
FOREWORD – by Honorable Justice V. R. Krishna Iyer, former Justice of Indian Supreme Court

Description

Today humanity is passing through a very critical period of history. If you want to influence events, or even to steer clear of critical problems, you need to be well informed and you need to act. Failure to recognize what is really happening and what is really behind current events is going to cost us our lives and our society.

Actually it seems unnecessary to list the ills our world is suffering from or to prove that these crises are getting worse, or that the measures undertaken by the present world to combat them are increasingly proving ineffective. Climate change is accelerating. Inequality is at historic levels. The financial industry continues to teeter on the brink of collapse, threatening not only the global economy but also every bit of our Nature's wealth that is necessary to maintain the very life form of this planet. And all the while, our political system has proven incapable of effecting the structural transformations necessary to save the life forms and the planet.

We are now indeed at a grave planetary crossroad. We are grossly underestimating the highly catastrophic and suicidal risk on our very present path. Take for example the fast approaching ecological collapse which many prominent scientists, including Stephen Hawking, have come to certify.

Years back, our great scientist Albert Einstein (philosopher in his later years) had already concluded about the main cause behind the coming of this day of reckoning when he said: "Perfection of means and confusion of ends seem to characterize our age". Suddenly, many scientists have now come in contact with social problems more and more, partly forced to do so by the growth of social science that brought them the new awareness of being in the midst of a human-caused mass-extinction, of being on verge of ecological collapse. Scientists are now talking about the "Anthropocene" – the destructive Era of Man.

Scientists and communities are apparently alarmed: humanity is at the brink of an ecological catastrophe. Objectively, in the last few years, science makes it painfully clear that climate risk has grown sharply, far beyond what 90% of the people realize. Elsewhere, top scientists speak out on the disastrous effects of genetically modified crops and food in a series on GM seeds and food debates.

History has shown that the people can rise to the challenge, but leadership is essential. Well, it is our leaders who are naturally supposed to take the initiative to solve the problems facing mankind. But many wonder why human leadership in this epoch of history is a mess, although they stop short of probing it further. Most leaders speak of an era in peril but do not provide the leadership needed to change the world's course. Leaders must speak candidly to the public—which yearns for open, honest discussion—explaining that our continued industrial leadership and economic well-being demand drastic changes.

But today our leaders are becoming followers, with their performances highlighted by pollsters! Most leaders are unable to take the lead and call a spade, a spade! They beat around the bush and are worried about political fall-outs, hoping that avoiding tough action might make the issues disappear from the radar, at least for the time being!

Today most people wonder as to where have all the real leaders gone! There are few leaders with the vision to overcome conflicting self-interests and personal prejudices – leaders who operate from a vision that influences others. We know that only the truly great can shape events that will permanently change the course of history.

When we look around where do we see the leaders who can measure up? Where are those leaders whose courage and conviction literally saved a whole people, whose determination changed the course of history?

We have been looking to our dysfunctional governing institutions for leadership and directions, without understanding that, in their present condition, this is not possible. Their operational premises, and the beliefs of their minions, not recognizing and completely ignorant of the nature of existence, make our institutions—including the mainstream political parties—the least likely source of direction. Regardless of the progress they make, these systems maintain fundamental ideas that generate only misdirection and hold humanity bound and helpless in the throes of institutionalized dementia.

All civilizations grow too large to support themselves, and their leaders have little foresight. These civilizations then collapse and are buried in the dust and mud. Modern civilization is no exception, if not still worse. What mankind faces today is not only the fast decline and fall of the most globalized civilization in history but also the fall of everything civilized or infected by this industrial civilization. The present fall is going to be such total and global that it may close that very cycle of life for good. In view of the oft-repeated experience, modern man must look upon this epoch of industrial civilization not as a way of life, but an adventure of suicidal self-degradation and ultimate self-destruction.

In many respects, modern society is in a more pathetic state than, for example, what the ill-fated Titanic experienced upon striking an iceberg. As a classical example of humankind's growing predilection in the denial of stark realities of impending catastrophes, story of the Titanic is being often quoted to explain the growing manifestation of modern man's rising schizoid behavior, dissociation, or divided self.

What ails our society, we all know, but the question is: who will bell the cat—who will come to our rescue? Today man faces a more catastrophic threat than what the Titanic passengers faced when all sane warnings fell on deaf ears; that man, as the most fooled, vulnerable and exploited species in history, faces the situation of the most unjustified trial in history in the court of the reigning global CORPORATE FORCE. This situation can be likened to the trial of the proverbial duck in a court where the jury is the fox.

In the name of development, Mother Earth is currently being violently 'gang-raped' by the highly mechanized and market-led modern world for power and profit. Earth's silent scream is what we can make out in the ongoing agony of billions of her own children—the voiceless men, women and children—who, otherwise, for millions of years lived on this beautiful planet without these catastrophic crises. Who will now speak for them against this wanton destruction of their living environment?

It is a fundamental principle of most moral theories that all human beings have a right to life. The right to be born, the right to have one's life maintained, the right not to be killed, the right to have one's life saved are all fundamental rights of every human being. Here no one has the right to destroy the living environment. Here we happen to occupy parts of this lively and wholesome

environment only quite temporarily — as a borrower.

Our future generations—our children, grandchildren and great... grandchildren included—are just as much members of human family as ourselves but have no voice to speak for themselves. We take advantage of this and are damaging them irrecoverably by our breach of trust of this environment of which we are only custodians and not owners. Every single citizen is a trustee of Earth. All the more, governments trustees (leaders) bear a special responsibility in this regard.

Today we are in default of our duties if we continue our present destructive modern lifestyles and create more, despite our knowledge of their dreadful consequences. Our generation and particularly those who are specially entrusted with the care of environment will have to answer before the court of history for our default and abuse of trust. Indeed we are committing the gravest possible crime against future generations—and, as is visible, even against ourselves — and are doing so with a full consciousness of the effects of our actions. It is indeed quite unsettling to believe that we have become the most destructive generation in all of human history, regardless of the fact that we are destroying the undoubted birthright of billions of human beings for whom we hold Mother Earth on trust.

In this regard, I have great pleasure to introduce a new book, *Life on Meltdown* by M. J. John, who has taken up this critical case/question before the present world. Here John undertakes a highly revealing study and has effectively tried to answer the crucial question: how has mankind, in our modern civilization, suddenly lost its potential quality for survival?

Coming to the solution part, the study finds that our social and political sectors are dysfunctional systems. Here what we shockingly see, from the part of the present world mandarins, are SOLUTIONS in DENIAL. Here the world seeks refuge in denial: denial that mankind is in crisis, denial that the life-supporting environment is in crisis, denial that the atrocities and suffering are actually occurring, denial that it is going to get worse, denial that it is our human responsibility to do anything about it, denial that we can do anything about it , and so on.

Thus our market-led world has been in perpetual denial of realities for quite some time now. Meanwhile all the accumulated problems have grown into serious crises and catastrophes that the only solution before the present world is to resort to massive cover ups, day in day out, by engaging scientists, professionals and other wishful thinkers who are trained to contradict realities. Here, even though, pinpointing the source of our problems is the first step in finding true solutions, none of our problems are fixable without reinventing our entire socio-political structure.

But this groundbreaking book provides an up-to-date uncensored description of the dangers faced by mankind today, through a comprehensive and honest source of information about adverse and catastrophic effects of commonly-practiced mechanical life styles, their mortal addictive traits and the highly adverse withdrawal effects that have rendered modern humanity highly passive— as slaves to its own machines and hi-tech market systems.

In non-technical language, the author brings an incredibly important and hardly ever recognized message to people who need to understand the dark side of the market-led modern scientific developments and the mechanical life and how to make possible the practice of back-to-nature approach with a conscience. The book's main import will be to serve as a counter-balance to the myth of some "miracle" scientific solutions. The author deserves credit for the courage he has had to unmask many pseudo-scientific conclusions frequently presented in supposedly scientific literatures.

It has taken great courage for John to write this very significant book, for openly speaking the truth. The author has outlined a careful and highly responsible rationale and sound program for society to free itself from faulty systems, and withdraw from the market-led mechanical life. He presents it all within a coherent philosophy of life. Although I may not agree on all the arguments advanced by

the author, I strongly believe that his views deserve deep consideration and study, and we can ignore many of these valuable facts only at our own peril.

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