

Since the stage- in of Occupy Central movement, in Hong Kong by students, academics and some legislators, our newspapers are replete with messages and slogans that are contradictory and therefore pose a dilemma to the people of Hong Kong.

Articles and slogans such as 1) Now get real 2) Listen to the people of Hong Kong 3) Seeds of discord. 4) Are Hong Kong people ready for democracy? 5) We are asking Beijing to keep its promise on Democracy. 6) Take step back, says mainland Scholars. 7) Time to call end to disruption, etc are expressive but controversial, allusive and the cause of confusion and antagonistic divide in our society.

The objectives of the ‘Occupy Central’ movement seems to be capricious and changing gears from the demand of Universal suffrage to the resignation of the Chief Executive to Beijing bashing, to Blame Police, blame anti protestors. But to what consequence or repercussions! Is this movement becoming a mob or is this an egotistical venture of student power or an outlandish path to publicity by egocentric and self proclaimed leaders soaked in vanity.

In order to garner an immediate solution to the current impasse and to ascertain our long term goals in the best interest of Hong Kong and its future we should understand democracy, the principles of Non–Violence and our patriotic or realistic relationship with China, with an incisive intellect and open mind.

Here are the pros and cons for your deliberations:

Nearly all countries have come under some sort of democratic structure mainly the Liberal Democracy with universal suffrage as an intrinsic ingredient as adopted by countries like USA, United Kingdom, France, Canada, Germany and its likes. So here we have a case of “for the people” “of the people” and “by all the people.”

Then we have Socialist Democracy that exists in Soviet Union, China, Vietnam and some parts of East Europe. Here the political and economic system is imposed on society by party officials, who have in the past been the cause of much psycho economic exploitation. So here is the scenario of “for the people, of the people and “by some people” and in some cases in both types of democracies at the “cost of the people”.

Both these democracies come under the umbrella of “Political Democracy” because both these systems are based on economic and political centralization.

Unfortunately both the models are vulnerable to severe shortcomings and corruption for the fact that election of a candidate could also depend upon the factors enumerated below:

1) Party affiliation 2) Political patronage 3) Election expenditure 4) Antisocial practices 5) Vote rigging 6) Bribery) 7) Buying votes 8) Intimidation and brute force.

In case of liberal Democracies the so called “Capitalists” manipulate the mass media such as

radio, television and newspapers while in socialist democracies the bureaucrats lead the country to construction or destruction.

In both forms of Democracies there is very little room and hope for economic liberation of people. In all forms of Political democracy voting rights have been granted to all or their representatives but in reality have deprived the people of their rights of Economic equality.

Consequently there is economic disparity between the rich and poor, immense inequality in people's purchasing power, unemployment, food shortages, poverty, insecurity and exploitation in Society.

In India of the recent past Democracy has proved to be a unique system of exploitation as we observe most dishearteningly. Therefore the myth or the farce of democracy is that in the long term only a handful of people pull the strings from behind the scene.

Our stark question should be "Does universal suffrage guarantee economic equality or is it the ultimate criterion of our freedom"?

This situation of inequality is a recurring symptom of mostly all democracies extant as the very nature of Democracy is that it favors the capitalists and thereby exposes the administration to corrupt forces, rampant greed and selfishness.

Democracy has been seen to utterly fail where people are illiterate, backward and immoral and their leaders saturated in corrupt activities.

In conclusion there are few ways open for democracy to function effectively:

- 1) The prerequisite for success of democracy are morality, education and socio- economic – political consciousness.
- 2) Firm, fair, efficient and effective rule of the law and its timely enforcement.
- 3) The right to suffrage should be vested in the hands of educated, politically conscious and those of high moral fiber.
- 4) Implementation of timely reforms to placate the innocent, the poor and the needy with fair distribution of resources in fulfillment of basic needs to be met of every individual.
- 5) To opt for Economic Democracy that alludes to Political centralization and economic decentralization.

This is to say that political power should be vested with academic's that are moralists and those who spiritually sensitized, whereas economic power to be vested in the hands of local people who have socio-economic –political consciousness.

Economic decentralization means production for consumption and not profit. This of course is a bitter pill for fellow capitalists and will need a quantum transformation in the psyche when the allure of capitalism begins to evaporate at the conscientious sight of pain and suffering of blatant poverty and its cries.

### **Non –Violence:**

Non violence means non-injury in thought, word and action. The theory and principles were enunciated in the political arena most successfully by Mahatma Gandhi by way of Passive resistance movement and civil disobedience. The milieu and the background were quite different from those we are currently facing.

Whatever be the reason of taking to streets to demand something that the students see as righteous should be done in the spirit of non- violence. Occupy Central is within the gamut of violence for the very reason that such mass gatherings of blocking traffic and entrances, hostile behavior towards the police are infringement of the law, violation of freedom and rights of others. This minority exposition of defiance and perhaps self glory is set against the very principle of one vote for each person.

Secondly it is polarizing the society, and it is affecting the livelihood of people -parents who need money to send their children to school and pay the bills besides the losses incurred at a macroscopic level.

The students should be convinced to return to their obligatory duties and take this matter up through other means such as the media open to all of us. They should be at all times, be open to discussing and to elicit dialogues with other members of our society in dignity, care and genuine concern to gain local sympathy. Occupy central should be neutralized as Occupy neutral which means to take the protest to a neutral zone for example in a park to voice their opinions so as to make the public familiar with their noble or patriotic thoughts.

### **Our relationship with China**

It does not take much to understand the principles and obligations of one country and two systems. The destiny of Hong Kong is inherently linked with China as an integral part of China. If we firmly believe that we are one country then it is obligatory for all citizens to acquire benefits or concessions from the Government by mutual consent and not by any display of vandalism or threat.

If the Chinese Government is not acceding to our demands then perhaps there are other considerations or apprehensions that do not permit HK people to have free flow of Universal suffrage due to the risk of repercussions from other provinces in conflict which the Government could face.

As part of one country all citizens should be tolerant of these aspects and try to cooperate with the Government in seeking or accept a compromise. To show and live with insular concern for Hong Kong only and not share the concerns of China is not a congenial or a patriotic way to live under the current regime. Perhaps this is what Beijing expects of all Hong Kong residents and that is to look at both sides of the coin to prove mutual good will.

One should understand that China functions on a basis of social democracy and we are demanding liberal democracy. At the current time a compromise would be most befitting to accept the Sandwiched democracy that is offered to us and be patient with Beijing to become more receptive to our feelings in time to come.

Over the years of China liberalization, we have seen the tentacles of communism gradually exfoliated of its suppressive methods and the new leadership is eager to open up sectors to meet the necessities of the people and fulfill its sovereign vision of eradicating corruption. To try and enforce or threaten Beijing to adopt western model of democracy at this time would be an indirect threat to its own party and a grant of self rule for Hong Kong. Therefore our current demand can be chalked out be a mere exercise in futility and illusory.

Should we not then let it fall into our lap when the time is right from both sides as a natural evolution of growth in awareness?

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