

CLEAN POLITICS OF THE PEOPLE

The basic concern of politics is welfare of the people and their full participation in the political process. To achieve this objective the people have to be accepted as the country's highest authority. Hence the final option for election of members of the assemblies, and acceptance or rejection of the decisions of the assemblies, must rest with the people. If this argument is accepted as a principle, it becomes necessary that the people should be made politically aware and empowered to the extent that they come to understand that the status of the political leaders is not that of rulers but of servers, and the people have the right to hold the serving rulers accountable to them. If this was true then the impediments in the way of people's authority will have to be investigated, and the elements responsible for these determined. The most serious hindrances in their way are lack of education and political awareness, non-availability of necessities of life and the denial of human rights. All these obstacles have undoubtedly been created through the conspiracies of absentee landlords, industrialists, bureaucrats and the religious elite.

Any discerning person is deeply anxious to come out of this oppressive situation. The political leaders of the past, who had taken upon them the responsibility of leading and serving the nation, have failed to show the path to progress and prosperity.

What is politics?

The most important need of our time is to comprehend correctly the country's political situation and prepare a coherent programme to improve on it. Obviously this cannot be done without active participation of the people. But such participation cannot be effected without differentiating between good and bad politics. The trend of politics in our country so far has been totally wrong. It is essential, therefore, to conceive the true direction of politics. Politics means securing the authority to rule, and using it for the betterment of the people. In order to organize the collective affairs of a nation and to solve its economic, social, political and cultural problems, a system of good governance has to be formed with consultation and assent of

the people, and by giving them some authority. The consent of the nation is acquired through elected representatives of the people. Thus the decisions taken by the governments regarding national matters, with the approval of the assemblies, are considered national decisions. Therefore, if the elections are not fair, and true representatives of the people are not elected through elections, the establishment of a good government and true reflection of national decisions would not be possible.

The authority of rulership is a colossal responsibility. It is a trust from God and the nation, and its exercise is a grave matter. This authority can be used only for the collective interest and not for personal or group interest or for the interests of particular classes. The proper use or misuse of government authority is the ultimate cause of the development or decay of a nation. Hence the nations that intend to progress have to secure exercise of governmental power and use it in the best way possible. The people too should fully supervise the working of their representatives in the assemblies after electing them through a foolproof electoral system, so that they may not get involved in serving their personal or group interests to the detriment of the national interest. The people should not lose their grip on their elected representatives. The democratic concept also includes the requirement of supervision by non-government organisation of any anti-people activities of government officers, and raising of their voices persistently against any wrong steps that may be taken by them.

Importance of political parties

Political parties are the best agencies for ideological and political training of the masses and for monitoring the performance of the government and the assemblies. They are an indispensable part of the democratic system. The political parties are the ones that appoint candidates for election contests on behalf of the people. After the formation of governments, the democratic principle of monitoring of government by the political parties and issuing instructions regarding policy framing should be applied diligently. In view of this overall importance of political parties, it must be ensured that its leadership is elected at all levels and not nominated. The elected Prime Minister,

according to this democratic principle, should not remain president of his/her political party. Henceforth, the Prime Minister represents the whole nation. Party elections should be held after every one or two years. It should also be reviewed regularly by party members whether or not the party manifesto is being followed.

Principles of politics

The basic thing that should be kept in mind regarding politics is in whose hands rests the authority to govern and to which class they belong? In other words it is necessary to know whether those in power belong to the lower and middle classes or the upper class? Those who are in power will work necessarily for the interests of those classes to which they belong. If, therefore, the interests of the people belonging to the lower and middle classes are to be served they should also exercise the control over government. The wealthy class should be pressed for spending sufficient portion of their wealth on the welfare of the people. But the fact on ground is that the ruling class has consisted mostly of *jagirdars*, absentee landlords, industrialists, traders, bureaucrats and the religious elite. These classes have been engaged all along in amassing wealth and living extravagantly while continuing to deprive the people of their minimum economic needs. They have not shown any attachment to the national interest. Such a ruling class could not have allowed, on its own accord, changes in the existing national and foreign policies in the interest of the country. In such conditions, it becomes essential to train the people about the changes that need to be brought in the existing socio-economic system. The people should be goaded to give a clear verdict in favour of establishing a 'People's Democratic Government' whenever the next elections are held. In this way a pleasant change could be brought about by going through a peaceful "democratic revolution" and saving the people from the travails of a "bloody revolution".

Another important principle of politics is that all the citizens of a country should be rendered equal treatment irrespective of their racial, group or religious affiliations. The government and political parties should work in coordination for economic and social benefit of all the citizens.

Special features of “politics of the people”

Having understood and accepted the above meaning of politics, we will have to observe the following special features of ‘politics of the people’ if we wish to partake in positive politics and shun negative politics:

- It devolves power to the people at the lower levels, and gives maximum autonomy to the provinces. It induces the countrymen to work for the collective interest rather than personal interests. This results in benefiting the nation as well as the individuals.
- It safeguards people from sense of insecurity, anxiety, despair and disappointment by providing them with the basic necessities of life and ensuring their basic human rights.
- It formulates effective programmes for raising living standards of the lower classes, and prevents exploitation of the weak and the poor.
- It provides the people with equal opportunity for progress. It arranges equitable distribution of wealth to all people by loosening the grip of the vested interests on the country’s resources.
- It paves the way for the establishment of a classless society on the basis of economic and social justice, by accepting the principle of human equality.
- It draws in people from all walks of life (both men and women) in greater numbers to participate in the political process, and matters of governance.
- It gives equal rights to women and men, and raises their economic, social, political and cultural status.
- It develops self-respect in the people. It creates the capacity of listening to others and the capability of speaking to others. It generates friendship, unity, amity, cooperation and interest in collective matters and, by engendering deep relationship with the ideology, and generates resolve and courage for achieving the objective.

- It establishes the rule of law, and gives a towering and dignified position to the judiciary by liberating it from the dominance of the executive.
- It treats the press as an ally of the people, and gives full protection to it, so that it may project the viewpoint of the people fully and fearlessly and thus play an effective role for improving the system of government and working for the betterment of the country.
- It restricts all political discussion to arguments based on facts, and focuses on problems of the people. Thus it guards the political process from undemocratic behaviour like religious prejudices, sectarian altercations and groupings. It does not allow formation of political parties on the basis of religions and sects. It brings on record all the assets and other particulars of political leaders to guard against all kinds of corruption.
- It relieves the majority of the people from poverty, unemployment and ignorance by developing their capabilities through scientific education and technological training.
- It establishes only one kind of education system for all, based on merit and not on the basis of richness and poverty.
- It develops the languages and cultures of the various nationalities and enables them to live together amicably. It enables participation of all minorities in the political mainstream, and guards their equal status in the dispensation of human rights.
- It liberates the nation from wrongful political pressures and economic plunder by the international forces, and helps the nation to become self-reliant through proper development of the country's resources.

Resolving existing political confusion

In order to get rid of the fifty-five year old bad politics, the first step should be to start making efforts immediately to establish a system that would provide full protection to the interests of the people. Revolutionary changes should be made in Pakistan's economic, social and governmental systems on the basis of the principles indicated by

all the Prophets alike, as well as in the light of the experiences of revolutionary movements of the recent eras.

We will have to adopt the principle, contained in the directions given by the Prophets, that all the land and means of production of a country are the collective property of the nation. According to this principle the *Jagirdari* system (in whatever shape it exists at present) should be abolished and the social status of all the people brought at par. Whichever land one may possess (rural or urban), and in whatever form, should be considered as state property and a trust with the people for earning their livelihood. Human labour should be made the basis of economy and capital should be given secondary position. Absentee-landlordism and construction of palatial houses for residential purposes should be prohibited. Such agricultural land as is in excess of a family's requirements, and that which is lying fallow, should be taken into state custody without compensation and distributed to the landless cultivators on easy terms. The industrialists and traders should be made to earn legitimate profits only. Such able and skilled persons who are without jobs should either be given employment or provided small loans to start business.

The second principle given by all the prophets, which their followers have distorted, is that all human beings, irrespective of their nations or religions, are "one people of one God". During the twenty-first century the leaderships of all world nations will have to rise above all prejudices, religious or ethnic, and by adopting the profound principle of tolerance, working for unity of humankind on the basis of economic and social justice, and utilizing their abilities for establishing world peace.