CHAPTER-IV

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Subhas Chandra Bose’s ideology was reflected in his works, writings, lectures, letters, editing and organizing of newspapers. Bose realized in his early days of leadership that effective mass communication was essential for liberation movement. Newspaper is always an effective communicating tool and considering the world history, leaders of freedom struggle were connected with different newspapers. In India, national leaders like Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru were attached with Harijan and another newspaper, the National Herald. The proper use of a newspaper could alter the minds of a nation. Even though he was not a professional journalist, Subhas Chandra Bose introduced quite a number of innovations, while himself editing, organizing or managing his papers viz. Banglar Katha (voice of Bengal), Forward, Atmashakti (self-actualization), Liberty, Forward Bloc etc.
It is interesting to note that Subhas Chandra Bose got interested in the vocation of a journalist, way back in his Cambridge days. He wrote two letters regarding his interest in journalism to the eminent political personality of Bengal, *Deshbandhu* (friend of the State) Chittaranjan Das from Cambridge on 16th February, 1921. Subhas Chandra Bose introduced himself to *Deshbandhu* C.R. Das as follows: "Five years ago I was a student of the Presidency College. During the trouble in 1916, I was expelled from the University. After losing two years, I obtained permission to resume my college studies. Thereafter in 1919, I passed the B.A. examination and got a first class in Honours.

"...I know very well that if after quitting the service I plunge into national work with resolute determination, I shall have plenty to do, viz. teaching at the National College, writing and publishing books and newspapers, organization of village societies, spreading education among the common people etc. But, I can now show to my family what tangible work I wish to undertake- it will probably be easier for me to obtain their permission to leave the
service. If I can give up the service with their agreement there will no need to do anything against their will.

".....You know best about the situation in the country. I heard you had established National Colleges in Calcutta and Dacca and you wanted to bring out a newspaper ‘Swaraj’ in English and Bengali. I have heard also that in various places in Bengal, village societies etc. have been established..."1 Regarding ICS (Indian Civil Service) and future plan of life Bose had written a long and an ‘explosive’ letter from Leigh-on-Sea, to Sarat Chandra Bose (elder brother of Subhas Chandra Bose) dated 22.9.20- Excerpts of a letter written by Subhas Chandra Bose to his elder brother, Sarat Chandra Bose : “I have been getting heaps of congratulations on my standing fourth in the competitive examination. But I cannot say that I am delighted at the prospect of entering the ranks of the I.C.S. If I have to join this service, I shall do so with as much reluctance as I started my study for the C.S. Examination with. A nice fat income with a good pension in afterlife – I shall surely get. Perhaps I may become a Commissioner if I stoop to make myself servile enough. Given talents with a servile spiril, one may even aspire to be the Chief Secretary to a provincial Govt. But after is
service to be the be-all and end-all of my life? The Civil Service can bring one all kinds of worldly comfort but are not these acquisitions made at the expense of one's soul? I think it is hypocrisy to maintain that the highest ideals of one's life are compatible with subordination to the conditions of service which an I.C.S man has got to accept.

You will readily understand my mental conditions as I stand on the threshold of what the man-in-the-street would call a promising career. There is much to be said in favour of joining such a service. It solves once for all what is the paramount problem for each of us – the problem of bread and butter. One has not got to face life with any risks or any uncertainty as to success or failure. But for a man of my temperament who has been feeding on ideas which might be called eccentric – the line of least resistance is not the best line to follow. Life loses half its interest if there is no struggle – if there are no risks to be taken. The uncertainties of life are not appalling to one who has not, at heart, worldly ambitions. Moreover, it is not possible to have one's country in the best and fullest manner if one is chained on to the Civil Service. In short,
national and spiritual aspirations are not compatible with obedience to Civil Service conditions.

".....Moreover, if I have to qualify for another career, it will add considerably to the financial burden which is already on your shoulders and I am not so heartless as not to feel what that burden means for you. Hence, I find that owing to sentimental and economic reasons, my will can hardly be called my own. But I may say without hesitation that if I were given the option – I would be the last man to join the Indian Civil Service.

".....If one is cynical enough, one may say that all this 'spirit' will evaporate as soon as I am safe in the arms of the service. But I am determined not to submit to that sickening influence. I am not going to marry – hence considerations of worldly prudence will not deter me from taking a particular line of action if I believe that to be intrinsically right.

"Constituted as I am, I have sincere doubts as to whether I should be a fit man for the Civil Service and I rather think that
what little capacity I possess can be better utilized in other directions for my own welfare as well as for the welfare of my country.

"...If the ghataks [match-makers] come to trouble you again, you can ask them straight away to take a right about turn and march off."1(a)

Few months later, Bose had categorically mentioned about his desirability towards Journalism to Sarat Chandra Bose from Cambridge on 16th February, 1921- ".....you have received my 'explosive' letter by this time. Further thought confirms me in my support of the plans I have sketched for myself in that letter.... If C.R. Das at his age can give up everything and face the uncertainties of life - I am sure a young man like myself, who has no worldly cares to trouble him, is much more capable of doing so. If I give up the service, I shall not be in want of work to keep my hands full. Teaching, social service, cooperative credit work, journalism, village organizational work - there are so many things to keep thousands of energetic young men busy. Personally, I should like to take up teaching and journalism at present. The
National College and the newspaper, ‘Swaraj’ (self-rule) will afford plenty of scope for my activity.... A life of sacrifice to start with, plain living and wishful thinking, whole-hearted devotion to the country’s cause - all these are highly enchanting to my imagination and inclination. Further, the very principle of serving under an alien bureaucracy is intensely repugnant to me......"1(b)

On the same day, with the same determination that he had before quitting from ICS (Indian Civil Service), Subhas Chandra Bose sent a letter from the Union Society to Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das through a trusted friend, Mr. Pramathonath Sarkar to avoid Government censorship.2

“..... I know very well that if after quitting the service I plunge into national work with resolute determination, I shall have plenty to do, viz. teaching at the National College, writing and publishing books and newspapers, organization of village societies, spreading education among the common people etc.... You know best about the situation in the country. I heard you had established National Colleges in Calcutta and Dacca and that you wanted to bring out a newspaper, ‘Swaraj’ in English and Bengali. I have
also heard that in various places in Bengal, village societies etc. have been established…”

Subhas Chandra Bose had also briefly mentioned his resume in the above letter that he had some knowledge of History, Geography, Economics, Political Science etc. From an ethical point of journalism, the essential prerequisites of an ideal journalist should comprise of awareness in various subjects of interest. Hence, in this context, Bose had written, “... I should like to know what work you may be able to allot to me in this great programme of National Service of education and intelligence I have but little - but I believe I have the enthusiasm of youth. I am a bachelor. As regards my education, I have read something of Philosophy, because that was my Honours subject in Calcutta and I am doing the same subject in my Tripos here. Thanks to the Civil Service Examination. I have had an all-round education up to a certain standard - such as, Economics, Political Science, English and European History, English Law, Sanskrit, Geography etc. I believe that if I can join this work, I shall be able to bring one or two
Bengali friends from here into it. But until I personally enter the field, I cannot drag anybody-else into it. I cannot visualize from here, which are the suitable fields of work in our country at present. But I have the feeling that on my return to my country, I should be able to take up two kinds of work, teaching in college and writing for newspapers. I desire to give up the service with clear-cut plans...

Young Bose also had some unique ideas for reforming the Congress party and said “.... I have quite a few ideas in my mind regarding the Congress. I think there must be a permanent meeting place for the Congress. We must have a house for this purpose. There will be a group of research students there, who will be carrying on research on various national problems. As far as I am aware, our Congress has no definite policy relating to the Indian currency and exchange.... My personal view is that the Congress has to maintain a permanent staff.... Besides, the Congress should open an Intelligence Department. It has to be so arranged that all up-to-date news, facts and figures about our country are available in the Intelligence Department. Booklets will be published in every provincial language by the Propaganda
Department and will be distributed free among the general public. Apart from that, a book will be published by the Propaganda Department on each and every question in our national life....”5 In this thought provoking letter, the voice of a mass communicator, Subhas Chandra Bose, twice president of the Indian National Congress and the Supreme Commander of the Azad Hind Government had become evident. Finally, in this letter, he wrote to Chitta Ranjan Das for his final choice of subject - journalism. “.... My personal feelings are that if you start with the English edition of ‘Swaraj’, I may be working as one of the sub-editorial staff. Besides, I may be teaching the junior classes of National College... I shall be awaiting your views. I am anxious to know what are the different kinds of work you may be able to assign to me. If you desire to send somebody to England to learn journalism, I am prepared to take this workshop. If I am given this work, expenses on account of passage and outfits will be saved. I shall, of course, resign from the service before I take up this work. You will, no doubt pay for my boarding and lodging because after
giving up the service, there will be no justification for my
accepting money from home....”

The next letter was written to C.R. Das on 2nd March, 1921
with a request and some proposals. He wrote this letter at this
crucial phase of his life, when Bose had resigned from the I.C.S,
the most coveted service under the British Government at that
time. “....it is my request that you may kindly not mention this
matter to anybody till you receive news of my resignation from the
service....Certain ideas are coming to my mind - I am
communicating them to you.

(1) I may take up teaching at the National College. I
have read a little of Western Philosophy.

(2) If you publish a daily newspaper in English, I may
work as one of its sub-editorial staff.

(3) If you open a research department for the
Congress, I may also work there....

(4) There is plenty of scope for work directed to the
spread of education among the common people....
Social Service:

It is my view that there is scope for work in the above directions. But it will be for you to consider in which department you would have me. Of course, teaching and journalism are the sort of work that appeals to me. . . .”

During this turning point of his career, Bose wrote a long letter on 6th April, 1921 to his elder brother, Sarat Chandra Bose, from Oxford and his final decision regarding resignation from the I.C.S. was mentioned here. “. . . . I may do some teaching work immediately I return, but as a permanent profession I shall choose journalism. That will help me to earn my living as well. . . .”

Subhas Chandra got an approval from C.R. Das about his future plan of actions. From Fitz Eilliam Hall, Cambridge, on 22nd April, 1921, Subhas Chandra Bose expressed his uncertainty about his future plan with a philosophical bent of
mind and spiritual inclination to his friend, Mr. Charu Chandra Ganguly. He wrote, “You are aware that once before I sailed forth on the sea of life at the call of duty. This ship has now reached a port, offering great allurement - where power, property and wealth are at my command. But, the response from the innermost comer of my heart is - ‘You will not find happiness in this. The way to your happiness lies in your dancing around with the surging waves of ocean. Today, in response to that call, I am sailing forth again with the helm in His hands. Only He knows where the ship will land. I have not been able to decide as yet as to what I shall do. Sometimes, I feel like joining the Ramakrishna Mission. At other times, I feel like going to Bolpur. And, then again, I have the desire to become a Journalist. Let us see what happens...”" Later, long after 16 yrs, when Subhas Chandra Bose wrote, An Indian Pilgrim in 1937, he mentioned and recalled why at that time he preferred a journalistic career. “.... I had a talk with the censor of Fitz William Hall, Mr. Reddaway, about my resignation. Contrary to my expectations, he heartily approved of my ideas.
He said he was surprised, almost shocked, to hear that I had changed my mind, since no Indian within his knowledge had ever done that before. I told him I would make journalism my profession later on, and he said that he preferred a journalistic career to a monotonous one like the Civil Services.”

Subhas Chandra Bose’s attraction towards journalism was not a sudden incident. When Bose was a First Year student of Presidency College, Calcutta, he established and organized a college magazine. His classmate, Mr. Promothonath Sarkar in his memoir wrote, “the debating society and college magazine of Presidency College was established by the efforts of Subhas Chandra Bose….Subhas Chandra wrote a biographical article on the former student of the college, very kind hearted barrister Taraknath Palit in the first issue of the first year magazine.”

That article was published in old Presidency Collegemen series of Presidency College Magazine. This English article was a tribute and deep respect of Subhas Chandra Bose to alumni Sir Taraknath, as well as it was thought provoking and rich in
literary sense. Subhas Chandra respected not his affluence, but his generosity towards the poor. Taraknath’s love for the poor and burning patriotism inspired Bose to write such article. Subhas Chandra wrote, “He had a thorough knowledge of English literature and a passion for philosophy. For sometime, he was keenly devoted to Hamilton and later on went over to the Spencerian School. But though he drank deep of the fountain of foreign literature and imbibed foreign ideal and sentiments, yet he did not forget his heritage. He loved his country and people.” Subhas Chandra portrayed his patriotic spirit as “.... the patriotic spirit of Sir Tarak, which was daily increasing in strength beneath the cloak of his apparently self-centered study, thought and activity, first formed expression during the Swadeshi Movement.” Subhas Chandra ended this article with Swami Vivekananda’s famous quotation and analysis of Taraknath’s talents. He wrote, “Let us keep in mind those words of Swami Vivekananda - ‘Oh, India, forget not that thy wealth, thy marriage are not for thy sense-pleasure, are not for thy individual and personal happiness; forget not that they
are born as a sacrifice to the mother’s alter.” Practically, Subhas Chandra Bose was greatly influenced by Swami Vivekananda’s ideology. This article may be considered as the first published article of Subhas Chandra Bose. It is interesting to note that Reuter (news agency) had despatched a news item on June 1921 from London about the resignation from Government service of the Indian youth, Subhas Chandra Bose, who stood 4th in the ICS and his joining the freedom struggle in India. It was mentioned in a memoir of Subhas Chandra Bose’s Comrade-In-Arms, Gopallal Sanyal that two historic letters of Subhas Chandra Bose, written to C.R. Das from Cambridge, were sent to his friend, Promoth Nath Sarkar for sending them to C.R. Das. The letters were not directly mailed to C.R. Das in order to avoid misplacement or censorship under the British Government. However, for reasons unknown Mr. Sarkar did not handover the letters to C.R. Das and preserved them carefully with him for a long time. After the end of I.N.A. (provisional Government established by Bose) trial at Red Fort, these letters were published in the daily Anandabazar patrika (Netaji issue) and the subsequent editions of Taruner
Swapno (the dreams of youth) authored by Subhas Chandra Bose. 19

Some reports of the Philosophical Society, Scottish Church College were published in the College magazine during the period from March 1918 to January 1919. Subhas Chandra was the Secretary of the Society in 1918. Two important papers that he read during that period were - 'A Defence of Materialism' (March 1918) and 'A Defence of Idealism' (Sept., 1918). A very brief summary of these two papers are as follows:

"Materialism can satisfy common sense for the following reasons:

(i) The external world appears to be a tangible material world and not an ideal one.

(ii) Knowledge of matter is direct and primary, that of life and mind are indirect and derivative.

(iii) Materialism throws a very optimistic outlook before man."
Materialistic nations attain national power and glory.

From the philosophical standpoint too, materialism is in a justifiable position. Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose's (an Indian Scientist) theory of response in the living and non-living, if finally proved, would go to show that life is only a development of matter. Parathelism fails because it does not show why two series are intimately connected. Materialism is not anti-moral.²⁰

Subhas Chandra Bose read his paper, as a secretarial report of the Philosophical Society on 'A Defence of Idealism.' The essayist supported idealistic Manism of the Hegelian type but differed from Hegel and Schopenhower in conceiving of the absolute, not as Pure Reason or Pure Will, but as spirit in all his fullness, striving through all the processes of the world to rise into the bliss of self-consciousness in the life of a man. He held that such a view could reconcile both science and religion and supplement the popular and scientific conception of things with the metaphysical.²¹
The prime qualities of a journalist could be traced from these papers, which though totally academic and subject-oriented, were analytical in nature. Subhas Chandra Bose, during his formative stage and before entering the world of Mass Communication and Journalism, had accomplished this journalistic and philosophical mind.

NOTES & REFERENCES


1(a) Ibid, pp. 208-209

1(b). Ibid. p. 111

2. Ibid. p. 212

3. Ibid. pp. 210-214

4. Ibid. p. 211

5. Ibid. p. 213

6. Ibid. pp. 212-216

7. Ibid. pp. 215-216

8. Ibid. pp. 227


11. Bose Subhas Chandra, An Indian Pilgrim, Netaji Research Bureau, Calcutta. p.115

12. Matriculation Examination, 1913 - Promothanath Sarkar stood 1st from Mitra Institution & Subhas Chandra Bose stood 2nd from Ravenshaw Collegiate School, Orissa

13. Swarone Monone Subhas Chandra (Bengali title - Edited by Rathindra Nath Bhattacharya)- Published from Vivekananda Pathagar, Calcutta


15. Ibid


17. Ibid


19. Ibid p.24

20. Scottish Churche College Magazine, VOL.-8, No.5, March-1918