



Security: The key to change

The Hostage Crisis - Its lessons for the New Millennium

At the end of the day, we all act from a perceived lack of security or an absence of security which motivates us to do certain things. Look at your own life.

I do believe the occurrence and, more precisely, the timing of the Hostage crisis was not an arbitrary freak mis-chance. There was a mighty message cloaked in this bizarre incident (of an Indian Airlines flight taking off from Nepal, hijacked by 5 terrorists) for the entire world. The following extract from a talk given to the teachers of Bluebells school, discusses:

- a) the underlying message for humanity,
- b) the inner preparation required to step into the future.

Why does one act out of personal interest?

The terrorist problem is a major lesson for our country and we are once again face to face with a most humiliating and thought provoking decision of giving in to the demands of the terrorists. How does one know what to do? If one looks at it from the point of view of oneself, then the personal interest, no doubt, overrides the national interest. All of us, some being mothers, others having families, can understand the fact that there is attachment. But on the other hand, the government's decision and the way the things have been done in this case, I think they speak a lot for the nation as a whole today - where we are as a nation. To blame one person or the other may not be such a wise idea. **It is a very clear indictment on the state of nationhood in India today where we are still somewhere stuck between our own self-interest as a people and going beyond it to really fulfil our *dharma* and our destiny as a great nation in the future.** So, these are things that do call for a

certain attitude. But you see what is far more important to analyse today is not only what happened - we all know what has happened because we have all read the newspapers - but to understand why it has happened, why is it so, because the hostages were a representative of the Indian people. They were all from all walks of life. They were educated, and their families too. And yet this is what the result of a five day impasse was. Why is it that this happened here? This may not have happened in some other country or may have happened - I don't know, but why is it that this weak submission was the result of the hostage crisis? This is an important question, because it points to a certain attitude prevalent in the nation. What attitude is that? We will come back to that later.

At the end of the day, we all act from a perceived lack of security or an absence of security which motivates us to do certain things. Look at your own life. Look at the way you respond to your own profession, your own job as a teacher. Where your security as a teacher, where your security as a person is threatened, there your



attitudes and the way you respond to situations dramatically alter, than if you were in a state where you knew for certain that your security was not under threat, was not being challenged. Now, especially in a case where you have the hostage crisis as it was just going on, what was the most important motivating element that provoked this decision? It was the security element - for the nation, for the government their own security, for the hostages, the people on the aircraft their physical security, for their families the security of their livelihood, of the continuation of somebody to take care of them, their emotional security. They didn't know what was going to happen to their relatives in the plane. So, the issue was security.

You say that personal security has overridden national security. Go back - why has this happened? **Tomorrow if you were on an aircraft or you were the relatives of those people, let me tell you, nine out of ten of you would do exactly the same. Now, why is that?** That is the question that we have to ask ourselves. Because if we have to develop the power of attitude we have to know why we would do this. We would do exactly the same. Why?

Audience Response: Attachment.

No, everybody has attachments. Go deeper, there is another answer. I am going to push you to where you are close to something.

Audience Response: Bothered about our own security.

What is the key to change?

The question here is... we are back to the same element of security. Now this is the key. This is the key for change. Let me go right to the heart of my topic now. **The key to change is security.** Most people, when you think about why they act in a particular way... suppose all the relatives, the Indian government, everyone... were given an assurance by a divine power or a divine person who they all had faith in, "Listen, nothing is going to happen to your relatives. They

are not going to die and they are going to get out of this problem, this crisis, without getting hurt. But you must take the stand, you must be brave and you must refuse to yield and say, no, we are not going to give in to blackmail." Suppose someone had given them this assurance and suppose it was you - You were given this assurance and you had complete faith in His word because you knew that if he says so it will come true. You had that faith. Now, how would you react after knowing that nothing was going to happen, that they were not going to die and that the terrorists were going to give up if the nation, the government put up a strong fight. Your entire response, your whole attitude towards the same incident would change. By changing what? Only one element. A complete sense of security that your relatives, the hostages were going to be safe.

Now we come back to Swami Vivekanand and all these exceptional people, and also on the power of attitude. What is the most important quality to develop in yourself so that you can gain the power of attitude? What is that one most important quality that can assure you that?

Audience Response: Self-discipline, self-control. Confidence, self-confidence. Determination.

What is that quality which can guarantee you the power to withstand, the power to overcome?

Audience Response: Fearlessness, economic and emotional independence, not bothered about yourself, sacrifice.

What helps you not to get bothered about yourself and helps you to sacrifice yourself? This is the question.

Audience Response: More love for people than yourselves.

What helps you to get more love for people and less love for yourselves?

Audience Response: Detachment.

What helps you to become detached? You are very close to it. Now let's get back to the two questions again.



1. What helps you to become detached and to overcome your personal self-interest?

2. What helps you to overcome fear and become fearless?

Audience response: Non-selfish attitude.

What helps you to become Non-selfish?

Audience Response: Sense of security.

What is it that gives you the sense of security?

Audience Response: Belief in yourself.

How does that sense of security that nothing will happen or only the best will happen come?

Audience Response: Strong faith, will power, positive attitude.

We are close to it. What helps you to gain this faith?

Audience Response: Karma, your values and principles.

How do you inculcate such values and principles? Environment, upbringing? No. If you like, I will throw some light on the question I have asked you.

Audience Response: After all our needs are met then we can look beyond to other people's needs.

(Big protest of 'No' from the group and more discussion.)

Audience Response: More of national interest - big group of sacrificers during freedom struggle.

All of you are right, but we still haven't come to the core of the issue. What, for example, helps to develop national interest? Today India is on the brink. We are about to enter the new millennium. You see, you are all teachers in the education system, see what a pathetic state our education is in, what the attitudes of our teachers are, what the attitudes of the administrators are, what the attitudes of society are to learning and education. What is it that can help to develop? Because once you know the answer you can begin to develop it right now. It is not something that is past and only happened in the Vedic ages and happened during the independence and cannot happen now. But that knowledge has

been lost. **What is it that can help to develop security, true security? that can help to develop fearlessness? (because fearlessness is dependent on a sense of true security), that can help to develop a selfless self-giving or a larger vision?** that can help to develop determination, commitment, strong will power? - all those things that each person here has said, what is it that can help to develop that?

Audience Response: Circumstances, environment. We are the greatest civilisation. Self-reflection to know the inner strength of ourselves. Controlling your ego. Meditation. Character. Belief in our value system.

How can one gain security?

All of you are right. The answer that I am going to give you is not my own. It is the answer that is given from The Mother's writings. It is the answer to this question that I wanted to start my talk with, because unless you know this, unless you understand this completely there's no point talking about what is attitude, how to develop power of attitude. Yes, you must have commitment, yes, you must have determination, large vision - and you will, no doubt, all feel self-satisfied with all the points on how to develop the right attitude, write your points and go home. But something to the core, something which is not run of the mill, which is not something you come across every day, otherwise you would all have been able to tell me by now. So don't worry, I am in the same boat as you. I too have learnt it.

What is this one thing? **According to Sri Aurobindo and The Mother, unless humanity and all of us actively realise that true security can only be gained when you have complete and absolute faith,** and that complete and absolute faith can only be gained if and when you have the living realisation, living communion with the divine, because true security can only be given by that higher divine source, power,



knowledge, omnipotence and protection... The Mother has said: **“Whatever you attempt, whatever you seek, even Love, even Perfection; it needs security. Nothing can be achieved with the feeling that all opposing forces can come and sweep everything away. We must find the point where nothing can be touched or destroyed or halted. Therefore, it is security, the very essence of security.”** All the global trends that result in ‘peace movements’ of one kind or another, are nothing but this: they are expressions of the quest for security. When nations, when people, when individuals, when the country realises once again that the basis of its security is not only on its material progress or prosperity, not on its intellectual genius but on its deep and abiding knowledge and experience of the divine. Only then true progress and true growth take place. That was the vision that was presented and that has been the ideal of India through the centuries. A lot of you were very close, you had touched something. But what is it that was behind India, what is the true genius of India, what is it that made India great and every Indian proud to be a citizen of this country, made India the greatest civilisation and the cradle of all civilisations in the world, makes us proud even today to be children and daughters of the great rishis? There is only one cause for this, and that is that, in India, the outstanding people we spoke of, they had true security. And that is why they could give up their life. **That is why they had no fear because you cannot have fear when you know that a higher divine destiny, a higher divine guidance, a higher divine power is protecting you.** That is how they could go into the storm, that is how we had Shivaji Maharaj, that is how we had all the great heroes of Indian history, Rani of Jhansi. If you notice their lives and if you see, especially the people I have mentioned, Sri Aurobindo, Swami Vivekanand, Sri Ramakrishna, all these people - some of them were also great patriots. How is it that they were able to take that daring step to

walk into fire, so to speak? How were they able to set other people, the whole country aflame with the ideals of patriotism, the ideals of love for the country, the ideals of spirituality? It was only for one reason - they based themselves on a supreme security. And that security, according to The Mother, is the Divine and when the nations, when people realise that, when the government realises that, when the political machinery of this country, which for all ancient times was governed by this principle - **when this knowledge comes back again into the living body of India, not just into an intellectual book, not just written in the Gita or written in the Vedas, or written in the Upanishads, but something that becomes part of the national life of India, then you will see a big change.** And that is what gives the power of attitude. That is what made these three people we mentioned, Swami Vivekanand, Sri Aurobindo, Rabindranath Tagore, and others, great, exceptional, outstanding. They could face anything because they knew that god was standing behind them and god was within them and they stood for the right. They knew they were protected against anything. They had the security. Nothing else can give us security. As long as we look for crutches outside ourselves, you will see the same fate - fear, insecurity, tension, restlessness, impatience, tiredness, cynicism, pessimism - all the ills that modern society today is afflicted with, all the problems that you and I are facing in our work life. Life is difficult - that there is no doubt about. Let us not imagine that we are on a bed of roses. Life is difficult and we all know that. And yet what is it that can help us on the way? So this is the vision that was the vision of our great rishi, Sri Aurobindo.

🏠 Ameeta Mehra