National Education

Our aim is not a national system of education for India, but an education for the world at large.

“Sublime Mother,

Our aim is no exclusive national system of education for India but an essential and fundamental education for all mankind. But, is it not true, Mother, that this education, because of India's special fitness (by virtue of its past cultural striving and attainment), is India's privilege and special responsibility towards herself and the world? At any rate, this essential education is India's national education to my mind. In fact, I regard this as the national education of each great country with characteristic differentiations peculiar to each nation.

I wonder whether this is correct and Mother would endorse it.

Yes, this is quite correct and part of what I would have said if I had had time to answer your questions.

India has or rather had the knowledge of the Spirit, but she neglected matter and suffered for it.

The West has the knowledge of matter but rejected the Spirit and suffers badly for it.

An integral education which could, with some variations, be adapted to all the nations of the world, must bring back the legitimate authority of the Spirit over a matter fully developed and utilised.

This is in short what I wanted to say.

With blessings.

26 July 1965

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BASIC ISSUES OF INDIAN EDUCATION

1. In view of the present and the future of national and international living, what is it that India should aim at in education?

Prepare her children for the rejection of falsehood and the manifestation of Truth.

2. By what steps could the country proceed to realise this high aim? How can a beginning in that direction be made?

Make matter ready to manifest the Spirit.

3. What is India’s true genius and what is her destiny?

To teach to the world that matter is false and impotent unless it becomes the manifestation of the Spirit.

4. How does the Mother view the progress of Science and Technology in India? What contribution can they make to the growth of the Spirit in man?

Its only use is to make the material basis stronger, completer and more effective for the manifestation of the Spirit.

5. The country feels much concerned about national unity. What is the Mother’s vision of things? How will India do her duty by herself and by the world?

The unity of all the nations is the compelling future of the world.

1 In August 1965 an Education Commission of the Government of India visited the Ashram to evaluate the ideals and educational methods of the Centre of Education. At that time a group of teachers submitted this series of questions to the Mother.
But for the unity of all nations to be possible, each nation must first realise its own unity.

6. The language problem harasses India a good deal. What would be our correct attitude in this matter?

Unity must be a living fact and not the imposition of an arbitrary rule. When India will be one, she will have spontaneously a language understood by all.

7. Education has normally become literacy and a social status. Is it not an unhealthy trend? But how to give education its inner worth and intrinsic enjoyability?

Get out of conventions and insist on the growth of the soul.

8. What illusions and delusions is our education today beset with? How could we possibly keep clear of them?

a) The almost exclusive importance given to success, career and money.

b) Insist on the paramount importance of the contact with the Spirit and the growth and manifestation of the Truth of the being.

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1. How to prepare children for the rejection of falsehood (a) when the falsehood is still within the blood and every cell of my body? (b) when attachment to falsehood is becoming stronger and stronger by the egoistic and possessive nature?

2. How can the unity of each nation be realised (a) when there is no unity within the individual? (b) when
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there is no unity between two members of a family? (c) when there is no unity in one organisation or institution?

3. How to get out of conventions and insist on the growth of the soul when even an Ashramite spreads the infection of social status to satisfy personal wants?

4. How not to give an almost exclusive importance to success, career and money when everyone is running after money for the exhibition and satisfaction of one’s ego and self-importance?

To each one a body has been given to do that work, because it is in realising these things in oneself that one helps humanity to realise them upon earth.

The teacher must absolutely possess the qualities and the consciousness he wants his students to acquire.

I would like them (the Government) to recognise Yoga as education, not so much for ourselves, but it will be good for the country.

Matter will be transformed, that will be a solid base. Life will be divinised. Let India take the lead.

MESSAGE FOR THE INAUGURATION OF A FRENCH INSTITUTE AT PONDICHERY

In any country the best education that can be given to children consists in teaching them what the true nature of their country is and its own qualities, the mission their nation has to fulfil in the world and its true place in the terrestrial concert. To that should

2 These four questions, asked by a teacher, are based upon the Mother’s replies to the series of questions in the previous letter (5 August 1965).
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be added a wide understanding of the role of other nations, but without the spirit of imitation and without ever losing sight of the genius of one’s own country. France meant generosity of sentiment, newness and boldness of ideas and chivalry in action. It was that France which commanded the respect and admiration of all: it is by these virtues that she dominated the world.

An utilitarian, calculating, mercantile France is France no longer. These things do not agree with her true nature and in practising them she loses the nobility of her world position.

This is what the children of today must be made to know.

4 April 1955