

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)
Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

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TWO ANNAS

OUR UNIQUE MISSION

[This is the report of Shri Vinoba's opening speech at the Chandil Sammelan.]

I

Tribute to Pujya Kishorlalbhai

I will begin by remembering Pujya Kishorlalbhai. As we know, he was utterly devoted to the great work which God has entrusted to us and to which we have pledged ourselves. The Gita has stated : There can be action in inaction and inaction in action. This is a characteristic of the perfectly developed souls and the key to the *yogic* life. He was extremely weak in body and though he was doing something or another all the 24 hours, yet he could not do much in the way of what we call outer (बाह्य) work. The work he did physically could not therefore be very imposing in its physical magnitude. Yet he showed us by his great example what tremendous work one can do despite the handicap of physical incapacity. What is the secret of it? The explanation lies in the fact that those who are pure of heart, whose attractions (आकर्षण) and aversions (विरह) have ceased through the grace of God are in a position to do good to humanity by their mere presence. Such men are few indeed ; only occasionally do they make their appearance in our midst. I regard Shri Kishorlalbhai as one of these few. After Babu, he was our great sustainer. Whatever our difficulty, we could always depend on him and with his innate godness he would always help us out of them. He was unique in this regard and no one else amongst us has developed this capacity in such measure. We therefore feel his loss very acutely and will always so feel it. We can make up that loss now only by love and goodwill to one another, and hope this we will do and help increase the spirit of good fellowship amongst us so as to be able to discharge the responsibility God has placed on us.

Why We Have Met

We are a group of workers. On an occasion like this when we are meeting in a conference we do talk a little, but even this little talking which we permit ourselves is part of work. It is not empty talk nor mere eloquence unrelated to work. We work all round the year, offer what we have done to God and then gather here, com-

pare our notes, exchange thoughts, and hope to draw and take away with us enough strength and inspiration for the next year's work. We shall then with this purpose in our view try to see the philosophy which lies behind our movement and inspires it and also examine and revise our programme of work, if necessary. Let us consider our approach, and the programme we have set ourselves and the final picture of what we wish to achieve.

The World Situation

However remote the corner of the world we may be working in, today the world situation is not such that we may ignore it. We have to take into account the forces which are working in the world today, we have also got to look at the new currents which are emerging, and consider the ideas and motives which are in collision and conflict with one another. All these must be considered before we can take any step forward, be it ever so little. In the absence of a right view of things action becomes blind.

Today we find that there is too much of instability in the world. The situation is pregnant with explosive dangers. We seem to be sitting on a volcano which may blow up any moment. I am not overdrawing the picture. I do not fear it nor do I intend to frighten you. I am only drawing your attention to the impending fearful reality. The shadow of disaster bestrides the world, there is no peace within or without.

Some two or three months back, some scholars and philosophers drawn from all over the world had met in Delhi in a seminar and they discussed the philosophy of non-violence. Some of their deliberations were reported in the daily Press. Pujya Rajendrababu had an occasion to observe in the course of its proceedings that no country in the world today had the courage to declare that it would do without the military. He expressed his regret that though we had the good fortune to hear Gandhiji's teachings from his own mouth and the privilege to work with him for a considerable time, even India was not prepared to launch on this bold venture. Our great leader Pandit Nehru has declared on numerous occasions that no problem of the world could be solved through physical might.

Both of these our brothers on whom the people have placed the responsibility of governing and leading the country believe in the supremacy of non-violence with all their heart. They do not believe in violence. And yet it is strange that under the pressure of the existing conditions they are required to consider it their duty to build up an efficient military force and to make it ever more strong. Such is the situation with which we find ourselves hamstrung today. We believe in one thing, and yet we are driven to do things which are quite contrary to our belief. We desire that people in India and in the world should change over from violence to non-violence, that they should love and not fear one another. We are fully convinced that only love can succeed and love alone can conquer. But our mind which pins its faith in what we call practical intelligence distrusts this truth which issues from the heart. The heart says: Violence can solve no problem; it may appear to succeed at times but for one problem which it may appear to have solved, it will create a score of new ones. But the mind does not see so clearly. It is beset with the three *gunas*—qualities which obstruct true understanding. It sees partly and partly it does not see. Thus this turbid mind says, "We cannot do away with the army. The people, whose representatives we are, are not strong enough for that. Therefore, we as their representatives have a responsibility laid on us to build up and strengthen the army." This is the situation. The heart desires that we should do some constructive work, but the mind says we must build up the army and put into use such machines as will help us in doing so. When those who have faith in Charkha are asked whether they can build up and equip the war-machine through Charkha and village industries they and we along with them, for we are included in them, are forced to reply in the negative.

An Impasse

Let us take for instance the Community Projects. The Government wants to start these projects in 5 lakhs of villages. They have been introduced in only a small number of villages at present but the Government intends to extend them further and hopes to end the poverty and bring prosperity to our rural population. But supposing war breaks out tomorrow, no one, not even they who have started them, can say that these projects will continue to work. The mind will then dominate the heart and say they should be wound up in face of this danger to our national existence. I am speaking by way of self-inspection. I am sure were we to occupy the position and shoulder the responsibility which they do, we would act much in the same manner as they. Whoever occupies office and wields governmental authority must needs think in a narrow, cramped, and a set circle. There can be no freedom of thinking for him. He finds himself, as it were, under an obligation to think and

act as the world seems to be doing. Even big nations like America and Russia fear each other. Nations less big like India and Pakistan do likewise. We know this fear of one another leading to ever-growing dependence on military strength will not solve anything and yet we stick to it. Such is the strange situation which surrounds us. Not that we are hypocrites. It is helplessness from which we suffer, and though people may charge us with hypocrisy, in fact our condition calls for pity. The question then is how are we to get out of this impasse?

Our Special Responsibility

Rajendrababu just told us that it is the special responsibility of the Sarvodaya Samaj to find the way out of it, because people expect it of us. They expect that we will keep unflinchingly to our faith and create the necessary atmosphere to bring it into actual practice under the existing conditions. If the Sarvodaya Samaj does it, that will be the best help it can give to our Government. We have to work for creating a society which may function without any military force.

I am sometimes asked as to why I remain outside of the Government. Why do I not take up administrative responsibility? I reply—when two bullocks are already yoked to the cart, how will the addition of a third one help it? If instead I can repair the road for the cart to go on it right merrily, I can render it the greatest possible service. Those who are in the Government do not want us to do things which they are doing, but look to us for filling in if we can what is wanting in their work. We have to understand all this and bear it in our minds and devote ourselves to the kind of work which may create what I call 'स्वतंत्र लोकशक्ति' or the self-reliant power of the people. Then only shall we be able to render real help to the Government and real service to our country.

The State and the People

I said we should create—*Swatantra Loka-Shakti* the self-reliant power of the people. Let me make it clear. It should be distinguished from the other two forms of power—the power of violence (हिंसाशक्ति) and the power of the State (राज्यशक्ति). The power of the people is the opposite of the power of violence, and though there is no such trenchant opposition between the power of the people and the power of the State, yet the two are different. There is of course an element of violence in the power of the State too, but inasmuch as this power has been entrusted to the State by the people its character differs from that of naked violence and the two cannot be put together in the same class. We however intend to go further ahead of it and create conditions which will do away with the need to use even the power of the State. Then only could it be said of us that we have realized

our 'स्वधर्म' or essential duty and done it. On the contrary, if we go after political power in the mistaken belief that it is the only way to serve the people, we will not only fail to fulfil the expectations people have of us but may also prove a burden to them.

I admit political power can be an instrument of service. That was why we sought it and accepted it and so long as the society needs it we are not going to give it up. It is certainly an instrument of service, but not the kind of service which may be conducive to creating the conditions which will do away with the use of this particular sanction. I will give an illustration.

Kingdom of Kindness Our Aim

Suppose there is a war going on. There will be some who will undertake to nurse the wounded soldiers. These men are full of love and sympathy and compassion for living beings. They do not make the distinction of friends and foes and volunteer to go to the front at mortal risk to their lives. They serve the sick and the wounded with the devotion of a mother to her child. There is no doubt that they are kind and their services are valuable. Nevertheless it should be clearly recognized that their service cannot contribute to the abolition of the war evil. Their kindness is only an aspect of a society which believes in war. Just as the wheels in the machines working apparently in different and even contrary directions are nonetheless parts of that machine contributing in different ways to the total working, so the killing of living soldiers and nursing of the wounded soldiers are both parts of the war-machine. Only the appearances they wear are different. Evidently one is a cruel job and the other is kind. However both the cruelty of the cruel and the kindness of the kind go to make up the war-machine. To be scientifically true and frank, so long as we recognize war as legitimate, both the doctor who undertakes to treat the wounded and the soldier who kills are on the same footing. Both are guilty of war. This means that by mere acts of kindness we cannot hope to create the kingdom of kindness, that is, the kingdom where kindness will rule. We do not aim at doing acts of kindness but at creating a kingdom of kindness. Kindness can and does exist even in the kingdom of wickedness, but only as a pinch of salt does in food, — kind acts only add to the taste of that with which they are mixed. Such kindness brings a sort of flavour to the violence of war, it cannot end war. So if we merely indulge in such acts of kindness, as will make of it a handmaid to wickedness, acting in obedience to the latter, we will not have done our real work. We must therefore develop a longer view and desist from undertaking any activity merely because it appears to be a constructive act of service. Though we may thereby do service of a sort but it is not the service which

is our special responsibility and which we have accepted as our *Swadharma*.

Why Not through Legislation ?

Let me give you another example. Many ask me: You seem to have considerable influence with the Government. Why do you not then press them to pass a suitable legislation and thus bring about the distribution of land without compensation? I reply, I do not stand in the way of legislation. If however this does not satisfy you and you want more from me, I may tell you that whatever the measure of success I may achieve in my work, it will surely facilitate the passing of such legislation. I am creating the atmosphere which will smoothen the way for it. But there I must stop. If I go a step further and start repeating that our objective cannot be achieved except through legislation, then it means I have strayed from my duty, the duty imposed on me by the particular path that I have chosen to go. My duty is clear. It demands that without taking recourse to legislation we should be able to bring about a change of heart among the people, so that they may voluntarily distribute land without waiting for the legislation. Is it because of legislation that mothers suckle their children? There is then such a power as love in the hearts of men which enriches human life. Man lives on love, he is born through love and through love is he sustained in his life and finally when he makes ready to depart from here and looks around to catch a sight of his dear ones it is love which consoles him and strengthens him to start on his unknown journey. If in spite of such overwhelming evidence of the power of love on every side, I do not endeavour to enlarge the bounds of this force so as to make it the basis of social life, if instead I merely keep harping on legislation, I fail to discharge my duty and I falsify the hope of the Government. I therefore want to devote myself to the creation of *Jan-Shakti*; the forging of the sanction of enlightened masses, — a power which is opposed to the force of violence and different from the authority of the State.

(From Hindi) (To be continued)

The Ensuing Kabil Examination

The ensuing *Kabil* Examination of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha, Wardha, will be held on the 18th and 19th of July 1953. Applications, together with the fees, should reach the Wardha office before the 18th June 1953. For detailed information please write to the address below.

27-4-'53

AMRITLAL NANAVATI
Secretary

Hindustani Prachar Sabha, Wardha

Erratum

In para 2, line 3 of the article "Shri Vinoba in Manbhum District" published in the *Harijan* of 25-4-'53 for 'Hindi is not a rich language' please read 'Hindi is not only a rich language' etc.

HARIJAN

May 2,

1953

DISTURBING NEWS

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

In reply to the debate on the Finance Bill in the House of the People on 16th April, 1953, the Finance Minister, Shri C. D. Deshmukh, referred to suggestions made for reintroducing the Salt Duty and is reported to have remarked as follows:

"Mr. Deshmukh expressing his personal view said that it has not been left indefinitely to the future. 'One has to consider it in proper time. I do not admit that the time has arrived. I admit that it might come' he said." (*Hindustan Times*, 17-4-'53).

It would have been good if the Finance Minister had said when was the time going to be proper, how it was not so at present, and what drove him to feel it might come. He said that he was speaking personally, which means that it was not the view of the Government of India, but might well be so at the proper time. Does Shri Deshmukh bide his time to bring the Government of India to his view? But that is another story. It might be well for us all to recollect that salt, liquor, and cloth have been three chief things round which the national sentiment for freedom and fight for it had been woven into a pattern of a non-violent rebellion against the foreign Government. There was nothing peculiar which made us resent this impost on salt then and which should not apply now.

As Gandhiji said :

"The salt tax oppresses all alike...It hits the poor man hardest...The little babe and the invalid and the aged—all suffer alike from this iniquitous tax..."

"There is no article like salt outside water by taxing which the State can reach even the starving millions, the sick, the maimed and the utterly helpless. The tax continues therefore the most inhuman poll tax that the ingenuity of man can devise..."

Therefore, the above news from the Finance Minister is very disturbing indeed. It must be opposed by all betimes.

20-4-'53

By Mahatma Gandhi

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SATYAGRAHA IN SOUTH AFRICA

(By John P. Fletcher)

[Peaceful and non-violent resistance which the coloured people in South Africa are putting up before the organized might of the White State there, is in direct and very welcome contrast to the Mau Mau agitation of Kenya, about which the reader must have read in the previous issue of the *Harijan*, from the pen of a peace-lover like Shri Fenner Brockway, M.P., England. The South African movement has a special claim to our attention, help and sympathy as it bears historical and spiritual descent from Gandhiji's South Africa movement which gave to the world the matchless weapon of Satyagraha. The recent movement is about 2 years old now, and thank God, it is gathering pitch and volume even against very heavy odds born of elemental racial hatreds and jealousies. A resume of this two year old story is reproduced below from the 1953 Spring number of "The War Resister", England, with the hope that it will help the reader to focus his attention on it. There is a lesson in it for the Kenya people which they should heed to, to their own benefit and also of humanity; because terrorism and counter-terrorism which it unhappily provokes should be beyond the pale of modern civilized world and must be considered barbarous, whether it may be from the State or from the people.

18-4-'53

—M. P.]

I am glad that I have been asked to discuss the significance of the South African Passive Resistance Campaign and its importance to the War Resisters' International. To me it is of the utmost importance that we should understand and give our strongest support to the Campaign which began on June 26th, 1952.

At its 39th Annual Conference held in December 1951 the African National Congress resolved to embark upon a mass Defiance of Unjust Laws Campaign with the co-operation of the South African Indian Congress. Dr. Moroka, Chairman of the Congress, wrote to Dr. Malan that if certain laws which were "undemocratic, unjust, racially discriminatory and repugnant to the natural rights of man" were not repealed before February 29th, 1952, they would have to start the Campaign. Dr. Malan's long and considered reply was published on January 29th. He said that the Government had no intention of repealing "the long existing laws differentiating between Europeans and Africans". Answering the three points made by Dr. Moroka, Dr. Malan said :

1. "You will realize, I think, that these differences (between the Bantu and the Europeans) are permanent and not man-made.
2. "You demand that the Union should no longer remain a State controlled by the Europeans...Racial harmony cannot be attained in that manner. Compliance with such demands inevitably leads to disaster for all population groups.
3. "Your third point is that the differentiating laws are of an oppressive and degrading nature. This again is a totally incorrect statement."

To this Dr. J. S. Moroka, on February 18th, 1952, replied :

"The question at issue is not one of biological differences, but one of citizenship rights which are granted in full measure to one section of the population

and completely denied to the other by means of man-made laws artificially imposed, not to preserve the identity of Europeans as a separate community but to perpetuate the systematic exploitation of the African people....

"With reference to the campaign of mass action which the African National Congress intends to launch, we would point out that as a defenceless and voteless people, we have explored other channels without success.

"The African people are left with no alternative but to embark upon the Campaign. We desire to state emphatically that it is our intention to conduct this Campaign in a peaceful manner, and that any disturbances, if they should occur, will not be of our making. In reiterating our claim for direct representation we desire to place on record our firm determination to redouble our efforts for the attainment of full citizenship rights."

The "Campaign" began on June 26th. Preparation for it had been the holding of mass demonstrations in the chief cities. Congress claimed that ten thousand volunteers had been secured. On June 20th the Action Committee published a notice:

"Only non-Europeans nominated by the Action Committee of the A. N. C. and the S. A. Indian Congress should take part in the campaign against unjust laws beginning on June 26th. The Campaign will be undertaken by "active volunteers" trained to remain disciplined. No others may publicly transgress laws. All non-Europeans must go to work as usual, there is no call for a general strike."

The plan of Campaign was also announced. It had three stages:

1. For selected and trained persons to take action in a few big towns.
2. For groups of voluntary resisters, well organized to act in the big towns.
3. When the leaders had exemplified non-violent resistance in action the movement would be extended to general action in town and country.

The Campaign (now at its second stage) has proceeded for six months and over eight thousand men and women have taken part and been arrested. The behaviour of the resisters, according to the Johannesburg correspondent of the London *Economist*, has been "impeccable". On their side, too, the magistrates and police have responded in an orderly way. There have been no excesses. The Campaigners are charged with "contravening pass laws, failing to produce passes, entering post offices and railway stations by entrances marked 'For Europeans only', breaking curfew regulations and entering forbidden areas". Punishments are restrained, usually being a fine of £ 2 with twenty days' imprisonment, though some sentences of three months have been imposed and younger resisters are being caned.

In a leading article entitled "Suspense in South Africa", *The Times* (London) of August 16th assessed the significance of the Campaign in the present age of political turbulence in South Africa. "There has so far been little or no violence on the part of either the rebels or the police," it says. "Each side seems to recognize that by first resorting to force it would give the moral advantage to the other. There are signs

that the strain is beginning to tell on the administration."

These signs of stress and of success are as follows:

1. An incident told to Agatha Harrison (an English Quaker) by Dr. Z. K. Matthews of two bridges across a river, one for whites, one for blacks. "A group defied the law (having given notice of what they were going to do) and of course were arrested. Others took their place and eventually the prohibition was removed."

2. On August 28th a Cape Town Magistrate declared a Native "defier of unjust laws" not guilty of a charge of sitting in a European waiting-room at Cape Town station on August 3rd. The Magistrate said that there was no waiting-room provision for First and Second Class male non-European passengers. The equipment in non-European waiting-rooms was also "greatly inferior" to that provided for Europeans.

3. The most important report, however, was in *The Times* (London) of 5th November from its Pretoria correspondent:

"Police in Natal are adopting a new method of dealing with breaches of such laws as the curfew regulations by native resisters. The policy is to ignore such demonstrators so long as they remain peaceful.

"The Defiance Campaign has given the South African police much extra work, and the authorities appear to be taking the view that they cannot afford to waste so much time on passive resisters, but must concentrate on preventing crime and violence."

This action of magistrates and judges of South Africa is a significant factor in the present history of South Africa, and is shown in the moderate sentences in these passive resistance cases, and in the struggle between the present Government and the Courts over the constitutional question. In August last the Government decided to charge the Campaign leaders, Dr. Moroka and Dr. Dadoo and eighteen members of the Executive under the vaguely defined new "Suppression of Communism Act". They were charged with the offence that the open defiance of the apartheid laws and regulations was designed to change the industrial and social organization of the country through unconstitutional and disorderly means. In December the Transvaal Court gave judgement. Mr. Justice Rumpff sentenced them to nine months' imprisonment each but the sentences were suspended for two years on condition that they were not convicted of further offences against the Act. In giving judgement the Judge said that "the accused were in his opinion guilty of encouraging a scheme which aimed at bringing about a political, industrial, social or economic change within the meaning of the Act, by means that included unlawful acts or omission—contravening certain Union laws and municipal regulations. The Judge said the offence of which the accused had all been found guilty was "Statutory Communism". The charge has nothing to do with Communism as it is commonly known. Leave to appeal was granted. (*South Africa*, 6-12-'52.)

On November 28th the Government published an order making it an offence to incite Africans to break laws and to hold meetings of more than ten Africans, the punishment being imprisonment up to three years or a fine up to £ 300. In response a European participation in the Defiance Campaign was announced to be led by Patrick Duncan. There had been careful preparation for this, and on December 8th (*Times* report) seven Europeans were arrested in Johannesburg for taking part in the defiance of unjust laws campaign against apartheid. They entered Germiston, an African location, and held a meeting of Africans. The Europeans, who were the first white people to be arrested in the Defiance Campaign, were accompanied by 14 Africans and 18 Indians, including Manilal Gandhi, who were also arrested.

"Within a few minutes (of entering the location) a crowd of about 1,000 singing Africans was following the group. The procession was accompanied by police wireless cars and members of the special branch of the C. I. D. Addressing the Africans in both English and Sesuto, Mr Duncan said: 'Today South African people of all kinds have come among you. They have come with love for you and with peace. I ask you to do what you have to do without making trouble but in the spirit of love.' (*Times*, 9-12-52).

It is early yet to appraise the importance of this new movement. It is early also to appraise the importance of the year-old Resistance Movement, but it is very clear that many sections of South African life and thought have been moved into fresh thought and action by the appeal to their conscience.

The South African Council of Churches urges the calling of a National Convention, at which all races would be represented, to work out the means by which partnership to all racial groups in the country's life could be achieved. The Institute of Race Relations urges a Conference between the Government and the African leaders. A "Liberal Group" of religious and social leaders has called for a liberal policy of equal rights. The Dutch Reformed Church has announced a Conference of all Church leaders to discuss the problem.

According to a report in *The Friend* (Pretoria), specific reference to passive resistance was recently given by the Bishop of Bloemfontein when addressing his synod. He said that it was a fundamental principle for Christians not to endanger public order except when defying a law which was contrary to moral principles. "It is unchristian and wrong for rulers to impose upon those whom they rule laws which restrict and humiliate the dignity and liberty natural to man, laws whose chief effect is to fill gaols to overflowing with non-criminal prisoners." There is evidence of world opinion too in the declaration of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches. Under the Chairmanship of the Bishop of Chichester in its meeting at Lucknow from 31-12-'52 to 8-1-'53, the Central Committee affirmed "all political, social and economic discriminations based on the grounds of race, wherever they may exist, are contrary to the will of God as expressed in the Christian gospel. Recognizing that existing racial discriminations are increasing tension and bitterness in various parts of the world, the Committee calls upon the member Churches to engage in the Christian ministry of reconciliation and to do all in their power to end such discrimination wherever it exists."

This passive resistance technique is that oppressed people, by willingly accepting the punishment the law imposes for breaking unjust laws, appeal to the conscience of their oppressors. The resisters' relations with the police are friendly, the police are informed when the acts of resistance are planned, and have responded in a friendly way. Magistrates and judges have been "friendly" in the mildness of the sentences imposed, and by a surprising number of "discharges".

I believe that, now that prominent white South Africans have joined the Campaign, the Campaign Committee will be more determined than ever to go forward, and that the Malan Government will be more hesitant to break it. The new President of the African National Congress, Chief Albert Lutuli, said at the fortieth Conference held in December 1952 in Johannesburg, his policy would be never to resort to force, to invite more Europeans to volunteer and to allow nothing to stand in the way of his people's freedom.

15-1-53

BHOODAN FIGURES

[Upto April 10, 1953]

S. N.	Name of the Province	Land Collections
1.	Assam	256
2.	Andhra	7,097
3.	Orissa	5,102
4.	Uttar Pradesh	4,74,529
5.	Karnatak	595
6.	Kerala	5,800
7.	Gujarat	5,501
8.	Tamilnad	6,976
9.	Delhi	1,124
10.	Punjab and Pepsu	1,045
11.	Bengal	102
12.	Bombay City	—
13.	Bihar	5,50,027
14.	Madhya Pradesh	15,042
15.	Madhya Bharat	2,491
16.	Maharashtra	5,000
17.	Mysore	343
18.	Rajasthan	22,072
19.	Vindhya Pradesh	2,382
20.	Saurashtra	3,000
21.	Himachal Pradesh	1,006
22.	Hyderabad	42,177
Total		11,51,667

Note: Of the collections from Bihar 4,00,027 acres have come from Hazaribagh District alone.

KRISHNARAJ MEHTA

Office Secretary,

Akhil Bharat Sarva Seva Sangh,
Sevagram, Wardha (M. P.)

OUR GREAT HERITAGE

[This is the third instalment of the Gandhi Memorial Lecture delivered by Dr. Sushila Nayyar on 2-12-52, before the students of the Agra University.]

III

Why do we want to study Gandhiji's life and techniques? He was the greatest revolutionary of our age and was the architect of India's freedom. He came to an India physically powerless and morally bankrupt. The ruthlessness with which the revolt of 1857, called Mutiny, was put down had crushed India's nationalistic aspirations. There were a handful of revolutionaries on the one hand, who frittered away their energies in a series of reckless but futile acts of terrorism; on the other, there were liberals who confined themselves to the holding of meetings and passing of resolutions. The vast majority of the Indian people cringed before the foreign rulers and quarrelled among themselves for the crumbs that fell from the table of the white masters. I need not repeat to an audience like this the story of mutual rivalries and betrayal among the Indian Princes which forged the chains of India's slavery. All the moral degradation and selfishness which is associated with political subjection under an alien rule was present amongst us in its ugliest form when Gandhiji arrived on the Indian scene. He was not discouraged or dismayed. The great revolutionary that he was, he set to work steadily and silently. He prepared and presented a programme which purified and revolutionized our entire national life. Indians who had trembled at the sight of a white soldier learnt to face bayonets with bare breast, with courage in their hearts, and a determination to break but not bend. His simple message of fearlessness and reiteration of the age-old thesis: "Die we all must, why not face death bravely for a noble cause?", had a magical effect. Words proceeding from the lips of one who never preached what he did not practise went straight to the heart and India, humiliated and prostrate, felt the thrill of new life. The masses of India were awakened from their slumber of centuries.

You are all familiar with the history of India's freedom struggle. The whole concept of non-violent resistance rests on the basic belief that men are not bad at heart. They can be made to see and do the right thing. Non-violence never aims at humiliating or hurting the opponent. It seems to win him over, so that the victory is complete and permanent. But he alone can kindle the spark of divinity in the opponent's breast, who has it burning bright within his own. Hence Gandhiji's insistence on inner revolution.

The eleven disciplines repeated morning and evening at the Ashram prayer meetings were calculated to revolutionize the individual and from an average human being, make of him a Satyagrahi. To the extent that a Satyagrahi practised those disciplines, he became a better soldier of non-violence. "The weapon of Ahimsa never

fails," said Gandhiji, "but he who wishes to wield it must acquire the skill to do so." His own life story is an illustration of how he acquired that skill and how his skill grew so that he became the general who could lead men and women of common clay—with very inadequate understanding of the technique of non-violence on to a mighty struggle of nationwide non-violent resistance which altered the course of history. The cry of the millions—'British power must quit India' and their readiness to silently suffer for their rights without inflicting injury, at last made Britain to pause and ponder. The result you all know. The peaceful transfer of power from the rulers to the ruled has left no trail of bitterness behind and India and Britain are today the best of friends. Non-violence alone could have achieved it. The mighty British empire which had come out victorious against many nations with mighty armies and unheard of weapons of war, had to yield before unarmed Indians. It was a milestone in human history. The world saw a new light in the midst of dark clouds of wars which keep on perpetuating themselves and never solve any problems. Here was a ray of hope. Gandhiji had shown a new way of righting political wrongs and settling international problems.

His adherence to absolute truth made him see clearly that if Indians were to successfully rouse the conscience of the British against the sin of the exploitation of Indians under foreign rule, their own hands must be clean. They must cease to be exploiters in their own country. And so he led a crusade against untouchability, and vowed not to rest till the evil was eliminated from Indian society, root and branch. He created a social revolution without the shedding of a single drop of blood which battered down the citadel of an ages-old tyranny. His intense humanity made him feel horrified at the treatment meted out by the so-called caste Hindus to those born in Harijan homes. He declared open war against the sin of untouchability and shouted from the house tops that if untouchability lives, Hinduism must die. The high priests of orthodoxy were shocked at this plain speaking. They organized black-flag demonstration and even bombed his car. But a lucky accident saved him. A crowd armed with lathis surrounded his car during his Harijan tour in Orissa. He stepped out of the car and walked through the hostile crowd alone, unaided, unprotected. His cool courage exposing his bare body to the lathi blows of the incensed mob nonplussed the demonstrators. No one had the heart to aim a blow at him. Instead, the hooligans used their lathis to make way for him through the dense crowd. From then on, he conducted the rest of the tour on foot. His party grew like a snowball and his message spread like wild fire. Indifferent to threats, unruffled by attacks of all kinds, he went on telling them gently but firmly that in the interest of Hindus as well as Harijans untouchability must go. At last light did dawn on Hindu society and it woke up to its responsibility. Another milestone was reached on

the great road leading to universal peace. The social revolution in India demonstrated that even the grossest and most time-hardened of social tyrannies can be ended without recourse to violence.

(To be continued)

NEXT STEP IN BHOODAN YAJNA MOVEMENT

(By Shankarrao Deo)

Not only did we reiterate at Chandil the great vow of collecting 25 lakh acres of land for Bhoodan Yajna to which we had pledged ourselves at Sevapuri in 1952, but we also further solemnly pledged that we shall not feel content after collecting only 25 lakh acres of land in the next 12 months but shall collect 5 crore acres of land before 1957 with a view to prepare a ground for the establishment of Sarvodaya Samaj free from exploitation and based on equality.

An expeditionist climbing a peak of a mountain like the Himalayas has a happy experience of having the sight of a peak still higher and is even more inspired to capture that also. Shri Vinobaji secured the first gift of 100 acres in April 1951. By the time of Sevapuri Conference the people had donated him one lakh acres of land. At Sevapuri the Sarvodaya workers fixed the target of collecting 25 lakh acres of land for the Bhoodan Yajna in two years. 7-8 lakhs out of these 25 lakhs were collected by the time of Chandil Conference. The Uttar Pradesh had nearly finished the quota of 5 lakhs by collecting 4.75 lakhs.

The fact that thousands of landowners big and small donated 7-8 lakh acres of land for the Bhoodan Yajna within a period of one year though a part of that year was spent in creating the necessary faith and right insight regarding the idea in the worker and people at large and in building an organization for the attainment of the target, itself amply proves that the flame of the Bhoodan Yajna is aglow in the hearts of the public and the Bhoodan Yajna has assumed the form of a national movement.

But for enthusing the movement with vehemence and speed workers making it a life mission should offer themselves in large numbers. With this end in view the Chandil Conference called upon those having faith in the idea of Sarvodaya and specially the constructive workers to give priority to Bhoodan Yajna.

During the last two years there was an incessant propaganda for Bhoodan Yajna throughout the country. But it is a common experience that the propaganda is always short of the need. There is certain stage and time in propaganda when the actual work invigorates the propaganda. The workers should therefore utilize all their energy and the time for the actual collection of land. We must remember that a great pledge is crowned with success by the combination of an alert body, a concentrated mind and a tranquil heart.

All harvest ready for cut must be reaped this year. Though Chandil Conference has specially called upon the constructive workers believing in the idea of Sarvodaya and youths of the country to devote their all in the movement, all-embracing policy will have to be followed as the task is to be accomplished through non-violence and change of heart. There are thousands of workers who have sacrificed in this movement and the number is even increasing. All these donors small or big are all our active workers. The organizers of the regional Bhoodan Yajna Committees should skillfully prepare schemes by which each worker will get work according to his capacity and in his own sphere of work. Each worker should be allotted a definite sphere. He should visit each village in the sphere and should aim at spreading the message of Sarvodaya and getting at least 5 acres of land from each village after the Sevapuri resolution. If each worker works with the firm determination, we can surely believe that the target of 25 lakhs shall be fulfilled before April 1954.

GANDHISM

(By Gandhiji)

If Gandhism is another name for sectarianism, it deserves to be destroyed. If I were to know, after my death, that what I stood for had degenerated into sectarianism, I should be deeply pained. We have to work away silently. Let no one say that he is a follower of Gandhi. It is enough that I should be my own follower. I know what an inadequate follower I am of myself, for I cannot live up to the convictions I stand for. You are no followers but fellow students, fellow pilgrims, fellow seekers, fellow workers.

We have to make truth and non-violence not matters for mere individual practice but for practice by groups and communities and nations. That at any rate is my dream. I shall live and die in trying to realize it. My faith helps me to discover new truths every day. *Ahimsa* is the attribute of the soul, and therefore, to be practised by everybody in all the affairs of life. If it cannot be practised in all departments, it has no practical value.

There is always the fear of self-righteousness possessing us, the fear of arrogating to ourselves a superiority we do not possess. Rather than, therefore, call yourselves members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh, why not carry truth and *ahimsa* in every home and be individual representatives of them wherever you are?

Harijan, 2-3-40

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