

Religious Regeneration: the Only Solution to Various National Problems -Shri Mohan Joshi Joint Secretary, V.H.P.

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Hindu culture is one of the most ancient cultures in the world. Its history goes back to lakhs of years. It remained grand and glorious throughout ages. But it underwent decay pitiably for the last one thousand years due to the continuous invasion by foreign forces. These attacks reduced its eternal dominating power to a very low ebb. Many diseases like individualism, casteism, parochialism, and linguism infected the healthy state of the nation. Foreign cultures, particularly Christian and Muslim religions want to demolish this culture through conspiracies designed in the wake of the mutual mistrust and bad customs that have arisen due to these ills.

They are not only extensively highlighting the bad customs like untouchability existing in our society to provoke our brothers belonging to, hill tribes and backward communities, they are

also exploiting their poverty and ignorance tempting them to break away from the Hindu fold. They are also injecting anti-nationality in the minds of these innocent folk.

They are deep in the conspiracy of trapping India once again under the foreign imperialistic domination taking advantage of our secularistic policy of the great tolerance of Hindu Society, the absence of organizational rigidity and the lethargy of religious institutions. Conversion to other religions is one of the main activities under this conspiracy.

Conversion

Conversion can be defined as the act of compelling somebody to change his faith by temptation, fraud, terrorism or violence. If Muslim invaders converted people on the strength of their swords, the Portuguese and British Missionaries used the tactics of temptation in converting people belonging to different castes and sub-castes, tribals, Harijans, etc. Converted individual automatically starts to follow the cultural traditions of the religion to which he is converted. Consequently, so many problems crop up in the population which even results in the partition of the country.

Evils of Conversion Imbalance In Social Status

Wherever Hindus are converted into the Muslim or Christian religion, the social status of Hindus and converts undergoes changes. Converts are looked upon with hate. They are on the brink of social boycott. A kind of tension is created in relation with them. Slowly this tension develops into social imbalance. AS a result new quarrels, ill feelings, and problems grow every day which are not only complex but also impossible to be solved. This situation gives rise to the possibility of bloodshed between the two communities.

Religious ill Will

There is a proverb that the new Musalman takes the name of Allah more frequently. The literal meaning of this proverb points to the fact that a new convert is very much conscious of his new religion and advertises its glories with great enthusiasm. Further, they always try to increase their numerical strength. They deliberately jeer at the Hindu gods and goddesses, Hindu values and Hindu culture and try to destroy them. Thus the fire of mutual hate gets ignited between the followers of the two religions. The flame grows the situation becomes explosive. Anti-social elements take advantage of the situation and indulge in such acts as rioting, arson, and looting.

Communal Enmity

The relations of the commensality and conjugality between kings terminate with the conversion. Eating habits also change. The question of gradation in status arises. This gives birth to communal enmity. Consequently, each community tries to see the other in a lower stratum. At the time of reckoning, nobody stays back. As a result, unending hostility persists between the two communities. The atmosphere of disquiet hangs on resulting in very ugly consequences.

Imitation of Others

The converts have to mold their way of life in consonance with the region they embrace and have to follow their habits. Along with the language, dress, and education the way of thinking also changes. They are compelled to adopt the customs and values of the religion to which they are converted. They are given a threat if these are not followed.

The situation comes to such an end that instead of remaining content in following the tenets of their new religion they start condensing the religion of their forefathers. In this process, they are reduced to the category of anti-national elements.

Dis-Respect to Ancient Traditions

After getting disciplined in the foreign culture the convert either forsakes all the traditions and values of the erstwhile religion or he is compelled to do so. As a result, he shows disrespect to his old values. Along with the disrespect to religion disrespect to the nation also gets generated.

Sedition

Conversion from religion means the conversion of allegiance from the State also. Pakistan is an illustrative example of this phenomenon. The fact is that but for the conversion of crores of Hindus by fanatic Muslim invaders, the formation of Pakistan was never possible on the basis of the Muslim majority in Sind, Baluchistan, Northwest Frontier province and East Bengal.

In short, conversion has only helped in breeding hate between different sections of people, in promoting anti-national feeling, in inciting communal violence, in destroying life and property of the people, in breaking up unity and integrity of the country and in acts resulting in inhuman, incendiary feeling among fellowmen.

Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Vinoba Bhave and the Niyogi Commission headed by Justice Bhavani Shankar Niyogi have condemned the conversion of Hindus to other religions. It is hence essential that necessary legislation should be enforced to prevent conversion.

Religious Regeneration and Its Need

When a caste or community which was forcibly converted to another religion by the use of temptation or terror gratefully remembers the glory of their forefathers and knowingly and voluntarily returns to the original cultural stream of ancestors, the process is called religious regeneration. This is only the return of the prodigal son.

This return is equivalent to the mending of broken strings of human hearts and thereby propagating the message of love and goodwill, creation of harmony after forgetting bitterness and ill-will, to promote the feeling of national unity and to develop the emotion of oneness with the whole nation. This return results in the development of regard to the motherland, to the great men of the nation and to the values of life, and the course is set for a happy and peaceful life based on mutual, co-operation. Hence the cure of the many-faceted troubles of the nation is possible only through creating a wave in favor of the return to the original faith.

Efforts

Vishva Hindu Parishad has put its mite in this direction. Particularly, during the cultural renaissance started in the wake of the wholesale conversion of backward people of Meenakshipuram, there had been the reconversion of about one lakh and twenty thousand converts who came back to the fold of Hinduism on their own free will attracted by the ideals and principles of their ancestors and teachings. They resolved to follow the spiritual ideals of Hindu sages and saints and to forsake completely the foreign worship practices and custom. They have started to live harmoniously with their Hindu brothers.

Now that the Christian and Muslim communities have begun to convert our fellow religionists with the support of foreign money, we should not remain content with giving lectures and public addresses. We have to take up an effective program to bring back to our fold the crores of Muslim and Christian citizens of our nation whose forefathers were forcibly and violently compelled to give up their faith by rulers and missionaries and who are still-home-sick in the memory of their Hindu ancestors. This is the only line of action that would provide a solution to all the worries experienced by the nation.

The Achievements of The Efforts of Religious Regeneration

(a) Effective Means Of National Integration

After attaining independence Government of India had established such institutions as the National integration council to maintain goodwill between the people belonging to different religions. But these efforts were not only unsuccessful to create goodwill, but the interference of foreign religious forces, vested interests and Christian and Muslim institutions with political ends, only mutual hate came to the fore. The reason is that foreign-inspired Muslim religious leaders and Christian missionaries fanned up only fissiparous tendencies. This encouraged divisive activities.

The demand for independent Nagaland, Azad Kashmir, Dalitsthan, etc. are the reflections of these tendencies. If crores of these Indian Muslims and Christians are reminded of the greatness of their ancestors and the real glories of history and remolded in the cultural framework of Hinduism, they could be bound by the spiritual thread of the Hindu way of life and brought to the fountainhead of national feeling. This will lead to an all-time termination of communalism and separatism.

(b) Presentation Of Communal Disturbances

It is due to the wide publicity given to religious fanaticism and cultural separatism that communal disturbances are recurring in our country. Terrific riots erupting in different regions of the country often take- an explosive turn. Religious leaders of antinational mental make-up induce the illiterate, or semi-literate simple folk belonging to minority communities to desecrate Hindu religious places, to build church, mosque or grave illegally, to kidnap Hindu women and children, to demean Hindu gods and goddesses and to create disturbance in Hindu religious festivals.

These acts cause riots in different parts of the country. If the Hindu religious heads tell these people of the actual story of the dreadful torture their ancestors were put to by the followers of Muslim, Christian and other faiths and if they propagate the real message of love, justice, and humanity indoctrinated in the Hindu faith and if these brothers are embraced leaving

aside the feeling of untouchability, then crores of these people may return to the original stream of Hindu life and the country can be saved from the tremendous loss caused by communal riots. This is the only way to create an atmosphere of goodwill and fraternity.

Easy Way of Building Up A United Country

The British rulers separated Burma from India following shrewd diplomacy in the year 1935. Afterward, they divided India into communal lines in 1947. The partition was a very bad bargain regarding social, political and economic aspects. At the time of partition, our leaders hoped that this step would be the end of communal feeling and riots. But this proved to be mere imagination. Similarly Mohd. Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan declared that followers of all religions would enjoy equal rights in his country. But crores of Hindus (including Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, and Sanatanis) were driven away from West Pakistan and erstwhile East Pakistan (which is now Bangladesh) the 54 lakh residents of that country are treated as second class citizens as in the case of Pakistani Hindus. Bestowing equal rights in economical, political and social progress is far cry-these governments are continuing to encourage the attempts of murder, terrorism, loot, the kidnapping of women and usurping their lands and houses.

Pakistan and Bangladesh have become the power states of the politics of international powers, resulting in bloody Indo-Pak wars thrice. Bangladesh is creating an eternal problem in our border area by sending infiltrators in large numbers. An atmosphere of tension prevails throughout the sub-continent due to various disputes. Shooting is often reported from the borders.

The possibility of an all-out war is always looming large with the result that all the three nations are investing crores and crores of rupees to purchase most modern weapons from powerful nations of the world to protect their borders ending up in a dreadful economic imbalance. Developmental plans do not work properly in any of these countries and seemingly the progress of such activities has come to a grinding halt. Consequently, we have lagged behind the progressive nations of the world such as the USA, the USSR, Japan, and China in the field of scientific research and development. If sincere attempts are made to establish social, religious and cultural unification of Pakistan, Bangladesh, and India, there is no reason why we cannot become one of the most powerful nations of the world.

The ancestors of ninety percent of Muslims and Christians of Pakistan and Bangladesh were



Hindus a few centuries back and the trends of Hindu culture are still visible in their life. If all these Muslims and Christians return to the stream of Hindu culture, the prediction of Maharshi Aravind that 'the division of India is artificial and the country would certainly reunite' would prove to be an absolute reality and consequently we would be able to contribute to world peace by building up a bright future.

Progress of Religious Regeneration Programme

A program has been formulated to make the converted groups reassess the values of the religion and culture in which their forefathers were compelled to leave and to attract them to their original way of life with due social respect. Accordingly, as a preliminary step 150 problematic and backward regions have been selected to implement the program. In the last few years, active work has been started in as many as fifteen districts spread over Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Orissa, Gujarat, Rajasthan. The results achieved in these districts are highly encouraging.

Thus the program of religious regeneration is an essential requirement for all-out progress of a united India and world peace. It is the duty of the Hindu community to spare no efforts for the implementation of this program.