



Freedom Cannot Be One-Sided

I know a woman who tried to win her freedom by obtaining a divorce from a despotic husband and securing a job in a well-established firm. When I met her after a few years' work, she said she was still not happy because her boss was no less despotic than her husband. Though she found compensation in economic independence, she was morally enslaved. The boss did not refrain from exploiting her and overworking her. She was expected to obey him and his assistants blindly, to tolerate their whims, repress her feelings and identify with them. In fact she had gone from one form of slavery to another.

Freedom, it seems, is one and indivisible. To be free from one form of slavery, requires a struggle for liberation from other forms. A woman who has achieved freedom within her family, is apt to suffer from injustice in her place of work or in other social institutions. Her struggle for freedom may have to go on through life.

This principle applies to large communities, to states and nations, as it applies to individuals. A state that has achieved freedom and independence is apt to be attacked by another state which does not believe in or does not practice freedom. Hence free nations are bound to preach and implement freedom outside their borders and help those living under a despotic régime to liberate themselves.

Freedom cannot be one-sided, just as welfare and prosperity cannot and should not be limited to a few. Freedom from oppression implies freedom from want and misery. The article dealing with life among the poor in Cairo, in this issue, will show that poverty is a disease in the body of the nation and, as such, its harmfulness will not be limited to the spot where it originated. The struggle for freedom and the struggle for social justice must go hand in hand. They are two sides of the same coin.

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