

Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia in the US

Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, was one of the illustrious political leaders of India and was active in the fight for freedom from the colonial rulers. Naturally, he was associated with the Congress party at that time. He was working as the Secretary of the Foreign Affairs wing of the party. He was asked to be the General Secretary of the party, but he declined the offer. He was effective in the Quit India movement. He was imprisoned in 1944 in the Lahore Fort where he was subjected to torture by the colonial government.

He was one of the pioneers of socialist movement in India. He left the Congress party along with leaders like JayaPrakash Narayan and Ashok Mehta to establish Socialist party. He was the Chairman of the party in 1956. He earned a Doctorate from the Berlin University in 1932.

Foundation for World Government invited him to visit America. He made two visits there:

From 13 July to 25 August in 1951 and again

From 28 April to 3 June in 1964.

Mr. Stringfellow Barr was president of the Foundation. Mr. Harris Wofford Jr. was one of the Trustees of the Foundation. He was with Dr. Lohia throughout his visit in America and helped him meet the various persons and visit institutions. Mr. Harris Wofford has made a faithful record of the speeches of Lohia during his visit to the United States of America. It was translated into Telugu by Mr. Sambasiva Rao Ravela. This brief is prepared based on the Telugu version. I feel Mr. Lohia was successful in making himself clear to the people in the States and was able to spread his idea of socialism without fear or favour. I tried to make justice to Lohia by putting his ideas as expressed on the American soil. I might have taken liberty to add some extra words in order to bring out the emphasis and clarity to what Lohia said but without any distortion of ideas. As I largely concur with what Lohia has stated I have also derived some satisfaction from this effort. I am thankful to Sri Ravela Somayya for giving me this opportunity.

--Jawaharlal Jasthi

First Visit

Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia stepped on American soil on 13 July 1951 by arriving at Idlewild airport in New York. It was an investigative visit with a tight schedule. He arrived late by a week as he was detained in Mysore in India just before he was to leave for America because of his involvement with a strike organised by the party. It was reported in the eagerly waiting American media as "Detention of opposition leader in India on the eve of his visit to US". The schedule was made tighter because of that. During the period of six weeks in America Lohia addressed about twenty public meetings and participated in discussions with people and broadcasts over radio addressing about fifty lakhs of listeners.

When he arrived, press correspondents were eagerly waiting for him at the airport itself. Explaining the purpose of his visit Lohia stated that as a young fellow he was impressed by the lives of Lincoln and Jefferson. Being a member from business community, he said, he was also interested in meeting people like Rockefeller and Ford. "I am inquisitive about the American people and their culture who made America so great. Coming from an ancient but not so wise a country I now entered the most powerful modern country" he said.

He was asked why he was detained in India just before his visit to the US. He explained cautiously. Landlords were trying to drive away the farmers who were cultivating the fields. They as socialists, tried to prevent it by organising a peaceful resistance. In India such obstructions would lead to prison. He stated that he led the movement with the slogan "Spade, Prison and Vote". In fact, it was the slogan of the party. Spade is the symbol of constructive and productive work; prison is for fighting injustice and vote is the democratic weapon to achieve political freedom, he said. To a question from a correspondent he said that the people in India are anxious to get rid of the foreign rule at the earliest.

The president of India League of America was also present at the meeting. He expressed doubt that reporting of his statements may bring him trouble. For that Lohia said there is no need to hesitate and it can be published as it is and that is what he wants. He won't say anything bad about his native country on a foreign soil. But facts must be given. If you want to be a citizen of the world it is necessary to tell the truth wherever you are. Regarding the results of elections recently held he opined that he is not an astrologer and would not dare to predict the future. But as his party got about 40% of the vote in the recently held byelection it would be the second party in India and may be the biggest socialist party in the world.

Regarding the non-alignment policy of the Indian government he said he would not consider the present policy of the government as non-alignment as they keep swinging between the two camps. In fact, two-thirds of the world is not aligned to any of the two camps and is waiting for a peaceful change. Socialists intend to take advantage of it and establish a democratic society strong in philosophy and economy. No doubt, it is difficult for the third camp to survive. We are all weak but it is the only way to become strong.

Then he was asked about the anti-American feeling prevailing in India. It is true, he said. It is the jealousy of the poor neighbor. But at the same time there is a genuine resentment about American policy of trying to impose their own attitude on others.

Before the visit to America Lohia happened to visit Yugoslavia and spent about a week as a guest of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs there. He was asked for his opinion of the country. Lohia said that he does not appreciate communism anywhere in any form. But the Yugoslav communist party is far better than the socialist parties of many other countries. Yugoslavia decentralized their power structure. Inequalities are confined to 1: 10 ratios. More important they did not seek at the expense of freedom. We must assure them they are not alone.

After the meet they had to go to Washington D.C. (from New York). Mr. J.J. Singh took them to La Guardia airport in New York in his car. Lohia was impressed and surprised at the luxurious facilities that were available in the car. Lohia was thinking how long it would take for Indian cars reach that stage. (But they reached far earlier than expected.)

On arriving at the D.C. airport Lohia got his baggage released without customs checking. It was one of the privileges extended by the government to the honored visitor. He was surprised as he did not expect it. "You should have told me earlier; I could have smuggled something" he joked with Harris. The immigration officer also realized that he is some VIP and just enquired what is the position of communists in India. For Americans communism is a red herring. Lohia replied "They may get not more than 4% votes...but why you are concerned about communism?" he asked.

"That is what we read from the media" the officer said.

Fisch University in Nashville, one of the few Negro institutions in the South, was his host. He had to address the students in their valedictory function on "Awakening of Asia and Africa". It was not the first assignment according to the original schedule. As time was lost due to late arrival of the guest the Senator Humphrey reduced his stay in New York and Washington as the cities are not supposed to reflect the real America and that the guest will prefer to visit more of rural areas. It was to the liking of Lohia as he preferred to meet the people in their farms and workplaces. In addition to the students and faculty of the university many people who are active in social work on equality came from distant places to hear the socialist from India. In course of his address Lohia stated:

"There is already a conflict between East and West. In addition, the contest between Soviet and Atlantic blocks is also there. More than all this there is intrinsic conflict between two regions of the world – one where people could not produce what they need and the other where production is in excess of their needs. The awakening of Asia and Africa must be understood in this context. If Africans grabbed political power during the last centuries the philosophical outlook and values would have been entirely different from what they are now all over the world. For example, the beauty of Venus would not have been appreciated as it is now. There would have been a different influence from the development of the continent. I wish Negroes in America pay more attention to Africa.

Some people express doubts whether Africans would be able to use the independence available properly. I consider it a foolish and meaningless doubt. Strictly speaking, which country has used its independence properly? If Africa becomes free and gets its proper place in the United Nations, it would have an immense effect on the racial relations in the US and the world. It is not merely for the development of twenty crores of Africans. We must strive for it in view of the need to develop humanity. We must give it moral and

material support for development of its people. I am not the one to flatter the compulsory ethics of poverty. It is necessary to eradicate poverty.

It is a common demand of modern civilization that the standards of living must be improving forever. It is equally acceptable to Henry Ford and to Joseph Stalin. Their policies are almost similar. But I am not the one to flatter the oneness of humanity keeping the economic inequalities rampant. In some respects, there is equality in the west. If I go to the roadside hotel it is difficult to distinguish between the worker and owner. But our civilization made us the slaves of heavy machinery and big industry. They may help production but cannot drive away poverty. Just consider these facts – In India the demographic density is 300 per square mile while it is 50 in America. The value of capital goods in India per head is \$35 while it is more than \$1500 in the USA. The figures reveal what is happening in Asia.

If at all India tries to apply latest technology, it makes lakhs of people unemployed. If you mechanize agriculture crores of people will be driven out to cities. Capitalists and communists try to assure that the industry will take care of them. To make it true it requires investment in production to the extent of thousands of dollars per head. Neither dollars nor rubles can satisfy that demand.

It is necessary for us to change our attitude to civilization. Instead of craving eternally for improved standards of living, it is necessary to search for an objective and pragmatic standard and strive to achieve it. Asia and Africa are suffering from laziness for centuries. I do not like to flatter the spiritual richness of my India. No doubt your modern civilization is practical. But don't jump to the conclusion that it is perfect in all respects. There is unrest in your life and activities. Both unrest and laziness are equally disgusting to me. They hide pragmatism and equality. If only we can mix the two in equal proportions, it would be launching a fresh and new civilization. In that civilization material and objective equality would prevail and poverty would be driven off. History would repeat itself. Asia and Africa would tighten belts making Europe and America lag behind. But that is not what I wish. That is what happened in history. But don't expect the western civilization would remain the same forever. Let us blend the two for the benefit of all.

I am reminded of my experience eighteen years back. I met an American girl in Berlin. She stays in Paris and invited me to meet her there. I happened to go there with one of my friends. But the watchman there did not allow us to enter the premises. When she was informed, she came down weeping for the treatment meted to us. She felt her values were undermined. She still had some basic instinct to shed tears to wash off her sin. But a European girl would not have behaved like that. Her civilization would not allow her show her emotions like that.”

The speech a deep impression on the audience. The students gathered around him and flooded him with questions and doubts. The president of the university Dr. Charles Johnson took him to his house for dinner. It gave Lohia an opportunity to meet many of the elite of Negroes in the city. He tried his best to encourage them to take more interest in Africa reminding them it is their continent.

Dr. Johnson happened to visit India earlier and had some idea of Gandhi's movement. Lohia directly confronted him “Why don't you defy the law and court imprisonment in a non-violent way? Dr. Johnson was sad and said “We are not like Indians. We are just 1.3 crores here. It would not have such effect here.

Lohia visited the Folk School established by Miles Horton in 1932. He also visited the rural areas. He was surprised that there is no tap water available there. His idea of a prosperous America started coming down to reality. Somebody asked, "What is the necessity for Indians to go to jail?"

"We were ruled by the British. They dumped their products on us. We burnt the foreign products. Going to jail is one way of fighting the foreign ruler, the non-violent way. But injustice is still prevailing even after getting independence. We have unjust laws and we defy them. Like your "sharecroppers" we have land lease system in our country. We are fighting for the rights of farmers who cultivate the land," explained Lohia.

Some of the people offered to come to India, stay there for some time and work along them to show solidarity. That is the reaction to the voluntary organizations working in India. Lohia met farmers – black and white – all over the southern states. Among the small farmers there is no color distinction. They inquired anxiously about the conditions in India and apprised him of their troubles and travails. He moved with them with his shirt, dhoti and Gandhi cap. Some of had doubt how the dhoti stands in place. He spoke largely about small machinery requirement, distribution of land and voluntary organizations. He found the farmers inviting with their friendly faces and warm greetings. Those were the people who lived on land, toiling day and night, had the fortune of watching dawn and dusk, rising and setting of sun who know and understand the cattle and live with them. That is the secret of life in rural areas. Lohia admitted it reinforced his faith in the future. This kind of peace of mind, contentment and happiness is not possible in the western civilization with its heavy industries and excessive production. He took advantage of the situation to explain the importance of small industries and simple living. He did not forget to insist on non-violent way of resistance to reach the goal. Gandhi and Thoreau are not merely for academic study. They must be followed in real life, he said. Such a talk from a non-white visitor inspired them. At the same time, they were also disappointed that he is underestimating the value of their progress and civilization. They are basically Americans and naturally proud of it even if the riches are beyond their reach. He was asked whether he would accept Truman as a socialist. "I like him but not as a socialist."

"You can take him to India with you?"

"No, no! I cannot afford him. But if you want you may take our Nehru to America."

"Why? Don't you like your government?"

"I agree it I my country, my people. But the government? It is not mine. I am trying to bring it down. In fact, I do not like any form of government."

They were surprised that the foreigner is not praising his own country like other visitors from other countries.

Referring to the distribution of land, somebody had a doubt that the recipient may lose it over time because of laziness losing the advantage of it. Lohia agreed there is such possibility if he is lazy. In fact, I am myself lazy and never rise early in the morning, he said. But the farmers in India are not like that. They work hard. The pity is they do not have the relevant equipment to give them the economic production.

What an American farmer gets by working for one hour, the Indian farmers gets by working for sixteen hours.

Lohia made friends with a boy of about eleven years. His parents are well to do. But he wants to earn something by himself. He has a vibrator and uses it to massage against some fee. In addition, he also distributes newspapers in the morning. He has plans to save and start an enterprise afterwards. "What will you do if it rains in the morning?"

"Of course, my father will take me round in his car." He said he is a member of the 4H club. The four Hs represent head, heart, hands and health. It is the motto of the club to dedicate all the four Hs for the welfare of the society.

Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) is one of the key organisations in the south of the United States. It supplies water and electricity at a low cost to an extensive area. It also supports farmer by supplying latest technology and agricultural equipment to farmers. But Lohia felt farmers could have been involved more in its management. It is a bit officious, he felt. Nevertheless, TVA is an organization that America can be proud of legitimately.

As stated earlier, Harris Wofford was accompanying Lohia throughout his visit. His grandmother was living in the Johnson city in the state of Tennessee. Wofford took Lohia to her house to spend a day and night. She was happy to play host to the visitor from India. She was an employee in the local insurance company. At the age of 75 she was active and took Lohia on a walk through her extensive plantation. It is her own but shared by all the friends there. There were many people waiting to meet Lohia – employees, workers, owners of small industries and housewives. During the conversation Lohia said he is unwittingly getting his socialism compromised enamored by the hospitality of American friends. When he expressed himself against the very concept of profit, they felt a bit inconvenienced. They were bred up with the idea of profit and free enterprise. Lohia understood the deep faiths of the middle-class people there. He enquired whether there are any people out of the 30,000 residents in the city who earn more than a thousand dollars per year. She avoided answer to the question as she did not like to embarrass her socialist guest.

For his next flight he came to Washington airport. There, too many people were waiting to meet him. There were government officers, Arab socialists, students and some members of Congress too. Cloven Maqsood of Lebanon socialist party was also there. Unexpectedly there were members of Indian diplomatic corps. They keep aloof as it was a private visit of a member of opposition party. Usually when a Congress member of American opposition party visits any other country, they will be received by the embassy there. But not so in the case of India. When the members of Foundation for World Government informed the Indian ambassador, Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, the ambassador at that time, of the visit of Lohia she reminded that a visitor from India shall call on the Indian consulate. She conveyed her congratulations to Lohia on his visit to the US and agreed to meet him. Lohia told her emissary that he too is anxious to meet her. He also told her to convey his greetings. It must be conceded that it would be inconvenient for her to welcome the leader of opposition to the government of her brother. The mill workers of Bombay were on strike for 63 days under the guidance of socialists in India. At that time the

workers in America supported the strike by supplying food to the workers. She met the American workers at that time.

It was a rare scene at the airport as the people were sitting on the floor waiting for the Indian visitor. He was in hurry and to some extent spoke bluntly. "I do not speak like an Asian. I have nothing to do with people who consider themselves Asians, Europeans or Americans. This is the time for us to adopt a universal outlook and consider ourselves citizens of the world. Asia is now disorganized without development. I would like to see Asia undergoing peaceful development. I have no objection to be branded anti-communist. But I am equally against capitalism as well. Even under communism there is gamble, violence and waste. But there is a difference between the capitalism in Asia and in the US. Your capitalism produces wealth. I met Eric Johnston, who is the one to analyze the world carefully. Capitalism is not able to secure investments in two-thirds of the world. It is confined to trading. In our situation it leads to profiteering, hoarding and black marketing. That is why I don't find any difference between Ford and Stalin. They are just two sides of the same mint. They represent the same civilization. It requires \$500 billion to bring India to the level of America. I don't think America or any other country is able to supply that much of capital. But what we need is small machines that could be used in villages. Every country has its own history which makes it behave differently. There is nothing in it to support or to regret. But if they are in the direction of gaining equality and freedom, I believe they will succeed one day. It is necessary that the world should move away from the conflicts created by the Atlantic and Soviet blocks. I don't expect it confined to Asia alone.

The Indian policy is shuttling between the two camps. In this situation Nehru is trying to bring China into the United Nations. But finally, Nehru will join the Atlantic camp due to his association with the British. It will happen only after some damage is done to the US. He does not want socialism in America. But it will be beneficial to India. Lohia reiterated that he would not deny socialism to America. "We are more distant from communism than you" he said. Both communism and capitalism bring concentration of power to dominate the world. Ellen Griffin, the director of Far East program Division of Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA) stated that if the world from Egypt to Indonesia becomes democratic it reduces his burden and makes him happy. What is required is preventing the spread of communism. Lohia was happy that there is at least one person who could understand his aim. Others were unhappy because we refuse to join the Atlantic alliance.

Lohia was scheduled to speak in the Howard University. It is the central university for coloured people in the US. The president of the university visited India earlier and was highly influenced by Gandhi. He has utmost respect for Nehru too. During the reception before the meeting they discussed about the influence of Catholics in America. During his speech Lohia indicated some antagonism towards Nehru which disappointed some in the audience. But his final disposition made many people happy. He spoke mainly about international racism. A few Brahminic forces with their economic power and veto are trying to control the countries of the lower castes. He placed the idea of "Free and United Africa" before America as it can upset the racist system.

He suggested defiance of law as the means to fell the walls built between the people. He suggested it as a universal weapon to attack injustice. It can be applied even in the US to combat racial discrimination. I know the colored people here are in minority. But they can get support from other races and also from some of the higher races. It becomes majority if they proceed with confidence and courage. It is necessary to dedicate ourselves to eradicate casteism in whatever form, it is there. If socialists were in power the movement for united Africa would have reached a significant stage. Take for instance the India-China problem. There is no scope for the third power except the communist and Atlantic colonialism. Look at Africa. We shall not wait until the problem becomes unmanageable. Socialism could have shown a solution to the problem that could not be solved either by producers or hoarders.

Somebody shouted that even Lohia could be corrupted if an opportunity arises. Lohia retorted saying that is why he never wanted to be in office. The biggest problem of the day is how to control. The only way is to reject power. Let us try for that. He said. Some other person expressed doubt that non-violence may not be effective to prevent wars between countries. That is why it has to be tried in situations where it will be effective – for example in internal conflicts of a country. It is necessary to make experiments on non-violence. It is not wise to stand against armies with empty hands. The resistance must be relevant to the political situation. It would not be proper for Americans to become extremists at times. The only solution is to do what you can.

Lohia was anxious to establish contact with common man whenever possible. Usually he talks to the drivers of taxis in which he happens to ride. He found that most of them have not heard of Nehru but are all aware of Gandhi. Lohia was satisfied with that. One driver explained the troubles in getting license to drive a taxi. He has to deal over the table and under the table. "It is the same in India also. But why not people do something to prevent it?" asked Lohia. The driver was frank in his reply. "After all the politicians have to face many troubles. I don't blame them for it."

Norman Cousins, the editor of Saturday Review of literature happened to return from India then. He was appreciative of the constructive plans of India. He advised Lohia to think of joining the Atlantic camp for the sake of common security. He blamed socialists for supporting Japan earlier. Lohia was alerted by that statement. "When was it, please explain?" he asked. "At the time of war some of the socialists stood by Japan" Cousins said. It was a surprise allegation as Cousins himself was sympathetic to Japan and adopted some of the destitutes from Hiroshima after the bomb attack. "Can you point out any of such socialists?" Lohia asked.

J.J. Singh interfered to tell that Lohia himself was one of them. He was shocked. One of his essays published in one of the publications edited by Gandhi was pointed out as proof of it. Then Lohia realized that he was misquoted. In that essay he only stated that if an Asian country tries to drive away the foreign imperialist forces, it must be appreciated even if it is ill reputed in some other aspect. That is being interpreted as support to Japan during war time, which is not correct.

Mr. J.J. Singh wanted to expose Lohia directly to the Wall Street. He took the help of one I.F. Baker, the Treasurer of Westinghouse Electric International Corporation. A reception was arranged. Lohia explained the origin of American capitalist system. He was addressing the bankers and stalwarts of commerce then.

In the present unstabilised conditions you may not be willing to invest in India, but in a short time you will see a socialist India where no traces of communism would be found. Then your investments in India would be profitable, he said.

Lohia visited Harlem in New York. The Urban League Center explained to him that they are trying to help the colored people in the slum area. After the passing of Equal Opportunities Act there is some relief, they said. There were Puerto Rican and Italian Americans among them. Many of their dwelling places were prone to fire accidents. But the houses built by the government for them were like oasis in the place. He realized the situation was conducive to juvenile delinquency. Referring to that he asked, "How do you face this situation?" they agreed "We have no alternative to violence." But constructive steps are being taken by the NAACP – National Association for Advancement of Colored People. Lohia suggested peaceful resistance to some of the unjust laws. Having pushed some of the people to the bottom layers of society you cannot expect them to be happy looking at your luxurious way of life. We all resent the situation. But none of us resort to any action. Lack of initiative to act nullifies the effect of sympathy we have. It is the same with India, he said. They know the situation in Formosa and Korea is bad but do not do anything practically. There is no use of trying to do something too late. If India was in socialist hands, we would not have kept quiet when China invaded Tibet. Formosa does not belong to Mao or Chiang-kai-Sheik or to Truman or Stalin. It belongs to the people of Formosa itself. But nobody supports them.

Harold Isaacs suggested instead of presenting the two camps as Soviet and Atlantic they should be presented as democratic and dictatorial groups. But Lohia pointed out to remember that the Atlantic camp also is not free from its drawbacks. We need something new, something beyond the two camps. Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) did not appreciate the bringing of a third camp. They are captivated by the idea of "Two Camps" enunciated by Truman. Lohia said that ADA wants socialism everywhere except in the USA. They support socialism even in Britain, but not in America.

Eleanor Roosevelt, the respected First Lady of America, arranged for a party for the ADA in the Hyde Park. Lohia happened to meet her on that occasion. It was a brief meeting, but Lohia was impressed by her frankness and was surprised on her daily schedule. From early in the morning to midnight she had no idle time left.

You cannot start a revolution just by sympathy and understanding. It is necessary that it must be reinforced with some anger and indignation (Satyagraha = righteous indignation). Don't misunderstand me or Gandhi if I say how angry was Gandhi at times. The basic question is not whether to follow the law or bring a revolution. You are bound to choose the path of revolution. But what kind of revolution? Is it by guns and bombs or through peaceful methods? Revolutions with the help of ammunition installed another dictator in the place of the old one. Our weapons of revolution are peace and non-violence.

When asked about Nehru Lohia said that he is not concerned with individuals, only with the policies they adopt. When Lohia expressed his differences with Nehru someone from the audience expressed resentment for it. Lohia agreed that Nehru is a sensitive person but he did not try to grow on Gandhian lines. I would be the first person to follow him if he adopts our policies.

TOWN MEETING IN SAN FRANCISCO:

This tradition of Town Meetings was established by George V. Denney. The address of Lohia was scheduled to be broadcast over the radio. So Lohia prepared his speech in writing. But Denney felt it was more scholastic for the listeners. He observed Lohia during the dinner time and felt it would be better if he is allowed to speak extempore. It was attended by more than 7,000 people of all shades. He said:

“The need for food and freedom I understand well. But I will be furious if you ask whether Asians want more of food or more of freedom. It is a cruel question. It degrades freedom and democracy as means of filling the belly. Neither capitalists nor communists could give us either of them. But if Asia is to come out of the present communist grip it has first to get rid of the landlords and consequent capitalism.”

Representatives of Junior Chambers of Commerce and Committee for a Free Asia were there among the audience. They did not like condemnation of both the camps so vehemently. They did not expect democracy so conflicted. But Lohia asserted that it is so. He said,

“Both are equally dangerous. Both Ford and Stalin are irrelevant for human civilization. We must go far from them. You are not bringing your wealth into Asia to save Asia. It is in your own interest that you are doing it. We know how destructive war is. In order to prevent it you must help two-thirds of mankind to build their own future in their own way. If not, you will not be able to secure what you intend to achieve. I would like to ask whether there is any proper standard of life except craving for luxuries. The struggle of the housewife shows her life is meant for the utensils. The life of the farmer is meant for tilling the soil. Is it this kind of life that we seek? Somebody asked whether Asians can enjoy democracy with their foolish faiths. Yes, they have it. But if I start enumerating the foolish traditions and faiths that are prevailing in the so-called progressive Europe and America, you will have to agree that you are not worthy of freedom and democracy. In fact, democracy is needed for the people who are suffering under the burden of dogmatic traditions and foolish beliefs. It is true that India suffers from caste system. We want to break it. At the same time don't forget you are also suffering from racism. You too have to come out of it. Just as communism offers inadequate food, capitalism offers inadequate freedom. We would like to provide freedom through food and food through freedom. We don't need the heavy machinery that you are using. We want smaller machines but with the latest technology to increase productivity without ignoring human involvement.”

When Lohia described how indecisive was the Indian government regarding the two camps of cold war, the Indian students present there could not relish it. They were not so much for the Congress party as such. They were not happy that the Indian visitor was so critical of his own government on the foreign soil. Lohia advised them to observe the actual conditions in India when they come back.

He had to explain the relation between India and Pakistan. He said that partition was a hasty decision based on the spurious theory of two nations. Even after partition there are more than four crores of Muslims in India refusing to go to Pakistan. There is no basis for the two nations theory. In fact, partition was big crime against humanity. That religious fanaticism can spell disaster again in Asia. If Kashmir is allowed to be a part of Pakistan it would reinforce religious fanaticism and gives new life to it. It should not be allowed in view of the welfare of Asia.

The main reason for instability of Pakistan is that it is in two parts separated by more than a thousand miles with deep cultural differences. Eastern part of Bengal must become a colony of the Western part of Pakistan or it shall get itself free from it. (It happened in 1972). Pathans in the north of Pakistan are demanding freedom. Perhaps all these problems could be solved only if undivided India comes into existence again. Socialists would try for it when opportunity comes. Some of the students with the cultural background of Pathans hesitatingly told Lohia that it would be difficult for them to follow non-violence in view of their culture of self-respect and sensitivity. Lohia reminded them of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan who is a Pathan and at the same time reputed as the Frontier Gandhi with his non-violent attitude. So, if you want to avoid violence there is nothing to stop you, he said.

After the speech Lohia was taken to a restaurant "Tavern on the Green". He was having an identity card of world citizenship with him which enabled him to enter the tavern. When he visited Paris earlier, he met Garry Davis, the founder of World Citizenship Movement. He gave Lohia the identity card with number 28772 as a citizen of the world. In that card the address of Lohia was given as "7 lakh villages". There were also 30 lakhs of world citizens in South France at that time. Lohia spread the movement in India into villages and cities and into the Lucknow University. He got the "World Charter" got accepted and recognized India as a continent of the world. (India does not allow dual citizenship. But world citizenship is not recognized in India. So, there is no breach of law and Lohia was saved.)

Next day the New York Herald Tribune arranged a banquet in honor of Lohia. Journalists were invited. In course of conversation he was asked for his opinion on Voice of America broadcasts. He was embarrassed to say that he never knew that there is something like Voice of America. He has no radio receiver he said. It was equally a shock to the hosts. America is maintaining the VOA at a heavy cost for public relations. They explained the process to him and gave details of the broadcasts and timings. He gracefully said he would try to listen to it after going back to India. Mrs. Helen Reid, the publisher of the Tribune had a genuine liking for India. She believes that both India and America together could do immense benefit to the world by helping the process of peace.

Lohia was taken to Milwaukee in the state of Wisconsin. The state is the center of dairy industry and the center of beer production. Milwaukee was the only city having a socialist as Mayor. Lohia was surprised on the coincidence of a socialist city being the center of production of beer. He was told that the city's population is mainly of settlers from Germany who are reputed to be crazy for beer. Most of them are social democrats and elected a socialist as Mayor. The Socialist Annual Picnic was arranged in the City Hall. They expressed anxiety that socialism was on the retreat everywhere. They felt it is because of the prosperity prevailing now. But Lohia did not agree. "It is too much to say that socialism thrives only in poverty. If that is the case, I would not be a socialist. I hate poverty. Socialism is a creative concept. It may be different in different countries. But it is necessary in all the countries" he said.

Jayaprakash Narayan studied in the Wisconsin University in Madison. Lohia met one of his teachers there. The teacher was happy to know that one of his students is leading the socialist movement in India.

In San Francisco Lohia entered into conversation with the driver of the taxi as a matter of habit. The driver very proudly declared that there is no city in the world better than San Francisco. Lohia congratulated him

for that. If you feel the native place a heaven it makes the denizens feel happy and proud and contented to some extent. While he was there some comments appeared in the press about Kashmir which provoked him to clarify. In his statement he stated "Partition of India resulted in the massacre of about six lakhs of innocent people and displaced about 1.5 crores of people. At present there are 1.2 crores of Hindus in Pakistan and four crores of Muslims in India. What would be the consequence if another division of land is contemplated based on religion? Formation of Pakistan has reinforced the idea that Hindus and Muslims are two different races. If it is encouraged it will spread all over Asia. It is all because of the religion – the main obstacle to peace and happiness in the world – that has entered politics. It must be stopped immediately. In the problem of Kashmir there are two theories at stake – religious hatred that has consumed Pakistan, India and Asia on one side and the self-decision of the people of Kashmir on the other side. In order to avoid any confrontation between these two aspects, the only thing we must do is to prohibit religious propaganda in referendum. As you know Pakistan will not agree to that condition. In view of it is better to stop calling for referendum hereafter. The antagonism between Pakistan and India is not confined to Kashmir alone. It includes the state of minorities in the two parts of Pakistan. At the risk of being branded a compromiser I would like to suggest. Half of Kashmir is under Pakistan and the other half under India. It would be better if both the countries are forbidden to make an issue of it. Partition of India itself was a crime and nothing can undo it."

Coming from the opposition leader of India the statement carried some credibility and accepted.

Ernesto Galarza was the leader of agriculture laborers in California. There are more than ten lakh people who migrate every year to work on the fields of California. In Mexico the wages are meager and even then, there is no work available. They migrate to adjacent California in search of work. Not that the wages are better. Even the corporate managers ill treat them. But work is available and they are happy at it. Nevertheless, it is a mistreatment offending the self-respect of the person. Galarza was a well-educated person with a research degree on hand. He left a decent job to devote all his time for the welfare of the unorganized agriculture laborers coming from Mexico and South America. When Lohia was in America Galarza was suffering from pulmonary defects. So Lohia went to San Jose to meet him. Galarza was proud to receive a socialist from India. Within minutes they became so close as if they were blood relations. Common field of work made the miracle. Galarza explained the conditions of workers there and the plans of agricultural corporations. Lohia understood the problems of migrant workers and expressed full sympathy and understanding for what Galarza was doing.

While addressing the workers in the summer school on the west coast of America Lohia realised that there are many misunderstandings about socialism among the working class. Many of them were told that it is something related to communism and so it is undesirable. Lohia had to take the trouble to impress on them that there is a world of difference between communism and socialism. That was the first step. He told many of us have pious ideas but make mistakes in implementation. For example, Truman wants to help Asia by investing there. But I am afraid it will not help us. On the other hands it becomes a burden as it flows into the hands of unscrupulous politicians. They take it for granted that they can depend on the help from others to develop their country for which they are mainly responsible. I do not say that we can defeat communism without your help. But whether you help us or not we will defeat both communism and capitalism. We do it for our own benefit, not to please you.

Lohia was basically skeptical of foreign assistance. He stated that Asia and Africa must be wary of American assistance and try to stand on their own feet. This is against the belief of Americans, including the Unions, who think that their help only could save those countries. He says he is not marketing his ideas, but he wants to leave his ideas on the table for whosoever wants to investigate it. For him socialism is an evolving theory. What all it wants is that the production should not result in accumulating profit to a few but made available to the entire society. Socialism can be molded in any way to accommodate that concept. It does not matter whether it is on the lines of Marx or some other philosopher.

He considers it the failure of Indian government for they have not done anything to unite the countries extending between Egypt and Indonesia. It was because the government was swinging between the two camps. They did not try to create a new force for peace. We must be able to foresee the developments in the international field. For example, within three years Africa is going to be another Indochina. Something must be done now to prevent it. There is no use of waiting until the crisis arrives and forces us to mediate between the two forces. He was equally critical of America in this respect.

STANFORD SPEECH:

Indians had to fight intensely during the last 35 years to get rid of the foreign rule. But now, even after independence, we are not able to enjoy the fruits of it. We succeeded only in getting another dictatorship in the place of the old one. Equality and freedom are still evading us. Politicians like me may give speeches and go to prisons. But most of the people think of romantic experiences, nature's beauties and rising and setting of sun. People do not take things seriously. The famous author of Yugoslavia asked me to describe the sunrise in India. But Pearl Buck Walsh asked me whether there is mixing of souls. When people are so far from political feelings, we must ask ourselves whether there is any purpose in pursuing politics. The biggest part of the world is non-political.

Till now history is confined to the sharing of power and property. If at all there is a revolution in Asia, I would be happy if it is disappointing to Asia and Africa. We had our revolution. We don't want more of it. But we want to be part of that age where there is equality and peace with cooperation. People in Asia are of the opinion that progress means enjoying the fruits of technology that is now available with Europe and America. But such a development in Asia cannot satisfy me. I would like to tell you the purpose of Indian revolution. Asia is now in the hands of landlords and industrialists.

This kind of rights to property must be annihilated if we want to establish equality and justice. Agriculture must be reformed. Government cannot do it. It is possible only if we encourage and inspire the rural people to contribute voluntary service. We have multipurpose projects – about twelve under construction in India. If completed they can irrigate 10% of the land in the country. Then what about the remaining 90%? We cannot go on making major projects. Even in the US they could not do more than five or six. We must search for alternatives. We must inspire people to offer their services for one or two hours each day for improving irrigation facilities, building roads and making compost pits etc., These works on soil without using steel and cement can give additional production up to 30 – 40%. By that we can avoid famines. Out of the people living on agriculture 30% are not landowners. If they give voluntary service its benefits landlords, not them.

There can be no incentive for them to contribute their labour voluntarily. It would be only possible if the land is distributed. I happened to visit Egypt two years back. There was a socialist in an incipient stage. They did not have a particular program. I told them about land distribution. When they met in the next annual meeting that was the only topic that was discussed. That is how the ideas spread. Many people consider socialism antagonistic to freedom. Asian socialists devised a system of decentralization and enabled districts and villages to participate in administration. It must be sanctified by adding into the constitution itself. Then it would be a government of the society, for the society and by the society. Unless we inspire the rural people like this, we will not be able to mobilise the indifferent people to action.

It is necessary to shift the responsibility of government to their heads. It would be for them to plan and execute. Let them make mistakes. They will learn over time. It gives life to democracy. I venture to suggest that such a thing has not happened anywhere in the world till now. Then technology would be a problem. It depends on heavy machinery and industry. It gives economic power by increasing production. We must understand that this technology prevailing in the US and Europe will not fit into Asian situation.

Mechanisation will replace workers and makes them unemployed. How to rehabilitate them? There was a suggestion that the machinery discarded by the US and Europe can be used in Asia. But those machinery running on old technology cannot withstand the competition from the machines with new technology.

The problem is not only with size but with technology as well. We must devise different kind of machinery, small and sophisticated. I call it "small unit machines". It does not demand huge capital. It supports decentralization. Technology must take a new look at the new requirement and new rural situation. Those who want a new world have to think of a new technology. There is lot of violence prevailing in the world. I am not talking of violence between the nations. I refer to violence prevailing within each country. There is friction between different classes and levels in the society. Each of them is under pressure. We cannot predict when the violence will erupt. Socialist Asia is inclined to bring revolution without using armaments. What we have inherited from Gandhi is the reason for it to some extent. Armed conflicts always ended with replacing one dictator with another one. Nobody is going to relinquish his power and property voluntarily, not even the government. That can be made possible with peaceful resistance and defiance of unjust laws. It leads to many conflicts, but without using force. Those who defy law may be imprisoned. Peaceful struggle is not inactivity. It is activity without violence. By suggesting this I am only reflecting the many things that happened in Asia.

About three years back armed bandits shot down seven ministers of the government of Burma. One of them was Aung Son. He was to Burma what Gandhi was to India. I met his widowed wife. She is a great woman. She hid the big tragedy within herself. There was a message in her sad smile. You might be subjected to great tragedy. You might have undergone great troubles in life. You may be angry. It would not be possible to dethrone the government using guns and bombs. You defy and resist it with peaceful resistance. That was the message. It would not disappoint you. The decentralised technology would not bring back the conditions prevailing in Europe or US. All the agreements that have divided the world into spheres of influence must be abrogated.

After becoming a member of the UNO, the socialist government would refuse to recognize any distinction between the victor and the vanquished. If you continue to uphold the distinction, there would be no end to wars. Every nation must have an opportunity to make a fresh start. The government of India should have signed the peace treaty with Japan despite objections from the US or the Soviets. Having failed to sign it, they could have signed another bilateral agreement with Japan.

To tell the truth, the UNO is based on international caste system. Five countries have veto power. They are Brahmin countries economically rich and militarily powerful, always prepared for war. I know it is not easy to change it. But it is necessary to point out the injustice of it.

Socialist Asia would strive to establish a world government. You are aware that some of the Indian Universities agreed to admit students from other countries. They agreed to be bound by certain conditions that are not legal, but ethical. Similarly, some of the cities and villages announced they are parts of world government. It is no doubt a weak situation. But it indicates the world envisaged by India.

It is necessary to try to bring the world under new government. But it would not be derived from the present governments. Peace is impossible without a world parliament. If the present governments agree to form a world government and draft a constitution for it, it would be the most fruitful; day for the world. It does not mean that I object to what you are doing to change the institution. I wish you succeed in it. But I believe there is another way also to bring in world government.

Perhaps this is my last speech in the US. I am thankful to all of you for your hospitality and peacefully hearing whatever said. I find America liberal and truthful. I don't believe they do not like socialism. I feel happy to tell you that my respect for American people is enhance by this visit. But at the same time my doubts on American civilization also have increased.

Finally, he said "If I were an American, I would like to bring all the liberals and world citizens on one platform and encourage defiance of unjust laws. I wish some of them go to prison thereby awakening the conscience against injustice. Thank you all."

SECOND VISIT

Lohia visited the US for the second time from 24 April to 29 June in 1964. The most important event during this trip was his address at the Arizona University in Tucson. Mrs. Ruth Stephen, who organized the event there was known to Lohia even earlier. The reporters present there did not allow him any rest before the main address. In the course of interview, he expressed himself against policies of the Indian government and in full support of Gandhian policies. It was not a surprise since he worked as Personal Assistant to Gandhi for some time and continued his close association with until Gandhi's death.

When asked about successor to Nehru he said it makes no difference as anybody who occupies the position would be the same. The only policy of Nehru's government was industrialisation and it made India lag behind in every other respect. Lohia agreed Nehru was their leader during the independence movement. He had the charisma then. But from 1947 onwards his image was getting obliterated gradually, particularly after October 1962 when China attacked India. He found fault with Nehru for not objecting to occupation of Tibet by China. He supported the integration of Goa with India but blamed Nehru for precipitating action just a few weeks before elections to impress the voters. It is the same with politicians all over the world, he said. But he could not digest the same game being played by a leader who claimed to be the successor to Mahatma Gandhi. That provoked Lohia to contest the election against Nehru himself.

Lohia stated that Kashmir is not the only problem between India and Pakistan. He thinks that merger of the two countries again is the only solution to it. He had his grievance even against Gandhi as he sacrificed the interests of India in order to prove success of his non-violence theory. But he also satisfied himself that the inconvenience caused to India was only ephemeral and the world got enriched by the spread of non-violence. It put the name of Gandhi on par with Jesus and Buddha.

Lohia made his open speech on May Day from the Ruth Stephen Poetry Center at the Arizona University in Tucson. He stated that communists and non-communists as well celebrate the day but the movement itself started surprisingly from the capitalist America. It started in the Hay Market of Chicago when the workers started agitation to restrict the working time to eight hours in a day. Then the agitators described themselves as the 'robbed class'. The day is now being celebrated as movement of the oppressed and exploited classes. Soviet Russia and Germany adopted it somewhere in 1885 and 1886, he said.

"When I describe current political situation in India you may find some disturbing similarities with American politics. Nobody believed me when I said that 270 million people in India live on four cents a day. Everybody said it is an impossibility. The Prime Minister himself said it is twenty cents, not four. His Planning Minister corrected him saying it is ten cents. I can prove false the data given by the Planning Minister. That is the background of poverty not only in India but entire Asia and Africa as well. Some effort is being made now towards economic growth by planning. If we take statistics only into consideration you will find that the rate of growth is the same in India and America – may be 3% annually. But when we convert it into real figures the difference is striking. The growth per head in America would be \$95 and \$1.5 in India. If India wants to reach the level of America it would take not less than a century, that too only if you are generous enough to stay where you are at present (without any growth during that

century.) The point is these differences will continue to exist until we bring in some radical change in the system itself.

“For the last few years I was clamoring that India should avoid luxury goods and ostentatious consumption, for some time at least. Socialism and social justice are very dear to my heart. I know it is an anathema with you. But when I spoke to the common men here, I realized there is not much of resistance to socialist ideas. I would like to suggest a maximum limit of \$200 per month as wages to any officer or entrepreneur. It is too low in your view, but not so for Asians and Africans. You may not be able to lead a luxurious life on that, but it would be enough to lead a comfortable life. I don’t suggest you live like that forever. It would be enough if you follow it for about 20 or 30 years to enable development in agriculture and industry. Until the means of production in those countries are modernized it is necessary to have limits on personal consumption. I don’t suggest distributing all the savings to the farmers, workers and the poor. It may amount to about \$5 billion a year. At any rate it would not be less than half of it. Invest it in agriculture and industry.

“In this connection I would like put forth my views on foreign aid. It must be estimated in view of the needs of the receiving country and also in view of the defense expenditure of the donor country. How the receiving country is using it also shall be taken into consideration. The fact is it is corrupting the governments there. It encourages them to think on the lines of capitalist investments. Your Universities and Foundations that offer the aid also encourage that line of thinking. For them development and modernization mean adopting the western standards of life. It results in creation of pockets of wealth within the web of poverty. It leads to temptation to corrupt and provokes illicit earnings. You may be shocked to see the levels of illegal earnings in Asia and Africa. But it has its context. If you look at the different levels of the inequal society, you will know why even the most sensitive and ethical person feels compelled to resorts to illegal gratification. The officer at the higher level is earning thousands of dollars per day. Compare it with the four cents the common man is earning. It is necessary to take cognizance of the difference in the levels of production and consumption in the society. Poverty will continue to spread, and the foreign aid will not be used effectively. Again, you give it in instalments in inadequate quantities. It gets sunk in the quagmire of corruption.

“Moreover, what America or Russia offer as aid is not even 5% of what they spend on their defense budgets. They see the threat of invasion in every movement of the other camp and go on piling up the weapons of mass destruction and feed the military industry. People like Gandhi were preaching that destructive weapons are unethical. But who cares for ethics? Countries do not run on ethical considerations. But after 1945 these weapons have become utterly useless. I am referring to the atomic weapons and ballistic missiles. There is no occasion to use them unless you are prepared to destroy the entire planet. In the coming decades you will be forced to discard these weapons and even that would be a problem. They will not be of any use either to prevent dictatorship or to attack dictatorship. We have to devise another practical way of fighting dictatorship. That is peaceful defiance of unjust authority, I believe.

“Let us look at the Afro-Asian situation. Both are suffering from the same problem. For example, Indian worker takes one hour to do the same work done by the American worker in three minutes. It is the same with an African worker too. The difference lies in the means of production available to them. It makes the difference in the cost of raw material and finished product too high. The benefits derived by the developed countries because of this difference is too much to accept. It is more than what they give as foreign aid to the developing countries.

“I have tried to put before you some of my thoughts. For me an American is the same as an Indian or a Chinese. I don't discriminate between individuals. I find the same hastiness in you as in others. If you please take care of it nobody would be happier than me. Thank you all....”

He completed his speech on that note.

During the question time he had to repeat many of the points clarified in the speech. Still there are some comments worth noting.

“I have no doubt that caste is the sole cause of backwardness in India. For the last thousand years We got differentiated as manual, vocational and mental workers. About 90% of Indians are backward, women included, even if some of them come from upper strata of society. Women were deprived of many opportunities that were available to men. You may be under the illusion that you are treating women equally. It is not true. You are keeping them aloof in many aspects. In fact, even the 10% of the people from the upper classes are not efficient. That is why the equal opportunities that are made available after revolutions in France, Russia and America are not relevant for India. 90% of our people need basic opportunities, not equal opportunities. The TVA in America is based on basic needs. Similar effort should have been made for backward people also. The stagnation in India is caused by caste system. Now it has reached bottom levels of ethics. It is not that easy to eradicate it as it has got corroded for over thousand years. But our ancient wisdom has one saying – the children of two races become one race. Even Huxley has not given a better definition.

Indians are accustomed to modern levels of consumption, but the country has not yet come to that level. Europe and US have taken more than two centuries to reach this stage – to make the machinery and equipment to help this level of production. Take for example the jet plane. They took a few decades to make it after inventing the plane. We cannot make it, but we use it, that is without undergoing the trouble of making it. Take another simple aspect of life. Women in India also use cosmetics. After all, they have that right as women. They are tempted seeing the western women to use the latest products. But they do not have the means to spend on such luxuries. Nevertheless, they must use cosmetics. That is the way of modern life. It is made possible by way of corruption. Thus, the west is responsible for excess consumption in poor countries.

By nature, I am against violence. I hate violence. I am waiting for the day of revolution devoid of violence. I expect India to go to the stage of instability from the present state of stagnation. They should resist injustice resort to direct action by disobedience. It may happen next week, or it may not happen even after a decade. I am convinced that a government according to my wishes will not be formed during my lifetime. If it happens it would be a miracle in politics. In India are expecting that all the opposition parties

join hands to form a government. I know it is not possible. I am getting and enjoying popular appreciation even without power. It is also unethical, a way of corruption! There are many people like me. They are happy without power.

MEETING WITH EINSTEIN

In his foreword to the book published after his visit to America, Lohia mentioned that he was particularly happy to meet three persons while in America. It is felt necessary to mention about it in order to make the report complete and comprehensive.

The first of the three was Albert Einstein.

It happened on 23 July 1951 in Princeton Institute. Lohia had to travel by a taxi from Philadelphia to meet Einstein. As a matter of habit Lohia involved the driver of the taxi into conversation and asked him for his opinion about Nehru. But the driver expressed his ignorance about Nehru. "Is he any ambassador in the US?" he asked. But when asked about Gandhi the driver readily reacted. "He was the leader who wanders with a rough cloth around his loins. Isn't it? He undertook fasts to drive away the British from India. Unfortunately, he was killed by his own people" he lamented. This gave immense satisfaction to Lohia. In fact, he talked to many of the common people in America with the same question. Most of them expressed ignorance of Nehru but were aware of Gandhi. Next Lohia asked the driver "Who is the best man in the US?"

"I don't know...But how to understand people now-a-days?"

"What about Einstein?"

"No doubt he is an intelligent man with the best brain...It depends on what we can expect from him...Most of the people take Eisenhower as the best man in America...For myself I do not have much regard for military people." he said.

As usual Harris Wofford was with Lohia in the taxi. They arrived in Princeton institute together. They were led to the room where Einstein was talking to Mr. String fellow Barr, the president of the Foundation for World Government. Lohia introduced himself to Einstein in German. After all, he studied in Germany and Einstein was a German by birth. They conversed in German for some time. Lohia found himself not so fluent in speaking German. In addition, there were two more persons with them in the room. It would not be courteous to talk in a language they could not follow. So, they shifted to English.

Lohia stated that his purpose in meeting Einstein was to understand himself in the light of knowledge and wisdom shed by Einstein. He wanted to analyse his own political convictions in that light and improve himself. In reply to a question from Einstein Lohia stated that all politicians are liars. But Einstein corrected him by saying all politicians are criminals. Both laughed together heartily. It relaxed the tense situation and the subsequent discussions went in a cordial atmosphere. Einstein wanted to know the opinion of Lohia on some of the German politicians. Lohia cautioned him that his opinions on such subjects would be told only in a rough language which may be offending him. They just laughed and left it there. It brought them closer still.

Referring to India and China Einstein asked, "Instead of blaming them for wrong faith why not we consider it their ignorance?" Lohia said "I am not particular as to what it is. They are under the spell of that dogma for such a long time that they have no intention of coming out of it."

Lohia realized that the conversation was going off the track for him. He wants to learn something from Einstein about the nature of knowledge and not waste his time discussing politics or economics. So, he made the point as he wanted:

"Scientific knowledge is respected all over the world as they have devised proper means to test their knowledge and prove it. But there is no such facility in politics and social sciences. All over the centuries people are accustomed to think in terms of contradictions like spiritualism & materialism, individual & community, rule of law & war and like that...Why was it that a proper means could not be devised to acquire real knowledge in social sciences as happens in sciences."

It must be noted that it is the question that was agitating the students of humanities since the earlier days. (In fact, it is the question that is addressed by the Nobel economist Abhijeet Banerjee.) It made Einstein think for a while. Lohia was apprehensive that he could not explain himself clearly enough to derive an answer from the great scientist. But Einstein gave a relevant answer. He said that politics is the place where sincere people had to confront with powerful persons. Sincere people think properly and talk smooth. But they are not powerful enough to become effective. They are not aware of the tricks to get hold on power. Until the good people become powerful and grasp power it would not be possible to clean politics. It was the idea of Einstein that sincere people must enter politics and come to power to serve people. Lohia realized that in his experience honest people are reluctant to grab power even when it is offered. As a result, corrupt people are taking those places. It made Lohia realize his mistake. But he was not fully satisfied as it was not a direct answer to the question. Why is it not possible to acquire predictive knowledge in humanities where quantification and experimentation is not possible?

The conversation shifted to civilisations. It revealed a radical difference of opinion between the two persons. While talking of America, Einstein stated that America would be able over time to catch up with the civilization of Europe. It implies that the civilization of Europe is more advanced than that of America. Most of the Europeans and those who are settled in the US from Europe are of the same opinion. But Lohia was not of that opinion. Wofford and Barr who were listening it all did not react as they were not supposed to participate in the discussion between two learned persons. But Lohia could not contain himself. Whatever ideas he held, he held strongly and whole heartedly. He said he did not believe that the aged people, but for some exceptions, could lead to better culture. That is why, he said, he keeps quiet with powerful." I am not the one among those who think that Europe is more cultured than America. Europe feels jealous of every person in the US. America has more than what Europe wants" he said.

Einstein did not expect such a direct confrontation with his idea and it showed on his face. Lohia immediately realized that he hurt the great man and tried to explain himself more clearly. "History is a cruel running race. People of different countries run the race. It is possible that the country that was in the lead at some stage may fall back at a later stage due to some factors. They are overtaken by some other country. They try to console themselves stating that the other was able to overtake them because

of physical power and not culture. That is, for example, what Indians think of Europeans. Europeans are similarly trying to explain the advanced stage of America. I am concerned about it because the Indian culture is older than both. They could be more civilized than them and could have established better standards of life.”

Einstein was impressed by his argument and said that he understands his independent thinking. Einstein suggested that Lohia explain the situation in India and its socialist activities. When told about the abolition of Zamindaries and distribution of land he was happy. But regarding the compensation paid Lohia felt it should have been lower than what was paid. Einstein agreed but said “Why Nehru could not do it?” He was amused at the reply from Lohia. He said “Some people are good authors but cipher in action. With a good jockey Nehru makes a good racehorse. But there is no jockey now” he said.

“I used to tell Indians that there are three beacons of hope for the world – Bernard Shaw, Mahatma Gandhi and Albert Einstein. This age is now faced with two options – one is Gandhism and the other is the atomic power. Gandhi is no more here. The atomic power is playing havoc. Is there no way of escaping this menace? How to guide the free thinking to open a new way to save the mankind from this cruel imprisonment? There was a long discussion on this. They realized they spent more than two hours together. Both had other engagements. Einstein complimented that it was his pleasure to meet a man like Lohia. But he leaves a burden of loneliness after leaving. While taking leave of Einstein Lohia requested for another opportunity to meet him before leaving America for which Einstein readily agreed. But it did not materialize due to engagements of Lohia. As a matter of respect Einstein came out with Lohia and saw him off in his car.

WALTER RUTHER

The other person of significance that met Lohia was Walter Ruther, the trade union leader of autoworkers. Lohia was also impressed by his scholastic way of speaking. There would be no ambiguity in his speaking. Many Americans speak like children in a hurry without giving any gap between words as if they are afraid of interference from somebody. Equal number of Americans speak very briefly, confined to the point, no unnecessary words. Both these types of people suffer a complex – that the British speak their language better. Mr. Barr also speaks like Ruther. But it is not a surprise as he is the head of a university. Ruther is from barber background. His words are clear and perfumed. In India also children of vocational people – like barbers and washer men – can speak well. But they confine themselves to their own problems and do not talk of national problems and politics.

“Walter Ruther is an intellectual. You will immediately understand his sincerity and honesty. He has a pure heart and mind. He told me earlier about the plans of annual wages, increments and effects of taxes. With his passionate analysis of statistics, he could easily become someday an enlightened economist or entrepreneur. When I met him in his house, I told him he is a socialist. He did not deny it. He felt a bit shy. But the plans he had in his mind prove that no socialist could be better than him. Earlier he was inclined towards communism and worked in Soviet Russia for some time. After coming back American communists suspected him of deviating from communism and resorted to targeting him for violence. A bullet shot injured his hand. Ruth can think high. With his practical plans he proved how to achieve uniform

development throughout the world. He asserted that there is no future for workers and socialists in America. He predicted Republicans would become more conservative attracting conservatives in the Democratic party. On the other hand, Democrats would become more liberal and some from Republican party will join them. It will happen before the next presidential election, he asserted. I felt he is talking as if he is thinking of contesting the next election. But Ruth was wrong when he said that he is waiting for rational. In politics nobody can afford to behave rationally. Politicians stick to a dogma and habit. Beliefs of generations, traditional way of upbringing by parents, friendships and social relations influence their way of thinking. One of the results is to be faithful to a party. When that party goes against his convictions, he does not think of leaving the party. He tries to console himself with a fond expectation that it is a temporary development in the party and it will certainly return to the original line at the earliest. If Ruth is thinking on those lines, leave alone becoming the president, he cannot even lead the workers successfully. By resorting to this kind of wrong analysis, both the communists and conservatives bring in stagnation and call it stability. Their faiths do not allow them to move away from the stable condition. It is a warning to liberals and socialists to be wary of such situation. It is not enough if they are good, they must be wise too. That was the problem I wanted to get clarified with Einstein – whether there is any way of reaching an objective commitment as in sciences. In countries like India good and foolish people alike appear bad.

On August 3, Lohia visited the offices of the trade union of Ruth in Detroit. At that time the Ruth brothers were involved in it as active members. They were seriously engaged in preparing the workers like soldiers to fight the corporate forces and training for picketing. There have been conflicts with communists as well. There were attacks on Ruth brothers. In one of such onslaughts the hand of Walter was crushed and his brother Victor lost an eye. At times they do not know whether the attacks are coming from leftists or rightists. Both are enemies of workers in America. But the self-confidence exhibited by them captivates anybody. He was leading one of the biggest trade unions with 12,50,000 members most efficiently. Its influence can be seen even in politics of the country. He demands corporate circle to maintain accounts transparently showing the costs and profits realistically. During the last five years there was no instance when they resorted to strike. Nevertheless, they could get wages and facilities impressively improved. Ruth stated that he wants to get wages for workers throughout the year whether there is work or not. Because of the stability based on the five-year agreement the workers were able to contribute to the union and make it strong.

Lohia wanted to know whether there is any possibility of forming a political party of workers in the near future and whether the corporates can be brought under social control. He also wanted to know if he expects the economy of America remain the same strong in the future. Ruth gave credible answers to these queries from Lohia. They were in discussions for more than two hours continuously. Ruth had an appointment with the head of General Motors and had to leave. He told Lohia to come again to his house in the evening even if it is late.

Being engaged in running one of the biggest trade unions, Ruth was also conscious of the other problems of the world. He is aware of the strong movement for disarmament. If it succeeds it would have a grave effect on American economy as defense industry is an important part. He is also aware that there is no

possibility of any unified organization of workers or agriculturists. As he worked for some time in Russia his stand against communism carries some credibility.

Before going to the house of Ruth in the evening Lohia was addressing the students from India at Ann Arbor. He told them to meet persons like Ruth and get involved with manual work. "The technology that you get here may not be of relevance in India. But your manual skills would be of use always" he said.

It was late in the night by the time he goes to the residence of Ruth. There were some of the local persons also with him. He was hesitating whether it would be proper for him to bring all these uninvited persons with him. He was a magnet to attract people around him. When they reached the house of Ruth his wife opened the door and all the people entered the house. They were all welcome as if they were expected.

By that time the United Automobile Workers finalized a proposal to the United Nations. It states that the US shall contribute \$13 billion annually to the UNO for a hundred years when it accumulates to \$13 lakh crores. This fund shall be utilised by the UNO only for economic and social projects. Other countries also shall contribute for it. But the contribution of the US is not linked with it in any way. The UNO shall organise an international conference on discrimination and establish an international police force. They felt that the UNO has become less effective in the absence of a police force under its control.

By the time these proposals were made by the Union there were about 30 lakhs of unemployed people in the US. In addition, there were about 20 lakhs depending on part time jobs. With an investment of \$13 billion every year on schemes of peace in the world they expect to create 30 lakh jobs. Lohia appreciated linking of American jobs with their (foreign) aid to the UNO. It would be a political step to stop wars. Lohia suggested to have an international journal to spread the idea of world citizenship. Ruth agreed to it. In course of discussions Lohia said "I don't mind whether you consider yourself a socialist or not. For me you are a socialist." While leaving the house after midnight they found Ruth cleaning the utensils.

SAM BERGER was the third person to meet Lohia as an individual, not representing any institution. He was basically a trade unionist. At that time, he was the representative of the US president in Greece. It is significant as it was the first and only occasion when a trade union leader was appointed to a diplomatic assignment at a high level in foreign affairs of a government. It was only Truman that could think of such a thing. He is better than many other presidents of the US – than even the FDR, thinks Lohia. Berger managed his job efficiently. The facts and statistics given by him indicated that communists came very near to grab power in Greece by the time he went there. But then they have destroyed about 150 union leaders, tribals and progressive people. By that Berger could not find anybody worth to talk to and conduct negotiations. It was entirely to his credit that he managed to identify and organize new union leaders and democrats. That was an achievement while the other communist countries were filling the ministries with people from higher and middle classes. Berger achieved great success in Greece.

But what really impressed Lohia was a question raised by Berger in course of conversation. Till then it was the prerogative of Lohia to ask questions and Berger to answer. But the question revealed the depth of the man. It revealed the curiosity of the man to understand what the world really needs. The question was - How is it possible for political leaders to secure the freedom of ideas that is not possible even in

Europe or the US? The question indirectly states that there is no freedom of thought even in the so-called advanced countries. But it is essential for progress.

During his long visit nobody posed such a basic question to Lohia. In fact, it needs some depth and sincerity to understand that it is a basic question. In advanced countries politics belong to some institution or organization that belong to different groups or camps of people. But in India it still moves around individuals. There are leaders, unionists and politicians in countries like America. Every one of them derives some sustenance from the organization to which they get attached. Earlier Lohia explained the Indian situation to Berger showing the caste system, low levels of life and isolation of higher classes. But in the presence of Berger Lohia was losing his confidence in future. World looks the same from Delhi or Washington. Still he tried sincerely to find the solution to the problem raised by Berger.

Caste system in India established new standards to the values. At times they stand as obstacles to the benefits of the class. If the politician was selfless and sacrificed something for the benefit of the community, his caste will stand behind him to some extent. The supporting caste may or may not support the ideas of the person. This kind of outlook is now getting obliterated gradually. This is clear in the case of communist leadership. Earlier the leadership was exclusively in the hands of working class and lower middle class. But now it has gone to the hands of higher middle class or higher strata of the society. At that time, I did not realise that politicians like sportsmen select their team to ensure victory and get a prominent place. Added to that because of entry of trading or ruling classes a kind of pseudo revolution has taken place. The craze for middle class luxuries like a decent house or a car is considered necessary for a civilized life. It has its influence on political situation. The individual opinion and outlook assert itself. Trade union leaders and politicians start as followers of a party or association. Later they may become boss of the same institution. In order to secure their already low standard of life they do not hesitate to follow the other ideas alien to them to fall in line with the organization to which they are affiliated. If at all there is any opposition to the ideas it would be there only within the organization. People join an organisation or institution because of their identity of ideas. The institution would be successful only if the individual opinions are suppressed and common ideas are made acceptable. People like Sam Berger, who are concerned with the future of the world, would get worried on such development.

This problem is not confined to human rights or civil liberties. We are now satisfied by drawing a line between individual rights and the government. That saves individual rights and privacy from institutional aggression. Rights of governments are regulated. Similarly, some aspects of individual conduct also are controlled. Nobody is beyond the political system. Individual may be having right to join any other institution or organization. In any organization the rights are necessarily regulated and controlled. But what about the power of voluntary organisations? The relationship between the voluntary organisation and its members is not studied from the standpoint of human rights. That is how the freedom of individual ideas is getting undermined even in democracies. It is easy to criticize the government. But who will question the organisation voluntarily chosen by yourself? Joining other institution is not a solution as every organization has its own rules and regulations. The voluntary unity of the United States is in no way different from the compulsory unity of the Soviet Union. That is why we are not able to find a safe haven for free thought anywhere. That is the enigma of freedom of thought and expression.