

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

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TWO ANNAS

PRIME MINISTER'S DECLARATION

[The following declaration of policy by the Prime Minister, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, contained in his message to Bombay State on the occasion of the celebration of its Prohibition Week from April 5 to April 12, will be considered as a landmark in the implementation of our national Prohibition policy. It lays down that, whatever the step, it has to be a step forward and "the direction should remain the same." States that may still be hesitating or wavering have in this now a clear directive from the centre, if at all it was needed. Bombay State may well congratulate itself for winning the credit of securing such a clear statement of this national policy from the Prime Minister of India.

64-53

— M. P.]

For a long time past prohibition occupied an important place in our national programme. When the Constitution of India was drafted and passed, the policy of prohibition was mentioned as one of the guiding principles of our policy. Some of our States have given effect to it fully, some partly and some have proceeded more slowly.

Conditions differ from place to place and those responsible for the governance of each State have to decide on what steps to take and when to give effect to this national policy. Naturally all these steps should be carefully thought out so that each step should be firmly taken and any untoward consequences avoided. But it should be remembered always that we have to go in a certain direction as laid down in our Constitution.

There has been a good deal of controversy over this issue, more especially because of financial difficulties. Financial considerations have to be borne in mind. But if, from a social point of view, a particular reform is considered desirable, then financial considerations have a secondary place. We may well consider the best method and the most suitable steps to bring about that reform, but the direction should remain the same.

The major consideration should always be the good of the masses of our people. I have little doubt that the masses of our people profit both in the short run and in the long run by a policy of prohibition.

I send my good wishes, therefore, on the occasion of Bombay State observing a Prohibition Week.

EQUAL DISTRIBUTION

(By Gandhiji)

The real implication of equal distribution is that each man shall have the wherewithal to supply all his natural wants and no more. For example, if one man has a weak digestion and requires only a quarter of a pound of flour for his bread and another needs a pound, both should be in a position to satisfy their wants. To bring this ideal into being the entire social order has got to be reconstructed. A society based on non-violence cannot nurture any other ideal. We may not perhaps be able to realize the goal, but we must bear it in mind and work unceasingly to near it. To the same extent as we progress towards our goal we shall find contentment and happiness, and to that extent too, shall we have contributed towards the bringing into being of a non-violent society.

Now let us consider how equal distribution can be brought about through non-violence. The first step towards it is for him who has made this ideal part of his being to bring about the necessary changes in his personal life. He would reduce his wants to a minimum, bearing in mind the poverty of India. His earnings would be free of dishonesty. The desire for speculation would be renounced. His habitation would be in keeping with his new mode of life. There would be self-restraint exercised in every sphere of life. When he has done all that is possible in his own life, then only will he be in a position to preach this ideal among his associates and neighbours.

Indeed at the root of this doctrine of equal distribution must lie that of the trusteeship of the wealthy for superfluous wealth possessed by them. For according to the doctrine they may not possess a rupee more than their neighbours. How is this to be brought about? Non-violently? Or should the wealthy be dispossessed of their possessions? To do this we would naturally have to resort to violence. This violent action cannot benefit society. Society will be the poorer, for it will lose the gifts of a man who knows how to accumulate wealth. Therefore the non-violent way is evidently superior. The rich man will be left in possession of his wealth, of which he will

use what he reasonably requires for his personal needs and will act as a trustee for the remainder to be used for the society. In this argument, honesty on the part of the trustee is assumed.

If however, in spite of the utmost effort, the rich do not become guardians of the poor in the true sense of the term and the latter are more and more crushed and die of hunger, what is to be done? In trying to find the solution to this riddle I have lighted on non-violent non-co-operation and civil disobedience as the right and infallible means. The rich cannot accumulate wealth without the co-operation of the poor in society. If this knowledge were to penetrate to and spread amongst the poor, they would become strong and would learn how to free themselves by means of non-violence from the crushing inequalities which have brought them to the verge of starvation.

Harijan, 25-8-'40

B.C.G. AND TUBERCULOSIS

[Shri S. R. Mistri, Bombay, sends me a leaflet issued by the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection, London, on the subject with a request to publish it in the *Harijan*. At a time when Governments in India today are rushing in for B.C.G. where doctors are divided, it is good to see the other side of the matter depicted in the leaflet reproduced below. At least it will amply show that B.C.G. vaccination should be voluntary and Governments need not be propagandists of B.C. G. at public cost.

3-3-'53

— M. P.]

Vaccination against tuberculosis is now very much in the news. The vaccine used is known as "B. C. G."—Bacillus-Calmette-Guerin, Calmette and Guerin being the joint inventors. It had not long been in use before it was responsible for two grave calamities: at Lübeck in Germany, out of 253 children vaccinated 176 were made ill and over 70 died (the number has been variously given between 73 and 76); while at a Madrid children's home, 333 were made ill and 164 died.

These two tragic happenings naturally put the vaccine in bad odour and for some time stopped it from being used extensively. However, even tragedies on this scale are forgotten fairly quickly, and B. C. G. gradually came into favour in certain countries, notably Scandinavia, France and the U. S. A. Conditions resulting from the Second World War vastly increased the number of cases of tuberculosis in many parts of the world, and even in Britain the death-rate which had been steadily falling for decades, suddenly began to rise again. This state of affairs gave the B. C. G. propagandists their chance, and the once discredited vaccine is now being used on an enormous scale. Despite differences of opinion among experts in this country, it has now been introduced into Britain, though for the time being only on a limited scale, the groups it is intended to vaccinate being those who are regarded as particularly exposed to infection. No doubt every effort will be made, later on, to bring B. C. G. into general use, as in the case of immunization against diphtheria.

In Britain, the wartime increase in deaths from tuberculosis applies only to the years 1940 and 1941. After that, the downward trend was resumed, and will probably continue. No doubt an attempt will be made, at some time

in the future, to insist that the decline in mortality is due to the introduction of B. C. G. vaccination.

What is B.C.G.?

Some inoculation substances consist of dead bacteria or their toxins. B. C. G. contains *living* tubercle bacilli, though in an attenuated (weakened) form. They are weakened by means of repeated culture on a certain medium, usually glycerine-bile-potato. Each injection contains millions of these bacilli. Many different vaccines have been tried (babies, children and lunatics, as well as animals, have been used in testing them), both with dead and living bacteria, and research is going on all the time; but for the present, B. C. G. holds undisputed sway and all the B. C. G. cultures in the world originate from the Paris strain at the Pasteur Institute. This was originally a virulent bovine strain—that is, from cattle. B. C. G. vaccine was first tried on infants in 1922, and it was soon taken up on a considerable scale in France, mainly because of Calmette's enthusiasm. For some years the vaccine was administered by mouth, but it is now usually injected. B. C. G. like all other similar products, makes high profits for commercial manufacturers.

Dangers of B.C.G.

It was claimed that the Lübeck and Madrid tragedies occurred through the contamination of the vaccine with virulent organisms from outside, but whether this was so or not there is always the possibility of the so-called non-virulent bacilli in B. C. G. becoming virulent again. Professor Much, at the trial of the Lübeck doctors, stated with emphasis that weakened tubercle bacilli can always become virulent again. This has in fact happened when they have been cultured on certain media. It is known that the characteristics of a bacterium depend very largely on its environment. B. C. G. is supposed to be sufficient virulent to increase the human subject's resistance to tuberculosis, but not virulent enough to cause an attack of the disease. This balance Calmette claimed to have achieved after 230 sub-cultures; and he also made the large claim that its characteristics were then fixed; that is to say, that all subsequent cultures would hold the same delicate balance—a most improbable theory. In fact, Petroff cultured a Paris strain of B. C. G. on gentian-violet-egg, and produced a virulent type of bacillus, which fact made Calmette angrily indignant. He insisted that, in this and other similar cases, the culture had been infected from outside—a most unlikely happening in view of the precautions taken.

Guinea-pigs have been used on an enormous scale in tuberculosis research because they are highly susceptible to the disease. In many experiments it was found that guinea-pigs inoculated with B. C. G. developed tuberculosis in varying degrees of severity. Lignieres reported in 1928 that he had produced progressive tuberculosis in rabbits by injecting them with B. C. G. It has been claimed that this has not happened in recent years; but the vaccine was "fixed" once and for all in 1924, and its virulence is not supposed to vary. The rabbits and guinea-pigs had not changed, so what had? The answer may be that the experimenters are now so concerned to back B. C. G. that they interpret their experiments differently.

It seems there is always a possibility of B. C. G. giving instead of preventing, tuberculosis, and it is known that it may "light up" (reawaken) dormant tuberculosis. If the injection results in giving the disease, the supporters of the vaccine have an ingenious excuse. They assert that the injection does not always succeed in conferring immunity. If, therefore, a vaccinated person develops the disease, he is regarded as a case of unsuccessful vaccination who has caught the infection from an outside source.

Dr. G. S. Wilson, M. D. F. R. C. P., D. P. H., writing in the *British Medical Journal* of 29th November, 1947, said:

"(1) B. C. G. is a live vaccine, and should be used within a week of its preparation. This means that

very great care has to be taken in its preparation to avoid contaminants, and in its distribution to make sure that a high proportion of the organisms are alive at the time of injection. (2) The virulence of B. C. G. is not fixed. If it is too virulent harmful reaction may occur in those who are injected; if it is not sufficiently virulent the degree of protection it affords will be reduced. (3) The injection has to be made intracutaneously with considerable care. If the vaccine is injected too deeply serious ulceration may occur at the site of injection in a high proportion of subjects and persist for weeks or months, sometimes accompanied by suppuration of the regional lymphatic nodes. Even if the injection is made strictly into the superficial layers of the skin a small local ulcer may normally (our italics) be expected to develop. (Holm, 1946)."

An article in *Le Concours Medical* of 1st May, 1948, which was one of a long series on the subject, referred to ".....the many cases of suppurating adenitis or the severe local reactions which have been reported by authentic supporters of B. C. G. and which are enough to give the lie to 'the perfect harmlessness' of this vaccine."

Causes of Tuberculosis

A century of investigation has shown clearly that, whatever germ may be associated with the disease its real causes are mal-nutrition and bad environment. The death-rate from tuberculosis was reduced enormously in Britain by improvements in the conditions of living, and this is, in fact, the only scientific way to tackle the disease. The widespread use of B. C. G. may do infinite harm by diverting attention from the factors that really matter.

Effectiveness of B.C.G.

The nature of tuberculosis, and the many and complex factors involved, make it almost impossible to determine whether in fact B. C. G. does confer some degree of protection from the disease. Some investigations have been made, in which numbers of vaccinated and unvaccinated persons, living under fairly similar conditions have been concerned. In most of these it is claimed that the results prove the efficacy of vaccination; but in others there was no difference in the incidence of the disease between the vaccinated and the unvaccinated. The highest claims refer to a "control" experiment made in respect of Indian children in the Qu'Appelle Indian Health Unit during the period October, 1933 to December, 1945. These claims were torn to shreds in a letter in *The Lancet* of 15th October, 1949, which showed that the statistical evidence which purported to prove the efficacy of B. C. G. were totally unreliable. The writer, referring to the figures given, said: "The critical reader must inevitably and wholly reject the claims made for them."

In those favourable to vaccination, it was significant that the general death-rate, as well as the tuberculosis death-rate was higher in the unvaccinated.

As the vaccination cannot have prevented other disease factors must have been at work that invalidate the conclusions drawn.

Experiments on Animals

The following species of animals have been experimented upon in connection with B. C. G. vaccination: dogs, monkeys, sheep, cattle, goats, pigs, rabbits, guinea-pigs, mice. The routine tests or samples of each batch of vaccine are done on guinea-pigs. These tests are useless as a safeguard, as the vaccine has always been used before the tests are completed. The vaccine has to be used quickly—some experts say within a week. Thus if a batch turns out to be virulent, the fact would not be known until too late.

Summary

B.C.G. vaccination is potentially dangerous, and there is no convincing evidence that it gives protection against tuberculosis. Its widespread use will give a false sense of security and make it less likely that the conditions that cause tuberculosis will be dealt with.

BHOODAN MOVEMENT AND FRAGMENTATION

(By U. Keshava Rao)

Some doubts are being raised as to what is the safeguard, after giving lands to the landless, against (a) fragmentation by inheritance (b) sale in parts or whole to others, which would defeat the purpose of the movement.

The fragmentation of donated lands by way of inheritance and sale is a fact to a certain extent. In order to meet any such contingency, the Bhoodan Yajna Samiti (Hyderabad) had imposed the following conditions on the donees:

1. The donee shall not transfer the land within ten years and shall keep the land for his personal cultivation.

2. If a co-operative society is formed in the village, the grantee shall, if so required by the Tahsildar, become a member of the society.

The experience gained during the distribution of lands shows that the cultivators have no such fears of fragmentation. Generally they do not favour the subdivision of land when it affects the agriculture and it becomes difficult to cultivate the soil. There are several instances where the agriculturists had taken up for joint cultivation instead of dividing the land, because the land is too small and co-sharers are many. As per example, (two) acres of land in Kolhalapuri village in Devarkonda Taluka is being cultivated by ten joint co-sharers. The joint farming system is an old one, prevailing in our villages. Whenever the agriculturists find that it is not profitable to divide the lands beyond a certain limit, they automatically take up the land for joint cultivation. If it is organized in a systematic manner, it would help very much to minimize the fragmentation of land.

The Bhoodan Yajna aims to provide the landless with lands without compensation by way of peaceful means. It exhorts that land is a gift of nature and as such, everybody has a right to benefit by it.

The fact that nearly 8 lakh acres of land have been collected within two years clearly shows that people are ready to donate lands for the benefit of society, if they got more than necessary. History shows that there are two methods to acquire lands:

(1) Acquisition by force, (2) Acquisition by compensation. But Bhoodan Yajna has showed the third way of acquisition by voluntary relinquishment.

26-3-'53

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HARIJAN

April 11

1953

A WARNING AND A POINTER

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

A sub-committee of the Public Accounts Committee of the Union has submitted its report on the working of the Hirakund Dam Project. The details of the report are out and the Government of India has accepted most of its recommendations.

The facts brought out before the public eye by the inquiry are very disturbing indeed and are so glaringly damaging to the reputation of a careful and honest administration that it is in no way an exaggeration to say that the whole episode will have very adverse effect on the confidence of the people in the soundness of the working of the Five Year Plan and its implementation by the present administrative set-up. To say the least there has been unjustifiable haste in the work, bordering on irresponsible negligence and decisions involving crores of rupees expenditure seem to have been taken in an irregular and unauthorized manner. And the proverb that 'haste is waste' seems to have fully come true and tragically illustrated by it.

There is another side of the picture also. Thank God that the scandal is out betimes at the vigilant eye of an important Government committee, and the public has been taken into confidence about it. It is both a timely warning and a needed pointer as to how even high-placed Government servants might or could behave if left to themselves and without due control of proper procedure and regard for public money. Do they realize what a rude shock they have given to public confidence in them and in democracy and how tragically they injure the good name of their Government? We hope the Government will restore the confidence of the people by dealing with the matter in a strong manner and by purifying the administration concerned so that the people might be assured of proper use of their money. There is a lesson for the Government servants also. Will they not be the real civil servants of their own countrymen and put their country's cause before their own self? May it not be said of them that they failed their own people at the very time when they ought to have quitted themselves better.

31-3-'53

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THE MESSAGE OF THE CHANDIL CONFERENCE

(A Letter to a Worker by Vinoba)

The Chandil Conference has made for greater clarity of thought among our workers who will now realize the far-reaching implications of the Bhoodan Yajna and their role in its implementation more vividly than ever. That, to my mind, has been the main achievement of this Conference. Many constructive workers are occupied with their various normal activities. When Bhoodan work was launched they thought that one more activity had been added to the ones they were carrying on. The deliberations held at Chandil have now made it clear that what they were required to do was to wind up as many of their present activities as possible and plunge themselves in the Bhoodan work. The Bhoodan work does not mean just one more addition to their activities, but something which comprehends all of them and which is therefore entitled to claim their sole attention.

The old, experienced workers are limited in number. Hundreds of new workers will get an opportunity to help them in their work and receive necessary training. From the amount of enthusiasm that I find for this work in the country, I hope that new workers will be forthcoming in sufficient number. They will also have to be trained for which arrangements should be provided by the Sarva Seva Sangh.

Collection of land-gifts is the least part of the work of Bhoodan Yajna. The main part of the work comes after that. The land collected will have to be distributed. Then, those who receive land will have to be provided with the wherewithal, so that they may start work, that is, they will have to be securely settled on the land. Then in the villages where land is received we will have to work for the establishment of Gramarajya with Khadi, village industries, Nai Talim etc.

Where we have received or might receive uncultivated but cultivable land, efforts will have to be made for establishing new villages and help them settle down to new life. It will be necessary for this purpose to secure co-operation from all concerned, to rouse the people to a sense of their strength and create Jana-Shakti, i.e. democratic force, and seek all possible aid from Government which will have to be moved to see its duty.

The Bhoodan Yajna and the work following it cannot be carried to fulfilment without *Sampatti-dan Yajna*, i.e. sharing of property. This will call for efforts to explain to the people the idea of *Sampatti-dan* as an inescapable principle of social life and make them accept it.

The work we are out to do is as vast and extensive as it is deep and solid. This is Sarvodaya. Land is the foundation of this structure. Constructive workers are the builders. The *Sampatti-dan Yajna* provides the tools and the

attainment of self-sufficiency in food and cloth represents the various items through which the work proceeds to its fulfilment, and the people are the deity by enlisting whose goodwill and favour on our side, we will march to success. I hope that all lovers of Sarvodaya will, simultaneously and in concert, lend their entire might to the fulfilment of this great endeavour.

Mahato Maro, 23-3-'53
(From Hindi)

A POSER TO THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT (By Shrikrishnadas Jaju)

The readers would recall that a few months ago the Madras Chief Minister, Shri Rajaji, had made an appeal over the radio pleading for support to the handloom cloth, in which among other things he had hinted at the advisability for this purpose of mixing mill-yarn with hand-spun yarn and thus producing a composite type of mixed-yarn cloth. He then got samples made of this type and now the Madras Government has come to the decision that such cloth be manufactured for the use of the *chaprasis* in various departments of the Government. According to its previous decision, Khadi was prescribed for such use. That goes now and henceforward instead of Khadi this mixed cloth passes into vogue for use in Government offices.

This new cloth will use, as laid down in the decision, a double-thread twine made up of one mill-made thread of 20 counts and one hand-spun thread of 18 counts in the warp and two hand-spun threads of 18 counts in the waft. Thus there will be three hand-spun threads for every mill-made thread. This slight admixture of mill-yarn will certainly make for some economy, but the question is whether it will be appreciable enough to sacrifice the long-established tradition of the purity of Khadi by going in for this mixed variety of cloth. It is true that the use of a single-thread hand-spun yarn in the warp makes weaving difficult which therefore takes a longer time with the consequent rise in the weaving charges. But if the yarn is double-twisted, then, in spite of both the threads being hand-spun, it becomes sufficiently strong and may be woven quite easily without any higher charges being paid for it. In case of double-twisted hand-spun yarn, it would not be necessary to mix any mill-yarn for reducing the cost of weaving. It may be that this mixed type of cloth will have a neater texture. But the point can be decided only after sufficient quantities of this cloth manufactured by ordinary weaver are examined and found to be so.

Of the two centres, where this mixed variety is proposed to be manufactured, one is Uttam Avinashi which the Madras Government took over from the Charkha Sangh for working their cloth self-sufficiency scheme, but which they did not care to return to the latter even after the scheme was abandoned. The spinners at this

centre are skilled workers and the yarn produced at this centre will also therefore be of sufficiently neat texture. Why then mix a thread of mill-yarn? Will it make that cloth more durable? To this it may be said that the double-twisted hand-spun yarn cloth—being of the same quality as at the Avinashi centre—will be equally durable. The experts are of the opinion that there cannot be much difference in respect of durability. On the contrary, some of them fear that the twisting together of a hand-spun thread and a mill-made thread will result in the latter biting the former which will render the yarn used in the warp weaker.

The price of this mixed cloth has been estimated at Re 1-14-0 per yard of 28 inches width. The Charkha Sangh offers its pure *do-suti* Khadi used in the dress for the *chaprasis* at Rs 2/- per yard, which will now sell at the reduced price of Re 1-10-0 per yard as a result of the decision of the Khadi Gramodyoga Board to grant subsidy at the rate of three annas per rupee. Its yarn is a bit thicker, but in the opinion of the experts it is not less durable than this mixed cloth.

Unfortunately people in the South have begun to call this cloth by the name of Rajaji Khadi. This is patently unfair to Rajaji because he regards it as belonging to the class of handloom or mill-cloth and has made it clear that it should not pass under the name of Khadi. But who can restrain the people? It is likely that it may become known as mixed Khadi, because three out of every four threads in it are hand-spun. But it would be an offence to call this mixed cloth Khadi according to a Government of India Act. For the present this cloth is being produced for use in the Government offices only and there is no intention to put it in the market. But in case the production outstrips the needs of the Government, it may find its way into the market and sell there under the name of mixed Khadi. Then others may also manufacture it and sell it by whatever name and those who have no genuine regard for Khadi but use it under the compulsion of rules and who may therefore go in for any cloth resembling Khadi, will gladly purchase it. Of course, the Madras Government has made it clear that this cloth will be produced only at the appointed centres and has warned that other weavers must not produce this special variety. The warning says that if they do so and indulge in mixing mill-yarn in Khadi, they will be strongly dealt with. But it is not clear how they will implement this warning. When some weavers are allowed to manufacture it, others will be naturally tempted to follow suit and this will give a serious setback to pure Khadi.

The naming of this mixed cloth raises a difficult problem. It will be said that in the event of this cloth going into the market, it should go under the name of the handloom cloth. But by what name actually will it be called? It cannot

be called mill-cloth, because there will be three-fourths of hand-spun yarn in it. The term, 'mixed cloth' is inadequate because it is necessary to show that it has a greater quantity of hand-spun yarn. The name mixed Khadi is likely to gain currency and though it looks very incongruous to put the adjective 'mixed' (मिश्र) before Khadi, it seems it will be difficult to prevent the word 'Khadi' from being used as a part of its name. The use of the word Khadi, however, even though qualified by 'mixed' may still be against law. It is therefore suggested that if the use of the word Khadi for this type of cloth is unavoidable, the proper thing to do would be to call it adulterated (or अमूढ़) Khadi.

The Charkha Sangh has always insisted that the Centre and State Governments should make use of Khadi for their need of cloth in all their departments. The Khadi Gramodyoga Board recently constituted by the Union Government has also placed the same demand. People expect that the Board will give a great fillip to the production of Khadi. Khadi will be produced in great quantities and since the Khadi scheme of the Board aims at providing relief from unemployment, all hand-spun yarn wherever produced and in whatever quantity, should be used. The spinning should not be curtailed on the plea that there is no corresponding consumption of Khadi. It is expected — there is also some assurance in this regard — that barring the needs of the Police and Military for their uniforms, every other need of cloth in all the departments of the Central and State Governments would be met with Khadi. It is the duty of the Governments to give at least this much support to Khadi. When Government want that the people should use Khadi and thus encourage hand-spinning with a view to providing relief in unemployment, how can they themselves refuse to use it? This being so, it is not clear how the Madras or any other Government can reasonably use the mixed cloth for their needs.

The mixed cloth is bound to cost more than the mill or the hand-loom cloth because it uses hand-spun yarn — even though in part only — which is much costlier than the mill-yarn. How then can it sell in the market against the inevitable competition? People cherish a feeling of regard for Khadi and agree to pay more for it which they will not do in case of the mixed cloth. Under the situation the mixed cloth cannot hope to get a market. It is evident that Governments whose duty it is to encourage pure Khadi can be the only customers for it.

If it is argued that the use of the mill-yarn in warp will facilitate weaving and make for cheapness, then may we ask the Government whether they will be prepared to accept the responsibility to make use in this way of all the hand-spun yarn produced in the country so that the problem of the hand-spun yarn may be solved once for all? As things are at present I cannot

think of Government agreeing to do so. If however they are prepared for it, they should give an express promise in this regard. And if this is not possible why is this mixed Khadi being used? The Madras Government owes it to the people to explain why they are bent on introducing this disturbing innovation and creating the consequent muddle in the field of Khadi. They should come out with a clear explanation of their stand. If they do not do so people will be justified in blaming them. One can understand that if the outturn of the hand-spun yarn goes beyond the point where it becomes impossible to sell all the Khadi thus produced, then the price of the hand-spun yarn itself will go down under the competitive condition of the market. But one cannot understand how the Government itself can undertake to promote the manufacture of this mixed cloth and use it for their needs or be instrumental in bringing it into the market.

(From Hindi)

DAWN OF HUMANIZATION

[This is the last instalment of Rene Fullop-Miller's speech; for previous instalments see the issues of 14th, 21st and 28th March, '53. — Ed.]

The original trend toward dehumanization was started by Descartes' introductions of abstract concepts of man, and it found its most dangerous expression in the tenets of the nineteenth century.

Since then, especially during the last decades, science has embarked on a startling new course which has led to a second Copernican revolution of thought. The newly evolved world picture discards all the pre-requirements for the various dehumanizing abstractions and terms them an untenable myth.

Modern science disproved positivist materialism and with it the basis of dehumanization by terming it a primitive mistake. J. B. S. Haldane, the great British biologist, spoke for all of progressive science when he said: "Materialism, once a scientific theory, is now the fatalistic creed of thousands. But materialism is nothing better than a superstition on the same level as belief in witches and devils."

In contrast to the materialists who deny the spiritual roots of man, modern science holds that man and life are not restricted to matter, energy and mechanical functions, but that behind all material creation a spiritual principle operates. This spiritual aspect of things alone can give access to that ultimate reality which remains barred to a mere physical view.

"Today mind no longer seems to us a chance intruder into the realm of matter," Jeans wrote. "It is slowly dawning on us that perhaps we ought to hail it as the creator and ruler of the realm of matter." And Eddington said: "We are no longer tempted to characterize the spiritual aspects of nature as illusory. Rather, the

physical world borders everywhere on the spiritual and its factual existence is due solely to this connection."

Before closing, I would like to give you a short glimpse of the results of modern scientific research that led modern biology, psychology and sociology to realize human nature in its totality and uniqueness.

Nobel Prize winner Erwin Schroedinger, who tackled the problem of life from the angle of a physicist, discovered that every individual has its own unique arrangement of chromosomes. Thus every living being carries the mark of its individuality already in the germinal cell. In opposition to the materialist conception of the characterless uniformity of all nature, the "principle of individuation" is a basic element in organic nature. Schroedinger compared the structure of inorganic matter with a wallpaper on which the same motifs form a repeat-design, while the structure of organic nature resembles a master-piece of tapestry. The latter employs no repetitions, for the weaving forms a coherent and overall picture by a great master.

Thus, uniqueness of personality is today a scientifically proved fact, which makes the fiction of mass-man an empty slogan. With this new concept of man, human values have come into their own again. As the great scientist and philosopher Alfred N. Whitehead explained: "Values and ideals are behind every act. Apart from values the human life is but a bagatelle of transient experience." And the Swiss neurologist Konstantin v. Monakov even declared that values are a biological principle.

The social concept of liberal and Marxist economists who reduced man to the product of his material environment has been scrapped by modern sociology, which takes account of the complexity of man and society.

The cynical anti-human philosophy of violence which was propagated by Nietzsche, Sorel, and Pareto, is viewed by truly progressive philosophers as philosophical aberration.

It is interesting to note that the recent insights of modern science and philosophy are in complete accord with the wisdom and teachings of all great religious leaders and sages throughout the centuries.

Those who put their faith in the uniqueness and totality of man, those who believe in the reality of intellectual and spiritual values, are furthering the evolving realization of a great truth, they help to bring about a dawn which will put to flight the dark night of dehumanization and thus chart the way toward a meaningful and valuable life.

As far as I am concerned, I would like to cast my lot with the forces of a new dawn of humanization.

(Concluded)

RECOVERY OF SPIRITUAL VALUES

[*The Sower* is a small "world-wide agricultural and village news bulletin" issued from England. It is devoted to the recovery of spiritual values in modern life in all its aspects—agriculture and industry, trade and commerce. A friend from England sent us its Spring, 1952 number, which contains very interesting material bearing on agriculture. As the reader will remember, an article by Shri Wilfred Wellock—"Adopt Gandhian Economy or Perish"—was reproduced from that bulletin in the *Harijan* of January 31, 1953. The following is culled from the editorial of the same number of *The Sower*. It will be interesting to read it in continuation with a similar plea put forth by Sir George Schuster in his address that appeared in the *Harijan* of 28-3-'53.

—M. P. J.

As the process of our decay advances the urgency of the discovery of the way of salvation grows. We shall not make that discovery until we realize that our root problem is spiritual. The economic collapse that is now overtaking the nations is the outcome of moral decay, of the triumph of material or money values over spiritual values.

Increasingly we have identified living with higher levels of consumption of goods and services. Quantitative production thus becomes our ideal. Quality of things and of life has ceased to count.

To get quantity of production we cover our land with chemicals, thrust our poultry into batteries and into deep litter, feed them and also our cattle on highly stimulating foods, thus debilitating them so that they become subject to numerous diseases, while land and animals yield food that is lacking in vital minerals, vitamins etc.

The beginning of salvation must be the recovery of spiritual values.

Spiritual values include respect for human personality, to develop which vocation is an essential factor; and where there exists a sense of vocation, honesty of purpose and sincerity in action will be manifest.

This philosophy applied to agriculture involves a close study of nature and a deep concern for health in every sphere of life—in the soil, in plants, in animals and in man. This involves spurning all the short-cuts to maximum quantitative production without regard to the health of the organisms from which our food is drawn.

It is an urgent problem from several standpoints. For example, what will happen to Britain when the already well stocked world markets are brimful and our unwanted exports fail to pay for the imports of food necessary if we are to maintain the present-day ration? Britain imports half her food requirements, and prices will rise as food gets scarcer, as, for instance, Argentine meat. The law of modern commerce is, the scarcer the commodity the higher the price. For both these reasons we shall do well to reconsider Lord Boyd Orr's warning concerning the world food shortage, and resolve to grow more of our own, here in our island home.

Local and regional agricultural planning and development committees would be an asset

to England and to her varied land conditions each with its own peculiar and particular attributes.

The moment one mentions the reclamation of unproductive, barren acres one is hailed with a torrent of protest on grounds of finance and labour difficulties. It makes one wonder how much longer we shall be able to put off this urgent task, and to which generation the worsening soil will eventually fall to be brought back to fertility at a cost which each neglectful year multiplies. Is there no solution to this problem of converting our waste land into fertile acres? When our foreign markets fail we shall be driven back to our neglected land — why not take time by the forelock? Can we recruit an army of rural civil servants, young men and women wishing to exchange city life for a life of service on and to the land, and to the country? The wartime Women's Land Army was a very real source of agricultural labour, and the money was somehow found to pay for it.

In a rural civil service have we an answer to the materialism of our age, to the flight from the rural areas, to the food shortage, to the ill-health and actual disease which demands the support of a welfare scheme at a terrific cost?

A new economy will call for many sacrifices and a lowering of the present standard of living. If it is to be an economy of permanence its roots will be in the soil. To embark on such an adventure will require courage of the highest order. Instead of a call to arms and possible death, it is a call to life and abundant living, to the greatest exploration and adventure of all; creative living as a gateway to true democracy and a well balanced "economy of permanence".

NOTES

It Was a Misunderstanding

Shri Rajagopalachari, the Chief Minister of Madras, was reported to have spoken a few weeks ago at the Madura College on the occasion of its anniversary, about the importance of the study of English in India at present. As papers reported, he made a strong plea for the retention in India of the English language which he claimed was a "gift by our goddess Saraswati."

From the reports we had about the speech it appeared that he was very probably answering a section of the people who held that English also along with the English rulers ought to quit India. However, from scant reports that appeared on this side of the country it was felt by some people that Shri Rajagopalachari was in support of the re-introduction of English that has been agitating the Bombay State. It was naively held that Shri Rajagopalachari suggested that English might be introduced as early as the 5th standard. I felt, and said in a public meeting, that it was not right and it would be doing injustice to a shrewd and versatile statesman of the calibre of Shri Rajagopalachari to believe that he supported such a proposition. To assure my-

self I wrote to him requesting to tell me whether I was right in my presumption described above. He was good enough to give me a prompt reply wherein he says:

"In Madura I was only referring to the general importance of the study of English along with the study of other languages. As you have guessed rightly it was intended to answer those people who hold that the English language also should quit with the English people. It had nothing whatsoever to do with any proposal anywhere that English should be introduced at an earlier stage in primary education than it is now done."

I hope this will clarify the position and remove the misunderstanding the people might have regarding Shri Rajaji's opinion.

1-4-'53

M. P.

Our Language Policy

"Nagpur, March 18: The Chief Minister, Pandit R. S. Shukla, assured a deputation here last night that the Government would shortly amend the Madhya Pradesh Official Languages Act to place Hindi and Marathi on an equal status.

The deputations told the Chief Minister that the enforcement of the Act from August 15, 1953, would adversely affect the cause of Marathi, as it stipulated only Hindi as the official language to be used in all Government rules, regulations, bye-laws and Assembly Bills and Act, although under the definition of official languages the Act included both Hindi and Marathi. The contradictory provision, they said, would disturb the balance between the two regional languages and would result in a separatist movement.

Pandit Shukla is understood to have said that the necessary amendment would be introduced in the current session of the State Assembly."

The above news-item is important as it illustrates the spirit of the directive in the Constitution of India about the language policy to be followed by us henceforth. It is in refreshing contrast to the avoidable controversy going on in Uttar Pradesh about the recognition of its two regional languages, viz., Hindi and Urdu. Let us hope the Uttar Pradesh in this matter follows the good thing being done by the Madhya Pradesh, for which it deserves to be congratulated.

31-3-'53

M. P.

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