

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

VOL. XV. No. 34

AHMEDABAD — SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1951

TWO ANNAS

PLANNING FOR INDIA

I

The readers have already before them the spirited criticisms of Shris Kumarappa, S. N. Agarwal and Vinoba to the Planning Commission's *Draft Outline of the First Five Year Plan*. In the following observations, however, the subject is presented in a slightly different manner for explaining to the public as well as the authorities the difference between the *Sarvodaya* approach and that of the Commissioners towards planning.

लोकैस्मिन् द्विविधा निष्ठा पुरा प्रोक्ता मया ज्ञच
(I declared long ago that there are two fundamental faiths in this world. — *Gita* III-3). This declaration is true in regard to more matters of life than the two approaches to *moksha* (salvation) through *jnana* and *karma*, immediately under discussion in the *Gita*. On studying the *Draft Outline*, I found that there was similar fundamental divergence of faiths in the *Sarvodaya* approach and that of the Commission in respect of planning.

We all love India and want her to develop and prosper. But India means, on the one side, the political region called by that name, with all her lands, rivers, seas, mines, animals, natural resources of energies; and on the other side, the men, women and children of India and their domesticated animals, which have become a part of their social and economic life. It would be wrong to say that any patriot or nationalist loves only one part of India to the total exclusion of the other. But it can be said that if an order of preference is to be made in a scheme for developing the two, some would lay more stress on and take note of the development of India's natural resources, while others would rivet their attention on the development of her human and animal life. Though none can entirely neglect the other, yet the first preference of the one or the other would make a great difference in laying down the plans.

The approach of the Commission in planning shows a preference for the former; that is, the development of India's natural resources; and in pursuit of that aim, they have resorted to what they have called 'mixed economy', that is, partly Capitalistic and partly Marxian. I have

explained in my book, *Gandhi and Marx*,* why I do not regard the Capitalistic and the Marxian approach to life as fundamentally different from one another. The apparent hostility between the two is the hostility of two rivals for getting the same prize. It is like the enmity such as prevailed between the British and the French East India Companies in the 18th Century, each wanting to establish itself as an exclusive political and commercial power in India. Their mixture is possible, because at the base their attitude towards life is common. Capitalism is private Capitalism while Marxian Socialism (including the so-called Russian Communism) is State-Capitalism, and the 'mixed economy' is a sort of truce proposed between the two rival Capitalisms. Each is expected to recognize the powerful position of the other in the present-day India, and perceive the wisdom of not forcing an immediate conflict.

The fundamental common principles of Capitalism and Marxian Socialism or State-Capitalism are:

- (1) Man's development depends upon the development of the environment around him;
- (2) Hence, development and exploitation of a country's natural resources, viz., land, mines, seas, and their produce, machineries etc., and of the energies like heat, light, electricity, magnetism, atom etc. must be the aim and object of all planning;
- (3) Planning must lead to larger profits, trade and commerce, both within and outside the country;
- (4) With the help of such development and exploitation of nature and of trade, they must raise the standard of living of as many men as can be managed in a conflict between life and nature;
- (5) The means for achieving these aims and objects are (a) the use and concentration of money as the common and legalized vehicle and symbol of wealth; (b) controlled production, distribution, and the intervening processes; (c) employment of as many men as necessary and possible, consistently with the above aims: i.e. in a conflict between man or animal and nature, the development of nature should be given a priority to the employment of man or animal; in a conflict between life and standard of living, the main-

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tenance of a high standard of living for as many as possible should be given a priority over the problem of employment and so on; (d) hence, in achieving production, transport, distribution etc. of articles, the guiding principle should be to achieve as much as possible, and as rapidly as possible, with as few men and animals as possible; employment should be increased by creating new types of wants and avenues of employment, and not by slowing down the processes of production and transport; (e) the world is not large enough to maintain all the children women might give birth to in the ordinary and healthy course of nature; hence, (f) in order to reduce the problems arising out of conflict between life and nature, in addition to catastrophic calamities such as, war, famine etc., positive remedies for the reduction of population should also be employed; for instance, surgical, medical and mechanical devices for birth-control, and inculcation of habits, drugs, etc. calculated to reduce or sterilize the reproductive powers;

(6) Owing to the inevitableness of a conflict between life and nature, every man cannot be assured of employment; attempt should be made to meet hard or temporary cases of unemployment through such remedies as charities, doles, relief-works, work-houses etc. to the extent means permit;

(7) The whole world being one and united, the ultimate aim is to establish world government; hence the goal of national or regional self-sufficiency cannot be pursued as an inviolable principle; through the mechanism of international trade and commerce, and means of transport, we might get our necessities from abroad in exchange of our manufactures or raw materials. If a great war is avoided, this would not be impossible and there is nothing wrong in principle in having to depend upon other countries for our necessities;

(8) Humanity being what it is, it is not a practical proposition to expect to maintain permanent peace or establish one world government, without the sanction of physical force. Love is good and necessary, and its help may be appreciated; but it cannot be relied upon as a sole measure of security. This fact, along with the advances made in the realm of technical science, makes the maintenance and development of up-to-date armaments unavoidable for ensuring a maximum, if not permanent, period of peace.

I believe I am not doing any injustice to the Planning Commission in saying that these are also the principles which have guided them in drawing up their *Outline*.

In the next article, I shall give in brief the principles of the *Sarvodaya* approach towards planning.

Wardha, 26-9-'51

K. G. MASHRUWALA

SARVODAYA

Its Principles and Programme

Pages iv + 61 Price Re 1/- Postage etc. 3 as.
NAVAJIVAN PUBLISHING HOUSE
Post Box 105, AHMEDABAD

SHRI VINOBA'S TELANGANA TOUR

IV

April 16, Hayatnagar (Second Halt, 10 miles)

Entry Into Dandakaranya

Thus began our walk through Telangana. Telangana is identified with Dandakaranya (the forest of Dandaka) of the *Ramayana*. Thousands of years ago Rama had walked through this forest clearing it of *asuras* and offering protection to the innocent people. Many a sage had sanctified the land in the past by practising penance at various places lying on the banks of the Godavari and the Krishna, which run through this area. But the present condition of the people was most wretched and depressing, and demanded strong reinforcement to the good that might have been showered on the people by the sages of old. A modern devotee of Rama, who had with him all the inheritance received from those sages seemed now to have undertaken to do that. Hundreds of men and women assembled to give him a send-off with all reverence and faith.

Vinobaji was accorded reception at several places along our way to our next halting station. The students and the staff of an orphanage in a village nearby, wanted Vinoba to spend some time in their midst. But since that was not possible, they accompanied him with their band and the flag for a mile. At Hayatnagar where we were to station for the day, the villagers accorded him a very hearty welcome decorating the village with arches and buntings of green leaves.

In the afternoon the boys and girls of the orphanage, accompanied by their Superintendent, came to see Vinobaji. They entertained him with songs and music. The Superintendent and his wife, were responsible for bringing up these children to whom they were more than their parents, and paternal love and joy were visible on their faces. They had with them a new entrant, a beautiful child of two months. Vinobaji took the child in his arms, and his eyes, as it were, tried to reach within. How would the problem which it mutely represented, be solved?

The Drink Evil

In the afternoon the villagers acquainted Vinobaji with the condition in the village which had four thousand population and five thousand acres of land, out of which one thousand was reserved for hunting purposes. Agriculture was the only occupation. There were about two hundred carts usually employed on hire, at five rupees per trip to and from Hyderabad. There were about ten lime-kilns. The carts carried the lime. There were four houses of weavers, who received one half of a bundle of yarn as their quota; this was sufficient for weaving two *dhotis* requiring hardly a week's work. How was the problem of unemployment for the remaining three weeks to be solved? The weavers would not spin the yarn themselves! Nor were they willing to weave hand-spun yarn. There were also the carpenters, ironsmiths, potters, shoemakers, two to four families of each, which is enough to meet the demand of the village. But there was no *ghani*. Cloth, sugar, *gur*, oil, kerosene, all had to be fetched from the city. Apart from the money that was drained out for these things there was the drink evil which had been devouring a large amount of money and that too for several years in the past. Three hundred and fifty rupees worth *sindi* was sold everyday. That made Rs 10,500 a month, or Rs 1,26,000 at least per year. In addition to this, the people consumed a gallon of wine per day which, at the rate of Rs 16 per gallon, was responsible for the waste of Rs 5,760 per year. To this must be added Rs 3,600 for excise duty on wine. Thus a total of Rs 1,35,360 was spent on intoxicating drinks by a population of four thousand, or more than Rs 30 per head. If we add to this Rs 20 per head for annual expenditure on

cloth Rs 50/- per head is being drained every year. This means an annual voluntary drain of two lakhs of rupees. 98 per cent of the people are addicted to drink. Among Harijans even the children are not free from it. Food, being not available in sufficient quantity drink takes the place of the evening meals.

It is instructive to know the respective shares of the licensee and the Government in the *sindi* business.

	per year	per year
Total income from <i>sindi</i> ..		Rs. 1,26,000
Excise tax Rs 3,000/- p.m. i.e. ..	Rs. 36,000	
Tax on the trees ..	" 44,000	
Total share of Government ..	" 80,000	
Balance: share of the licensee ..	" 46,000	
Out-of-pocket and establishment charges 50 per cent ..	" 23,000	
Net income of the licensee ..	" 23,000	

So the *sindi* vendor earns Rs 7 from every member of the village and the Government receive from it sixteen times its income in land revenue. It is such a tempting source of income! Will the Government be able to forgo thirteen crores income from excise out of its total income of thirty crores? If they do not do it today, they will have to face a revolution some day.

But why do not the sober people in the village try to put a stop to this drink evil in their respective villages? They say they are afraid of being arrested under the pretext of being Communists. The villagers informed Vinobaji that the 'night-kings' had put a stop to the drink evil some time back. We came to know for the first time here, that the Communists were known as 'night-kings'. The villagers were happy so long as the ban on the drink existed. The Communist programme however was not intended for freeing the people of the drink evil. It was taken up as a programme on political considerations and was given up according to the villagers, under the pressure of the liquor-dealers.

Vinoba was astonished to hear this horrible tale, and wondered how the people still survived.

One of the villagers said, "Sir, did not the demons survive in the time of Rama? The condition will be worse if this drink evil is not stopped."

He was a responsible man in the village. He made three suggestions for improving its condition. Drink evil must be stopped; tenancy act should come into force; there should be improvement in the way of levy procurement.

Vinobaji was glad that at least there were a few persons who still thought about their villages. There was no source of income. There was not even one acre of land per head; no industry; and *sindi* was used as a substitute for food. This was going on for the last one hundred years at least. And even then Congressmen complained that they had no programme for the service of the people! The fact was that they took no interest in the work of social service. They wanted politics, because power could not be achieved without politics. They argued that if they did not take the power themselves, it would go into the hands of *goondas*. But in order to get power, these people adopted the same means as the *goondas*, and went a little better than they in employing them.

But there was a ray of light in all that darkness. Our host Shri Pulla Reddi, who is also the president of the Tahsil Congress Committee, has been able to persuade a *pandit* well versed in Telugu and Hindi to reside in the village. The *pandit* teaches Shri Pulla Reddi's children in the morning, and takes Hindi classes with about twentyfive students from surrounding villages. After receiving necessary training they are expected to become Hindi *pracharaks* (propagandists) in their respective villages. Thus a good beginning has been made at least in

one direction. Shri Pulla Reddi's example deserves mention, because many a parent have been sending their children to cities for education. If they followed this example they would be serving their villages and earning the gratitude of the villagers at a less cost than what they spent on their children in towns. These small things would go a long way in checking Communism.

The evening prayer was attended by several thousand men and women. This was the first village in this tour and we knew not what would be the form of the meeting. But people had walked long distances to see Gandhiji's Baba (*sadhu*). There was on one side the joy of their *darshan*, and on the other, there was the agony of their pitiable condition. In his speech Vinobaji explained to them that the Government, that was established in Delhi could not be expected to come to their village and deliver happiness to them. If their village was on fire the people from Hyderabad could not come to quench it. It was humanly impossible for a man or a group of men to sit at one place and look after the administration of such a big country. Vinobaji, therefore, impressed upon the people to have a committee of their own in every village to look after its affairs. This committee should study the requirements of the village and try to meet them as far as possible in the village itself. The committee should also free the people from the drink evil. They should also take care to see that quarrels, developed in towns and cities, like those of Congressmen and Socialists and other political groups, did not filter into their village. People might vote for any one they liked at the time of elections, but if outsiders came and tried to create political divisions in the village they must politely but definitely tell them that they had nothing to do with their political squabbles and opinions, and, so far as their affairs were concerned, they were neither Congressmen nor Socialists, nor Communists. They were all one group of Hayatnagarwallas, and nothing else. He warned them that politicians will go to them and instigate the poor against the rich, the employed against the employer, and one against the other. They should tell the politicians that their village was one, that they were like one family and that they wanted to think about the problems of the village as others did about the problems of the country at large. If the villagers remained firm and did not allow the outside evils to enter into their village, they would be able to eliminate the evils of their village one by one.

D. M.

'Shri Thakkar Bapa Commemoration Volume'

The Gujarat Research Society of Bombay has brought out a commemoration volume in memory of the late Thakkar Bapa. It contains nearly twenty contributions, some of them being reprints. Among the contributors are: Dr. Rajendraprasad, Shri G. V. Mavlankar, Shri Viyogi Hari, Shri D. Rangaiya, Shri L. M. Shrikant, Shri P. G. Shah, Shri K. G. Mashruwala and Shri Kapil Thakkar. The well-known anthropologists Dr. Verrier Elwin, Dr. B. S. Guha and Dr. D. N. Majumdar have each paid a deserving tribute to the untiring worker in the cause of the down-trodden and the backward. With the exception of two in Hindi all the contributions are either in English or in Gujarati. Besides acquainting the readers with the noble characteristics of Thakkar Bapa, it provides also interesting and valuable information about some of the scheduled and backward classes of India. The volume is priced at Rs 3/- and may be had from the office of the Society at 46-48 Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bombay 1.

H. M. V.

HARIJAN

Oct. 20

1951

THE THIRD WAY

Shri Vinoba Bhave's pilgrimage for the propagation of the Land-Gifts Mission is an event of great importance and hope in the history of India. When he met with success in his mission in Telangana, some people thought that the people who were afflicted by the Communists' atrocities had no alternative but to donate land to Vinoba. A similar success, they thought, was not likely to attend him in collecting land in other parts of the country.

Even so, it would not have reduced the importance of the Land Gifts in Telangana. For it is the diseased who will take medicine. What is important is that the people were ready to take the *right* medicine, even though it was bitter, and that the services of the *right* doctor were available. That his mission is now receiving a good response from the people at every place is an indication that God, through one of His pure devotees, is preparing the suitable atmosphere necessary for a spiritual transformation, that is, a non-violent revolution in the country.

Vinoba truly belongs to the same stalk as Gandhiji in his living faith and hope in God. Our country has always produced from time to time such men of faith. Vinoba is not a new phenomenon. But that the masses of this country are prepared to listen to such men of God testifies that the people of India are also men and women of faith, and the fire of *dharma* (duty) can be kindled in them.

Mahatma Gandhi initiated the people into truth and non-violence, and they became ready for Satyagraha. The British Government was a tremendous organization—a huge corporation. And their philosophy holds that an organization or a corporation has no soul. But Gandhiji's Satyagraha performed the task of making this tremendous corporation feel the power of the soul.

Now the stage has been reached to bring into the arena the forces of *aparigraha* (non-possession) and *asteya* (non-stealing) along with truth and non-violence. Shri Vinoba saw that the root of the malady of the present world lay in its faith in wealth. It was therefore necessary to depose Money, the symbol of possession, from its sovereignty over life. After deep reflection accompanied with fast, Shri Vinoba made a resolve not to accept money gifts. And there never was with him a question of earning money.

Labour and money are two forces in the world. In order to escape from labour one has to lay by money. As long as money occupies the place of pride, labour cannot attain dignity, however much it may improve in its quality and

volume. Vinoba has deposed money and raised the dignity of labour. Only after bringing about this transformation in his own person, Vinoba has earned for himself the right to preach non-possession, that is, curtailing the possession of wealth. And owners of land have supplied the proof that the Indian nation has not forgotten its ancient tradition of being influenced by the higher law—the law of the Spirit.

We have often asserted that Russia has one way, America has another, and India a third way of doing things. But so far this third way had not manifested its dynamism, in an active manner. Had it been acted upon with the power of the State through legislation, we could not call it the third way. There is a world of difference between the way of gifts through the Land-Gifts sacrifice, of which Shri Vinoba is the presiding sacrificial priest, and that of enormous gifts of money by way of financial aid which America has been distributing to the four quarters of the world. No doubt, both have a far-sighted end in view; but in one there is faith in the power of wealth. It harps on the string of greed for wealth. In the other there is the power of the spirit as its basis. It has the one-stringed harp of renunciation in its hand. Its music is devotional and one which will prevail in the end. After experiencing the prosperity and power of the State, both Emperor Yayati and Emperor Ashok came to the conclusion that the salvation and the peace of the world did not lie in enjoyments and imperial power, but in their renunciation. Only by reducing possessions and luxuries, can the power of the spirit be awakened, and peace and brotherhood spread on the earth.

(Translated from Hindi *Mangal Prabhat*, Oct. '51)

KAKA KALELKAR

APPEAL TO MADHYA PRADESH

On the 12th September, I left Wardha for my journey towards Delhi. The *Bhumi-Dan Yajna* (Land-Gifts Sacrifice), which was launched in Telangana, proved a success. I have undertaken this journey to propagate the same mission throughout India. Today, on October 7, after crossing the borders of Madhya Pradesh, I have entered Vindhya Pradesh. On 2nd and 3rd October, a Sarvodaya Conference was held at Sagar, wherein the workers resolved to collect at least one lakh acres of land for the Land-Gift Mission from Madhya Pradesh. To accomplish this task, I have appointed a Pradeshik Samiti (Regional Committee) of the following three members:

1. Shri Dadabhai Naik
2. Shri Appaji Gandhi
3. Shri Rajendra Malpani

This Samiti, in consultation with me, shall appoint responsible workers in every district to carry out this work.

Two of the members of the Samiti had already participated in my walking-tour. They have seen the humble and non-violent technique of collecting lands which I wish to be employed.

This Samiti will also secure additional lands and shall distribute them among the landless labourers with no alternative employment. Harijans will be particularly attended to. The policy will be to distribute land among the people of the same area wherefrom it is collected.

The Samiti is empowered to carry on necessary correspondence with the Government and do other needful things. For this, the Samiti will frame necessary rules, which will be published later on.

The personnel of this Samiti has purposely been not selected of influential men. They are of course *sevaks*. But their capacity is limited. I hope that all influential persons, the common people and the Government will co-operate with them in their work, and thus, a way will be opened for non-violently and peacefully solving one of the most baffling problems of the country.

Malthon (V. P.), 7-10-'51

VINOBA

(Translated from Hindi)

SHRI MANILAL GANDHI'S CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

Shri Manilal Gandhi has registered his protest against the racial segregation laws of South Africa by calmly and non-violently disobeying them. Under these laws, it is an offence for an Asiatic to occupy a bench, or to enter a public reading room or any other place, reserved for Europeans. Shri Gandhi has been openly and repeatedly doing this. The police takes note of it but, so far, the Government has taken no action against him. It is good that the South African Government does not make itself look more ridiculous by proceeding against Shri Gandhi for breaking these laws. It should not have made them at all, but has done so under malign influences. The South African Prime Minister, who is also a Christian Divine, I trust, realizes the incongruity between his State policy and his Christian doctrines. If for any reason, he is unable to run his Government in conformity with the best Christian principles, I hope his Government will reconcile itself to this way of making the wrong legislation a dead letter.

There should be an ever increasing number of citizens affected by these laws, to copy Shri Manilal Gandhi's example in a non-violent but firm and quiet manner. Right-minded Europeans, and I believe their number is sufficiently great, should also openly show their sympathy towards such non-violent law-breakers. If they are proceeded against, the action should be welcome; if their breaches are overlooked, they have gained their desideratum and should quietly continue to exercise what is really their natural right.

Such nullification of the law in one sphere will lead to the discovery of ways of rendering it a dead letter in other spheres also. Since the law itself is against the fundamental principles of equity and justice, its non-violent breach does not militate against good conscience. Rather, cowardly submission to them does so.

Wardha, 9-10-'51

K. G. MASHRUWALA

REVIVAL OF LINGUISTIC CONTROVERSIES

When there is a desire to evade the implementation of policies thrashed out after mature deliberation, a controversy is restarted after a brief rest. The controversy about the medium of instruction in Universities is one of these. So far as *Harijan* is concerned, I should like to close its columns against it. Its stand has been repeatedly made clear, and I do not think any useful purpose can be served by rearguing the subject.

In the view of *Harijan*, the regional language should normally be the medium of instruction even in the University.

Exceptions :

(1) the medium in institutions of an all-India nature would have to be Hindi, wherever the institution might be situate; and whether it is of a university type or lower grade;

(2) professors, specially employed or invited from other provinces, if they are unacquainted with the regional language, may be permitted to use Hindi either for a period of transition or for the full term of their employment;

(3) students of other provinces may be allowed to answer their questions in Hindi, instead of the regional language. But they may not claim to be instructed in Hindi; and would also have to study the regional language.

It goes without saying that Hindi can never be neglected as a language to be studied by every student. The command over Hindi must be greater than a modern graduate has over English.

I believe that the above position is natural, and practical and in accordance with sound principles of education. However, I would make the following offer to all University professors and teachers :

Take it that English is to be discarded on December 31, '51. You are allowed to choose between the regional language and Hindi in order to make the start on January 1, 1952. Make your choice and begin the work. If you think that Hindi will suit you better than the regional language, go ahead with it, and let us watch the results of our experiments for a sufficient period.

I would not bother with technical terms over much in the start. Let the professors coin any term they like and use them along with the foreign terms to avoid confusion. If they are unable or unwilling to coin or accept a term suggested by others, I would allow them to use the foreign terms at this stage. The immediate and first task should be the abandonment of English without loss of time; because it is unnatural and against principles of education.

The subject is closed for discussion.

Wardha, 27-9-'51

K. G. MASHRUWALA

GO-SEVA IN MADHYA BHARAT

(Extracts from a report by Shri Radhakrishna Bajaj of his recent tour in Madhya Bharat in connection with Go-Seva work).

Kasturba Gram, the headquarters of the Kasturba Gandhi Trust is 4 miles from Indore. It has 300 acres of land and there is a big tank nearby. When the centre will shortly start functioning, it will need 4 to 5 mds. of milk daily. The centre hopes to be able to produce all its requirements of milk, vegetables and food-grains on its own land. There is a proposal that the Krishi-Go-Seva-Vibhag (Department of Agriculture and Cow-Service) of the Sarva-Seva-Sangh and the Kasturba-Trust should undertake the work jointly. They intend to keep the local *Malvi* cows and improve the breed by means of selective breeding. Seth Badrilal has agreed to donate 25 *Malvi* cows of good quality to start the work. I hope that both the institutions will sanction the scheme, and the work will start in the near future.

The Madhya Bharat Government has decided to start 3 Breed Improvement centres at 3 different places; the annual total expenses are estimated to be about a lakh of rupees. Of the three two will be run by the Veterinary Department of the Government; the third, the Nimadi-Breed-Improvement centre has been entrusted to the Sarva-Seva-Sangh. It will be run by the Madhya Bharat branch of the Sarva-Seva-Sangh (Krishi-Go-Seva-Vibhag). Shri Baijnath Mahodaya is the secretary of the branch, and Shri Vishwanath Khode and Shri Takhtmal Jain are members of the Committee. Shri Ramchandra Jain and Shri Champalal Gole both of whom had had their training in Wardha are in charge of the work at the centre. Dr. Mukerji, the veterinary officer of the place is giving his full co-operation. The scheme adopted for the breed-improvement in the villages is the same as drawn by the Go-Seva Sangh. It is proposed to keep bulls of good quality for use in 20 villages around the centre. The existing useless ones will be rendered ineffective through castration. This will lead by and by to the improvement in the breed. The area will be extended after the quality in the selected area has gone up to the required level.

Having personally seen the progress of Go-Seva work in Madhya Bharat, I feel that both the people and the Government are enthusiastic about it. They readily appreciate the new outlook in the matter of Go-Seva which the Go-Seva Sangh has been propagating. I, believe, given right guidance and necessary help, the work will go ahead rapidly. My impression is that of all the students and workers who have come for training in Go-Seva to us in Wardha, the Madhya Bharat students have always been and are still the most outstanding.

(Translated from Hindi)

THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

Gonds' Response

The second stage of Vinobaji's North India Tour lay through the Satpudas. He was heartily received by the Gonds, the inhabitants of these hills, at every place. The following figures will be interesting to the readers:

Date	Halting Place	Population	Villages on the Way	Total land Received	No. of Donors		
					1 to 25	25 to 100	More than 100
18	Umrana	300		50.80	7	—	—
19	Chhindwada	35000		54.00	6	—	—
			Sarna	3.55	4	—	—
			Bangaon	11.50	8	—	—
20	Singodi	1295		79.55	42	—	—
21	Amarwada	2955		108.13	34	—	—
			Kunavool	1.00	1	—	—
			Jungarvali	9.00	6	—	—
22	Surlakapa	320		50.95	18	—	—
23	Harrai	1669		1033.33	20	—	1
24	Kandeli	48		5.00	3	—	—
25	Narsinghpur	13000		62.93	11	—	—
26	Kareli	7000		319.00	17	—	1
27	Barman	931		527.75	19	1	2
Total				2,316.49	196	1	4

The figures are eye-opener. The big cities of Chhindwada and Narsinghpur have proved very shy; but the response of the villages is noteworthy. Why are the cities shy? In the villages Vinobaji comes into direct contact with the villagers. His words touch their simple, generous hearts. They know the pangs of the poor, the agony of the landless. Their heart is as broad as the sky. Vinobaji speaks to them personally, stretches out his one hand and they fill his both hands with land. In the cities, either the landholders have prejudices against Congress workers, or the Congress workers have not the courage to approach the landholders, because Congressmen happen to be landlords themselves and before asking others they must be prepared to part with a portion of their own possessions. They have not yet fully realized the significance and far-reaching character of this movement.

In Telangana it was quite the other way. The villages did contribute their mite unreservedly but the cities also fully realized their responsibility and tried to make up a four-figure contribution everywhere. Thus Suryapet, Mahabubabad and Warangal did not lag behind and over-reached the figure of one thousand acres each, while Adilabad made up two thousand. Many Congressmen gave a fourth of their lands. But in Madhyapradesh for want of adequate effort by those expected to give a lead and prepare big landholders beforehand, whatever donations came, are made as a result of Vinobaji's personal appeal. And Vinobaji does not stay for more than a day in any place. But he is not in the least pessimistic. If the poor people have been giving away their precious lands, the rich can not escape. The rich will have to follow the lead of the masses tomorrow, having lost the opportunity of setting an example. "All the land belongs to me. It shall come to me, i.e. to *Daridranarayana*." Such is the urge of the hour. It is not I who am speaking; it is the will of the Lord that is working through me, says Vinoba. The masses, however, have caught the idea better. Their moral support is evident from their enthusiasm, manifested through their donations, however small they may be. Did not Babu collect every pie that was offered to him for *Daridranarayana* even by the *Daridranarayana*? Out of the 201 donations, only 4 are of more than a hundred acres, Thakur Udayabhanu Shah who gave 963.33 acres being one of them. All the rest are but like drops which alone can water the land.

The *Ramayana* relates that when Sugriva and Hanuman saw Rama, Hanumana recognized in him his Master

at the first sight and surrendered himself fully to him immediately; but Sugriva made friendship with Rama only after he was convinced of the latter's might. The story was repeated in Bapu's lifetime. With the exception of a few men like Jamnalalji, Mahadevbhai and a few others it was the masses who recognized Gandhiji, before the intelligentsia did. The latter came to him only after he had passed their tests. In the same way, the Meos of Punjab, the people of Telangana as well as the Gonds of Satpuda understood at once that here was a man, who was their real well-wisher and servant. But the politicians will take their own time to understand the significance of his mission, and the revolutionary character of his movement, not only for India, but for the whole war-ridden world. Non-violence, however, knows no haste and impatience, and we have to wait for the proper moment. The *Sarvodaya* workers of course, must do their best to hasten the day.

Thus we crossed the Satpudas, a rich and beautiful mountain track, more than 3,000 feet high, 75 miles in length and 24 miles in breadth. Although the soil is poor to a very large extent Harrai the Jagir, which we visited on September 23, is the most substantial exception. The people in this district speak Hindi better than Gondi. The population is 88 persons per square mile. In rural areas it is 82. The town population is 7 per cent of the whole. But Chhindwada which we visited is only 4 per cent and Jagirs have no towns. A larger number of the population is given to agriculture than is evident from the statistics. The district of Chhindwada was under Gaudi rule before the Gond kingdom was established. This was later absorbed by the Marathas, who in their turn, were superseded by the British. It seems the Gonds enjoyed freedom for 60 years. Their economic system deserves research. Wages were paid in kind and agriculture was all done by hand.

When the Gond Chief gave his sumptuous gift, Vinoba said to the villagers: "I have received water through a big pipe. But the land needs drops of rain. May you all shower!", and one after another they rose and gave 70 acres.

To the Thakur, Vinobaji said, "Do not be satisfied with making the donation. Send some young men to Sevagram. Get them trained in *Sarvodaya* work. They will build up Gondwana (Gond-Land) anew." And he cited the example of Jamnalalji. "See what tremendous work he has done in Wardha. You may follow his example."

Method of Asking

Vinoba has a peculiar way of asking for land. Villagers are waiting on the road-side to have his *darshan*. He sits on a cot in their midst, pats on their backs, explains to them his mission within five minutes, obtains land for the landless at times one acre, at times five, at times eight and so on, and marches along. At one place, a villager offers him a garland. "Have I come for garlands? Do not I get them at Paramdham? Tell me if you can give me land for the poor." And the man at once parts with a portion of his land. People fight in law courts for every inch of land. Here they give him willingly. The idea has begun to work.

And at every village, he has an original method of introducing his mission. He never repeats his arguments in the same words. The cause itself is so noble that it becomes a source of incessant inspiration to him. "Does not the sun go to every door and does not a scavenger feel that the light of the sun is equally available to him as to a king? How can God be partial in distributing what belongs to Him and not to man? If He had distributed air, water, light and sky equally and for all, how is it that He will want that the land should not belong to all but be vested in the hands of a few? I do not mean to suggest that all the land that is in the possession of the landholders is acquired by foul means. There are some who might have received it as a reward for services, some might have acquired it through industry and hard work; at the same time, there are not a few who have obtained it

by means other than fair. But whatever it might be, the fact stands that while a few possess land, there are many who do not have any. This is against the will of the Lord and His will alone can prevail in the world. It might be for this reason that God has chosen me as an instrument to launch this revolutionary movement of acquiring land through persuasion and love. Otherwise what power do I possess that people should voluntarily part with their land and give it away to me for distribution among the poor?" Somebody has to say this truth, and who else could be better fitted than he, who has the interest of the poor in his heart, and nothing but good-will for every one in the world? At Narsinghpur, he said, "The fact that I have come to ask for land, does not imply either humility on my part or benevolence on yours. Mine is the demand of a rightful share on behalf of the poor." Vinobaji wants it to be recognized that, "Every son of the soil has an equal right over Mother Earth."

He gives his reasons for the movement: "Decide your wants and plan accordingly. The world is going on the wrong path. You can check it by a proper planning at home. This is impossible without proper distribution of land. And is not distribution possible without the help of the law or the pistol? China and Russia have a lesson to give. Telangana has proved the futility of violence and the feasibility of a non-violent revolution because there the pistol has failed and the law is not going to succeed. People know the loopholes in the law better than the law-makers themselves do. But even if the law has to come, it should come in the best possible form, and *bhoo-dan* alone can create the necessary favourable atmosphere for it."

At first people thought land cannot be had for mere asking. When it began to come, they said the problem cannot be solved by such small gifts alone. Vinoba replied: "Quite so, therefore it is up to you to decide your quota and fix your target. I want you to unfasten your purses. Abandon your claim on the land in your possession. It is neither proper nor justifiable to retain the rights of ownership. People ask me whether the Government would not move in the matter, but I simply fail to understand their question. Is the Government different from the people? The Government will do what the people will want it to do." And then he narrates to them—and graphically too—how land is being distributed in Telangana today. "Our men go in search of the landless, as does a father in search of a proper bridegroom for his daughter. Imagine the joy of the people who have absolutely no idea that some one will suddenly come to their doors one fine morning to make them masters of land. They had not even dreamt of it. That is non-violent revolution."

At Kerala, where Vinobaji received more than 300 acres of land costing 1,000 rupees per acre, a friend said it was all spontaneous and without the least effort on the part of the workers. They gave land to Vinoba because they understood his mission from his own lips. It would not be difficult to collect more land hereafter if they carried his message and did some organized effort. But I must not take more time over this. Vinobaji is seriously thinking of giving some concrete shape to his programme and let us wait for his announcement.

Swami Sitaram's Fast

I cannot close this letter without mentioning another equally important event of the week.

At Umrana on the 34th day of Swami Sitaram's fast, Vinobaji became restless about the Swami. "How can we afford to lose such a great worker?" thought Vinobaji. He, therefore, wired to the Prime Minister to acquaint him with the latest developments. Pandit Jawaharlalji immediately acquainted Vinobaji with all the efforts he had been making and also with the difficulties that stood in the way of fulfilling the demand of the Andhras. Telegrams and telephones were exchanged from Chhindwada to New Delhi and Guntur. At 10 p.m. the following message from Vinobaji was delivered to the personal assistant

of Swamiji: "Pray give up fast immediately. As I understand the situation, continuation of fast is impeding the cause which will be best served by breaking it now. I am convinced Jawaharlalji is trying his best."

The fast was accordingly given up; but as no declaration has yet been made by the Government it is causing restlessness among the Andhras. But Swamiji has assured Vinobaji that he would not take any step without consulting him. Vinobaji, however, has convinced him that the President and the Prime Minister were doing their best.

An Attack of Diarrhoea

Another event of anxiety during the week was Vinobaji's health. He had to walk 21 miles and that too through the mountainous tracts of the Satpudas. He did not get the rest which he should have to aid his digestion after his usual three meals per day. He had been experimenting with groundnut milk. All these factors combined to give him an attack of acute diarrhoea. Eight motions a day for three days weakened him so much that at Surlakapa and Harrai, he could not talk to the people on arrival as was his usual practice. He had to rest under the shade of a tree more than once before reaching his destination. It was a heavy strain to walk 15 to 20 miles with such disturbed condition of the bowels. He could not be persuaded to stay on for rest at one place until recovery. He insisted on reaching Sagar to attend the Sarvodaya Conference of Madhya Pradesh workers, scheduled to meet on the 1st and 2nd October. With some difficulty, he consented to break journey at Kerali and postpone the tour by one day. By a change of diet he brought the disease under control, and the journey was resumed in good condition. An important change has been made in the daily time-table. He rises at 3 a.m. now, instead of at 3.30 a.m., and the party starts moving at 4 o'clock in the morning instead of at 5. The greater part of the journey is thus covered in the early hours of the morning, and the heat of the sun is avoided.

D. M.

FIVE CRORE ACRES

Vinoba has crossed the boundary of Madhya Pradesh and entered Uttar Pradesh. He will also pass through a part of Vindhya Pradesh on his way. The response of the people to his appeal for land-gifts is encouraging. The villagers and small landholders understand the significance and implications of his mission, and give generously. The large landholders, townspeople and the intelligentsia are, as usual, a little slow both in intellectually grasping the importance of the appeal and heartily responding to the same.

But sooner or later, and whether enthusiastically or in acquiescence to circumstances, they, too, will understand the call of the time, and will decide to follow the people.

Vinoba has fixed a target of five crore acres for his *yajna* throughout India. It is not too much for the cause of the poor; much more will be ultimately needed. But a voluntary gift of five crore acres by the people would be a handsome token of the non-violent revolution the people of India are capable of bringing about. It will pave the way for the necessary Government effort in this direction, and will show a way to other nations of the world, which think in terms of violent upheavals for solving the problems of the crores of famishing, landless peasants.

U. P. is expected to give at least a crore acres. The rest of India must also respond proportionately. The donors and workers need not wait for Vinoba to go to every province for the purpose. Even if he succeeds in visiting every province, it would be physically impossible for him to visit every tahsil or even district, not to mention the village. So let every worker take this message to every proprietor of land and let every land-holder think over this appeal, and notify to Vinoba the land offering he will bring for this sacrifice to *Daridra-Narayana*, the Lord of the Poor. Let the *Diwali* bring bonuses of land to the people of India.

Wardha, 10-10-'51

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CONTENTS	PAGE
PLANNING FOR INDIA—I .. K. G. Mashruwala	289
SHRI VINOBA'S TELANGANA TOUR—IV .. D. M.	290
THE THIRD WAY .. Kaka Kalelkar	292
APPEAL TO MADHYA PRADESH .. Vinoba	292
SHRI MANILAL GANDHI'S CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE .. K. G. Mashruwala	293
REVIVAL OF LINGUISTIC CONTROVERSIES .. K. G. Mashruwala	293
GO-SEVA IN MADHYA BHARAT .. Radhakrishna Bajaj	294
THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS .. D. M.	294
FIVE CRORE ACRES .. K. G. Mashruwala	296
NOTES:	
'SHRI THAKKAR BAPA COMMEMORATION VOLUME' .. H. M. V.	291
'SEVEN MONTHS WITH MAHATMA GANDHI' .. Jivanji Desai	296

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Printed and Published by Jivanji Dahyabhai Desai, Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad 9.