CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION AND OBSERVATION.

The National Cadet Corps is one of the biggest paramilitary-cum-youth movements in the world. Its distinctive characteristics have given it a unique position amongst all other youth welfare organisations in the country. The Cadet Corps training system has got all the positive ingredients in it to motivate the youths to the growth and development of individuality and national integrating force. It is a powerful media of instruction by which youths can associate themselves with varied programmes of national reconstruction. The National Cadet Corps Scheme caters to some aptitudes of adventure and it has a varied programme which cannot usually be found in other youth movements functioning in the country. Our desired goal of physical, moral and psychological advancement of young men and women may be attained through proper execution of this Corps Scheme. Youths express themselves better through training in discipline, cultivation of spirit of adventure and fostering of creative activity through craftsmanship. Smartness, self-confidence, sportsmanship and co-operative attitude, above all, the development of a strong sense of duty and discipline and promotion of patriotic spirit can
be achieved easily through the programmes of Cadet Corps Movement. No other youth movement in the country can claim to have such comprehensive and pragmatic approach. In spite of these nice features of the Corps scheme, its degree of attainment has been rightly subjected to criticism. It cannot be denied that in the period of thirty years since its inception, specially during the last twelve years, this youth movement has not, to its credit, as much success as the country expected of it. The nation has failed to take cognizance of its importance, that is, the Scheme has not been able to arouse interest in the people, proportionate to reasonable expectations. Government cannot either assert that they have fulfilled the aspiration of the nation in this field. In Civil as well as in Defence sector, it is yet to make a mark.

In the first phase, that is, for the period of first fifteen years from 1948-1962 its growth, trend and its output were of average standard. The seriousness of its aim was duly appreciated by the members of the Corps. The Cadets and the Officers, attached to the academic Institutions, had been found quite enthused to shoulder their responsibility. The regular members of the Armed Forces, the custodian of the programme, were not lacking in their performance. The Cadets and their part-time
Officers did not grudge their emoluments, however meagre it might have been. If we hold a comparative study of the National Cadet Corps and other departments of the Government the overall picture of the former does not seem to be gloomier than the latter.

Since the late sixties, the whole situation in the NCC has been undergoing a change throughout the country. It follows a deterioration tendency. Foreign aggressions, socio-political turmoil, financial stringency coupled with inflationary pressure, mounting tension among the youth and particularly the unemployment nightmare among the educated young people descended as avalanche both in physical and psychological arena. Education and discipline were worst hit and the National Cadet Corps, a part of the educational system, suffered consequently.

Add to this, the defective planning of the NCC Scheme itself. The sound principle "Non Multa, Sed Multum"—that is, the principle of quality and not quantity, was given a go by, by the planners responsible for its development. It is the quality of training and not merely the quantum which should be aimed at. This is what our National exigencies demand most.

Training in the Cadet Corps is very basic in
concept. In 1962-63 the Institution of Senior Division Rifle Companies aroused quite a good amount of anational spirit and enthusiasm, but its training was never imparted on practical lines, resulting in natural shortfall of the programme. In this respect, National Cadet Corps has to meet almost the same fate as the University Training Corps during the British regime. Insufficient supply of training gears and non-availability of training ground and staff have made the ambitious scheme unrealistic in its approach and execution.

The efforts for creating motivation by the Training Staff in the Cadets, has been lacking to a great extent, and the periodical assessment about the output of the training, as required, has not been undertaken in right earnest. Some sort of negligence has also been observed on the part of the authorities in their conspicuous silence over examining the concept of its strategy, and if ever done, it was a mere formality and it was not sincerely followed up.

As drawback of the scheme lies with the posting of low calibre officers of the Armed Forces in the NCC organisation. The type of officers who are being deputed to undertake the command of the Cadet Corps must
essentially be those who are interested in the development and furtherance of this vital youth movement, and those who genuinely believe in its ideal. NCC is certainly not the dumping ground for unwiling hands, nor a post or pre-retirement sinecure for them. Barring a few, most of them have no knowledge of or interest in the Cadet Corps. Training and control of a regiment of grown-up people in the Army, who have bound themselves with bonds and contracts, are much easier than training the corps of educated youths and adolescents, who volunteer for hard type of military training. It requires resourceful officers with a clear foresight, who can dedicate themselves to the job. No care has been taken in this respect. None but the defence hierarchy has got any say in the matter of appointment of officers though it concerns mostly education and Youth Welfare.

All soldiers are good; it is the officers who make a regiment good or bad. Pride in uniform, that is, the sense of belonging, is a must to motivate one in one's duty. The environments are to be created in such a way that the NCC Officers may realise in them that they are doing something honourable, something valuable and that the society recognises the value of their service. Previously
young teachers of Schools and Colleges who underwent Officers Training in regular defence establishment, used to live and mess with regular officers as their equals. They participated in the "officers daily dose" and competed with regular officers. On the national ceremonials they used to play an important part in leading the troops and companies. The NCC used to be stationed preceding Police or Territorial Army contingents in these functions. Now-a-days, NCC is not given the same status. Few officers, if any, are invited to the Republic Day gathering or a National gathering. There is no Regimental Night or a similar party. There is no such club or association for assembly of the regular army officers and their families with their counterparts in the NCC. The highbrow-attitude in most of the regulars psychologically disassociate the part-time NCC Officers, producing a demoralising effect.

The two sections, the Regular Army Officers and NCC (teacher) Officers suffer from some complex. The Regular army officialdom in the Headquarters think themselves to be the reservoir of all knowledge, experience and of authority in the NCC-world, forgetting that without the initiative, active and co-operative attitude of the educationists - the part-time NCC Officers and the
Heads of the Institutions, the whole scheme is bound to fail. They are to some extent negative in their outlook. NCC part-time Officers constituting about 80% of the strength should have liberty to control and organise the whole scheme, including vehicle, ammunition, training, etc, so that they have the sense of belonging to the organisation. Regular Army Officers should act mainly as watchdogs and conduct the administrative business. With their authoritarian attitude, they in most cases ignore the experience, education and psychological frame of the teachers who are generally, in addition to their short course of army training, armed with higher academic attainment than many of the Regulars posted in NCC command. This situation should go, and it would go only when the regular army personnel, before assuming Corps duty, are given certain amount of training in educational policy of the country with an academic bias. Regular military officers once employed in NCC duty should be allowed to remain there for at least five years, if not otherwise found unsuitable, so that he may sufficiently acquaint himself with the prevailing conditions and problems.

Members of the Cadet Corps have got to be
motivated. Cadets do not like to merely act or rehearse as soldiers. Officers also dislike to do so as officers. Most of the Army Cadets have never been placed in any such situation or given such scope that may arouse their real interest and inspiration in the defence organisation of his country. The Naval and Air Force Cadets – most of them are never taken to Man-of-War on sea or to an Air-Carft, and there is no question of their participating in exercises. Even the camping facilities, one of the most attractive and important items of Corps training is restricted to a limited few because of financial limitation. To overcome it, more funds are to be drawn for improvement and prosperity of this vital Youth Welfare Scheme. Only an insignificant number of Cadets, perhaps not more than one per thousand of the total strength gets opportunity to attend the Republic Day Camps in Delhi every year and a negligeible number attends the Adventure training courses. More opportunities should be given a larger number so as to enable the boys and girls to put to test their training.

Excepting the re-employed or those on the verge of retirement - most of the members of the Armed Forces - posted in the NCC organisational pike for their mother unit. They come from and go back to their own regiments and
lacking the sense of belonging to the Unit. They naturally do not have any affection for the Cadet Corps. It is said that once a Gurkha ever a Gurkha, once a Rajput ever a Rajput. None of them is proud enough of his NCC assignment to say - once an NCC ever an NCC. NCC is nobody's baby. This can be done away with by grant of certain amenities to those posted in the Corps, and by proper screening during their selection, and more concretely by actively involving the NCC Officer in it.

Instead of making NCC a fashion, it should be made the passion. A passionate liking for the Cadet Corps should be instilled in the youth by creating practical bias in its training system. One man with faith and conviction is worth a thousand with only the required interest.

Regarding NCC Officers, their aptitude for and attitude towards the movement should be objectively studied. From the administrative point of view, they are subjected to the authority of their institutions on the one hand, and the Unit-Command on the other. As the NCC is not yet an integral part of educational programme throughout the country, their service in the corps is not at all recognised in the academies while assessing their workload. Their participation in NCC has no place there.
Many heads of Institutions actually pull in a direction diametrically opposite to the direction from which NCC organisation pulls. The position of the NCC Officers consequently becomes a very unenviable one. The responsibility for success of NCC must be placed squarely on the shoulders of the heads of Institutions. Through the amendment of rules and regulations this paradoxical attitude should be changed and closer link between the heads of Institutions and Unit Commanders be established. An amount of Rs 50 or Rs 75 should not be the only point of consideration; their service in the corps must be given weightage in the general curriculum. The following measures are suggested for qualitative improvement of the Cadet Corps:

(1) The National Cadet Corps programme be merged with or included in the educational curricula as an elective subject of study in the school and college. Retired service personnel of the Armed Forces may be appointed as instructional staff instead of borrowing them from active service, and be posted for each of the troop or coy in School and College.

(2) Award of real honour and status to the part-time NCC Officers should be instituted having regard to their
designation, decoration and experience as current in the regular services. As their commissioning is notified in the Gazette they should be give due identity and authority in the public eye so that they realise their rights and responsibilities. Responsibility without authority mostly leads to organisational collapse.

(3) Emoluments of part-time NCC Officers of all categories and those for Cadets too, should be revised and be made handsome and honourable; in this regard parity should be maintained with the general price index on the basis of work load. With this, strict measures be taken to ensure quality output and perfect discipline at all levels. We should put trust in them, but if they are found genuinely apathetic and letting the corps down, they should be removed without any sympathy.

(4) The present system of dual control between the Central and State Governments in running the NCC should go. There is the need of Central Administration and unified financial control through an Act of Parliament or through an amendment of the existing Act.

(5) Camping facilities should cover the majority number of cadets on roll, and not to be restricted to a limited few. The supply provision for uniform of cadets and their
training gears should be regular, and it should be regular, and it should be so organised from the point of view of size, pattern and decency that it may be suitable for a real corps. Training in weaponry is to be made more practical so as to arouse keen interest in our young boys and girls.

(6) The Chambers of Commerce, State, Central Government and Defence Authorities be instructed to give preference to the successful NCC Cadets, possessing other necessary qualifying diplomas, when they appoint people in their establishments, as is done in case of children of the ex-employees of the firms/Government.

(7) More emphasis in the corps scheme should be laid on the training of the school-going able-bodied boys and girls, on the basis of which the target of the Senior Division strength be fixed. This will help in maintaining the process of continuity ultimately resulting in the qualitative output through gradual development of body and mind.

(8) Greater avenues for entry of the poor students in the Sainik School should be opened up. Excellent mode of instruction is imparted in these schools with NCC training compulsory. The poorer sections of the society find no
families to get their wards admitted because of the high charge of fees and other costs. The number of such type of schools is only 16 all over this vast country; the number should be increased considerably and means should be devised to enable low-income group and rural people to find admission for their wards in the same, otherwise, the high principles of Socialist pattern and democracy will have no meaning. The provision of Open Unit Scheme for the working youths in the country, as discussed in the NCC Committee Report and in the House of people in 1947-48 is yet a far cry.

(9) We should provide more NCC Units in Naval and Air Force Wing in the country. Considering the Diego-Garcia problem in the Indian Ocean and the Vast Coastal security involved along with the problem of security of long-stretched mountaineous borders, more attention must be paid for expansion of these para-military youth force in the Naval and Air Wing Sectors.

(10) The poor strength of Girls Division in the Cadet Corps shows that we have been negligent in this branch. The Girls Division of our Corps has perhaps no parallel in the world. It is a unique organisation in as much as it provides opportunity for citizenship and para-military
training, and offers enrolment on voluntary basis. In a small way, the organisation can claim the credit of playing a notable part in emancipation of women in India. Considering Their success in mountaineering, parachuting, police service, nursing service, advancement in science, education, motherhood and child-care - their success in every sphere of the society, much larger number should be brought under this discipline.

(11) National Cadet Corps should be treated as the Second Line of Defence. To this aspect, more emphasis should be given on outdoor training and firing of arms. There is no excuse for surrendering ammunitions out of allotted quota for practice. There is little justification for arms drill with dummy rifles for major part of the year. The imagination of youth is triggered off, only when they really pull triggers of their rifles and fire live ammunitions.

There are of course some limiting factors in giving effect to the furtherance of this youth programme in India's planning and its present set up. Ours is a Democratic Welfare State and we have got limited resources at our disposal. The vital and essential sectors, like Defence, Agriculture, Industry claim more of our resources.
Defence and security are of utmost importance, and diverting a number of more qualified army personnel, which is already in shortage, to the cadet organisation may become a problem. Admitting all these, it may be said that the youths of today are the leaders of tomorrow, and if one million educated young men and women of Cadet Corps are trained and taught in right earnest, they can work wonders. It is they who would have their position as legislators, generals, research fellows, academicians and technologists - the architects of a great nation. Mere tinkering over the Corps scheme will not help any more, it must be renovated with imagination and necessary follow up.

In 1966, the Planning Commission (Education Division) set up working cell in Youth Programme under the Chairmanship of Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao and recommended the setting up of the National Youth Board. The Deshmukh Committee on National Service also viewed that a National Board should be constituted to deal with all the Youth Movements in the country. Major General Virendra Singh, a former Director General of the NCC, suggested review of the working of the existing youth activities, including the National Cadet Corps, and to place them all under the
control of an autonomous body - the National Youth Board. It was suggested that in the initial stage, the Youth Board should function under the direct control of the Prime Minister to ensure the success of the programme. However, in view of the above discussions on the problems of finance and administrative control, it would not be judicious to amalgamate the National Cadet Corps Scheme with other Youth Service Scheme in the country. National Cadet Corps today occupies the most important place among all other youth welfare programmes. NCC, NSO or Boy Scouts and Girls Guide are basically different in concept and aims. The Late Dr. H.N. Kunzur, who was responsible for the birth of National Cadet Corps in 1948, said, "The National Cadet Corps was, perhaps, the only all-India movement that has succeeded in our School and College".

The NCC Evaluation Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. G.S. Mahajani, the Vice-Chancellor of Poona University, viewed that in spite of the vicissitudes through which NCC passed for more than 25 years, it continues to be a live and active force fulfilling the aspirations of youth to a considerable extent. It is the largest and the best-run of all youth movements in India, and it has succeeded in a large measure in inclucating the ideas of discipline,
leadership and co-operative working amongst the young men and women. NCC programme must continue to develop along its own distinctive channels.

A good number of NCC Cadets and Officers have been successful in various avocations. Some have reached top positions in universities, commercial houses, some have entered politics and have become Ministers or Members of legislatures. Besides, a considerable number of them - both men and women are in the Armed Forces, Police and Civil administration as decorated officers.

Neighbouring Countries have been amassing their troops in large scale and their armoury is being stockpiled with lethal weapons bought or borrowed from the advanced countries. Carrier task forces of the Western countries have been operating in the Indian Ocean since 1973. In spite of string protests by India Government and by various littoral countries, the UK and the USA have established a fullfledged navel base on the island of Diego Garcia. The world has grown so small today with the development of science and technology the effect of an event in the farthest corner of the world is felt in its remotest corners. The Wars in West Asia have produced a valuable lesson. No country comes to the assistance of any other.
country unless that country's national interests are thereby served or advanced directly or indirectly. This salutary lesson drawn from the Arab-Israel War is applicable for any country.

The rapid changes in the pattern of international relationship, the unpredictability of threats emerging therefrom, the refinements in the strategical and tactical concepts, the rapid march of technology - all demand that educated youths of India today should not only make themselves conversant with the defence and international problem but also with the planning of national reconstruction. Moreover, the more broadbased is the military training, the lesser is the danger on to democracy from dictatorship of specialised arms.

It is heartening to note that people in general have, of late, been taking interest in the Armed Forces. Formerly civil population would view askance at the army. This tendency has changed; a good deal; the service and sacrifices, the strifes and victories of the Jawans have created confidence in them. It may not be wrong to say that thousands of Schools and College-going youths (cadets) in villages and towns moving in military uniforms might have some bearing on this psychological change.
A number of finest officers and instructors of the Armed Forces posted to the National Cadet Corps have fought in wars, travelled widely and won decorations and medals. They share their knowledge and experience with our young cadets. In their turn, the cadets would do good to be in their company as much as possible and learn all about our gallant soldiers, and in the process, imbibe the finer qualities which help in the development of unity and integrated personality.

Unity achieved through a standardized syllabus of Corps training, a common uniform, and training imparted by the instructional staff of Defence Services is a unique set of factors for national integration. Experienced and qualified officers, Junior and non-Commissioned Officers who retire and get released from army at comparatively young age may be fully utilized for quality training of the Cadets by their being posted in Cadet Units in Schools and Colleges and by bringing them under the control of the Heads of Institutions.

Sense of duty is inculcated in the young mind by highlighting the essential requirements of personal responsibilities and loyalty to the members of the family at home as also loyalty to one's Alma Mater and to the society at large. Regard for discipline may be instilled in
the youth by imparting to them the disciplined way of life of the fighting services, bringing them under the guidance and directions of the leader of the team, and teaching them to give higher priority to the interest of the group even at personal inconveniences.

The 42nd Amendment Act which amends the Constitution of India seeks to prescribe a set of 10 'Fundamental Duties' for India's citizens. Exigencies in and outside the country might have influenced our legislators to resort to this unique stand, i.e., to spell out some of the fundamental duties, not enunciated before. Of such duties, as outlined in the Act, the 4th one states that it is a fundamental duty to "Defend the country and render national service when called upon to do so". It is yet to see the underlying idea and implications of this provision. Whatever may be its significance, members of the National Cadet Corps, must be in a favourable position to respond to the call of defending the country, if need be. It is the proud privilege of the members of the Cadet Corps to volunteer their services towards the defence of the country whether it is statutory or not.

In conclusion we should pay heed to this quotation from Swami Vivekananda, the great prophet of India: "Say brother, the soil of India is my highest heaven, the good
of India is my good". The future of the country belongs to the young; a new India which is emerging awaits the young to bring prosperity. A brave, broad-minded, courageous and aspiring youth is the foundation on which the edifice of a new India will be built and the Cadet Corps may well be one of the pillars supporting this edifice.