**Toward National Unity in Multicultural Societies**

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**Introduction**

Integrating different ethnic groups in Guyana and the Caribbean into a single cultural identity seems wanting. Given the presence of many different ethnic groups, a national and regional unity that is birthed only from one identity for all is false. The creation of a single identity would then become a cultural loss to each ethnic group. Perhaps, this is not what Caribbean people want. It is instructive to note that in the 1930s, Indians in Jamaica rejected the colonial Moyne Commission’s injunction to become absorbed into the Creole culture. The Moyne Commission had pressed for the emergence of a single identity on the Island.

Then, of course, we have the multicultural scenario in the U.S. Does the U.S. have a singular American cultural identity? The answer is in the negative. Each ethnic group has a legitimate cultural classification. For instance, the U.S. has Asian-American culture, African American culture, Jewish-American culture, Italian-American culture, Native-American culture, etc. Each ethnic group practices its culture and there is no attempt to create one cultural identity for all Americans. Pluralism, a philosophy that encourages the coexistence of many cultures, is at work.

**No Need For Forced Assimilation**

The slave trade and the indenture scheme brought new ethnic identities and cultures to the colonial and post-colonial Caribbean. However, amid all the ‘mixing’ conceptions of Creolization, Ethnogenesis, Inter-ethnic Fusion, Mettisage, and Hybridity, it is the Creole culture today that usually is synonymous with Caribbean identity. Creole is the underlying culture that continues to shape Caribbean institutions. And this Creole has Eurocentric roots. Caribbean identity is synonymous with Creole culture; Hintzen (2006) notes that Creolization emerged out of a Creole continuum with White Creoles at one end and Africans at the other end. He explains that: “In its historical production, creole society in the Caribbean emerged out of the representations and institutional practices of colonialism. It was forged out of an hegemonically imposed discourse of difference that allocated historically constructed and racially identified groupings to exclusive socio-economic sectors of the political economy. The creole continuum was fashioned from the insertion into slave society of two historically produced racialized categories that, in European imagination, existed universally at the opposite poles of civilization. Créolité was produced in the confluence of these two categories. The ‘Afro-creole’ (what is popularly considered ‘black’ in the region) is located at one end of the continuum. As a social category, it is the embodiment of the (changing) representations and practices of descendants of enslaved populations transported from West Africa for plantation labor. Racially constituted by ‘pure’ descendants of Africans, its creolization is the product of a syncretic mix of traditional African culture with the cultural forms of the dominant European colonial overlords. ‘White creoles’ or ‘local whites’ are located at the other end of the continuum.”

Indians who later arrived as indentureds in the Caribbean in the 19th century were outside of this continuum; today, their ‘outsider’ status still persists. Hintzen argues that Creole culture conceals a racialized division of labor and a racialized distribution of power and privilege, creating a distinction between the Creole and non-Creole and vituperative varieties of territorial
nationalisms; no regional and national unity. Hintzen’s answer to this problem of unity lies in the extrication of Creolité.

The fact of the matter is that Creole "has now become widely used to apply to the essentially Caribbean nature of the cultural identity that developed at the interstices between the cultures of Africa and Europe," according to Shepherd (2005). But do we need a dominant culture in the Caribbean? However, some African communities oppose the Creole identity because they believe that it covers up the Africanness of the Caribbean, and they may even have dumped the Afro-Creole concept that Burton (1997) advances. Africans have a right to develop their African culture and not become assimilated into a Creole culture that is predominantly Eurocentric. Indians, according to Patricia Mohammed (1988), also oppose the Creole identity, seeing it as amounting to a cultural loss for the Indian community. Indians have a right to advance their Indian identity and not become assimilated to a Creole persona.

No ethnic group should be forced or cajoled into assimilating another’s culture. Indians perceive their culture to be pure and autonomous, that is, untouched by Creolization. They, therefore, feel a need to protect and gain recognition for their culture. Some Indian communities have established this cultural protection through cleavage and closure. Coolitude (Carter and Torabully, 2003), is another ethnic identity theory that is now presented as having greater credence than Creolization, Ethnogenesis, Inter-ethnic Fusion, Mettisage, and Hybridity. However, Shepherd uncertain about the role of ‘Coolitude’ asks, "Can it really realize its objective of mediating the creolization process in the post-colonial era so that it becomes more inclusionary and integrated into Caribbean art, poetry, literature, history etc?; for, according to Carter and Torabully, ‘coolitude’ involves rediscovering the ‘coolie’ memory and adopting a more complex attitude to culture, showing how Indian culture can adapt to a plural landscape; how Indian culture can be inserted into a culture that is essentially a Euro-African mix." Cultural loss will ensue with insertion into another’s culture. And this is precisely the problem: the attempt to construct a singular cultural identity as the dominant culture, through historical and existing policy applications of Creole culture. The proposed rhetoric of ‘Coolitude’ also may be the subject of future cultural experiments to attain this singular cultural identity in places like the Caribbean. The Indian Diaspora has about 20 million Pravasi Bharatiyas, living in both developed and developing multicultural countries. Bharatiyas already are faced with cultural dilution in developing multicultural societies in the Caribbean, aggressively engaged in the quest to achieve national and regional unity. However, many of these developing countries have an existing dominant culture that drives national unity and institutional development. In many such societies, the governing culture invariably is not Indian in the Caribbean. The dominant cultural pattern is Creole and therefore, by definition, a manifestation of ethnic dominance.

According to Honychurch (1981), “Creole’ was first used in the Americas to describe those persons of European descent born and brought up in the Indies..." In the colonial Caribbean, this Creole culture was predominantly imbued with characteristics of Eurocentric and American distinctiveness. Much of this Creolization producing an indigenizing experience was transmitted to African slaves, clearly, a legacy of colonialism. This dominant Creole culture continues to shape the major institutions, even today. Clearly, this pattern is not of the cultural ilk of the ex-colonized Indians. Under such circumstances in the Caribbean, therefore, Indians hardly input the drive to national unity through applications of their own value systems. Creole culture as a form of ethnic dominance reduces the cultural impact of subordinate ethnic groups in Guyana. If this were not the case, then we would see that any ethnic group’s culture would significantly
influence institutional growth in Guyana. However, this is not the case, as exemplified by the role of Creole dominance in meeting people’s needs in education, health, law, etc.

All societies must fulfill certain fundamental needs for survival purposes. For example, children are socialized; cultures have to be transmitted across generations; social order must be upheld; goods and services have to be produced, distributed, and consumed. A society over time creates patterns of behavior to resolve these problems. The patterns of behavior are referred to as ‘institutions’. An institution is an established collection of values, norms, statuses, roles, and groups that evolve around a fundamental need aimed at problem resolution, as illustrated in Table 1: the family as an institution meets a need of providing care for the young, structured around some values, rules, statuses, roles, and groups. The same is true of education, religion, political system, etc. An illustration of how institutions are established may explain the significance of different cultures. This paper notes that it is the Creole culture that mainly inputs institutional development and evolution in terms of defining social needs, and the cluster of values, norms, statuses, roles, and groups. Indian culture, therefore, is marginalized in institutional development; however, the residual aspects of Indian culture invariably utilized in meeting societal needs represent a cultural dilution.

In addition, globalization, too, has quickened the pace of cultural dilution of subordinate ethnics. Creolization, dominantly rooted in Eurocentrism, has an affinity with the external agencies’ goals vis-à-vis their bid to control the local society. Many ex-colonial countries do not have a dominant indigenous cultural pattern. As aforementioned, Creole culture dominates. Therefore, it is the Creole cultural configuration with Eurocentric roots that drives the local control mechanisms of these international institutions. The cultural patterns of Indians do not impact these institutions’ standard operating procedures; the Creole cultural pattern plays this role. In the case of Indians, India and the next generation will need to be sensitive to this negative institution-building role facing Bharatiyas in those developing multiracial societies. Clearly, significant cultural loss reduces an ethnic group’s productivity and psychological zeal to advance a quality of life.

Good governance in multiracial societies generally ensures the confluence of each ethnic group’s culture to create national unity. National unity must not mean a dilution of the ethnics’ cultures. National unity must not mean giving a higher status to some cultures to the exclusion of other cultures. Ethnics should be given space to unite and interact within a mosaic of all cultures. National unity must mean pluralist unity where there is a dynamic coexistence of each group’s culture. National unity must create space and promote an appreciation of all cultures. Further, all cultures must be on a level playing field to contribute to societal development. This approach to national unity indeed, will reflect all cultural patterns in the society’s major institutions. If this approach becomes a reality, the institutional mosaic will be a genuine manifestation of national unity.
Table 1.5: Major Social Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Social Needs</th>
<th>Values</th>
<th>Norms</th>
<th>Statuses/ Roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Regulate sexual behavior; Provide care for children</td>
<td>Marital fidelity</td>
<td>Have only one spouse</td>
<td>Husband; Grandmother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Transmit cultural knowledge to the young</td>
<td>Intellectual curiosity</td>
<td>Attend school</td>
<td>Teacher; Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Share and reaffirm community values and solidarity</td>
<td>Believe in God</td>
<td>Attend regular worship</td>
<td>Rabbi; Cardinal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical system</td>
<td>Take care of the sick</td>
<td>Good health</td>
<td>Save life if possible</td>
<td>Physician; Patient, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic system</td>
<td>Produce and distribute goods and services</td>
<td>Free enterprise</td>
<td>Maximize profits</td>
<td>Accountant; Vendor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political system</td>
<td>Distribute power; Maintain order</td>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>Vote by secret ballot</td>
<td>Senator; Lobbyist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Investigate social and natural world</td>
<td>Unbiased search for truth</td>
<td>Conduct research</td>
<td>Physicist; Anthropologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>Agress or defend against enemies of the state</td>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>Follow orders</td>
<td>General marine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal system</td>
<td>Maintain social control</td>
<td>Fair trial</td>
<td>Inform suspects of their rights</td>
<td>Judge; Lawyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>Provide for recreation and exercise</td>
<td>Winning</td>
<td>Play by the rules</td>
<td>Umpire; Coach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


E Pluribus Unum

For the moment, however, some forces, though well-intentioned, are diligently at work to spread the gospel of national unity devoid of the cultural presence of all ethnic groups. These forces see national unity as requiring something fundamentally different and separate from the existing varied cultural life of the society. Apparently, advocates for this type of national unity believe that such unity will be clothed in a brand new culture, quite different and excluding the existing cultural mosaic. This kind of advocacy is a recipe for national disintegration.

In fact, this ‘E Pluribus Unum’ (out of many, one) approach to national unity reminds me of the ‘melting pot’ concept in the U.S. The melting pot theory in the U.S. posits that all the nationalities eventually would blend into one ‘American’ culture. This method requires that the society should build a new and distinctive culture from the diverse experiences of its ethnicities. In the U.S., the first President George Washington believed in the melting pot theory whereby future immigrants would become ‘one people’. This process failed. What eventually happened was that the cultures did not melt but persisted into a hierarchy of ethnic cultures. Then and even today in the U.S., despite the advent of multiculturalism, Eurocentrism dominates. It is evident
that one ethnic group’s cultural patterns (Eurocentrism) permeate the major institutions of the U.S.

However, there is the notion in the U.S. that Eurocentrism was always present, but with the enduring belief that all the minority cultural experiences would evaporate into one culture. What did not occur was a ‘cultural meltdown’. Instead, we saw the growth of an ethnic hierarchy in the U.S., with Eurocentrism being the dominant cultural pattern. There are important lessons here for developing multicultural societies, in terms of how not to create a national culture and national unity. No national unity must be birthed from cultural meltdown and/or ethnic dominance.

**Plural Theory and Ethnic Dominance**

Clearly, any ethnic hierarchy creates a process of subordination and superordination, so that some cultures are favored and others are not. These hierarchical conditions, inevitably, will produce ethnic cleavage and closure where different ethnics exert considerable efforts to protect and preserve their cultural patterns. Cleavage eventually could produce dysfunctional consequences, unless some dominant group takes control over all ethnic minority enclaves, according to Smith’s Plural School. This perspective depicts each ethnic group as a self-sustaining ethnic enclave for its members with no common value system. Given the absence of a common societal value system, the Plural theory holds that each minority ethnic enclave may develop its own social structure that could be in conflict with the ruling group. This kind of society, therefore, requires a mechanism to minimize this conflict and control the overall social order; the mechanism being ethnic dominance.

As a particular perspective, the Plural theory has advanced the notion that national integration requires the presence of a dominant group amid a sleigh of ethnic enclaves; the alternative, according to this theory, is national chaos. Ethnic dominance not only supports and sustains an ethnic hierarchy, but works toward diluting the cultural patterns of subordinate ethnics, in the pursuit of national unity. This cultural dilution is a prerequisite for ethnic dominance. Smith, by excluding class analysis, nevertheless, may have overestimated the role of different cultural communities. The exclusion of class would practically show no meaningful social interaction among ethnic communities. But each community has a stratification system based not only on race and ethnicity, but also on class. Both African and Indian communities comprise of upper, middle, and lower classes. A lower-class Indian would more likely interact with a lower-class African as well as with other lower-class Indians than with Africans and Indians of the upper classes, and vice versa.

There are two levels of the class structure - a societal-wide class structure as well as a class structure for each ethnic group. There, therefore, is an interethnic and an intra-ethnic class structure. A multiethnic society with interaction only occurring within a particular class is a manifestation of class cleavage that is highly characteristic of the following two situations: The situation where Indians only interact with other Indians of the same class is intra-ethnic class cleavage. The situation where Indians and Africans of the same class only interact with other Indians and Africans of the same class is inter-ethnic class cleavage. These inter-ethnic class interactions, at any rate, would show a closely-wedded structure of interactions among Smith’s ethnic enclaves, in contradiction to the immense conflicts that he postulates. By implicitly excluding class, Smith was unable to tap into some level of integration prevailing among the different ethnics. A higher level of interaction may lead to a lower level of conflict and a higher level of integration; inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic class interactions might have enhanced meaningful discourses among the ethnic enclaves.
Rodney (1981) also casts doubts on Smith’s ethnic enclaves. Rodney notes that the case advanced of highly prevalent racial conflict in Guyana is overstated, thus, "my contention is that the case for the dominant role of racial division in the historical sphere has been overstated, and that scholarship on the subject has accepted without due scrutiny the proposition that Indians and Africans existed in mutually exclusive compartments. The problems of interpretation lie not only in the marshalling of the evidence, but, more fundamentally, in the historical methodology that is applied." Indians and Africans did not then and do not exist now in mutually exclusive compartments; and Rodney argues that this proposition is largely untested. The two groups also are not monolithic, implying the presence of a class structure. The propensity for interaction is greater between people at similar class levels, even if they are from a different ethnic group, and vice versa.

A serious criticism of Smith’s Plural Theory, then, is that those inter-ethnic class interactions can facilitate significant levels of integration, and therefore, dissipate the necessity for ethnic dominance to maintain a social order.

**Indian Cleavage**

Clearly, a dominant ethnic group generally conspires to reduce the significance of some cultures, in order to maintain its own dominance. Responding to this dominance, some enclaves defend and preserve their cultures through ‘cleavage’ type behaviors. Ethnic dominance, therefore, retards national unity.

The problem of ethnic dominance, however, is that it not only sustains an ethnic hierarchy, but works toward diluting minority cultures in the quest for achieving national unity. And this watering down of other people’s cultures is a pre-condition for ethnic dominance. This situation produces cultural hegemony against all minority cultures.

But people will resist any attempt at weakening their culture. And cultural dilution and cultural hegemony are twin evils for inciting ethnic tensions in any multiethnic society. The search for national unity is a must, but its achievement must not be premised on cultural compromise. In a multiethnic scenario, national unity is not equal to a single cultural identity.

At any rate, Indians mainly display ethnic cleavage and closure, as they perceive their culture to be pure; resisting Creolization to preserve their perceived ‘pure’ culture. Africans, on the other hand, embrace the Creole culture.

Indians believe that they have cultural purity and autonomy. This perception of cultural purity and autonomy among Indians produces enormous energies for an aggressive promotion of cultural persistence. Keep in mind that even today, there is a sustained perception in the Caribbean that Indians are ‘different’, since they do not conform wholly to the Creole culture.

Given the prevailing Indian cultural cleavage, a derivative of the need to sustain cultural purity, has now become an institution, some Indian politicians on the political fringe misinterpret this Indian behavior pattern. The misinterpretation is intentional because these politicians see Indian cleavage as a voting block rather than as behavior aimed at cultural preservation. This is political manipulation and exploitation reaching great heights at electoral times; reducing Indians to becoming political preys.

In addition, African politicians may interpret the persistence of Indian cleavage as being too excessive, producing anti-nationalist orientations. During the PNC dictatorship, nationalist orientations were synonymous with Creole culture. The fact that Indians do not conform wholly to Creole culture may induce Africans and others to view Indians as anti-nationalists. This
conclusion is inappropriate, as it negates the Indian heritage as a national phenomenon, and appears as if only Creole culture is the exclusive preserve of the national culture.

Therefore, the dialectic between African Creolization and Indian cleavage produces a ‘separatist’ behavior pattern of both groups. This dialectic guarantees the persistence of Indian ethnic cleavage and closure in a class structure that favors Creolization and marginalizes Indian ethnicity. Indian cultural marginalization is another significant phenomenon that retards the pursuit of national unity. Some features of the Indo-Caribbean experience may very well be dislocation from India, massive burden of labor in the Caribbean, ethnic victimization in the post-colonial era, and migration to the metropolitan centers. These characteristics generate a double marginalization, as Naipaul (1975) would say. First, there is marginalization via their relationship to a subservient American and Euro-centered Creole-Caribbean condition. Second, there is marginalization via their ‘outsider’ status as Indians in the Caribbean.

**Cultural Imperialism**

People who constantly talk about the need for races to ‘come together’, implicitly use Smith’s Plural Theory to understand the power dynamics in a society with varied cultural groups. This ‘coming together’ is invariably intended to mean the development of national unity in developing societies where only dominant cultures are allowed seating at the head table, that is, where ethnic hierarchy and dominance exist. The cultures of the masses, in this context, are excluded and are reduced to a subordinate status. Under these circumstances, Smith sees all the varied subordinate cultures as ‘one’, and believes that such conditions will always require a dominant group to control subordinate enclaves. This is a ‘Plural Theory’ position that is unwarranted. The ‘one people’ perspective, implicit in Smith’s Plural Theory, historically, includes the role of a dominant cultural pattern that influences and controls economic and political institutions and the minority groups.

Naipaul (1975) in a keynote speech at a conference held at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, noted the case of a European colonial administrator who complained about the local people not coming together. This was an example of the colonial attitude. Naipaul (1975) criticizes this colonialist’s perceptions that see the local peoples as having no distinctive qualities, and that all of them can be compartmentalized into one cultural non-distinguishing brownish mass. Naipaul (1975) rejects this colonialist’s assertion as "It concedes humanity, it concedes a past, a particularity, and a pride, only to one particular group. It concedes these things only to one people the administrator’s people and it denies them to everyone else." The European colonialist’s conception of national unity was the compartmentalization of all the locals into one cultural group, resocializing them to show deference to Anglo-culture and to subscribe to American and Anglo-conformity. This colonialist’s thinking and action amount to cultural imperialism where everything that is ‘White’ is superior and that whatever is non-White is inferior. Naipaul rejects this cultural imperialism. Cultural imperialism legitimizes the Eurocentric-rooted Creole culture; cultural imperialism legitimizes its dominance over the other cultures.

This scenario is an illustration of assimilation of minorities to a dominant White group’s culture that was the basis of national unity in colonial times. Naipaul was right. But Naipaul (1975) went further to say that this colonial conception has persisted. In the case of Trinidad & Tobago (T&T), Naipaul believes that T&T people present to outsiders their picturesqueness, and the cosmopolitan population at a trivial level. In other words, they use tourist concepts to introduce their society. Such tourist concepts solidify simplicities and ignorance about
diversified people’s history and achievements, with a view to promoting a unity of culture. The colonizers established a psychological construct whereby the ex-colonized accept that the many different local people are really one people. This situation applies to Guyana, too. But the people of Guyana, T&T, and other developing multicultural societies have varied cultural patterns. They certainly are not one people. They are different, as they have different cultures. But they certainly interact and work together meaningfully in the cause of nation building in the various countries. They are not one people when the reality is that they have their own distinctive cultures, and where the underlying dominant American and Eurocentric-rooted Creole pattern is applied to shape and mould institutions. It is appropriate, however, to talk of one people where the underlying dominant pattern is birthed from a meaningful coexistence of all cultures.

The colonialist’s position of the need to create one people would produce a false national unity, and cultural loss to each ethnic minority group. Cultural loss would degenerate a society into a cemetery of cultures. This overwhelming aura of the colonial conception of national unity, seeing all locals as one people has reached maturation in the Caribbean, as colonial rules via the dominant Creole culture continue to create and shape institutions.

Take Guyana as a case in point to illustrate the issue. Politicians thought that use of the term ‘Guyanese culture’ and baptizing everybody as having a ‘Guyanese culture’ would heal all and eliminate the deformities of the society. ‘Guyanese culture’ generally refers to a mix between the melting pot concept and assimilation. At any rate, the incorporation of either concept within ‘Guyanese culture’ is just like an admission of the cultural non-distinctiveness of all the peoples of Guyana. The cultural content and parameters of the application of the term ‘Guyanese culture’ are fully controlled by a dominant cultural pattern, i.e., American and Eurocentric-rooted Creole culture. This happens because the Creole culture owns and controls the cultural capital when it comes to shaping institutions in Guyana. What needs to happen is that all ethnic groups’ cultures in Guyana should input institution building.

It is unwise to think that these attitudes, such as using the term ‘Guyanese culture’, which at first might seem revolutionary, is really the other side of the old colonial attitudes. Naipaul said "What looks new is only a reaction to the old, is conditioned by the old. I think this is the kind of irrationality that we must avoid."(Naipaul, 1975). In the United States, no credence is given to unifying all the people’s cultures in the society. Such cultural unification in the U.S., if it becomes a reality, would still be subordinated to the Anglo-power elite. This would be assimilation to Anglo-conformity that is highly irrelevant and unnecessary. In the U.S., pluralism, implying the coexistence and acceptance of each ethnic group’s culture is in vogue, and is characterized by an element of permanence. However, in the U.S., too, there is an underlying ethnic dominance where Eurocentrism permeates institutional development. Eurocentrism gradually is being diluted through an aggressive implementation of multiculturalism. How much dilution occurs would depend on the political will of power holders.

**Pluralist Unity**

Pluralism and multiculturalism are the most logical, secure, and enterprising form of national unity in a multiethnic society. Under pluralism and multiculturalism, to be a ‘Guyanese’, is to accept and celebrate the diversity of ethnic cultures in Guyana. Perhaps, this is the only kind of persisting national unity that may be sustainable. ‘Guyanese culture’ must not be applied to mean merely one culture; there is not one Guyanese culture, but many Guyanese cultures. There is not one Caribbean culture, but many Caribbean cultures. And all should coexist equally to achieve regional unity.
In Smith’s Plural Theory, ‘national unity’ implies that an elite determines the parameters of societal unification and hegemony over other ethnic groups in the society. This type of national unity trapped in any multiethnic society is not feasible; and is antagonistic to cultural diversity.

But Guyana, being highly stratified by class and race, with considerable amounts of inequality, cannot embrace a national unity that excludes cultural pluralism. Real political acknowledgment and institutionalization of each ethnic group’s culture will improve race and ethnic relations, and create a well-founded national unity.

A dominant ethnic group pursuing ‘national unity’ but excluding the values of minority ethnics is Problematic; a fertile ground for an emerging community of irrationality. People will not come together in this community of irrationality. India and the next generation have a moral responsibility to address this emerging community of irrationality with which Overseas Indians have to grapple.

Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee (High Level Committee on Indian Diaspora, 2001) made the following statement in 1977 when he was the Minister of External Affairs: "The subject of overseas Indians is one which is very dear to our hearts. Everyone of Indian origin overseas is a representative of India and retains many aspects of our cultural traditions and civilization. Though our sons and daughters have gone abroad to work or to reside there, India will never disown them or fail to appreciate and respect their essential loyalty to the culture and heritage of the mother country."

There is a growing need to have a working relationship of Overseas Indians with India, amid a fiercely brutal economic globalization process. A sustained relationship requires an application of the principle of reciprocity, making both parties stakeholders. Both parties would need to have a mutual understanding of what is happening in India, on the one hand, and what is happening in overseas territories, on the other hand. Vajpayee’s commitment to Overseas Indians is encouraging. But he no longer is Prime Minister. India and its Overseas Indians’ political and cultural bonding in the pre-1947 period is the pragmatic way forward.

Each Overseas Indian takes a piece of India in the new abode. However, today continued limited political networking among Overseas Indians, notwithstanding their many notable accomplishments, guarantees a reduced prevalence of their culture in the major institutions of those developing multiracial societies. Such development drives a wedge between India and Overseas Indians.

REFERENCES


