

There is turmoil all over the world. The economic system is breaking down: we have increasing unemployment, decreasing production levels, disproportionate consumerism, obesity on the one hand, starvation on the other, unbridled corruption and increasing poverty. And people are in panic demanding democratic reforms from corrupt governments.

What we are witnessing, is what Alvin Toffler warned us of in his books, we are witnessing the breakdown of capitalism, nationalism and all systems based on centralisation of power.

World-wide protests are a symptom of the breakdown of systems that we have taken for granted for so long; systems that arose out of industrialism, i.e., capitalism, organised religion, mass education, political ideologies such as democracy and communism, and nationalism. These are no longer the answer to our problems. Words such as democracy and patriotism are losing their meanings.

We need major analyses of what has gone wrong, of the part that new technology is playing in the breakdown and how to allow these technologies to create our new civilization. We cannot continue with the type of government that we now have all over the world, in which a few people have excessive power, and are prone to corruption and war-mongering. And we need major reforms: tinkering with the economic system, political system, education system etc. is not the answer. We need to find new ways in which individuals can live and work together and have greater control over their own lives.

We are not only in an economic meltdown, we are in a meltdown of all old systems. We are in the situation of people at the end of, in Toffler's terms, 'the First Wave,' the agricultural revolution. When industrialism arrived, new systems developed based on centralisation and people had to give up subsistence farming. Now we are at the end of Industrialism and at the beginning of a new way of life. We waste our energies trying to patch up the old system; we need to acknowledge, develop and embrace a new way of life. We have already begun to do so; but we are not aware of the extent of the change in which we are involved so we constantly hark back to systems that have become outmoded.

Millions of people displaced by the Industrial revolution gave up their farms and became part of a new way of life. Millions suffered. Some, those we consider 'primitive', still live by subsistence farming. Those of us who cannot see or find our way out of industrialism and into the new

technological/information/computer age and the new opportunities that it offers, will be left behind and become the 'primitives' of the future.