

Jayaprakesh Narayan and Total Revolution

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Abstract

This research paper is an attempt to know the contribution of Jayaprakesh Narayan in improving Indian Political system in general and Total Revolution in general. This study is based on secondary data mostly on books, published as well as unpublished work related to Jayaprakesh Narayan. He was a multi-dimensional personality. Even while pursuing his quest for a non-violent social revolution which would usher in both freedom and equality he was seriously concerned with the problems of national integration. As a person who had devoted a good part of his life to the struggle for India's freedom, it was quite natural for him to feel anxious about the preservation and strengthening of the country's national unity, especially in view of threats to it of various kinds emerging from time to time. He was the man beyond the blessing of NOTA (None of the above) by Supreme Court of India as JP was the first to demand NOTA in Indian political System.

Keywords: Jayaprakesh Narayan, Total Revolution, NOTA

Introduction:

The germs of the concept of 'Total Revolution' lie deeply embedded in Gandhi's teachings to which Jayaprakesh Narayana, the leader of Total Revolution turned as a result of his disillusionment with what might be called "Conventional wisdom of revolution and conventional technique" of change. In fact, 'Total Revolution' is a further extension of Gandhi's thought on socio-economic problems and technique of change in the context of contemporary social, economic and political reality. The journey of Jayaprakesh Narayan from Marxism to Gandhism resulted in Total Revolution. Unconventionality was most pronounced in Gandhi's thinking on social and economic arrangement of the society giving him a distinctive revolutionary character. Through Total Revolution, Jayaprakesh Narayan tried to build upon it with a greater emphasis on specific components of the whole concept.

Jayaprakesh Narayan's Total revolution is a grand vision of individual state and society. Behind this vision lies an understanding of our entire experience of more than two hundred years of industrial development. It is based upon Gandhi's basic postulates and it envisages non-violent method of changing society with non-violent techniques. Total Revolution is an all-enveloping process of change in the individual as well as in the society. The primary emphasis is on moral values, decentralization of economic and political power and insistence on non-violent means to achieve good ends.

NOTA means none of the above also known as "against all" or a scratch vote is a ballot option in some countries such as India. In India it was demanded first time by J P Narayan. In 2009 election commission told supremecourt about its chances of availability on the PIL on an NGO named The People's union for civil liberties.

Methodology

This research paper is based on secondary data mostly on the books and published as well as unpublished work related to Jayaprakash Narayan. An attempt has been made to analyze his thought about Indian Political system. After understanding his thought and his works some suggestions were provided to make Indian Political system smoother under the shadow of his thought.

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Objective:-

- The concept, component and dynamics of change of Total Revolution.
- The mode of action that propelled the movement.

Concept of Total Revolution

To understand the word Total Revolution, we have to first of all understand the word “Revolution”. Revolution as a concept has been defined in a number of ways. George Saweyer, Petter, Samuel P. Huntington, Sigmund Neumann and Thomas S. Kuhn define Revolution as value change. By value change is meant a change in the dominant value of the community at a particular point of time in its temporal dimension.

The most common definitions of revolution have laid emphasis on a structural and institutional transformation in the existing social relationship and institutional bases of the society. The theorists of structural change envisage that a revolution replaces one social structure by another. In a narrow sense (or Marxian tradition) it is specially related to the changes in the economic structure of the society. Economic structure is interpreted to mean the structure of property relation. So a change in social structure is basically a change in the component of the ownership of property. In a broader sense, a change in social structure does mean not only a change in the property relation; lay the economic structure of society but also in other aspects of the social structure.

Wilbert C. More defined revolution in terms of institutional change. He perceives revolution as types of change which “engages a considerable portion of the population and results in change in the structure of government” the other definitions of revolution include change in the leader-ship (elite) component of the government, changes brought about by legal/ constitutional means, and finally violent acts. This analysis clearly spells out that any one dimension of change may mean a revolutionary change-be it a change in the dominant values of the community or its social structure, institutional, leadership or elite components, or legal or violent change. Total revolution is a further extension of the Gandhi an approach to social change. Social change in the Gandhi a paradigm is a very comprehensive and intrusive term. According to Gandhi, a partial change in any one component of the social matrix is likely to produce disequilibrium in society. Society therefore, will tend to more towards a state of constant instability. In order to ensure that the social organization maintains a steady and dynamic home static state, an all round change is needed. By an all round change Gandhi did not mean only a change in the social framework but also a qualitative change in the behavioral attitudinal – volitional and psychological texture of the individual, Gandhi like Hegal, believed that revolution begins in the minds of men. But Gandhi enlarged the Hegelian concept. Gandhi is primary emphasis was that an individual wanting to change the society must first of all change himself. Gandhi’s revolution was evolutionary and a process of purification. Gandhi’s approach was not limited to a change in individual’s lifestyle’ thought structure and behavior -pattern only. Thus, together with a revolution in the individual, society must also change. It spans the entire continuum along which values as well as social and institutional structures are ranged. The emphasis is an each one of the demerits constituting the continuum. Gandhi talked of changing the society. He conceived far-reaching and novel changes in the entire society organization which consisted of the economy.

Total revolution, as a concept, was put forward by Jayaprakesh Narayan (at times referred to as JP) in the wake of Bihar movement in Patna on 5th june1974. In a public meeting at Gandhi maiden, Jayaprakesh Narayan declared that the struggle was not going to be limited to se curing the demands of the students, including the resignation of the minister and the dissolution, of the assembly in Bihar but would aim at bringing about a total revolution or Sampoorna Kranti, which alone could solve the urgent problems of the county and usher in a new society. Actually it was Karl Marx who had first used this term in the book “the poverty of philosophy (1847)” in which he wrote: “.....mean while, the antagonism between the proletariat

and the bourgeoisie is a straggle of class against class, a straggle which carried to its highest expression is a total revolution”

Total revolution signifies a radical transformation not merely of our material conditions but also of the moral character of the individuals. The idea was implicit in many of Gandhi’s writing and speeches. Vinoba expanded the idea further as early as 1951, he declared “my aim is to bring about a three fold revolution first, I want a change in peoples heart; secondly, I want to change the social structure. In the sixties he spoke in this being frequently enough to warrant the use of towards. Total revolution as the title of a book containing his speeches, published, it has been aptly observed in a recent study that JP’s movement for total revolution was a continuation of the preceding movement for non-violent revolution through Bhoodan and : there is hardly any difference between Sarvodaya and total revolution. It there is any then Sarvodaya is the goal and total revolution the means. Total revolution is basic change is all aspects of life. There cannot be Sarvodaya without this without using the term total revolution JP himself had been emphasizing since the misfortunes if not earlier, the need for a social revolution which would not merely bring about a change in the structure of society, but also an improvement in the character of the individuals comprising it after he joined the Bhoodan movement in the fifties he laid particular stress on it. In course of an article published in 1969 he also used the term total revolution to describe the objective of the Sarvodaya movement in India. Revolution to the Bhoodan and Gramdan programmers’ he observed: Gandhi’s non violence was not just a plea for law and order or a cover for the status quo, but a revolutionary philosophy. It is indeed a philosophy of a total revolution become it Embarrass personal and social ethics and values of life as much as economic, political and social institutions and processes” it is however a fact that the term total revolution become a recurrent theme of J P s speeches and writing only since 1974 and it is only since then that it has taken its place in Indian political discourse.

Following Gandhi, JP recognized the necessity of change in the individual, the individual who takes upon himself the task of changing society “one of the unstated implications of Satyagraha would be” JP says in his prison diary, a self change that is to say those wanting a change must also change themselves before launching any kind of action” in this lies the whole philosophy of JP’s total revolution. During his democratic socialist days, JP had reached the conclusion that no revolution worth the name was possible unless the practitioners of revolution themselves underwent a change in their individual being. Thus the cornerstone of revolution was the change individual who in thus worked for change in the socio-economic structure of the society. JP faith in the change of individual as the precondition for change in the society was a Gandhi an approach. Like Gandhi, JP also stressed that individual change cannot be regarded as the be all and end-all on the other hands it is the morally transformed individuals who would activate the process of change to put it differently society change is not wait until all individuals in the society change. On the country the transformed individual and the social framework are to interact so that it can lead to an all round change. A process of simultaneous change is therefore the sine qua non of a society expecting a revolution.

JP conceived of a revolution in terms of not only commitment to the cause of revolution but also his own lifestyle and attitudinal structure. There was no doubt a professional revolutionary but in him bath profession and practice (vichar and aachar) found a happy blending he practiced. What he preached and preached what he practiced. Ideas were therefore constantly bring tested in the crucible of practice, and practice in twin leads to a modification of ideas.

JP’s Concept of revolution is very comprehensive like that of Gandhi s. it consists of a wide spectrum of variables it is non conformist in so far as it departs from the used meanings attached to revolution.

The component of total revolution :

There are seven components of total revolution social, economic political cultural ideological intellectual educational and spiritual. These numbers may be increased or decreased. JP himself thought that the Cultural Revolution could include education and ideological. Similarly social revolution according to him in the Marxian sense can cover economic and political revolution and even more that. He also thinks that each of the seven categories can be further split up into sub-categories. For proper analysis these seven components may be rearranged in the following manner (a) cultural which includes spiritual –moral dialogical intellectual and education (b) social economic and (c) political.

Cultural :

JP used the term ‘culture’ in a very comprehensive sense. It cannot individual and group behavior. At a purely personal or ground level Cultural Revolution invokes a change in the moral values held by the individual or the group. In any debate of moral values, therefore, ends and means must enter. It is in regard to the ends means problem that JP following Gandhi has been very insistent. As far back as 1950 JP declared: we eschew the unclean and jealous methods that the communists follow writing on yet another occasion in 1951 he said the first aspect of Gandhi that must interest the socialist is its moral and ethical basis its insistence on values. Russian or Stalinist interpretation of socialist philosophy has reduced it to a crass Machiavellian code of conduct utterly devoid of any sense of right or wrong good or evil. The end justifies the means and when the end is power personal or group power there is no limit to the depth to which the means will sink to secure the object use.

A change in regard to the ends means relationship both in the individual and group life is bound to produce a corresponding change in the belief system that is, the ideology of either the individual or the group. A new ideological revolution therefore, is bound to ensure if the organic relationship between ends and means is accepted. As a natural corollary to this an intellectual revolution cannot be avoided for the entire ends- and means approach in the context of Gandhi thought must give a new outlook to the individual or the group to new things around them and this is what JP means by intellectual revolution.

The most important variable in the cultural change is education. According to JP, education must be a powerful element of society change and it should be closely linked to notional development.

It should be biased in favor of the masses rather than in favor of the upper classes. It must create a new kind of awareness among the submerged and weaker sections of our society so that they fully integrate with the society. He had suggested the full integration with the society. He had suggested the following change in the present system

1. One third to one-half of the working time in all educational institutions at all stages should be devoted to active participation in the programs of social service and national development.
2. A large part of non formal education should be introduced in the system. Part time expanded at the secondary and university stage.
3. A large part of our budget on education benefits the upper classes with the result that the masses are left out. Such an imbalance must be corrected if social justice is to be the object of our educational policies with this end in view, three programs must be given top priority namely (1) adult education (2) a non-formal education of less than six hours a week to all are of school youths in the age group of 15-26; and lastly (3) universalize the elementary education for all children.

Turning to secondary education JP’s scheme envisaged a thorough change in the system. First, higher institutions should not be permitted to proliferate leading to a fall in the standards. Secondly, strict criteria should be laid down regarding recognition, affiliation, and financial assistance to be given to the

institutions of higher education. Thirdly, adequate fees should be charged in these institutions while making allowances for liberal grant of free studentships and scholarship to deserving candidate. Fourthly, the emphasis in higher education should be on quality rather than quantity. And lastly but most importantly degrees must be delinked from employment JP's recommendations seek to lay the foundation of a more viable, meaningful and purposeful system of education.

Social – Economical:

As JP stated 'social' in the Marxian sense also includes 'economic'. A social revolution, therefore, is basically an economic revolution in the Marxian formulation. Marx's use of the term was justified in the European context. In the India context, this term was justified in the European context. In the Indian context the term social has a distinctive character. Due to caste derisions, a whole panoply of rituals, hierarchy, modes of inter-caste communication, sense of pollution, marriage norms and practices, social distance, and informal rules of behavior grown have grown over thousands of years. JP did not overlook the fact that there lies a boundary line between a caste and an economic class. Yet he also recognized the social reality underlying the caste configuration in so cite. And that reality is that caste is quite an autonomous factor, independent of its economic moorings. The test of total revolution in this sense is iconoclastic. It has to break the caste barriers. And in order to do so, total revolution must evolve new norms and practices replacing those based on caste. Inter caste dining abolition of dowry system, archaic marriage rules and regulations all must enter the area of total revolution. It is in this sense that the social content of total revolution assumes quite an independent dimension.

But total revolution must go hand in hand with economic revolution. JP only carried Gandhi's thinking further to embrace every details of economic life economic relationship. JP recorded in his prison diary, includes technological industrial, and agricultural revolution, accompanied by a radical change in the pattern of ownership and management.

The industrial technological structure of the economic has two major facets namely (1) the ownership patterns and (2) the size of technology the model of industrial technological development that he has in mind consists of a numbers of elements. they are (a) diversified ownership pattern of the self-employed Individual, group of families, registered cooperatives, Gram Sabhas, Block Samitis, Zilla Parishads and only in the end the state (b) labor intensive small techniques linked largely with agriculture in place of capital intensive technology with the provision that, where the latter becomes inert able, it should be placed under state ownership. Such large scale industries are conceived only as feeders to small units so that they do not devour the former as had happened in the wake of technological revolution.

In the sphere of agriculture JP's thinking was very specific the present agrarian structure even after different states have passed land ceiling legislation remains as unevenly balanced as even. Except in Kerala and west Bengal no significant change in the structure of ownership has taken place. JP agitated for land to the tillers "the primary emphasis in regard to land reform, therefore, is or the ownership land by those who cultivate it, adequate wages for the landless poor and effective implementation of existing laws relating to ceiling eviction, share crapping and homestead land. If the existing laws had been implemented, a new ethos in the countryside would have been created but it is exactly in relation to putting the haves into operation that all government of whatever ideological variety, have failed.

Political:

In the sphere of political revolution JP follows Gandhi. Gandhi visualized power rising from the grassroots and reaching the tap which remained noting more than a coordinating body. Such a new of polity was different from those in practice either in democratic system or the communist countries. In other words, if power was shared among different echelons of the social structure starting from say the village upward the

danger of centralization could very well be avoided. Centralization either of political or of economic power, was what Gandhi dreaded most, he therefore, laid emphasis on decentralization.

JP followed the same line of thinking in his approach to the reconstitution of power from the base his thinking on polity in the present context had two distinctive features. Firstly, he raised substantive issues in regard to the whole polity as is prevalent today and secondly, pending the reorganization of the polity. Along his substantive formulations, he advocated reform in the present political system.

His vision of a party less democracy reorganization of the power structure from below institution new representative bodies and other suggestions fall under the first. In the second category, he visualized reforms in the parliamentary system.

In plea for reconstruction of India polity, JP rejected the western model of democracy on the ground that it did not give full scope to the people to participate in the management of their affairs and is based on anatomized view of society, the state bring an inorganic sum of individuals. In its place he pleaded for a model of democracy, based on an integrated concept of society and providing the fullest possible scope to the individual to participate in the management of his affairs without the inter mediation of political parties. The latter, according to JP functioned without any control them by the people or even by their own numbers and were the source of many evils. It was not now ever the party system that was the main culprit, but parliamentary democracy. Which lay at its bock and which could not work without it?

In the context of total revolution the following points needs to be stressed.

Firstly JP's approach to the reordering of political power is significant. This led him to conceive of a polity in which the effective levels of powers are controlled by people. In order that such a control is possible, he advocates the creation of formal structures at villages block and district levels. Most of the power, in his scheme rests with these structures. The structures are government at their respective levels in the sense that they are independent in their sphere of operation and yet interdependent in their sphere of operation and yet interdependent in relation to other tiers. It was this approach to decentralization of power that led him to supper the Panchayti Raj System. He believed that it was perfectly feasible to incorporate the different tiers below the state level into the constitutional framework by a bold strake of amendment there by making it a part of the structure of the entire polity. In such a polity a viable structure is one in which participation of the largest number in the decision making process is guaranteed. JP made a radical departure from the practice of the Panchayati Raj. He pleaded for units which would be administratively viable while guaranteeing the participation of the people. This is essence meant a process of regrouping from the village upward so that an optimum size crystallizes at the respective levels.

Secondly, JP had in the past made for- reaching and comprehensive recommendations with a view to reforming the present system of election he was the first to suggest that in order to prevent defections, which become the order of the day, effective legislative steps should be taken JP also raised the issue of the corrupting role of money in the entire electoral process. Reform of the electoral system, has been one of the very persistent demands which JP went in market on the political system .there are other aspect like the use of administrative machinery the ways and means of conducting a free and fare election and a civil code of conduct among political parties about which JP has provided wide ranging guidelines. JP has drawn our attention to the control of the legislature. He suggested that there should be clause in our constitution for recall of the legislatures that is the constituents must be vested write the power to recall a member if he does not carry out his duties.

Mode of Action:

There are three broad categories of action that JP has under cored. First, it should now be clear to everyone that in JP's scheme the usual constitutional devices are not adequate. A democratic political system

is more likely to degenerate in the interval between two elections which may necessitate the launching of a direct non violent action the regime might become corrupt and inefficient. If may increasingly lead to the concentration of power in the hands of one or a few persons thereby rendering it more and more authoritarian its capacity to respond to the needs and aspirations of the people may be eroded over time. In such a situation j p would not advise people to wait for the next election on the contrary; he would export people to resort to non-violent action. Secondly JP suggested the formation of peoples committees at the grassroots. These people committees were conceived of as organs of people power they had there are a twofold function. They were supposed to mobilize the energies of the people into constructive channels. It is in these constructive role that JP visualized a healthy inter- action between the power of the people and the state power. In other words Jan Shakti and Rajya Shakti (people power and state power) are supposed to supplement each other. Another function that JP suggested for the people committees is to resist the injustices and tyrannies of the state individual, or a group of individuals.

Nonviolence as an extra constitutional weapon was to be involved. He cautioned against its indiscriminate use it can be resort to only when all channels as prescribed under democratic system are blocked and no other course is left open.

Thirdly JP advocated class struggle. According to JP caste and class largely then to overlap both sociologically and economically. Gandhi said that non violence can be used as a weapon to resist every form of injustice and tyranny in a society. Indian society is a stratified society and nonviolence here assumes the form of a struggle between the 'haves' and 'have-nots'. The only difference with the Marxian class struggle is that by calling upon to resist injustice and tyranny the appeal is lifted to a moral plane. It is not an appeal to the economic interests of the have note but more poignant appeal to choose between good and evil justice and injustice truth and untruth. Gandhi's most original and unconventional contribution to the dynamics of social change lies in this sphere nonviolence involves self suffering. self suffering blunts angle and aims at arousing the moral sensibilities in both the parties involved in the dispute violence as a dynamics of class struggle invariably leads to animosity which if victorious largely perpetuates itself. It is only in this sense that j p propounded his theory of class struggle. This is one of the many forms of action that JP suggested in order to usher in total revolution.

CONCLUSION:

Total revolution is a combination of seven revolution social economic political cultural ideological or intellectual education and spiritual. This revolution will always go on and keep on changing both our personal and social lives. It knows no respite no halt. Certainly not a complete halt .it is a permanent revolution and is expected to move on towards higher and higher goals. The concept of total revolution has had both Marxist and Gandhian origins. It is always expected to be total, touching all aspects of life. JP developed his concept of total revolution on the basis of a synthesis not merely of Marxist and Gandhian concepts of social revolution but also of the principles of western democracy.

Ghanshyam Shah rightly said, "Jayaprakash Narayan gave no blue print of that (alternative) society nor outlined the various stage of the revolution. Instead he gave a long list of proposal agricultural development equitable land ownership appropriate technology rural and small in dustiest political and economic decentralization no caste etc, he did not spell out now the land was to be so distributed nor how the social and economic hierarchy was to be abolished. JP is criticized on the ground that he had no ideology a blue print for a new economic and political order which he had outlined in considerable detail much before the Bihar agitation was even conceived of R.K. Barik another critic of JP supports the contention that JP had no ideology by citing JP's view as reported in the Calcutta daily, Statesman of 16 June 1974. JP is reported to hare said I do not think ideology help clarity, I think all ideologies have become old. It is not ideology but science that can answer all the questions. Let scientists and economists sit and chalk out a Program" but it is incorrect

to conclude that JP had no ideology on the basis of such stray comments. Infact JP's reasoned rejection of parliamentary democracy and his outline of a new Sarvodaya order may definitely be said to constitute an ideology.

JP failed to achieve his revolution and that political parties continued to rule where the people should have stepped in is different story. one shrewd commentator has pointed out that the reason for this is that same economic classes and vested interests that dominated society before continued to do so even after the exit of Mrs. Gandhi from the political scene following her massive electoral defeat in 1977. But perhaps the real reason why Lok- Niti as JP visualized it could not substitute Raj -Niti was because JP's Lok -Niti was basically an unworkable utopia.

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