

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

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TWO ANNAS

THE SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM MEMORIAL

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

Readers probably know that Gandhiji founded his first Ashram in India in Ahmedabad and named it as the Satyagraha Ashram. That was in a private building 38 years ago, on 15th May 1915. During these years much water has flown down the Sabarmati: the great founder himself is no more, and we are a free nation, though not enjoying the Swaraj to achieve which Gandhiji founded his immortalized Ashram. During these years not only we as a nation, but the Father of the Nation also grew to be a world figure, and he became so unique a personality that Einstein was led to remark that "generations to come, it may be, will scarce believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth". It is human to try to visualize such great ones through their relics, which therefore the forgetful humanity jealously preserve, even to be reminded of them. The Government of Bombay has accordingly decided to acquire the site and old building of the first Satyagraha Ashram at Kochrab in Ahmedabad and it is going to be maintained as a fitting memorial of that great institution.

The opening ceremony of this Satyagraha Ashram Memorial was formally done by the Chief Minister of Bombay on October 4, 1953 or the *Rentia Barash*, i.e. the birthday of Gandhiji according to the Hindu calendar. The Collector of Ahmedabad, who is the Chairman of the Advisory Committee appointed by the Government of Bombay for this memorial, said at the beginning:

"It was here, in this building, that in 1915 the Father of the Nation established, for the first time, a Satyagraha Ashram, on his return from South Africa. He stayed in these premises for nearly a period of two years. The Ashram was then shifted from these premises to where you see the Harijan Ashram today on the banks of the Sabarmati River.

"In 1950 the Government of Bombay thought of acquiring these premises in which Bapu had spent some memorable years of his life and from where he had started propagating the cult of the spinning wheel, his ideas about Harijan uplift, equality with the poor, self-help and scores of similar other things. I need hardly add that it was mainly due to the keen interest taken in the matter by our Chief Minister that this scheme of acquiring the premises was promptly completed and the building handed over to the Committee which had been

established to see that the memorial was put up on sound and right lines.

"The Government have accepted the recommendation of the Committee that this acquisition is mainly intended to preserve the building as a relic of Gandhiji's Ashram and to use it as a centre for social activities loved and advocated by Bapu. Naturally, in view of these recommendations the desire of the Committee has been to keep the memorial aesthetically simple, attractive and as far as possible, in its original design. While we have renovated the building by plastering it here and there, its structural features have been kept essentially the same as it were when Bapu occupied it.

"In consonance with the recommendations made by the Committee and accepted by the Government, the Ashram will run a library where we will be keeping Gandhiji's literature. The library will also act as a focus for sponsoring such social and cultural activities as were dear to Bapu. It is intended to appoint an Organizer-cum-Librarian who will be mainly responsible for organizing such activities."

At the end the Collector read messages received on the occasion, some of which are given below:

From Dr Rajendra Prasad

"All the places connected in any way with our struggle for freedom are claiming the nation's attention one by one. That is specially the case with places where Mahatma Gandhi stayed and worked. In course of time such places are sure to acquire historic importance. The Satyagraha Ashram at Kochrab in Ahmedabad District was the first place where Gandhiji stayed in 1915 on his return from South Africa to propagate his ideas about the spinning wheel, uplift of the Harijans, propagation of Hindi as an all-India language etc. He stayed in this Ashram for about two years before shifting to the better-known Ashram of Sabarmati. Till 1950 the building at Kochrab occupied by Gandhiji remained almost in its original condition. Rightly enough the Bombay Government acquired it together with the neighbouring land three years ago with a view to preserving it as a relic of Gandhiji's Ashram and to use it as a centre for social activities.

"It is only proper that this first venue of Gandhiji's political and humanitarian activities should be developed as a memorial worthy of the Mahatma. It is given to few to visit as many places as Mahatma Gandhi did while propagating his political philosophy and social doctrines. Thus, though there are places in the remotest districts

of India which he visited and with which local people still associate his name, the places which he selected for his work and which he sanctified with his presence deserve to be raised to the status of national monuments. For this reason, I feel that developing the very first Satyagraha Ashram started by Gandhiji is a step in the right direction. I take this opportunity to congratulate the Bombay Government and the Gandhi Smarak Samiti on their decision and hope that the Kochrab Ashram will not only help us to remember our emancipator with gratitude but will also inspire us with that lofty idealism which characterized Gandhiji's life and teachings."

From Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

"I am glad to learn that the original building in which Mahatma Gandhi established a Satyagraha Ashram in 1915 has been acquired and is going to be used as a centre of social activities. This is as it should be. On the occasion of the inauguration ceremony of the Ashram which will be located in this building in Ahmedabad, I send my good wishes."

From Shri C. Rajagopalachari

"May all of us learn to value sacred things and give our worship in the right way. This inauguration ceremony consecrates the spot, where our Janaka ploughed the ground for his great sacrifice and where for India he found Sita in the furrow."

From Acharya J. B. Kripalani

"I had the privilege of living for a few days at the Kochrab Ashram in the middle of 1917. I had been with Bapu in Champaran. The Committee to look into the grievances of the Champaran tenants at the hands of the indigo planters had been appointed and there were a few days before its work was to begin. Bapu wanted to utilize this time to return to the Ashram and begin his social activities specially the establishment of a national school.

"Life in the Ashram was a new experience for me. Most of its members were the inmates of Bapu's Ashram at Phoenix in South Africa. Shri Maganlal Gandhi was in charge of the Ashram. I must admit I did not altogether fancy the life there. It appeared to me too rigid and full of prohibitions. I know today that the restrictions were necessary if they were to be trained to keep their rigid vows. After a day Bapu asked my opinion about the life there. I frankly told him that while the inmates of the Ashram may be imbued with the spirit of non-violence I did not see the spirit of active love in their life and work. I had associated active love with a kind of glow of delight in the face of those who felt it and I missed it in the countenance of the Ashramites. To my surprise and confusion this opinion of mine was retailed to the inmates of the Ashram after prayer in the evening. Of course Bapu added, "I don't accept Professor's opinion." He always called me professor. I don't think the elder members of the Ashram

appreciated my opinion. I scarcely expected them to do so. But it is an incident that stands out in my memory.

"The land at Sabarmati had been acquired and often we had to work there. Some times we went to live the camp life that had been created there for the supervision of constructive work.

"It is not my purpose here to record the varied experience I had in the few days I was privileged to live in Kochrab Ashram. I am glad that the Bombay Government have purchased the building in which Satyagraha Ashram began its work in India. I am also happy to learn that the surrounding grounds have been acquired for carrying on Bapu's constructive work. I wish the new institution all success."

From Shri G. V. Mavlankar

"I am much pleased and satisfied to learn that the Government of Bombay have decided to perpetuate, as a memorial, the site of Gandhiji's first Ashram in India. I know the site and the building since 1915 when Gandhiji came and stayed there. I had the privilege of attending the prayer meetings and of having been served dinner by Gandhiji himself. I remember those pious days and the great things that Gandhiji taught us, all of which make me firmer in my resolve to follow them and inspire me even today.

"Gandhiji needs no memorial; he is one unto himself. This one in brick and mortar is only a material thing. On this occasion, I only hope it will inspire posterity to enthrone in their heart the ideal of the Satyagraha Ashram and provoke them to follow the path of Truth, Non-violence and Service. I am sorry I cannot be present on the occasion, on account of other engagements outside. I wish all success to the new institution."

(Abridged from the original in Gujarati).

The Chief Minister, Shri Morarjibhai Desai, in his speech, referred to the great sanctity that naturally attaches itself in our minds round the idea of this memorial and showed his deep concern to see that the new institution was organized in the best manner befitting the unique ideal of the Father of the Nation. To do that, he said, the Government proposed to create a Trust for it, so that the institution might not suffer on account of changing governments under a democratic order.

In this connection, I suggest, the proper way to do this would be to make a statute of the legislature laying down the general law for the creation and maintenance in due and adequate manner, of this Satyagraha Ashram Memorial Trust. It should be realized that this memorial, however humble and outwardly small-looking, embodies the idea of the Satyagraha Ashram which is no more now. As such it is a world memorial for the Ashram ideal, which was to imbibe and evolve and inculcate in the body politic the way of life, individual and corporate, based on Satyagraha, Bapu's immortal and unique gift to the world.

BHOODAN LAND DISTRIBUTION IN U. P.*(By Akshya Kumar Karan)*

The question is often asked as to how the lands received in Bhoodan are actually distributed among the landless. The question is important and needs to be answered in order to remove the doubts which ignorance in this regard may create in the minds of the sceptics. For example, there are people who are anxious to know if we who are entrusted with the work of land distribution succeed in finding out the really needy from among the poor landless. The suggestion would seem to be that the villages are torn with individual and factional rivalries and honest men who can help in finding the most deserving cases from among the poor for the allotment of land are hard to get. What is then the guarantee that the land distributed would only go to the landless, properly so called — who have nothing else to turn to for their livelihood? Even assuming that they will get land, how can they profit by it unless they are provided with the agricultural wherewithal?

These doubts are quite natural and require to be removed. Vinobaji has been answering them from time to time. The Uttar Pradesh Bhoodan Samiti has also considered this question and laid down the method of distribution which is now being followed by the workers throughout the province and may therefore be regarded as having stood the test well:

1. The date for the distribution of land in the village which may have been chosen for this purpose is fixed several days in advance and is announced to the people of that and the neighbouring villages seven days before the date of actual distribution, by beat of drum. Efforts are also made to approach the people personally and inform them of the programme. The announcement is repeated a day before the date of distribution.

2. During the seven days preceding the distribution, the distribution workers inspect the donated land, study its fertility and decide the acreage necessary for the maintenance of a peasant family. They also request the head of the local *gram-panchayat* and the *patwari* to accompany them and help them in the inspection and the appraisal of the fertility of the land concerned.

3. The information regarding the date and the place of the distribution is sent to the District Magistrate and other officials concerned with it, the intention being that he or his representative and the *patwari* may be present in the meeting and give to the organizers the benefit of their help.

4. On the distribution day the entire population of the village gather together at the appointed spot. The donors are also present. Then someone from the workers makes a short speech explaining the ideology of the Bhoodan, the method of distribution and the policy underlying

it. Next, the landless among the present are asked to stand up. Some of them may not stand up on account of shyness. The organizers therefore take care to repeat the request until all of them show up. Since they are all local people who know one another, there is hardly any room for a landholder passing himself off as landless. Besides, the *patwari* is there to point out who are the real landless.

5. The landless can be divided into three classes: (a) Agricultural labourers who have no other means of earning their livelihood and who work on land of others; (b) those who have taken to other occupations but would like to revert to cultivation because the occupations in which they are engaged are insufficient to support them; (c) those who have very insufficient lands and no other occupations and who are therefore very poor.

6. The first preference in the distribution of lands is given to the class (a) landless, next come the poor cultivators belonging to class (c). The rest of the land if any is allotted to class (b).

7. However there might be villages where the number of the landless of even the first group may exceed the land available for distribution. That makes distribution difficult. Under the situation the responsibility for picking out the most deserving persons from them is placed on the landless themselves. If they cannot decide it, lots are drawn and land is allotted accordingly. The Bhoodan workers act merely as witnesses. The persons going to receive land having been settled, they are asked to sign a printed application purporting to be a request for land, after which they are presented with certificates of having received land. This certificate is signed by the representative of the Bhoodan Committee, the representative of the District Magistrate (the *patwari*) and the Chairman of the village *panchayat*. The workers have to take care that the certificates are duly filled in and distributed to the recipients of land.

8. The whole procedure is gone through without any fee being charged from the recipients.

9. The lands received should be cultivated by the recipient himself for at least a period of ten years, and the cultivation should start within 3 years from the date on which he received it. Failing that, it may be taken back from him and given to some other man.

10. We aim at giving a *bigha* of land for every individual in the family.

This is the method of distribution followed by the workers in our province. In case of a difficulty not covered by the above, the workers are to solve it in consultation with the people of the village, taking into consideration the local conditions.

(From Hindi)

HARIJAN

Oct. 17

1953

REARRANGING THE MAP OF INDIA

[The question of redistribution of States in the Indian Union is fast getting prominence all over India. It has therefore compelled both the Government as well as the political parties to pay heed to it, whether they like it or not. Shri Jawaharlal Nehru spoke on it during his last tour in South India at Madras. Mr Rajagopalachari inviting Mr Nehru to speak, said that they were glad the Congress President and Prime Minister was going to tell them a few things which they would keep as "wise and permanent advice". The speech is summarized below from *The Hindu*, October 3, 1953.]

"I shall confess to you," Mr Nehru said, "that I did not wish to hurry it. I wanted to delay — I am not talking about Andhra, I am talking about general problems — till the other processes of consolidation in India had taken place. We are consolidating our country in many ways and we are, I think, a strong national unit in the world. Nevertheless, there is much to be done if we are to bring about what I would call the full emotional integration of India and her people."

"I would have preferred," Mr Nehru went on "that this process of re-fashioning the provinces and States of India was postponed or delayed till we had built the country with a solid foundation. I had no doubt that it was necessary to some extent to re-fashion the map of India, but I cannot say to what extent. There is no reason why we should accept everything that came down from the British as a permanent institution in India. The process has begun and let us do it well and thoroughly. Let us not be afraid of it or sorry about it. It is certain it is a historic development which is taking place or is going to take place all over India, in various shapes and forms."

The Prime Minister, in this connection, referred to the talk about linguistic provinces and observed that while there might be something in it, he did not like this particular phraseology, "linguistic provinces". Language was no doubt important and represented a major element in the culture of a people. They wanted to preserve the variety of culture in India which was represented among others by language and to give the languages, whether Tamil, Telugu or any other tongue, full opportunity of growth and cultural expression. "But when we talk about linguistic provinces, while we lay stress on an important aspect of the question, the trouble is that we somehow ignore many other important questions. The question has to be considered in its entirety in all its aspects, linguistic, cultural, administrative, financial, security, defence and so many other things. Then, you are in a position to look at the picture as a whole. Also, you cannot isolate the

problem of any one State, because one State adjoins two, three or four States. As soon as you touch one State, it affects other States. People do not seem to realize it. The formation of the Andhra State is relatively the simplest problem and yet it was by no means simple. All kinds of difficulties arose and will arise, no doubt."

Problems Posed

Mr Nehru said that there were demands for linguistic States in South India and in Western India. They could not be treated in isolation. Let them, for instance, take the demand for a Maharashtra State. The Maharashtrians were a fine and virile community among the people of India. There was nothing wrong in their desire for a Maharashtra Province. But, as soon as they began to consider this problem, they could see how many questions arose. The first naturally was that the Bombay State would have to be broken up with other consequences.

That applied to Karnataka also. The Kannadigas wanted a State. He sympathized with them and there was no reason why they should not have it. There was more reason on their side than on the side of many others. But Karnataka by itself was not a simple issue. If they took up the problem, Mysore came into the picture. Bombay, Madhya Pradesh and Berar also came into it. They could not just say: "You can have Karnataka province and there it is." The whole of Central and South India would be shaken up. Therefore, they had to consider the picture in its entirety.

The biggest problem, Mr Nehru pointed out, was economic. They talked a great deal and rightly about the economic problem. The principal question was the economic issue of raising the standard of people and getting rid of unemployment and poverty. "If this is the biggest problem," he asked, "should we do something which comes in the way of a solution of it or delay it? It is an important consideration. That is why I say, language, though an important factor, is not the overriding factor. The other factors have to be considered."

High Power Commission

"It is for this reason," Mr Nehru said, "that we are going to appoint a High Power Commission to go into these matters." He had always thought of the appointment of such a Commission because he did not think that they should accept everything as it was in India today. But certainly he had hoped that the appointment of such a Commission would be delayed for at least ten years till independent India settled down and that they could take up the cutting up of States in a slightly different way.

Mr Nehru said that they came to the conclusion that it was better they did not delay the matter. "If by delay one merely keeps the people's mind in ferment, it is not worthwhile. So,

we have decided to go ahead with this Commission."

The Congress President hoped that the Commission would be appointed in the course of this year and that it would go ahead with its work quietly and dispassionately. How far the Commission would be able to do its work in such a manner depended upon other people. Anyhow, it was his intention that the Commission should work in that way and take into consideration the picture of India as a whole.

Principles of Reorganization

"I am not prepared", Mr Nehru said, "to consider linguistic provinces singly. But I am prepared to consider here and now the whole of India, how the reorganization of States could be carried out keeping in mind all factors and keeping in view linguistic, cultural and other matters, so that the Commission can put before India a full picture."

"This business of linguistic provinces," Mr Nehru declared, "narrows our outlook and makes us less conscious of India and more conscious of our State or province. If this is the result, it is a bad result. The overriding consciousness of the people must be of the country as a whole. It is what is called national consciousness. Otherwise, you become narrow and provincial." If in each State, people became narrow or had an awareness only of their own State, it was bad. They had to guard against it.

India's Unity

Mr Nehru pointed out that when they were out of India and went to America, Russia or China, they were not thinking so much of the particular patch of land in India from where they came. "You will be thinking more of India as a whole. It does not matter where you come from. The awareness of India is strong if you are out of India. But it cannot be so strong if you are just thinking of your State, district or town, whatever it might be. I have always felt that the next stage after achieving independence is the realization of this unity on the emotional and psychological basis."

Mr Nehru said that he did not want in the slightest degree to regiment the people of India, their minds, habits or thought. It would be fatal to do so. He wanted the rich diversity of India to continue and every part of India to develop according to its own habits and diversified ways of living and thinking, but always bearing in mind the map of Indian unity. If they did not consider this important problem from this point of view, they could not go ahead as a strong nation. The fate that had overtaken them in the past would still overtake them again.

The Internal Danger

"Do not imagine that the past cannot be repeated and that we have got over all dangers

— let us put it crudely, of foreign domination," Mr Nehru warned. "There is a great deal of talk sometimes in the world today of danger to India of invasion across the Himalayas from Russia. I have not the slightest thought in my mind of danger of that type. If there is danger, we are prepared for it. I am not worried about it. I do not know why powerful countries worry about it. But I do worry about the internal danger. My reading of history is that it is this kind of danger that has cracked us."

Reverting, in this connection to the subject of linguistic States, Mr Nehru emphasized that nothing should be done to weaken the fabric of India. It was manifest that if they proceeded purely on some kind of linguistic basis and not on any other, they might make ridiculous divisions from the economic and administrative point of view. One had to accept a ridiculous division as between nations, because national boundaries were the result of historic incidents or war. "But there is no reason why we should have absurd divisions—economically and administratively absurd—merely to satisfy some urge for what is called a common language area." They wanted to develop all languages.

Mr Nehru concluded that, now that the policy had been put before the country quite clearly by the proposed appointment of a Commission to go into the whole matter, it seemed to him that it was completely unnecessary and wrong for people to go on agitating for this linguistic State or other. It had no meaning. The shouting of slogans and passing resolutions demanding this and that reminded one certainly of what they did under British rule. "It is not quite fitting," Mr Nehru said, "in a free country to do so."

All India Nai Talim Conference

We have been receiving many inquiries regarding the Nai Talim Exhibition going to be organized as an integral part of the Ninth All India Nai Talim Conference, Titabar (Assam). The exhibits should reach Titabar on or before 8th November, 1953. Suggestions for this Exhibition are contained in a booklet issued by the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, Sevagram and can be obtained by sending As. 4 in postal stamps.

Concession Certificates

Employees of a Government, semi-Government, local self-Government or a statutory body going to attend the All India Nai Talim Conference on their personal account may take advantage of the railway concession. But for this they will have to send a declaration from their immediate superiors that their travelling expenses will not be borne by the Government or semi-Government or statutory body.

30-9-53

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BHOODAN YAJNA: WHY AND HOW

(By Shrikrishnadas Jaju)

[The Madhya Pradesh Government has set up a special Statutory Board for helping and promoting the Bhoodan work in the State. The following is adapted from the speech of the Chairman of the Board, Shri Shrikrishnadas Jaju, on the occasion of its inauguration.]

2-10-53

M. P.]

Political freedom having been achieved, the next important task before the country was that of securing the economic and social freedom to the people. The question demanded attention the more insistently because every adult, man or woman, had now the right of vote which made the wide social and economic disparities between different classes and groups look ever more incongruous in the context of political equality. It was clear that the people would not suffer them any longer. The poor in India have continued to be exploited along the centuries and our chronic poverty has passed into a proverb. Even after six years of freedom, the darkness of the cottages of the poor remains unrelieved by the touch of its glow. Under the circumstances, the economic problem assumes highest priority and calls for immediate solution.

In accordance with the ideology of non-violence, Gandhiji, while he strove for political freedom, had also paid due attention to the economic aspects of our situation and achieved what was possible, notwithstanding the crippling handicap of an alien government ruling over our country. Strange as it may seem, those who held the reins of the Government after the attainment of freedom found themselves unable to go along the path which Gandhiji had showed.

But things could not stand still. The movement for the abolition of economic inequalities between different classes has been steadily growing throughout the world. In the last few years it has produced violent convulsions specially in some of the East Asian countries. The rumblings of this movement were already being felt in India which showed that the problem had reached the danger point. But it was neither desirable nor possible to solve it through violence. Legislation could have provided a sort of solution. But a radical legislation making a sudden break from existing conditions, is also not entirely free from violence and cannot even be enforced satisfactorily unless it is supported by public opinion. It looked as though the country were caught up in a difficult impasse. In the meantime, however, God inspired Vinobaji to launch the Bhoodan movement and show the way out.

To collect lands from the landholders and distribute them among the landless is only an outer, though a necessary, aspect of its work. Essentially it is directed to the creation of new values in our social life or *सर्वदलसमन्वय* as says Vinobaji. It seeks to establish an ethical view of economics. Economics have been too long dominated by the profit motive with disas-

trous consequences for all. Vinobaji wants to rescue it from this degradation and make it conform to ethics so that India may solve all her problems through non-violence and ultimately realize her cherished goal of building up the Sarvodaya order of society. The Bhoodan movement has made great progress and people are now well acquainted with its nature and ideology.

The intellectuals are however oppressed by a doubt, namely, whether Bhoodan can provide an effective solution of the entire land-problem. As it is, the achievements over the last two years are quite considerable and strengthen us in our hopes from this movement.

Those who have more land than they need have begun to realize that they cannot keep it for long. Lands are being sold and are thus going to those who will work on them with their own hands. There was also for some time a spurt in the cases of eviction of tenants by the landlords under the fear that the future legislation in this regard will deprive the latter of this right. The tendency, has, however, been checked in most States and, it is hoped, will be completely stopped very soon. The Planning Commission has accepted the principle that there ought to be a ceiling to the individual's ownership of land. The Hyderabad State Assembly is already considering a bill in this regard. And it is certain that sooner or later all other States will also have to take similar measures. Vinobaji advocates laying down a 'flooring' instead of a ceiling, that is, every one who wants to live by cultivation of the land, and has no other means of livelihood must be provided with enough land to have his needs met by it. The atmosphere for direct or indirect sharing of land which we find growing around us is largely the result of the Bhoodan Yajna. The State Governments can do their part in this work mainly by suitable legislation designed to help and promote the movement. The atmosphere for such legislation is being rapidly built up. That will however constitute only a part of the work. Our primary objective is to change the prevailing ideas about wealth, specially about the individual's ownership of wealth. This can be done only through the Bhoodan and the Sampattidan Yajna.

The Bhoodan work has been conceived as a non-party social service activity. It has no place for party-politics. Except the Communists and a few other groups all others are supporting it and contributing towards its furtherance according to their capacity. It is expected that those who work for it will forget their party-affiliations for the while and work as non-party social workers without in any way trying to serve the interests of their parties. The distribution work will also have to be done in the same spirit. It will be our endeavour to place it in the hands of non-party workers who will be expected to discharge it in the non-party way.

I think we will have to face two main difficulties in the distribution work : One, the procuring of a copy of the description of the gifted land from the Government land records—this copy will have to be attached to the gift-deed —, and the other, the determination of the gifted land where only a part of the field has been donated. It will be difficult for the donor or the Board to do it. And it will also take much time if they do it. Therefore it had better be left to be done by the Government officers. The Government will also have to provide certain facilities to the new grantees. The Board will present its considered recommendations on this question to the Government in due time and hope that they will do the needful.

(From Hindi)

MARKETS AND WORLD PEACE

(By Wilfred Wellock)

[The following is from the Author's *Orchard Lea Papers* No. 8 on "Local, National and World Government". It continues the argument that was taken up in "World Government is no Solution", (see *Harijan*, 10-10-53).

M. P.]

Before nations can function in amity to achieve the world's peace, they must free themselves from the nightmare of uncertainty in regard to markets and supplies. The first steps to this freedom are a revolution in personal and social values and aims, and the organization of a reasonably-balanced agro-industrial economy. The effect of taking them would be a marked fall in the nation's demands for markets and for the earth's resources, and thus in the strains and tensions which lead to war.

It follows that the foundations of a true internationalism are a spiritual culture and community responsibility, and that these rights should be established throughout the world. Man's highest development depends upon such a culture, as does also the world's peace. Hence it should reside in all the institutions of responsible small communities : in the family, the school, the church, the playground, and in all the places where man and woman foregather to fulfil their personal ends and their social being. If their culture be deficient, vitiated international relations will result ; but if it be sound, the order of peace and universal goodwill will ensue.

Every nation and every locality is more or less conscious of certain values and characteristics connected with its traditions, language, culture, habits and customs, which it desires to retain and develop. Also the more responsibility is localized, the more colourful, varied, fruitful and attractive will the life and work of nations become. Quality of life is most manifest in the little things of every-day experience, in friendly habits, kindly customs and rich, flavourful phrases. Take these things away and life is reduced to a spiritual desert.

A century ago it was proclaimed by the Manchester economists that the world trading system which Britain and the West was then promoting, would increase world intercourse and friendliness and insure the world's peace. The present state of the world shows that it has had precisely the opposite effect. Indeed, the aggressive nationalism that is now arising in the Near and Far East may be said to be one of its products, and the best way to end it would be to abandon imperialism and adopt a more co-operative economy. The one great exception to the new Eastern Nationalism is the spiritual nationalism of Gandhi.

What attracted me most during my recent visit to India was the richness of her skills and handicrafts and the spiritual quality of her life, and I can think of no greater tragedy than the abandonment of her village economy in favour of Western industrialism, that nightmare of deadening uniformity of standardized goods and men. What India needs is the harnessing of simple, small-scale machines to her wonderful skills so as to improve her production while preserving and developing her creative genius.

Today the people of the great power-States call frantically for peace, while yet they increase their armaments and move fatefully towards war. Boggled by their materialism they are unable to escape from the fate they dread. Their mass-production industrialism demands more markets and raw materials than are available, whence fear of economic breakdown, communism and world war hastens the event they desire above all others to avoid. No world government could function in such conditions.

A hydra-headed fear enslaves the nations. Truth alone can save them : the truth that life is more than meat. Peace has its price. It is the fruit of the creative and other spiritual values and it will come when these values are taught in our schools and colleges and pursued in our workshops. The order of peace will first be fulfilled in the family and the locality, then, with them, in the region, and with the region in the nation, and finally with the nation in the world family. It is such an order we ought to be erecting today. In the last analysis a peaceful world order is the harmonious functioning of millions of small communities which have learned the art of living. Their peace is the world's peace because they accept a common law, the TRUTH that they who give their lives shall find them. The operation of that law is the World Government we seek.

MAHADEV DESAI'S EARLY LIFE

By N. D. Parikh

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INDISCRETION RUNNING AMUCK

(By Parashuram Sharma)

Today being the Gandhi Jayanti day, *The Times of India*, like all other papers, publishes the portrait of Mahatmaji on its first page under the caption the "Father of the Nation".

Just below it are found the following significant words—"Prohibition must go to avoid financial crisis". "Do drink for another ten years, says Dr. Deshmukh."

What an appropriate statement by Dr. Punjabrao Deshmukh on this auspicious occasion and a very holy present to the Father of the Nation!

It is really a great pity that the ministers and other responsible leaders may speak in such a strain, as if they were the masters of what they surveyed. Will it give peace to that great soul to see that a minister of the Centre and that also on his birthday dares to utter such words as these: "I would even ask people to drink for another ten years. I am keen on getting more money and do not care where it comes from?"

Is it not an open challenge to the Constitution itself, to which these people pledged themselves under sacred oath? Could he not choose some other occasion to voice, as if, his pent up feelings and in more suitable words? Will he not feel sadder in making such a statement, even under difficult economic conditions?

He does not seem to care from whatever source he can get money, even if it comes by ruining the poor and their families and lowering the moral standard of the nation as a whole. Rather he will like even the sober to take to drinking so that their minister may get more money. Is he sure that after ten years he will be the minister and he will then start the campaign of prohibition as directed by the Constitution?

Financial crisis can be the result of bad planning, as first things must not have been placed first. Huge sums are being spent on schemes in which common man does not feel interested as they do not touch his heart. These schemes seem to be simply the whims of certain advisers. Is there any guarantee that even the excise revenues will prove sufficient for these whims, if the present policy is continued?

May God help poor India and save her from such friends, is my humble prayer.
Nasik, 2-10-'53

[I quite reciprocate the feelings expressed above. It was quite out of taste for *The Times of India* to do as described above! And if the report is true, Dr. Deshmukh almost appeared to be in the crusading mood for drink and its tainted money! It passes one's comprehension that this drink crusade is from a member of the Government of India, whose Constitution lays down that the State shall strive to prohibit the use of drink and drugs except for medicinal purposes. Such gross irresponsibility in high quarters is a dangerous thing for the new democracy. Should not the Prime Minister pull up such ill-thought outbursts of indiscretion running amuck?
5-10-'53

M. P.]

CONSTITUTION-MAKING IN PAKISTAN

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

It is so good to learn that after a fairly long lapse of time, constitution-making for Pakistan has begun again and there is a move towards the solution of its tough and knotty questions. A Karachi report of October 5 says, the Muslim League Assembly Party unanimously accepted the chief fundamentals of the Constitution and decided that the Federation of Pakistan will have a bicameral legislature and it will consist of five units, viz., 1. The N. W. F. P., Frontier States and tribal areas, 2. West Punjab, 3. Sind and Khairpur, 4. Baluchistan and its States, Bahawalpur and Karachi, and 5. East Bengal. The moot question to be solved was, how to balance the two wings of Pakistan—the East Pakistan and the West Pakistan. It is announced by the Pakistan Prime Minister that this knotty problem has been satisfactorily solved and it will come before the next Constituent Assembly Session for its formal ratification. This is really another feather in the cap of Mr. Mohammed Ali, the first being his understanding with India regarding the Kashmir question. It is not for us to go into the merits of the solution, except to be happy that it has been somehow arrived at.

It is learnt that the State will be Islamic, i.e. it will work according to the tenets of the Koran. Even this may be all right as far as it goes, because it is repeatedly said to the world that the Koran stands for a liberal democratic order. The only question is, who will interpret the Koran how. Will it be interpreted that way and made the basis of the law of the land? There appears to be a wrangle on this aspect of the question even at present. We hope this will be cleared by the Constitution, especially to the satisfaction of the non-Islamic minorities that Pakistan has not merely to mind and protect but also to see that they also, as equally good Pak nationals, feel free and have equal opportunities to prosper and to grow to their full stature, and are equal in the eyes of law. To do this it is utterly necessary that these minorities as well as the parties that do not see eye to eye with the official political party in power are free to function and make themselves heard at the present time. Particularly it is now up to the Prime Minister of Pakistan to release from detention the great Khan brothers and their brave comrades so that they can give the benefit of their counsels to their own countrymen at this important juncture in their history. Let us hope the Pakistan Prime Minister earns this further merit as well, so that our neighbour country might desire an agreed and free Constitution for itself.
9-10-'53

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