Knowledge and Specialization

The problem of knowledge and specialization, it seems to me, is very important. Let us consider it and see if the mind which is trained in specialization and in knowledge can be free to investigate and to discover whether there is nothing more beyond what it has known, to investigate where knowledge is leading us and the significance of specialization.

There are many avenues of knowledge, and more and more information on a vast scale is becoming available to us. Where is it all leading us to? What is the function of knowledge? We see knowledge is essential at a certain level, in our conscious and unconscious living, in our existence. Can such knowledge be a hindrance to further investigation of man’s realization of the total significance of existence? For instance, I may know how to build a bridge. Will that knowledge bring about a radical change in my ways of thinking? It may produce a superficial change or adjustment. But in this present crisis in the world, which is necessary, a mere superficial adjustment or a radical revolution? It seems to me that revolution born of any particular pattern of action is not revolution at all, and that if we are to bring about a new generation with a new way of thinking, we must find out what the function of knowledge is.

What is knowledge—not the dictionary meaning, or a definition? Is it not the cultivation of memory along a particular line? Is it not the development of the faculty of gathering information to be utilized towards a particular end? Without knowledge, obviously, modern existence is almost impossible. Can knowledge, which is the cultivation of
memory, the gathering of information, and the using of that information for special purposes—for surgery, for wars, for uncovering new scientific facts, and so on—be a hindrance to the total understanding of human society?

As I said, knowledge may be useful at one particular level. But if we do not understand the total process of human existence, will not that knowledge be a hindrance to human peace? For example, we have scientific information enough to create food for the whole of mankind and to give them shelter. Why is it that that scientific knowledge is not used? Is that not a problem to most of us? Is not that very knowledge preventing the consideration of human understanding and peace?

What is preventing the stoppage of war, of feeding man, clothing him, giving him shelter? It is surely not knowledge, it is something entirely different. It is nationalism and vested interests in various forms—capitalistic or communistic or of a particular religious group—which are preventing the coming together of man. Unless there is a radical change in our ways of thinking, knowledge is used, is it not, for the further destruction of man. What are the universities of learning doing, the academic as well as the spiritual? Are they producing, bringing about, a fundamental revolution in our hearts and minds? It seems to me, that is the fundamental issue, and not the constant accumulation of further information and knowledge.

Can a total revolution take place through knowledge, which is, after all, the continual development of the mind through memory? I may know various facts, I may know the distances between the various planets, I may know how to run jet planes, but will that knowledge, जैसा कि मैंने कहा, एक खास स्तर पर ज्ञान अवश्य ही उपयोगी हो सकता है। परंतु यदि हम जनवीय अर्थत्त्व की समस्या प्रक्षेपण को नहीं समझते हैं तो क्या यही ज्ञान मानव की अवधारणा के लिए बाधक नहीं बन जाता? उदाहरण के लिए, हमारे पास ऐसी वैज्ञानिक जानकारी है कि हम समुद्री मानव जाति के लिए प्रयोजन अन्न पैदा कर सकते हैं और उनके रहने के लिए स्थान की व्यवस्था भी कर सकते हैं। तो फिर ऐसा क्यों है कि इस वैज्ञानिक ज्ञान का इस्तेमाल नहीं किया जा रहा है? क्या यह हमें से अधिकांश के लिए समस्या नहीं है? क्या यही ज्ञान ही जनवीय समझ और अवधारणा को अवरुद्ध नहीं कर रहा है?

ऐसा क्या है जो युद्धों को रोकने से, लोगों को भोजन-वर्तमान आदि दे पाने से, उनके लिए आवास की व्यवस्था कर पाने से हमे रोकता है? निखिल ही यह ज्ञान नहीं बल्कि उससे सर्वथा भिन्न कुछ और ही है। वह है राष्ट्रवाद और निहित स्वतंत्रता के विभिन्न रूप--पूर्ण वैज्ञानिक समुदाय जो मनुष्य को मनुष्य के साथ नहीं होने देते। क्या आपको नहीं लगता कि हमारे विचार करने के तरीकों में जब तक मूल रूप से बदलाव नहीं आता तब तक ज्ञान का प्रयोग मनुष्य के लिए और भी अधिक निवाशकारी होगा? जिस ज्ञान प्रदान करनेवाले और आध्यात्मिक ज्ञान का प्रसार करनेवाले विश्वविद्यालय ज्ञान कर रहे हैं? क्या वे हमारे हदों और मन--मस्तिष्कों में कोई आरूढ़ क्रिया ला रहे हैं? मैं समझता हूँ कि यही हमारे सामाजिक मूल्य मुद्दा है। अधिक-से-अधिक सूचनाएं जमा करते जाना, ज्ञान एकत्रित करते जाना उनमें महत्व की बात नहीं है।
will that information, bring about a radical change in my thinking? If it cannot, what will it bring about? Is it not a problem for most of us?

We want peace in this world; we want to put an end to envy which arises in human individuals in their search for power; we want to put an end to wars. How is this to be done? Will mere accumulations of knowledge put an end to wars, or must there be a radical revolution in our thinking? Will thinking produce that revolution? I do not know if you have considered any of these points, but it seems to me, a revolution based on a particular pattern of thought is not a revolution at all. After all, thinking is the response to a particular condition, the response to a challenge according to a particular background. I respond to a challenge according to my conditioning, to my training, to my upbringing as a Christian or a Hindu or a Muslim or whatever I am. How is that background, that conditioning, that peculiar pattern of action to cease, and a new way of thinking to be born? Is this not a problem to most of us? Because, there cannot be a radical revolution unless the breaking of all the background takes place, of the pattern of our constant thinking along a particular line.

Will knowledge, the accumulation of information about facts, bring about the breaking of my conditioning? Yet, this is what we are doing; we are constantly accumulating information, knowledge, training our memory. All this is important at one particular level. We may search out information about the whole consciousness of man, about the psychological process of uncovering oneself—mostly intellectual, mostly verbal—through specialization. But,
will that bring about a radical change? It seems to me that mere information, knowledge, will not bring about a radical change. There must be a totally different factor, and that is the understanding of the process of consciousness, of the mind that is constantly accumulating, gathering information.

Why are we gathering information, knowledge? It is for the purpose of security, which is essential at one level of our being. Some people think that knowledge is a means of discovery. Do we discover through knowledge? Does not knowledge impede discovery? How can the mind find this out if the whole mind is trained to merely gather information, knowledge? Must not the mind examine this question free from any anchorage, from any belief, from any knowledge? The mind, having knowledge, must be free of it in order to find out; otherwise, it cannot find out.

After all, there is a conflict in all of us between the conscious and the unconscious, between the superficial ways of thinking and the hidden processes of motives, desires, anxieties, and fears. We are gathering information, knowledge at the superficial level, without fundamentally altering the deeper levels of our consciousness. The most important thing in the present crisis is that the revolution should take place at the unconscious level, and not merely at the conscious level. Revolution at the unconscious level is not possible if the conscious mind is merely cultivating memory. Is not the problem, with all of us, how to bring about this revolution deep in ourselves?

After all, the individual is the man; the
whole world is not different from you and me, and it is the individual that brings about the radical transformation. History shows how a few individuals, different from others in their way of living, have wrought a change in society. Unless we individually transform ourselves deeply, fundamentally, I do not see any possibility of having peace and tranquillity in this world.

How is the individual—that is, you and I—to change radically at the deep, unconscious level? Is it brought about by the practice of a particular ideal or a particular virtue? Is not the cultivation of a particular virtue merely the strengthening of that consciousness which is pursuing the accumulative process of memory, the strengthening of the self, of the ego? Is not the practice of a particular idea or an ideology still a strengthening of the self, the ‘me’, with the inevitable conflict within and without—which is the fundamental cause of wars?

Can there be a revolution in the ‘me’ through the action of will? I do not know if you have exercised will in order to bring about a change. You must have noticed that the action of will is still at the conscious level and not at the unconscious level. And mere alteration or exercise of will at the conscious level does not produce a revolution, an alteration, a radical change in our ways of thinking. So, is it not important to find out, for each one of us, how the mind works, not according to any particular philosophy, but actually observing the ways of our mind in action, the ways of our life, so that through the understanding of the superficial mind, it may be possible to go beneath the surface and understand the whole mind?

Unless we bring about an integration of the whole mind, the individual brings about the radical transformation. It is through the individual that the world transforms. Unless we individually transform ourselves deeply, fundamentally, I do not see any possibility of having peace and tranquillity in this world.
between the thinker and the thought, mere thinking, reason, philosophy, accumulation of knowledge, will be used by the thinker as a means of self-aggrandizement, either of the individual or of a group, or for the propagation of a particular ideology. So it is important, for those who are really serious about these matters, to find out how the total integration of man can take place. Obviously, it cannot be through any form of compulsion or persuasion or through disciplinary processes, or through any action of will because they are all, if one really looks at it, on the surface level.

So, our problem then is, how is this total transformation of our being to come about? We have tried through authority, through compulsion, through conformity, through imitation. If we understand the truth of compulsion, the truth of discipline, the truth of imitation or conformity, then the superficial mind becomes free from these compulsory imitative processes, and so the superficial mind becomes quiet. Then, the total, unconscious processes can project themselves into the conscious, and in their projection, there is a possibility of uncovering them, understanding them and being free.

Whenever there is understanding of any deep facts of life, the mind is invariably still, not making an effort to understand. It is only when the mind is entirely still that there is a possibility of an understanding which brings about a radical revolution in our life.