

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

CHECKING CORRUPTION

(By Shrikrishnadas Jaju)

It is now an indisputable fact that corruption is rampant in the country on a large scale. From the letters I receive in connection with the Honest Life Movement I find that not a small number of men are restless about the eradication of this evil. But nobody has so far been able to suggest any effective remedy for it. But our duty is only to continue our efforts in that direction. Ultimately a solution will be found only when public opinion against it gets very strong. We, therefore, made a suggestion that the names and addresses of persons, with full details of individual cases of corruption, should be given due publicity in newspapers. Several papers do so even at present. If necessary, a special journal might also be published for the purpose. This has been suggested and several friends have welcomed the idea.

Normally, complaints about corruption should, in the first instance, reach the authorities competent to deal with the matter decisively. But here the experience often is that nothing is done even by the officers. They are indifferent. It is possible they might be receiving several complaints which are false and engineered out of spite. It is therefore necessary to devise a method, which will leave no doubt about the veracity of complaints, and suitably place them before the proper officers. The local Shuddha Vyavahar Mandals should take upon themselves these duties. In some cases they might themselves take appropriate cases to courts. A person who brings a complaint with some risk to himself, is likely to be believed. A newspaper too, which publishes such authentic reports with particulars of names etc., undergoes a risk along with its correspondent, who is expected not to conceal his identity. It will help to create public awakening and the officers will also feel a greater sense of responsibility.

I feel that a beginning should be made to set up such a machinery and give a trial to the scheme. The task is difficult and risky and involves a great amount of sacrifice. Shrewd, worldly-wise people will be of no use in it. Simple men of good character will come forward to take the risk. But they will require the co-operation and support of others. A great deal of work can be done by local Shuddha Vyavahar

Mandals. Some strict conditions should be laid down for the publication of facts of individual cases of corruption in newspapers to eliminate the possibility of its abuse by designing persons.

Corruption can be broadly classified into two divisions: private and public. Private corruption is resorted to for two purposes. Some persons give bribes to get an advantage for themselves; for instance, for obtaining a contract, for getting inferior goods passed off as superior ones etc. Others do so out of helplessness to get what they are entitled to, but which is not granted without tips. From the first group of persons we cannot expect any co-operation. It is only persons in the second group who, if they are very earnest to root out this evil, can give publicity to true accounts. In the beginning, perhaps, it may be unnecessary to disclose the name of the person who has taken the bribe. It might be published after investigation. But the giver of the bribe would have to declare his name and confess his guilt. In some cases, the charge might be held not proved, and the scales might so turn against the complainant, that he may become liable to punishment, though the truth might be on his side. This risk has to be taken.

There is a type of corruption which takes the form of an established practice. It is the common experience that people take for granted that in railways and courts, no work could be got done without giving some bribe or tip. In such cases we cannot expect much help forthcoming from the persons who give the bribes. This work must be done by others, such as students, members of Peace Brigades, Seva Dals (Service Corps) etc. Even here, the bribe-givers can help the eradication, if they make true entries in their account-books showing expenses incurred for illegal gratification as such. These account-books should be presented before Income Tax officers and such expenses should be claimed as part of business expenses. In case, they are disallowed, the cases might be taken to the highest tribunal.

Students and members of Peace Brigades etc. may render useful service in this field. They can keep a watch over such activities and bring them to light. It will put some check upon the officers. Cases discovered by such united efforts will carry greater weight both in courts and for publication in newspapers.

It is needless to say that the number of such responsible workers will be small. But their effect on the minds of the people will be great and healthy. For, the work involves sacrifice, and it is only sacrifice which awakens the people.

There is one more point to be considered in this connection. At times a case of defamation might be instituted against the complainants and the newspapers publishing such reports. Occasionally, it may be necessary to contest such cases. But ordinarily it would be more advisable not to do anything beyond making one's statement and cheerfully undergoing the punishment, if awarded, than to undergo the worries of defence and legal niceties. But of course each case will have to be decided on its own merits. All these efforts will ultimately raise the moral tone of society and give a momentum to the Honest Life Movement.

I know that the above scheme is hard to put into practice and involves a great amount of sacrifice. It is therefore advised that those who want to plunge themselves into this sphere of activity should do so with full understanding and after careful consideration. It is the duty of others to lend their support and co-operation to these servants prepared for sacrifice. Among the remedies suggested to meet the problem of corruption, this scheme has an importance of its own.

Sevagram, 18-9-'51

(Translated from Hindi)

VINOBA'S NORTHERN TOUR

When Vinoba returned from his Telangana tour on the 27th June last, nobody had an idea that he would start on his new mission so soon again. On his return, he had declared at Sevagram that he would apply himself to making the experiment of self-sufficiency at Paramdham a complete success so that it would add strength to his utterances outside. The problem of land was not limited to India alone, he said. It was an international problem and if the Paramdham experiment was successful, it would solve the problem at home and abroad. He had accordingly taken to his spade and started digging in the field. He made several changes in the Ashram programme to facilitate speedy elimination of money economy. Financial aid was not to be availed of any more after the 2nd October, 1951 even for development purposes. The most important change was the pledge taken by all the Ashram colleagues to lead a life of complete celibacy, with a view to make this experiment a complete success.

He advised changes also at Sevagram and Gopuri. The main point was self-sufficiency and money elimination. He seemed to be in haste for radical changes. Invitations from different provinces were pouring in. Workers from Thana District wanted Vinobaji to visit the backward area there. Pandit Dharmadev Shastri who is working in the Himalayas amongst the Adivasis had written heart-rending tales of the people there, where labourers were agitated and a struggle seemed imminent. In the Usmanabad District in Hyderabad, there was the problem of the re-habilitation of the Muslims. Similarly the question of the Meos was not yet settled and Vinoba's presence was needed there.

However, we believe that he would not leave Paunur at least before the 27th October, '51, that is for four months

since his return. On the 6th September there was a meeting of the constructive workers at Sevagram, convened at Vinoba's instance, with a view to start some intense work in the villages around Wardha. He felt that that alone could be a straightforward reply to the Planning Commission. Not a few were surprised that elderly people like Shri Kishorlal Mashruwala and young enthusiasts like Shri Shrimannarayan Agarwal raised their hands to enrol as volunteers for this new programme. They were all sure of Vinoba's presence to guide this new programme. He addressed the workers in the afternoon on the 6th and in the evening he informed his colleagues about his decision to undertake a tour to North India on the 12th. Exactly six months ago (6th March), and from this very Sevagram he had announced his *Sarvodaya* tour. Workers were embarrassed by the new decision and could not at once understand the full significance of the new adventure, especially after initiating the new programme of intensive work in 30 villages around Wardha, and after inspiring so many seniors and juniors. But he argued that his tour would add strength to the home front. The immediate cause for his sudden decision to start on tour was the invitation of Prime Minister Nehru to Delhi to discuss the Five Year Plan. The letter which was received on the 5th settled the date and the direction of his tour.

He left for Paunur on the morning of the 7th, after paying a visit to Bapu's cottage. This was, as it were, to recover the *astras* (weapons) that he had deposited there after the Telangana Tour. The Tallmi Sangh sisters accompanied him upto the mounds nearby to give him a send-off. All the workers and the students lined on both sides of the road. The atmosphere was filled with *Ramadhun* and Vinobaji arrived at Paramdham.

Before leaving Paramdham, he paid a visit to Sargaon, his dear village. He explained to the people there his mission. They wanted to do something as a token of an auspicious augury. They gave him sixty acres of land. Wardha gave six hundred. Some of Vinobaji's associates gave away all their lands. I will be failing in my duty if I forget to mention the name of my comrade Dattooba Dastane who gave away his all, i.e. 19 acres. Shri Thakur also gave all his lands. In the morning hours of the 12th, Vinobaji left Paramdham. In his message he appreciated what the Wardha people had done to make his pilgrimage a success. Explaining the meaning of *bhoo-dana* (Land gift) he said *dana* (gift) is not only donation, but equal distribution. He wanted people to realize that society, which consisted mainly of poor people, had a rightful share in the property of the haves. They should come forward to part with their lands voluntarily for the have-nots. That alone would bring a non-violent revolution in India. Otherwise there was no other go but to invite a violent revolution, like what took place in Russia and China. So far as he was concerned, he would devote all his life to bringing about the non-violent change for which he thought there was a favourable atmosphere in India.

Before crossing the Ashram limits he visited the Bharat Rama Mandir, sang his most favourite song *Dharma jago Nivritticha* (Let the teaching of Nivritti prevail). The *dhun*, *Rama Ramana Govinda Hare*, filled the air. The river Dham also joined. Above in the sky the *Mriga* (Orion) was prominently visible. There the sage was anxious to protect it from the hands of the *Vyadha* (the hunter—the Indian name of Sirius, the Dog Star). Here on the earth this sage was eager to protect the masses from the clutches of violence.

The average of lands received as donation during the first week, from Paunur to Sansar, is about 285 acres per day, as against 200 acres per day in Telangana. In some small places like Gunggaon, Sansar Lodhikheda, land was simply showered on him. The Pathan brothers did not promise anything except their own 12 acres. But the people supported them by making up a figure of 250 acres. At Lodhikheda, they gave 60, promised 100, and made up

160. Sansar Tahsil gave 500. There were not a few examples which were touching. At Nagpur one Maruti Rao gave away all the 7 acres he possessed. At Kelod one Brahman who had received 12 acres in gift gave away all of it to Vinoba. At Ramakona a poor mason gave away 8 acres which was his all. He said that he earned his bread by his work. If he kept the land, his children would become idle. At Dongargaon, a very small village of the Gonds, Vinobaji received one acre and $\frac{1}{2}$ acre respectively from two very poor Gonds who owned but 4 acres. There were many who gave either $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{1}{4}$ of their belonging.

The figures per Tahsil are given below:

1. Wardha	..	640 acres approx.
2. Nagpur	..	395 " "
3. Saoner	..	214 " "
4. Sansar	..	596 " "

The response in villages has proved that land-gifts do not require an area to be infested with Communist atrocities and *Sarvodaya* need not wait till after *sarvanash* (total destruction) as in Telangana. People thought that Vinobaji might not receive lands in other parts of the country as he did in Telangana. If so, there would be no chance for change of heart and non-violent revolution, for which, he believed, the ground was already prepared in India.

This North India tour has another significance. In Telangana the atmosphere was filled with violence. There was firstly, the violence of the Razakars, aided by the then Government; secondly, the violence of the Zamindars and Jagirdars; and thirdly, the violence of the Communists; and lastly the violence of the Indian Union Police and Military. Thus in the atmosphere of such all-round violence, Vinobaji's pilgrimage brought over a change unthought of, undreamt of. It was a revolution psychological as well as physical, social as well as moral, economic as well as political. The Telangana tour was the beginning of a new era and served as a basis for a vast field of constructive work, a field which had remained barren till then. In this new tour although there was no Communist problem visible to the naked eye, you could not deny that the seeds of Communism were present. Was the land properly distributed? Was unemployment eliminated? Was the food problem solved? Were village industries revived? How could you then check a bloody revolution? The change of Government had hopelessly failed to impress, either by their deeds or by their words that they wanted to move towards *Sarvodaya*. The Planning Commission report, if implemented, would prove another catastrophe for the nation. Congress workers had no leisure from their electioneering campaign. Selfless *Sarvodaya* workers were the need of the day. It was for this reason that Vinobaji, on the eve of his departure, had given a final shape to his new programme of intense work in the surrounding villages of Wardha. It was a good sign that in many places that we visited on our way, we came across *Sarvodaya* centres. At Seldoh, Shri Kumarappa has established the Pannai Ashram under his personal direction, and his short stay has transformed the village. At Takli there is Shri Bhansali assisted by his adopted daughter Shri Pushpabehn. It was a sight to see Vinoba and Bhansali, two kindred spirits, seated on the dais side by side. Together they reminded one of the Ocean and the Himalayas—courage and dignity, knowledge and devotion, meeting together in human form. At Saonga, there was the selfless untiring worker Kanetkar. The whole journey thus marked by the coming together of remarkable personalities and institutions reminds us of the old Ashrams and *Rishis*. Did not Rama meet such *Rishis* on his way to Dandakaranya? Vinobaji was not tired of paying tributes to every one of them.

Want of space forbids me to report all that he said, though whatever he said was always inspiring. Blessed

are those who are witnessing the march. What a devotion of the masses for Vinobaji and his cause! "Have they gone mad?" he asks. "What makes them part with their land, which is so dear to them? They have realized that the revolution is imminent and inevitable and they do not want it to be one of the kind of Russia and China. They have realized that mine is the only way to bring about non-violent revolution. That is why they are voluntarily parting with their lands. Once you have solved the problem of the land, you have solved all the problems of the world too."

His warning to all is: "If India, now after Mahatmaji, does not act up to his teachings, but takes to violence, she will be shattered to pieces, she will have no place in the world."

To the rich, he says, "Consider me as your fifth child if you have four, and give me my share, the share of the poor masses!"—"I am a friend not only of the poor, but of the rich as well. I want to save them from the coming catastrophe."

And in this way the pilgrim is marching on. Sometimes it is 15 miles a day, sometimes 18 miles, sometimes 21 miles. It has well begun. It is only the beginning of an end—the end which, God willing, Vinoba has resolved to achieve, and towards which he has taken one more step, on the 12th of September, 1951, immediately after he entered upon the 57th year of his life.

D. M.

HINDI EXAMINATION FOR BOMBAY GOVERNMENT SERVANTS

The Bombay Government has decided that all its employees except class IV should qualify themselves in Hindi by passing one of the specified examinations conducted by the *Prachar Sabhas* in the State within a period of three years if they have not already done so. The *Hindi Vinit* (the fourth) Examination conducted by the Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad, is specified as one of the four qualifying examinations.

The Gujarat Vidyapith holds five graded Examinations in Hindi and the *Hindi Vinit* Examination is the fourth in the series. The first three Examinations are the *Hindi Pahali*, *Hindi Doosari* and *Hindi Teesari*. To qualify oneself for appearing in the fourth, i.e. *Hindi Vinit* Examination, the first three examinations, viz., the *Hindi Pahali*, *Doosari* and *Teesari*, have to be passed. Those who can prepare themselves can sit directly in the *Hindi Doosari*, and having passed it they have to pass the *Hindi Teesari* to go to the *Hindi Vinit* (i.e. the fourth examination).

These examinations are bi-annual and are held all over Gujarat in various centres, in the months of April and September every year. Regarding the dates of the examinations and the last date of the acceptance of the application forms an announcement is made in the papers at the suitable time.

For the convenience of Government employees it has been decided to hold a special *Hindi Doosari* Examination on January 6, 1952. The last date of the acceptance of the application forms for this examination is December 3, 1951.

The April Examinations will be held as usual on April 12 and 13, 1952 and the last date of the acceptance of the application forms is February 18, 1952. Detailed information regarding the syllabi, the text books and the rules and regulations of the examinations can be had on sending three annas postage stamps from the undersigned. No enquiry unaccompanied by postage stamps will be attended to.

Gujarat Vidyapith
Ahmedabad 9
6-10-1951

GIRIRAJ KISHORE,
Pariksha Mantri,
Hindi Examinations

HARIJAN

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CRITICISM OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

[The following are a few of the points, which Vinobaji placed before a member of the Planning Commission in the course of a personal discussion. I regret I have to give them only in their dehydrated form, deprived of all their juice, flavour, and freshness. A full report has been published in Hindi *Sarvodaya* of September '51. — K.G.M.]

1. Work for All

The Plan does not undertake to provide work and food to every one in the country — a directive laid down in the Constitution. If this obligation is accepted as the fundamental basis of planning, the whole outlook and approach will undergo a revolutionary transformation. Instead of this, the Planners take the maintenance of army, large-scale industries etc. as the primary obligation.

Enable every one to live and other things will follow in due course. There must be a solemn declaration that by a fixed date, employment will be available to every one seeking it. Employ every implement, you think to be necessary for the purpose. Vinoba had no objection if the most efficient up-to-date machinery or tool was employed, provided employment was provided to every one. He objected to proceeding on the assumption that it was not possible to do so. If that was their view, they must quit their jobs.

2. Drink

Vinoba referred to the disastrous effects of addiction to intoxicating drinks on the life of the people. In Telangana, for nearly a hundred years, the people have been made addicted to *shindi*, with the result that though nations after nations have been awakened in the world, there was no awakening there. As people meet in the Ashrams for prayers in the evening, the villagers in Telangana meet for quarrels. The planners do not seem to be at all aware of their duty to improve the conditions of life of such people in the country.

3. "Family Planning"

Vinoba strongly objected to the measures suggested for "producing less children". He disputed the proposition that the population of India was inordinately high. A Government which thought that it could not look to the well-being of the people in the country with their natural growth, must quit the office instead of asking their principals — the people — to reduce their numbers so that they might be able to rule over them.

Had the Planners any experience of birth-control methods? Had they ever given thought to the various causes which lead to a heavy rate of increase in the population? The birthrate among

lions is very small; among the sheep, it is very great. The birthrate among the rural population is greater because of the low living conditions there. What is needed is not artificial means of birth-control, but a proper direction of their life. Their life must be transformed. Conditions necessary for ensuring healthy children are also conditions which reduce birthrate.

4. Village Industries

The Commission wants village industries "to stand on their own legs"! They first break those legs and then they ask them to stand on them! In spite of this injury, the village industries have somehow tried to stand on their hands. They must be proud of them instead of asking them to shift for themselves or commit suicide.

With a foreign and hostile Government Gandhiji gave an impetus to *khadi* and village industries. Vinoba hoped that the Government would acknowledge that the contribution of these industries to the attainment of Independence was at least 10 per cent, if not more. The Government of free India say that they cannot achieve what Gandhiji could do single-handed under a foreign government. It is like this: a mother says to her son, "I have laboured for you all these years and provided living for you. Now I am weak and you must protect me." But the son says, "I am unable to do it. It is not profitable"!

The fact is that the Planning Commission do not know even simple mathematics, and so do not know the productive and employment-providing capacity of village industries. Vinoba had gone from village to village in Telangana and made a careful study. There was ample scope for *khadi* there. The spinning industry was still alive. He challenged even the Socialists to suggest any alternative industry to *khadi* for these villagers. They could not suggest any. But the Government does not care for *khadi*, and it is allowed to be throttled.

The fact is that they have made certain assumptions about methods of production. These assumptions are false and must be given up.

The Plan suggests that villages should themselves plan to provide work for their inhabitants. Let the Government cease to collect the land revenue from the villages if they do not wish to undertake any responsibility for providing employment to villages. Let also the village industries taken away from them be restored to them. They have depleted the villages of their industries in textiles, oils, *gur* etc., and they say that the villages should find new ones. Are the Planners able to suggest a definite way out? Do they realize what would happen to the towns if the villagers in sheer desperation hit them back? It is extremely necessary that nothing should be planned which will harm the village industries. *Just as they have 'reserved forests', so there must be some industries 'reserved for villages'.*

They say that these village industries 'take away the joy from life', and so they want to

introduce dance and music in the villages to the accompaniment of drink to create this joy of life!

Vinoba severely criticized the textile mills. They had come down from 17 yds. to 12 yds. and alleged that they did not get enough cotton in the country. Not that there was no cotton in the country, but they wanted qualities which the country did not produce. They could use country cotton in previous years, but now they had discarded it, because it was rough, and wanted fine cotton as their raw material, even if it had to be imported. They discarded their own child because it was not handsome enough, and wanted to adopt another's. And these mills are given protection and various economic facilities to enable them to purchase foreign cotton, while the *khadi* industry was told that it was not economic and must stand in competition with mill-cloth!

Vinoba was told that the plan did once have a *khadi* scheme, which envisaged an expenditure of 62 crores for 15 lakh *khadi* workers. Vinoba said that it was all conceived on wrong lines. It did not contemplate *khadi* as a domestic occupation for self-sufficiency as the first and foremost object, but only as a type of labour got done for wages. *Khadi* could not prevail that way.

5. The Food Problem

Government made a solemn declaration that they would not import any food after 1951. Then they discovered that they could not fulfil their pledge. Instead of abdicating, they appointed a commission to report that the country cannot attain self-sufficiency for some years to come!

Vinoba stressed that the attainment of self-sufficiency in food must top every other aim. They would not take insufficiency of food so lightly, if they understood the gravity of the situation. In case the world or India got involved in a war, she would practically have to sell herself to the country undertaking to provide food to her.

The Plan is based on eternal begging. It provides no incentive to produce more food for the nation, nor does it contain any inspiration for them to make any sacrifice for the nation in times of crisis.

6. Prevention of Cow-slaughter

The Plan says at one place that unrestrained slaughter of cows has not affected the cattle population of the country. At the same time it has not the courage to say that they do want slaughter of useless cows. They know that people would not tolerate such a blunt statement. Let them therefore accept the facts. The cow and the bullock form a part of our society, and their protection is an aspect of Indian socialism. Hence their slaughter will have to be stopped. The economic condition of the nation can bear this burden if we make proper use of the cow-dung while they are alive, and of their bones, hides, blood, flesh etc. for manure and other things, after they are dead. They would not be a burden in that case. As for

the Muslims, Vinoba was prepared to assure Government on their behalf that they did not want cow-slaughter.

When he was among the Meo Muslims, Vinoba had told them in their mosques that if Allah had been pleased with meat offering, butchers alone could please Him, and no Prophet would be necessary to give that message to the people. But Allah did not thirst for meat. He wanted the devotion of the people. Vinoba's words appealed to the Maulvis and the Meos, and it prevented a riot in the offing. The Constitution gave a clear mandate to the Government and the Plan should unambiguously declare that cow-slaughter would be stopped forthwith.

7. Basic Education

The Plan simply approves the Basic method of education. It does not take pains to show that it is practically possible, and is the only one which will produce a self-reliant and united nation, and create self-supporting schools. The Basic school should have a plot of two acres of land to it, in which vegetables and cotton could be produced for the school, and each family in the village should give a measure of grain to the teachers, so that the extra-payment alone would have to be met.

8. Land Policy

The Plan takes for granted that small holdings are uneconomic. Vinoba demanded proof. He granted that villagers could take to collective farming successfully after proper training, but that did not mean that as long as they were inclined to cultivate small fragments the production should necessarily decrease. Vinoba found that the people in their present condition would not be able to take to co-operative farming immediately. The experiments in co-operative farming hitherto conducted had proved failures. Knowledge of arithmetic was a necessary prerequisite in co-operative farming, and people lacked it. Hence, in his Land-Gift mission, he did not insist on co-operative farming at this stage. He came across some people who were willing to give him land for distribution on the condition of co-operative farming. Vinoba asked them to make the experiment themselves. These donors wanted to dominate co-operative farming by keeping a big share for themselves. Vinoba told them to give away all their lands and be free from the pride of ownership of the land. They should allow the people to become owners of land for once.

It was necessary that surplus lands should be taken from their present owners and distributed to those who did not have land or any alternative means of livelihood and were ready to take to cultivation.

Vinoba had always insisted that the land revenue should be collected in kind. He did not want money-economy to rule the villages. He also wanted village labour to be paid in food. These two things would go a long way to prevent starving conditions.

(There are several factors which have contributed to make agriculture, particularly of

small holdings, not as productive as might be expected. Cultivators have been neglected for centuries and systematically deprived of the facilities needed for successful intensive cultivation. Both the land revenue policy and the law relating to transfer of land are responsible for these, in addition to other causes. Sometime, I might be able to speak about them in more detail. — K. G. M.)

BOYCOTT AS PART OF CONSTRUCTIVE WORK

(By Dharendra Mazumdar)

Despondency

During the last nine months I have toured the different provinces with a view to explain to the people the plan and the basic principles of the Katali Mandal Movement. These tours have brought me in touch with constructive workers of all types, and I have had an opportunity to exchange views with them on the different aspects of constructive work. In the course of these talks a thing, that struck me as very significant, and which I found to be almost universally present, was that most of the workers ended up with a note of despondency. It seemed as if they felt that all their labours in the field of constructive work led them nowhere; as if the light was fading and there was darkness ahead. Some of them appeared to be wholly incapable of thinking ahead or anew. That they still go about, machine-like with their *ghanis*, *charkhas*, or basic schools is evidence rather of their loyalty than of a living faith and conviction born of clear understanding. Doubtless, they have the will to stick to their routine, but when questioned regarding the principles or objectives of their work they are hardly able to open their mouths. Some are engaged in acts of social service from a sense of charity or compassion. Some say that they want to build a new society, but they have no clear idea either of the nature of that new society or of the way it would be brought about. I was surprised to come across even among old comrades and co-workers some who do not, or have now ceased to look upon *khadi* and village industries as providing any key to the solution of the vast problem that faces the country, and still stick to this work. On being questioned about the reason for this, they replied, as if in utter despair, that having given a quarter of a century of their life to this work, they could not go in for any change of the programme now. If the Government and the people allowed, they would spend the rest of their life in the same work to which they were accustomed. They had the consolation that after all what they were doing was good and useful work and did some good to the people. Frankly, I was shocked at this absence of vision among our constructive workers. And I have no doubt that this is a situation that calls for serious thought.

We must be clear as to what makes us take to constructive work. Individually and organizationally we must decide as to what vision allures us, what ideals inspire us, and what ob-

jectives guide us. In the days of slavery our constructive work was, to most of us, a means of establishing close contact with the people by doing some little good to them and thus creating in them a measure of national consciousness and securing their co-operation in the mighty effort to end the British Raj. Even at that time people were not wanting to whom service of the poor was an end in itself. Still, generally speaking, the workers had Swaraj as their goal. Now that British Raj has ended the situation must be treated as having basically changed. Naturally, therefore, our workers ask, why constructive work now? When we speak of *charkha*, people tell us, why talk of *charkha* now after Swaraj? The people who ask us such questions include workers of the Charkha Sangh and other all-India constructive associations. This explains why we are not able to produce in our organizations and institutions that atmosphere, or in our workers that way of living and thinking, which is essential for the achievement of our ideals. The times through which we are passing challenge us to think clearly and live rightly. If we fail to do this we stagnate and perish.

Two Approaches

Khadi and village industries work might be undertaken on two considerations: (1) the philanthropic and (2) the revolutionary. The philanthropic consideration is by no means new. In this wide world there have always been people who have made their lives noble by devoting themselves to philanthropic service and have even suffered and sacrificed for its sake. Even before Gandhiji came on the scene there were people who rendered social service to the people in various ways. Service of the poor is nothing new. But Bapu made service of *Daridranarayana* an article of faith. He said that if we wanted to serve the poor we must run to the villages, for it is there that the poor live. What did his emphasis on the village mean? Why did he not also talk of the towns and the cities?

We know that it is the earth that produces all wealth. When labour is applied to earth wealth is produced. And it is the villager who labours and produces wealth. How is it then that the villagers become poor? And having become poor how, according to Bapu, do they become *Narayana*?

The villager produces wealth but the city dweller takes it. The tallest buildings are found in the cities. While the villager is *Daridranarayana* (Lord of Poverty), the city dweller is *Lakshminarayana* (Lord of Prosperity). How strange really that the city dweller becomes the master of wealth even when he applies no labour to earth? The fact is that instead of applying his labour to earth, the city dweller applies his talent and capital to man. Acting as a middleman he usurps all the wealth produced by the villager. And when as a result of exploitation by the city the village is impoverished and our conscience is touched by the misery of the villager,

we philanthropically come forward to render him some service with a view to alleviating his misery. We ask him to produce some *khadi*, or prepare some other article which we sell to the rich city dweller and pay some price to the artisan in return of his labour. Sometimes we raise donations from the urban people and distribute free medicine to village people. We thus try to secure crumbs for the village people from the sumptuous table of the city dwellers. This is how, we think, we are working to end poverty. But does it lead us anywhere? If we raise a mound at one place it is bound to create a hollow at another. In course of time that hollow will become a reservoir for stagnant water full of filth and foul odour. And however troublesome the nasty hollow may become, we cannot fill it up by a few basketful of earth from the mound. Similarly any attempt at filling the hollow in the villager's belly by throwing into it crumbs from the heap on the city dweller's table is doomed to failure. Maybe, this charity may for a moment mitigate the suffering of the hungry and the naked. But obviously it is no permanent solution. Therefore we must understand that any constructive work done with this end in view is constructive work at best charitable; it cannot be revolutionary. Gandhiji however wanted to create a social order free from exploitation. He never wanted that those who do not produce should be allowed to become prosperous on the labour of those that produced, and that social workers should go on giving some succour to the exploited by throwing at them crumbs picked from the exploiter's table. Gandhiji visualized the building up of a social order which would make the exploitation of the producer impossible. And with that view he wanted us to apply ourselves to the task of ending the present system of centralized production and profit. This method of destroying and building simultaneously is a technique peculiar to the constructive programme of Gandhiji. After his last release (from the Aga Khan Jail), as soon as he saw that the departure of the British would not take long he took up the work of the basic revolution in hand, and at once gave his word of command to the different constructive organizations to take definite steps in that direction. He definitely asked the Charkha Sangha to give up its old job, and plan to take up the new one of building up a new *samaj* free from exploitation. The period of mere philanthropic work had ended. An immediate change of faith was necessary. Revolution must take the place of mere philanthropy.

Constructive workers must, therefore, now think seriously and determine their response to Gandhiji's challenge. Shall we be mere distributors of charity or shall we work for a revolution—that is the question which each one of us must answer. We must take once for all one of these two paths. As soon as our vision is clear we shall know which way to go. Rigidity of out-

look and despondency will immediately vanish. Even after this heart-searching, if some decide that they must confine themselves to philanthropic service only, they are welcome to do so. They must then give up talking of creating a new social order and all that. There are a number of Hindu and Christian missionary institutions, which are doing admirable charitable work. Since they are clear about their goal and the way to reach it they are satisfied with what they achieve and they know no despair. But those who have the ambition of working for a really new social order must examine afresh their programme of work and their way of life. They must realize that while they do something constructive they must also simultaneously work to destroy all that must be destroyed in order to end the present social order. That is the necessary characteristics of a revolution.

Prerequisites of a Revolution

A revolution can be brought about either by the Government or by the masses of people and the public workers. If the Government wishes to initiate the process then it must inevitably stop machine-production, buffalo-protection and the old system of education. If the Government does not decide to do this, then all the money that it spends on the promotion of decentralized industries is sheer waste. If on the other hand this revolution has to be brought about by public organizations and public workers then they must adopt a double programme—promotion of *charkha*, village industries, cow protection and basic education on the one hand, and boycott of machine-production, buffalo-rearing and the old education on the other. They must in their own life and in the lives of their institutions adopt the boycott programme and take a vow to implement it. They must persuade other individuals and institutions to do the same. And when they find that the public is sufficiently aroused they should initiate a comprehensive movement of boycott. If we fail to do this our constructive work will be sheer waste in terms of a social revolution.

In the course of my tour whenever I have presented this idea to my co-workers or to directors of institutions I have met with ready approval. There has been no disagreement in principle. All have agreed that this is the right thing to do. But they all speak of great difficulties in the way of implementing the programme. They say that the circumstances are not favourable. If that is so why do our workers and institutions feel dissatisfied when the Government pleads inability to restrict machine-production? Since the Government too has to face the same difficulties we should have no grievance against it. We talk of revolution, and yet we are cowed down by adverse circumstances, and by difficulties. We should not then be surprised at the attitude the Government takes.

I do not deny that there are occasions when circumstances prove too forbidding. But can we

honestly say that our workers and institutions have done all that they could do, and that it is only the circumstances that thwart their efforts? I don't think this is so. So far as I have been able to understand I feel that we are forgetful of our objectives; and our goal is obscure. So I feel that if our workers and institutions were to keep the vision clear, and prepare a suitable programme and hold fast to it, they will soon find that the circumstances have become favourable. I have no doubt that this will be so.

I also do not deny that even when we are convinced about the steps we have to take, we don't have the capacity to undertake the entire programme all at once, weak mortals that we are. But even if we move slowly but with full consciousness of the direction in which we are going we shall find the way clear and we shall make progress in all certainty. What is needed is clear vision, determination and dedication. To begin with we should raise the cry of boycott of machine-production in the sphere of food and clothing first. Later on we may extend our cry to other spheres. We may also pick out specific items and concentrate on them. All individuals and institutions may not be equally effective but the progress will be maintained. But if we fail to make conscious effort in this direction we shall soon find ourselves without goal and doomed to failure. Our sacrifice and character may bring us individual spiritual consolation and contentment, but the great dream of a social revolution will remain unfulfilled.

We have seen that in the great days of the Swaraj struggle our movement for Swadeshi would have come to nought if we had not simultaneously carried on boycott movement against *videshi* (foreign). Similarly now if we fail to start a boycott movement against machine-production along with a movement for popularizing village industries etc. all our cry for village industries will not do anything better than giving some little help to some needy people. It certainly cannot create a social order decentralized and self-sufficient and free from exploitation.

I do hope that my co-workers and the constructive institutions will give serious thought to this appeal of mine.

(Translated from *Sarvodaya* (Hindi) for Aug. '51)

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GANDHIJI'S FAST

To the Editor, *The Times of India*

Sir,

Mr Churchill's statement, made in his memoirs, that "at an early stage he (Gandhiji) was being fed with glucose whenever he drank water and in the end, being quite convinced of our obduracy, he abandoned his fast" is incorrect. It is not clear from what source he got this information.

Gandhiji was neither fed with glucose during the period of his fast nor did he abandon it. I was the Superintendent of the Aga Khan's Palace for the full period of twenty-one months when the Mahatma was confined there. I was staying day and night under the same roof with Gandhiji, and I well remember that the Mahatma obtained a solemn promise from his doctors that glucose would not be administered to him during the fast, even if he became unconscious.

Bombay, 27-9-'51

A. E. KATELY

(From *The Times of India*, 1-10-'51)

Payments of Takavi

A Bombay correspondent writes to the following effect:—

"In view of the impending acute famine, the Government must have considered the measures it will adopt to meet the situation. One of them will undoubtedly be loans of Takavi. These should be advanced before it is too late, and measures should be adopted to see that they are paid promptly, and the sanctioned amounts actually reach the payees. The system of paying through Talatis and Circle Inspectors has not been satisfactory in the past. The cultivators get their amounts neither in good time, nor in full. The Talatis and the Circle Inspectors have to be propitiated before the cultivators get their payments.

"It is suggested that a gazetted officer should see the loans paid in the presence of himself and a local constructive worker or a person recommended by a constructive workers' institution in the Taluka or District.

"Secondly, the cultivators must not be made to travel long distances and made to waste a full day or more to obtain the loans. It is the officers who should go to the villages, or at least to a place not at a great distance from the villages to be served, and the making of payments and attendance to the people's application should take a priority over all other departmental business."

I think that the suggestions are reasonable and Governments all over should issue necessary instructions and make suitable rules to see that the people are really served and not ordered about by the officers.

Wardha, 29-9-'51

K. G. M.

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