mouth', he talks self-respect of depressed castes. But there is no consistency between his words and deeds. It was in June 1945 that Ambedkar wrote his voluminous book (Volume 9) on the atrocities of Congress under the title "What have Congress and Gandhi done for the Untouchables?" What was the reason for setting aside his slogans for the sake of Congress in December 1946 and becoming part of the Congress government by August 1947? What did Congress—which did not do any thing for Untouchables by 1945—do by 1946? Had it done something?

If Ambedkar offers a witty reply that he joined the Congress government but not the Congress party, such a reply is not enough. If the Dalits are in a situation wherein they are convinced by such reply, Ambedkar's action will be accepted as a great deed. Otherwise, It causes intense mental agony in the case of the Dalits who apply their thought.

In the meantime, there occurred a third strange event. Ambedkar got another position because of Congress! On August 29, the Constituent

Assembly elected 7 persons as members of the committee for drafting Constitution and appointed Ambedkar as its Chairman.

The members of the committee were: (1) Alladi Kuppaswami Ayyar (2) N.Gopalaswami Ayyangar (3) Ambedkar (4) K.M.Munshi (5) Syed Mohammed Sadullah (6) R.L. Mitthal (7) D.P. Khaitan.

Ambedkar was the chairman of this committee.

Mr. Vasant Moon who edited all the volumes of Ambedkar, while commenting how Ambedkar raised himself to the highest position said,

“Dr. Ambedkar, who was a strong opponent of Congress had now become their friend, philosopher and guide in Constitutional matters” (p. 26).

Mr. Vasant Moon does not raise the question how a person who was a strong opponent of the Congress until then had so suddenly become their friend! There is no meaning in his descriptions, namely, ‘philosopher and guide’ of the Congress. Because, Ambedkar does not have any new philosophy that he can offer to the Congress. Now the philosophies of both the sides became one and the same. Similarly, there is nothing that makes Ambedkar a guide of Congress. In fact Congress itself became a guide of Ambedkar. Hence, all the descriptions of Mr. Vasant Moon are meaningless eulogies.

Once, M.C.Raja, a Dalit leader became pro-Gandhi and pro-Congress and did not support special electorates for the Dalits and said, ‘our salvation lies in not segregating ourselves from the Hindus’. Referring to this incident, Ambedkar once criticised Raja that he was doing the work of “mere hirelings” of the Congress and wondered why he had developed such a strong love for Gandhi and so on (Vol.5, p. 356).

When the Dalit legislators belonging to the Congress party voted against the Dalit interests in the Madras Assembly, Ambedkar abusively described them as “muzzled dogs” of the Congress (Vol. 5, p. 345).

Is it not by becoming a supporter of the Congress that Ambedkar—who abused the Dalit legislators for becoming pro-Hindus and pro-Congress and for voting against the interests as “mere hirelings” and “muzzled dogs”—got his seat in the Constituent Assembly? Is there any difference between what Raja said (Let us live together with Hindus) and what Ambedkar said (Let us keep our slogans aside and be united!)? It is ‘betrayal’ if others do it! It is ‘service to the nation’ if he does it? Is that so? In this manner, Ambedkar kept aside his slogan of ‘social reform’ and ‘Dalit movement’ and began his unity and friendship with the Congress.

When we speak of the ‘Constitution’, it is necessary to examine (1) the way it is drafted and (2) its contents.

The way the 'Constitution of India' was drafted:

The Drafting Committee consisting of 7 members started its work on 27-10-1947. However, the Constitution had been already drafted by that time! The personnel of the office of the Constituent Assembly prepared the draft ready. B.N.Rao, the Constitutional Advisor, S.N. Mukherjee, Draftsman and the personnel of the office of the Constituent Assembly did the whole work. The officers prepared a new Constitution based on the then existing Constitution called the British India Act of 1935. Of the 395 articles in the old Constitution, they retained 250 articles verbatim or with minor modification. In addition to these, they added some points to this new Constitution from the Constitution of other countries. Thus, they had already prepared the 'Draft Constitution'.

Then, what was this 7-member Committee expected to do? The Committee was expected to examine the prepared draft and suggest modifications if necessary. The personnel of the office of the Constituent Assembly were to incorporate these suggestions later.

Satyanarayan Sinha, a member of the Constituent Assembly who proposed this 7-member Committee stated the duties of this committee as follows:

"...to scrutinise and to suggest necessary amendments to the draft Constitution of India prepared in the office of the Assembly" (p. 29).

Referring to the work of the 7-member committee, Vasant Moon also stated that it was engaged in "**discussing and revising**" (p. 44). This means the duty of the committee was to discuss the already existing draft and revise wherever necessary! This is the duty of drafting the Constitution by a 7-member committee! Ambedkar's chairmanship is for this purpose!

The 7-member committee started its work. It has to keep the copy of the draft before it and go through the articles one after the other. It has to retain those articles which it thinks are all right. If it thinks that it should change a word, sentence, or a paragraph, it does so according to the majority opinion and dictates it to the stenographer, who makes a note of it. Later the official draftsman Mukherjee takes care of incorporating the suggested changes. If the committee goes through all the articles in this manner, it amounts to the finalisation of Constitution.

The committee meetings always had a quorum though all members did not attend every meeting. The committee sat on this job from 27-10-1947 to 13-2-1948. The committee handed over the final draft to the president of the Constituent Assembly on 21-2-1948.

In his covering letter to the final draft, Ambedkar informed the

president that “the necessary quorum was present” and “the decisions were either unanimous or by a majority of those present” (p. 95).

In the same letter, Ambedkar expressed

“the committee’s gratitude for the assistance the committee had received in this difficult task from Sir B.N.Rau, the Constitutional Advisor, Shri S.N. Mukherjee, Joint Secretary and Draftsman, and the staff of the Constituent Assembly secretariat” (p. 104).

After this, the draft of the Constitution was published in the Gazette and released it for the public discussion.

After 8 months, discussion on the draft Constitution began in the Constituent Assembly from 4-11-1948.

In his first day speech, Ambedkar praised the draft Constitution finalised by their committee as a “**formidable document**”. He gave the details concerning the number of articles, schedules and chapters and claimed that

“the Constitution of no country could be found to be so bulky as the draft Constitution” (p. 49).

(The 7-member committee under the chairmanship of Ambedkar brought a very great reputation to India preparing such a bulky Constitution which no other country possessed! The world would have felt disappointed if no country had such a bulky Constitution!)

The discussion of the draft Constitution continued for one year in the Constituent Assembly. The members of the Constituent Assembly made some critical comments here and there on some aspects. They suggested some amendments. Some of the amendments were incorporated in the Constitution. Finally, the Constitution received the consent of the Constituent Assembly on 28-11-1949. President Rajendra Prasad signed the document. In this manner, a new Constitution for ‘independent’ India came into existence. The same Constitution is still in operation in India even today.

So far, we have examined the procedure in which the Constitution was drafted. Now, we have to examine what the contents of the Constitution are.

Contents of the Constitution:

Pages 105 to 317 in volume 13 contain the text of this draft Constitution. Here we will see it very briefly. The Constitution begins as follows:

“WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to

constitutes India into a SOVEREIGN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC and to secure to all its citizens: JUSTICE, social, economic and political; LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the Nation; IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY this ___ of ___ (.....day 15 of May, 1948 A.D.), do HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION" (p. 105).

'Social, economic and political justice, liberty, fraternity, unity—all these words are simply jargon! Just as priests fluently recite the most useless 'Mantras' in a religious ritual, all this jargon of the Constitution too is a useless recitation of empty words!

Who were the people who drafted and discussed this Constitution? They were the members of Constituent Assembly, weren't they? Whom did these members represent? By what sort of elections had they entered the Constituent Assembly? They entered through an election process in which one fourth of the population did not possess the right to vote. Nearly 100 members were Zamindars (feudal lords) who entered the Assembly without any sort of elections. Will it be a Constitution of people when such members discussed and accepted it? Is this a Constitution which all the people of India voluntarily adopted?

Is Ambedkar not aware of all this? He knows pretty well. This gentleman, who always talks of democracy or to use a Telugu idiom, who always talks of democracy 'whenever he opens his mouth', is now not bothered about the undemocratic nature of the composition of the Constituent Assembly.

The question is not whether a given Constitution is bulky or thin. What does it say about 'property' and 'labour'? This is the important question. We have to mainly note such things.

The Constitution which we are going to see consists of many parts.

Reference to 'property' is in part 3. Whereas there is no reference at all at any place to 'labour'.

We have to examine these parts briefly:

Part 1: This contains the Indian union, its territory and its jurisdiction. India is a union of states. 'State' means any kind of administrative unit: it may be ruled by a government or a chief commissioner. Parliament, by means of laws, can change the names and borders of the states. It may either increase or decrease the number of states.

Part 2: Citizenship. Every person will acquire citizenship either because of birth, permanent residence or succession.

Part 3: Fundamental Rights: All citizens will have all rights of equality in all spheres of life. The State (government) will not discriminate against individuals on the ground of religion, race, caste or gender. All citizens have equal rights and use common resources and public places. Nothing prevents the State from making provision for the reservations of appointments or posts in State services in favour of the backward class of citizens. (p. 110).

➤ Untouchability is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. It is an offence punishable in accordance with law (p. 110).

➤ The state should not confer any title on any citizen. The citizens of India should not confer any title on any citizen. The citizens of India should not accept the titles from the foreign governments, unless the President permits (p. 110).

(There are no details as to why titles are forbidden. Yet this is a very good thing. Then why do they have Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan, Bharath Ratna and so on. Do Constitution and titles go their own way?)

➤ All citizens have a right to freedom of speech and expression. They also have the right to assemble peacefully without arms, to form associations or unions, to live anywhere in the country, to practise any religion and to form any religious institutions.

➤ There should be a provision for the reservation of appointments or posts in favour of any backward class of citizens who are not adequately represented in the state services. (This is item 3 of Article 10, on p. 110. There are no details with reference to the number of years for which these reservations should continue). However, there is an explanation concerning the seats in the legislative assemblies in Article 305 of Part 16 on p. 254. "...the provisions of this Constitution relating to the reservation of seats for the Muslims, the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled tribes or the Indian Christians either in Parliament or in the Legislature of any State for the first time being specified in Part I of the First Schedule shall not be amended during a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution and shall cease to have effect on the expiration of that period unless continued in operation by an amendment of the Constitution" (p. 254). There are no details other than these in the Constitution pertaining to reservations).

➤ There are rights to own, acquire, retain or sell property and to pursue any occupation. The State has no right, except by law, to take away

the property of any person. The State cannot take away property—movable (land), immovable, a company, a business firm or property in any other form without paying compensation. Even the religious institutions have the right to own movable and immovable properties (pp: 113-15).

➤ The Parliament can decide by law whether to restrict or abrogate these rights with reference to the armed forces.

With this, Part 3 ends. Though there are many more parts in the Constitution, its entire essence is clear from part 3.

This Constitution protects the right to property. It does not make any distinction between property based on one's labour or property based on exploitation. It treats every kind of property as a holy thing! It is more holy if it is property based on exploitation! Its aim is to protect such property. Individuals can own movable or immovable properties. They can receive rent, interest and profit. This Constitution defends and sustains all these rights of exploitative property that have been there since the past!

No one should take any property without compensation to the owner. According to this rule, we can't touch lands, plantations, industries, money capital and everything that foreign rulers acquired in this country. Similarly, we can't touch estates of feudal lords consisting of thousands of acres of land. Likewise we can't touch any land or any industry of native capitalists either. Which means, this Constitution pleases capitalists: both native and foreign and landlords! In that case, what is the meaning of the phrase 'equality to all persons in all spheres of life'? How do all persons attain economic equality? This means, they are saying, 'acquire property if you can! Who prevented you? The Constitution is giving that right to every one'. This means, they have given the right to exploit to all equally! This is equality!

Ambedkar came forward with great joy or to use a Telugu expression "to put both his hands" in this work of preparing such a Constitution.

After mentioning that 'practice of Untouchability is an offence punishable under law', the State brought the Act prohibiting Untouchability in 1954. That is 5 years after the finalisation of the Constitution. It took so much time to provide a safeguard for the protection of low caste people! No example other than this is necessary to prove that equality cited in the Constitution is false.

Part 4: Directive Principles:

The State may implement these principles which the Constitution has laid down. It need not implement these principles if it is not possible. These are not rules. These are only guidelines. If the State implements them, the

Constitution framers will be happy. If the State does not implement them, they will feel much happier.

Those sermons are the following:

➤ “The State shall strive to promote the welfare of the people” (Aha! Who are the people? Are the capitalists: native and foreign people? Now it is clear. Yes, the State has to keep their welfare in view, doesn't it?)

➤ Men and women have the right to get a livelihood. Ownership and control over material resources of society should be useful for the common good. (Private individuals can possess property rights over material resources; whereas those material resources should be useful for the common good! How wittily draft committee members speak!)

➤ Men and women should get equal wage for equal work. There should be humane conditions of work. There should be a uniform civil code. The State should protect young persons and children from exploitation. (No explanation of what exploitation is! But they talk of protection from exploitation!)

The Constitution gave indescribable Sermons in this part to the State that it should keep all these matters in view.

Part 5: In this part, there is a reference to adult suffrage and the information indicates that they have introduced the right to vote. This, they should have mentioned in part 3 where there is a reference to Fundamental Rights. But there we don't find any reference to this right (of Adult Suffrage).

From Part 6: There is nothing to examine specifically. Hereafter everything is concerned exclusively with powers. Who will elect the President and the Vice-President at the Centre? What are their duties, powers, tenure and salaries? Similarly, about the Attorney General and Speaker as well. How many houses will the Parliament consist of? How many times those houses will meet in a year? Elections, Conducting the houses, Quorum, Privileges of the house, Qualifications of the members, Procedure to introduce Bills, Annual Budget, Auditing, Supreme Court and its rights, Appointment of Judges—Thus, information concerning Centre is over.

After this, information concerning the States. Then the Centre-States relations, their assets, income, debts, Central-State services, Courts... In this manner, hundreds of pages continue with these details until Part 17 ends. With this the Constitution comes to an end.

In the whole of the Constitution, abolition of Untouchability and Adult

Suffrage are the two noteworthy points. There is nothing special worth talking about the remaining points.

It is beyond the imagination of this Constitution to talk about 'performance of labour by every person'.

This is totally an orthodox ('Sanatan') Constitution. Which means, it is such a Constitution which was born during the period of Slavery and which continues exploitative rights. This Constitution adopted verbatim the same laws which the British imperialists—who occupied the country as their colony—formulated in order to carry on their rule smoothly. The only thing that has changed is the political leaders.

The fact that the same imperialist laws are useful to an *independent* country proves that there is no difference between the imperialists and the rulers of this country, that the interests of both sides are the same and that all of them aim at exploiting the Working Class in the name of property rights.

If we look at the Constituent Assembly—which adopted this Constitution—from a class perspective, all the members of the Constituent Assembly belong to the same class. They included devotees who kneel down before the British imperialism, native feudal lords, political 'rightists', Communalists, agents of propertied class and such others. All of them have proposed the Constitution of their choice.

No skill, or any creativity was necessary to either prepare this Constitution or to scrutinise this draft. The language of the courts was enough to do this job! There is no scope for using poetic talent in such activity. Even if you assign this work to ordinary clerks, they can do it easily. In fact, it was these clerks who did the entire work before and after the scrutiny of the draft Constitution.

Many people think that Ambedkar did this work of drafting the Constitution single handily. They think so because they don't know the fact. It is surprising to note that even those people like Vasant Moon who know the facts also praise Ambedkar. Mr. Moon described that Ambedkar has engraved this statue of the Constitution with great creativity. On the title page of the 13th volume which contains information about the draft Constitution, Mr. Moon has described Ambedkar as 'the principal architect'. In fact, there is no architecture here. Examining some thing that already exists is not tantamount to architecture.

1) This Constitution is a grand "Structure of Political Democracy": Ambedkar

After the conclusion of discussions and petty and witty amendments of the draft Constitution in the Constituent Assembly, Ambedkar gave a very long speech in his capacity as the chairman of the draft committee on 25-11-1949 (pp: 1206-18. Most of the things that follow are in a condensed form).

At the outset, Ambedkar expressed his happiness because all the members of the Constituent Assembly except one member appreciated with generous expressions the labour which the draft committee put in.

He claimed that he entered the Constituent Assembly not with any other hope except to safeguard the interests of the Scheduled Castes. *(Does any one safeguard the interests of Scheduled Castes by means of a Constitution that exploits Scheduled Castes? Moreover, that safeguarding is done by keeping aside all the slogans of the Scheduled Castes! If Ambedkar had entered this Assembly only to protect the interests of the low castes, what was the need to keep their slogans aside?)*

Then, he repeatedly expressed his gratitude to the Constituent Assembly:

"As to the compliments that have been showered upon me both by the members of the Assembly as well as by my colleagues of the Drafting Committee I feel so overwhelmed that I cannot find adequate words to express fully my gratitude to them. I came into the Constituent Assembly with no greater aspiration than to safeguard the interests of the Scheduled Castes. I had not the remotest idea that I would be called upon to undertake these responsible functions. I was therefore greatly surprised when the Assembly elected me to the Drafting Committee. I was more than surprised when the Drafting Committee elected me to be its Chairman. There were in the Drafting Committee men bigger, better and more competent than myself such as my friend Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar. I am grateful to the Constituent Assembly and the Drafting Committee for reposing in me so much trust and confidence and to have chosen me as their instrument and given me this opportunity of serving the country" *(Cheers.)* (p. 1208)

(Would it not be possible to serve the country if he had no position of the chairman of the drafting committee? Well, this means, what the remaining 6 members in the committee did was not serving the country! Nowhere did he explain what 'serving the country' means. Does 'serving the country' mean drafting a Constitution that served a particular class? Now the matter is clear! This means, Ambedkar is overwhelmed with joy for serving the exploitative class!)

Later, Ambedkar expressed his gratitude to the office of the Constituent Assembly who prepared the draft initially.

"The credit that is given to me does not really belong to me. It belongs partly to Sir B.N.Rau, the Constitutional Adviser to the Constituent Assembly who prepared a rough draft of the Constitution for the consideration of the Drafting Committee who, as I have said, have sat for 141 days and without whose ingenuity to devise new formulae and capacity to tolerate and to accommodate different points of view, the task of framing the Constitution could not have come to do successful a conclusion. Much greater share of the credit must go to Mr. S.N. Mukherjee, the Chief Draftsman of the Constitution. His ability to put the most intricate proposals in the simplest and clearest legal form can rarely be equalled, nor his capacity for hard work. He has been acquisition to the Assembly. Without his help, this Assembly would have taken many more years to finalise the Constitution. I must not omit to mention the members of the staff working under Mr. Mukherjee, for, I know how hard they have worked and how long they have toiled, sometimes even beyond midnight. I want to thank them all for their effort and their co-operation." (*Cheers.*) (pp: 1208-9).

(If so many parts of the 'credit' go to so many people, what remains for the chairman? Strangely, it seems a lot of it still remains!)

Thereafter, praise for the Congress Party began.

"The task of the Drafting Committee would have been a very difficult one if this Constituent Assembly has been merely a motley crowd, a tessellated pavement without cement, a black stone here and a white stone there in which each member or each group was a law unto itself. There would have been nothing but chaos. This possibility of chaos was reduced to nil by the existence of the Congress Party inside the Assembly which brought into its proceedings a sense of order and discipline. It is because of the discipline of the Congress Party that the Drafting Committee was able to pilot the Constitution in the Assembly with the sure knowledge as to the fate of each article and each amendment. The Congress Party is, therefore, entitled to all the credit for the smooth sailing of the Draft Constitution in the Assembly" (p. 1209).

(Shares of all persons mentioned above evaporate because now every thing goes to Congress Party!)

So far, Ambedkar has praised the presence of discipline in the Congress Party, hasn't he? Now look at another side of it! Now he is praising the absence of discipline in the Congress Party!

"The proceedings of this Constituent Assembly would have been very dull if all members had yielded to the rule of party discipline. Party

discipline, in all its rigidity, would have converted this Assembly into a gathering of 'yes' men. Fortunately, there were rebels. They were Mr. Kamath, Dr. P.S. Deshmukh, Mr. Sidhva, Prof. Saxena and Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava. Along with them I must mention Prof. K.T.Shah and Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru" (p. 1209).

(This means, rebels in the Congress Party are far better than Ambedkar who was not a rebel! They had at least made some criticism.)

"The points they raised were mostly ideological. That I was not prepared to accept their suggestions, does not diminish the value of their suggestions nor lessen the service they have rendered to the Assembly in enlivening its proceedings. I am grateful to them. But for them, I would not have had the opportunity which I got for expounding the principles underlying the Constitution" (p. 1209).

Next, the showers of praise turned to the President. Ambedkar declared with great obedience that he must thank the President for the courtesy and the consideration which he had shown to the members of the Assembly and this he can never forget.

After closing this scene of flooding the Congress Party with praises, he began to enact the scene of criticising Communists and Socialists. Here Communists mean 'Marx-ists'. There is no clarity who these Socialists are. Ambedkar's complaint was that these Communists and Socialists were carelessly criticising this great Constitution which was possible because of the wonderful discipline of the Congress Party. He did not mention a single point of their criticism. Without mentioning anything, he began to accuse them.

"The condemnation of the Constitution largely comes from two quarters, the Communist Party and the Socialist Party. Why do they condemn the Constitution? Is it because it is really a bad Constitution? I venture to say 'no'." (p. 1210).

(Ambedkar has learnt pretty well how to undertake great ventures under the shade of Congress Party).

"The Communist Party wants a Constitution based upon the principle of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. They condemn the Constitution because it is based upon parliamentary democracy" (p. 1210).

(Did the Communist Party say this? Ambedkar has imagined something of his own and commenting the same without mentioning the criticism which that party made).

The Socialists are criticising this Constitution, according to Ambedkar, because they should have freedom in the Constitution to nationalise or

socialise the entire private property without any compensation. But there is no such freedom in this Constitution. Hence, the Socialists are opposing this Constitution.

Did those Socialists—whoever they may be—show this reason? Ambedkar has not cited their words either. He says that Communists and Socialists are opposing this Constitution because it does not permit them to introduce changes of their choice if they come to power in future! Aha! How to eulogise this intellect? Or to use a Telugu expression, with how many mouths should we eulogise this intellect?

Can't those—who come to power in the future—draft the Constitution of their choice? Haven't the Congress people drafted the Constitution by changing to some extent the then existing Constitution? Will the parties—who subscribe to revolutionary theory that aims at the confiscation of properties of exploiters without compensation—think whether or not the existing Constitution permit them? If it so happens that they come to power, they would at once tear this Constitution of exploitative rights into pieces and draft a fresh Constitution in accordance with their theory. Whatever ideological group that comes to power, it will formulate a Constitution that suits its ideology. It does not depend on the Constitution of others. Didn't this great Constitutional expert know such a small point as this?

The reason for the criticism of this Congress Constitution by Communists and Socialists might not be the same as Ambedkar is attributing, namely, 'This Constitution will not be useful to us'. This reason is totally meaningless. They might have criticised the then existing conditions. Ambedkar did not give a single point of their criticism except accusing them!

For a Constitutional expert—who stood in the bourgeois Constituent Assembly amidst big princes and capitalists, who put on his shoulders the responsibility of defending their exploitative property rights and—who was overwhelmed by the happy feeling that he was serving the country of princes and capitalists—, it is very natural to become extremely furious at the very thought that there are people who think of confiscating properties of princes and capitalists without compensation. The same thing had happened in the case of Ambedkar. That is why, this friend of the bourgeoisie became so furious at Communists and Socialists!

Ambedkar's speech is not yet over. It is going on and on following the tune of lawyers and bourgeois political tactics. But Ambedkar too hesitated a little because he thought that it would be treacherous to defend the property rights of bourgeoisie and their Constitution even after the world had heard the term 'exploitation of labour'. Hence, this lawyer, in order

to be free from the crime suddenly changed the tune of his speech as follows:

"I do not say that the principle of parliamentary democracy is the only ideal form of political democracy. I do not say that the principle of no acquisition of private property without compensation is so sacrosanct that there can be no departure from it. I do not say that fundamental Rights can never be absolute and the limitations set upon them can never be lifted. What I do say is that the principles embodied in the Constitution are the views of the present generation or if you think this to be an over-statement. I say these are the views of the members of the Constituent Assembly. Why blame the Drafting Committee for embodying them in the Constitution? I say why blame even the Members of the Constituent Assembly?" (p. 1211).

'Why blame the Constituent Assembly', asks Ambedkar! All the members of the Constituent Assembly are defenders of property rights! Yet we should not criticise the Constituent Assembly! This is how a person who claims that his objective is to protect Scheduled Castes speaks! Moreover, it also means Ambedkar is exhibiting too much innocence and asking thus: 'we have done whatever the Constituent Assembly asked us to do. Why do you blame us?'

But he won't do if he doesn't like that job even if others ask him, would he? He did the job which the Constituent Assembly assigned to him willingly and overwhelmingly. He didn't do it against his will under compulsion, did he? Precisely for this reason we blame him!

The Constituent Assembly, the Drafting Committee and Ambedkar—these are not different aspects. All are the same. All people are one. Our criticism is against all those who did that job together and willingly! Those who do not agree with that Constitution have the right to criticise the Constitution and its makers.

Next, Ambedkar had also started another argument: 'now the Constitution is so because of the views of the present members of the Constituent Assembly. If the people of the next generation want to change it let them do so, we are not saying that this should not be changed and it should be retained as it is forever.

It is a different matter whether the people of the next generation change it or they too retain the same Constitution. The present criticism is against this Constituent Assembly. 'Not doing some thing that has to be done now itself and telling the people of the next generation to do whatever they want' later —implies that the present generation is evading its present duty and throwing it on to the next generation. In other words,

the people of the present generation are saying, 'we want exploitative rights only'! Hence the criticism is against the members of the Constituent Assembly!

Ambedkar thinks that his argument, namely, 'Constitution is so because of the views of the present members of Constituent Assembly', is very strong and he was able to present such a great argument. The critics of the Constitution do not object to the views of feudal lords and capitalists. The critics know that they hold such views. The whole criticism here is because Ambedkar too holds similar views.

Should views of feudal lords, capitalists and Ambedkar be identical? Shouldn't there be any difference?

This gentleman claims that he is the representative of the Depressed Classes! He is a person who claims that the realisation of the interests of the Scheduled Castes is his goal! He is the person who declared such grand schemes as 'safeguards from economic exploitation' and 'State Socialism'! He is the person who vehemently argued that his schemes should be implemented within 10 years after attaining independence and that his schemes would result in liberty, equality and fraternity in society! Why did such a person abandon all his objectives, slogans, schemes and enter the Constituent Assembly of the propertied classes? For what purpose did he adopt the view of the propertied class as his own? What is the answer to these questions? 'If the people of the next generation want to change the Constitution, they can change it'—Is this an answer?

Ambedkar prepared his scheme of 'safeguards from economic exploitation' in March 1947 with a view to present to the Constituent Assembly (Vol. 1, p. 383). But the Constituent Assembly rejected his scheme. This means, while the Constituent Assembly rejected Ambedkar's scheme, Ambedkar accepted the scheme of the Constituent Assembly.

We have already seen earlier the contents of Ambedkar's scheme. It is a scheme that simply transforms the forms of property. Ambedkar prepared at least such a scheme because agricultural labourers were waging struggles to occupy the lands of landlords in China as well as in India in places like Telangana. In such an atmosphere, it would sound ridiculous if he did not refer to 'properties' while talking about safe guards for the poor. Hence, he discovered that kind of scheme!

When the Constituent Assembly rejected his scheme, what should a person have done if his scheme is his goal? He has to undertake programmes of defending and propagating his own scheme among the people. But what Ambedkar did was not to mention it again! Never did he raise the topic again!

Thereafter, he quickly became a minister in the Congress government and the Chairman of the Drafting Committee or to use a Telugu metaphor, the minister-ship and the chairmanship 'fell in love' with Ambedkar. Thenceforth, Ambedkar abandoned his scheme of 'safeguards from economic exploitation' and with great joy immersed in the programme of decorating the Constitution that safeguards 'economic exploitation' and was overwhelmed with joy for he got an opportunity to do service for the country! His scheme of safeguards was not useful in any way except to decorate his collected works after his death.

We don't ask other members of the Constituent Assembly the kind of questions which we asked Ambedkar, namely, 'why should you do that? Why did you do this?' It is because the other members didn't declare any ideals such as, 'safeguarding the interests of the Scheduled Castes' is my goal!' or 'liberty, equality and fraternity are my objectives!' and so on. They did not take any vehement oaths. Since he himself declared those ideals repeatedly even in the Constituent Assembly, we put these questions to Ambedkar.

Ambedkar opposed the criticism against the Constitution so vehemently that no form of logic was left unused by him. In Canada, he says, people did not at all have the right to amend their Constitution! Whereas in America and Australia, it is not possible to touch the Constitution except under extraordinary circumstances! But it is not so in India! In India, it is enough if a certain majority of votes are secured in the parliament in order to amend the Constitution. Is there any Constitution anywhere in the world which can be so easily amended? It has the most facile procedure for amending the Constitution. We have not put a seal of finality and infallibility upon the Constitution by denying to the people the right to amend the Constitution. If you want to amend it, get a majority of votes and then amend it'—This is how he argued a lot.

(Here, there is a doubt about the present day Dalit leaders! Ambedkar himself categorically stated that if the majority of the members of the Parliament are willing to amend the Constitution, there is a provision in the Constitution, there is a provision in the Constitution itself to do so, didn't he state it? Then why do Dalit leaders now say that 'the government should not touch the Constitution and can not amend it'? What is the correct method? Examining the proposed amendments or arguing not to touch the Constitution? Don't these leaders know any of the Ambedkar's descriptions of the Constitution of how facile and flexible it is?)

Ambedkar also hurled a terrifying challenge at his critics concerning the speciality of the Constitution of India:

"I challenge any of the critics of the Constitution to prove that any Constituent Assembly anywhere in the world has, in the circumstances in which this country finds itself, provided such a facile procedure for the amendment of the Constitution" (p. 1211-12).

After Ambedkar answered all kinds of criticism against the Constitution with his astounding arguments, the remaining part of his speech projected a scene in which Ambedkar expressed his heartfelt grief, 'will India maintain her independence or will she lose it again?'

Ambedkar repeatedly said that the question of the country's independence is causing him anxiety and that his mind is crowded with these doubts. This oratory scene proceeds as follows:

"...in addition to our old enemies in the form of castes and creeds we are going to have many political parties with diverse and opposing political creeds. Will Indians place the country above their creed or will they place creed above country, our independence will be put in jeopardy a second time and probably be lost for ever. This eventuality we must all resolutely guard against. We must be determined to defend our independence with the last drop of our blood. (*Cheers.*) On the 26th of January 1950, India would be a democratic country in the sense that India from that day would have a government of the people, by the people and for the people. The same thought comes to my mind. What would happen to her democratic Constitution? Will she be able to maintain it or will she lose it again. This is the second thought that comes to my mind and makes me anxious as the first" (p. 1214).

After this, for a while, Ambedkar praised Buddha's democracy and the democracy of the Hindu kings of that time.

Were caste distinctions not observed in those Hindu kingdoms? Ambedkar had so many doubts whether India would maintain her Independence or lose it. Why didn't he get the doubt, 'what do you mean by democracy under monarchy?' What is this, why are Hindu kings so loveable in the view of Ambedkar now?

In his capacity as the chairman of the Drafting Committee, Ambedkar expressed an indescribable agony. Here again he was worried a lot if this country loses again the democracy that it received from the Constitution which the drafting Committee finalised.

Look, all this anxiety of Ambedkar is about the greatest democracy which was formulated by those members who were elected by means of an electoral system in which even one-fourth people don't have the right to vote and by the feudal lords who did not face even such nominal elections!

He raised the question of 'how to maintain this democracy?' and he himself answered, 'we should hold fast to the Constitutional methods'. He said that "we must abandon the bloody methods of revolution".

(All these persons have membership in the Constituent Assembly. Some have ministerships and even bigger positions. It is needless to talk about lands and capital that they possess. Then how are these gentlemen connected with revolution? Therefore let there be no 'revolution'!)

He further said that it is better to give up as early as possible the anarchic methods like civil disobedience, non-Cooperation and Satyagraha.

No revolution! No Satyagraha! Everybody should act as per law, according to the laws in the Constitution because he and other members gave such a great Constitution. Don't violate it!

This means, Dalits do not need any movements and any programme of struggle against the State! All that they have to do is service to the Constitution! That is, service to the propertied class.

Ambedkar's speech proceeded further as follows:

"On the social plane, we have in India a society based on the principle of graded inequality which means elevation for some and degradation for others. On the economic plane, we have a society in which there are some who have immense wealth as against many who live in abject poverty" (p. 1216).

Mr. Ambedkar, what will these people with abject poverty do with the political equality ('All are equal before law!') that all of you declared in the pages of the Constitution.

Ambedkar's sermon to feudal lords, industrialists and politicians who sat in the Constituent Assembly proceeded further as follows:

"How long shall we continue to live this life of contradictions? How long shall we continue to deny equality in our social and economic life? If we continue to deny it for long, we will do so only by putting our political democracy in peril. We must remove this contradiction at the earliest possible moment or else those who suffer from inequality will blow up the structure of political democracy which this Assembly has so labouriously built up.... These down-trodden classes are tired of being governed, they are impatient to govern themselves. This urge for self-realization in the downtrodden classes must not be allowed to develop into a class struggle or class war. It would lead to a division of the House. That would indeed be a day of disaster. For, as has been well said by Abraham Lincoln, a house divided against itself cannot stand very long. Therefore the sooner room is made for the realization of their aspiration, the better for the few, the better for the country, the better

for the maintenance for its independence and the better for the continuance of its democratic structure. This can only be done by the establishment of equality and fraternity in all spheres of life. That is why I have laid so much stress on them" (pp: 1216-18).

Ambedkar's speech is not yet over. It is clear what Ambedkar emphasised in the Constituent Assembly, isn't it? Ambedkar is warning the Constituent Assembly that as the majority people in the country are living in 'abject poverty', the State should establish economic and social equality and if it is not done, the people will resort to 'class struggles' and we should not allow such a thing to happen.

Well, what should the Constituent Assembly do for the downtrodden classes? What is Ambedkar's intention? Should all the rich people in India distribute their property to the poor? It is not there in the Constitution. They need not give up their property without compensation. Well, at least, should all persons begin to perform labour? This is also not there in the Constitution. Moreover, this is something which Ambedkar doesn't like at all. Then what should the Constituent Assembly do for economic and social equality? How can these contradictions be eradicated? Ambedkar did not offer the members of the Constituent Assembly any suggestion like, 'give up your property rights', or 'all persons should perform labour' or any other suggestion.

Did he at least show a path to the people? Not at all. According to Ambedkar's philosophy people have nothing to do for themselves even if they live in abject poverty. They should not resort to 'class struggle' in any form. They should not resort to *Satyagraha* either. Everybody should follow the laws mentioned in the Constitution! It is the class of owners who made those laws! Those laws tell the labourers not to look at the property of the employers. Then how do people get rid of the abject poverty? Ambedkar has not suggested any solution to this problem.

It follows that, in order to get rid of poverty, people have to do nothing; the Constituent Assembly has to do nothing and even Ambedkar too has to do nothing! (God is the only creature that is left! We have to search where that guy is!)

Anyone, who feels really sorry for the poverty of people will try to find out the cause for the poverty. As soon as they hear about the theory of 'exploitation of labour', they will at once agree with it. They would realise that confiscation of means of production from the hands of the class of employers without compensation is the right solution. From that moment of realization, they begin to preach people the objective of class struggle. But Ambedkar opposes this totally. Nowhere did he support the struggle against the property rights of the employers. Not only did he not support

it, he opposed it at every step. He repeatedly preached to the people that the best way for the poor people is to follow Constitution and they should not act contrary to the laws. Whereas for the propertied classes in the Constituent Assembly, he cautioned that the 'downtrodden classes may take the path of class struggle! You should not allow that!'

But Ambedkar had some hesitation and despair though he was speaking with confidence, standing amidst the property owners in the Constituent Assembly. He was surprised a lot to note that 'times are fast changing'.

He said:

"Times are fast changing. People including our own are being moved by new ideologies" (p. 1218).

This is to say that people not only in foreign countries but also in our country are influenced by Marxism!

Now the last sentences in the speech:

"...let us resolve not to be tardy in the recognition of the evils that lie across our path and which induce people to prefer Government for the people to government by the people, nor to be weak in our initiative to remove them. That is the only way to serve the country. I know of no better" (p. 1218).

In the entire speech, the last sentence alone is beautiful!

This sentence is totally true!

Ambedkar really does not know anything better than that. If he had a better idea, the history of Ambedkar and the history of the struggle of the Dalits would have been much better than it is now.

If Ambedkar knew that the welfare of the Dalits and membership in the Constituent Assembly are not consistent, he would not have said so unhesitatingly that he entered the Constituent Assembly for the welfare of Dalits. Instead of standing amidst people and telling them, 'let us get rid of our poverty and servitude by means of class struggle', he would not have stood in the Constituent Assembly and told, 'let us be careful and see that people do not resort to class struggle'.

'I know of no better'—though this is something that Ambedkar said merely with conventional modesty, he in fact does not know what is better.

After Ambedkar concluded his speech, all the members of the Constituent Assembly flooded Ambedkar with praises. They called him 'modern Manu'. Just as Manu's law is 'Manu Smriti', Ambedkar's Constitution is 'Mahar Smriti'. ('Mahar' is the name of the caste of

Ambedkar, hence they called his Constitution 'Mahar Smriti'! It seems this appeared as a compliment to Ambedkar too! Nowhere did he reject these terms).

A member named Thakur Das Bhargava advised Ambedkar to join the Congress Party. (Does Ambedkar have to join the Congress formally? It seems Bhargava was innocent or to use a Telugu metaphor, 'it was madness' on the part of Bhargava. Is Ambedkar's "closer contact" with Congress not tantamount to having joined Congress already?)

Whereas Ananthasayanam Ayyangar made a beautiful analysis of Ambedkar:

"The very person who came to doubt and to criticise has ultimately taken charge of this Constitution and framed it. I congratulate ourselves for the goodwill shown to him and the manner in which he has reciprocated it. After all, by closer contact we can easily understand one another's view point" (p. 1167).

This means Congress Party had cleverly took Ambedkar closer to them! Similarly, Ambedkar too demonstrated cleverness in coming 'closer' to Congress!

All the clever men came close to each other and understood each other well!

It is only the people who did not understand the two.

2) Military in Telangana

Do you know what was happening in the country 'outside the Constituent Assembly' while the days were passing leisurely with *delicate* debates on the Constitution?

The rural poor engaged in agriculture in Telangana, Andhra, Kerala, Bengal, Panjab, Uttar Pradesh and some more places were waging struggles, under the leadership of the Communist Party, for occupying the lands of the landlords.

If we take the example of Telangana, Mr. P. Sundarayya's book, **TELANGANA PEOPLE'S STRUGGLE AND ITS LESSONS** (a CPIM publication in December 1972) gives a vivid and visual description.

In Telangana villages, tenant-farmers and agricultural labourers began revolts against feudalism. Among them, poor Hindus and Untouchables were present. They stopped all the payments connected with compulsory free labour and compulsory presents to the landlords. The poor people began to confiscate the stocks of grain of big landlords and distribute it

among themselves. They dumped and set fire to the records of Patels and Patwaris (Village officials), the records of the landlords, promissory notes crowded in the almirahs of the money lenders. Finally, with the slogan of 'land to the tiller', they began to distribute the lands of landlords. Initially, they left 500 acres of land to each landlord's family and distributed the remaining land. But gradually, they left 10 if it was wet land and 100 acres if it was dry land. These revolutionary activities began to spread to other districts as well (pp: 58-59).

The landlords, who were terrified due to the activities of the poor people, left the villages and fled to towns.

"The anti-Razakar, anti-the Nizam armed struggle developed in the Telangana area rapidly; village squads with about 10,000 members and regular guerilla squads with more than 2,000 members were formed; innumerable struggles, heroic deeds, nearly 2,000 militants, fighters and leaders laying down their lives but taking a heavy toll of the Nizam's armed personnel, police agents, Razakars, landlords and their goondas; driving them away from villages; 3,000 villages administered by village panch committees or gram rajyams; land distribution, education and health, and all rural services organised by these fighting people's committees" (p. 60).

This is a small example to understand the difference between Ambedkar's path (paying debentures, interest and inheritance) and the Communist path of struggle against 'exploitation'.

The 'Nehru-Patel Government' (it was also Ambedkar's government since Ambedkar too was a minister in that government), under the pretext of annexing the Nizam, sent 50 thousand soldiers into the Telangana villages in September 1948 in order to suppress the people's revolt.

The Nizam surrendered to the Indian government without any resistance. Then the objective of the Indian army was to suppress the people. Which means, destroying guerrilla squads, the Communist Party organisation and the Village Committees.

Ambedkar, who was a part of the government, knew every thing: why the Indian Army had proceeded to the Telangana villages and what it was going to do there.

"The Congress military regime in Hyderabad, the police, military and the Congress Razakars had let loose vandalism, terror and fascism on an unprecedented scale with a view to crushing the heroic struggle of the people of Telangana" (p. 197).

"Military camps were erected all over fighting areas in Telangana at every 4th or 5th mile. Twice or thrice a day, villages around these camps

were raided by the military and the people were systematically tortured. People in every village were herded at a place and brutally beaten. They forced the people to accompany them through forests, gardens, hills, etc., in search of Communists and compelled them to give information. When they could not find anyone in the search, people were again beaten" (p.198).

"...people were tied to ropes and drawn up and suddenly dropped to the ground with a pulley system (like the one used to draw water from wells). Men were tied in gunny bags and soldiers threw them over a wall from one side to the other. —Some soldiers caught hold of the arms and some others the legs of the people and swung them while some others kicked those swinging men with their nailed boots like foot-balls are kicked. —People en masse were made to lie down in the sand under the hot sun and were beaten. Some were tied to tree-tops upside down and were swung, and at the end of each swing, were beaten. Some were made to lie face downwards, a wooden plank placed on their back, two soldiers got on it at each end, and swayed and danced. —Pins were thrust under finger-nails; branding bodies with red-hot firewood or iron was a common feature. People were also tortured with the electric current. —...Hundreds of people used to be severely beaten up and made to run in front of running lorries. Whoever could not run ahead of lorries were tied behind lorries and dragged" (p. 198).

"Rangayya of Chandupalli was tied to a cart and burnt alive. He died shouting, "Communist Party Zindabad" (p. 200).

"Ramulu was caught in an encirclement raid at Miryala (Suryapet taluka). Failing to get any secrets from him, he was tied to a lorry and dragged on the road until his body was torn to bits" (p. 200).

"Muthayya of Visnur and Appireddy of Kalmalacheruvu were burnt alive in hayricks" (p. 200).

"Ganji Satyanarayana of Malkapuram, squad leader and Harijan Muthayya, had their eyes gouged out, testicles cut and thrust into their mouths, and later hacked to pieces" (p. 200).

"Yellaswamy of Nomula village coming from an agricultural labour family,...was subjected to innumerable torture—pieces of flesh were cut from his body, nails were hammered into him, he was branded with red hot iron; still he refused to reveal secrets and was shot dead ultimately (p. 201).

"Needless to talk especially about atrocities on women. They raped women who recently gave birth to children, pregnant women and young girls. More than 1,000 women were raped during the first year and a few thousands during the whole period. Because a number of brutes raping

women in a row, more than 100 women died. —Women's breasts were pulled and crushed with iron forceps, and babies were killed before the very eyes of their mothers. —70 women were stripped naked, chameleons tied to their thighs and chilly powder thrown into the wounds."

(pp: 199-200).

Innumerable incidents of murders, burning alive, burying alive and massacres took place.

In Allampalli camp, Palvancha taluka, in one day in September, 45 were shot dead among whom 18 were party members. Butchery continued and within 4 days 119 were killed. In this camp, it is estimated that more than 300 were killed (p. 201).

"In Gadipadu and other camps established for Koya people evacuated from the forests, within two months, about 10,000 people died of cholera. Police shot dead 120 persons to force them evacuate their villages" (p.201).

Soldiers unleashed terror in thousands of villages of Nalgonda, Warangal, Khammam, Karimnagar and Hyderabad.

Military committed many atrocities in the present day Andhra districts which are border districts of Telangana.

"In Krishna district, the people's movement in support of Telangana became intensified. The mass of agricultural labour, in more than 400 villages, were preparing for strike struggles to win their demands. Their demands were 30 bags of paddy, 8-hour working day and 30 paid holidays. The peasants in the zamindari tracts refused to pay rent to zamindars and demanded that their rent be scaled down and the zamindari system be abolished" (p. 152).

If these demands had been achieved, even the untouchables, who were agricultural labourers, too would have benefited a lot.

Even the Congress leaders could not resist themselves from exposing the terror unleashed by the Army that attacked Andhra villages.

"Sri Vemula Kurmayya, former Congress Minister for Harijan Uplift, member, Madras Legislative Assembly, issued a statement on the shameless police atrocities in the village of Yelamarru, an extract from which is given hereunder: "Before day-break on 14th July, 1949, 200 Malabar Special Police raided the village of Yelamarru. They surrounded the village and did not allow anybody to leave. After daybreak, they gathered the villagers in three batches in the local high school compound. They stripped them naked and each was given ten stripes. Then, they forced the villagers to parade throughout the village, in their nakedness ! When some tried to hide their shame with their hands, they were beaten again. Some of them

were made to lie prostrate before the Gandhi statue and were given more blows. Even after this, the clothes were not returned but they were asked to go home and appear before their womenfolk naked and to come back attired on new clothes. Both untouchables and touchables were among the people who were subjected to this atrocious humiliation and beating.—All the women in the Harijan colony were made to stand in the maidan and were beaten" (p. 168).

"In all the villages of the district, the people are asking about these village atrocities, which they say, are worse than the Punjab atrocities perpetrated by the British imperialists in 1919" (p. 169).

"300 policemen raided the village of Katuru, Gannavaram taluka, Krishna district on the 16th of this month. All men in the village—irrespective of their creed—were cruelly lathi-charged. Women were abused. About 400 men were stripped of their clothes and paraded in the streets in nakedness....Are these the measures the police have to adopt under the Congress rule?" (p. 170).

"Andhra Prabha, a leading Telugu daily of Andhra, in its editorial dated July 26, 1949, wrote: "Uncivilised, atrocious, unspeakable—these words may be very strong words; but even these words are not sufficient to describe the barbarous raids by the police in the Krishna district. The same gruesome and sordid story from every village—gather all people, indiscriminately beat them, strip some of them of their clothes, parade those people in the streets in nakedness...By doing such things, it does not result in suppressing the Communists.." (p. 170).

"The repression was so brutal, atrocious and wanton that the very Congress leaders who themselves brought and organised police raids on villages, were forced to issue statements in the press condemning it, seeing the anger of the people" (p. 171).

"Seva Dals (Congress volunteer squads) are being fed with the money looted during the raids in the villages. Drunkards, habitual convicts, have become village Congress leaders..Loot, burning of houses, murders are being committed..."(p. 171).

The following is an incident which Gogineni Lakshminarayana, brother of N.G. Ranga, narrated. "K. Lakshminarayana, who was a victim of police atrocities, said to me: "At 4 p.m. police came. They asked: you son of a bitch, are you a communist leader? So asking, I was beaten heavily. I fell unconscious. They spoilt all the foodstuffs and other things in my house, looted all the money, and went away. Doors and cots were broken.."(p. 172).

“U. Pitchireddy was beaten with the butt-end of guns and lathis. His property was destroyed. He was arrested, and was being taken to Subbareddy’s house. (This Subbareddy is the biggest landlord and was the initiator of these raids.) Meanwhile, Subbareddy came that way. The police officer asked Subbareddy whether he was satisfied. He replied, ‘No, not yet. Some more people should be made to sit in a row and beaten...’ (p.172).

“Seven peasants were forcibly taken by the armed special police from the villages of Kodur, Velvadam and Ganapavarm and they were alleged to have been shot dead in Butchireddipalem near Mylavaram. —Challapalli Narayanarao and Tatiah, who were hiding in the vicinity of Kothapalem, were captured by the men belonging to the party of the landed aristocrats and handed over to the police party headed by the circle inspector, Avanigadda. They were shot dead. This incident was also reported as an encounter between the police and the Communists. But late on, it was reported that a reward was distributed to the men, who captured them both. —Venkateshwar Rao of Movva village was captured by the men belonging to the party of the landed aristocrats and beaten to death at Pedamuktevi police station” (p. 172).

“Four dead bodies were brought by the police to this village, and they reported to the magistrate that there was an ‘encounter’ (p. 173).

“Jasti Raghavayya and Mukkamala Rao who are standing trial before the Special Second Class magistrate, Vijayawada, were on bail. They were regularly attending every hearing. One night they were taken away by the special police from their respective houses to an unknown destination (and were shot dead.)” (p. 173).

“The situation has deteriorated to an unimaginable extent. Our freedom and our independence are at the mercy of local leaders and of those who have political power in their hands...A police officer can open fire on any number of persons. Nobody can raise his voice. The police officer was given protection vide another section...Such powers have made some police officers follow in the footsteps of Dyer” (p.173).

“Such was the ghastly murder rule of the Congress. And yet, Sardar Patel, the Deputy Prime Minister of the Indian Union, had then made a lying attack on the Communist Party and attributed to it murders, arson, loot. The capable Sardar could do it and put it to the kept press, for malpropaganda, only after he had ordered the closure of the democratic press and gagged all the people’s voices, only after banning the Communist Party and all mass organisations, and only after he had clamped down his rule of fascist terror and medieval barbarous regime” (p. 174).

After the entry of the Indian Army into Telangana, poor people perished in large numbers. Both touchables and Untouchables fell in bunches. The military atrocities continued as routine activities. Exactly at the same time, the task which Ambedkar—who claimed that the welfare of the depressed castes alone was his objective—was carrying was to repudiate each and every criticism levelled against the Constitution of India and to deliver speeches in the Constituent Assembly declaring how great that document is.

Do you remember the questions which Ambedkar showered in the Constituent Assembly?

“People are living in abject poverty... They lack social and economic equality...How long shall we continue these contradictions?” Further, do you remember the commandments that he uttered on other occasions, ‘The Depressed Classes don’t have land. Land is, in the hands of upper castes, like a weapon. The Depressed Classes should achieve political power’?

When the rural poor take the risk of life in order to get rid of poverty and want to rule themselves, there is no wonder if the exploitative State tries to suppress the people. The exploitative class does not refrain itself from suppressing others. But we are not concerned with the government. We are concerned with Ambedkar! Didn’t Ambedkar—who give long lectures on Buddha’s Ahimsa (non-violence), the democracy of the Hindu kings of the past and bloodless liberty and fraternity—know what the Indian army was doing in the Telangana villages? According to him, all the citizens in the country should act in accordance with ‘law’. They should not violate it. This means, if the poor want lands, they have to buy them with money, but not go against the propertied class in the name of ‘class struggle’. It will be illegitimate. It will be unlawful.

People should serve the country and protect the country’s independence until the last drop of their blood is shed. If they resort to such evil acts like occupying others’ properties, the government has to take action against them as per the Constitution. The government should not send the police against people every now and then for petty reasons but what can it do if not use the police in such a serious situation? As per the Constitution, the government is obliged to safeguard the properties of the propertied class. It should not allow people to occupy their land without compensation. Therefore, the government has no other way except to suppress people. It performed its task—this is Ambedkar’s view.

Hence, he was not moved at all by the atrocities of the military under the direction of his government. In the name of defending democracy he stood in support of the Congress. Without leaving his ministership, he continued in the government without any hesitation!

3) Break with the Congress!

When the scene of Ambedkar's surrender to Congress was completely over, the Congress' affection for Ambedkar diminished. There were no indications of Ambedkar's getting the ministry of his choice. Moreover, he was not taken into any one of the newly formed committees.

He waited and waited for four years with a lot of patience and new hopes. But, how long could he wait? As the hopes diminish, or to use a Telugu metaphor, as hopes touch the bottom, patience of a person too dies, doesn't it? At last, he got frustrated and resigned his post of Law Minister on September 27, 1955.

Usually, in such contexts, the Prime Minister tries to beseech the person who has resigned and asks him to withdraw his resignation. But here no such thing happened.

Ambedkar issued a statement explaining as to why he had to resign. I have not found this statement in any of the Ambedkar's volumes available. So I am taking these details from the chapter 'Resignation' on p. 358 of Yendluri's Telugu book "Dr. Ambedkar jivitacaritra" (Biography of Dr. Ambedkar). Mr. Yendluri mentions *The Hindu*, dated 27-9-1951 as his source.

Ambedkar mentioned 4 reasons for his resignation.

The very first reason is that he did not get the ministry which he wanted.

Second reason: The government did not provide proper safeguards in the case of depressed castes.

Third reason: The foreign policy of the government was not acceptable to him.

Fourth reason: He did not like the way ministers were treated as followers of decisions made by Committees. (*Oh, this means he liked atrocities on Telangana!*). Ambedkar declared these four points as reasons for his resignation.

While elaborating the second reason, he said, "Right from my young age, my life has been dedicated to the service of depressed castes". But, the government's negligence of the depressed castes could not be the first and foremost cause for Ambedkar's dissatisfaction. 'Not getting the ministry of his choice' became the foremost cause for his dissatisfaction.

His explanation of the first reason was very strange and there was no consistency between the reason as to why he didn't like the law department and what he said about the same Law department a year after his resignation!

"I could understand the fact that the importance of the Law ministry in the central cabinet is very low even during the days when I served as a member in the viceroy's executive. Moreover, the role of the Law minister in formulating the government policies is very limited. The post of a Law Minister is meant to accommodate very old lawyers who are tired of varied experiences involving ups and downs. Hence, it is common to describe this law ministry as an empty soap box" (Yendluri, p. 361).

The same Ambedkar, who described the law department as "empty soap box" a year ago, while speaking in a meeting at Pune on December 22, 1952, glorified the law department saying how it discharges a great responsibility and how it can maintain democracy. He said that democracy would sustain if all people obey the laws.

"It is the responsibility of the law ministry to see that justice, equality and liberty in a democratic society are accessible as rights to all people. Hence, the highest place is accorded to the law ministry in democracy" (Yendluri, p. 373).

This is how he glorified the greatness of the law ministry. (Then why didn't he like such a ministry?) Did the greatness of a useless ministry begin to appear gradually after losing that ministry and after living without any position? Otherwise, how was it possible for the "empty soap box" to acquire such greatness?

This humanist—who is very anxious to make justice, equality, democracy and everything for all people—did not find any reason during the period in which the military was committing atrocities on the people of Telangana. 'Not getting a ministry of his choice' alone became a strong reason for quitting the government!

In this manner, Ambedkar developed antagonism for the Congress since he gave up his ministership in the central cabinet. The Congress Party that was a party of great discipline till yesterday has now become an anarchic party! The intensity of Ambedkar's rivalry that started with condemning Nehru's policies had gone to the extent of condemning the Constitution.

4. 'I will be the first person to burn this Constitution': Ambedkar

Ambedkar became a member of Rajya Sabha in 1952. In 1953, while speaking in Rajya Sabha on the 'Bill of the Andhra State', Ambedkar criticised the Bill for not providing any safe guards for the rights of minorities. In the same speech, he criticised the Constitution as well.

This information is not available in Ambedkar's volumes. I am citing it from B. Vijayabharathi's Telugu book, "Baba Saheb Ambedkar". This book informs us that Ambedkar said the following with reference to the Constitution:

"All people call me the maker of the Constitution. In fact, I had to write many things against my wish. Now, I am not satisfied with the Constitution that I myself wrote. I will be the first fellow that comes forward to burn it. This Constitution is not useful to any one" (p. 211).

Can any body imagine such an upside down arguments from the mouth of the same person?

Firstly, it is wrong to say, 'the Constitution that I wrote'. We have already seen who drafted it and how it was finalised. He should have said, "the Constitution which the 7-member Committee wrote". What is this expression, 'this Constitution that I wrote'?

'I had to write a lot against my wish in the Constitution'—by this, Ambedkar means this: 'we prepared the Constitution as per the majority decision. I cannot do it as per my decision singly, can I? I should accept some thing which the majority decides even if I don't like it, shouldn't I?'

Here there are many points. There is no difference of opinion between the majority of the members and Ambedkar concerning the fundamental aspects of the Constitution. If at all there were any differences, they were superficial issues. That person does not participate in that work if there are differences in fundamental issues. He won't agree with it. Therefore, it is a meaningless argument to say after leaving Congress thus, 'I didn't like many points in the Constitution'.

When a person associates himself willingly in a collective activity, he has to act in accordance with the majority decisions. This is the right method. Ambedkar too has to do the same thing. In that case, why should he say, 'I didn't like many things at that time'? What is the problem that Ambedkar now faces afresh since he followed the majority decision at that time?

Now the entire problem is 'not getting the ministry of his choice'! Hence antagonism with Congress! Further, antagonism with the Constitution! He has to find fault with it. If he finds fault with it, people will ask him, 'It was you who made it, wasn't it'? Hence he says, 'I didn't like many things then itself'. It is Ambedkar's belief that this argument would save him. He was so confident that nobody would ask him thus: 'if you didn't like that job, you should have abandoned it! At that time,

you should have criticised the Constitution the way as you are criticising it now, shouldn't you?

'Though I didn't like many things in this Constitution, I acted according to the majority decision'—this is how Ambedkar argues. Then what about the challenges that he made during the discussions in the Constituent Assembly? "I venture to say that this Constitution is not bad"—Did he say these words too in accordance with the majority decision and contrary to his own views? "I challenge any of the critics of the Constitution..."—Did he make this challenge too in accordance with the majority decision?

If the same person who then 'ventured' and 'challenged' now says, 'This Constitution is useful to none! I am ready to burn it', this will be another adventure! How can the adventures of circus people compete with this adventure of demagoguery? Ambedkar himself then said that the people of this country should follow the law, didn't he? Well, then, is burning Constitution a lawful activity?

Why did he acquire this sense, namely, 'this Constitution is useless'—which he did not have in 1948—in the subsequent period? What happened in the recent past except that Ambedkar did not have ministership!

Is this Constitution useful to none? Is it also useless for the propertied classes? If so why have they retained such a Constitution? Are the propertied classes in this country stupid?

We have already seen earlier that Ambedkar did not sweat for the drafting of the Constitution. We have seen that he made some modifications. But now, what do Ambedkar's words, namely, 'this Constitution is useless', indicate? Don't his words prove that whatever little scrutiny and minor modification he did are useless?

How is it possible for a person to talk as he likes by changing his arguments upside down as if, to use a Telugu saying, 'his is not a tongue but a palmyra rafter'? How is it possible to understand this?

Well, what happened to 'service to the country', 'maintenance of independence' and so on?

19 AMBEDKAR HAS CHANGED 'RELIGION'

Ambedkar, who declared way back in 1936 that he had decided to change religion (in the essay *Annihilation of Caste*), changed his religion after 20 years. He embraced 'Buddhism' in 1956.

It is very justifiable if Untouchables or other low caste people develop contempt for Hinduism. But it is very surprising to note that Ambedkar—who developed such contempt and who decided to leave it—was able to continue as a Hindu for 20 years!

The Conference of Mahars held in Bombay on May 31, 1936 resolved that 'the way to solve the problems of Untouchables is to leave Hinduism and embrace another religion' (Vol. 5, p. 403). This means that apart from Ambedkar, some other Dalits too were ready to change religion way back in 1936. Ambedkar did not explain why that conversion into another religion did not take place until after 20 years.

Ambedkar did not read his essay, *Annihilation of Caste*, which he originally wrote to read at the conference of Jat-Pat Todak Mandal (hereafter Mandal) in 1936. That conference did not in fact take place because the organizers of the conference raised objections with reference to two points in the essay. They suggested Ambedkar to delete certain words and Ambedkar did not agree to it. The conference did not take place.

The two points were:

- 1) Criticism of the Hindu religious texts.
- 2) Reference to change of religion.

These two points seemed objectionable to the Mandal. These points will become clear if we read the essay *Annihilation of Caste*. In this essay, Ambedkar made some suggestion for reforming the Hindu religion. (We have already seen what these suggestions were on an earlier occasion in this book. See section 1 of chapter 13 of this book).

The main suggestion was: There should be one and only one standard book of Hindu Religion, acceptable to all Hindus and recognized by all Hindus. This of course means that all other books of Hindu religion such as the *Vedas*, *Shastras* and *Puranas*, which are treated as sacred and authoritative, must by law cease to be so and the preaching of any doctrine, religious or social contained in these books should be penalized.

In addition to this, Ambedkar also made some more suggestions. This is how Ambedkar wanted to reform Hindu religion.

Mandal did not agree with this idea. They too want reforms in the Hindu religion. That is why, they started the 'Association for the breaking of Caste and the like' (Jat Pat Todak Mandal) and conducting programmes with a view to breaking the caste system. It is only an Association for breaking the caste and not an Association for breaking religion. This Association rejects the rules of religion with reference to observance of caste distinctions. But the Association did not like the idea of rejecting the 'Vedas' as Ambedkar suggested. They became upset, 'Alas! What is this!' They persuaded Ambedkar again and again: 'why don't you delete certain things'. But Ambedkar did not agree. This was the first reason for not holding the conference.

In this issue, it was the fault of the Association. Because, when they call a person to speak in their Association, that person should have the freedom to express his views. The Association should examine responsibly if there is anything worth learning from those views. It should have examined Ambedkar's suggestions and criticism in terms of whether they were justified and practical, accepted the positive aspects and rejected the negative aspects. There is no rule that the Association has to agree with whatever he says. Hence why such restrictions though gently, 'Delete this point, delete that point in your speech'? This was the wrong thing that the Association did.

The second point: reference to the change of religion. We find this very clearly at two places in the essay, *Annihilation of Caste*.

"...this would probably be my last address to a Hindu audience..."
(Vol.1, p. 78).

"I think they are not likely to alter yours. But whether they do or do not, the responsibility is entirely yours. You must make your efforts to uproot Caste, if not in my way, then in your way. I am sorry, I will not be with you. I have decided to change. This is not the place for giving reasons. But even when I am gone out of your fold, I will watch your movement with active sympathy and you will have my assistance for what it may be worth" (p. 80).

From these words, it is clear that he talked about the changing of his religion. Moreover, it also amounts to saying, 'Annihilation of caste is not possible. All low caste people have to change their religion'. In the same essay, in other contexts, he also said more clearly that 'annihilation of caste' is impossible.

The representatives of the Association read the manuscript of the speech. There is a mention of change of religion in it. They did not like such a declaration to take place on their platform. Because, they formed their Association for the sake of 'breaking of caste'. Its very name is 'Jat Pat Todak Mandal' (Association for Breaking Caste). It does not observe caste distinctions. Hence they invited Ambedkar to give the Presidential Address. Such an association should only say, 'don't observe castes. We have to and we can eliminate this evil practice', but should not say, 'no use, castes do not go, the solution is to change religion'. The Association should not give scope to such views in its conferences. That is why, the Association people went through the draft of Ambedkar's speech and objected to his declaration of the change of religion. The correspondence went on between the two sides on all these matters.

On one of the much earlier occasions, while talking to a representative of the Association, Ambedkar mentioned the issue of change of religion and told him, 'I have no desire to use your platform from which to advocate my views regarding change of religion'. But without sticking to his own words, he very clearly mentioned the change of his religion at 2 places. When the Association person asked about it he answered as if he had just mentioned it indirectly. In his reply he said,

"Indeed until, you came to Bombay on the 9th April the Mandal did not know what sort of an address I was preparing. It was when you came to Bombay that I voluntarily told you that I had no desire to use your platform from which to advocate my views regarding change of religion by the Depressed Classes. I think I have scrupulously kept that promise in the preparation of the address. Beyond a passing reference of an indirect character where I say that "I am sorry I will not be here... etc." I have said nothing about the subject in my address. When I see you object even to such a passing and so indirect a reference, I feel bound to ask; did you think that in agreeing to preside over your conference I would be agreeing to suspend or to give up my views regarding change of faith by the Depressed Classes? If you did think so I must tell you that I am in no way responsible for such a mistake on your part. If any of you had even hinted to me that in exchange for the honour you were doing me by electing as President, I was to abjure my faith in my programme of conversion, I would have told you in quite plain terms that I cared more for my faith than for any honour from you" (p. 34).

This was Ambedkar's reply! The person who said that he would not use others' platform to talk about the change of religion did not stick to his word. Moreover he said, 'I said it in passing and indirectly. What did I say more than this? Do you object to this much reference?'

Will this be an answer or bullying?

The representative of the Association behaved with a sense of tolerance in this matter. They requested Ambedkar to reconsider the matter. They were not suggesting to either Ambedkar or the low caste people not to change their religion. They were merely requesting him not to mention the change of religion on their platform!

The Association was quite reasonable on this point. It was a big blunder on the part of Ambedkar. Ambedkar should have realized that, in the conference of an association meant for breaking caste, he should not express the view that he was changing the religion because we can't eliminate castes. Or he should have heeded the advice of others when they pointed out this. He did not do either of these two things. For Ambedkar, whatever he does and however he does, it appears to be a wonderful thing. Though the Mandal people did not suggest to him to give up his idea of the change of religion (they simply asked him not to mention it on their platform), he accused them that they were asking him to do so, that they tried to tame him by giving him the Presidentship as a bribe, that he sticks to his guns unperturbed and the entire fault lies with them only. He himself committed the entire mistake but shouted at them, 'Do you think I surrender to your Presidentship'. He also made strange arguments, 'I have not done anything wrong; I am not at all responsible'.

When the Mandal said, 'This is objectionable to us', Ambedkar should have at once realized, 'okay! I have mentioned that point as I have not thought that it would be objectionable to you. I will definitely delete it. I don't insist that I should declare my decision to change religion from your platform'. How nice it would have been if he had said so. But Ambedkar did not do so.

At that time (in 1936), Ambedkar was not in a hurry to change religion. He had not yet decided the religion into which he wanted to convert. If he wanted to declare it at once, he himself could give that information to the newspapers. Or he could call a meeting of the Dalits and then declare his intention in it. When such ways were available, how was it appropriate to choose an association for the annihilation of caste? Moreover, is it a sensible thing not to understand his mistake when the Mandal organizers were upset and requested him not to declare it on their platform? What was the loss for low castes' people if he had not declared this intention of changing religion in that very conference? What humiliation did Ambedkar have to face?

Those who consider religion as an irrational matter will not have any religion. According to such people, all these that appear to be religious problems are due to social conditions. But all those who believe that God

exists and he only causes hardships and comforts of human beings will have some religion or the other.

Ambedkar's method is neither of the two. He argues that religion is necessary even in the absence of belief in God.

"The correct view is that religion like language is social for the reason that either is essential for social life and the individual has to have it because without it he cannot participate in the life of the society" (Vol. 5, p. 409).

Quoting another author approvingly, Ambedkar also says,

"It (religion) is a means by which society exercises its control over the conduct of the individual in order to maintain the social order" (Vol.5, p. 410).

Participation in the life of society takes place by means of processes of production and distribution. Society itself does not exist without these processes. Relations between human beings form only through such processes. The population that does not do any labour too is connected with those processes.

Religious activities simply indicate superficial collective relations. As human beings collectively practise worship, festivals, customs and the like, the same practice appears as participation in the life of society. But religious activities do not constitute the real meaning of social life. Social life exists even without them. Similarly, the view that 'an individual cannot participate in the social life without religion' is totally false. Similarly, the view that 'religion, like language, is social' is also wrong. Without language, relations between human beings do not exist. But relations exist even without religion. Hence, language and religion are not identical.

Similarly, there is no truth in the view that 'religion is a means to regulate the conduct of individual'. The nature of 'labour relations' alone regulate the conduct of individuals. The conduct of master and slaves depends on their relations only. Religion merely recites superficial sermons and moral principles. **All religions defend the existing exploitative relations. Buddhism, which does not accept the existence of god, too did the same thing.** Hence, there is no scope to think that religion, which rejects god, would teach great conduct to human beings. Such a view is totally meaningless. If all human beings want good conduct, they have to establish 'relations that do not involve exploitation of labour'. Good society will not emerge due to religious sermons. **Religions have been in existence for many thousands of years. No society has become a good society due to religion.** All the views of Ambedkar concerning religion are meaningless and contrary to reality.

Since the resolution of the Dalits to change religion, the upper caste people began to criticize: 'what can the Untouchables gain by conversion?'

If a person does not believe in religion, it is a different issue. But when people have such beliefs they have to reject the religion that humiliates them.

What the Untouchables gained by conversion is this: they can express their resentment toward the Hindu religion that insults them. This gain is enough! This is certainly a gain for those who experience humiliation.

Concerning this conversion, Ambedkar discussed at length in
volume 5.

Referring to the concession, some people criticized, 'If Untouchables leave Hinduism, they will lose political rights that they get through Hinduism, don't they?'

Ambedkar's answer: they may lose them. But they will get rights that ought to come due to the new religion.

Another criticism: Will the new religion free Untouchables from an inferior status?

Ambedkar's answer: If Untouchables choose a religion that has no castes and becomes part of it, they can gradually forget their inferior status.

This is how Ambedkar offered some answers.

Conversions have been taking place in India for a long time. For example, many untouchables have been converting to Christianity.

The real question concerning conversion is: 'Have Hindus stopped to observe Untouchability in the case of Untouchables who converted to other religions?' Ambedkar says such a thing has not happened.

"Can an untouchable after his conversion to Christianity take water from a public well? Are his children admitted to a public school? Can he enter a shop and buy things from inside? Will a barber shave him? Will a washerman wash his clothes? Can he travel in a bus? Will he be admitted in Public offices without compunction? Will he be allowed to live in the touchable quarters of the village? Will the Hindus take water from him? Will they dine with him? Will not the Hindus take a bath if he touches him? I am sure the answer to every one of these questions must be in the negative. In other words conversion has not brought about any change in the social status of the untouchable convert. To the general mass of the Hindus the untouchable remains an untouchable even though he becomes a Christian" (Vol. 5, p. 470).

Then a question arises at once: 'Why should they convert?' Answer to this question is the same as we saw before. The Conversion is for the purpose of expressing resentment against Hinduism, not with a view that the Hindus will change and stop observing untouchability as soon as Untouchables convert.

Conversion takes place not only among the low castes but also the upper castes. Whichever religion they may convert into, the upper castes' people continue to observe caste distinctions as before in relation to low castes that had already converted into this new religion. They transfer castes into a religion where there are no castes originally. For example, lower castes could not escape from the menace of caste even after their conversion into Christianity.

"Christianity has not succeeded in dissolving the feeling of caste from among the converts to Christianity.... There are Brahmin Christians and Non-Brahmin Christians. Among Non-Brahmin Christians there are Maratha Christians, Mahar Christians, Mang Christians and Bhangi Christians. Similarly in the South there are Pariah Christians, Mala Christians and Madiga Christians. They would not intermarry, they would not inter-dine. They are as much caste ridden as the Hindus are" (Vol.5, pp: 455-56).

Ambedkar felt that Christianity could not lay down strict rules so that the Hindus who converted to Christianity do not observe caste distinctions and Christianity does not have the character of fighting
injustice.

"It is an incontrovertible fact that Christianity was not enough to end the slavery of the Negroes in the United States. A civil war was necessary to give the Negro the freedom which was denied to him by the Christians" (Vol. 5, p. 471).

Owing to this, Ambedkar did not like Christianity. He did not choose Christianity when he wanted to convert. Likewise, he did not like Islam and Sikhism also. Finally he chose Buddhism.

Could Buddhism restrain the Hindus from observing caste distinctions after their conversion into Buddhism? Did Hindus who joined this religion stop observing Untouchability? Could Buddhism put strict restrictions on Hindus? Didn't Buddhism too like Christianity, tolerate 'slavery'? Ambedkar has not touched any of these questions. He simply said, 'I will leave Hinduism! I will leave Hinduism!'; but it did not take place for 20 years. His conversion would not have taken place if something had happened to his life, wouldn't it? There wouldn't have been a scope to demonstrate his protest against the Hindu religion, isn't it? It is very surprising why he did not have the determination to do that act!

Finally, he converted to Buddhism in Nagpur on October 14, 1956. Then he was 66.

Any book on Ambedkar's life will tell us how grandly and colourfully the conversion function was celebrated.

For Ambedkar, Marxism had been a big burden, or to us a Telugu metaphor a 'stove on the chest' day and night. This was proved once again in this celebration of conversion. In his speech that he made immediately after conversion into Buddhism, he devoted most of his time to attack Marxism. Those biographies of Ambedkar reported that Ambedkar taught the Dalits: that Marxism merely preaches physical comforts like 'eating, drinking and enjoying' themselves and that Marxism is not useful for human beings. Those books depicted that Ambedkar, after embracing Buddhism, got mental peace and tranquillity hitherto unknown.

It is surprising that Ambedkar got 'mental peace' and 'tranquillity' when the Dalits' problems and Untouchability continued as before! Well, then, it will be alright if all Dalits get mental peace by following the same path, isn't it? How easy it is to change religion? A job of half an hour! Does any body need more than this if they find such an easy path to get mental peace and tranquillity? Why did he delay this for 20 long years?

After attaining tranquillity by embracing Buddhism in October, Ambedkar gave a talk on *Buddhism and Marxism* in a conference of Buddhists held in Katmandu (Nepal) in November. The same speech turned into the essay *Buddha or Karl Marx?* Ambedkar's peace of mind might have reached its peak when he spoke that Marxism is not useful for mankind and that Buddha's Ashtanga Marga is the best path for the world.

On the whole, Ambedkar learnt to get tranquillity of mind only by condemning Marxism always!

20

WHAT, THEN, IS AMBEDKAR?

Now it is easy to understand what are the positive aspects and the negative aspects of Ambedkar's writings and movements; what should we accept and what should we reject concerning the 'Dalit' and Caste questions.

➤ Ambedkar brought the problem of Untouchability to the notice of all people in the country. He moulded the struggle against this evil practice

into a movement for political rights. He created the consciousness among the Untouchables that they too have rights.

➤ Though the movement for reservations started before Ambedkar, he continued that movement until reservations were achieved. Owing to reservations, higher education and higher-grade jobs became accessible to at least a certain population of lower castes.

➤ Ambedkar had exposed the Congress and Gandhi to the maximum extent on the question of Untouchability. Had he not exposed them, all people would still believe that Gandhi was a person who was greatly concerned for the Untouchables. Now at least some people have come to know the truth about Gandhi.

➤ Ambedkar exhibited a strong opposition to not only Untouchability but the caste system as a whole. He expected equality without caste distinctions.

➤ He suggested to people to reject Hinduism, which still has caste distinctions. He himself rejected it.

As all these aspects do good for the lower castes, we should recognize them and follow them necessarily. However, along these aspects, there are many aspects, which do a lot of harm to the lower castes, and hence we have to reject them totally. This is a contradiction in the character of Ambedkar! This is a big tragedy!

Ambedkar defended religious beliefs with more determination than Orthodox people; but in the name of 'rationalism'! He did not receive any rational aspect of Buddhism. The Buddhism, which he depicted with his own explanations, is crowded with superstitious beliefs like all other religions. Similarly his Economics is the same which defends exploitative incomes and exploitative property rights. His philosophy, his politics and everything is in accordance with relations of exploitation.

When one does not understand the fact that it is **labour**, which distinguishes humans from animals and that human society means **ensemble of labour relations**, only thing left out for people in order to understand any issue is that which appears outwardly. This is what all people who ignore the nature of labour relations do. This is what Ambedkar too had done.

In the case of property rights, Ambedkar did not utilise even to a minimum extent the logic and rationalism which he applied in the case of caste distinctions. Hence Ambedkar too became part of elite who support relations of exploitation. He sunk in innumerable contradictions.

The moment he started his writing, there began a baseless confidence in Ambedkar that he is a great intellectual. There emerged a kind of false logic, namely, 'whatever I wrote is logic'!

Whenever he studied a problem, Ambedkar used to declare at every step that none has found out the cause for the problem and that he alone discovered it. But none of his studies—beginning from his 1916-essay, *Castes in India* till his 1956-essay, *Buddha or Karl Marx* is neither logical nor honest. Readers had to observe innumerable inconsistencies in these essays.

What correct cause did any research of Ambedkar show for any problem that he studied? This will become clear if we recall his studies in a sequence.

➤ What cause did he show for the origin of castes in his essay? He said that castes originated due to endogamy and Brahmins started endogamous marriages in order to maintain their domination and privileges. Which means Brahmins were already dominant since the period when there were no castes! The Shudra Varna existed as a 'menial' Varna even during the period of Varnas. In that case, what is the difference between Varnas and castes?

Ambedkar said that there was a time when there were only three upper Varnas. In the same period when four Varnas did not yet exist, Brahmins had privileges that they get by birth. On the one hand he pointed out to such privileges and on the other hand he argued that Varnas are not hereditary and only castes are hereditary.

The same person, who said that Varnas are hereditary during the period of the three Varnas, made numerous haphazard arguments, namely, that Varnas during the period of four Varnas change once in four years, that Brahmins and Shudras become Shudras and Brahmins respectively, that Shudras also studied in Gurukulas for 12 years and that all the lower caste people imposed castes on themselves voluntarily.

From the problem of castes, he brought forth the argument of 'surplus women and surplus men'. Without having minimum common sense that there won't be any problem when both men (widowers) and women (widows) who want to remarry are available, he argued that problems like Sati cropped up and claimed that he alone had discovered this fact.

Sometimes he said that 'Varnas are superior than castes' and sometimes he said that both are the same in the sense that one is "vicious" while the other is "pernicious"—with such blunderous arguments, what could Ambedkar say about how castes originated and what the distinction between Varnas and castes is?

➤ Well, what could he discover in his essay, *Who were the Shudras?* He began to depict that Kshatriyas of the Shudra branch were of Solar descent and known for valour ('virile people') while the rest of the Kshatriyas were cowards ("an imbecile lot without any self-respect"). The entire research in *Who were the Shudras?* is based on this argument! He said that during that period only the upper Varnas existed without 'menial' (servant) varna. Starting with the claim that he would narrate the history of the present day Shudras who constituted 80% of the Indian population, he concluded that there is no connection between the Shudras of the past and present. In this manner, this study, with the title *Who were the Shudras?*, turned out to be a futile exercise that does not help us to learn who the Shudras were.

➤ What did he say in *The Untouchables: who were they and why had they become untouchables?* Initially he said that there were no contradictions between those who were in villages and those who were outside the villages. Those who guarded the villages, perhaps, might have joined Buddhism. Perhaps, this conversion might have angered those who lived within the villages. Thus he conducted all his research with such assumptions as, 'this is how it might have happened', 'that is how it might have happened'. He did not show evidence to any of his assumptions.

➤ Regarding Untouchability, in his essay *The Untouchables*, he argued that Untouchability did not exist before Christ and it did not begin until 400 AD. Didn't he argue so? But later, ignoring all this he showed in "Buddha and His Dhamma" that Untouchability existed even during Buddha's time and it was Buddha's greatness that he admitted even untouchables as his disciples!

However small the issue may be and however easily understandable the issue may be, it invariably contains inconsistencies, skipping points and bullying arguments! He argues in whatever manner it suits him. Nowhere do we find any other principle of argument.

➤ Serious accusations against Brahmins that they extended the span of Kaliyuga!

➤ The poet who wrote 'Mahabharata' is a lover of truth ("truthful") at one place and an insincere fellow ("vainglorious") at another place. Both comments in the same work of his research!

➤ Ambedkar argued and argued that slavery is 'better' than Untouchability and at the end concludes that it may be 'over hastiness' to think like that! As if it is not he who made such observations initially!

➤ It is needless to talk about the *Annihilation of Caste*. This is very

famous as a 'great work'! But what Ambedkar concluded in this book is this: Annihilation of caste can take place only if the Brahmins agree. Otherwise, no! Even low castes too don't change. On the whole annihilation of caste is impossible. This is what he said in this book. True that low castes at present are ignorant. But is this ignorance an eternal truth? Isn't there any scope for these people to change? Isn't there any 'teaching' or 'programme' to offer to these people? What path did this essay show to low castes? Moreover, he warned that subcastes don't mix and mixing sub-castes is very dangerous!

➤ What about the division of labour? Ambedkar himself observed that the Hindu religion is based on the division of labour which assigned unclean jobs to lower castes and clean jobs to upper castes. But if others make similar observation, namely, 'there is a connection between castes and division of labour', he does not accept it.

➤ He referred to the 'hierarchy' or gradation of labourers as 'division of labourers'. He argued that such a division of labourers is specific to India. But 'hierarchy' or 'gradation' of labourers is present in all the countries. It is present even in those countries where there are no castes. Therefore, there is nothing new in what Ambedkar discovered!

➤ He started with a claim that he would propose some 'safeguards from economic exploitation' but ended with safeguards for the continuation of exploitative rights and exploitative sources of income. Moreover, those rights and income are hereditary and continue till dooms-day or to use a Telugu metaphor, 'until moon and stars exist'!

➤ Is it necessary to talk about Ambedkar's hatred for Marxism? How did Marxism become such an antagonistic theory to a person who is a representative of the Dalits? It is because his views are not strongly attached to the interests of the Dalits. All that attracted him was the capitalistic path. Hence the hatred for Marxism. He needed one reason or another to reject Marxism. Hence he discovered 'violence' and the 'use of force' in it.

What remains in Ambedkar's writings which we may claim, 'this is a good research?'

Biographers of Ambedkar glorified (or to use a Telugu idiom 'raised to the skies') every aspect of his research—however inconsistent and haphazard it may have been. There is not a single instance where they raised questions, namely, 'what is this argument? What kind of research is this?' They didn't raise questions even on such analysis as 'solar line' and 'lunar line' which Ambedkar presented as if they are great scientific explanations. No question against his formulation that fusion of sub-castes

is 'mischievous' and a 'wrong remedy'! The biographers did not raise a single question on several dozens of wrong formulations of Ambedkar.

The reason for so many kinds of errors and mistakes in Ambedkar is that his thought process is sunk mainly within capitalistic limitations. Which means, he considered every 'outward appearance' as great knowledge! He did not develop his logic beyond such outward appearances. Two examples clearly indicate this defect of Ambedkar.

One example:

"The development of articulate speech was the first thing which, from the point of view of human progress, divided man from the brute" (Vol.3, p. 88).

Human beings speak and animals do not speak. This is some thing that 'appears' outwardly! If we consider only this aspect, it appears as if speech distinguishes humans from animals. But if we don't stop at this point and raise some relevant questions—namely, 'Animals live without speech, don't they?', 'Why did humans require speech which animals didn't require?' For what necessity did speech emerge?'—then we will find a way to understand things that do not appear outwardly.

The actual cause that transformed the 'animal stage' into the 'human stage' was 'labour'. Animals eat whatever they find in nature and live in accordance with their natural instincts. But the same is not the case with humans. Human beings transform substances found in nature into other forms. The 'Human stage' begins with the simplest sorts of labour like using stones and branches of trees as implements and taking safety measures against the sun and the rain. For the purpose of and in the process of these activities, rudimentary thoughts, different sounds from the oral cavity (mouth), isolated utterances began and accordingly the mouth, brain, feet and hands developed and gradually language developed. The need for speech—which is absent among animal—arose among humans because a specific feature called 'performance of labour' began among human beings.

To say that speech distinguishes humans from animals amounts to observing only outward appearances. To make such observations, no logic and intellect are necessary. It is something which everybody knows. But some thinking is necessary in order to understand the fact that 'human beings developed speech due to the feature of performance of labour'. Only if we are able to understand this fact, it amounts to correct knowledge.

Let us look at another example to understand the difference between a superficial understanding and a proper understanding of things. While discussing the economic conditions of rural people, Ambedkar opposes Gandhi's system of using the charakha and proposes 'greater urbanisation'

as a 'salvation'. Arguing that the government should make people move from villages to towns, Ambedkar said,

"Sir, that being the position, the view I take—and I say this with full deliberation—that the salvation of this province and, if I may say so, the salvation of the whole of India lies in greater urbanisation: in reviving our towns, in building our industries, in removing as much population as we possibly can from our villages to the towns. What is there in villages? After all, our village folks have no capital to run their agriculture in the best way in which agriculture ought to be run. Population is increasing every decade, and land is being fragmented every time a man and heirs come on the spot. Everywhere the situation is as bad as one could conceive it. the only way by which you can increase the standard of living of the people in the villages is not to give them an antiquated machine like the charkha or to force them to weave cloth which they cannot sell in a competitive market. The way to increase the standard of living is not to destroy industries and other revenues of service in the towns and force them to go to villages. The way lies in the other direction, namely, in taking away as many people as you possibly can from the villages and bringing them to the towns, giving them employment in industries and establishing better ways of economic life. That is the way" (Vol. 2, pp: 32-33).

It is true that means of livelihood for the poor people in villages is diminishing. It is also true that they may get some sort of means of livelihood if they move from villages to towns. These are superficial facts. Looking at these superficial things, if one believes that salvation of the country lies in the migration of the rural population to towns, it amounts to believing superficial facts as actual solutions!

Why do people in villages not have adequate land? Why are resources for agriculture not available? Instead of increasing industries in towns and bringing the rural population to towns, why can't the State establish those industries in villages? Why can't the State develop the villages as well? Ambedkar didn't have any of these questions. According to him, all industries should be in towns. The entire population should live in towns only. If this happens, the economic condition of people will improve. This alone is the 'salvation'!

But the correct solution is one which eliminates the distinction between 'town and country' (rural-urban contradiction). A given region should not have fewer amenities while another region has more amenities. Population should be spread over across the whole land wherever it is inhabitable. Agriculture and industry must be spread across all regions. There should be such a division of labour whereby all people can do both agricultural and industrial labour. If arrangements are made with a view

of equality that 'we have to develop all regions', then the distinctions like, 'this is a village' and 'this is a town' will disappear. This is the Marxist conception.

Whereas according to Ambedkar the State should increase 'urbanisation'. The correct solution from the view point of equality, we have to 'reduce' urbanisation! The two are totally opposite theories!

In this manner, we find Ambedkar's conceptions irrelevant at every point.

Here we have to recall the question of 'reservations'.

Though reservations have been in existence for 50 years, the majority of the low castes do not have access to education. Which means, it can never happen that all the low caste people will become educated by means of reservations.

Further, the existence of reservations is a temporary solution that ought to continue only for a certain period of time and not as a permanent one.

Well, will the Dalit question be solved if the State makes reservations permanent? What does making reservations permanent mean? As reservations are provided on the basis of castes, permanence of reservations implies permanence of castes. To say that 'reservation should remain permanently', it amounts to saying, 'we want our low castes permanently. We will always remain as low caste people'. This means, permanence of reservation will do serious harm to the lower castes.

The principle of 'annihilation of caste' and the principle of the 'continuation of reservations' should co-exist only temporarily and not for a longer time.

What will the condition of lower castes be if reservations are removed after some period of time? By then, some part of the population in those lower castes will have entered higher education and mental labour by means of reservations. Their economic conditions will have improved to some extent. But the majority population of those lower castes have always been living in 'abject poverty' and the lowest manual labour. For this majority population, continuation and removal of reservations mean the same. Reservations are of no use to the majority population at any point of time. This means, if the condition of not a few but all the low caste people has to progress, we have to go not to the 'continuation of reservation' but to the theory that frees them from the exploitation of labour.

While this is so, what should happen in order to eliminate castes? All people can say that 'inter-caste marriages' must take place! Then how

should other conditions change if intercaste marriages have to take place? The economic conditions of low castes should improve. If this does not happen and if all the low castes remain in poverty as before, intercaste marriages between the upper caste youth and the poor lower caste youth will not at all take place. This means, we have to go to the theory of exploitation of labour in order to eliminate castes.

Viewed from any angle, except liberation from the exploitation of labour, no tip or trick like Ashtanga Marga will be effective to solve the problem of the Dalits.

But Ambedkar always saw Dalits as 'people belonging to a particular caste' and did not consider them as labourers and suggest solutions from that angle. He did not at all create a positive opinion toward Marxism (that is, the theory that explains exploitation of labour). He warned them again and again and again that they should not follow that theory and thus he closed the path of knowledge. This is the biggest harm which Ambedkar did to the Dalits! Not showing the path of class struggle to Dalits and reconciling them with reservations means, to use a Telugu saying, 'breaking the legs and giving a stick'. It is like destroying the capacity to walk independently and making a person physically handicapped.

Some of the educated Dalits sing wholly to the tune of Ambedkar: 'Ambedkar proposed greater economic schemes than Marx'. But some clever educated Dalits say, 'Dalits also need Marxism along with reservations. We can't deny it'. This is like thinking, 'why have an unnecessary dispute. It is better to accept Marxism too!' But we don't know whether such educated Dalits knew whether Ambedkar did not feel that need.

If educated Dalits do not know the fact that Ambedkar vehemently opposed Marxism, then they have to first know about it. Or if they accept Marxism even after knowing Ambedkar's opinion, then they have to first criticise all of Ambedkar's negative opinions of Marxism. They have to clearly declare that Ambedkar's understanding of Marxism is wrong. If they don't declare so and evade it and reconcile with the statement, the 'Dalits need Marxism', it means they are not saying what they believe in.

Another category of educated Dalits say that 'Marxists always repeat the parrot like words, 'exploitation of labour' and 'surplus value'. If talking about exploitation of labour is parrot like speech then will their recitation of the term 'Caste!' 'Caste!' 'Caste!' not be a parrot like word? What will these people—know about society? What will they know even about caste?

Persons, however good they may be, cannot understand either their

own situation or the situation of fellow human beings when they do not have proper understanding of labour relations.

Those Dalits—who do not know anything about classes and who are able to receive higher education, get higher grade jobs and acquire property—will not at all be concerned with the problems of the countless poor people. Just as propertied persons in the upper castes are not concerned with the poor people of their own castes, the economically better off persons in the low castes too are not at all concerned with the poor people of their own castes. The movement for reservations does not give them such knowledge.

Owing to an improper understanding of the path of reservation, educated persons of the lower castes have developed a tremendous negative feature, namely, caste chauvinism! Because, they are able to see some advantages from reservations. They are able to get those reservations because of their castes. Hence they think that it is their task to glorify their castes.

While making use of reservations, it is inevitable to mention one's own caste in the application forms. One should not mention caste in daily life except while filling the relevant forms. One should not approve of caste distinctions. The lower caste people should dislike mentioning their caste. Elimination of that evil should be their goal.

Making use of reservations does not mean worshipping castes or to use a Telugu idiom, 'not keeping them over the head'. But the educated Dalits are not able to understand such a small point. Instead of feeling intense agony and angry about being Malas and Madigas, they proudly declare, "I am a Mala! I am a Madiga!" They are treating 'humiliation' as 'felicitation'. This means, totally in an upside down manner! In other words, a reverse of what should happen! The understanding and the sense of self-respect of the Dalit activists with regard to the caste system is in such a pathetic situation!

All this will make the upper caste people happy in many ways. As the low caste people have not acquired a class outlook, they won't take even a glance of the properties of the upper castes. There is no risk for exploiters from such low caste people. This is the first cause for the happiness of the propertied class.

The activists of low castes are glorifying their own castes and consider it as an idea to retain their castes. Malas as Malas, Madigas as Madigas, Rajakas as Rajakas, Yadavas as Yadavas...thus, the lower castes people are looking at their castes with admiration and are overwhelmed with joy. Because of this type of activists—who do not have the objective of not

observing castes—caste system will remain in tact for ever. This is the second reason for the happiness of upper caste people.

If reservations continue to exist, the votes of lower castes will surely go to the parties of upper caste propertied classes. This is the third reason for the happiness of propertied classes. They may have many more such kinds of happiness.

Since Ambedkar kept the lower castes away from the class outlook and since the activities of these castes hold many wrong conceptions, the benefit which the upper castes and propertied classes get has no limit.

Some of the stupid fellows in upper castes, without understanding all this, are annoyed of reservations. They become furious and shout, 'how long will these reservations continue?' They do so because they are not aware of many uses of continuation of reservations.

The clever government of India keeps on extending the period of reservations for its own benefit. If it is smart, it should make reservations permanent. The educated persons in the lower castes will totally be satisfied by permanent reservations. They treat their castes as their wealth, make their castes permanent and get assimilated into them. Any way they don't have the perspective of property rights. What more do the upper castes and propertied classes need?

But, what should have Ambedkar taught the Dalits?

What should have Ambedkar realized as a representative of poor castes? What should he have taught the Dalits? He should have taught them that reservations are the most trivial and temporary means and class struggle is the highest and permanent means. He should have taught them, 'Reservations give temporary relief. Continuing this path for a long time is continuing the caste system for a long time. It is not possible to abandon castes as long as reservations continue. Rejection of castes should be our aim. Hence, retaining reservations for a longer time amounts to doing harm to ourselves. The permanent solution for liberating ourselves from our problems is class struggle against exploitation. That is Marxism. This is our path of liberation! Follow the path of class struggle while making use of reservations! This alone is the path which we have to follow!'

But Ambedkar did not do like this. Those people did not receive such knowledge from this leader.

All that the Dalits received from Ambedkar is 'slavery of reservations and religious obscurantism'.

Whatever be the form of religious obscurantism, the solution is logic and materialism!

The solution for caste distinction is Castelessness and non-observance of caste!

The solution for poverty is class struggle against exploitation of labour! The class struggle that continues until exploitative division of labour is changed! Establishing equality!

But, the Dalits received none of these solutions from Ambedkar.

Because 'Untouchability' is the most crucial problem, any reformer who fights against that evil will receive boundless love and affection of the people.

Ambedkar received them abundantly from people since he moulded his struggle against Untouchability into a movement for reservations.

Moreover, his studies abroad at a very young age brought him heaps of fame. The people of the colonies will have excessive glamour for the studies in the capitalist countries—though those degrees do not give any new knowledge!

Another factor that raised Ambedkar's reputation was his fight with Gandhi!

All the reasons combined together, increased excessive cult of individual of Ambedkar and made him above 'examination'.

Ambedkar can abuse Gandhi (whom many Hindus admire) with any sort of words like: 'puerile and insincere', 'ambitious politician', 'cunning' and so on! But, one cannot criticise Ambedkar for any thing, even if he commits any number of blunders and any kind of blunders. This is the rule of Dalit intellectuals with regard to the cult of the individual. But this fascist trend is highly damaging to (or to use a Telugu metaphor, it is a blow of an axe) the interests of the Dalits.

Any individual or a theory should stand test and pass it. If leaders commit mistakes knowingly or unknowingly their followers should correct them. It does not amount to disrespecting the leaders. Therefore, the Dalit people should realise certain things.

1. Buddhism is also like other religions in respect of social relations. It also supports 'exploitation of labour'. Hence, we have to reject Buddhism too. We have to acquire a rationalist outlook concerning nature and society.

2. We should never mention caste on any occasion except while filling application forms. Non-observance of caste should be our aim.

3. We should realise that Marxism is the right and permanent solution in the context of inequality and domination in our lives. We have to learn that theory.

4. From the preaching of a teacher or a leader, we have to accept the correct things and reject the incorrect ones. We should not tolerate right and wrong in the same way. Whether it is love or respect, we should not be indiscriminate.

5. When we come across any teacher, any philosopher, or any theory at any place in the world, we should examine what it says concerning labour relations, property rights, riches, and poverty. We have to understand on which side that teaching stands. If we don't understand this, we can not understand any thing in society. We cannot protect ourselves.

Well finally what, then, is Ambedkar?

Concerning educated persons like Ambedkar who was born in the Working Class, received education, learnt languages but one who could not understand the interests of the Working Class, Marx made an observation. It is worth citing in this context:

“The more a ruling class is able to assimilate the foremost minds of a ruled class, the more stable and dangerous becomes its rule”

(Capital, vol. 3, p. 601. Moscow edition, 1971).

Ambedkar is an educated person who assimilated himself willingly in the ruling class!

A misled intellectual!

THE END

THE BLUNT WEAPON OF UNTOUCHABILITY!

[The serialization of my essay in Andhra Jyoti weekly, began in December 1999 and ended in November 2000. In September 2000, an article on Marx and Ambedkar appeared in a column titled "Diary of a Dalit", in Vaartha, a Telugu daily. In response to this article, I wrote the following article which appeared in Vaartha. As the theme of my article is concerned with the 'Dalit' Question, I am giving it here.]

In his "Diary of a Dalit" ('Vaartha', dt. 12-9-2000), Chandra Bhan Prasad has shown both Marx's economic agenda and Ambedkar's agenda and appealed to the readers to understand how superior the agenda of Ambedkar is. He made this appeal in response to those who argue that Ambedkar does not have an economic agenda. "I am putting before you both Marx's agenda and Ambedkar's agenda. You decide for yourself whether Ambedkar has an economic agenda or not". This is how he has assigned the responsibility to the readers.

According to Prasad's details, Marx's scheme has the following points: 'All kinds of hereditary rights over all properties should be abolished. All citizens must perform labour'. Though Prasad has shown many more points, these two are enough for the purpose of our present discussion.

What is the essence of Marx's economic agenda? Removal of exploitation of labour.

A class in society has been living by means of exploitation without doing any labour for hundreds and thousands of years. That class has occupied 'land', 'money' and 'capital' as its private properties. It has been extracting rent in the name of land-right, interest in the name of right over money and profit in the name of right over capital. All these incomes are in fact parts of labour that the labouring class performs. This means, the class that does not perform labour is living by exploiting the class that performs labour! This has been taking place since the days of slavery to the present time in all the countries of the world.

Explaining all this Marx says, 'The class of labourers has to liberate themselves by means of its struggle against the class of owners. It has to bring all the properties of owners under the collective right without paying any compensation.

The labouring class has to change the conditions in such a way that the exploiting class too performs labour. Every person should live by means of his own labour instead of others' labour.

Now, according to Prasad's own presentation, Ambedkar's economic agenda or scheme consists of the following points: The State should buy lands of the landlords and industries of the capitalists by paying compensation. The State has to issue Debentures to all those property owners and pay interest annually. The State itself should organize those lands and industries.— This is the essence of Ambedkar's economic agenda.

Here, there is no condition that all persons should perform labour. This scheme implies that property owners should live by taking interest and without doing labour as before. All the properties of the property owners will now become 'money'! On that money, interest comes from the State. This means, the income which the landlords used to get in the name of 'rent' in the past will now come in the name of 'interest'. All those property owners now live on interest just as they lived earlier on rent, interest or profit. Both are same. This is nothing but change of the form of property rights. What is the source from which the state pays interest to all these property owners? Where else does it get from? From the class of labourers. This is how it pays: The State rents out to people the lands which it purchased, doesn't it? The rent which these tenants pay to the State should be adequate to pay interest on the debentures of landlords. Similarly, the amount which the workers in the industry pay to the State would be such that it is enough to pay interest to the debenture holders! This means, even through Ambedkar's scheme, all these property owners will live on the labour of the labourers without doing labour for themselves as before. How long, do you think, that these property rights of receiving interest on debentures can continue? Ambedkar did not say either that this is only a temporary arrangement or these property rights should be removed. He said that these debentures shall be "inheritable". Which means, these property rights will remain for generations: from one generation of children to another! The families of debenture-holders will go on receiving interest for generations! Until the world vanishes! This is the new economic scheme which Ambedkar showed to mankind! Chandra Bhan Prasad put this scheme before readers and said to them, 'Look, how great agenda this is!'

After presenting the schemes of both Marx and Ambedkar, Prasad said, "Above all, what we have to note is that these two persons

suggested the same kind of policy. Both are wishing that properties and enterprises should be under the control of State”.

Both Marx and Ambedkar had suggested the same policy concerning property, observes Prasad! What should we call an observation such as this!

While one person suggested the path of eliminating the exploitation of labour, another suggested the inheritance of property rights so that one can live on exploitation. Showing such contradictory paths, Prasad comments that ‘the two paths are the same! Both persons said the same thing!’ Which means, he doesn’t know either view! He doesn’t know debentures, interest and inheritable rights. He knows nothing. If both are identical, what is the need of the second path when the first path already exists? The second person (Ambedkar) too should support the first one (Marx).

Those who don’t like to understand ‘exploitation of labour’ and who don’t have serious anger will find a great person even among those who defend *interest* and *exploitative property rights!*

Prasad further says, ‘Both Marx and Ambedkar said the same thing, didn’t they? Then, why do people who wish to bring about a novel change in the country reject Ambedkar and salute only Marx? Why are they ignoring Ambedkar?’

Salutation to Marx since he rejected exploitation of labour. Rejection of Ambedkar since he supported property rights! Those who do not understand the concept of exploitation of labour and remain favourable to the exploiting class cannot understand this point!

Ambedkar too, on one occasion, compared Buddha and Marx and commented: ‘some people say that Buddha’s theory is pessimistic. Why don’t they ask the same question with reference to Marx’s theory?’ Exactly in the same manner, now Prasad also asks, ‘When they salute Marx, why do they ignore Ambedkar?’ How can the disciple understand what the teacher could not understand, unless he is a ‘disciple who excels the teacher’? For a Dalit intellectual who cannot understand what Marx said and Ambedkar said is not the same, moreover they are contradictory to each other, it appears as if all the upper caste people are doing a lot of injustice to Ambedkar. For Prasad also, it appeared so.

However a great person an untouchable is, the upper caste people do not accept that great person as a hero or a leader, says Prasad. They

didn't respect Ambedkar precisely for this reason, argues Prasad. We greatly admire this disciple who refers to Ambedkar even today as an Untouchable! This is the weapon which the Dalit intellectuals use time and again. By using this expression unreasonably every now and then, they are making it so blunt that it becomes totally useless.

If some one does not try to understand the actual basis for others' criticism of Ambedkar and argues that 'they are criticizing Ambedkar because he is a Dalit', this means he is treating 'Untouchability' as a means to escape from criticism! But this is a stupid way! A most useless means! A means that will sink the person much deeper into the criticism!

I know many 'non-Dalits' who admire Ambedkar a lot. As regards to myself, I used to admire him a lot; 'worship' him a lot. But after learning about 'exploitation of labour' and after realizing that Ambedkar is favourable to the exploiting class, the whole admiration evaporated. Can those who understood what exploitation is treat the supporter of exploitation as a 'great personality'? Can they still admire such a personality?

The criticism against Ambedkar is not because he is an Untouchable. It is because he is in favour of the exploiting class. Because he is opposed to Marxism. Hence the criticism against him!

Coming back to the question whether Ambedkar had an economic agenda or not, he had it once in order to submit it to the Constituent Assembly. It was an agenda that supports exploitation. Ambedkar's reputation can remain a little, if his disciples don't mention his economic agenda rather than mentioning it.

Ambedkar himself did not ever mention his agenda again which he prepared in the form of a memorandum in 1947. He abandoned his economic agenda and began to preach Buddha's Ashtanga Marga. Of course, the two are favourable to exploitation! Hence, Ashtanga Marga appealed to Ambedkar more than his own economic agenda.

Since Ambedkar was favourable to the exploitation of labour, all his Dalit disciples too took the same path and 'turned their faces away' from Marxism. It is such a stupid path that makes them incapable of knowing whether they are doing good or harm to themselves!

(From 'Vaartha', Telugu daily, dt. 30-9-2000).



For the solution of the 'Caste' question...

The world needs the theory that is powerful enough to illuminate the path. It is irrelevant whether that theoretician is Buddha, Marx, Ambedkar or someone else. That which remedies the disease alone is a medicine! That which emancipates from sufferings alone is the higher path. If it is Buddhism, we are obliged to follow it, to revere it. The question, however, is to ascertain which is the higher path! This is the thing, which we must ascertain. We are obliged to follow the thing which we ascertain to be the higher path.

When we come across any teacher, any philosopher, or any theory at any place in the world, we should examine what it says concerning labour relations, property rights, riches, and poverty. We have to understand on which side that teaching stands. If we don't understand this, we cannot understand any thing in society. We cannot protect ourselves.

From the preaching of a teacher or a leader, we have to accept the correct things and reject the incorrect ones. We should not tolerate right and wrong in the same way. Whether it is love or respect, we should not be indiscriminate.