

Sri Aurobindo quickly replied: "Only by a general intellectual and spiritual awakening can this nation fulfil its destiny. Our limited information, our second-hand intellectual activities, our bounded interests, our narrow life of little family aims and small money-getting have prevented us from entering into the broad life of the world. Fortunately, there are ever-increasing signs of a widened outlook, a richer intellectual output and numerous sparks of liberal genius which show that the necessary change is coming. No nation in modern times can grow great by politics alone. A rich and varied life, energetic in all its parts, is the condition of a sound, vigorous national existence. From this point of view, also the last five years have been a great benefit to the country.

... The new idea that should now lead us is the realisation of our nationhood not separate from, but in the future scheme of humanity. When it has realised its own national life and unity, India will still have a part to play in helping to bring about the unity of the nations.

. . . But it is equally necessary that we Indians should begin to think seriously what part Indian thought, Indian intellect, Indian nationhood, Indian spirituality, Indian culture have to fulfil in the general life of humanity. ... "I am convinced and have long been convinced that a spiritual awakening, a re-awakening of the true self of the nation is the most important condition of our national greatness. The supreme Indian idea of the oneness of all men in God and its realisation inwardly and outwardly, increasingly even in social relations and the structure of society is destined, I believe, to govern the progress of the human race. India, if it chooses, can guide the world."

... It is more important that the thought of India should come out of the philosophical school and renew its contact with life, and the spiritual life of India issue out of the cave and the temple and, adapting itself to new forms, lay its hand upon the world. I believe also that humanity is about to enlarge its scope by new knowledge, new powers and capacities, which will create as great a revolution in human life as the physical science of the nineteenth century. Here, too, India holds in her past, a little rusted and put out of use, the key of humanity's future.

It is in these directions that I have been for some time impelled to turn my energies rather than to the petty political activities which are alone open to us at the present moment. This is the reason of my continued retirement and detachment from action. I believe in the necessity at such times and for such great objects, of Tapasya, in silence for self-training, for self-knowledge and storage of spiritual force. Our forefathers used that means, though in different forms. And it is the best means for becoming an efficient worker in the great days of the world."