

HARIJAN

Editor: PYARELAL

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TWO ANNAS

HOW GANDHIJI FEELS AND ACTS

Gandhiji's second visit to Delhi within a comparatively short interval gave the residents a further chance of listening to him every evening. The crowds were, if anything, larger than before. The air is tense with feelings of insecurity, lack of faith all round, hatred, mistrust and despair. Small wonder then that they flocked in their thousands to hear a few words of solace from the only one who bears no hatred in his heart towards anyone and in whose vocabulary the word despair does not exist.

It was indeed a tragedy that this time too the prayers were not allowed to be held. The moment the verse from the *Quran Sharif* was begun to be recited a voice would be raised in objection. And, true to his technique of non-violence, Gandhiji would ask the thousands to bow to the will of the one because it would not be right to overawe anyone. It was a hard lesson for those who had come to join in community prayer to be deprived of the privilege owing to the folly of the person. I used to feel particularly sorry for the large number of women, for, they certainly did not come to hear Gandhiji's after-prayer discourse so much as to join in the *Ramadhun*. But the crowd showed exemplary toleration and calm and one can only hope that the lesson Gandhiji would have them learn from this practical demonstration went home.

In spite of the continued communal strife Gandhiji continues to be optimistic. In reply to a questioner as to whether the present gulf between the Hindu and the Muslim was permanent or unbridgeable, his reply was, "Nothing of this kind can be permanent. If it were to become so, it would mean that neither religion had any truth in it." It was this appeal to his listeners daily to be true to their religion that was the dominant note in all his discourses. Intolerance and hatred were the very way to destroy religion and he was visibly hurt on the last evening when the objection to the recitation of the *Quranic* verse came from a woman, for, Gandhiji always expects far more in the moral sphere from women than from men. Asked by a friend whether Pakistan would die a natural death if conceded, his reply was, "Can you describe Pakistan to me? What reply can be given to an unknown premise? I have tried to understand what it is and have failed. And if the Punjab and Bengal today are hall-marks of Pakistan, then it can never exist." His own view regarding the division of India has not undergone any change. He stands for a

United India as firmly as ever and as he said more than once to friends, "The ultimate decision of division or partition of provinces and all such matters are for the people to settle among themselves after the British have withdrawn their power." This looking towards the British power for everything was a hopeless and a disintegrating factor in their lives. The same applied to the States. They had been in a perpetual state of tutelage under the British. That sustenance was now going and if the Princes wanted to remain on their *gaddis* they would have to become an integral part of Free India. Their freedom lay in giving power into the hands of their people and becoming their premier servants.

Replying to a French friend, Gandhiji said he felt that a socialistic State was bound to come into being in India. He hoped that Indian socialism would not be an arm-chair, but a practical, socialism. The goal must be clear and perfect or else they would be sailing on an uncharted sea and might founder. He himself naturally clung to the hope that future society in India would be built on non-violence. And only in that case would socialism become a permanent way of life.

"Will religion die?" asked the same friend. Quick as lightning came the response. "If religion dies, then India dies. Today the Hindus and the Muslims are clinging to the husk of religion. They have gone mad. But I hope that all this is froth, that all the scum has come to the surface as happens when the waters of two rivers meet. Everything appears muddy on top, but underneath it is crystal clear and calm. The scum goes to the sea of itself and the rivers mingle and flow clear and pure."

To the same friend he said, "Britain was once undisputed mistress of the seas. If she plays true by India, she can become mistress of the morals of the world which will be a very much bigger honour. She can then decide the fate of the world. I believe she has the capacity. I know the British well. I have passed some of the best years of my life among them and I have always voted against the name of 'Perfidious Albion' for them and have preferred to subscribe to Cowper's well-known verse 'Hypocrisy is an ode to virtue.' But Britain has yet to rise to those heights."

And so Gandhiji goes his way on his lone pilgrimage of winning hearts to the way of love. Everything he says whether to the British, to the Princes, to the Hindus, to the Muslims, to the

individual, to the community, to the minorities, to women, to the journalists, indeed to the world, is all in the nature of a challenge. All eyes are turned on India. Will she be true to her leader and lead not only herself but the world into the paths of peace? It is a big challenge and a heavy responsibility.

New Delhi, 10-5-'47

A. K.

ANOTHER DELHI INTERLUDE

4-5-'47

According to plan Gandhiji asked before the prayer began as to whether there were any objectors on the prayer ground. One solitary voice said 'Yes'. Gandhiji was visibly hurt that the folly of one person should deprive thousands of persons from enjoying the sweets of community prayer. But, as he reiterated, it was against the spirit of *ahimsa* to overawe even one person into submission. He, therefore, asked the audience to close their eyes and join him in silent prayer for two minutes. He asked them during this silence to enshrine the name of God — God, who was infinite, immeasurable and unknowable, had millions of names — in their hearts and bear no anger against the misguided youth who had stopped the prayer again that day.

Gandhiji told the gathering that he had had an hour and a half's interview with the Viceroy during the day in which the latter had complained against misleading reports and headlines in the newspapers. The Viceroy had said that he had come to India to transfer power in a peaceful manner to Indian hands. By June 30th, 1948 all signs of British rule were to vanish from here. It was his earnest desire that India should be united and that all should live in harmony with each other, no matter to what community they belonged. He wanted Indians to forget the past and to believe in the honest desire of the British to bring about, if possible, agreement between the Hindus and the Muslims before leaving. It would not redound to the credit either of Britain or of India, the Viceroy had said, if the communal strife continued. The Viceroy was a famous naval commander and while, as such, he did not believe in non-violence, he repeatedly assured him (Gandhiji) that he believed in God and always tried to act according to his conscience. He, therefore, pleaded with everyone that they should not place obstacles in his (the Viceroy's) way. If the strife continued in spite of his best endeavour during the period of the liquidation of the British power, he would not hesitate, however reluctant he might be, to have recourse to the use of the military. Though the Interim Government of India was responsible for the preservation of law and order, he considered himself no less responsible in the ultimate end for the maintenance of peace so long as British soldiers were on the Indian soil. Gandhiji said that the Viceroy had spoken very courteously and earnestly and felt that his difficult task would be lightened if all the communities and parties recognized his honesty and cooperated in the pursuit of the common purpose.

Gandhiji repeated what he had said the day before that unless the Viceroy was proved to be guilty of a breach of trust, they must continue to believe in his honesty of purpose. If the Hindus and the Muslims continued to fight, it would mean that they did not want the British to go. Nevertheless, even if they continued to behave as animals, he himself had no doubt in his mind that the British must go by 30-6-'48. It was high time they stopped blaming each other. That could never bring about peace.

Gandhiji referred to the crying problems of food and cloth shortage which were common to the masses which included the Hindus, the Muslims and the others. If they were wise enough to be on friendly terms with each other, they would be enabled to feed those hungry mouths and clothe those naked bodies. It was their duty to do so.

Gandhiji then referred to the visit he had from Major General Shah Nawaz, earlier in the day, who told him of a village in Bihar where the Hindus who had been reluctant to allow the Muslim refugees to return, had assured him that they would welcome back all the refugees and the villagers themselves cleaned the streets and undertook to repair the broken houses. After all, everywhere where madness had reigned, all that the sufferers wanted was the service of love and understanding from their erstwhile oppressors. The action of these Hindus in Bihar and all such actions were bright spots in the darkness that today enveloped them.

If the Qaid-e-Azams's signature to the peace plea was sincere, Gandhiji continued, then the disorders and cruelties in the Frontier and the Punjab would stop.

6-5-'47

As Gandhiji had not returned from his interview with the Qaid-e-Azam, the prayers began without him at 6-30 p.m. There was one objector again and, therefore, the gathering was deprived once again of joining in anything except the two minutes' silence.

Owing to inclement weather the previous day Gandhiji's written words had not been read out. In his absence they were read out today.

"In order to escape from the evil one I seek refuge in God. Oh God! I begin every task with the remembrance of Thy name. Thou art the compassionate and the merciful. Thou art the Creator of the universe. Thou art Lord and Master. I praise Thee alone and desire only Thy help. Thou wilt mete out justice on the Day of Judgement.

"Show me the right path, the path which Thy saints have trod, not the wrong path of those who have offended Thee.

"God is one. He is eternal, all-powerful, uncreate. There is none other like Him. He has created all things. None has created Him."

This, wrote Gandhiji, was a translation of the verses read daily from the *Quran Sharif*. It passed his comprehension how anyone could object to their recitation. He affirmed that the enshrinement

of this prayer in their hearts only could uplift and make better men and women of them.

7-5-'47

Referring to his visit to Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah on Tuesday, Gandhiji, addressing the prayer meeting at Bhangi Colony on Wednesday evening said that the conversations were carried on in a friendly spirit even though there could never be agreement between them on the question of the division of India. He could not bear the thought of it and so long as he was convinced that it was wrong, he could not possibly put his signature to the scheme. He held that it was not only bad for the Hindus but equally so for the Muslims.

Gandhiji added that he did not think in terms of the good of any particular community where India was concerned. He tried to be the representative and servant of all alike. But the Qaid-e-Azam and he had declared again in clear language that they abjured violence for all time for attaining political ends. To that they were both pledged.

He went on to say that many people were opposed to his going to Jinnah Sahab but he was convinced that no harm could possibly have accrued therefrom. After all they were fellow Indians and had to live in the same land.

Referring to a letter he had received from a sister, wife of a prominent Hindu Mahasabhaite, objecting to his reading the *Quranic* verse on the usual grounds, Gandhiji said that he was hurt that such objections could come from a woman. He expected love and toleration in a higher degree from women than from men. He wondered where they were drifting and what women would or could teach their children if their hearts were permeated with hate.

Gandhiji refuted the argument that because some Muslim fanatics had done evil deeds in Bengal and in the Punjab, the *Quran Sharif* was bad. The Hindus had gone mad in Bihar, but that did not take away from the greatness of the *Gita*. He said he might understand their not wishing to admit Muslim wrong-doers into their homes, though even that was wholly contrary to the spirit of religion, all of which taught man to love his enemies. But not to wish to read a verse from any scripture, simply because hate for the followers of that religion filled their hearts, was the negation of true religion and far from protecting Hinduism, was the very way to destroy it.

Gandhiji went on to say that the argument that he could not recite the *Gita* in a mosque and that no Muslims would read a verse from any scripture other than their own was a fallacious one. He related how he had held prayers in Muslim houses and how in Noakhali he had held them in the compound of a mosque. The person in charge had raised no objection and had said that it was perfectly legitimate to call God by the names of Rama and Rahim.

Gandhiji then read out the translation of the *Quranic* verse in Hindi which ran as follows:

In order to escape from the evil one I seek refuge in God.

Oh God, I begin every task with the remembrance of Thy name.

Thou art the compassionate and the merciful.

Thou art the Creator of the universe.

Thou art Lord and Master.

I praise Thee alone and desire only Thy help.

Thou wilt mete out justice on the Day of Judgment.

Show me the right path, the path which Thy saints have trod, not the wrong path of those who have offended Thee.

God is one.

He is eternal, all-powerful, uncreate.

There is none other like Him. He has created all things.

None has created Him.

Gandhiji said that if every word of it were enshrined in their hearts they would be uplifted and be the better for it. No one objected to the translation because it was in Hindi but the moment he read it in Arabic there were objections. He pleaded with them to see the folly of their ways. He hoped they would pray to God to lighten their darkness.

USING THE GIANT'S STRENGTH AS A GIANT

According to a Reuter's message Dr. Hugh Dalton, the British Chancellor of the Exchequer, referring to the Sterling Debts, stated:

"This vast accumulation of debt represents an unreal, unjust and unsupportable burden. If lend-lease and mutual aid had been applied among all members of the grand alliance as they were applied between the United States and the British Commonwealth, by far the greater part of these debts would never have been charged against us.

"Sooner or later—and it would be better sooner than later—this mass must be very substantially scaled down.

"Britain is strong, but one sign of her strength must be refusal to take on fantastic commitments which are beyond her strength and beyond all limits of good sense and fair play. Nor could I as British Chancellor of the Exchequer support financial arrangements which would mean that for years and generations to come, this little island which led the fight for freedom would, through this peculiar war-time accountancy, carry a crushing load which even the defeated enemies of freedom—Germans, Japanese and the rest—would escape."

It is rather amusing to find even at this hour of the day British statesman trying to fool the world that they "fought for freedom". When will they realize that even the least sophisticated is aware that their fight was to crush their economic competitors? It is no good now squealing over the cost of it. Who were all in the "Grand Alliance"? Surely not India! Is it a right, gallant and chivalrous use of strength to deny one's liabilities? What straits the proud British moral grandeur has got into now!

J. C. KUMARAPPA

HARIJAN

May 18

1947

QUIT NOW

[On the 5th of May Gandhiji answered several questions put to him by Mr. Doon Campbell, Reuter's special correspondent at New Delhi. The answers cover a large field—the current situation in India and world affairs. —Ed.]

Q. Is the communal division of India inevitable? Will such division solve the communal problem?

A. Personally, I have always said No, and I say No even now to both these questions.

Q. Do you subscribe to the opinion that Britain will be morally obliged to stay on in India if the outstanding Hindu-Muslim differences have not been resolved by June, 1948?

A. This is a question that has never been put to me before. It would be a good thing if the British were to go today—thirteen months means mischief to India. I do not question the nobility of the British declaration, I do not question the sincerity of the Viceroy but facts are facts. Neither the British Cabinet nor the Viceroy, however outstanding he may be, can alter facts. And the facts are that India has been trained to look to the British power for everything. Now it is not possible for India to take her mind off that state all of a sudden. I have never appreciated the argument that the British want so many months to get ready to leave. During that time all parties will look to the British Cabinet and the Viceroy. We have not defeated the British by force of arms. It has been a victory for India by moral force. Assuming, of course, that every word of what has been said is meant to be carried out, then the British decision will go down in history as the noblest act of the British Nation. That being so, the thirteen months' stay of the British power and British arms is really a hindrance rather than a help, because everybody looks for help to the great military machine they have brought into being. That happened in Bengal, in Bihar, in the Punjab, and in the North-West Frontier Province. The Hindus and the Muslims said in turn: 'Let us have the British troops.' It is a humiliating spectacle. I have often said before but it does not suffer in value through repetition because every time I repeat it, it gains force: the British will have to take the risk of leaving India to chaos or anarchy. This is so because there has been no Home Rule; it has been imposed on the people. And, when you voluntarily remove that rule there might be no rule in the initial state. It might have come about if we had gained victory by the force of arms. The communal feuds you see here are, in my opinion, partly due to the presence of the British. If the British were not here, we would

still go through the fire no doubt, but that fire would purify us.

Q. What sort of Indo-British relationship do you envisage after June, 1948?

A. I envisage the friendliest relationship between Britain and India assuming that a complete withdrawal takes place with complete honesty behind it—no mental reservations of any kind whatsoever.

Q. Does the clause incorporated in the Draft Constitution on the abolition of untouchability in itself represent a great reform?

A. No. That clause does not represent a great or any reform. It registers the fact that a great revolutionary reform has taken place in Hindu society. I confess that untouchability has not yet been pulled out root and branch from the soil. Like the evil effects of the British connection, those of untouchability, a much older institution, do not disappear in a flash. It may take some years, perhaps, before a stranger coming to India can say there is no untouchability in any shape or form.

Q. Do you believe the United Nations Organization, as at present constituted, can maintain a lasting peace?

A. No. I fear the world is heading towards another showdown. It is a fear that permeates many minds. But if all goes well in India, then the world may have a long peace. It will largely depend on the manner in which India takes it. And that will depend largely on British statesmanship.

Q. What is the solution to the Palestine problem?

A. It has become a problem which is almost insoluble. If I were a Jew, I would tell them: 'Don't be so silly as to resort to terrorism, because you simply damage our own case which otherwise would be a proper case.' If it is just political hankering then I think there is no value in it. Why should they hanker after Palestine? They are a great race and have great gifts. I have lived with the Jews many years in South Africa. If it is a religious longing then surely terrorism has no place. They should meet the Arabs, make friends with them, and not depend on British aid or American aid or any aid, save what descends from Jehovah.

The Cart Before the Horse

A news item says that a new Agricultural College is to be started to afford facilities for training in scientific agriculture. The Anand Parbat Estate has been leased by the Central Government for it. Commodious buildings for lecture rooms, laboratories, hostels and residential staff quarters have been provided for. All that is needed is an agricultural farm! In the near future they will arrange to secure one to be "attached to the College". Should not agricultural colleges be situated in chosen farms in typical rural parts rather than that agricultural farms be attached to the colleges? The latter is the way of working of our Government of India. When will it change?

J. C. K.

EQUITY IN TAXATION

The mill-owners have made the people believe that village industries cannot stand competition with large-scale industries as the former are "inefficient", while the latter are scientific and efficient. By constant repetition the public can be made to believe anything, but this type of propaganda has been carried on to such an extent that even economists are saturated with such baseless ideas.

The advantages afforded to mills are many and one may almost assert that they are subsidized by public expenditures. The village artisan hardly ever derives any benefit from the crores of rupees taken from him and spent lavishly by the Government. The expensive researches of scientific institutions are not for him. The trunk roads built at fabulous cost are not only of no use to him but are even injurious to his unshod bullocks — witness the mud tracks used by preference by bullock-carts by the side of the macadamized and asphalted roads. The armed forces happily are conspicuous by their absence in villages, though they are much in evidence in towns and cities; still these charges are met out of villagers' production. The railway administration has no regard for the requirements of villagers unless it be to drain his raw materials at harvest season and to bring them back to him at enhanced prices. All these handicaps placed on village industries are counted towards their inability to compete with the upstart parasitic mills.

To these old time disadvantages the new-fangled controls have added in no small measure. The All India Village Industries Association agent for Bihar writes that the lifting of the ban on the inter-provincial movement of oil seeds and oils combined with the vagaries of the railways is telling upon the *ghani* men. The railways bring in freely mill-pressed oils from the U.P. and the Punjab. This has pushed down the price of oils. But the scarcity in oil seeds continues as the railways refuse to allot any waggons for oil seeds. The price of these seeds are keeping to high levels while the price of mill oils has fallen considerably. Because of this differential treatment by railways, mustard seeds outside the province are selling at Rs. 21 a maund while the same quality seeds are only available at Rs. 30 a maund within the province. This is a transport-made scarcity and the Bihar Government pleads inability to set it right.

It is by such means that the natural vitality of village industries is being sapped and their succumbing to such methods is attributed to the "inefficiency" of village industries.

To obviate such discriminations proper statistics should be maintained and all public expenditures benefiting the mills should be met out of levies made on the beneficiaries and not out of general taxation. Only by so doing can we establish equity between the various forms of production.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

THE INDIAN NATIONAL TRADE UNION CONGRESS

[A Conference of labour workers from all over India inaugurated by Acharya Kripalani and held under the presidentship of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel at New Delhi on the 3rd May, 1947 adopted a resolution to form the Indian National Trade Union Congress or the *Rashtriya Mazdoor Congress*.

A report of the Rashtrapati's inaugural address and Sardar Patel's presidential speech as also the resolution are reproduced here.

By another resolution the Conference elected a Provisional Executive of the Congress with Dr. Suresh-chandra Bannerjee as Chairman and Mr. Khandubhai K. Desai as Secretary. —Ed.]

Acharya Kripalani, the Congress President, inaugurating the Conference explained at length the reasons for calling the Conference. He incidentally stated that it was a happy augury that the Conference met under the Presidentship of Sardar Patel, himself a Trade Unionist since the earliest days of the Trade Union Movement when he organized the B. B. & C. I. Rly. Employees and the Postal Employees of Gujarat in 1919. He pointed out how it was difficult for those who believed in peaceful and democratic methods to cooperate with those who dominated the Trade Union Congress at present and considered any means as proper to achieve the end. He hoped that the new organization sponsored by veteran labour leaders of the country like Shri Nanda, Shri Suresh Bannerjee, Shri Khandubhai Desai and others, in answer to the genuine need of the hour would prove an unqualified success.

Shri Gulzarilal Nanda, Secretary of the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh, then read a statement (reproduced elsewhere in this number) giving reasons why the Sangh came to the conclusion that it was high time to advise labour workers to start a new central organization working on non-communal and non-political lines with a view to redress the grievances of the workers, establish a just standard and settle disputes through the machinery of arbitration and adjudication.

Sardar Patel addressing the Conference narrated the history of the Trade Union Congress and dwelt at some length on its present position. The Trade Union Congress which was given prestige by Congressmen and over which prominent Congress leaders like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, C. R. Das and Lala Lajpatrai had presided, was now adopting an anti-Congress attitude. It is dominated today by the communists who call out strikes not for the good of the workers but merely to serve their party ends or discredit the Government. It was no use trying to capture the Trade Union Congress since the communist unions put up bogus membership and did not hesitate to resort to unscrupulous methods. As a contrast, he narrated how the labour movement started by Gandhiji resulted in the best organization in the country due to the services of Shrimati Anasuyabehn Sarabhai, Shri Shankerlal

Banker, Shri Gulzarilal Nanda, Shri Khandubhai Desai and others. The Textile Labour Association of Ahmedabad was the strongest organization of the cotton mill-workers in the country and was admired even by foreign visitors. As a result of the 26 years of work of the Union, Ahmedabad had prospered and the workers got the highest wages. There were few strikes since the parties settled their differences through the machinery of arbitration which was initiated by Gandhiji who had to stake his life for it as early as 1918. Sardar Patel said that they were anxious to see that right type of unions on Ahmedabad lines were started throughout the country. A beginning was made, therefore, in 1937 when the Congress accepted ministries, to train labour workers and send them to various places. Those who started work in that manner had succeeded even though their work was interrupted by the political struggle. The communists who dominated the Trade Union Congress today were fomenting strikes, refused to accept arbitration, advocated a 'go slow' policy and when production was most needed, brought about stoppages by agitating for irresponsible demands. The step which was being taken should have been, in fact, taken earlier. With the advent of independence, they had to fight with people, within the Congress itself, who were out to create chaos and capture power by any means. He then called upon Dr. Suresh Bannerjee to move the main resolution which reads as follows:

Whereas the course which the Labour Movement in the country is taking under the leadership of those who are opposed to peaceful change and democratic methods has proved extremely detrimental to the growth of strong and healthy trade unionism and is doing incalculable harm to the true interests of the masses of the country and whereas it has become now a sacred and imperative obligation of those who care for the well-being of the working class, to take concerted action to safeguard and promote its interest, it is resolved that to give effect to this purpose an organization called The Indian National Trade Union Congress be formed.

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THE WHY OF IT

[The following statement by Shri Gulzarilal Nanda, Secretary, Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh, read before the Conference of the Labour workers at Delhi sets forth in clear terms the reasons for establishing The Indian National Trade Union Congress.

—Ed.]

With your permission I will make a brief statement on behalf of the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh to explain the purpose for which this Conference has been convened.

The working class question has recently come into prominence owing to the frequent disturbance of the economic life of the country consequent upon large-scale strikes and lock-outs. It is obvious that the prevailing labour unrest in the country is primarily due to the privations and difficulties experienced by labour. To serve their political ends, certain parties and groups push labour into discarding peaceful methods for the redress of its grievances. They are directing the labour unrest into channels which often lead to breaches of the peace, accentuation of the hardships of the people and harm to the interests of the workers.

There is an acute shortage of supplies in the country which creates serious discontent and retards the progress of reconstruction in every direction. We must maintain and expand production. We must also make it sure that in the course of the political transformation which is proceeding apace a stable democracy is safely installed in the seats vacated by foreign imperialism. For these reasons the working class problem acquires a new and special urgency. The policies pursued by the A. I. T. U. C. under the communist leadership, which functions in its name, stand in sharp and total conflict with these aims. Their ways threaten the security and the welfare of the community and are inimical to the best interests of the workers themselves. The bulk of the working class is opposed to the political philosophy of the elections to the Legislative Assemblies in the country from the various labour constituencies. The workers have had enough of the loss and sufferings which are inseparable from methods adopted by the communists in dealing with the difficulties of the working class. But the presence of Congressmen and others in the T.U.C. in subordinate association with the communists creates the wrong impression that the present policies and the leadership of the T. U. C. reflect the mind of the entire working class. The urgent need of the moment is, therefore, to provide machinery for coordinating the scattered forces of those who are in fundamental opposition to the communists in their approach to labour matters. These conclusions are embodied in the resolution passed by the H. M. S. S. at the meeting of the Central Board this morning. The resolution runs as follows:

"The Central Board passed a resolution on 17th November 1946 expressing the opinion that

all the Unions with which the members of the Sangh are connected should be affiliated to the Trade Union Congress to promote through it the policy and the programme of the Sangh. Subsequent experience has compelled a total reversal of this policy and the Board hereby rescinds the aforesaid resolution.

"The Sangh deplores the fact that the discontent and the difficulties of the workers are being exploited by parties and groups for ulterior political motives causing serious damage to the economic and political life of the country and doing deep injury to the best interest of the working class and the masses in general. In the opinion of the Board the most urgent need of the moment is to speedily bring into being and develop a Central Organization of Labour in the country which will strive to secure the highest benefits and the maximum progress for all the categories and classes of labour while preserving a national spirit and outlook and which will conduct the struggle of the workers for improved standards and just conditions in accordance with the principles set out in the statement of the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress dated 13th August 1946, Wardha. The Board recommends to the members of the Sangh and other Congressmen actively interested in labour to take immediate steps to form an organization on these lines which will be purely non-communal and which will not be subject to the control of any political party."

The subject matter of the resolution is offered for deliberation at this Conference. The need and justification for a move on these lines is likely to be questioned. The Conference will have to satisfy itself that the proposed step is imperatively necessary and desirable having regard to the good of the working class as well as the larger interests of the community. I have already indicated some of the considerations which have determined the present attitude of the Sangh in this matter. I shall give in a few words an idea of the developments which formed the background of the present decision of the Sangh.

A section of the labour movement which draws its inspiration from Gandhiji's ideas and bases its outlook and activity on his conception of truth and non-violence in relation to labour has all along kept away from the Trade Union Congress and other central organizations of labour which have existed at different times. Its reason for keeping out of the T. U. C. is that the way in which the Trade Union Congress is constituted and run militates against the growth of a healthy and strong trade unionism. The usual answer on the other side has been that it is open to these unions to join the Trade Union Congress and exert their strength and influence to secure the desired reform. The aspect has received close and careful consideration. It has been found that the composition and the voting strength of the various bodies in the Trade Union Congress are managed in such a manner that the democratic procedure of achieving a change by the influence

of ideas and the relative superiority of real numerical strength has no scope at all in this case. The Trade Union Congress admits paper organizations and accepts fictitious or grossly exaggerated returns of membership. This false display of numbers has continued from year to year.

Another matter of deep concern to those who refuse to enter the Trade Union Congress is that certain dominant groups within it waged a violent campaign against arbitration as a method of avoiding strikes and securing justice for the workers. The answer to the objection used to be that each constituent union could maintain its own line of action, since so far as the Trade Union Congress was concerned, an affiliating member enjoyed complete autonomy with regard to its internal affairs.

The question of relationship with the Trade Union Congress was reviewed again at the time of the reorganization of the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh. In view of the fact that several members of the Sangh had been associated with the Trade Union Congress for many years and were reluctant to leave it, the Sangh adopted a policy in the matter which placed no restraint on members or associated Unions with regard to their connection with the Trade Union Congress and left members free to arrange their relations with the Trade Union Congress according to their choice.

As time passed the feeling rapidly grew that in the prevailing economic and political conditions in India, the vital interests of both the working class and the country demanded an immediate and nation-wide application of the principles and methods for which the Sangh stood. It had therefore to shed its neutrality and the resolution favouring entry into the Trade Union Congress was passed on 17th November 1946.

Very soon thereafter the members of the Sangh who had been taking a leading part in the Trade Union Congress for years reported that in the existing set-up of the Trade Union Congress it was vain to expect fair play and since it was not possible for us to join the race for multiplying bogus unions and submitting bloated returns of membership we would have to wait very long before we could secure a chance of effecting the reforms on which the Sangh had set its heart.

This is a critical period in the history of the country. To dislocate the productive organization of the nation in these times is really to strike a direct blow at the life of the nation and at its political integrity. It will not be easy to undo the economic damage or the political harm which the communist activity is causing from day to day if the mischief is not counteracted at once.

It may at the same time be mentioned that the All India Trade Union Congress has at its annual session passed a resolution condemning the Bombay Industrial Relations Act and the Industrial Disputes

Act mainly on the ground that the enactments provide for adjudication and empower Government to refer disputes to the arbitration of a Tribunal or the Industrial Courts. This resolution of the Trade Union Congress runs directly counter to the declared policy of the Congress in this connection as stated by the Working Committee on the 13th August, 1946.

We have also to reckon with the fact that Congressmen cannot be comfortable in the company of those who left no stone unturned to sabotage the national struggle of 1942 and who in that most difficult phase of the nation's fight for independence did their worst to harass the forces engaged in a life and death conflict with the enemies of our freedom.

As we go ahead we will certainly be exposed to a fierce attack on the ground that we are seeking to disrupt the unity of the working class. We have no difficulty in showing up this false view of the situation. Many of the unions which are now coming to form a new organization have for years stayed away from the Trade Union Congress. Others which will decide to sever their connection with the Trade Union Congress will be leaving a hot bed of disunity, and not a place where there was any collaboration on the basis of mutual good will and understanding. It is better for all concerned not to attempt to unite or reconcile the way of peace with deliberate violence, democratic method with dictatorial rule and a creed of unscrupulousness with the desire for truth.

While there is no common ground between those inspired by communist philosophy and those who have faith in democracy, the proposed organization can provide a broad platform and ensure the largest measure of unity as among the latter, in pursuit of the aims of the labour movement. The constitution of the Sangh furnishes the essence of these aims. The preamble enjoins "continuous efforts to organize the workers in all industrial centres in the country on right lines for the purpose of establishing just industrial relations, eradicating exploitation in any form, securing speedy improvement of their conditions of work and life and their status in industry and society." The objective has been expressed in terms of an order of society which places no hindrances in the way of an all-round development of its individual members, which encourages the growth of human personality in all its aspects and goes, as far as possible, in progressively eliminating social, political or economic exploitation and inequality, the profit-motive in the economic activity and organization of the country, and the anti-social concentration of power in any form.

GULZARILAL NANDA

GANDHIJI'S PRESS STATEMENT

Sheth Cachhalia, Honorary Secretary of the Transvaal Indian Congress, cabled for a message on the rally which was to take place in Johannesburg of all the non-European races in the Union of South Africa on the question of racial disabilities in the Union. The question is most intricate and almost baffling. It is intricate enough when confined only to the Indian disabilities but the inclusion of all the races while logically correct is fraught with grave danger, if the struggle is not kept at the highest level and is not firmly based on truth and non-violence. I wanted to warn the organizers of the rally against rhetorical display or raising idle hopes and to advise them to carry on their demonstration with dignity and restraint. Let no one doubt that the salvation of all the exploited peoples of the earth and, therefore, of the world lies in the strictest reliance on the coin on whose one face is written truth and the other non-violence in large letters. Sixty years of experience has taught me no other method.

New Delhi, 5-5-'47

Gram Sevak Vidyalaya

(All India Village Industries Association)

The first annual convocation of the Gram Sevak Vidyalaya after the break in 1942 was held on the 30th of April, 1947. The Hon'ble Shri R. K. Patil, Minister for Food, C. P. and Berar, delivered the convocation address and gave away the certificates to the successful candidates.

The total number of students in the Vidyalaya was 62, out of which 11 obtained merit certificates, 26 got ordinary pass certificates and 15 were awarded industries certificates only. 10 students failed.

The next session of the Vidyalaya commences from the 1st of July, 1947 as usual; application for admission to the session should be sent in by the 15th of June latest.

Besides this, another course for village organizers is proposed to be started from the 1st September, 1947 to the 30th April, 1948. This will be open to those who have attained the academical standard of a graduate of a university.

For detailed information and prospectus please write to the Superintendent at Maganvadi, Wardha, C. P.

J. C. K.

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