

HARIJAN

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

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TWO ANNAS

KISHORLALBHAI — A CONSTANT SOURCE OF INSPIRATION

(By Vinoba)

It is a year since Pujya Kishorlalbhai departed from our midst to retire into the world of the Spirit. As I said on that occasion, in the rather free association of workers, which we are, his presence provided the great uniting force which kept us bound to one another. He acted very much like the oil which keeps the parts of the machine working smoothly, each in its own sphere. Thus he lived giving us freely of his abundant love and passed over to his Home when finally the call came from the other side.

Friends and workers had a realization of greater responsibility devolving on them after him. A great many of those who gathered together at Chandil had an experience of his invisible presence, which made them take to the work with a sense of greater urgency and seriousness. They took a very important decision there. The Charkha Sangh merged itself in the Sarva Seva Sangh and thus greatly added to the strength and influence of the Sarvodaya Samaj. This has opened the way for other constructive organizations to do likewise. I believe that by and by they will also come in and be merged in the Sangh. Ahimsa does not work in parts. It is a harmonious whole. It is what the Vedas have called by the name of *Aditi*, 'One without division'.

Some friends had suggested the raising of a memorial fund for Kishorlalbhai. I did not approve of the idea. I pointed out that Kishorlalbhai had not liked the raising of the fund in Gandhiji's name. Nor had I liked it. But some of the old and respected leaders of the country issued a public appeal for it and we did not think it right to voice our disapproval and strike a rather discordant note. But with that chapter of collecting funds by raising subscriptions should be deemed finally closed. That will give us the needed inspiration to find out new ways of doing our work and thus add fresh and nobler chapters to the old ones. We should stop encouraging the spirit of possession even for promoting public welfare activities. That will open the way for adventure and bold experimentation along

other and more fruitful channels, and enable our workers to be brave and strong and acquire the genius to overcome all difficulties.

People are aware that along with the Bhoodan Yajna we have also launched a Sampattidan Yajna as a complement to the former. We want the people to donate a portion of their wealth and income but we do not want to collect the money so donated with ourselves and establish a fund or anything like that. The money remains with the donor. We only keep the gift-deed. The donor undertakes to spend the money in accordance with our instructions. He has also to keep the accounts and present them to the public. Then it is not that he gives his donation once and is freed from his responsibility to have anything to do with it. On the contrary, he is required to give the pledged portion of his income year after year throughout his life. If we succeed in popularizing and establishing this idea among our people, every house will turn into a bank for the poor, and we will see that non-possession is a thousand times more effective and more powerful than possession. I am deliberately proceeding with this programme rather slowly, because I want it to be assimilated into our accepted code of individual and social conduct. The need for Sampattidan was being felt ever since the Bhoodan movement started. But following Kabir's great injunction, "Attend ye to the root, and all else will be added unto it," I preferred to concentrate on the Bhoodan Yajna only in the initial stages, and put forward the idea of Sampattidan based on non-possession in Bihar, after Bhoodan had made sufficient progress. I may add that the sacred memory of Kishorlalbhai was my constant inspiration in working out the development of this idea of Sampattidan and the final form into which it has been presented before the people.

Friends who met at the Chandil Sarvodaya Conference realized that it would no longer do for them to sit on the fence if they really wanted the Bhoodan movement to succeed. And they decided to plunge themselves into it. I feel that this decision was also inspired by Shri Kishorlalbhai's memory. He often said while he was alive, "How I would like to go from village to village on the Bhoodan pilgrimage!" And though he could not move physically, he did all he could to

keep up the spirit of those who did. His love and solicitude for the workers had the same sincere intensity as that of a mother and sustained them in their work as nothing else would.

Kishorlalbhai did not believe in external memorials. As for me, I think such memorials serve more to obliterate the memory of the departed than to keep it alive. I had been to Nalanda a few days ago. In the ruins of the famous Buddhist University, which once flourished there, I saw an image standing over the figures of Shankar and Parvati lying under its feet. Perhaps the sculptor thought that he was glorifying the greatness of Buddhism. As we know it, he was only destroying it. One can give any number of the illustrations of this type. The outer memorials serve not only to obliterate the memory which they are designed to perpetuate but also at times to degrade it. We have to realize therefore, that the remembrance and meditation and practice of the noble qualities which were expressed in the life of the departed great is the only real memorial. That is the way to do honour to the memory of seers and sages, the path-makers of humanity.

Barhat (Bihar), 1-9-'53

(From *Hindi Sarvodaya*)

THE UNBORN

(By *Maurice Frydman*)

No immigration from the beyond.

Too many people. . . .

The unemployed, underemployed, the landless

Choke the politician's gullet.

Cork up the mother's womb ;

No child without a permit.

The standard of life must go up.

More guns are needed, more cars, more lipsticks,

Skyscrapers, hydels, atomic piles,

Less men, more iron.

Babies are a nuisance, they want to eat, they want to play ;

So many of them ; how to provide,

When all is earmarked for industrial potential ?

The country belongs to the born, no newcomers allowed

The baby is an unwanted factor in planning on the basis of a stationary population.

To be born, wait for the death rattle of a greedy old man.

A cup of milk, a bowl of gruel cannot be found

For all the funds are tied up in capital investments.

Keep the unborn behind the bars, exterminate them like rats

With metal, with rubber, with chemical jellies.

A few million tiny meals, a few million little dresses

The country cannot afford, for it has priorities to consider.

Dam your rivers and streams, but don't dam the river of life ;

Let children come in vast numbers, welcome, cared for, much loved.

Men and women of the future, they will bring their own resources

Their own genius and drive, initiative and persistence

Given a foothold, they will make a place for themselves

And for those to come after them.

The land will respond to the flood of love and life

And blossom out in abundance, in triple, in tenfold measure

Glad to cradle the millions, to feed the hundred millions

Little mouths, wells of creation, springs of living waters.

I wrote it in a moment of exasperation. Yet it does not give the whole of my mind.

Feeding all the babies who are born is not such a hard task as it appears on the surface. Let us assume that the population increases by 5 million every year and that the country will spend on each child Rs 50/- per month either in cash payable to the mother, or in food, clothing, housing and medical and educational services till the child finishes its full education at the age of 20. Each child will cost Rs 600/- per year. The total number of children in the care of the nation will be, barring mortality, 100 million. Taking the population as 400 million the average life span as 80 years and the productive years as 20 to 60, we shall have 50 per cent of the population productively working. The total cost of bringing up 100 million children at Rs 600/- per child per year will come to Rs 60 billion which, divided by 200 million of working population, will come to Rs 300 per working head per year. This is not much, taking into consideration that there will be no expense whatsoever on children.

This calculation does not take into account the productive capacity of the children themselves, if made full use of in the basic schools. A child can easily give Rs 100 worth of labour per year and with good tools and organization even Rs 200 worth of labour per year is not too much to expect, especially in the case of children above the age of 12.

By producing food, clothing, shelter, tools and educational necessities, like paper and books themselves and thus avoiding all non-productive handling and transport, the value of their labour will be still higher. The charge per head of working population could be thus reduced to Rs 200 per year.

Probably the most practical solution will be a residential basic school in close proximity to the parental village.

All limitation of population on economic and political grounds is a sign of muddled minds and narrow hearts. The country definitely belongs to the unborn and his rights are paramount. All attempt to oust him is breach of trust.

Bombay, 11-8-'53

HUNDRED YEARS OF COMPULSORY VACCINATION

To

The Editor of *Harijan*.

Sir,

Exactly one hundred years ago compulsory harmful vaccination was first introduced in this world beginning with England in 1853. So that the present year 1953 is centenary year of compulsory vaccination.

This compulsory vaccination law of 1853 was also the commencement of a popular campaign in England against the principle of compulsion in this matter of vaccination. The next few years witnessed an increasing distrust of vaccination on the part of the British public due to its many failures and the tragic evidence that it was by no means the harmless proceeding at first pretended and claimed by the medical profession.

From 1853 to the appointment of Royal Commission on vaccination in 1889 by the British Conservative Government for investigating the whole matter, the fight for freedom from compulsory vaccination was increasingly fierce in England. Thousands of British parents defied the law, submitting to fines and imprisonment rather than be false to conscience and injuring the health and life of their dear children. Over 8,000 tragic cases to illustrate the terribly bad results of vaccination were reported to the Royal Commission on vaccination. The Royal Commission recommended abolition of compulsory vaccination.

By 1898 the storm of protest of British parents against compulsory vaccination was so great that the British Government bowed to the strong demand of British people, and praise and thanks be to God Almighty, abolished compulsory vaccination.

The compulsory vaccination law of England rested on false assertions of leading doctors who declared as fact what had been falsified by experience. England and Australia have demonstrated to the world that small-pox can be successfully abolished by cleanliness and sanitation alone without vaccination. There are now for fifty years millions of British children who have never been vaccinated at all. Today there is greater risk of illness and death from vaccination than from small-pox. In England during the last thirty years only 118 children under five died from small-pox, but 291 British children were killed by vaccination. Other diseases follow in the train of vaccination, some more fearsome and fatal than small-pox.

In the London *Church Times* (religious newspaper) Reverend H. Hughes, M.A., one of the most famous of Christian preachers, after describing the "brutalities practised upon the unhappy calves" in the Government vaccine factory says: "It is difficult to understand how any human beings could have brought themselves to believe that it is in harmony with the will of God that

little children should be deliberately infected with a filthy disease of calves tortured in this way."

I, therefore, through *Harijan* humbly and respectfully request Governments of all the Provinces of India and their Ministers of Public Health who fortunately for people of India are not doctors, to abolish compulsory vaccination laws.

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SORAEJI R. MISTRI

POVERTY AND LUXURY

(By N. R. Balakrishnan)

I hope that I will not be misunderstood if I state with all humility that the extravagance of our rich and educated classes is driving our half-starving millions to the pitch of discontent and dissatisfaction. It was Tolstoy who said that the mere satisfaction of a need has a limit, but luxury has none. Gandhiji insisted that even water should not be wasted, nor a grain of salt be taken more than it is absolutely necessary. How many in India really follow his precepts and feel for the poor? Today while the rich and educated classes pamper in luxury, millions of our countrymen exist on the verge of poverty. Gandhiji always emphasized the need for 'plain living and high thinking', and he never hesitated to say that he would refuse to have all privileges and monopolies to which the poorest of the poor had no access.

Despite their violence and excessive materialism, we cannot deny the fact that the Western countries are far ahead of us as regards food and clothing. They have a catholic outlook and Christian fellow-feeling while we are satisfied with the seeking of our personal salvation, Mukti or Moksha. While they are united as nations, we stand disunited by caste and communalism. While they talk of their present achievements, we boast of our past culture and ancient heritage.

Yet we cannot ape the Westerners in anything and everything. Smoking, drinking, gambling, exploitation of sex by means of filthy literature and films, multiplication of wants by clinging to various fashions are some of the ways they have imported to us and these pernicious habits are doing havoc in our society. Luxury is easy to acquire but hard to give up. The proverbial wisdom says that lust, luxury and idleness have banished every virtue out of the world. I find no hope for our country unless and until we eschew luxury, live simple and moral life and voluntarily help our suffering fellowmen. John Ruskin rightly says: "Luxuries, whether national or personal, must be paid for by labour withdrawn from useful things, and no nation has a right to indulge in them until all its poor are comfortably housed and fed."

A RIGHTEOUS STRUGGLE

By Mahadev Desai

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1953

A MISGUIDING AGITATION

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

The P. S. Party in Gujarat has started an agrarian agitation in the Pardi Taluka, District Surat. Some persons have been arrested in that connection and Section 144 has been applied to the whole of the Taluka.

The movement concerns itself in a way with Bhoodan Yajna and its leaders describe it as "Khed-Satyagraha". It is therefore necessary to examine it.

It is said that on account of recent Bombay Tenancy legislation, landholders began to get back their tenanted land on the plea that they wanted to till it themselves. It is also said that much acreage was got back from the tenants in this way in Pardi. This left the tenants to live as field labourers. Another thing that is said to have taken place was that landowners stopped to grow food crops and turned good land into mere grass-land. This was to their advantage in two ways : 1. It saved them from much cost of production, and 2. they had not to depend upon labour for exploiting their land. The sum total of this change was that while the landholders prospered the tillers of the soil almost lost their profession.

It is a question whether the landholders are allowed by law to change food-crop land to grass-land. Grass is also a need for our cattle. However, we want more food today. At such a time it is not good to allow to grow grass in place of food. However, it appears that this was going on in Pardi during some years past. Consequently the tiller got unemployed, thus creating a headache both for the people as well as Government.

It appears that, under these circumstances, the P. S. P. decided to launch what it calls Khed-Satyagraha in the Taluka. It was for solving the problem of a similar kind in Telangana that Shri Vinoba thought of the Bhoodan way—a direct and non-violent method of providing the landless with land. People liked this idea and we find it accepted today as an all-India movement. The same way can be resorted to in Pardi also. The P. S. P. leader, Shri J. P. Narayan went round the Taluka and the whole of Gujarat saying that Bhoodan should be intensified as it has the potentialities of being a silent non-violent revolution to solve our land problem. Obviously, the Khed-Satyagraha of Pardi is not in accordance with Bhoodan principles. Its protagonists as well admit it. Their claim is that it is a further action under Satyagraha. Does it mean that Bhoodan, according to them, is not helpful?

Again it is the first principle of the Satyagraha method that its object must be specific and

against whom it is directed must be clear. And on both these counts there must be proper public opinion; if it is not there it must be cultivated, and direct action might be undertaken only after exhausting simpler constitutional ways.

Examining the Pardi agitation in this way, what do we find? We are told that 5,000 acres must be immediately given to the tenants so that they might employ themselves with them. Instead of asking for that acreage as Bhoodan, the P. S. P. propagated among the landless that they should go to the grass-land and begin to till it. That is, they should capture land from the landlords directly. How far it can be useful to till land at this stage of the season and how it will actually benefit the landless is another question. The idea seems to be that if people turn up to capture land in large numbers, there would be enough pressure on the land-owning classes to give way; or it will influence the Government to move and secure land to the landless. If this is true, then it is not in accordance with Bhoodan, is very clear.

Again, it does not fulfil the essential conditions of a true Satyagraha action. It is not directly aimed at the landholder and still he is touched; nor is it directly aimed at Government and still it is also touched. There is breaking of law by trespass on the grass-land; it is difficult to say that it is civil. All this renders the movement only as a strong form of mere demonstration. Satyagraha is made of sterner stuff than that. It would not be proper therefore to call the Pardi agitation Satyagraha.

Again, it is commonly agreed both among the people as well as by the Government that the landless must get land. What is then sought to be established by the Pardi agitation? It is alleged that the tenants were ejected from the land, which should be investigated. This rather complicates the question about the exact nature of the demand further. If such an enquiry is the demand, then it can be agitated for in an orderly way; the legislature might be resorted to; if ejections are bad in law they might be challenged through law courts. Or in the last analysis, the ejected tenant might refuse to be so treated and so resort to Satyagraha. Nothing of this kind seems to have been done in the Pardi movement. Why the P. S. P. workers who had been working in the Bhoodan movement switched over to their new way and how it is Satyagraha and how it is going to benefit any one is not clear.

It remains for the people now to see that the unemployed landless are not injured by such an agitation. Ill-thought out and hastily undertaken Satyagraha injures; they must be saved from such injury. The Government must see that the Tenancy Laws are not abused on account of their any drawback. The landholders also will have to understand that they cannot ignore Shri Vinoba's message. If they have stopped having food crops it is not proper. To deprive the tillers living with

them for years on, of their means of livelihood will ultimately injure them also. They cannot allow land to lie as if fallow, as it will be a crime against society. Why should they then have claim to land even? They should know that the ownership is theirs only if and so long as they use it for social good. In the happiness and livelihood of all lies their own happiness also. It is an immutable law of co-operative society. If this is forgotten, it gives an unnecessary occasion to agitations like the Pardi one, and thus one initial mistake brings in another. This only doubles the mistake, without in any way correcting it. Social good requires that both the mistakes be corrected and the landholder as well as the tenant are directed to peaceful and reasonable ways.

11-9-'53

(From the original in Gujarati)

MERE EDUCATIVE PROPAGANDA CANNOT COPE WITH THE DRINK EVIL

(By Gandhiji)

My work in connection with temperance began as early as 1893 when I went to South Africa. When I saw my own people, my own countrymen drinking and even women drinking who would never think of drinking in India and as a result leading a life of the gutter, I saw that the task was an uphill one. These men and women were not prepared to listen to any lectures on temperance, much less to any personal advice. I saw too that some of them were perfectly helpless or they thought that they were helpless. I adopted many measures, all such measures as were within the competence of a man who is without any authority. But I cannot claim any degree of visible success for those efforts.

These men (Indian labourers) who have become addicted to the habit of drink do not justify it. They have a sense of shame about it. If you speak to them about it, they will tell you they are helpless, they are labourers; they will tell you all sorts of falsehoods and try to deceive you, but they are ashamed of this habit. In Europe, on the other hand, it will be ungentlemanly on my part if I do not stand a drink when you come to see me. When I was a student in England, I found myself in a most embarrassing position because I would not stand a drink to friends. But that is not the case in India, and therefore I suggest that it would be a wrong thing for you to say that education has to precede legislation. Education will never be able to cope with the evil.

I would therefore appeal to you to make it your sacred duty to carry on a whirlwind campaign for total prohibition.

Young India, 18-4-'29

MAHADEV DESAI'S EARLY LIFE

By N. D. Parikh

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IMMIGRATION AND RACIALISM

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

"Nairobi, Aug. 27, 1953 — Kenya's Europeans today voted for the admission of at least 30,000 more European immigrants to the British Colony in the next five years and a ban on further Asian immigration.

"The only hope for the survival of the Kenya's European Community was to stop the entry of any more Indians and establish what would amount to a white reserve, they said in a resolution at the annual conference of the European Electors Union meeting here. The Union represents about 20,000 Europeans." — Reuter.

The above news-item is noteworthy in various ways. It spells a future war of races and colour in that dark continent. How otherwise can a small microscopic minority dare dictate a thing revolting to the sense of justice and fair-play? The white minority in East Africa is only about 44,000 in a total of 1,81,00,000. In Kenya we find that there are 30,000 Europeans, 90,000 Indians, 24,000 Arabs and five million Africans. A lakh and more of the Asians who are in Kenya are chiefly the middle men who work for the small European aristocracy at the top. The African is the proletariat, who has been deprived of his good and fertile land under white legislation and this land is reserved for Europeans. He is again made to earn currency to pay a poll-tax which can only be paid in cash. In his own native land, he is required to carry with him a registration certificate with his fingerprints on it. It is in this background that we should interpret the news-item given above.

There is another aspect also from which we should view this attitude of the European. The Westerner dins into our ears that we are too many and unless we choose to die of want and hunger we should control birth and thus open markets for Western manufacture of contraceptives. With the strength of armaments that he has, he would not allow us to emigrate to Africa, Australia etc. which are very very under-populated and therefore should be exploited to their best by man, from wheresoever he comes to settle on them. But the European settler would want a European only to emigrate to those lands. Such a racial ban on immigration is bad enough. While on one side it creates a problem for happy international relations, on the other it shows how hollow it is for Western economists and sociologists to preach birth control and not realize that an obvious and natural way for mankind to ease over-population in some parts and utter under-population in some others is to plan reasonable emigration through an international authority. This the Westerner would not do; he would rather hazard to meet reactions to this his selfishness, like the Mau Mau agitation by black and tan methods of counter-Mau-Mau-ism and India's resentment by passing laws to exclude Asians. This is against the spirit of justice and even the UNO Charter. Is it in any way wrong to say that this mentality of the overbearing white minority in a land which is not theirs is a danger

to world peace and an invitation to strained international relations between the East and the West? We hope the Kenya Government, which is one of the British Commonwealth, will not encourage the Electors Union in their selfishness by accepting their resolution, which asks for discrimination on bad and insulting grounds of colour and race.

5-9-'53

INDIA AT THE CROSS-ROADS

(By John Seymour)

[John Seymour in his talk from the B.B.C., London, describes what he saw going on in India at the present time. He says that he found a great debate going on amongst us about our country's future, viz., should we follow, as some think, the classic industrial revolution of the West, or should we follow Gandhiji and base our economy on Khadi and village industries? Verily we are at the cross-roads of East West ideologies; and we should be conscious of the issues at stake, so that we can decide wisely and truly. The following article describes vividly this problem as an outsider sees it.

10-8-'53

M. P.]

Two Kinds of Cotton Industry

Just before I came back from India I spent a few days at a place in the north, a princely State where the great fortress of the Rajah and his numerous palaces and pleasure-gardens still dominate the medieval city—in spite of the fact that the Rajah no longer has any power, and has been cut down to a miserable £ 50,000 a year free of income-tax. But a new fortress has arisen to share the domination of the city—and no doubt to take over a larger share of it as time goes on. And that is a cotton mill.

It is hot and humid in the cotton mill—appallingly hot in the summer, of course—and the endless noise, a maddening, repetitive, and somehow more than usually senseless noise, nearly drives you 'off your rocker'.

Now the Congress Government has started another kind of cotton industry in this city—a handloom industry. Or, at least, it has revived the ancient handloom industry which was nearly dead. There is a school there where the production of cloth by hand is being taught, and also a lot of other trades which do not need big machinery.

The Real Conflict in India

After having tramped first round the cotton mill and then this school of handicrafts, I sat down in the house of the director of the latter, together with half-a-dozen other people, and we drank *lassi*, or buttermilk—very nice, too. The conversation turned to what I believe is the real conflict that is going on in India; and this is not the conflict between Communism and Western-style democracy.

Big industry or handicrafts? City factories or village industry? And on the answer to this depends a lot of other questions: Small farms or big? Tractors or oxen? Dung or artificial fertilizer? Sailing ships or steam vessels? What makes India the most interesting country in the world today—to me, at least—is that it is the only country left where such questions are being asked.

Efficiency or Happiness?

As we drank our buttermilk we compared the big cotton mill and the handlooms. The manager of the mill, who was with us, said that he could not see how the handloom industry could ever compete with the big mills. The mills were so much more efficient.

A young chap who was an instructor at the handloom school said: 'efficient for what?'

The mill manager answered: 'For making cloth, of course.'

But the other replied that he made extremely good cloth on his handloom, and that he made all that he wanted.

The manager said: 'But look, if you had a machine you could make in an hour the amount of cloth you now make in a day.'

The instructor said to this: 'Yes, but I happen to enjoy working by handloom. Why should I deny myself a day's pleasure?'

I thought it was about time I tried to get in a word, so I said: 'But surely—nobody enjoys work?'

The handloom man said to this: 'If I didn't enjoy my work I would not do it. I would find something I did enjoy. We spend most of our lives working; if the work is unpleasant we are wasting our lives.'

The Great Indian Debate

Now in that short conversation lies the great Indian debate that seems far more important to the Indians, I believe, than the argument between the Stalinists and the advocates of American-style capitalism.

To a man with the ideas of my handloom weaver there is not much real difference between the American way of life and the Russian way. As far as he is concerned they are both wrong. They both place what they call 'efficiency' above what my friend would call the happiness of the individual.

The big mill manager has already been forced by law to cut down very considerably of his cloth production to help the handloom weavers. He resents this because he knows that, left alone, the mills could starve every handloom weaver in India within a few months. He looks upon it as wrong that the Government should intervene to handicap one contestant to give an unfair advantage to the other. He does not see how India can progress and compete with the rest of the world if her industry must fight with one hand tied behind its back. His ideal is to see India a sort of oriental United States, and he knows that this ideal will not be realized as long as the handlooms have their way.

Gandhi's Influence

And they may well have their way. Mahatma Gandhi still looms over India like a Colossus. You cannot get away from him. His influence has never been stronger than it is now, and it is increasing.

The Gandhi-inspired reaction against my mill manager's ideals of progress is getting stronger. Many Indians—and I think I am right in saying most Indians—just are not impressed by the Western industrialized way of life. They want to see an end to poverty and food shortage, of course, but they do not think that the big factory and mass production are the only or the best means to this end. The followers of Gandhi, and that includes the majority of Indians, do not want motor-cars and jet-planes and bottled American fizzy water.

Government of India's Leanings

On the whole the State Governments lean towards the Gandhian view, but the Central Government is performing the amazing feat of trying to sit on both sides of the fence at once. On the one hand it is trying very hard to attract foreign capital to start big mills and factories, and on the other it is protecting village industry. Pandit Nehru leans, I should say, towards the big industry side. Of course, dare he take the risk—in a country as hungry as India—in refusing what big industry has to offer? The big machines are needed, among other things, to build the great irrigation and hydro-electric dams which are changing the face of India.

But Gandhi was not a voice crying in the wilderness. Gandhi could lead India only because India was willing to follow him. In every town and city and big village in India you will find what is known as a Khadi centre. This is a place where people are taught how to turn raw cotton into cloth. In every village in India you will find the

women, when they have nothing else to do, sitting down on the ground spinning the *charkha*, or Indian spinning wheel. In every village of any size there is a weavers' quarter, and you will see the weavers working in the shade of the trees.

Religion of Khadi

Khadi has become a religion to an enormous number of Indians. It was not just a thing started by Mahatma Gandhi to embarrass the British. The movement has grown enormously since independence. Many people are willing to pay more for home-spun cloth than they are for mill cloth of the same quality—if a machine-made article can ever be said to be of the same quality as something made by the hands of man. A good member of the Congress party—which has after all, an overwhelming majority in the country's Parliament—dare not be seen wearing mill cloth.

In other words, what the West calls 'efficiency' is still not the only criterion in India. You are constantly hearing the question: 'Efficiency—for what?' Is it good, for example, for a man to stand for eight hours a day in front of a power-loom and then go home and sleep in an industrial slum—or, far worse, a dormitory suburb? Will it lessen him, perhaps, as a man? Is it better for him to do something in his own time and in his own home that he can enjoy doing? This is a factor which Western efficiency experts do not as a rule consider.

Wherever I went in India I found efforts being made to improve the life of the villagers, ostensibly on the lines that Gandhi laid down, but by people who are actually willing to compromise a little—people who are willing to make use of machinery, up to a point.

I went round some villages in Madras State which were developed by the Government and where village industry was being fostered and encouraged, but with the help of a certain amount of modern machinery. A new hydro-electric scheme has just brought electric power to the district. I saw there a little weaving shed with four looms in it, but the looms were being driven by electricity. The young chap who was taking me round it said that it was run by a small co-operative society, the members of which came and worked the looms when they had time. During the harvest season the little mill was closed down.

Man and Machine

I asked the young man how this use of machinery accorded with Gandhi's ideas, and he said: 'All Gandhi wanted us to do was to save us from going the way of the Western countries where men have become not much better than machines themselves. Provided we keep our people in the villages we are doing what Gandhiji wanted us to do. There is no reason why we should not use machinery; what we must avoid is letting machinery use us!'

India is becoming a land of small co-operative societies, mainly producers' co-operatives—the group of villages who form a society to buy a tractor or a motor-pump to irrigate the fields of all the members or who start a small factory. One finds little village factories producing an enormous range of goods—from toy balloons to tin trunks.

The big industry people—and they are very powerful—want to see quite a different kind of India from this. Agriculture must be mechanized they say, so that the bulk of the village population will be released from the land and will go to the cities. There it will be absorbed into the big factories which will develop. In other words, India must undergo the classical industrial revolution of the Western economists.

But the followers of Gandhi have no such idea. They point out that in the old, pre-British India the village was completely self-supporting. They want it to be so again. As for food shortage, even Gandhi recognized the need for some form of population control, and this need is very widely recognized throughout the cities and vil-

lages of India today. If the population is allowed to exceed the limits of subsistence in any country there will be hunger whether it has a big-industry economy or a village economy.

The followers of Gandhi freely admit that their village economy will not be as efficient from a Western point of view as big industry. But again they ask: efficient for what?

(Reproduced from *The Leader*, August 2, '53)

SOCIAL SELF-HELP IS THE ONLY SOLUTION

(By M. P. T. Acharya)

Heimin Simbu, organ of the Japanese Anarchist Federation, reports that in a village called Kasane, there is a libertarian Communist Colony of 68 members belonging to 18 families and the colony is progressing.

Members work 9 hours a day and rest on Sundays. They own works and economy commonly. There is no money circulating within the colony (i.e. nothing can be bought) and there are no wage workers. Money is used only for external transactions. Males and females are treated alike.

The colony has 5 cows, 5 pigs, 130 hens and 2 goats. (Translated from Swedish).

Such news are not fitted and not found in big papers and party political propaganda organs because such ideas are dangerous to both private capitalists and political parties who want to capture power over the people by promising political quackery.

This village community is not founded by electing members to cuckoo clouds called parliament, but by direct action by the members locally. The members are not sitting far away from the works but are in actual work. This village community is not directed by the Government as Kolkhoz (collective economy, as it is wrongly called) and Sookhoz (State farms) with wages paid as to slaves and driven as slaves of State. They are free communities (Communes) conducted by the members themselves on social solidarity basis, without interference by Government or disruption by political parties. Where equality exists, solidarity cannot be broken.

If all villages organize themselves on this basis, they can abolish money transactions among themselves and provide one another with all things without buying and selling, (and therefore without money calculations and transactions) as among the members of a family, all families and all villages belonging to one human family. It can be extended to the world.

If civilization crashes, that will be the only way to organize mankind—they have to organize themselves without politics and States and their economics. Civilization based on wrong and unworkable economy of politicians and States will crash. It is no use to save it—it cannot be saved—as politicians and statesmen are vainly attempting to save it.

Edward Carpenter wrote once: If civilization makes us sick, let us go back to barbarism! Not necessary—for we can go further beyond civilization as we know it.

DRINK EVIL IN THE ARMY

(By C. Rajagopalachari)

I would like to share with the public the following letter I received from a lady whose name and address I should not give :

"I heard your advice to the Custodian Force bound for Korea, over the radio, with special interest, because my husband happens to be amongst those who are going. I thought it was the best of the messages given to them before their departure—it had a personal human touch. But, if you would permit me to say so, the message would have been still more fitting if you had included the subject of drink also in it. I wonder why you did not advise them to be moderate at least, in drinks, if not completely abstemious. Do you think they need alcohol to keep their spirits up even when they are going on a peaceful mission? Drink has been and is the greatest evil of all times. It has been responsible for the breaking up of more homes than any other single factor. Drink has ruined the life and happiness of thousands of women all over the world, whose husbands are addicted to it. It is responsible for more crimes and accidents in modern times than we think. It is a disease deep-rooted, especially in the army. Why cannot Prohibition be enforced in the army also? I have often wished it would be. When armies go overseas where drinks are available at very cheap rates and there is no one (especially a wife) to prohibit them, from indulging in drinks, they are naturally tempted to consume more than is good for them. It is not only dangerous to health, but also to life itself, because after a heavy bout of drinking, man lacks in co-ordination and is incapable of clear thinking or any action that needs co-ordination, as for instance driving. And army officers invariably drive home themselves after booze parties. You can very well imagine the great danger of handling a vehicle in that fuzzy state of mind and on a dark night. It is just then they think they are the ablest of drivers and try to excel their skill in speeding.

Consequences of Drinking

"Besides this risk, there is another which is equally great, if not greater. You, Sir, have told our men not to look at women, but without advising them to abstain from drinks also. What is the use? It is drink that makes them want women and it is next to impossible for them to keep away from women after drinking. The manifold dangers of going to women can well be imagined and I have no doubt that there are plenty such women too out in Korea. Not all men have such will-power, honesty towards their wives and integrity as not to yield to temptation; neither are all of them God-fearing.

"All this naturally leads to a criminal squandering of money—money which could be better saved for better purposes or spent on other matters which have a better claim.

"Sir, no doubt you know all this; but still I could not help expressing myself after hearing your speech; and I hope you will forgive me my audacity in writing to you direct."

Depth of Feeling in Women

This was followed by the next letter :

"I feel greatly honoured by your having condescended to reply to me—I least expected it. I thought you would get angry with me for having dared to say your message was incomplete.

"Sir, you have rightly guessed the depth of the feeling behind that letter and can imagine with what a heavy heart I have seen my husband off.

"I know scores of other wives who feel the same way I do about this drink business.

"Certainly, Sir, you may make use of my letter without disclosing my name.

"I do pray, that with your kind help and influence this evil of drink may be eradicated from India and especially from the army."

29-8-53, Madras

(From *The Hindu*, 31-8-53)

Official Languages of M.P.

The following news is from a press note issued by the Government of Madhya Pradesh :

"Hindi and Marathi have been declared the official languages of Madhya Pradesh for all purposes, barring a few exceptions. It is quite true that when we substitute one language for another, numerous difficulties present themselves; but surely we cannot postpone the change indefinitely on this account. Hence, it is necessary that we resolve these difficulties and start doing all our official work in our own languages. The notification which comes into force from the 1st of September 1953 exempts from its operation certain classes of business which present legal or temporarily insuperable administrative difficulties. For these purposes, English may be used for the present. Government, however, expect their officers to use the official languages as far as possible in these matters also, except where under the notification the business must be in English.

"It may, however, be made clear that after the 26th of January 1954, all official work will be carried on in the official languages as far as possible, except in those matters where by law or under the Constitution the work has to be carried on in English only.

"Government desire that the language used should be as simple and easily comprehensible as possible. Barring legal, technical and such words, whose wrong use is likely to lead to confusion, words in current parlance which are commonly understood should be given preference. If equivalents for any English word or expressions are not readily available in Hindi/Marathi, there would be no objection to writing the English word or expressions for some time."

8-9-'53

M. P.

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