

THE SPIRITUAL SCIENTIST

An ezine for those who think!

Combating Corruption



Question: What is the Vedic perspective on the current agitation against corruption?

Answer: It is a vital step in the right direction of establishing morality and integrity in the social body of India.

Corruption is a malignant cancer that is eating up the fabric of Indian society today. Corruption originates in greed, which the *Bhagavad-gita* (16.21) describes as one of the gateways to hell. Greed brings hellish conditions even into this world, as we see today in India with the distressing scarcity of necessities among the have-nots being exacerbated by the blatant misappropriation of the taxpayers' money by the powers that be, who keep increasing their sickening flaunting of luxuries.



Gita wisdom recommends combating greed at two levels: material and spiritual. At the material level, the *Gita* presumes the necessity of a strong administrative system to curb and counter social evils. In that light, a disciplinary body with teeth to punish the corrupt is vital for combating the evil of corruption. The *Bhagavad-gita* (3.21) points out that political leaders being default role



models for the citizens play a decisive role in shaping the values of society. Social trends seep rapidly from the top to the bottom, so corruption at the top inevitably perpetuates, even multiplies, by the time it reaches the bottom. That's why providing the disciplinary body with powers to ensure accountability among the top leaders of society will go a long way to ensure accountability among all segments of society.

The *Gita* also points out that material solutions are just the beginning to combat greed. Acknowledging the deep-rooted human frailty to succumb to temptation, *Gita* wisdom recognizes the necessity of spiritual education and training for overcoming this frailty. The re-spiritualization of human consciousness enables one and all to experience that real fulfillment in life comes through gratitude, not greed; through service, not exploitation; through sharing, not grabbing. Acknowledging the powerful influence of exemplary leaders, the *Gita* highlights the importance of such re-spiritualization among the political rulers, saying that *rajarishis* (saintly heads of state) are essential for establishing and maintaining dharma, moral and spiritual integrity, in society. The *Gita* is remarkably futuristic in its approach, for it bespeaks of universal human concerns and aspirations, thus pre-empting the secularist objections of today. The *Gita* in its conclusion (18.66) differentiates universal spirituality from sectarian religion: it proclaims that the essence of spirituality is the development of virtue, with the supreme virtue being a spirit of loving service to the Supreme and all his children.



To summarize, when coupled with an individually-inspired and socially-sustained spiritual redirection of the human quest for happiness, the legislative reform of the body politic is a necessary and desirable step for substantially and sustainably curbing and conquering corruption.

