CHAPTER - V

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Corruption has maligned public life to a saturation point to day. It has entered every walk of life. To speak the truth law almost never touches the big man, the important public figure responsible for the destiny of the nation. It is common in many developing States to advocate severe measures in order to control corruption. Japan, during the Tokugawa period practised branding, cutting the hand that played the mischief, and similar corporal punishment. In Soviet Russia, punishment for crimes against the State has been the severest. Like other countries of the world India also has been facing an unprecedented situation arising out of unabated growth of corruption. The aberrations of bribery and corruption are born of greed, avarice and rapaciousness and are a peculiar feature of persons of respectability and high social status in an acquisitive and affluent society and they all affect not only the health and material welfare of the individual, but also the economic structure and social fabric.

100. John, B. Monteiro (1966) : Corruption; p.111.
of a nation.

It is easy to criticise and condemn corruption, but it is difficult to eliminate it from human society, and much more difficult to avoid being tempted into it when our own turn comes. Prosecution of corrupt people cannot change the main stream of this evil in the society. Root out of corruption from public life needs to achieve high standard of ethical behaviour through building of human character. It is very easy to ridicule others for their acts of corruption, but that would not be the answer to the problem. We can hope to root out corruption from the world only if we are able to root the nefarious thing out of our own hearts and minds. 101

Power and corruption go hand in hand, particularly in the societies which give highest consideration to materialism and hold spiritual and ethical values and standards at low ebb. Absolute power corrupt absolutely. The existence of vigours anti-corruption laws and anti-corruption agencies supposed to help in reducing this menace from the society. But, the lacunae of such laws and lack of morality amongst the custodian

of such laws leads to failure in achieving the objectives of anti-corruption laws. The handling of the anti-corruption work by the ministries concerned, or even the centralization of this work within the home ministry is not a healthy practice. The administration cannot be a judge of its own conduct. Besides, in the public mind a feeling persists that departmental proceedings against higher officers are not generally encouraged. So, we need an effective and unbiased treatment of corrupt people by changing the existing procedures and processes. The difficulty of getting equal and just treatment of corrupt public servants irrespective of class, cadre and position prompted the demand for public inquiries. In this respect the Sentharam Committee's recommendations, if accepted by the government will perhaps be more effective to remove such type of misdeeds at least to a greater extent.

Public vigilence is the basis of any anti-corruption strategy. Tightening of law and setting up of new institutions for investigation alone are not at all sufficient to combat corruption under the present situation of ever expending corruption techniques. The

real remedy for checking this evil lies much deeper. It lies with the public, which should be prepared to put up a stiff fight against it. For every corrupt official, there are hundreds of members of the public wanting to make use of him and to feed him. It will be difficult to tackle this growing evil unless we mobilize the best elements in society to fight it. In some foreign countries like United Kingdom and U.S.A., anti-corruption bodies have done excellent work in educating the people and in gathering and coordinating their will to resist it and focussing it by exposing corrupt practices mercilessly. The setting up of such organisation in India is a vital necessity.

Corruption in India has so far unchecked. It starts from the top echelons and reaches the lowest ebb in the society with the result that one cannot think of living honestly even if one aspires and yearns to do so. Here individual's corruption is limited only by the limited scope he finds for it and willy nilly we all find some scope.

These days everyone talks of corruption in public life, without realising that corruption in public life is but a reflection of corruption in private life.\textsuperscript{103}

\textsuperscript{103} Kohli S. (1975) : Corruption-The Growing Evil In India ; p.26.
It is highly contagious disease that spreads from one
to the other, till a whole group, community or a nation
as a whole becomes contaminated. The vicious cycle of
corruption being started at the top, it can be stopped
only when legal or moral or social pressure can be
applied to the political and economic elite to win
elections, run their political parties and earn their
business profits by honest means. It depends upon the
changing of the quality of public life. The prosecution
alone cannot be effective in eradicating or significantly
reducing the corruption from public life. The crisis of moral values and ethical codes appeared much
earlier than the state's intervention to regulate the
crime of corruption in the society. So it becomes very
much difficult to eradicate this malady by the belated
intervention of the state. The quality of public life
depends upon its organisational set up in maintaining
ordered norms of society. In an ideal society, all
members find their personal needs gratified by living
up to the rules of the society and the members are moti-
vated to follow the normative system of that society.
The individual's wish to control transactions for per-
sonal benefit coincides with the cultural and social
pressures exerted from group sources. But the prevailing
circumstances in India to-day polluted the public life with hiking dishonestly and corruption. The social, political and psychological conditions are so prominent in India that nothing works without one's indulging in corruption, in one way or the other, willingly or unwillingly. It becomes impossible for an honest man to live in peace in India. The practices which have become routine in everything from taking bribes in lieu of doing something to get admission to a College will force one to turn dishonest. Corruption essentially started when the power of money was first felt together with influence and authority of any kind. In fact we have reached a stage in corruption where the extent of each individual's corruption is limited only by the limited scope he has to be corrupt. Willingly or unwillingly each one of us finds some scope for it.

Since corruption in India starts from the top - the political leadership being its fountainhead, it becomes impossible to root out this evil from the society without changing the behaviour of individuals in a society particularly of elite classes. The path
of integrity for creating an environment which will sternly discourage any temptation for corruption must come from within the Ministry and Department. To sum up the measures for improving the quality of public life, it may be stated that, the evolution of a social climate in which no public servant or a person holding a public office, unless he is wholly devoid of moral sense, will be tempted to stray from the path of integrity and resort to corruption. Prosecution of corrupt public servants can contribute little to improve the quality of public life.