

# HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

## REGRETTABLE SPIRIT

The reader will find in another part of this issue my colleague Shri J. C. Kumarappa's article *Politics Then and Politics Now*. It was unfortunate that Shri Shankarrao Dev took up a text from Shri Kumarappa for developing his ideas. He could have done it independently. Having been referred to specifically, Shri Kumarappa's reply to it has also to be given place to. But I do not propose to allow this debate to develop in the *Harijan*. It pains me to see that Gandhiji's 'constructive' followers should adopt an attitude of hostility towards his 'politician' followers and spend their energy in rendering criticism. It does not benefit the country in any way, nor does it advance the constructive programme even an inch.

Let us in all humility remember that much though Gandhiji respected Vinoba, Kaka, Kumarappa and others, he had no hesitation in saying that Pandit Jawaharlalji was his heir and successor and he had not withdrawn his co-operation from him till the last day of his life. Indeed, he was shot within five minutes after he had finished talking with the Sardar. And he had made no condition with the Government before giving his co-operation in respect of the constructive programme. All those names (or most of them) whose existence on the Board of Trustees of the Gandhi Memorial Fund is resented above, were Bapu's co-trustees in the Kasturba Trust also, and he did not regard them as unassociable. Why should we? The mention of percentages is misleading. Assuming that Shri Kumarappa's classification is correct, I know at least two constructive workers, who did not accept trusteeship on the Gandhi Memorial Fund. If they had, their percentage would have been more than 15%. Who but they themselves are responsible for reducing their percentage, if mere numbers matter? If the Congress leaders do not have sufficient confidence in us, constructive workers, it is for us to create that confidence by proving our capacity and power to win them over and by our work directly among the people. If the people follow us, what does it matter that the Congressmen or even governments do not? Confidence cannot be created by merely cutting criticism. We have extolled non-violence night and day and fought untouchability of Harijans. Let us show that non-violence to our comrades on the political field, and not regard them as a new caste of unassociables. He whom Gandhiji owned as his

cannot and ought not to be an object of our dislike, be he Jawaharlal, Birla, a junior inmate of his Ashram, or a *bhangi* of the Valmiki Colony.

Certainly, Gandhiji said that he would have a Kisan Premier, employing Jawaharlalji as his secretary. He also said that he would appoint a Harijan girl to be the Governor-General. At the opening ceremony of the Gujarat Vidyapith, he had said that he would have an illiterate man of high character to be the Principal of its college. But it was he who had sought out the late Acharya A. T. Gidwani and made him the Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Gujarat Vidyapith, and I am sure the appointment of Rajaji must have been made with his fullest approval. His words must therefore be regarded to have a better meaning than literal. If he had written out Instruments of Instructions, he might have perhaps said to Jawaharlalji, 'your boss is the ignorant and poor Kisan of India'; to Rajaji, 'be as humble as a Harijan girl'; to Acharya Gidwani, 'your learning is of no use if you are not a man of character'. If we think that Gandhiji showed weakness in not giving up his colleagues in the Congress or his association with the rich, we had ample opportunity while he was alive, to non-co-operate with Gandhiji himself on a matter of principle. If we think that his co-operation was all right, because he had confidence enough that single-handedly he could carry his own point once he willed to do so, then let us build that strength in ourselves, in the same way as he did. Gandhiji found fault with himself when he found that his words failed to carry conviction to others, and waited patiently till they did. But for his patience, I wonder how many of us would not have been dismissed and abandoned by Gandhiji long since. I believe with Shri Kumarappa that the constructive programme is the only salvation of the country and that it has to be accepted sooner or later by the State as the fundamental basis of all its policies. But a mere dogmatic repetition of this belief cannot carry conviction to those who are unable to see it clearly today. Only that faith should be sufficient for us to work with hope and patience and love, even with those who do not possess it.

Wardha, 22-3-'49

K. G. MASHRUWALA

P. S. A colleague, who read this before it was despatched to the Press, promptly got out a file and gave me a copy of the following letter written

by Gandhiji to Shri J. R. D. Tata. It is in reference to the Kasturba Gandhi Memorial Trust and shows Gandhiji's attitude and way of thinking:

Sevagram, via Wardha, C. P.  
October 7th '44

Dear Jehangirji,

In order that I may be understood by you as fully as possible I write this in English, though I should love to write to you in Gujarati. For similar reason this will be typed.

Thank you for your cordial letter of greetings. I would like you to make the cordiality concrete by attending the next meeting of the trustees to be held at Wardha on Saturday the 4th November. Saturday has been specially chosen in order to enable the original trustees to attend with minimum of inconvenience. That you have readily accepted the additional names proposed by me for the Board of Trustees and for the small Executive ought not to bear the meaning that the original trustees are to be sleeping members.

I know I am guilty of having given currency to the thought that the administration of trust funds should in practice be left to the trustees of my choice. I discovered my mistake before any mischief was done. The more I think about it, the more I feel the narrowness underlying such a conception. The whole Board is a very happy combination and if most of the trustees take an active interest in the administration of the fund, we may expect even unthought of beneficial results. An active combination and co-operation of top city men and simple village-minded men and women is not an everyday experience. I trust therefore that you will make it convenient to attend the forthcoming meeting and even persuade the co-trustees to do likewise.

Yours,

(Sd. in Gujarati) M. K. GANDHI

Shri J. R. D. Tata,  
Bombay House,  
Bruce Street,  
Bombay.

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## POLITICS THEN AND POLITICS NOW

In a series of articles *Congress and the Constructive Workers* Shri Shankarrao Dev, taking as a text an introductory paragraph of my note on the Akhil Bharat Sarva Seva Sangh, has tried to make out a case for constructive workers to take part in politics. Running right through his writings there is a continuous misconception of the place of politics in different forms of governments. Politics in a slave country is one thing, politics of imperialism is another. Politics under a totalitarian government takes one shape but politics of democracy is of a different mould. Swaraj politics is not necessarily the same as *Ramarajya* politics. His call to constructive workers reminds one of the lines of the old nursery rhymes "Come into my parlour, says the spider to the fly".

Taken in the context of old imperialism our politics was definitely directed towards getting rid of an alien government. Under that stress we had developed certain techniques which will naturally have no place in self-government. Those of us trained in the old methods find that it has become a part of our nature and it is almost impossible to shake it off. Such hardened old soldiers have to get off the road to make road for the newer type. As long as road-hogging is resorted to by the old stagers, who have the advantage of the momentum, it is futile to invite others. Shri Shankarrao remarks that "there is no doubt that the present Congress leadership has come in for much severe and unsympathetic criticism bordering on anger, not only from their political opponents, but surprisingly enough, from their friends also, especially from constructive workers." The fact that friends also are dissatisfied should have turned the searchlight inwards. But power politics has no time for self-examination. So Shri Shankarrao passed by the opportunity.

Shri Shankarrao recognizes that Gandhiji wanted his constructive programme to be the "dynamo of a non-violent social revolution and not a palliative in the form of social reform," and he himself states, "the revolutionary potentialities of Gandhiji's constructive programme can only be realized if it is accepted and worked as a whole and as the basis of a new non-violent social order." Does Shri Shankarrao profess that the present day politics is directed towards the establishment of a new non-violent social order? If not, as the constructive workers can have no part in any other political activity, they cannot respond to his call.

Gandhiji has in mind this difference in politics of imperialism and politics of *Ramarajya*, when he says, "Congress in its present shape and form, i. e. as a propaganda vehicle and parliamentary machine, has outlived its use. India has still to attain social, moral and economic independence in terms of its seven hundred thousand villages as distinguished from its cities and towns." Therefore, what we want is not the old technique but the development of a new one to usher in *Ramarajya*.

This does not mean that we need to discard our redoubtable old warriors as Shri Shankarraoji fears. Gandhiji himself had suggested that instead of being a Premier, Jawaharlalji should rather be the Secretary of a Kisan Premier. Politics should cease to be an end but become a means to attain our social and economic freedom. This is the type of politics where constructive workers can usefully play a part. This is the Lok Sevak Sangh of Gandhiji's conception where politics is not abandoned but it is sublimated into a constructive instrument.

Shri Shankarraoji confesses that this idea of a non-violent society has not found favour with the Congress. He says, "Incidentally it is often forgotten that though the Congress accepted non-violent non-co-operation and Satyagraha of Gandhiji in 1920, it was mainly as a means to achieve political independence and never as the basic principles of the Gandhian way of life or of a new social order. To the vast majority of Congressmen Gandhiji was essentially a political and not a moral leader. The moral and purificatory side of his programme was accepted by the generality of Congressmen more as a price of his leadership than as a matter of inner conviction or acceptance of a higher, moral and spiritual code. No one was more aware of this than Gandhiji himself. We see the truth of this statement in the present day attitude of the majority of Congressmen towards governmental power and service of the people through constructive work. Today it is a sad sight to see them putting more faith in power than in service."

Can we wonder at it that the constructive workers of the Gandhian ideology stand aloof from such a Congress and its politics?

If the Congress desires to get the co-operation of these workers, it will have to offer full scope for the ideals such workers stand for. The present day tendency does not indicate any such move on the part of the Congress government or the Congress itself. On the other hand, its leaders express a lack of confidence in constructive workers and exhibit tendency to hold power in their own hands. To cite only two instances, the recently formed Government of India Cottage Industries Board has hardly any constructive workers on it. An overwhelming majority of the members are government representatives of the old imperialistic order. Even the Gandhi National Memorial Trust is made up of 66% politicians, 25% business magnates and only 8% of constructive workers. This state of affairs has to be reversed if constructive workers are to be attracted. Mere reiteration of Messages etc. as at the Jaipur Congress will not do. Constructive workers have to be reassured by actual practice. Shri Shankarraoji himself says, "If the

Congress is to achieve the goal set by him (Gandhiji), then it must give a central place to constructive work in its social reconstruction programme. The various constructive organizations that are already there and those which may be formed in the future must become an organic part of it. The Congress must adopt a plan of decentralized production which should form part of the permanent economy of the country. It must give special attention to the rapid development of cottage and small-scale industries and it must aim at national and regional economic self-sufficiency at least in the essentials of life." When the Congress adopts such a policy and a programme to implement it, we are certain the constructive workers will not wait for an invitation. They will then know they can only realize their ideals through the Congress and will flock to it. Is the Congress prepared to change its power politics for the politics of *Ramarajya*?

Fighting British imperialism called for political strategy but to combat the demons of social injustice, poverty and disease requires constructive work of a high order with staying power and steadfastness of purpose and grim determination. It also needs the backing of a definite governmental policy and drive.

The acceptance of the politics of *Ramarajya*, therefore, will involve a complete change over in our standards of values. Material considerations will have to yield place to moral, human and spiritual values. This in its turn will have to be reflected in our simple mode of life. Unless this social order is in the horizon, constructive workers cannot by any kheddah\* operations be brought into old time politics. They have to be drawn into it and not beaten into it by verbal jugglery. Let us hope the light will dawn on the leaders before it is too late.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

\* Trap for catching wild elephants.

#### SOME USEFUL BOOKS BY GANDHIJI

An Autobiography	7-0-0	0-13-0
Key to Health	0-10-0	0-2-0
Non-violence in Peace & War		
Vol. 1	7-0-0	0-10-0
Cent Per Cent Swadeshi	2-0-0	0-8-0
From Yeravda Mandir	0-8-0	0-2-0
Hind Swaraj	0-8-0	0-2-0
Self-Restraint v. Self-Indulgence	2-0-0	0-8-0
Women & Social Injustice	3-0-0	0-8-0
Delhi Diary	3-0-0	0-10-0
The Nation's Voice	3-0-0	0-10-0
Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Govt. (1942-44)	2-8-0	0-7-0
Constructive Programme	0-6-0	0-2-0

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# HARIJAN

April 3

1949

## AN APPEAL TO CONSCIENCE

Elsewhere will be found the remarks of Pandit Nehru in regard to the Khan Brothers and the Khudai Khidmatgars. Their continued incarceration constitutes a challenge to the civilized conscience of the world. If ever there was a case of martyred innocence sanctified by devotion to the highest ideals, it is theirs—particularly the Badshah Khan's. The world will not easily forget the miracle which he nearly performed, of inculcating the non-violence of the brave on the fierce, warlike Pathans. Whatever the political difference they may have with the Government in power, their integrity is above question. They have declared their acceptance of Pakistan. I remember how, after partition, during my last stay with Gandhiji in December 1947 and January 1948, Badshah Khan sent word to Gandhiji that he should not worry about them as they had deliberately decided not to meet him or write to him as they wanted to put their bona fides above suspicion. It would be doing them cruel wrong to suspect them of double dealing or treachery. They are incapable of both. They love their country and its people with a deep, passionate love. Badshah Khan is straight and simple by nature and guileless at times to the point of embarrassment. This is what Gandhiji, who had tested them through and through, wrote about Badshah Khan in 1938 after his historic tour of the N. W. F. P. in his company:

"Whatever the Khudai Khidmatgars may be or may ultimately turn out to be, there can be no doubt about what their leader whom they delight to call Badshah Khan is. He is unquestionably a man of God. He believes in His living presence and knows that his movement will prosper only if God wills it. Having put his whole soul into his cause, he remains indifferent as to what happens. It is enough for him to realize that there is no deliverance for the Pathan except through out and out acceptance of non-violence. . . . He does not want to see his Pathan as a *goonda* of society. He believes that the Pathan has been exploited and kept in ignorance. He wants the Pathan to become braver than he is and wants him to add true knowledge to his bravery. This he thinks can only be achieved through non-violence. . . .

"There is no humbug about him. He is an utter stranger to affectation. . . . And so when we parted at Taxilla our eyes were wet."

In the course of the same tour Badshah Khan once poured his soul out to Gandhiji in words that lay bare the innermost springs of his being. Here are his exact words taken down as they

dropped from his lips and retorted in the *Harijan* at the time:

"Mahatmaji, this land so rich in fruit and grain might well have been a smiling little Eden upon this earth, but it has today fallen under a blight. My conviction is daily growing deeper that more than anything else, violence has been the bane of us Pathans in this province. It shattered our solidarity and tore us with wretched internal feuds. The entire strength of the Pathan is today spent in thinking how to cut the throat of his brother. To what fruitful use this energy might not be put if only we could be rid of this curse?"

"Whatever may be the case with other provinces, I am firmly convinced that so far as the Frontier Province is concerned, the non-violence movement is the greatest boon that God has sent to us. There is no other way of salvation for the Pathans except through non-violence. I say this from experience of the miraculous transformation that even the little measure of non-violence that we have attained has wrought in our midst. Mahatmaji, we used to be so timid, and indolent. The sight of an Englishman would frighten us. We thought nothing of wasting our time in idleness. Your movement changed all this. It has instilled fresh life into us and made us more industrious so that a piece of land that formerly used to yield hardly ten rupees worth of produce, now produces double that amount. We have shed our fear and are no longer afraid of an Englishman or, for the matter of that, of any man. . . . Englishmen are afraid of our non-violence. A non-violent Pathan, they say, is more dangerous than a violent Pathan. If we could assimilate and put into practice the whole of the doctrine of non-violence as you have explained it to us, how much stronger, and better off we would be! We were on the brink of utter ruination. But God in His mercy sent us the non-violence movement to save us in our extremity."

Such a person can never be an enemy of a State that calls itself Islamic. The Khan Brothers are of the stuff of which heroes and martyrs are made. They bear enmity towards none. They have no personal axe to grind. They would be content to lay down their lives for the cause for which they lived to the exclusion of all else. It is, therefore, well with them. But, surely, a better use could be found for such servants of God than to bury them alive.

A word to the Khudai Khidmatgars. They are on their trial. Let them hear in mind the prophetic words of Gandhiji from the same article from which we have already quoted:

"If in the last heat the Khudai Khidmatgars prove untrue to the creed they profess to believe, non-violence was certainly not in their hearts. The proof will soon come. If they zealously and faithfully follow the constructive programme, there is no danger. They will be found among the bravest of men when the test comes."

Non-violence does not depend on anybody's sufferance. It is its own seal and sanction. It conquers through innocent suffering and what may look like defeat. It never fails.

Delhi, 21-3-'49

PYARELAL

### KHAN BROTHERS AND THE KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS

With reference to the communique issued by the N. W. F. P. Government in which allegation had been made about a plot, in which the Red Shirts in Hazara District had been implicated with insinuations against the Government of India, Pandit Nehru, replying to a short notice question in the Indian Parliament on Saturday last, said among other things:

"The Government have seen this communique with surprise and great regret. While the communique does not mention the Government of India specifically, the entire wording of the communique insinuates that the Indian Union is a party to some plot against the N. W. F. P. Government and the Pakistan Government and it is stated that money has passed from India to the Red Shirts. So far as they are concerned, the Government of India repudiate these allegations and they have made a strong protest to the Pakistan Government in regard to the insinuations contained in the communique of the N. W. F. P. Government, which must have an injurious effect on the relations between the two Dominions.

"The Government have refrained from expressing any opinion so far in regard to the very serious happenings in the Frontier Province as well as the Tribal areas in the North-West because of their desire not to interfere, in any way, with the internal affairs of other Governments. They have, however, viewed these developments during the past year with increasing concern.

"It is well known that the Khudai Khidmatgars, or the Red Shirts as they are sometimes called, under the leadership of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Dr. Khansahib, played a very notable part in the struggle for the freedom of India from foreign domination. The high integrity, selflessness and patriotism of these leaders have been admired not only all over India but in other parts of the world. They showed a remarkable example of peaceful action, even under the greatest provocation, and set a standard which it was not easy to follow even in other parts of India. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan took the doctrine of non-violent action to the brave and warlike Pathans and turned their great energy into peaceful channels. Perturbed by the partition of India, he nevertheless accepted it in all sincerity and publicly declared his adherence to the new order of things, claiming, however, that the Pathans were entitled to autonomy in regard to their internal affairs. He followed this policy of accepting Pakistan, but at the same time standing peacefully for the internal freedom of

the Pathans, and it is impossible for any person acquainted with this gallant fighter for freedom to believe that he can be associated in any way with any underhand activities. His outstanding qualities are straightforwardness, integrity, courage and a devotion to the cause of his people.

"While the Government and the people of India, having accepted partition and its consequences, loyally abided by these changes and did not wish to interfere with local happenings within Pakistan, it was impossible for them not to take the deepest interest in the fate of some of the bravest and finest soldiers of freedom that India had produced. They were distressed, therefore, at the series of happenings in the Frontier Province during which intense repression took place of the peaceful Khudai Khidmatgars, and their leaders were more specially subjected to treatment of a kind which one would not expect any Government to mete out.

"Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, a man of the highest standing for a generation past in India, has been kept in solitary confinement for over a year and his health has suffered greatly during this period.

"I do not wish to recount all that has happened in the Frontier Province during this past year and more, but the tale that has appeared in the newspapers from time to time is a sorry one. We have remained quiet and we have not had any kind of contact with the Khudai Khidmatgars or their leaders ever since the partition, but the sufferings of our old comrades of the days of our fight for India's freedom have distressed us exceedingly."

[ Note: Since the announcement of the above, the Government of Pakistan have issued a statement saying that it did not suspect that the Indian Government was involved in the alleged plot.

— ED. ]

### NOTES

#### The National Week

This issue will appear shortly before the commencement of the National Week. I take it that the Congress leaders will have made their announcement as to how it has to be observed. As I think of it, it seems to me that at this stage of our national life, the Harijan cause deserves to receive our first attention. In spite of legislative measures passed in their favour, their social ostracism continues in practice in as severe a form as ever. Those who have really shed untouchability are only a handful. The social ostracism results in various handicaps in getting water, admission into schools, avocations, and, of course, temples.

The Madras Government announced some time ago in response to Shri Shriramulu's fast to observe one day in a month as Harijan Day. In Maharashtra Shri V. N. Barve, President of the Provincial Harijan Sevak Sangh, has organized a scavenging programme for men and women of all castes and communities

in association with *bhangis*. These are steps in the right direction. The National Week will be a good occasion to start such activities.

Wardha, 25-3-'49

K. G. M.

### Your Money or Your Life

Cinemas have made familiar the alternative the hold-up-man presents. In his case the demand is for the one or the other.

In case of the *vanaspati* mills there is no alternative. It demands both money and life!

In 1947-48 there were about 1 crore of acres under groundnut and 21% of the production went to the *vanaspati* mills. That means 21 lakhs of acres were earmarked for these mills. These lands can grow *jawar* and two acres of *jawar* land will easily support a family of five. Hence the pressure of the *vanaspati* mills last year put out 10½ lakhs of families, that is more than half a crore souls had their food taken out of their mouths by these mills. Besides, during the period India had imported over 130 crores worth of food stuffs. Is this not a subsidy to mills to release food lands for raw materials?

J. C. K.

### Ahimsa Week

Principal W. S. Fernando of Universal College, Panadura, Ceylon, who has been organizing Ahimsa Week in Ceylon for some years past has issued an appeal from which the following is taken. — E. D.

"We kindly request all to co-operate with us in observing the Ahimsa Week, which falls in the first week of May every year. The following three precepts have to be observed during the week:

1. To abstain from killing.
2. To take only vegetarian diet.
3. To give rest to animals from 11-30 a. m. to 1 p. m., and to abstain from travelling in vehicles drawn by animals during that time.

"Further in order to increase food products in the country and to keep our fellow men gradually away from eating the flesh of animals, we kindly request all to plant as many food-producing plants as possible commencing on May 1st at 6-30 a. m. and continuing throughout May and June."

### Hawking Food at Railway Stations.

The country is experiencing shortage in food. There is ill health due to bad feeding habits. These two facts can be helped, though to a limited extent, by controlling the hawking of food on railway platforms. All the twentyfour hours the vendors shout themselves hoarse at every station. Eating at all times is dietetically bad. It makes the station platform a dirty, noisy bazar every time a train passes.

It would seem simple enough to regulate the catering and limit it to certain hours, and during those hours, to time the trains to halt longer at particular stations.

This will conduce to better health, to cleanliness on the platforms and in the carriages, and will generally make for orderliness. Will the railway management take up this reform also amongst the many it is seeking to introduce?

J. C. K.

The travelling public has also much to think of and improve in this matter. Some people seem to get voracious appetite as soon as they enter a train. Like chain smokers, they are eating or drinking continuously at all times of the day and night while travelling. This is a bad and unhealthy habit. They should also remember that no management can succeed in maintaining cleanliness if the people will not help it in the task. And the people are more to blame for the uncleanness of our platforms and carriages (and towns also) than railway or municipal managements.

K. G. M.

### Vaishnav-Jana

[Note: A correspondent asked for an English translation of Gandhiji's favourite hymn, *Vaishnav Jana*. The following is a free translation of it by Gandhiji himself. — ED.]

God's truest saint is he,  
Who holdeth other's woe to be his own:  
No pride hath he,  
He speaketh ill of none,  
He holdeth all alike in honour:  
He ruleth well his speech,  
His passions and his thoughts:  
Always he speaketh truth,  
He layeth not his hands on other men's possessions:  
Pure is he and chaste,  
No self-delusion bandageth his eyes,  
His mind is drawn away from earthly things,  
No lusts, no ill desires sear his soul:  
He loveth well the name of God,  
He knoweth well that God's most sacred shrine  
Is man's own body:  
Generous is he, and free from cunning,  
He yieldeth not to anger:  
One such man  
Bringeth by his presence purity  
To all around.

NARSAIYO

### REVIVAL OF MODI

The same reactionary spirit which manifests itself in opposing Urdu is to be seen to work from the opposite direction in the Order recently issued for reintroducing the Modi script in the Bombay Province. Is Modi to be made the script of the Marathi language so that documents, applications, etc., might be presented in that script as they used to be about a generation ago? Personally I know Modi much better than I do Urdu. Hand-written Urdu I can hardly decipher satisfactorily. Modi letters and documents I can read and write with greater ease, but as a script it is difficultly legible and incomplete. It is not as short (i. e. speedy) as shorthand or even Urdu, and though more complete than the Urdu, still it is inexact. Like the Urdu, it has its own artistic beauty in calligraphy, which one may admire as an exhibit in a museum, but not when it comes to reading manuscripts and letters written in it. And yet there is enormous and important literature written and printed in the Urdu script. This cannot be said of Modi. It was never the script for newspapers, magazines or books even when it was widely prevalent.

But while Modi is sought to be revived, Urdu has been condemned and opposed on the ground of its incompleteness and illegibility and to ask all students of Hindustani to learn both the scripts is regarded as too heavy a burden. Is not the spirit of antipathy for Islam and assertion of provincialism quite obvious? How is the Marathi language and literature going to advance further by returning to Modi?

How many arrangements, which could be made simply and naturally are turned into problems by us which lead us into inconsistent positions, because our approach towards them is not non-violent but one based on hatred and narrow egotisms? Linguistic provinces would be a natural arrangement if it were freed from provincial virus; so also the question of the national language and scripts could be solved in a spirit of generosity. But we have contaminated every one of these by political, that is, narrow approaches.

Our aim must be to reduce the number of existing scripts. If the alphabetical order of the different Indian scripts is the same, why do we not seek a way to reduce their number? One can understand different ways of writing when the scripts are based on different systems, like Nagari, Roman and Urdu. But why should the Marathi language have two different scripts, while Hindi-Urdu-Hindustani, which has always been written in two and even three scripts hitherto, cannot be allowed to have those alternatives? My appeal to the scholars is, let us be generous and reasonable and workers for unity.

Rao, 9-3-'49

K. G. MASHRUWALA

### NEW INDIAN POSTAGE STAMPS

Recently there was the news that a new archaeological series of postal stamps is to be issued in the near future. It will depict the *Glory that was Ind.*

It would be cruel to deprive Indians of the satisfaction of being proud of their past. It is particularly so at this juncture when they had set about to nullify all that was glorious of their heritage.

But that apart, is it legitimate for us to look to the past only? The Government and the people of India dream of a new order. That is to say, they look to the future. Certainly the past is to be taken into account. But if the future is so to be stressed, stress in everything done by the people or the Government should be placed on the future aspects of things. If this is admitted and is carried to its logical conclusion in respect of a new series of stamps, the series should symbolize and depict various pictures which remind us, from day to day, of our goal and of the ways leading to it.

Everybody, and all concerned, are interested in and swear by the importance of the constructive programme. It is fit and proper that all conceivable resources be tapped to make the people constructive programme conscious. So I suggest, with all the humility, that next year the series should contain symbols and pictures depicting the contents and ideas behind items of the constructive pro-

gramme. I do not mean to add anything as regards the importance of the constructive programme and/or the part that such a series may play, little or otherwise, in making people constructive-minded.

One thing more and I have done. The denominations in this series will be in English and Hindi and the word *INDIA* will be in English as revealed by the specimens. Here also we should move from the past and the present (English and Hindi) which this series reflects, to the future (Hindustani). At the top, there may be indications of the respective items of the programme. At bottom the denominations may be in corners — two scripts in two corners — and word *HIND* in the middle.

S. M. NEKSATKHAN

[Note:— The suggestion deserves to be considered. India's old achievements in art are of course great and many and worthy to make one feel proud of. If we depict only the past, we are able to show only a little out of the few still undevoured by time. The Jains have protested that their beautiful temples ought to have found a place; and when the Jains are satisfied, some other art will complain of having been omitted. Even after every important representative of the past art has found its place, it will still be a dream long since realized and shattered. The past memory is not even twenty thousand years old, while the future before us is infinite. So it is better that we think of the future and give pictures of our dreams of Sarvodaya which we wish to achieve hereafter. Also, of all things postage stamps perhaps penetrate deepest into the villages and it is fit that the people as well as the foreigners should see village civilization depicted on the stamps: e. g. we want to grow more food, more cloth; we might show the plough, the *charkha*, the handloom, pair of oxen, cows, etc. These implements deserve places of honour in preference to buildings and stone images, however imposing and artistic.

On the question of script, I think the Roman script should also remain along with Nagari and Urdu.

Wardha, 19-3-'49

— K. G. M.]

### FROM VINOBA'S SPEECHES AT THE SARVODAYA CONFERENCE - I

#### PURPOSE OF THE CONFERENCE

The purpose of the Sarvodaya *sevak*s meeting in a Conference every year is the forming of mutual contacts. Of course, when friends meet they do discuss various matters and exchange views, and hence there can be no objection to adding that object also in the purpose clause. But I attach less importance to exchange of views through the medium of speech than to that silent conversation which takes place when people with like urges and faith sit together in a common atmosphere surcharged with a common ideal. The congregational spinning which we have just finished illustrates my point. The sight of such spinners' gatherings has become rather rare these days. But I thirst for them. So, when I join a gathering of men and women assembled to spin together, I experience a mental condition which may well be termed *samadhi*. To me

the fact that we meet together and jointly take *Ramanama* in this active manner is a condition of bliss.

We were blessed with a torch-bearer. If we pledge ourselves again to follow the light shown by him, we shall have met well. It will purify us and add to our capacities.

#### SARVODAYA ORGANIZATION

Ours is spoken of as a loose organization. Words often fail to express the exact meaning. If the word organization (*sangathan*) has at all to be applied to this body, I would say that this is an unartificial organization. It is not a manipulation, but just a natural mutual contact.

Is there any use for such a loose body? I am asked. The question is pertinent. When the wheels of a machine are to be moved by a cord running over them, the cord has to be strung as tight as possible and to reduce the friction caused by tightening, the wheels have to be oiled. That is the law of mechanics. A loose cord will not create friction, but at the same time, it will not move the wheels. The same principles apply to organizations. They have to be stiff and disciplined for efficient work, and the friction-discipline must be reduced by the oil of love. But this does not apply to the Sarvodaya Samaj, since it is not intended to be a machine for carrying out the various activities which we consider to be important. We have our various constructive organizations for that purpose, and we have been trying to form a federation of these under the name of Sarva Seva Sangh. That organization will be the machine for our work. Through the Sarvodaya Samaj we shall think and meditate together on principles and goals, and shall popularize our ideals. A loose organization is better fitted for this kind of work than a well-regulated machine.

#### PERSONAL REPORT

Shortly after the last Conference I undertook a touring programme in New Delhi, parts of East Punjab and other places in the North. I cannot say that I achieved much. The main change that has taken place during the period is that the strained relations among the principal communities, and the feeling of dependency among refugees have lessened. I cannot claim any credit for this change. But incidentally I got an opportunity of reducing religious separatism. It seems that unknown to me God prepared me for this work, when about ten years ago I took a fancy for studying the *Koran* in the original Arabic. I found that this had endeared me to Muslims, who accepted me as one of them. Both at Ajmer and in Gurgaon, the Muslims welcomed me with love. It has been possible to place a few good workers among them in the Gurgaon district and they have been rendering useful service. The relations between the two communities have greatly improved. It would be a great service to the country if we could do the same in similar other parts of the country, such as Delhi, Ajmer, Aligarh, Hyderabad (Deccan) etc. I propose to proceed to Hyderabad from here.

#### THE PLACE OF KHADI

Except in Gujarat, wherever I went I received generally garlands of flower. It was only in Gujarat that I received yarn hanks as garlands. This was a great disappointment to me. I am like that man described by Tulsidas, who became blind in the month of Shrawan (July-August), when there was everything green all around him. The picture of a green world had become impressed upon his memory, and in his imagination he could see only the green colour. Similarly, having been always surrounded by *khadi* and yarn in the Ashram, I expected to find it everywhere and felt sorely disappointed to see its absence in the country. Possibly, I am like that blind man. But I do not believe that I am blinded. In our conception of Sarvodaya, *khadi* has the place of honour. Nothing else can supplant it. Shri Kakasaheb told us this morning that though we had not yet summoned courage to say it, some day we shall have to say to the people — not only of India but of the whole world — that they must accept the message of *khadi*. These words of Shri Kakasaheb appeared to me prophetic. Of course, he said this by quoting Bapu. But along with Bapu's, his own vision of the future is also joined to it. Neither Bapu nor Kaka may be suspected of having lost the reasoning faculty. What they have said is very sound. The other items of the constructive programme are good, and have to be worked out. But they are not representative of the Sarvodaya ideal, because the other items are not inconsistent with other conceptions. For instance, no one would doubt that the service of lepers is a necessary item; so, too, village sanitation and health. It is not so about *khadi*. There is opposition to it. It is said to be inconsistent with the modern age, which in the modern parlance is called the age of mechanized industrialization. The older generation called it the age of *Kali* (strife). Ours is a rebellion against *Kali*. *Khadi* must therefore occupy the central place in our thought and services; all the rest adjust themselves around it. We might and should render other services also, but if we admit defeat in *khadi*, then I have personally no doubt that the rest of our programme becomes one of secondary importance only.

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