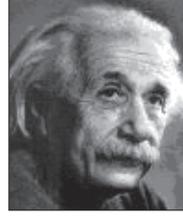


Lohia and Einstein



Candid Conversation

Candid Conversation between Lohia and Einstein

- Harris Wofford

Author : Lohia and America Meet

Dr.Einstein was seated on the porch of his small farmhouse talking to Stringfellow Barr, President of the Foundation for World Government, when we arrived. For the next few hours Lohia and Einstein carried on the rarest conversation of the trip. Best of all were the great, hearty laughs which the two men shared as they surveyed the ironic state of mankind. For a time they talked in German, but mainly they were generous enough to speak English.

Einstein's curiosity required that Lohia talk Indian politics and outline the Socialist program. The abolition of landlordism and the re-division of land he approved of rapidly. When Lohia answered a question about a compensation for the landlords with a firm stand against it, proposing only rehabilitation settlement, Einstein said, 'good, good'.

Why had Nehru not done these things? Lohia did not know. Einstein laughed at Lohia's remarks: 'Some men can write admirably- but act miserably'.

Einstein seemed to like the concept of small machine, and he strenuously supported the idea of decentralization of authority. They briefly differed on Communist China, which Lohia opposed as completely as he opposed Chiang's china of status quo. Perhaps they would differ about Europe, too, for the one moment when Einstein seemed almost hurt when Lohia said,

'You know I'm not one of those who believed that the European is more cultured than the American.' 'What?' Einstein asked, and Lohia reiterated that he believed America to be the natural fulfillment of the European mind, and that Europeans were jealous even of American plumbing and pressure cookers: 'It is only that America has more of what Europe wants.' Einstein finally laughed, 'I see you have an independent mind.'

'May I ask you a question, Dr.Einstein?' Lohia began. 'Not about politics. I have come here to learn from you, and in politics I suppose I might even have some thing to tell you. But in the higher field of the human mind we need your help. In India I have said that our century has had only three great men, Gandhi, Bernard Shaw, and you. In Berlin, I said that our age has thought only twice, Mahatma Gandhi and atomic energy; one is gone, and your invention is a source of death. How is the human mind to get out this stagnation, this confinement and rigidity which is stifling it? Do you see a new integration which can free thought for new voyages of discovery?'

In this vein they surveyed the world for a while, and Lohia wanted to return to continue this discussion with, for him, 'the best man in America'. When the two parted, Einstein said, 'It is so good to meet *a man* – one gets so lonely.'

From : T. Ravichand