

Essay on Nationalism

"Nationalism is a sacred passion, a great moral and ethical belief, a social expression on a national plane, immense love for the country. It is an infrangible notion to treat loyalty to one's nation superior to all other loyalties".

A true nationalist is one who regards his country as the cause of his existence and ready to abandon his own interests for its welfare. An avowed nationalist never minds sacrificing everything including his life for the cause of the nation. People adore and glorify him as an incarnation of super-being. Poets compose verses in honor of his deeds and everyone prays for his immortality. After death he is treated as an eternal foundation of inspiration, an ideal to be followed by all, a beacon light that shows the right path even after his departure.

Nationalism can't be treated as a passive thing or an inconspicuous way of leading life. It is such an active and self-motivated, inner emotion that urges him to do and dare anything for the cause of the nation. They die so that others may live. There are many instances even in the history of our freedom struggle where for the cause of motherland, many suffered unimaginable hardships and many sacrificed their lives for the cause of the nation. Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Subhash Chandra Bose, Bipin Chandra Pal, Chandra Shekhar, Mahatma Gandhi and so many, who had never cared for their own comfort and they lived for the cause of the Motherland and die, were the true nationalists.

Since time immemorial, in all the histories of civilization, nationalism has remained and regarded as a subject of eloquent praise on the lips of everybody. The love and attachment to one's motherland

are not unnatural, its root lies in the affection he receives since he is born, plays nurtures in that land. Everyone has the feeling of nationalism, love for his country. An unknown poet has beautifully coded the following lines, that shows the feeling of immense love for the motherland: "O for a glimpse of my Motherland so fair! O for a breath of its sweet-scented air! There let me live and oh, there let me die! There is sweet silence my dead body shall lie".

Evils of Nationalism:

Nothing is wrong in loving one's country, nothing is wrong in having loyalty to one's country, but if the love and loyalty become so strong, that it resulted in hatred for all other countrymen, and other nations it becomes evil. Blind nationalism dwarfs the mind just as a Chinese woman's unnatural shoes compress and distort her feet. Nationalism, when outruns its reasonable limits, becomes organized hypocrisy, creates hatred for other nations. Extreme nationalism glorifies war. Nationalism when diverted from the path of reason and the common good, quite often loses its sacred instincts and degenerates into an aggressive attitude of nationalism. A nationalist without high moral and ethical considerations adores his country blindly and treats all other people of the earth as downright barbarians, deserving for his countrymen no better treatment. Cecil Rhodes wrote in his will: "I contend that the British race is the finest which history has yet produced." Victor Hugo said: "O France, it is the need of the universe that thou shouldst live. I repeat it France is necessary for the human race". It never felt by these men that other races and people are also created by the same Almighty and not less than their countrymen.

Many European nations carried out the mission of their dominance and tried to implant the same by force over other countries. Nationalism, if mixed with unworthy motives, and self-centered greed for power and

imperialistic motives becomes the worst cause to destroy and destruct the existence of civilization in the world. The foolishness of an irrational nationalism can well be seen in the writings of Rupert Brooke who wrote that when he died he wished to go to an English Heaven.

Owing to such parochial feelings, some of the eminent philanthropists and enlightened thinkers of the present time have advocated the idea of cosmopolitanism that means the whole world is the nation of everyone. The theory of cosmopolitanism discards the boundaries of countries and everyone is a citizen of the world. It says that in the present age of globalization, scientific inventions, space research has brought the world closer wonderfully, so it shall be a folly to talk of nationalism. The ideals of nationalism are nothing but an orthodoxical narrow thinking concept that has no relevance in this world of scientific and technological advancement. If we honestly look the things from the present perspective, lacs of Indians are living well in various countries throughout the world, they have their allegiance with the respective country and are emotionally attached to India, their motherland. Lacs of foreign nationals are visiting India, some settle here, many foreign companies and their employees are earning from our country, our companies have their employees and offices settled in foreign countries, the boundaries among the nations have just remained the boundaries for the sake of getting passport and visas. In such a situation, talking about nationalism looks redundant. Now people have started thinking of good for all human race, for all the civilization of the earth. The idea of cosmopolitanism is, slowly and gradually started, getting recognition and acceptance nowadays.

Conclusion:

Despite various evils of nationalism, or extreme nationalism, it is a

natural feeling acquired not by any technical means, but by birth and is a virtue by itself. As loving one's mother, father, can't be bad, likewise loving one's country is also not bad, but hatred of other nations is indeed the worst form of nationalism.

Nationalism, if spiritualized with higher moral and ethical values, and if in apposition to the motto of Abraham Lincoln, 'With malice towards none, with charity for all', becomes one of the most sacred emotions, worthy of the utmost praise. The nationalism of Hitler and Mussolini is the worst shape of nationalism, we need nationalism with love for our country as well as love for all who live and let live with peace, prosperity, and affection towards all.