

# HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

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TWO ANNAS

## STATE ENTERPRISE

(By Gandhiji)

I look upon an increase in the power of the State with the greatest fear, because, although while apparently doing good by minimizing exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality which lies at the root of all progress.

The State represents violence in a concentrated and organized form. The individual has a soul, but as the State is a soulless machine, it can never be weaned from violence to which it owes its very existence.

It is my firm conviction that if the State suppressed capitalism by violence, it will be caught in the coils of violence itself and fail to develop non-violence at any time.

What I would personally prefer, would be, not a centralization of power in the hands of the State but an extension of the sense of trusteeship; as in my opinion, the violence of private ownership is less injurious than the violence of the State. However, if it is unavoidable, I would support a minimum of State-ownership.

What I disapprove of is an organization based on force which a State is. Voluntary organization there must be.

*Modern Review*, October 1935

## GOD'S TRUTH

(By C. Rajagopalachari)

[The following message was sent by Shri Rajaji on the occasion of the celebration of the Bombay State Prohibition Week.]

It is unwise to imbibe alcohol in any quantity. It is immoral to encourage others to take any form of intoxicant and this is what we are asked to do when people tell us to open liquor shops to catch wage-earners. It is not just immoral but extreme wickedness to do this to get a revenue for the benefit of persons other than those to whom the drink is sold. All talk of loss of revenue is a confusion of words. It is equivalent to saying we sacrifice what we could get by deceiving wage-earners and deceiving their wives and children. All this is not argument but God's truth.

## OUR GREAT HERITAGE

[This is the Gandhi Memorial Lecture delivered by Dr. Sushila Nayyar on 2nd December, 1952, before the students of the Agra University.]

I do not claim to be a learned person and was hesitant to address a gathering of men of letters. But on second thought I realized that as an eye-witness, who had the rare privilege of seeing the Master at work at close quarters, it was my duty to bear testimony to the greatest phenomenon of our age. I am therefore here to share with you some of the rich experiences that came to me not because of any merit on my part, but as a result of chance to use the language of the sceptic, and because of some good deed in a previous birth, if one may speak the language of faith.

### I

It is amazing how memories begin to fade so quickly. Mahatma Gandhi is already becoming a legendary figure. Sometimes I sit back and wonder within myself whether such a one actually trod the earth and we saw him, heard him and served him in the flesh! It has become the richest memory for those of us who had the good fortune to sit at his feet.

There is a spark of divinity hidden within every human being. But in the case of the general run it lies dormant, unawakened. In the course of history, there come occasions when a rare being, a chosen instrument of His will, through His grace, succeeds in uncovering it from the ashes and cinders of error and ignorance with which it gets overlaid. He then becomes a beacon light to illumine the path of benighted humanity. The world recognizes such a one as *yuga purusha* — an *avatar*. One such being was Mahatma Gandhi.

India has seen many such *yuga purushas*. Mahatma Gandhi was the latest. What meaning, what significance has his life-story for the youth of our day? Shall we place him on the icy heights of the Himalayas and provide ourselves with an excuse dismissing all that he taught us as a counsel of perfection—a Utopian exhortation of an unpractical idealist? Or, does it contain something which we can all follow and practise with advantage in the present-day world? Mahatma Gandhi has ushered in a new era, an era in which

men have started thinking in terms of abolishing all violence and all bloody wars. The doctrine of non-violence is not new. But the concept that it can be used as a potent weapon for putting an end to all forms of exploitation, that it is an instrument that can be wielded by large masses of ordinary men and women for the redress of social and political wrongs and even for the settlement of international disputes is Mahatma Gandhi's special discovery and contribution to human thought.

His experiments in South Africa and in India have demonstrated the efficacy of his non-violent technique sufficiently to create an incentive for thinking men and women all the world over to further explore its possibilities in a systematic and scientific manner. It requires a great man to make a new discovery. But once the discovery is made, lesser men can carry the research further. The discovery of the principle of creating active immunity in man by injecting disease germs was made by Louis Pasteur as a result of years of patient study and hard work. But since then other scientists have added to and enlarged his original discovery. Today even ordinary technicians are able to give preventive inoculations by making use of the new knowledge and save millions of men from death and disease.

Gandhiji was a great scientist and as a result of years of penance and research he has given us a unique weapon. We have his written testimony that to begin with he was a timid, young student of average ability. Yet he became the architect of our nation's destiny with tremendous spiritual power. What was its secret? It was simply observance of the principle of Truth, out of which flowed all his strength. The moment he saw he had made a mistake, he had no hesitation in announcing it from the house tops. The path found to be wrong was given up once for all without a moment's hesitation and the course he considered to be right was followed with set determination irrespective of consequences. There are moments in one's life when it becomes really difficult to know what is right and what is wrong. Life is not always a plain pattern in white and black. Often there are intermediate shades of grey which are hard to distinguish one from the other. But as a rule we have a fair sense in our heart as to what is right and what is wrong. If on such occasions we succumb to the weakness of the flesh and follow the path of least resistance, our faculty of discrimination becomes dulled. On the other hand, if we have courage to follow the right path as we see it, our capacity to distinguish between the shades of grey becomes progressively keener. That is how Gandhiji became a sensitive barometer of moral right and wrong and developed that marvellous intuition and insight which caused his guidance to be sought by all in every difficult situation. His judgement of men and matters was unerring. His opponents learnt to

respect his political acumen and to fear it if in their hearts they did not mean well. He once wrote: "Most religious men I have found to be politicians in disguise, but I who am considered to be a politician am a religious man at heart."

(To be continued)

### TRUSTEESHIP

#### THE BEST MALIGNED GANDHIAN TENET

(By Wilfred Wellock)

It seems irritatingly paradoxical that a man who proclaimed his sole concern service of the downtrodden should have had sanguinary associations with the well-to-do, who would not be such except by exploitation. One cannot serve two masters at a time. How, then, could Gandhiji, a friend of the exploited, have friends in the camp of exploiters? How can a person who exploits the poor be expected to hold and use his gains for the benefit of the poor? The paradox, like other paradoxes, remains baffling so long as things are viewed superficially or with a set purpose. We have to go deep and find out the basis which influenced Gandhiji's behaviour in this regard. It is the theory of trusteeship that explains his association with the rich.

As early as the 4th February, 1916, during the opening ceremony of Banaras Hindu University, Gandhiji while addressing the audience, *inter alia*, reprimandingly referred in his speech to the earlier speakers, the Rajahs and the Maharajahs, who waxed eloquent at the poverty of India. Proceeding, he bluntly observed: "I compare the richly bedecked noblemen with the millions of the poor, and I feel like saying to these noblemen: 'There is no salvation for India unless you strip yourselves of the jewellery and hold it in trust for your countrymen in India.'" So, he got to the theory very early, and was at it till the end of his life. Two things are quite clear here. His plain speaking to the richly bedecked noblemen and his concern for the poor. Let us bear in mind these two things while examining his theory of trusteeship.

If we want to transform the capitalist society we have to understand its wrong ways so that we may find the right ways to get out of it. In the atmosphere prevailing today, even a dispassionate attempt to understand anything which has any connection with what is dubbed capitalism would be suspect. I am sure I run the risk of being dubbed an agent of capitalism vainly trying to perpetuate it.

The tenets of Gandhiji must always be examined in relation to his whole philosophy. He had a definite view of the future society he was trying to ring in. It would not be scientific to tear out an item from that framework and to view it in the background of the framework of present day society. It would help nobody to take as specimens the capitalists of an acquisitive society to judge the 'capitalists' of a non-violent society. So, we must know precisely the forms



and functions of the economic institutions in particular and social, political and other institutions in general, operating in a non-violent society.

Yet, it is difficult to divest ourselves of the idea of a rich man behaving, these days, in the interest of society. A parallel can be found in religion. Religion is admittedly good, but as in its name bad things are done, many refuse to have anything to do with religion. So, when moneyed men misbehave a strong tendency naturally arises to do away with them. But will that solve the problem?

Gandhiji's ideas on the way in which the economic institutions should function in a non-violent society are clear and emphatic. Some of them may be noted here. Basically, economics should be subordinated to ethics. The State should provide work for all its citizens so that they may earn and acquire the means of their existence. It is implied that every man's needs are guaranteed. Another implication is that the "haves", if there be any, will not have the free rein they have at present, while the "have-nots" will no longer be in their present hapless state. Further, in a non-violent society the great majority will produce primary necessities, and not be slaving for others. Cottage industries would be part and parcel of such an arrangement, also village industries in a self-sufficient economy. The State and the local bodies would own all the key, and the big industries and the social services. In the sphere of distribution co-operative societies would be preponderant. Trade and commerce would conform to this set up. Hence the money which the capitalists now get by exploitation would go to the people.

Today a man is a millionaire because he owns big key industries, monopolizes productive and distributive trusts, cartels and combines, is his own commission agent, his own bank and insurance agent. All these wells of the acquisitive society would dry up in an altruistic co-operatively organized society.

The question is, then, how shall we make the transition from the present capitalist or semi-capitalist-semi-socialist order, to a peaceful social order, that is, a social order in which there is no exploitation? By way of Communism, or Socialism, or Trusteeship which is the Gandhian method.

Communism is the way of liquidation, ruthless dispossession and usually accompanied by the imprisonment or death of the possessor. That is complete liquidation, because it includes the capitalist as well as his capital.

This leads to such a condition as we have today—powerful class hatreds and fears both in the Communist countries, and in the world at large between Communist and non-Communist countries. At the moment the whole world fears, and is arming in preparation for a world-shattering world war, which its very arming is insuring.

Socialism is the way of very slow liquidation, so slow that many of the "have-nots" lose patience and go over to Communism. But in fact, as Western Socialism everywhere proves, the end of Socialism is maximum levels of material living. Hence no class is ever satisfied, but plans and plots in order to get the lion's share of the national income. Its politics becomes based on that principle, as is the case in Britain today. British Socialist leaders have latterly moved into the lower and upper middle classes. This is preparing the way for more class struggle and also for more international struggle, since under a materialist conception of life, the demand for the earth's resources will quickly outstrip the supply, when competition for their possession will pass from the realm of diplomacy and normal trade, to war.

Hence both Communism and Socialism terminate in violence.

Then what about Gandhiji's principle of Trusteeship?

In the first place, Gandhi starts from the ethical principle that none should live in luxury while many are driven to penury and starvation. He indeed makes that principle the very basis of Trusteeship.

In any case, a very rich man is a social exploiter. His accumulated wealth is the product of the brain and muscle of a large number of people. What he pays in wages or salaries and what he charges for whatever production he controls, is fixed by him, and is backed by his financial, social and political power.

The question is, therefore, how to achieve the re-direction of that power, so that the community get their due?

Gandhi's answer is, by the exercise of soul-force, or non-violent resistance to evil, on the part of those who are wronged, assisted by their sympathizers. Soul-force is the dynamic by which righteousness or Truth, are to achieve recognition of the obligations of Trusteeship.

Applied to Industry, this boils down to the adoption of the ethical strike, or "striking" for the victory of Truth which is also justice.

In order to organize such strikes, education in Basic Social Truth is necessary. This can be easily done as Gandhi himself showed. He claimed to be an expert in the organization and conducting of strikes—factory strikes. He led many, and in every case he achieved complete victory. He explained and expounded the moral and spiritual justification for strike action. Schooled the workers in it, showed the absolute necessity for non-violence in carrying on the strike. He then asked the workers to strike if they felt spiritually equal to the task. They usually did. Then he led them, and shared their rations.

In due course he began to prepare for demanding the right of labour to share with capital ownership and control, and had he lived it is possible he would have gone ahead until he had brought the whole of Indian industry within the

possession and control of all who participated in it.

Thus the doctrine of trusteeship is a part and parcel of the non-violent ends and non-violent means in the Gandhian scheme of things. It establishes the sovereignty of the people in the conduct of their daily avocations. It is 'no make-shift, certainly no camouflage.' According to its author: "It has the sanction of philosophy and religion behind it. No other theory is compatible with non-violence." It deserves to be studied carefully by all sincere students of human well-being.

(From *The Sower*, Spring, 1952).

## HARIJAN

April 18

1953

### THE NEW STATE OF ANDHRA

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

It is declared that Andhra will be formed into a separate State some months after. Well may the Andhra people congratulate themselves on the realization of their dream after a fairly long time of perseverance, though not of patience which seemed to have left them in the last few years of this their journey to the cherished goal. Let us hope that patience returns to them and that they muster many more other virtues also which will be called forth from them in the service of the new State to be constituted soon.

There is a school of thought among us which holds that parcelling out India on a linguistic basis will be a dangerous thing. On the other side there is an equally strong, and perhaps bigger, section of the people who hold that the sooner this is done the better for us, as its absence, according to them, is a bar to progress of rebuilding India. Here also the golden mean is the wise course and it is good that Government has accepted it and it moves carefully and cautiously in this matter. The creation of the new State of Andhra is to be watched carefully and further work in the formation of linguistic-cum-administrative units of the Union will depend on what experience we gather from this experiment. This is a wise decision and it is to be hoped that other provinces will heed to it and mind first things first and be patient about a problem which is surely not the topmost priority.

As was feared, a quarrel has arisen over border areas on the linguistic frontiers between two States. In the case of Andhra, Bellary District has been a bone of contention between Karnatak and Andhra. Government, before deciding over the matter of separate Andhra State, had appointed Justice Wanchoo to go into the whole question and report on all matters that might arise in the wake of such separation from the parent State of

Madras. A Boundary Commission seems to have been recommended to settle difficult questions of such a nature, and it would be good if the line of least resistance is adopted in this matter and such questions are referred to it. Till then the controversial parts may well remain in the residuary State.

Justice Wanchoo was asked to go into the financial aspect of separation also. He has reported that the new State will perhaps run into a deficit of about 2 crores or more and therefore it will have no money for new ventures in reconstruction etc. And he suggested how to remedy this probable state of affairs, which he might have better left to the leaders and the Government of the new State.

Looking to the Report that appeared in the Press we find that various suggestions were made both by the political parties and the Madras Finance Department (F.D.) to make good this deficit. For example, the F.D. suggested that the Sales Tax (and the Motor Vehicles Tax also) might be tightened up to render a crore; the water cess in the Godavari and Krishna Delta Systems for wet lands can be increased to give a crore more. It is only Rs 5 per acre, whereas it is Rs 10 in the residuary State of Madras under the Mettur project and in some cases as much as Rs 22-8-0 per acre in Tinnevely district. These are obviously helpful suggestions and should be fully exploited. It is also noteworthy that no one suggested scrapping of prohibition as a remedy against the deficit. Therefore, it becomes really surprising to see that Justice Wanchoo advised, of his own accord, that Andhra might decide to be off-prohibition which is State policy at present, and thus not only make good the expected deficit but also have a few crores surplus for new works and schemes of public welfare. The suggestion requires serious consideration from various points of view.

It must be obvious now that scrapping of prohibition will be clear 'disservice to the poor' and a criminal betrayal of the people as it involves going back over the nation's plighted word. As Shri Rajaji, intervening in the debate in the Madras Legislature on the 'excise' demand in the supplementary estimates, said a few days ago, "the scrapping of the Prohibition Act would be a 'deliberate act of cruelty and injustice on the poorest section of the people.' In his opinion, the excise was immoral not because it held any religious horror to him but because it was collected from the poorest by the State" (P.T.I. message from Madras, March 28), and I may add, in the interest of the rich. Thus, not merely from the moral or ethical point, but also from the point of public finance\* as well it is bad and unjustified. It is bad in law too. The Constitution of

\* The following observation (*Free Press Journal*, p. 2, April 3, 1953) by Shri Jivraj Mehta, Finance and Prohibition Minister, Bombay, while addressing newsmen on the



India lays down that "the State shall endeavour to bring about prohibition. . . ." (Art. 47). Now to scrap prohibition is surely not an endeavour for prohibition, and is therefore *ultra vires* of State policy as laid down to be followed, if at all, regarding drink and drugs. It must be noted that Andhra has prohibition, and hence the question of going back over it is bad in law as well as in practice and policy.

Therefore it is surprising to see that the Wanchoo Report does not consider these weighty reasons against scrapping prohibition and goes into saying what it might have well avoided. The leaders and new rulers of Andhra State may be requested to see that drink cannot be a proper gift to their wards on the occasion of the birth of the new State. The people and their leaders should raise their voice against this bad advice. There may be other ways to get money from the people. The way of drink revenue is no way, nor a true monetary foundation for rebuilding new Andhra, as it ruins the people and is destructive of their wealth and happiness. Andhra should be courageous like Bombay and start well with prohibition which is a sure foundation, both material and moral, and is an undisputed blessing to millions of our poor people—chiefly women and children.

Andhra has seen in its neighbourhood the birth of Shri Vinoba's Bhodan Movement. It has seen the worst of the Communist menace also. The leaders of the people have to rise to the occasion and make the best of all the good things like prohibition etc. that they inherit and start with and avoid what is proved bad and undesirable, and with courage and conviction march on to Sarvodaya, our common national ideal.

6-4-53

significance of the 'Prohibition Week', deserves to be noted here in this connection:

"The Minister pointed out that prohibition had made taxation more equitable inasmuch as the Sales Tax which has replaced excise taxes falls on the consumer in proportion to his purchasing capacity whereas the excise taxes used to come mainly from the poorest strata of society."

4-4-53

By Mahatma Gandhi

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## OBJECTIVES OF EDUCATION

[From translation of the Address in Hindi of Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of India, at the Convocation of the Patna University on March 11, 1953.]

In my view the objectives of education are three, two of which relate more or less to the life of the individual as such while the third is concerned with his collective life. Its first objective is to enhance the power and capacity of reason of the individual given to him by God. It is true that reason is a gift made by Nature or God to man at his birth. But in its pristine form its capacity and power are extremely limited. If a person were to be left to depend on his untutored reason alone he would not be able to use it to do any good to himself or to his fellows due to severe limitations of space and time. But if this rational faculty is enriched by the accumulated experience of the past generation, its power and capacity are increased very greatly; for then, the individual is able to grasp numerous truths of great utility relating to himself and the animate and inanimate world around him which he could not possibly have learnt by means of his own unaided reason. In other words, the educational process makes his reason so powerful and capable as to understand the nature of his own personality and that of the animate and inanimate world around him and while living in it to direct his life in the right channel. It is, therefore, not improper to say that education, in one sense, is a process of acquainting and enriching every new generation with the accumulated experience and knowledge of the past generations and thereby enhancing the capacity and power of their reason.

The second objective of education is to so train the senses of every individual human being as would employ them for fulfilling successfully all his physical and other needs. While knowledge is, no doubt, essential for a proper employment of these organs their training is also necessary for the same purpose. However vigorous or energetic a man may be, he cannot effectively undertake any work unless his bodily organs are also properly trained and have some experience of that kind of work.

The third purpose of education, in my view, is that it should evoke in the individual the qualities necessary to enable him to live and work with his fellows. Whether a person likes it or not, he has to live with his fellows. No one can wholly retire from the world and live in an isolated cottage of his own. The life of complete solitude is nothing but a beautiful fancy of the poet; it is not and cannot be a fact of life. It is possible that an individual may live in solitude for a little time but he cannot do so for all his life. So when collective life is an inevitable and ineluctable fact of human life, it is absolutely necessary that every individual should be fully conversant with the art of collective living.

In the ages gone by when the scale of collective life was quite limited and when economic

processes had not become highly concentrated, there was no great necessity for an organized effort to achieve these three objectives or to maintain at every instant a balance amongst them. But today when the scale of collective life is almost world-wide and when economic processes have become concentrated beyond imagination it has become highly necessary to make intense efforts to help individual realize these objectives in his life not only in the realm of mind but also in that of action.

So it is that in the past few decades people have been feeling in all parts of the world the necessity of a fundamental change in the educational system inherited by them from the past. We find that different kinds of changes have been taking place in the educational system of different countries of the world. I would not be wrong if I say that in the educational sphere also a revolution has been taking place similar to that which has occurred in the economic and political spheres. In our country and especially in the State of Bihar unfortunately there has been no such far-reaching change or revolution in the sphere of education. People here have no doubt been thinking about this problem but I am afraid that so far there has been no outward effect worth mentioning of such reflections.

(To be continued)

## REMOVAL OF PROSTITUTION

(By Suresh Ramabhai)

The human body is often subjected to ailments which aggravate with every additional dose of medicine. Likewise, human civilization suffers from diseases which seem to intensify with every onward march of progress and betterment. Among these unfortunate diseases one is traffic in women, also called prostitution. As old as civilization, prostitution has been defined as the "supreme type of vice which is ultimately the most efficient guardian of virtue", and is held by many a moralist, thinker, philosopher, or champion of civilization to be a social necessity. Priests and worshippers of the shrine of civilization may, therefore, well remain unmoved at one of the most startling facts of free India, viz., increase in women traffic and extended prostitution. Formerly resorted to by forsaken or helpless women in known localities of towns and cities, it has now begun to be practised as an art (as a means to raise the family proceeds) in some of our regular modern households whose external appearance, just like that of any other, gives a complete lie to the unholy trade within. Thus the honour of our sisters and mothers has been reduced to a commercial proposition. My feeling is that if things were allowed to move or drift on as at present, the relationship between the sexes in our country will be thoroughly demoralized and with it will go to dust the ideal of family life, perhaps man's happiest and most wonderful institution.

Surely there is no clear-cut or immediate solution of this terrible development in free

India. One can only point to the ways and means of controlling this evil and gradually wiping it out. Wipe, yes; I use the word deliberately for I am not among those who regard this evil as an inevitable concomitant of life. It is an evil, a disease which has to be done away with sooner rather than later. This takes me to the causes of the malady.

It cannot be gainsaid that inequality, both in the social and economic spheres, has proved to be the most serious germ responsible for the case. But it is also true that social or economic inequality apart, prostitution has ever been hailed and hence preserved as an indispensable requirement for the soldier. In other words, militarism and prostitution have gone and go together and will go together. To expect that this evil will be uprooted while militarism, under any form of statecraft, prospers is as vain as to expect a silver ore from a tin mine.

Another factor that has worsened the situation is the surpassing conquest of money or machine over man, i.e. enhancement of centralization in the social and economic aspects of life. This is why, the manifold wonders of science have failed to stem the tide of prostitution. Nay, by their very nature, they have only countenanced it. Also centralization of power or pelf has led to more and more social-cum-economic inequality. In fact, greater the centralization greater the inequality and greater the inequality greater the centralization. Hence, greater the militarization. And, greater the prostitution.

It can, therefore, be safely concluded that prostitution or women traffic cannot be stopped in any country so long as it resorts to:

- (i) Arms to defend itself;
- (ii) Machines to develop itself;
- (iii) Centralization to govern itself;
- (iv) 'Might is right'.

The necessary conditions for the curing of the said malady can now be put down. They are:

- (i) The country should rely on the weapon of progressive non-violent non-co-operation to defend itself;
- (ii) Its smallest units should be economically self-sufficient (at least so far as the basic needs of food, cloth and shelter are concerned) and machines be made use of less and less;
- (iii) The State should, at the Centre to begin with, have the minimum powers which should progressively decrease with the lapse of time and this power should accrue from the lower unit to the higher simply by virtue of service rendered; and
- (iv) Where rights are a result of performance of duty.

Note, these are the necessary conditions. I do not claim them to be both necessary and sufficient. For who knows what may be in store for man in future? But it can be confidently stated that an attempt to check prostitution while not



fulfilling the said conditions is to cry for the moon.

Now a word about the practicability of the proposition. Undoubtedly, the said lines are very different from those on which is said to be built a "Welfare State", hankering after the three monsters of mechanization, centralization and militarism. But these lines stand for a Sarvodaya State, an objective higher still in which there would be actually no exploitation, and whatever it would be met and held up by the matchless instrument of progressive non-violent non-co-operation, for an objective in which there would be a true democracy of the villagers (as they constitute the largest number), by the villagers and for the villagers. So if we of India copy the English, American or Russian model of "Welfare State", we are doomed to be ruined. We have to discard it and construct the ever-green pattern of the Sarvodaya State of a classless and casteless society, claiming the single sanction of progressive non-violent non-co-operation. Then and only then would our mothers and sisters blossom into queens of households or *devis*.

Allahabad, 14-2-53

### BHOODAN AND LAND REFORMS

(By S. N. Agarwal)

A Conference of Members of Parliament in New Delhi on Friday the 27th March passed a resolution on Bhoomidan Yajna and placed on record its "sense of deep appreciation" for Acharya Vinoba Bhave's movement which has "ushered in a new chapter in the socio-economic reconstruction of India." The Conference also appealed to the public in general, and Members of Parliament and State Legislatures in particular, "to lend their active support and co-operation to this great and noble work" and help Vinobaji in achieving the target of 25 lakh acres by the end of March 1954.

In the course of his inaugural address, Pandit Nehru observed that he attached the greatest importance to the Bhoomidan movement which was a "novel way" of solving the most difficult problem of land distribution in the country. Moreover, it was helpful in creating a new atmosphere in India by trying to bring about a revolution through non-violent and peaceful means. "This movement," remarked Pandit Nehru, "may be beyond the understanding of the economic pandits, but it reaches the minds and hearts of the people."

Dr. Radhakrishnan, who presided over the Conference, said that Vinobaji was preaching the "Law of Love" in place of the "Law of the Jungle" because he believed more in persuasion than in force and coercion. The Bhoomidan Yajna would show to the world that "drastic socio-economic changes could be successfully brought about not through authoritarian methods or authoritarian governments but through democratic methods."

Acharya Vinoba has fixed the target of 5 crore acres of land donations by the end of 1957, which will complete hundred years after the first struggle for Independence in 1857, and also witness the next general elections. Five crore acres represent approximately one-sixth of the total cultivable land in India. The total number of landless labourers in the country is also about five crores. Vinobaji will be satisfied if each member of a family gets one acre of average land or a family of five receives five acres for cultivation. On the basis of an average family of five members, Vinobaji expects every landowner to donate one-sixth of his total land by regarding Daridranarayan (the poor landless labourer) as the sixth member of the family. According to Acharya Vinoba Bhave, therefore, there is no question of fixing a "ceiling" as two, three or four times the average economic holding. According to him, five acres of land of average quality ought to be the "low roofing" in India. Like food, land is the basic necessity of life and nobody should be allowed to possess more than what is absolutely necessary for subsistence.

In the course of his address to the Conference Pandit Nehru made very pertinent observations regarding the responsibility of the Government in regard to Bhoomidan movement. "The Government's responsibility," stated Shri Nehru, "is not reduced by one jot as a result of the Bhoodan Yajna." However great a success Acharya Vinoba may achieve, his movement could not take the place of law. "So the responsibility of the Central Government as also of the State Governments in solving the land problem remains and has to be fully discharged." In the first Five Year Plan, the Planning Commission have recommended that there should be "an upper limit to the amount of land that an individual may hold." This limit will have to be fixed by each State having regard 'to its own agrarian history and its present problems'. The census of land holding and cultivation, which it is proposed to hold during 1953, will give the data relevant to this decision by each State. The plan has also suggested that there should be established a Central Organization for Land Reforms for conducting research and investigation relating to land reforms in various States and "pooling knowledge and experience". We would like to know from the Central Government as to what steps have already been taken by them to implement these recommendations of the Planning Commission. So far as we are aware, no arrangements have so far been made for conducting a Land Census during the current year, three months of which are already over. We suggest that the Government of India should not lose any further time in appointing a Land Census Commission for the speedy collection of all the requisite data of the number and sizes of land holdings in different parts of the country. The proposed Central Organization of Land Reforms should also

get in touch with the progress of land legislation in various States and find out how far the State reforms fall short of the main recommendations of the Planning Commission as laid down in the Five Year Plan. A few States have, undoubtedly, gone far ahead of other States in introducing far-reaching land reforms on progressive lines. The remaining States are yet lagging behind and there is much leeway to be made up. Their enthusiasm for radical measures of land reform will have to be 'whipped up' so that they may not retain the old feudal traits any longer.

Acharya Vinoba's Bhoodan movement is very helpful in creating the right climate for the introduction of far-reaching land reforms in India through peaceful and democratic measures. It is now for the Government to fully utilize this favourable atmosphere of public opinion for the introduction of suitable land legislation at an early date. Mere lip-support and sympathy for the Bhoodan Yajna will be of no avail. Let the generations to come not say with regret that a Gandhian Saint like Vinoba walked thousands of miles in his frail body on foot asking for land donations from village to village, but the Government of the day did not utilize the golden opportunity for enacting progressive land reforms with speed and determination!

(From the *Economic Review* published by A.I.C.C., New Delhi, April 1, 1953).

## PROHIBITION AND WELFARE STATE

(By M. S. Aney)

[Message by Shri M. S. Aney on the occasion of the celebration of the Bombay State Prohibition Week.]

Prohibition has been the recognized policy of Indian National Congress. And I congratulate the Government of Bombay on having given effect to it, courageously. न सुते पिबन्ति is the injunction of the स्मृति and all the Smritis are unanimous in including सुरापान or drinking as one of the five major evils, i.e., पंचमहापातक which every human being ought to avoid.

A programme of a Welfare State in a Nation like India will always be incomplete so long as it excludes prohibition on one ground or the other. Prohibition aims at the eradication of the social evil that eats into the vitals mainly of poor classes. Prohibition introduces some comforts in the family life of people living in cottages, and lays down the sure and firm step for their uplift.

I wish the example of the Government of Bombay in this matter be emulated by the Governments of other States in India and even by the Central Government. Dry India will be in a better position to preach Spiritualism and the Gospel of Peace and Non-violence than Wet India. Its voice will then command greater attention and respect.

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## NOTES

### War and Peace

The *Peace News*, London of February 27, 1953, gives the following interesting news:

"An incomplete list of 43 Dutch jet fighters lost through accidents between February 1950 and December 1952, involving the death of 30 pilots and total cost of approximately £1,700,000 is published in a recent issue of the Dutch journal *Vreda*.

"The money would have been sufficient for the building of 1,700 flats or a week's holiday for 300,000 children."

Many similar instances can be added to show what a vast amount of precious wealth we are diverting to death and destruction even though its legitimate place is to support and preserve life and happiness. How many so-called industries in peace-time are maintained unnecessarily only because they are capable of being switched on to the war machine when unhappily it is to be brought into action in case of war? The world can surely live without these things only if peace and love for all irrespective of class or creed, colour or race becomes the religion of man.

7-4-53

M. P.

### "Mahatma" (In Eight Volumes)

The sixth Volume covering 1940-1945 of Shri D. G. Tendulkar's *Mahatma* (in eight volumes) is out. It is a real pleasure and joy indeed to see this series coming out right in time as per schedule announced at the beginning. The volumes run in uniform get-up of noteworthy beauty and taste, and full of illustrations collected by the author with great care and pains from so many sources. The whole set of eight volumes is priced at Rs 180/-, each volume separately being priced at Rs 25/-. In them the buyer will have the result of the labour of love for the Mahatma which the author has given to it, and the long painstaking research and erudition that he has put into it, this his monumental work.

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## WHY PROHIBITION

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