

# HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

## MAHATMA

(By Rabindranath Tagore)

He stopped at the threshold of the huts of the thousands of dispossessed, dressed like one of their own. He spoke to them in their own language. Here was living truth at last, and not only quotations from books. For this reason the Mahatma, the name given to him by the people of India, is his real name. Who else has felt like him that all Indians are his own flesh and blood? When love came to the door of India, that door was opened wide. At Gandhi's call India blossomed forth to new greatness, just as once before in earlier times, when Buddha proclaimed the truth of fellow-feeling and compassion among all living creatures.

## HIS ALL-EMBRACING LOVE

(By K. G. Mirchandani)

It was early morning in mid-April when Mahatma Gandhi arrived at Hyderabad (Sind) by train after visiting important towns in Upper Sind. The mild rays of the sun peeping over the horizon illumined the clear atmosphere, and a gentle cool breeze was blowing. A number of his admirers had gathered on the station platform to give Gandhiji a hearty welcome. As soon as he got down, the very first words he spoke with evident satisfaction were: "Horses of Shikarpur are fine, they are very well cared for." Some were surprised at this initial remark which sounded odd in the context of his immediate surroundings. Gandhiji had seen so many men and places in the course of his tour and the only thing he could think of referring to first was horses! But he had his own yardstick about the relative importance of things.

On further consideration it was realized that the ambit of his love was as wide as the ocean and embraced men and animals, birds and insects, trees and flowers in its comprehensive sweep. Just as a stray horse which way the wind blows, the above casual remark of Gandhiji indicated how his unconventional mind was working. Hackney carriage horses are generally underfed and overworked, and so it must have gladdened his heart to see such horses in a flourishing condition at Shikarpur, for their drivers took pride in them and faced them on public roads.

It is taken for granted that man is the noblest creature on earth. It is, however, doubtful if Gandhiji considered a man to be *ipso facto*

superior to dumb creatures. He knew the seamy side of life as a lawyer, as a *satyagrahi* jail-bird, and as the confidant of so many persons, and his vast experience in various spheres of life had shown him how men degrade themselves to the level of beasts. It is, therefore, no wonder that Mahatmaji who believed in the oneness of all life, should have thought about the welfare of horses in the same way as he thought about men's. He who wrote "The cow is for me a poem of pity" must have had love for that docile and useful animal and others of its kind in a large measure. To subserve the selfish ends of man Gandhiji would not sacrifice the well-being of other creatures. For his love transcended not only the barriers of caste, colour and creed but also of species.

That unselfish love reigned in the heart of Mahatmaji was again observed at the above mentioned station when he was leaving for Bombay. Many persons had collected on the platform to give him a respectful send-off. When the train was about to start, Gandhiji looked out from the window of a third class compartment by the side of which he was sitting, with his hands joined together in token of farewell, his countenance beaming with a benign smile, and his eyes sparkling with the light of love in his heart. Under the magnetic influence of his gesture several young men, and even a few not so young, ran alongside the train for some distance, their gaze fixed on the smiling Mahatma. It was only when the engine gathered momentum that they reluctantly fell back. The scene reminded the present writer of the legendary Pied Piper of Hamelin who lured the children of the town into a mountain cave!

Unquestionably, Mahatma Gandhi was a fisher of men who cast his net far and wide, and inspired an unarmed people to perform deeds of unparalleled valour. Gandhiji who sublimated cheeseparing into an art and a virtue by the force of his character, could also transmute base metal into pure gold by the alchemy of his love. From his early youth he worshipped at the shrine of Truth and made *ahimsa* the pole-star to guide his frail barque in the storm-tossed ocean of life. Fearlessness and frankness being his dominant traits, Mahatmaji's dedicated life was fittingly crowned with martyrdom. The unique example he set, both by word and deed which were in perfect accord, is an undying heritage for mankind.

**BHAVE'S SIGNIFICANT METHOD**

In the course of his leader, "Is the Peaceful Revolution Possible in India?" *Freedom* (15/12/51), an Anarchist Weekly of Great Britain, writes:

It is easy to think of industrial capitalism as providing the extreme examples of social degradation and disintegration. But in no other country can the extremes of wealth and mass destitution be so plain as in India. Wealth is there of the most lavish and fantastic kind: while the squalor and unremitting, hopeless condition of the peasants as they wage an unending struggle against lack of equipment, lack of capital, harsh natural obstacles and debt, is something that Europeans find hard to imagine even dimly. Both the wealth and the squalor derive from the unequal ownership of land, and it is this basic inequality which anarchists stress as the fundamental economic and social issue of the revolution in India. The removal of this inequality is the pre-condition of a just social organization.

The appearance of Acharya Vinoba Bhave\* and his requests to landowners that they should give him some of their lands for redistribution to landless peasants is therefore a remarkable phenomenon.

Living in the most simple way, and sleeping in the mud huts of the poor he set out on a tour on foot of South India, beginning in Telangana. On this tour, the landowners gave him 15,000 acres. Since the beginning of September, when he set out on a 795-mile walk to Delhi, he has been given a further 20,000 acres. At New Delhi he was visited by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the President of India, who offered as much of his lands in Bihar as Bhave liked to take. Such a gesture can hardly be lost on landowners generally throughout India.

To Western ideas, influenced by Marx, and by the actuality of capitalist property and the class struggle, it is fantastic to see a degree of redistribution of property carried out simply by asking for it. It may be said that Bhave has achieved so far—only 35,000 acres of the 50,000,000; he aims at an area representing one-sixth of the total cultivable area of India. That such an amount is only a sop to stave off the day when the peasants will seize the land for themselves. Even so, 35,000 acres at the very outset of his attempt is an extraordinary achievement.

Still more significant is the method. For he is really appealing to the sense of social justice of landowners and by conceding some land for redistribution they are admitting

the injustice of inequality. Such admissions, such concessions are the beginnings of a loss of belief on the part of the ruling class in the basic justice and rightness of their positions of social privilege. Such a loss of confidence is something which has always preceded the major revolutions of history.

Thus the charge of reformism may well be substantiated, and Bhave himself may have no very radical or revolutionary aim; but in his method there is something revolutionary, for it touches the ethical matters that lie at the heart of social justice.

No doubt there is no country except India where such an appeal could have been made without ridicule. Yet when all the ifs and buts have been said, we shall do well to watch this strange experiment which touches the centre of India's revolutionary problem—the land.

**SHRI VINOBA'S NORTHERN TOUR****XII***Jajau*

From Dholpur, we re-entered U. P., Jajau, in Agra District being our first halting place. "Jajau is, perhaps, a corruption of Yadav, but I hope," said Vinoba, "it is free from the faults of the Yadavas".

Every country, Vinoba said in his speech, had a speciality, in the same way every person had an individual characteristic. The speciality of India lay in its sense of restraint. By way of illustration, Vinoba referred to the struggle for freedom as carried in India during recent years. Even illiterate women had taken part in that struggle. It became possible for them to do so because they could rely upon the sense of restraint for which the people of India were always reputed to show even in war. This sense of restraint was innate in our people and not one that was induced by Gandhiji. If that virtue was not developed further there was the chance of the freedom of India becoming a freedom to do injury. Vinoba illustrated it further by referring to the sense of security enjoyed by the Muslims in India. They—the Muslims attributed it, no doubt, to the impartial policy of Pandit Nehru. It was true, Vinoba said, that there was a chance of evil things happening if the leader was not good. But the sense of security was not due merely to Pandit Nehru's impartial policy, but to the special culture of India. It was the social virtue of India that was responsible for removing quickly the feelings of animosity and hatred which were generated for a brief period. That Gandhiji had conditions favourable to his mission was also due to the culture of our people. The problem which India would have to face hereafter would also have to be solved by developing further the virtue of restraint.

The virtue which stood next in necessity after restraint was that of large-heartedness. *Gita* had enjoined upon man the triple duty of making sacrifice, giving charity, and performing penance. But we take them to be duties to be performed occasionally. Now-days the injunctions of Hinduism and Islam are not looked upon as duties of everyday life, but as good acts to be done occasionally. Only the taking of food is regarded as a thing, which must be done every day; as to giving food to another, it has to await a suitable occasion. We do not realize that compassion and pity have their fields in everyday life. They must be felt every day in the same way as one feels the appetite for bread and water.

Concluding Vinoba said that the meaning of the Land-Gift-Sacrifice was in effect that the sentiment of sacrifice,

\* Bhave does not rhyme with save as suggested by an American Journal, but s is pronounced as in father and ve as in weary.

charity and penance must develop further in our country so that our country need not have the necessity of going the way of Russia and China. "I wish donors should feel the same joy as a mother feels as she feeds her child on the breast."

One Dr. Mangal Singh and his companion had accompanied us from Dholpur to Jajav. One of them held a flag and a shovel in his hands. On enquiring into the reason for this, we learnt that these friends had built a road of 26 miles in the Dholpur area with the free labour and co-operation of the people. The people felt much inconvenience for want of a good road in that part. Forty thousand people working for six months co-operated in building the road. It now remained for the Government to have it covered with grit and rolled. Unless this was done before the next monsoon, the whole labour would become a huge waste. In order to draw the attention of the authorities, this worker with the flag and the shovel was offering a sort of Satyagraha by his silent demonstration. Vinoba congratulated the people of Dholpur for this free co-operative labour. He described how he and his colleagues had dug a well in the same manner in their Ashram at Pauran, and admitted that their road-construction was a much greater work than his well-construction.

#### Rohta and Agra

From Jajav to Rohta, and from Rohta to Agra. At Rohta workers gave us an account of their work. Almost all the principal workers of Agra had engaged themselves in this work. In the course of their talk they referred to a great Zamindar of Agra, whom they felt diffident to approach. Vinoba asked me to interview him, and expressed his willingness to pay him a visit. I gave the message. He himself came to see Vinoba, and had a frank talk with him for more than an hour. All his misunderstandings due to insufficient information were removed. When he was satisfied that Vinoba belonged to no political party but was a pure humanitarian worker for the *daridranayana*, he offered to give him his full co-operation.

At Agra, the evening prayer was held on the bank of the Jamna. Two years ago, Vinoba had stopped at Agra on his way to Jaipur. It was the Gita Jayanti day. Vinoba alluded to the event, and said that the Land-Gift-Sacrifice was an act in conformity with the teachings of Gita. He explained at length how the entire land problem could be solved by just a small act in conformity with the principle of *atmanayama* (treat another as your self).

The Shivramanis are a well-known family of Agra. They are three brothers. They counselled among themselves. Vinoba had appealed to them to treat them as their fourth brother. They had 1,900 acres of land; they made four shares and gifted 500 acres to Vinoba, holding *daridranayana* as the eldest member of the family and so entitled to a larger share.

#### Renuka

From Agra to Renuka. It was reputed to be the place of Parashuram (one of the incarnations of God, Renuka, which means the dust, being also the name of Parashuram's mother). It was also associated with the memory of the poet Surdas. Necessarily, these associations raised a wave of emotions. The day on which we reached (13th Oct) was the first of Karik Sud, and known as Bali's First. It was the New Year day of Gujarat, and is held to be the day on which Vaman asked three paces of land from Bali, and Bali gave him his all—even be-tok himself to Patala (the subterranean world). The result of his complete self-renderer was that Vaman himself became his eternal door-keeper. After alluding to his story, Vinoba referred to Krishna, with whose sacred memory also this part of the land is associated. It had been hallowed by the foot-steps of Krishna who was the

greatest democrat ever known. He made no distinction between the rich and the poor, between man and woman, all mundane distinctions, and established as was proper, the kingdom of love. God and Wealth could not stay together. Bali chose God in preference to Wealth. Vinoba asked the people to be charitable like Bali. He desired that no Indian who wanted to earn his living by tilling land should not have a plot for the purpose.

#### Mathura

From Renuka we proceeded to Mathura. Vinoba's pace of walking increased as we approached the city. His mind was full with devotional sentiments which rose in intensity as we drew near the holy city. He was reminded of Surdas, who must have wandered in these parts in quest of Krishna.

The proceedings of the Sarvodaya Conference and Vinoba's speeches have been already reported in the *Harilan* and need not be described here. The workers from the various districts of U. P. invited Vinoba to visit their districts, and promised to get land-gifts from their respective areas. Thus from Chitrakut, Shri Arjunji promised to get 11,000 acres from 1,100 villages of his district, at the average rate of 10 acres per village. Shri Radheshyam Joshi gifted compensation of 700 acres, which valued at more than Rs 25,000. A friend from Banaras district gifted away all his lands to Vinoba. Even Baba Eshwariyas, who owns no property, but being a member of the Legislative Assembly gets some allowances, donated 11 acres. There was also a Village Industries Exhibition at Mathura. It was organized by Shri Goshal on behalf of the U. P. Government. He evinced a deep understanding of the village industries problem.

#### Hathras and Sassi

We were at Mathura on the 1st and 2nd November, 1951. We left Mathura on the 3rd and visited Sonal, Hathras and Sassi on our way to Aligarh (Gh). At Hathras we collected 99 acres and the compensation of 91 acres.

At Hathras Vinoba said that he wanted to unite together all mankind. It was a great ambition. But ambition should always be as great as the soul itself. If there was true love in the heart, it was possible to convert the heart of another. The key was love for every being.

On our way to Sassi, we visited a girls' school. A girl questioned the propriety of *Ramadhana*. Vinoba explained that Rama was a synonym for God, and did not refer to any of the three historical persons known by that name—alluding to Rama, Balaram and Parashuram.

The girl was not satisfied. If Rama did not refer to the historical Rama, the word *Sitarama* did. Vinoba said that Sita meant a devotee of Rama in this context. It was usual and proper to refer to God and the devotee together. The last verse of Gita said that where there were God (Krishna) and the devotee (Arjuna) there would also be Prosperity, Victory and Happiness. The remembrance of the devotee with God pleased God.

(Translated from Hindi)

D. M.

#### Corrections

I regret several errors have crept in the last issue of *Harilan*. Some of them are obvious and no useful purpose will be served in giving a list. But I must correct one, which is misleading. On p. 397, column 1, line 10 please read 'Communists' in lieu of 'communists'.

Bombay, 20-1-52

K. G. M.

## HARIJAN

Jan. 26

1952

### THE OFFERING OF YARN-HANKS IN SARVODAYA MELAS

I have suggested the programme of the offering of one hank (640 rounds) of self-spun yarn per person in Sarvodaya *melas* to be held at various places in the country on the 12th February. This annual offering of a hank in memory of Bapu is in token of one's love for him. Moreover, it also is an initiation in productive labour. I believe that everyone who desires Sarvodaya will like to participate in this offering. We have only to take this message to the people. Every person making this offering will be presumed to be a believer in the principles of Sarvodaya, that is, is a voter of Sarvodaya. His name and address will be registered in the Sarvodaya office. Thus I am putting a well-planned and solid programme before the country. There are about 18 crores of adult voters in our country, but our number of voters will be greater, for even children can be our voters. He may not be a *khadi*-wearer. If he is a drunkard, it will be our duty to make him give it up. Just as members of a family residing in different villages assemble on certain occasions, similarly all our family members offering hanks will assemble on the occasion of Sarvodaya *melas*. Our workers will visit their villages and will meet them from time to time. Particularly, they will not miss to see a person who is the only offerer from his village. He should be regarded as Vibhishan among them.

This is a very comprehensive programme that I am putting before the people, and, I trust, that it will create enough constructive and collective strength.

Pillihit, 7-1-52

(Translated from Hindi)

VINOBA

### TWO GREAT DAYS

The closing week of January is marked by two great days—the day of Independence (26th) and the day of Gandhiji's Martyrdom (30th).

Twenty-two years ago, Gandhiji took a pledge not to rest until India had achieved *Purna Swaraj* (loosely 'Complete Independence'). Hundreds of Congressmen joined him in taking that pledge. The pledge was repeated year after year and Congressmen took it in public with solemn ceremony and in the presence of thousands of witnesses.

The Salt Satyagraha was decided upon as the first item in the movement for Independence. Gandhiji decided to leave the Sabarmati Ashram never to take abode in it until the pledge was fulfilled. He never returned to it—refused to do so even after the 15th August, 1947—because though it brought political independence, it was not that *Purna Swaraj* which he and the Con-

gress had vowed to achieve. *Purna Swaraj* did not contemplate a divided India; an India in which Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and others ran against one another's throats and emulated in driving out one another out of their ancestral homes. Even before the commencement of the "Fight to the Finish" (1930), Gandhiji had more than once staked his life for preventing fratricide. But the foundation of *Swaraj*, which India achieved in 1947, was laid on principles contrary to the above. It rested on a triple partition and for the time being became a signal for fratricidal war and displacement of people on an unprecedentedly large scale. It brought misery to lakhs of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs and created two States which commenced a war within a few weeks of their birth. And though each has affirmed peaceful intentions they have been always practically hostile and suspicious of each other all along.

The pledge of Independence had said, "We recognize that the most effective way of gaining our freedom is not through violence." And yet the fruit which we began to reap immediately before and after Independence was violence of the most reprehensible kind. Surely, Gandhiji thought, that the seed which he had believed to be of the non-violent variety was not so, and he must commence his penances again. Though outwardly everyone paid him respectful homage and acclaimed him as the Father of the Nation, he felt himself humbled and forlorn.

But his generals and army might forsake him, he could not forget the pledge with which he had left the Sabarmati Ashram and be reconciled to a *Swaraj*, which was anything but *purna* and non-violent. His injunction to the people in the last phase of the struggle against the British had been DO OR DIE. How could he forget that himself? And so, though he was surrounded on all sides by forces of anger, hatred and violence, and was misunderstood and forsaken even by some of his closest and life-long associates and colleagues, he kept his eye upon his pledge and faith in God and recommenced his endeavours, as if *de novo*, for the balance of *Purna Swaraj*. He had to begin at the very root of the trouble—Communalism. Old as he was in years and was getting physically weaker day by day on account of repeated fasts undertaken to expel the communal poison, he was so determined that the forces of communal hatred felt that they would not gain their end as long as he was alive. They did not want him to spread his gospel of Unity and Love, but were willing to give him the satisfaction of having died for it. We know the result.

The pledge of *Purna Swaraj* has not yet been fulfilled. For instance the original pledge of 1930 had said:

"Village industries, such as hand-spinning, have been destroyed, leaving the peasantry idle for at least four months in the year, and dulling their intellect for want

of handicrafts, and nothing has been substituted, as in other countries, for the crafts thus destroyed . . . .

"Culturally, the system of education has torn us from our moorings and our training has made us hug the very chains that bind us."

These two are specifically mentioned in the Pledge. Other resolutions and records mention several detailed items as desiderata of *Purna Swaraj*. Since 1930 while some of the old items have changed their values, others which had escaped prominent attention then have become supremely important now. For instance, the land and the food problems. In the form of the abolition of Zamindari on the one hand, and of preventing too much fragmentation of holdings on the other, the land problem had been studied to a certain degree. The principle, "Land must belong to the actual cultivator" was also roughly recognized. But its converse, namely, "Every willing cultivator must get a piece of land to cultivate," was not discovered. Acting on the former principle and with no reverence for the purity of means, the Communists spread a reign of terror in Telangana. Vinoba's faith in non-violence and love led him to the discovery of the converse principle and suggested to him the non-violent way to the solution of the problem. What is an economic holding? Should land be cultivated collectively or co-operatively? How far might the system of landlord and tenant be allowed to exist? What should be the respective shares of the landlord and tenants? Can a landlord claim his share when the crop has failed? These and other allied questions are too complicated to be answered easily. But the principle, "Everyone who wants to cultivate personally should have a piece of land proportionately due to him," is capable of immediate implementation by the good sense of land-owners themselves, as also by legislative and executive efforts. It is a principle to which none may take an objection. The land-owners might act upon it from whatever motive they like. It should be out of recognition of moral justice; but, if that is not clear to all, let them do it out of philanthropy; out of love for the poor; or out of just shrewd long-sighted self-interest.

Constructive workers and Congressmen should regard it, as Vinoba does, as a further step in the fulfilment of the Pledge of *Purna Swaraj*. It will also contribute to the solution of the food problem as no other single factor can. It provides the key for the solution of a great world problem. Vinoba's is an appeal to the noble and higher instincts of man. It is a work above all party politics. It is thus worthy of being a truly national principle—a principle on which the whole nation is one. To constructive workers, it is a work which will ultimately strengthen every item of the constructive programme. In-

deed, as Vinoba says, if this work is neglected at this juncture, the entire programme of constructive workers might fall to pieces.

In ancient India, kings used to perform the *Rajasuya Yajna* on the occasion and anniversaries of their accession to the throne. On that occasion, the king gifted away lands to Brahmans. In a democracy the whole nation sits on the throne. The nation must perform its *Prajasuya Yajna*—the sacrifice in commemoration of the accession of the people to the throne. Let the day of Independence and the day of Gandhiji's Martyrdom be accompanied with gifts of land to all those who have none, and want it for personal cultivation.

Bombay, 15-1-'52

K. G. MASHRUWALA

#### NOTES

##### Thou Didst Resist

(From *Philippi*)

They say that Thou wast silent as a lamb,  
Bleeding to death, resistless while they sneered;  
While they did smite Thee with their brutal fists,  
And mocked and scorned Thee unto Thy last  
— sigh.

They lie! . . . for Thou wert not a helpless lamb,  
Thou didst resist, Thou great and silent Strength.  
I saw, Thou didst not stir one finger-joint;  
Thou spoked not a word. And Thou didst bleed,  
While from Thine eyes only compassion shone. . .  
I saw how they turned dumb; with restless looks  
Hither and thither turned them, gaunt of face,  
And when they heard Thee pray for them, they  
feared.

At Thy last sigh, "Father, forgive Thou them,"  
The crowd in terror smote its breast and fled—  
Thou, Christ, didst Thou resist at Golgotha.

H. F. in the *Westminster Gazette*.  
(From the *Indian Opinion*, June 5th 1909)

##### Personal—Vinobaji

Readers of *Harijan* may be unaware of the accident which injured Vinobaji's knees about a month ago. He and two of his companions were struck by a cyclist coming from behind one cold morning during their tour in the Dehradun district. All including the cyclist himself sustained injuries. Vinobaji received more injuries than the rest, his knees and back having badly struck against the ground. Vinoba did not feel much immediately and quickly rose up and continued his journey. On reaching the destination the injuries were found to be more severe than imagined. He was treated. For a few days he continued his journey partly on foot and partly on a chair borne by friends. But the pain did not abate, and for a few days past he was obliged to proceed with his programme in a bullock-cart. He is recovering now, and is able to walk a few miles. His companions have recovered.

Bombay, 16-1-'52

K. G. M.

## SHRITAPRAJNA RECITATION

[Most readers are aware that the last nineteen verses of the 2nd Chapter of the *Gita* form part of the daily evening prayer of most of the Gandhian Ashrams and institutions. They are also recited in Conferences etc. of Constructive Workers. In some of the provinces, elsewhere in their regional translations, elsewhere in Sanskrit. A good Hindi translation of these verses composed in the same metre as the original was not available till now. I believe there are two available now — one by Shri Haribhau Upadhyaya of Hatundi (Ajmer), and the other by the Hindi Poet Shri Siyaram Saran Gupta. The first edition of the latter having been exhausted, a revised edition has just been printed, with an introduction by Shri Vinoba, who has generally approved the translation.

It was suggested that the translation of the *Shritaprajna* section might be adopted for recitation in place of the Sanskrit *shloka*, which very few of the thousands of people who recite them understand. This led to a closer scrutiny of this particular section by Vinobaji and others along with the poet, and in the end an amended text was approved for being made current immediately. A finer scrutiny would suggest some more improvements yet, but that has been held over for the present. Shri Vinoba has already introduced this text in his tour through Uttar Pradesh. The text is published below for general information. Copies might be had from Shri Siyaram Saran Gupta, Chirgaon (Jhansi). — K. G. M.]

## स्वितप्रजके लक्षण

[नीता-संसार मे]

अर्जुनके कहा —

स्वितप्रज सम्पत्तिस् बहुते कृष्ण हे किये,  
स्वितभी बोकुडा केने, बैठता खेर बोकुडा ?

भी प्रसन्नमने कहा —

मनोरम सभी काम तब दे जब पावे जो,  
आरामे आर हो सुष्ट, सो स्वितप्रज हे लकी ।  
दुखमें जो अर्द्धिज सुखमें मिलि निःसुष्ट,  
भीत-राग-मन-कोप, मूर्ति हे विषयकी बही ।  
जो सुनासुमकी पाके न तो सुष्ट न रुष्ट हे,  
सबेज अर्जुनसही, प्रजा हे उरकी-स्विरा ।  
कृमि ज्यों निज अंगीको जिन्रियोंको समेटे ले —  
तंबाव: विषयोति जो, प्रजा हे उरकी-स्विरा ।  
भोग जो सुष्ट जयते हे निराशारी मनुष्यके,  
रत किन्तु नहीं आना, जाता हे आस-सामने ।  
यन्त्रुज सुपीकी भी जिन्रियोंके प्रपन्न जो,  
मनको हट सेती हे अरुने बलने रहान ।  
जिन्रुं संसलने रोके महीमें रग, सुष्ट हो,  
जिन्रियों विनने पीती प्रजा हे अरुकी-स्विरा ।  
भोग विनन होनेसे होता अरुज सम हे,  
सामने काम होगा हे, कामने कोष भाव ।  
केसने मोह होता हे, मोहने स्मृतिविनय,  
अरुने बुद्धिक नाव, बुद्धिभाव विनाव हे ।  
राज-नेत्र-नीरवाणी करे जिन्रिय-कार्ये जो,  
स्वाधोपन मुनिसे पावे, पाता आत्म-प्रसाद सो ।

प्रसाद-पान होनेसे घटते सब दुःख हे,  
होती प्रसन्नचेताकी बुद्धि सुखिबर शीघ्र ही ।  
नही बुद्धि अरुणोके, भावना अरुनमें कहा,  
अभावने कहा लाल, केने सूख अरुनलकी ।  
मन जो दोड़ता पीछे जिन्रियोंके विहारमें —  
सौख्यता जनकी प्रजा, बलमें नाव वायु ज्यो ।  
अरुनेब महाबाहो, जिन्रियोंको समेटे ले —  
सबैना विषयोति जो, प्रजा हे अरुकी-स्विरा ।  
निजा जो सबे भूयोंकी सयमी जातने बहू,  
जातने जिनमें अरु, यह तत्पन्नकी निजा ।

सरी-नदोसे मरता हुआ भी  
सबुद हे ज्यों स्विर सुखिज,  
सो काम सारे जिनमें समायें,  
पाता बही जालि, न काम-नामी ।  
सबै-काम-परिस्वाणी विषरने भर निःसुष्ट,  
अहता-ममता-दुख, पाता परम जालि सो ।  
बाह्यीरियति यही पावे, जिनमें पाके न मोह हे,  
किंकी अरुनमें जो हे बह्मनिबोध-वनिनी ।

## "THE TASK OF PEACE-MAKING"

This is the title of the authorized report of the World Pacifist Meeting held in Santiniketan and Sevagram (Wardha) in December 1949. The contents of the book, which has a Foreword by President Rajendra Prasad and an introduction by Mr Horace Alexander include : Messages from some well-known people including Professor Albert Einstein; a speech on 'Facing Realities', by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and also speeches by Acharya Vinoba Bhave, Dr. Kailash Nath Katju, Dr. Amiya Chakravarty and others. One chapter is devoted to the detailed reports of deliberations in Santiniketan and Sevagram. Another contains the reports of Commissions appointed by the World Pacifist Meeting, which accepted them as resolutions, on various problems that confront mankind today. They include World Citizenship, World Government, Satyagraha Units, the Relations of Pacifists with Communists, India and Pakistan, Palestine, South Africa, Racism and Colonialism, Refugees and Displaced Persons, Basic Education, Basic Education and Social Order, Food and Population, the Basic Principles of Peace-Makers, Education for Peace; and the Transcendence of Egotism.

The World Pacifist Meeting was attended by 122 people, men and women, from 30 different countries of the world including India. It was a truly 'United Nations' gathering, to quote a delegate. They represented groups, who honestly strive to destroy the seeds of war and to sow seeds of goodwill and harmony. It is an effort to find an answer to the riddle of our age. The proceedings of the Meeting, contained in this book, are presented to the world in the hope that they will stimulate the thought and action of all concerned for world peace.

The price of the book is Rs 5/- per copy, plus postage. The Secretary says that the price has

been purposely kept low, in order to make it available to ordinary men and women of the world.

Copies can be obtained from your book seller or Visva Bharati Publishing Department, 6/3, Dwarkanath Tagore Lane, Calcutta 7, India.

#### THE SPIRITUAL BASIS OF BHOODAN YAJNA \*

My dear brothers and sisters,

The very entrance into your ancient city reminds me of various past associations. For those like you who are permanent residents of the city, these associations might be just memories. But when a stranger like me visits this place, his heart throbs differently and his mind begins to move in a celestial atmosphere.

It was in the forest of this place where the child Dhruva had practised his *tapas* (austerities). There are also several later events which are associated with this place. Of all these, those connected with Lord Krishna have become a thing of eternal glory for Indians. Wherever they might live, they always remember Bhagwan Shrikrishna. Being overpowered with this sentiment it has become rather difficult for me to speak to you even a few words. When the heart is full of emotions the tongue becomes mute.

#### The Universal Teaching of Gita

Lord Krishna gave to the culture of Bharata a peculiar turn expounded in *Gita*. But the tragedy is that the ideal placed by *Gita* and practised by Bhagwan Krishna himself is not to be seen practised in actual life in Indian society. Our fall had been so great that this country became subject to constant foreign invaders and actually passed into complete subjugation for nearly 250 years. During this period our misery reached its zenith. Partly on account of the world situation and partly on account of our Satyagraha Movements we became a free nation. It is now four years since we became a free nation. But even after independence the evils that had crept in to us before, have not disappeared, but have rather become intense. If we neglect them and do not try to purge them out, we shall not reap the benefits of Swaraj, and might even reap disasters.

The very start of the teachings of *Gita* is based on the principle that whatever might be the position in which a man is placed by birth, if he performs his duty with love, devotion, and singleness of purpose, he becomes worthy of *moksha*. But look to the history of India. We see that our society has continually broken into graded groups. Some people have regarded themselves as high and relieved themselves of physical labour. Those who had to perform it have been treated as low. Harijans who worked as cobblers were treated lower than *Mizans* whose occupation was agriculture, while scavengers, the most serving class, were treated as the lowest. In this way several high and low grades came into being. Those who spared themselves from physical labour were given higher status in the society. A country which regards its working class as low and less respectable heads towards destruction. This very thing occurred in the history of the Roman Empire and has been repeated in India. Foreign traders came to India and our own trade began to decline. The common man could not cherish any particular love for our trading community, for the latter had never tried to mingle with the masses. Consequently the foreign traders gave a death-blow to our trade, and the country passed under foreign domination.

#### Invaluable Services

Had the common man any love for the trading class, he would have sacrificed his all to save the country from ruin. But the society was divided into high and low grades from the type of work they did. The dignity of labour disappeared. The same condition exists even now. By

\* Vinoba's speech at the U. P. Sarvodaya Conference, Mathura, on 1st Nov. 1951.

Gandhi's teaching, some people have understood the value of work and a few do some body labour too. But people as a whole still regard the performer of physical labour as lower in social status. This work is valued low even in economic terms. In ancient India no Brahman or priest claimed a higher status than the *Mizans*. He had to live a life of poverty. But the present-day man of letters puts a high price on his learning. This feeling is very harmful. As long as economic life and social life are not mutually harmonized, the society will not emerge strong. We shall have to change the existing order of paying as high as possible to the high-born and paying as low as possible to the physical labourer, and in its place, to establish *Samsa-Yoga*. Indeed, no money appraisal should be made of the intellectual and spiritual services of any person. Can one appraise the invaluable services of a man who has saved the life of a drowning person? To value his service in economic terms is absurd. Similarly, neither the services rendered by the mother to the baby nor of the Rashtrapati who gives his deep thought for the good of the country can be evaluated in money. The three types of services described above might be different in their character but none of them can be measured in terms of money. There can be no two opinions on this.

A plainan fruit and a stone, belong to different categories of material objects, and the latter cannot be compared with the former, even though the latter is of gold and silver. Similarly the services of a scavenger, a mother, a professor, and numerous others of that type can not be determined in terms of money. Therefore the rule should be: A man who wholeheartedly serves the society should be held entitled to his living wage. Likewise, the President of the country, who serves his country with equal zeal, although intellectually, should be given the wage sufficient for his living. The basis of payment to the President must be the same as that of the *Mizan* and the scavenger. I have served the society in various capacities, as professor, judge, peasant, writer, editor etc, but I never experienced the feeling that one type of work was of a higher type than that of another. I derived the same mental satisfaction in every one of them. It is however true that I did not get the same experience of muscular exertion from every work. It differed in every different type of work. But that does not make any difference in the degree of mental satisfaction. When anybody desires to give me more than my needs I get perplexed. I cannot accept it. Why should I take more curds than what I need? And I am at a loss to know why I should accept it, simply because somebody offers to do so. The right principle is: Everyone must have his bread for the day and not also for the morrow. And the economic, social and spiritual value of every work should be equal. This alone can *Samsa-Yoga* be established. *Gita* has very distinctly proclaimed that the law applicable to oneself should be equally applied to others.

After the attainment of Swaraj, we must aim at the establishment of this *Samsa-Yoga*. We have also called it 'Sarvodaya'. You may call it by any name. I am wandering from place to place for the establishment of this *Samsa-Yoga* or Sarvodaya.

#### The Reason for Bhoodan-Mission

You all know that these days I have been asking land-gifts. I have plunged myself into this strenuous task with the purpose of eliminating the various distinctions of high and low from the society and to facilitate everybody to take to physical labour. It is highly inconsistent that those who possess land should not till it themselves, and those who cultivate it should possess no land to do so. Those who cannot plough get it ploughed by others, while those who can do so have to do so as labourers. Since they have no right on the yield produced by them, they work half-heartedly. Moreover, they are paid in coin, and they do not get even sufficient food. Why should this be tolerated? Is it unjust to stop this false system? And are we doing dis-service to the land-holder, if as a friend, with full love for him, I request him to donate fifty acres from his one

hundred? Is this not an indication of my genuine love for him? And if he insists on his old way of living, I shall reason with him saying that it is good-will and friendliness towards a too fatty friend to advise him to reduce his weight, just as it is one's duty to try to put on some flesh on another, who is too lean and emaciated. A corpulent person will have to make some changes in his mode of living in order to reduce his extra weight. If by so doing he changes from a leisurely pacing elephant into a swift horse he should willingly adopt this change.

#### The Panchayat Principle

I request you to consider what could be God's plan. Can His plan permit only some to possess land and nothing to others? I shall not say that all those who possess land have acquired it by unfair means. They might have acquired it industriously. But that does not mean that they have a right to retain its possession. The land that you have acquired from others should be returned to them, even though you are its owner today. I even do not say that everyone should get an equal share in the total cultivable land. I do not want arithmetical equality, but I do want equity, or such equality as, for instance, the five fingers of the hand have. These five fingers are not equal in dimensions, but they all work in full cooperation and together perform innumerable tasks. Again, their equality is not so disproportionate as it would be if, say, the smallest finger were an inch in length, while the largest one was a foot. The moral is that even if there cannot be absolute equality, there should also not be disproportionate inequality, but there should be equity, even through their inequality. The five fingers possess different powers. Similarly each man possesses a different capacity. All these inherent capacities of each person should be developed. This is called the *Panchopet Dharma*.

The principle of a Panchayat (Council of Five) was: 'God speaks through the five', i. e. a unanimous decision of the Panchayat was respected as the verdict of God. If three or four out of five gave one judgment and the others gave a different one it could not be taken as the verdict of God. If it were not so, it would give rise to majority and minority distinctions. Therefore the only way to achieve unity is to accept the principle of 'God speaks through the five', i. e. to achieve the ideal of unanimous decision.

#### Decentralization in the Scheme of God

If we accept the proposition that every man should have the same social and economic status, all these distinctions would immediately vanish. If you all will help me in this Land-Gift-Mission, it will take the shape of a big movement, which will provide solution for the various baffling problems of our country. We won independence with the power of *ahimsa*. Other countries had to adopt violent techniques for it. But if we do not take the next step to achieve social and economic freedom, verily our independence is in danger. To achieve this, we shall have to follow the decentralised technique of God. Through co-operative institutions we will have to control economic activities. Had there been no decentralization in God's planning, He might have been obliged to travel from Bombay to Calcutta, Calcutta to Delhi and so on. But He gave two eyes, two hands, and two ears to everybody to cooperate with one another. Had He given four eyes and no ears to one; and four ears and no eyes to another; the former would have had to take the help of the latter to hear; and the latter, of the former to see. If this had been so, the Almighty would not have enjoyed so care-free a sleep in the *kashiraanur* as He is said to be taking today. We must understand the principle and beauty underlying this pattern of co-operation.

Politicians talk of 'One World'. But for God, one world compasses the whole universe with all its stars and stellar systems. If He had entrusted the monopoly of distributing intellect to only one being, one would simply

shudder to think of the volume of corruption and maladjustment that might have taken place in His Supply and Distribution Departments. The cure of all these ills lies only in the growth of *gramodayog* (village industries). Its first step is the distribution of land to the landless; and the second to establish village industries in every village.

My plea, that every son of the soil has a right on Mother Earth, is not my own. Vedas had proclaimed it. No brother can prevent his another brother from serving his mother. And I shall even go to the length of saying that whosoever demands land must have it; and it is the duty of the landlords to give it to him. Is drinking water denied when asked for? And if it is denied, how ashamed he looks! Similarly one should feel ashamed to refuse to give land to one who asks for it.

#### The Role of the Government

I can understand that one should not give food to another without asking him to labour for it. But if one demands the means to do that labour, it is our duty to provide him with them. It is also the duty of the Government to allot land to the needy at the rate of five acres per family.

But the Government is unable to do so at present. What is Government after all? The Government of a country can function only with the consent of its people. If people decide once for all that all people have a right to land and it cannot be the property of a few, the key to open the locks of the Government is in their own hands. I wish to unlock it by a key and not break it by a hammer. And so if you all will help me in this mission we can achieve success and can establish *Sampo-Yoga*. India will then become the lighthouse for the world. The world too expects India to show it the light. Therefore, if you set aside all other work and take to this alone, you will be able to present the live picture which Gandhiji had envisaged for free India. It is the duty of all those believing in Gandhian ideology to concentrate all their energies on this mission.

(Translated from Hindi)

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