

THE POLITICIANS OF YORE HAVE FAILED

Among the grave challenges in the way of democracy in the coming days are the former politicians and ministers, and ministers turned political analysts. They have failed in governance as well as in political construction in the past, and yet would like to tender political advice to new governments. They willfully or inordinately air the demands of the exploiting upper classes and therefore are not suitable for the present requirements of pure and real democracy which 90 per cent of the people want. These politicians have been used to a mode of political thinking and exercise not commensurate with the will of the people and their needs. They have been conditioned to serve the demands of the jagirdars, capitalists, religious elite and the filthy rich. Exceptions are always there but there are very few politicians capable of rendering suitable advice in the effective working of democracy, the true concept of which they are yet to learn.

Generally the present political leaders of Pakistan cannot be relied upon for promoting democratic politics. Because they are not democrats at heart; they do not believe in consultation. They are used to indulging in diverse and conflicting statements. They have not done in-depth study of the problems faced by the people, nor do they have full understanding of the issues faced by the nation. They are self-centered, egoistic and selfish to the extreme and hungry for wealth and power. These political leaders were not able in over fifty years to separate legislature, executive and judiciary. They could not set up an effective system of checks and balances. They could not bring about a sound system of accountability. They could not develop a high degree of morality of the elected representatives. They could not establish equality of all before the law. They succumbed to fascist methods of governance such as state-controlled media, secret police, political victimization, personal cult and host of other ills. They were unable to develop an electoral system in which each registered voter could have an inalienable right to vote for whomsoever he/she wants to vote for, without pressure, coercion or fear of reprisal. How could one expect that these political leaders and their personality based political parties would perform now when they were unable to during the last half a century? A true concept of democracy needs honest political leaders and true democrats. Hence the demand by the vested interests for restoration of the status quo, which is a

retrogressive brand of democracy, is not worth acceptance by the people of Pakistan who are not politically well aware. How could they be expected to fare better in the same political dispensation. We should, therefore, come out of this fallacy. It is now time that this outmoded old leadership representing largely the vested interest of the upper classes is replaced by a new selfless, honest, dedicated and creative leadership representing the 95 per cent masses of the lower and middle classes. The support of the people can only be won through honest and good governance and not by the machinations of the political elite. In addition, cooperation may be sought from such civil society organizations that are working for creating political awareness of the masses or are catering to their other needs in a sincere manner

The better ones among the present politicians should realize that the wrongful and selfish political elements that have been wielding power all this while have been doing so in a bad way. They have been interested in creating economic mishap, social chaos and political corruption. They have been used to corruption, bribery, money and land grabbing and other evil doings. If any of these political leaders do really come to believe in democracy at any time, and become political beings, they will have to desist from such acts and instead try in good faith to learn afresh real democratic politics from the people themselves by working diligently for the cause of the people. They must accept the fact that the people had been kept suppressed by them, and that they must apologize for all this. They should now devote themselves, if they can, to create good political leadership from amongst the lower and middle rungs of the society. They should willfully give way to the newly emerging leadership. Such new leadership will be well placed indeed to build democratic institutions and to evolve a truly democratic setup for good governance. They will certainly prove to be good future leaders of the country. It is the law of Nature that the new and the dynamic should replace the old and the outdated.

We should be very clear in our mind that only those with a democratic frame of mind, who are not infested with racial or religious prejudices, who are imbued with a strong commitment with the cause, and are honest and sincere, will in future be accepted by the people. Now, in order to strengthen the people in their resolve to attain power and dignity for themselves, the electoral system will have to be revised and tailored to the requirements of true democracy. This exercise should be entered into with full consultation of the people. The bureaucracy should be kept at bay in this respect.