

INTEGRAL HUMANISM

Lecture 1

Our Direction

I am asked to present my thoughts on the subject of “Integral Humanism” in a series of talks beginning this evening. Last January at Vijayawada, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, adopted the statement of “Principles and Policies” in which the term ‘Integral Humanism’ was also accepted. There have been scattered discussions here and there on the subject. It is necessary that we consider Integral Humanism in all its aspects. So long as the country was under the yoke of the British rule, all the movements and policies in the country had one principal aim, ‘to drive out the foreign rulers and to achieve independence’. But what would be the face of the new Bharat after independence? In which direction were we to advance? These questions were not precisely thought out. It would not be correct to say that no thought was devoted to these aspects. There were people who even at that time had considered these questions. Gandhiji himself had set out his idea of the independent Bharat in his book *‘Hind Swaraj’*. Prior to this, Lokmanya Tilak discussed the philosophical basis of the rejuvenation of Bharat in his book *‘Gita Rahasya’*. He gave a comparative exposition of various schools of thought current all over the world at that time.

Apart from these, the Congress and other political parties adopted various resolutions from time to time which contain references to this subject. However, the subject requires much more serious thought than was devoted to it at that time. It did not attract serious attention then because everyone believed that it was more important to think of the ways to drive out the British and that other things could be discussed later on. It did not seem right to waste time in internal discussions while foreign rule continued. Hence, even if there might have been differences in views, they were shelved for the time being.

As a result, even those who held the view that socialism should be the basis of the future Bharat, worked inside the Congress as a socialist group. They did not attempt to form a separate party as such. The revolutionaries too, were working for independence in their own way. All were agreed, however, that the foremost task was to gain independence.