

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

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TWO ANNAS

TASK BEFORE MINISTERS

(By M. K. Gandhi)

I have before me quite a number of letters fiercely criticizing what they consider to be their luxurious life. They accuse them too of favouritism, even nepotism. I know that much criticism comes from ignorance. Ministers should not be sensitive. They would take in good part even carping criticism. They would be surprised if I were to send them the letters I receive; probably, they receive worse. Be that as it may, the moral I draw from them is that the critics expect much more from these chosen servants of the people than from others in the way of simplicity, courage, honesty and industry. In this matter we cannot imitate the English rulers of the past, except perhaps in industry and discipline. The whole purpose of this note will be served if on the one hand, the Ministers profit by valid criticism and the critics learn to be sober and precise about their facts. Inaccuracy or exaggeration spoils a good case.

On the train to Delhi, 8-9-'47

Harijan, 21-9-'47

SIR STAFFORD

With the passing away of Sir Stafford Cripps India has lost a true friend. By the part he played in the history of the transfer of power, Sir Stafford has won an abiding place in the hearts and affections of Indians.

His outstanding legal talent and his record as a diplomat and a minister of the Crown would have by themselves sufficed to entitle him to a niche in the temple of fame. But even more valuable perhaps was the human side of his personality. It proved no small asset in the difficult task which the British Cabinet Mission had to handle.

He was an ardent social reformer and a rebel in his own party. All this harmonized with Gandhiji's own make-up. He shared with Gandhiji his deeply spiritual outlook and Gandhiji was happy to find in him a fellow crank and faddist as a vegetarian and a nature-curst. In his very first letter to Gandhiji after the arrival of the British Cabinet Delegation in India Sir Stafford invited him to join in the silent prayer service arranged by some common Quaker friends, including Horace Alexander and Agatha Harrison; and when later Sir Stafford fell ill at

Delhi, Gandhiji sent him his "most charming" nature-cure doctor—Dr. Dinshaw Mehta "who completely won my (his) heart". Between him and Gandhiji there grew up a personal bond of affection which, on Sir Stafford's part, found expression in the message he sent on the 78th birthday of Gandhiji;

"You have devoted so many years to the cause of Indian freedom that I hope you may live long (to 125 years at least) to see the results of your labours come to a full fruition, and happiness for your people.

"These are difficult days, but nevertheless we are progressing in the right direction.... A few short steps and the great act will have been completed and then we can all rejoice together in this accomplishment of Indian freedom."

In the course of the negotiations the Cabinet Mission were led to adopt a different line from what Gandhiji had suggested. Gandhiji had suggested to them that they should follow the democratic principle of handing over power to the Congress or the Muslim League—both their creations—whichever commanded their confidence and not attempt an amalgam of incompatibles which might result in a fearful explosion. Sir Stafford on the other hand, with other members of the British Cabinet Delegation thought that they could not safely entrust the power solely to the Muslim League. At the same time, while appreciating the view that in the alternative the best course was to put the task squarely on the shoulders of the Congress and rely upon it to do the right thing by India as a whole, they felt that in the situation by which they found themselves confronted, they were bound to try for the co-operation of both the parties. At another time, when the internal frictions were less, a different course might have been possible. They decided to "temper courage with prudence".

Their conclusion was unassailable if the premises on which it was based was conceded. Underlying the British attitude which Sir Stafford voiced was the assumption, unconscious perhaps, that the British people were morally bound to see that a solution of the Indian problem to their satisfaction was found before they could quit India. Gandhiji regarded it as a relic of British "imperialism" which the Labour Government had inherited and which it could not shake off in spite of its leftist protestations. The logic of events inexorably drove the British

government very near to Gandhiji's position, when they installed the Interim Government with Pandit Nehru as the Vice-President at the Centre. But the reactionary bureaucratic forces, whose hidden hand Gandhiji had more than once vaguely sensed during the Cabinet Mission's negotiations and after, queered the pitch with the result that we all know.

Sir Stafford and Gandhiji had differences of view which both expressed frankly but that only added to their friendship as frank discussion should always do between friends. Sir Stafford's interest in India did not abate after Independence. He continued to watch with deep sympathy and sorrow the travail and growing pains of free India, not unmixed with the feeling, one fancies, that perhaps the past policies of the British Government were in no small measure responsible for the tragedies which marred the final and crowning act of the British Labour Government. In his last letter to Gandhiji dated 1st October 1947 he wrote :

"I have purposely refrained from writing to you in the most anxious and perilous times through which you and your country—or your two countries!—have been passing. But I feel now that I must express to you my admiration for the splendid work that you have done. All your friends in this country—and they are many—admire greatly the determined way in which you have set out to conquer the evil by good. It has been a great inspiration for all of us who have the good of India at heart. We have been made so sad at all that has happened and we are only too conscious of the part that the past history has played in the present discontents.

"I pray that you may be given the strength to persevere and that by your example the evil spirit of communal faction will die down so that India and Pakistan may resume their progress towards what I still hope may one day be the goal of 'unity.'"

Equally touching was his condolence message on Gandhiji's passing away. Another 4 years and he himself was stricken down, with an illness which proved to be his last.

On his return to England in June 1946 after the Cabinet Mission's negotiations, he wrote a touching letter to Gandhiji about the illness of their daughter whom they had put in a special Quaker home. The letter went on to refer to the "wonderful spiritual atmosphere" about the place "which will have, we hope, its healing effect with the other treatment she will be able to have."

In his final illness, as a nature curist that he was, Sir Stafford fell back upon his faith in the healing power of the spirit as his principal weapon. It did not cure him—nor can medical science guarantee cure in every case, but it gave him what no medicine can give—spiritual solace and the strength and courage to fight the fell illness with undisturbed peace and presence of mind. It came very near to Gandhiji's *Ramana-ma*.

New Delhi, 23-4-'52

PYARELAL

AT THE CROSS ROADS

(By Pyarelal)

II—Intensive, Small-Scale Cultivation

I have referred to the problem posed by the growth of our population. Population control, of course, is the ultimate answer. How it should be done is another question into which I will not enter here. But it is clear that our policy in regard to agriculture should be such as to enable us to maintain the maximum population on a limited acreage for the longest period of time without exhausting the soil. I shall presently show that this can best be done by adopting a system of intensive, individual farming on a co-operative basis, supplemented by handicrafts and cottage industries as advocated by Gandhiji, instead of large-scale, collective, mechanized farming and a policy of heavy industrialization.

Cultivation in China

Prince Kropotkin showed by his experiments what results could be obtained by intensive, small-scale cultivation. Here is another witness. This is what F. H. King, that great American authority on agricultural-physics and soil management writes in his *Farmers of Forty Centuries*: "We desired to learn," he says, "how it is possible, after twenty and perhaps thirty or even forty centuries, for their soils (he refers to China, Korea and Japan) to be made to produce sufficiently for the maintenance of such dense populations as are living now in these three countries. We have now had this opportunity and almost every day we were instructed, surprised and amazed at the conditions and practices which confronted us whichever way we turned; instructed in ways and extent to which these nations for centuries have been and are conserving and utilizing their natural resources, surprised at the magnitude of the returns they are getting from their fields."

And this is what he found: In the Shantung province in China a farmer was having 12 in his family. He kept one donkey, one cow, both exclusively labouring animals, and two pigs on 2.5 acres of cultivated land where he grew wheat, millet, sweet potatoes and beans. "Here is a density of population equal to 3,072 people, 256 donkeys, 258 cattle and 512 swine per square mile. In another instance where the holding was one and two-thirds acres the farmer had 10 in his family and was maintaining one donkey and one pig, giving to this farm land a maintenance capacity of 3,840 people, 384 donkeys and 384 pigs to the square mile, or 240 people, 24 donkeys and 24 pigs to one of our forty-acre farms which our farmers regard too small for a single family." The average of seven Chinese holdings which Mr King visited and where he obtained similar data indicated a maintenance capacity for those lands of 1,783 people, 212 cattle or donkeys and 399 swine,—1,995 consumers and 399 rough-foot transformers per square mile of farm land.

And what are the practices or the system of

cultivation that made all this possible? "Both soil and subsoil are carried into the villages and there between the intervals when needed they are, at the expense of great labour, composted with organic refuse and often afterwards dried and pulverized before being carried back and used on the fields as home-made fertilizers. Manure of all kinds, human and animal, is religiously saved and supplied to the fields in a manner which secures an efficiency far above our own practices."

Mr King figured out too the economic value of this human waste. "The International Concession of the city of Shanghai in 1908, sold to a Chinese contractor the privilege of entering residences and public places early in the morning of each day in the year and removing the night-soil, receiving therefor more than \$31,000 gold, for 78,000 tons of waste."

In India the total manure value of the excreta and urine of our human population has been calculated at Rs 230 crores in round figures. Similarly India's enormous cattle wealth could yield 983.5 crores worth of manure. Even if 25% of it could be conserved, the total manure recoverable from the excreta of the human and cattle population of India would be worth 303 crores of rupees. And yet our Ministry of Agriculture proposed to spend 173.8 crores* of rupees over a period of six years (1951-'56) on a scheme of importing artificial fertilizers "which will be run on no profit and no loss basis".

In the Talimi Sangh basic school at Sevagram, one of the first things that the children do is to learn to conserve and turn into compost the human waste and put it back into soil. The resulting improvement in soil fertility and increase in the crop yield is serving as an eye-opener and object-lesson to the villagers all around, apart from the difference it has made in the health and sanitation of the village-folk. They have learnt to erect trench-latrines and to convert human and cattle waste into compost. This is just a small part of the basic system of education which Gandhiji conceived and introduced.

Relation of Agriculture to Cattle-culture and Industries

Closely related to the system of agriculture based on cattle and human economy is the question of handicrafts and cottage industries. Agriculture must have supplementary cottage industries to sustain it. Recent advances in agronomy have brought an increasing realization of the importance of the 'Law of Return' i.e. the necessity of returning all animal and vegetable refuse back into the soil, for building up soil fertility. In a country like ours, where agriculture and health of the soil depend upon the maintenance of proper balance between the cattle population and human population inhabiting it, preservation of cattle wealth becomes a basic

*The figure was subsequently reduced to 23.4 crores after the establishment of Sindri project,

need. And in order that this may be economically feasible, both human and cattle population must be multipurpose. The cattle that turns the soil must also fertilize it, turn the oil-press, lift the sub-soil water and draw the bullock cart, when it is not turning the soil. Similarly the human population must engage in processing their field produce, and practising handicrafts and other cottage occupations when they are not engaged in agriculture. This, if it is intelligently done, would develop their mental faculties too and provide them with the whole education needed for life, so that amid oxen they do not grow up into the likeness of Markheim's 'Brother Ox'. This in its turn means that both our human and cattle population in the villages must be protected from the competition of mechanical power.

Let us take the next necessary of life—clothing, which, inspite of mills, has remained unsolved. Yet it is so easy. The present (1951) per annum availability of cloth in India is 11.5 yards and the utmost the Planning Commission promises is, it will give 15 yards of cloth per annum at the end of its five year plan. Now, 20 seers of ginned cotton (or 70 seers of un-ginned cotton) will yield 480 standard hanks of yarn (of 840 yards each) in 163 man-hours. Thus, each member in a family of say five, by spending 43 to 48 minutes daily, or the whole family giving four hours daily collectively, to spinning and ancillary processes, will produce enough yarn to be woven into 121 sq. yards of cloth. That will give per head 24 yards of cloth per annum. That means, that if the present quota of 15 yards per head is prepared at home, a family of 5 will have to spend two and a half hours daily or each individual 30 minutes daily. Therefore, Gandhiji suggested, that spinning should be regarded as one of the basic activities in which each and every one of us should engage for at least half an hour daily and thereby solve the unsolved cloth problem for good. Nor is this a mere theoretical calculation. The 7th grade children of about 14 years of age in the Sevagram Basic School produced 50 sq. yards in 947 man-hours (from cleaning of cotton to the production of finished cloth) which means 9 man-hours per square yard of finished cloth.

(To be continued)

By Mahatma Gandhi

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SARVODAYA ATTITUDE TOWARDS CENTRALIZED INDUSTRIES

A defective report of the second part of the resolution of the Sarva Seva Sangh made at Sevapuri seems to be responsible for its criticism in the Press. A careful and accurate translation of the original Hindi resolution is published elsewhere in this issue.

The emphasis on decentralization both in Government administration and economic field is not a new feature in the Sarvodaya ideology. For bringing about economic equality and establishing a non-violent society, the Sarvodaya workers have always pinned their faith on decentralization and village industries. Centralized industries are a hindrance to economic equality and peace. Indian leaders following Gandhiji, from whom they have taken this idea, are not the only body of persons who think thus. Many a western political and economic expert has also advocated these ideas.

All nations are crying for peace. India stands for it in an unmistakable manner. But it is not realized that large-scale industries and armament are interdependent, and the enlargement of the one needs the enlargement of the other. India cannot reduce her armament if she goes mad after large-scale industrialism. But those who direct the economic policies of our country are either themselves not convinced of these principles or are under the influence of people whose interests are tied with centralized economy. Hence, we see establishment and organization of huge centralized factories day after day throughout the land. There does not even appear any clear vision, policy or discretion in the institution of large-scale industries. The only way open to the public to protest against and defeat this activity is that of boycotting products of such industries.

But this has become so complicated a matter, that it is difficult to attack it from all sides. Hence the Sarva Seva Sangh has directed the initial attack on only two spheres of centralized industries, namely articles of food and clothing. For practical purposes these would be, in matters of food, things like milled rice, mill-flour, mill-sugar, biscuits, foods, mill-oils, *vanaspati*, drinks like coca-cola, all foreign foods etc.; in matters of clothing, all cloth not made of hand-spun and hand-woven yarn.

It will be seen that no new principle has been advocated in this. It is the principle on which the Charkha Sangh and the Gramodyog Sangh have been based. The movement has been simply sought to be intensified. Indeed the word "cloth" might have been replaced by 'body-

wears' so as to include also the elimination of factory-made leather and rubber articles of personal use.

The restricted application of the ideal seems to have escaped the attention of the critics. If they expect that constructive workers should not think of organizing boycott of factory-made articles of even food and wear, their objection is not acceptable. Indeed, the sponsors of the resolution will not, I think, feel sorry if any person eliminated from his use as many things as possible of centralized industries, including even railways, motor vehicles etc. But this has not been expressly advocated.

The other and the more important part of the resolution relates to the *bhoo dan* movement. This, too, has been criticized in the light of Shri R. K. Patil's views about the difficulties regarding the distribution of the gifted lands. Shri Patil's views are entitled to be considered with attention and respect. I shall try to do so as soon as possible.

Wardha, 22-4-'52

K. G. MASHRUWALA

AGREEMENT OR SLAVERY BOND ?

I

(By Suresh Ramabhai)

Terms of Agreement

The well-known British journal, *New Statesman and Nation* has described 1951 as the year which "may well be remembered in history as the first year of the American Empire." In the opening week of 1952 were laid the foundations of American penetration in India too. On 5th January, 1952, an 'Agreement' was signed at New Delhi by Prime Minister Nehru on behalf of the Government of India and by the U. S. Ambassador in India on behalf of the Government of United States of America. In his recent address to the Parliament, the President of India has given high praise to this Agreement. Quite a large and influential section of the Indian press has hailed it as a landmark in the history of Indo-U. S. relationship. No apology is, therefore, needed for a critical study of this historical document.

At the outset, it must be stated that this new Pact is in pursuance of the 'Point Four Aid' agreement for technical co-operation signed on behalf of the Governments of India and U.S.A. on December 28, 1950, in which an Aid of 1.2 million dollars has been provided for technical training etc. The present Pact goes far ahead both in its objectives and contents.

Objectives

1. Promoting and accelerating the economic development of India;

2. Promoting international understanding and goodwill, maintaining world peace and undertaking such action as the two Governments may mutually agree upon to eliminate causes for international tension.

Thus it can be said without any fear of contradiction that it is a politico-economic Pact and not a puny Technical Aid Agreement.

Terms

How the said objectives are sought to be achieved can be gathered from the terms of the Pact. The Pact consists of 10 Articles which may be summarized as follows:

1. The obligations assumed in this Agreement will be performed on behalf of the Government of India by a duly designated Ministry and on that of the U. S. Government by a Technical Co-operation

Administration. The latter will be represented in India by a Director. He and his staff shall be regarded as a part of the diplomatic mission of the Government of the U.S.A. in India and shall share fully in the privileges and immunities enjoyed by that mission and its personnel.

2. The Administration shall furnish a field party of specialists to collaborate in carrying out the Technical Co-operation Programme. The party shall be under the direction of the Director. All of them shall be selected and appointed by the U.S. Government. All facilities shall be provided to the Technical Co-operation Directorate or the Administration. It will share fully in all the privileges and immunities, including immunity from suit in the courts of India which are enjoyed by the Government of the U.S.A.

3. (a) As regards finance, the U.S. Government will provide, by depositing in U.S.A. until 30th June 1952, a sum of 50 million dollars (about Rs. 24 crores) to be credited to a Special Fund, called the Indo-American Technical Co-operation Fund (Fund A), while the Government of India will constitute a Special Development Fund (Fund B) exceeding Rs 25 crores for making available supplementary finance. Besides, the U.S. Government will further bear a sum of about four million dollars in meeting in U.S.A. the expenses of its experts, the tuition and other charges of Indian nationals sent abroad for training in this connection, and the costs of technical assistance provided by the U.S. Government through private agencies.

(b) The fund B shall be strengthened by the sale proceeds of saleable goods imported under this Pact as also by repayment of the sums (belonging to the Fund A) disbursed as loans to private agencies or State Governments.

4. (a) The Fund A shall be jointly administered by an Indian Government officer and the American Director. It will be utilized only for the execution of agreed projects of technical co-operation.

(b) Fund B and its proceeds are, like the Fund A, to be utilized only for the projects approved by both the Governments.

5. Allocations will be made whereby agreed amounts shall be transferred from the Fund A to the consolidated funds of the Government of India or shall otherwise be authorized to be expended. Such transfers and/or authorizations to expend shall be in the forms of grants-in-aid and loans. But nowhere in the Pact has it been indicated how the loan portion is to be repaid.

6. No funds or parts thereof, allocated to or derived from any programme of assistance undertaken by the Government shall be subject to any garnishment, attachment, seizure, or other legal process by any person, firm, agency, corporation, organization or government.

7. Agreed projects of technical co-operation shall be executed by a Central Committee (of not more than seven members) to be constituted by the Government of India. But no recommendation of this committee involving the allocation of expenditure of funds made available by the U.S. Government can be given effect to without the concurrence of the Director.

Functions

The Pact gives no idea how the American assistance is to be exactly utilized. Obviously its purpose is to attain the objectives mentioned above. Though reports in the Press point out that this is to be done by growing more food and establishing certain types of townships, yet as the text of the Agreement, in question makes no mention of them, comments on the same would be beside the mark here.

Next we shall examine the economic and political implications of the Pact as evident from the aforesaid terms.

(To be continued)

MESSAGE OF SEVAPURI

(By Shankarrao Deo)

The Sarva Seva Sangh and the Sarvodaya Samaj have pledged themselves at Sevapuri to an objective of 25 lakh acres of land for being distributed to the landless all over India within two years. In doing so, they have taken up for the whole nation the torch lighted by Shri Vinobaji on the 18th of April of last year in Telangana. It is the torch of a non-violent economic revolution which will usher in a Sarvodaya Society, based on justice and equality. It can now be truly said that this movement of *Bhoodan-Yajna* has become national, for there is no one in the country who does not subscribe to the ideal of equitable distribution of land. It is also a happy augury that the leaders of all political parties and groups have blessed this movement and promised their full support.

There is a general feeling that after the 15th of August, 1947 the people have not felt the natural glow of freedom or have not been enthused for new tasks inspite of all the constructive efforts of the Government and various other political parties. Instead, dark and deep clouds of frustration have hung heavily in the Indian sky and as a consequence the people are morose and sullen. A careful analysis of this frame of mind of the people seems to show that their frustration is due to the fact that though they got a bumper crop of what they sowed, they unfortunately expected quite a different harvest.

The revolution that was completed on the 15th of August, 1947 was really a political revolution, though during its progress some social and economic content was given to it. This revolution had released vast energy in the country. It swept away a mighty empire and full power was transferred to the people. Yet the power generated was so great that by using a part of the residue Sardar Patel, the iron man of India, brought about a second non-violent revolution within an extraordinarily short span of time by the integration of the States and the creation of a great and united India.

The Congress Government that took over the reins of power from the foreigner could boldly steer the ship of the State during the stormy days that followed the partition of the country and successfully rebut the catastrophic repercussions of the second World War. Today we have a stable government and peace reigns supreme throughout the breadth and length of the country. These are the exploits of the non-violent political revolution for which the nation suffered and sacrificed. They naturally and inevitably create the feeling of reverence and awe in the minds of impartial and appreciating foreign observers. It is but meet that we should also feel proud of them.

But unfortunately the people expected the Government which came into power on the

upsurge of an essentially political revolution to bring about revolutionary changes in their economic life. They were demanding an impossible from the present Government. It could only consolidate the gains of the revolution of which it was itself a child, but could never start or initiate another revolution. People fired by an idea or an ideal and ready to suffer and sacrifice for it can alone ignite the spark of a new revolution. It is a long and strenuous journey.

Then Shri Vinoba started on his walking tour and appealed in the name of justice and equality to the conscience of those who had lands to voluntarily surrender them so that they could be distributed to those who have no lands but who are versed in agriculture and want to adopt it as their profession. Thus began the campaign for the non-violent economic revolution. At Sevapuri the Sarva Seva Sangh and Sarvodaya Samaj have decided to carry on this campaign so far confined to his personal efforts on a nationwide scale. Of course, Shri Vinoba will continue to be its leader. This inspiring call for a non-violent action is bound to appeal not only to the *sevaks* of the Samaj or the constructive workers throughout the country but to the whole nation. This is sure to rouse the people out of the sloth whose germs are bred in inaction for it creates a new way of social activity which has a universal appeal.

The resolution brings into bold relief the urgent problem of the equitable distribution of land and the complementary problem of giving employment to all, through the spread and encouragement of village industries. It also advocates the boycott of those centralized industries which come in the way of self-sufficiency in matter of food and cloth. As is said in the resolution, the Sangh and the Sannam recognize that social justice is indivisible and therefore must extend to other fields of life also. As far as the industrial sector is concerned the resolution says that this is possible only through decentralized economy and therefore it is necessary that village industries are encouraged and organized on a wide scale.

Thus the Sevapuri session of the Sannam has not only placed before the country a definite programme of the economic revolution based on Gandhian ideology, but has also adopted the Gandhian technique of carrying on a movement to a successful end, by rousing and harnessing the mass energy by fixing targets which lead to concentrated efforts on their part.

I had said in my article, "Thoughts on Sevapuri", (*Harijan*, 29-3-52) that "if the *sevaks* and the constructive workers are to be the leaven of this non-violent revolution, they must prepare themselves for this task by first bringing about the necessary changes in their personal lives". Sevapuri has now assigned this task to them. Let them begin.

SEVAPURI RESOLUTION

The Sarva Seva Sangh announced its following resolution at the Sarvodaya Conference, Sevapuri:

Bhoodan-Yajna

The Sarvodaya Samaj aims at the establishment, on the basis of truth and non-violence, of a classless and casteless society in which there is no exploitation and everybody gets full opportunity for individual growth and development. The main issue before us is to devise ways and means to proceed towards this object in the face of the economic inequality rampant in the country. The *Bhoodan-Yajna* movement, inspired and led by Vinobaji, has provided a solution for it in ample measure. Demonstrating the efficacy of non-violence, this movement has enlivened again our faith in non-violence. We are glad to note that the movement has attracted the attention not only of this country but also of those abroad. As desired by our workers and countrymen, it is but meet that this movement is carried on with redoubled zeal and vigour under the direction of the Sarva Seva Sangh. Shri Vinobaji is also of the view that instead of confining the movement to his personal efforts alone it should be made nation-wide. The Sarva Seva Sangh, therefore, feels called upon to take up this responsibility on its shoulders under the leadership of Shri Vinobaji.

The fundamental principle of the *Bhoodan-Yajna* movement is that all children of the soil have an equal right over Mother Earth, in the same way as those born of a mother have over her. It is, therefore, essential that the entire land of the country should be equitably redistributed anew, providing roughly at least five acres of dry land or one acre of wet land to every family. The Sarvodaya Samaj by appealing to the good sense of the people should prepare their mind for this equitable distribution, and acquire within the next two years at least 25 lakhs of acres of land from about five lakhs of our villages on the rough basis of five acres per each village. This land will be distributed to those landless labourers who are versed in agriculture, want to take to it, and have no other means of subsistence.

Centralized Industries

For the establishment of Sarvodaya it is necessary to make a progressive advance towards creating a society based on economic equality in every field of life. Also, to give employment to everyone. We believe that this is possible only under decentralized economy, that is through village industries.

To this end, as an initial step, such centralized industries as come in the way of self-sufficiency in food and cloth should be boycotted.

(Translated from Hindi)

Note:

Bhoodan Committee

Regional *Bhoodan-Yajna* Committees have been appointed for most of the provinces of India. They will have to obtain land gifts and other donations to the extent of targets fixed for their respective regions, and to distribute the lands in accordance with the principles laid down by Vinobaji. A list of Committees for each region may be obtained by writing to the Secretary, Sarva Seva Sangh, Sevagram.

By Mahatma Gandhi

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FEAR MOST FEAR

"Of all the wonders that I yet have seen,
It seems to me most strange that men should fear,
Seeing that death, a necessary end,
Will come when it will come."

Thus says Julius Caesar in Shakespeare's famous drama of that name.

Fear, be it of death or anything else, is man's worst enemy, and indeed, in the opening line of the 16th chapter of the *Gita* the Lord puts fearlessness as the first attribute of the godly man.

Yet man is continually fearing—fearing everything except fear itself, which is the root trouble.

The most amazing demonstration of what fear can reduce man to is seen in the present-day armament race amongst the nations of the world. Even India, whose foreign policy is non-aggressive, is now spending more than ever before on her armed forces. We howled at the British rulers for spending huge sums on the army, and now we have outdone them ourselves in the name of international peace!

Each nation knows quite well that armaments will not save it from frightful devastation, and that the most these armaments may do is to enable it to inflict more or less equal devastation on the other party. The world stage is set for mutual destruction, everybody fearing everybody. In this atmosphere international efforts for all round disarmament or even reduction of armaments, are of little avail. Fear and suspicion will continually spoil the proceedings and undermine any agreement, even if one is ever reached.

There is but one way out of this frightful dilemma, and that is for at least one of the bigger nations bravely to lead the way by casting this suicidal fear aside and totally disbanding its army and navy. Of all the nations it is India who should take this great step forward. In one flash she will become the spiritual and moral beacon of the world. India the storehouse of age-old wisdom, India the birthplace of Buddha and Bapu, what has she to do with this fear and violence? She must shake herself free of this hypnotizing sickness, so foreign to her spiritual nature, and become worthy of her ancient heritage.

As I write these words I can see people throwing up their hands in horror, and exclaiming, "The moment we do such a thing Pakistan will devour us!" What nonsense!! Pakistan is not an unmitigated devil that she should not be able to feel the thrill of a new Light, as other nations will. On the contrary she would feel it more, because she would then know that India's protestations of non-aggression and friendliness are cent per cent sincere. She is also not such a fool as not to know that henceforth world opinion will be dead against her if she takes aggressive action of any kind against unarmed India.

For maintenance of internal order there should, of course, be a strong and highly disciplined police force. There is nothing illogical about this. Inside one's own country one has to deal with anti-social elements, with scoundrels and madmen of all kinds, mostly of low mental order and moral development. These people are the product of faulty governments, and it will need many generations under good government to evolve a state of society which does not produce such people. Until that stage is reached, disciplinary police (or any other name which may be chosen) must be maintained along with reformatory institutions and other measures.

The position with regard to one's international relations is quite different. Here one is not dealing with low and ignorant types, but with the leading men of other countries. However much we may disagree with Truman, Stalin, Churchill or any other national leaders, we must admit that they are, each in their own country, men of outstanding intelligence and experience, otherwise they would not be where they are, and that they are, therefore, entirely capable of understanding and responding to a great and courageous act like unilateral disarmament on the part of another nation. That is one great difference,

and another is that the rank and file of armies are made up of men mostly drawn from the peasantry and urban workmen. Here again we are not face to face with low scoundrels, but with human beings capable of higher emotions. Added to this is the fact that the world has definitely advanced towards a sense of international responsibility.

With this problem there can be no satisfactory half-measures. It is a matter of total armament or total disarmament. If one keeps a small army it is worse than useless. Big or small, like attracts like, and one will continue to attract the bellicose attentions of other nations towards oneself without gaining any moral strength. In the same way an "Army of Defence" is a pure illusion, carrying with it no moral value. No one really believes a nation which, keeping a big army, says it is only for defensive purposes. And if you ask any military officer, he will tell you that a purely defensive war is an impossibility. Once you start fighting you have got to take your advantages as they present themselves, or else go under. The Korean 38th parallel is a clear example of this truth.

To be any good the step has to be total disarmament—and that would not only be some good, but would lead to a new era for mankind.

It is impossible for us fully to visualize the amazing effect on the world which India's unilateral disarmament would have. It is for us to achieve this great act. The surest way is to go to that vast mass of humanity—the peasantry of India—and give them this message set in its right context along with the rest of the Gandhian ideal for peace and plenty. India's wisdom, endurance and courage are still alive in her villages. The villages are of rock, whereas the cities are of sand. Let us build on that rock of the Indian peasantry. It may be harder and more wearisome to build on rock, but the house will stand firm, while the house built on sand will fall with the first storm.

Gopal Ashram,
P. O. Pilkhi,
Dist. Tehri-Garhwal,
U. P., 2-2-52

MIRA

TRAINING COURSES IN MAGANWADI

The Gram Sevak Vidyalaya in Maganwadi, Wardha will re-open on the 1st of July, 1952 and will offer the following courses of training:

1. A Two Year Course in Gram Udyog Nai Talim

Those who have had some experience already in one or more items of the Constructive Programme will be preferred. The age limit will be roughly between 20 and 35. Minimum qualification is matriculation or its equivalent in general knowledge. Hindi and English being the medium of instruction, a good working knowledge in both is required. But a good knowledge of Hindi will be considered additional qualification. Since there will be a minimum of 5 hours of productive work daily, candidates should be capable of hard physical work.

Some scholarships are available for this two years' course. These scholarships will be awarded only to those who produce a guarantee that after training, some institution, organization or persons will undertake that they will be enabled without fail to carry on the work for which they are trained.

2. A One Year, or Vinit Course in Village Industries

Minimum qualifications are a good working knowledge of Hindi and general knowledge equal at least to the elementary school leaving certificate. Also, capacity to do hard work.

3. Shorter Courses in a Village Industry

Under these, candidates will get training in production work in one or another of village industries for periods ranging from one to three months.

Further detailed information is available in our printed prospectus and syllabus, copies of which can be had on application with 3 anna stamp for postage. All applications for admissions should be on our printed forms and should reach us by the 1st of June, 1952. All communications should be addressed to the Secretary, Maganwadi, Wardha.

N.B. All the above courses are available to women candidates also.

Maganwadi, Wardha

G. RAMACHANDRAN,

Secretary,

Gram Udyog Vibhag, Akhil Bharat Sarva Seva Sangh,

DRINK AND POVERTY

In my previous note in the *Harijan* of 19-4-1952 "An Ill-Thought Proposition", I had tried to show that allowing drink to the poor so as to realize excise income with which to subsidize foreign food grains will not be proper nor really helpful, as the remedy will be worse than the malady. The poor labourers and workers, with the removal of prohibition, will be drawn away to spend their hard-earned money after drink, and will have left no money or very little if at all, with which to buy food even though subsidized. This is a general truth whatever the use for which excise revenue is collected. It is the main problem which the reformer cannot afford to forget. Hermann Levy in his book "Drink"—*An Economic and Social Study* pointedly notes this, which is worth while quoting here:

"The real sources of secondary poverty are 'drinking, betting, and smoking'; 'very often the worker wastes a large part of his time and energy between the smoke of the factory and that of a pub.'—(P. 38)

"It is particularly with secondary poverty that there is the danger of that reciprocal action to which the Amulree Report called attention: the withholding of sums from domestic improvements and their application to drink may allow deteriorating conditions at home to deteriorate further. As the Report observed, '.....the dangers of a vicious circle need to be reckoned with. By seeking refuge in the public house, a man or woman may become tolerant of bad conditions at home, and *pari passu* the means to remedy those conditions may be seriously prejudiced by the amounts spent on intoxicants. We were impressed by the evidence put before us in this regard by a number of witnesses from their own experience and observations of social conditions in the poorer districts of large cities.'

"The conclusion then is fairly clear: secondary, that is the unhealthy allocation of an income itself adequate to meet the prime necessities of life, is the main problem for the reformer. And very often it is drink which is the main agent, direct and indirect, of maldistribution." (P. 39-40).

Therefore, if at all we care to see that our workers get their primary needs of food and raiment, it is the greater reason that we should draw them away from the suicidal temptation of drink, which will otherwise throw them and their families into hunger, squalor, degradation and debasement.

20-4-'52

M. P. DESAI

'WON'T DIE TILL I HAVE SEEN HIM'

[The following is based on Shri Krishnadas's description of an incident in the first edition of his *Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi* which has been omitted in the new abridged edition, pp. 34-5.

— V. G. D.]

(On the road between Vikramjit and Sasaram in Bihar)

One of the tyres burst and we came out of the car as it had to be replaced (August 1921). It was drizzling and I was standing close by Gandhiji on his left, when an old woman, supporting herself on a stick, came to me with slow steps and asked, 'My son, who here is Mahatma Gandhi?' I was feeling shy and made no reply. So the woman, stepping forward, repeated her question. Gandhiji then asked her, 'Why are you searching for him?' She replied, 'Sir, I am 104 years old and my eye-sight has grown dim. I have visited various holy places including Badarikashram. In my own village I have dedicated two temples and provided for worship of the images. Just as we have had Rama and Krishna as *avatars*, so also Mahatma Gandhi has appeared as an *avatar*, as I hear. Until I have seen him death will not come to me.' As she was saying this, her eyes were suffused with tears. She now knew that the person who was speaking to her was Gandhiji himself. He asked her what food she took. She replied she took syrup of Durva grass only once a day. While this talk was going on, some villagers who were standing by informed us that the woman had been standing there all day long with a view to having *darshan* of Gandhiji. She was too old to walk about. When we passed her, our car was going very fast. If therefore the tyre had not burst just near her, she could hardly have noticed anything. Or if the tyre had burst at some little distance from her, she could not have walked so far to have a look at Gandhiji. The tyre burst at a distance of only five yards from where she was standing. It was a strange coincidence indeed.

SEVEN MONTHS WITH MAHATMA GANDHI

By Krishnadas

Abridged and Edited by Richard B. Gregg

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