

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

SALES TAX

(By M. K. Gandhi)

I have been requested to reproduce the following article of Gandhiji (*Harijan*, 8-9-'46). I do so gladly. But I am afraid that it helps neither the Government, nor the merchants. The issue at present between them is not whether there should or should not be a sales tax, but whether it should be on a single-point or a multi-point system.

This has to be examined on the criterion suggested by Gandhiji in para three of the article. The Government must show that it does not hit the poor, and the opponents must show that the money raised thereby will not be used for the public good. It must also be examined whether the people have the capacity to bear the burden of additional taxes.

On the land-surcharge issue the Government has surrendered to the landowners. It has revealed the strength of the landed interests in the Government. For, really, having regard to the fact that the land revenue has not been revised for a very long time, and that the price-level has considerably risen since the date of the last settlement, there was some justification for the surcharge. But there, too, a higher rate of surcharge was proposed to be levied on the inferior soil. Such soil also generally happens to be possessed by the poorer class of farmers. Hence the proposed manner of surcharge was inequitable. Here I do not go into the fundamental issues such as the collection of land revenue in kind, and exemption of certain class of holdings from tax.

Wardha, 29-7-'52

— K. G. M.]

I have received many letters in regard to the Sales Tax Act of the Bombay Presidency. Many arguments advanced against it are, in my opinion, thoughtless. Nevertheless, I placed some of the complaints before the Finance Minister. Shri Vaikunthbhai Mehta is a cautious and conscientious Minister. He has sent me a full reply.

It appears that this Act was framed before the popular Government came in. The present Ministry have made some essential changes in it. The letters received by me were full of criticism giving the impression that the present Government was wilful, indifferent to public opinion and the tax was already in vogue. As a matter

of fact, not only has the collection of the Sales Tax not begun, but it has been postponed till October 1st and may be delayed still further if need be. Moreover, many articles of necessary use have been exempted, thereby showing that the Government has paid due attention to public objections and inconvenience. I am aware that there are people who hold that there should be no Sales Tax at all. A great deal has been said in favour of this view. But no government can exist if it were to listen to abstract objections. In other words, it is wisdom, in such cases, not to raise basic issues.

The Sales Tax is in vogue in many provinces. The main criterion in judging any tax should be that it does not hit the poor. It should also be seen that the money raised thereby, is used for the public good.

A popular ministry is responsible to the legislatures and cannot do anything without their consent. Every elected member in a popular legislature is responsible to his voters. Therefore, the voter who represents the public should ponder well before embarking on any criticism of the government of his creation. Moreover, one bad habit of the people should be borne in mind. They do not like any tax whatsoever. Where there is good government, the tax-payer gets full return for his money as, for example, the water tax in cities. No tax-payer could get water on his own for the same payment. But even so, and in spite of the fact that the tax is levied by the popular will, tax-payers always resent even paying such taxes. It is, of course, true that one cannot prove the benefit of all taxes as easily as the one I have cited as an example. But as society grows in size and complexity and the field of service also grows, it is difficult to explain to the individual tax-payer, how he gets his return for any particular tax. This much, however, is clear that taxes as a whole should stand for the general benefit of society. If this were not so, the argument that taxes were levied by popular will would not hold. To the extent that we are still under foreign rule, the Government is not wholly responsible to the people. But in the Provinces today the Governments are popular up to a large extent and we must judge the Sales Tax accordingly.

New Delhi, 29-8-'46 (From *Harijanbandhu*)

SHRI VINOBA'S UTTAR PRADESH TOUR — VIII

U. P. Government's Co-operation

Our two-day (8th and 9th May) halt in Lucknow, the capital city of U. P., was marked by visits of important persons and important discussions on *Bhoodan-Yajna*. Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, the Chief Minister, announced in a Press Conference that his Government would lend full support to *Bhoodan-Yajna*. Among others who met Vinoba, were the President of the Provincial Congress Committee, Ministers of Food and Agriculture, Government Secretaries, University Professors, the Chairmen and about 500 secretaries of Panchayat Raj Committees, Pressmen, and some members of the R. S. S.

The Government Secretaries put before Vinoba some of their doubts and the legal difficulties that would arise in the transfer of land under *Bhoodan-Yajna*. There was a frank discussion, and they were all highly impressed by Vinoba's talks and appreciated the importance of the mission. At the end of the meeting, the Chief Secretary, Shri Jha, said, "Sir, we shall try to remove all legal difficulties that would arise in your work; nay, it will be our duty to do so. Nobody can disagree with your mission. But it is clear from what you explained to us that the basis of your work is mainly moral." Vinoba readily agreed with him and exclaimed, "You have properly grasped it."

Patil Controversy

The statement which Shri R. K. Patil had issued after the Sevapuri Conference often became a subject of discussion at various places in our tour. It was not unexpected that Lucknow should broach this subject again. Vinoba said, "Criticism of my work does not hinder but helps me. If I could convert all people to my views, I would give up this work and take up another, which has so far been neglected. People everywhere may not be aware that Shri R. K. Patil himself has donated a large portion of his land to this *Bhoodan-Yajna* and if I desired, he would donate even more. So there is no difference of views between us. The idea of *Bhoodan-Yajna* is dear to Shri Patil. But the problem of the pair of bullocks troubles him. He feels that five acres are insufficient for a pair of bullocks. But the question is whether we desire to distribute land to men or to bullocks? If it were to bullocks, we should seek the opinion of bullocks; but if it was to *hisans*, I have consulted them at several places in different districts of U. P. and they have assured me that they could produce their livelihood from five acres. Hence, I am distributing five acres. 'Economic holding' is a relative term. In M. P., a pair of bullocks ploughs 20 acres, which, perhaps, makes Shri R. K. Patil think that 20 acres are needed to constitute an economic holding. But the U. P. Government has fixed 6½ acres for economic holding. I have no objection against distributing 6½ acres in place of five. If you donate more I shall distribute more. It is for you to bring more land. And you should remember that it is not the standard of Lucknow but that of a village that will determine the adequacy of the holding." Continuing Vinoba observed:

"We should not forget the deplorable economic condition of the country when we discuss an economic holding. We have very limited land in our country. The right remedy therefore, lies not in increasing the size of holdings, but in resorting to intensive cultivation of a small piece of land and in increasing crops per acre. There are small holdings in China and Japan.

"Just as a pair of bullocks requires 15 to 20 acres for an economic holding, similarly a tractor will require perhaps 500 acres. Thus economic holding varies with the technique of agriculture.

"But I ask them to give up all these standards and decide how much land will be required for an average family and distribute accordingly. Let there be co-operation wherever it is required. People are putting forth a plea for full co-operation. But I see that the country has not still reached that stage; but partial co-operation is possible in matters of ploughing, irrigation, night-watches etc. Even at present they work together for some operations. Again, we do not distribute land to all the landless people. Only those who have no other means of livelihood, who live on agricultural labour and know the work of agriculture will get land."

Referring to the suggestion that people should better be absorbed in village industries instead of increasing the pressure on land, Shri Vinoba said, "It should be unnecessary to impress the importance of village industries on one who has been working for it for the last 30 years. In our work *bhoodan* and village industries are wedded together as Sita and Rama. If anyone has a Lalshman to bring into the service of the two, I would certainly like to know that companion.

"The Paramdham (Vinoba's Ashram in Paunar) experiment of ploughing with man-power is alone sufficient to disprove the plea that small holdings produce less crops. There are several others who will cite similar experiences."

Questions and Answers

Q: In what time do you think your work will achieve success?

Vinoba: Success can be judged from two angles. First, how far have we advanced towards our goal? Secondly, what is our own conception of "success"? I shall say that I am reaping more fruits than what I deserve and I see that still more fruits are to come in future. I had estimated that I would get one lakh acres of land in a year. My estimate proved correct. Now its scope has become enlarged. The workers from all over the country have pledged themselves to collect 25 lakhs in the next two years. Wherever I go, I see increasing enthusiasm in the people. My work continued unhindered even during the election period. Now the atmosphere is more favourable; so also sympathy for the cause. Expectations too have risen. I consider this as only a symbolical movement in the direction of a social revolution.

Q: What do you mean by a symbolical movement in the direction of a social revolution?

Vinoba: I see clearly the events that are going to happen in future. Only those who have eyes can have this vision. A blind person sees a pillar only when he strikes against it. The people do not take time to understand the idea of *bhoodan*. When once the public opinion is crystalized, so that landlords also favour this idea, it paves the way for both legislation as well as a revolution; and no citizen would then oppose it. The Leftists, Rightists and Wrongists—all support me today. They have a doubt in respect of only the distribution of land. So far the distribution is in progress in only the Hyderabad State. Until now I have received no complaint against it.

There cannot be much contradiction in the fields of Thought and Literature, and of Literature and Objective Reality. For thought emerges first and then expresses itself in word. And act follows the word. If people had adhered to the idea that land should remain with its landlords, they would not have voluntarily given their possession. Why should land have come running to me? The truth is that the land does not wish to stay with its present owners; but wants to embrace its rightful owners. It has offered itself to be handed over to the landless. Otherwise how could I have got land in an area like Telangana where people hardly understood my language? But I saw that the One who inspired me to ask for land, inspired others to donate it. And now the atmosphere

has been more favourable and *bhoodan* has gained a momentum. This is the reason why I say that land wants to run away from its present owners and embrace the landless who know how to till soil.

Q: In what duration of time do you think the problem of the landless will be solved?

Vinoba: Lord Buddha came and tried his best to end miseries of the world; but they still remained. I am not out to end any problem for all time. May be, in the meantime my own problem may end; and the Press might publish a news-item that the Vinoba-problem is over. (This evoked a loud laughter in the audience.) The solution of the problem, therefore, depends upon the intensity of our efforts. The reputation of one who asks land may be compared to a bridge over a river, which joins its two banks. The people on both the sides should have an unflinching faith in the integrity of the man. When people will see that he aims to harmonize the good of both the giver and the taker, they will give unreservedly. Our most important task lies in transforming the general psychology of acquisitiveness into that of giving. This is a fundamental work, charged with revolutionary potentialities.

University Education

Vinoba had also important talks with the University professors. They sought a guidance from Vinoba about the way in which universities could further the work of Sarvodaya. Vinoba said that he would like the university education to be revolutionized. It offered at present no opportunity to the peasant, carpenter, blacksmith and other artisans. Each student should devote four hours daily in productive labour and earn his bread and should ask for no help from parents for his education.

Q: "But how can all this be possible in a city?" asked the professors.

Vinoba: Why should it not be? A city is as much a part of the universe as a village. My advice to the university students is that they should go to the universe for education. They should come into a living contact with the world. At present agriculture is being taught through English. For the last 10,000 years our people know the art of cultivation. Why should the knowledge of English be necessary to know its science? Surely it is not a subject of a modern branch of science. Had I been the head of an Agricultural College I would have entrusted the students and the staff with a fine laboratory, a good library and necessary agricultural implements and told them that they would have no salaries, stipends, or remittances from their homes but that they should produce useful crops, discover newer and newer things and gain knowledge through self-help. Unless we do not undertake such a revolutionary move, the modern education will not go. I thank God that we are not in the full grip of this education. As long as the old system of education exists we must take it that we are still governed by the old order of government. Even those big powers which have no faith in non-violence have done a great deal of constructive work through education. Much more should we who believe in *ahimsa* scrap the present educational system and labour incessantly for constructive work."

National Planning Commission

There was also some discussion on the National Planning Commission. Vinoba said, "Economists of your eminence ought to have given your comments upon the National Planning Commission Report. People have a right to expect this much from you. But their desire remained unfulfilled. Hardly 4 or 5 persons from the whole nation have expressed views on the Report."

Outline of Sarvodaya

Before closing, these friends desired Vinoba to give them an outline of Sarvodaya. Vinoba said: "I believe that Economics is not such an absolute science as Mathematics. It changes with changes in the society. The villages of India must become self-supporting and they must be saved from fluctuations as much as possible. They

must manufacture the finished goods which they require in their own villages, if the requisite raw material for them is produced locally. Machines should belong to the society at large. There should be no intervening agency between production and ultimate distribution. A society based on *ahimsa* cannot function through intermediate agencies. To bring about such a society village industries should thrive. All should get food and all must work. The economy of the nation should be planned on the lines of a joint family. If the *charikha* can provide employment to all it should be used. Whenever I talk of *charikha*, and of ensuring food and employment to all, the National Planners say, 'Ours is a partial planning and not National Planning.' Then I say, I look at the National Planning from the Sarvodaya point of view. And if you cannot plan for the whole nation but have to discriminate, posing myself as a Communist, I say, 'In that case, you should discriminate in favour of the poor in making your plan.' This is my outline of Sarvodaya in brief."

Women vs. Men

Some ladies too had come to see Vinoba. Vinoba explained to them about the evils of purdah system etc. One of them asked Vinoba whether, in the work of uplifting the womanhood, they should seek co-operation of men or rely on their own strength.

Vinoba: I wish that as far as possible you should help yourselves. Not only this, I even go further and say that the entire work of basic education should be entrusted to women.

A lady asked: Wherever we work, our work is being obstructed by men. What should we do?

Vinoba: Launch Satyagraha. There is already a fountain of love in your hearts. It has only to be coupled with insistence.

R. S. S.

Speaking to the members of the R. S. S., Vinoba said: "We must discard that service which divides humanity into pieces. Today, both Hindus and Muslims are unhappy. Both need protection from cold. If at this time anybody offers me blankets only for Hindus or only for Muslims I will throw them away. Along with the spirit of service you must strengthen in you the thought that 'I am pure Spirit (*Atma*)'. My body may be born a Brahman or a Shudra, a man or a woman, but I am not any of these. I am above it. If I say that this body and I are one, I deprive myself of the limitless power which is mine as spirit and reduce myself to an individual with the limited power of the body. Although we are larger in number than Muslims we still harbour the feeling that Muslims might overcome us. We are constantly afraid of Pakistan as Pakistan is of us. History has shown to us the great strength of this nation. But today this unfounded fear is frightening us. Let us extend our hands to Muslims. Those who never do so and keep 'lathi' in their hands for protection can never dismiss fear. Be-friend Muslims and you will realize that they are equally love-thirsty as you are. They too are amenable to love, and they love their children in the same way as you do. God has not endowed any particular community with cruelty. It will be a serious charge on God if we say that the Muslim community as such is cruel. India has absolutely nothing to fear from anybody and nobody has strength to destroy her. But we lack in faith and magnanimity of heart. We wish no reforms and have no courage to mix with others. Hence we are groaning under such hardships."

The 9th was the Buddha Jayanti day. Vinoba's speech of that day has been already published in *Harijan* (5-7-52). It is needless to repeat it here.

In the Capital of Uttar Pradesh, those who had the privilege to hear Vinoba that day, felt as if the very Buddha was preaching to them.

In our three halts in the Lucknow District we got 9,912 acres from 203 donors.

(Translated from Hindi)

D. M.

HARIJAN

Aug. 2

1952

BLACKING OUT GANDHI ?

I have already referred to a letter which disapproved of my article *Dissolve Gandhism*. Shrimati Mirabehn's plea has also been published. I have also received some letters which warmly approve of my article. The approval and the disapproval cancel each other and leave no reason to the writer for a feeling of egoistic satisfaction of having made a very nice contribution. But they leave behind a suggestion that the subject must be considered further in a dispassionate manner.

Mirabehn appears to have missed my point. It is not out of despair or a heart-broken feeling that I say 'Dissolve Gandhism'; nor out of any feeling of disagreement with Mirabehn or others. There can be also no question of removing from our vocabulary or blacking-out Bapu's name. So long as humanity exists on the face of this earth, I cannot conceive of Gandhi becoming a forgotten name. I believe he will be remembered and his life and teachings will be studied with no less reverence and for no less long time than the life and teachings of any great master that the world has produced. Surely I have not accepted, or have not been entrusted with, the editorship of Gandhi's own paper to remove his own name from the vocabulary. Socrates has not been forgotten, even though we do not speak of Socratesism; and in our own country we have not forgotten the great names of Janaka, Yajna-vaalkya, Vasishtha, and many others, although no 'isms' have been perpetuated in their names. My faith is that Gandhi's name and the cream of his teachings will live even longer and shine with far more increasing lustre in the ages to come without the fetters of Gandhism than if they are attempted to be organized into a system or defined in exact language.

Let us learn from what has happened during the short period of the last five years. Rama Raj was an old, respectable and popular term among our people for numberless centuries. It stood for an ideal State. The ideal was not laid down in definite terms or objectives. All it conveyed to the mass mind was that it would be a world in which every one would be happy and contented. There would be no strife, no disease, no untimely deaths. No one knew or cared to know whether it would be a democratic or an autocratic State, a republican or a monarchical government and capitalist or socialist, a centralized or a decentralized order. It was open to try any system which could make people happy and contented, and abolish war, disease and premature or unnatural death. This indefiniteness prevented the term

Rama Raj being made the motto of any particular party.

On account of Gandhi's partiality for old terms, he brought the term Rama Raj into more frequent use than ever. The happily vague ideal began to take concrete shapes and was identified with Purna Swaraj, or Complete Independence with Gandhi's picture of Indian Home-Rule or the Karachi resolution of the Congress.

Rightly or wrongly, the Congress was regarded by the popular mind as the institution which had the responsibility of achieving that ideal. Rama Raj, Gandhi Raj, Congress Raj, became synonymous terms in the minds of the people as well as of the opponents of the Congress. Before the Partition, the Muslim League jeered at it and opposed it as being a Hindu ideal. After Independence we see how the wide-spread feeling of dissatisfaction with the present state of affairs, has brought into disrepute all these terms and how they are ironically employed to suggest every form of maladministration and corruption. This invariably happens when larger and wider terms are used for small, narrow, concrete systems and objectives. Christianity, Islam, Sanatanism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikkhism, all have become narrow unprogressive creeds, when organized by their founders or followers. They become exclusive and incapable of being universally accepted. I would like the teachings of Gandhi to be saved from this fate.

The same post which brought me Mirabehn's article, brought me a letter from Mr Horace Alexander from England. Along with other interesting matters, he writes:

"I have been reading Mirabehn's final article (*Bapu Raj*) and your comment on it. I find myself in much unity with Mirabehn who, I think, is interpreting Gandhi's message to the world in the way that any Westerner who has lived close to him would be likely to do. And yet I agree with your comment. No one of us has the right to use his name. Let us rather learn from him that any truth we think we have apprehended must be set before the world on its own merits; and even though we may think we learnt it all from him, yet still we can only say, 'This is, I believe, the truth', not 'This is Gandhi's truth'. Did he not himself say (in effect) more than once, 'When my name is forgotten, then perhaps the world will begin to accept the truth, I have tried to teach'? In fact we must all learn not to lean on him — not even on his name. Of course, if any one says, 'But you learnt that from Gandhi; it is not your original idea', the reply must always be, 'Yes, of course, I did'."

Mr Horace Alexander has grasped the idea correctly and expressed it well.

There are other letters also from which I could have quoted usefully, if I could devote more space.

But the use of Gandhi's name is not after all a matter on which a controversy need be raised. We cannot afford to waste time, much less fall out, on such wordy matters. The term "Gandhism" in the sense of the broad trend of his teachings is not going to be literally abandoned

by the world at my bidding. Even I shall be found to use it occasionally for brevity and convenience. It is sufficient if the substance of my suggestion is understood and accepted.

Wardha, 21-7-'52

K. G. MASHRUWALA

WORKING OF PROHIBITION IN BOMBAY STATE

Some months back the Government of Bombay had, through one of their senior officers, Shri M. D. Bhansali, got the working of prohibition examined, who has by now reported the results of his inquiry to Government. His findings and recommendations are based not only on reports submitted to him by Collectors and various social service organizations in the State, but also on personal investigations and observations in most of the important districts. He has pointed out that—

(1) the introduction of total Prohibition has brought about a perceptible improvement in the social and economic conditions of the people in the rural areas, particularly among the backward and labouring classes, for whom Prohibition was primarily intended;

(2) in the Dangs District, where a large number of people were addicted to drink, consumption of liquor has practically ceased since the introduction of Prohibition;

(3) in the Kheda District, which has a population of over 16 lakhs, consumption of liquor has gone down considerably and there is great reduction in cases of smuggling and illicit distillation;

(4) in the Panchmahals District, a large number of Bhils and other backward classes, who prior to Prohibition were addicted to drink, have given up drinking;

(5) in almost all rural parts in the interior of the State, apart from coastal and rural areas, which are within easy approach of urban areas or border on neighbouring States, Prohibition is effective and that in Greater Bombay and other urban areas also, though illicit distillation may have increased, the total consumption of liquor has gone down considerably. In most areas, such illicit consumption would be a very small fraction of what used to be consumed before;

(6) the use of liquor on festive and other occasions such as marriages, funerals, etc., by the aboriginals, backward classes and rural inhabitants has practically disappeared; and

(7) the drunken brawls, which used to be a feature prior to Prohibition, have practically ceased.

With a view to making the Prohibition Law more effective, Shri Bhansali has recommended that—

(a) the Bombay Prohibition Act, 1949 should be suitably amended to provide for

legitimate use and to prevent misuse of medicinal and toilet preparations containing alcohol;

(b) legislation to prevent abuse of spirituous medicinal, toilet and other preparations containing noxious articles should be undertaken;

(c) the work of collection of mhowra flowers should be entrusted to co-operative societies;

(d) licences for the manufacture of palm gur to individuals should be discontinued;

(e) punishment of imprisonment as well as of fine should be levied and fines should be recoverable instead of additional imprisonment in lieu of fine; and

(f) a specially selected task force should be appointed in special Prohibition areas.

NOTES

End of Postmen's Dispute

Both the Government of India and Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan deserve congratulations for the satisfactory settlement of the Postmen's demand. Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan's advice to his followers not to use his fast as a springing board to revive the old demand for creating a fresh fight was commendable. Equally commendable was the attitude of the Government of India in agreeing to review the matter dispassionately. If the fast had been used as apprehended, it would have lost its character of being a penitential fast, and would have been taken by the people generally as a political one. It would have led to strained feelings on both the sides. The experience of this fast has provided a good object-lesson to all those who resort, or are tempted to resort, to fasts on such occasions. The fast must bring the disputing parties nearer, if it has been undertaken in the right spirit.

Wardha, 21-7-'52

"Which Way Lies Hope?"

This is the title of Richard B. Gregg's small book just published by the Navajivan Press.* It is an examination of Capitalism, Communism, Socialism and Gandhiji's programme. A friend who belongs to none of these schools, but is an advocate of a governmentless decentralized socio-economic order writes:

"I think it is a book for Pandit Nehru and all Congress leaders.

"What I don't find in this book as well as in any other books or articles is the role of interest, rent, profits, and taxes. All have taken for granted they must be there and have passed over them in silence. Yet it is exactly these which determine prices and upset distribution."

Wardha, 22-7-'52

K. G. M.

* Price Re 1-40, Postage etc. As. 4.

EVICION OF TENANTS

Speaking at the prayer-meeting in Banaras on 17th July '52, Shri Vinoba said :

" I advise those who are being evicted from their lands by landlords that they should not suffer eviction but stick to their lands. If landlords belabour them, they should peacefully bear it. This too is strength, it is cold power. Those who beat them will have their hands fatigued. Dusshasan's is an instance on the point. I have given this counsel even before. But I shall make it a point to refer to it at every place wherever I go."

Warning the Government, he said :

" *Bhoodan-Yajna* has created an atmosphere of peace and harmony. It will not be advisable to allow any adverse force to vitiate it. It will do good to none. *Bhoodan* mission is going on smoothly with the goodwill of all. But if eviction of tenants from their lands is allowed to proceed, it will lead to disastrous consequences. These problems should be settled with love, amity and a sense of social justice. I know that it is difficult to awaken the higher nature of men and generate love and peace in their hearts. But we should see that we do not at least add any impediments in the way. I warn the Government that if it allows cases of eviction of tenants to happen, this sort of inefficiency, or better to say, chaos, will be as tragic and disastrous, as that of celebrating *van-mahotsava* on the one hand and becoming silent witnesses of the wanton destruction of forests by the zamindars on the other."

To the evicting landlords, he said :

" I have been on a walking tour in your province for the past nine months. I have obtained land-gifts to the tune of about 2,75,000 acres. It has created an atmosphere of peace and harmony. I believe that the healthy influence of *Bhoodan-Yajna* on the landlords is partly responsible for their non-obstructive attitude in the abolition of the Zamindari system. Whether that may be, it is a matter of great concern that those who gave away their lands in *bhoodan* for the landless on the one side, should create a new class of landless people on the other by evicting them from their lands. It is not a matter of concern for me alone, or for Government alone, or for the evicted tenants alone, but for all, including landlords. I therefore appeal to the landlords not to evict those who have been in the service of the soil for years together. They are the true sons of the soil. What can be the fault of these sons of the soil? If the landlords desist from evicting their tenants, I shall regard that as making large donations to me. And if I come to know of a donor that he has evicted or is evicting his tenants, I shall refuse to accept his *bhoodan*, but with all the power of love at my command, I shall give him instead *jnan-dan* (gift of knowledge) that the eviction of tenants is not in his interest. I

trust that if my message reaches them, they will all agree with me. I shall also tell them if they donate their land, I shall distribute it to its present tiller. I understand that they resort to evictions out of ignorance. For it brings no good to any one to bring miseries to the people. If we dig the ground on which we stand, we ourselves will fall into the pit. Narrow, selfish interest should not blind us; we should be far-sighted and act. 'Don't be short-sighted but enlarge your vision,' says a Sanskrit adage."

In the end Vinoba advised the Sarvodaya workers to go from village to village and explain to the people that they should hold fast to their land, and should not allow themselves to be dispossessed. In the attempt of resistance, they should not use force, but, if necessary, should resist it at the cost of their life. Incidentally, he also very much regretted the dearth of social and constructive workers in U. P.

(Abridged and translated from Hindi)

D. M.

A TRIBUTE TO VINOBA

(By Paul Richard)

The second great task for India — a great example to the world.

The example of a new way — of a new world, of brotherhood.

A new experiment in communal sharing — not through violence, but through love.

Thirty years ago, I was sitting in meditation with a young recluse.

In a small hut, in the compound of the Ashram in Sabarmati.*

The young recluse is now the new saint of India — Vinoba Bhave.

The lesson that the new saint gives is that of spiritual communism.

The communism of the Rishis, of the Buddhas, and of the Christ.

Of all true religious men in all times and in all nations.

Communism could remain in fact as in principle — a way of love.

Any ideal may become virulent when confronted from its birth with hatred.

* During a three weeks visit to Gandhi's Ashram in 1920, when after daily afternoon walks with the Mahatma, I joined the recluse for meditation in his hut.

India is there to give to the new comer a new cradle.

Non-violence was the seed that Gandhi sowed in the furrows of politics.

"Bhoodan-yajna" is the harvest of Vinoba in the vine-yards of economics.

Harvest of bounty for bodies and souls, enriching both giver and receiver.

This kind of land distribution could perhaps be possible only in India.

A peaceful offering of joy before the high altars of the Himalayas.

In India, the heart of Asia, must be kept burning that torch.

The torch of Ahimsa purifying the world of all its bloody sacrifices.

The torch flaming in the sky to shame the earthly man-made infernos.

Behold, what can be a mere individual — alone — in the world crisis.

The saint will not remain alone. He opens a way to all.

On Vinoba's way can tread the thinkers as well as the doers.

The way of creative love is also a way of creative light.

To any emotional and moral principle a rational basis must be found.

Here is the rational conclusion of all discussions on Ahimsa, at Sabarmati.

'Violence to human beings is a confusion of substances — moral and material.'

You would not expect a nail to be driven through moral persuasion.

Why should you think of a hammer to persuade an intelligent being?

Physical violence to moral beings measures with moral persuasion to material things.

(From *Vedant Kesari*, May '52)

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DESCENT FROM THE CROSS IN KOREA

Ethel Mannin, reviewing Rene Cutforth's *Korean Reporter* (Wingate) in *Peace News* of May 23, 1952, writes:

'Napalm is jellied petrol. An English colonel told Cutforth, "It reaches a temperature of more than 1,000 degrees centigrade in a few seconds. Horrible stuff."

'Its function as a bomb is to burn everything including human beings over a wide area. The flaming petrol blinds as well as burns, and people who survive the roasting alive are likely to become mentally affected from shock....

'A woman and her children were separated from the father of the family when the refugees from Seoul were fleeing across the frozen river and the policeforced the crowd back at the point of automatic guns.

'The exodus had to be stopped as the roads on the other side were already jammed with refugees, and military traffic was at a standstill: "the railway tracks themselves were moving rivers of refugees and the people died in hundreds * under the wheels of trains."

'The woman and children had crossed the ice, convoyed by her husband. Then he had gone back for another load; but at that point the traffic across the ice was stopped. The woman screamed in her despair and *frenzy*. No one knew what to do; because there was nothing to do.

'A train arrived from Seoul. When it stopped, no one moved. They couldn't. They were frozen stiff. The crowd waiting on the station climbed up on the engine and the trucks to unclasp frozen fingers and support numb bodies. Against the sooty background of that station the Koreans staged their modern descent from the Cross in a hundred grotesque positions. A rough computation put that journey's casualties at 170, mostly killed outright or left to die after being thrown from the roofs of coaches in tunnels.

'When Cutforth was leaving Chosen, the ancient name for Korea, the "Land of the Morning Calm," a Korean Catholic priest said, "Do you know if you held a plebisite in South Korea, the Communist vote would be more than 75 per cent? We are used to masters. Your armies have not behaved well to the people and we dislike you all cordially. It is impossible to keep great theories of freedom in front of the eyes of simple people. They are afraid of the bombs and the burning and the raping behind the battle line. The Chinese understand us much better. Your cause is good but you have lost our goodwill."

'A South Korean who was asked whether he would sooner be dominated by the Americans or the Communists replied: "Does it matter to the blade of grass whether it is eaten by a horse or by a cow?'" The same issue of *Peace News* carries an article by Emrys Hughes, M.P. in the course of which he says:

'An official communique boasted that in a raid on May 8, 12,000 gallons of napalm were dropped and 165 buildings destroyed.....

'Cutforth personally saw hundreds of villages reduced to ashes.....

'Here is a description from the *New York Times* of February 1951: "A napalm raid hit the village when the Chinese were holding up the advance, and nowhere in the village have they buried the dead because there is nobody left to do so. The inhabitants throughout the village and in the fields were caught and killed and kept the exact postures they had held

* In the first 6 weeks of the war in Korea more civilian lives were destroyed by U.N. air forces than were destroyed by the Luftwaffe in England during the whole of World War II. See the Rev. Claud Coltman's article in *Peace News* of May 9, 1952, page three.

when the napalm struck—a man about to get on his bicycle, fifty children playing in an orphanage, a housewife strangely unmarked, holding in her hand a page torn from a Sears-Roebuck catalogue.”

V. G. D.

COMPULSORY VACCINATION FOR TRAVELLERS

[Last month the Editors, *Theosophical Free Tracts*, Bombay, prepared and circulated the following petition to the Health Minister, Government of India, New Delhi, to seek the amendment of the rules making it compulsory for people desirous of travelling abroad to get themselves vaccinated, inoculated etc. against various diseases. Apart from religious grounds, there are several eminent medical authorities, who denounce these measures as ineffective for the object for which they are compelled, but even positively harmful to the health of the people who have to take them, and occasionally becoming even the cause of spreading the very disease sought to be prevented. The petition has been signed by 2,600 persons belonging to 60 places in India. The signatures were collected in less than three weeks' time. There will be many, who would have endorsed the petition, had they been apprised of it.

Needless to say, I support the Petition.—K. G. M.]

It has come to the knowledge of the undersigned that at the present time a Sanitary Convention, the draft of the Regulations of which was discussed by the World Health Assembly, in May 1951 and afterwards circulated to the Governments of the 66 nations taking part in the World Health Organization, is being discussed. If the Regulations are accepted in their present form they will come into force in many areas in October, 1952.

The proposed Regulations of this Convention allow any "health administration" to demand vaccination certificates from all arrivals in a country even if there has not been the remotest risk of smallpox infection, the following verifiable facts being ignored:

British, American and Australian public health doctors can bear witness that vaccination does not prevent smallpox being brought into a country. The Report of the British Ministry of Health, 1950, (Appendix F) states that if vaccination as "a requirement were imposed on arriving travellers, it could not however, be guaranteed that no more importations of smallpox would occur." And it goes on to state that in 1944, 1945 and 1947 "recently vaccinated" servicemen had caused "outbreaks of the disease in this country" several deaths having resulted. In the U. S. A. "thoroughly vaccinated" servicemen caused smallpox outbreaks. Italy and Japan have had shocking smallpox epidemics lately, the majority of cases occurring in thoroughly vaccinated persons. Arabia, France, Holland and Scotland have also lately had outbreaks started by recently and thoroughly vaccinated people.

To endeavour to impose on every entrant into a country an operation which makes the majority of people feel poorly and many quite ill for a week or ten days, or longer, is unwise. It creates resentment against and criticism of the health administration that orders it. It causes

delay, inconvenience, business losses and difficulties, annoyance, bad feeling and it discourages travel.

Everyone has a right to the integrity of his own body and to maintain his blood unpoisoned by vaccine and lymph. The imposition of vaccination and inoculation is an infringement of natural, human rights.

Vaccination undergone to visit the U. S. A. has already caused serious illness and death. Film stars, boxers, Trade Union officials and many other people in the public eye have been made ill by vaccination or inoculation undergone as a travel requirement. There is a rising tide of resentment and fear against these measures.

The negotiations which result in International Sanitary Conventions are discussed by vaccine and serum manufacturers and the public health officials of various countries in the greatest secrecy. The public are kept in the dark about decisions that concern them vitally until too late for them to offer opposition and they are becoming rebellious. Moreover this latest document does not refer to Governments but to "health administrations." Health Departments are assuming more and more alarming power over the liberties of millions of people all over the world.

This petition is to register indignation and protest against this shameful attempt to violate the natural rights of healthy men, women and children—and to force upon them choice between the alternatives of vaccination or giving up travel.

The undersigned are opposed to vaccination and inoculation as conditions of travel.

We urge that a compulsory exemption clause be put into the Section of the new International Sanitary Convention Regulation which deals with vaccination—exempting from any vaccination or inoculation requirement all persons having a conscientious or religious objection to them and all who hold medical certificates stating that vaccination or inoculation would injure their health.

May we in closing respectfully draw your attention to the urgent need for prompt action, since any reservation made by any Government has to be sent to the World Health Organization without delay.

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