

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

HIGH COMMITTEE ON LINGUISTIC PROVINCES

I am unable to welcome the High Committee's report on Linguistic Provinces with the enthusiasm which has been accorded to it by some of the Congress papers. Instead of putting an end to controversy and agitation it has invited them. The principles which it has set forth and the counsel which it has given are good but it hands over the trump card to agitators when it confesses in so many words: "Notwithstanding what we have said above, if public sentiment is insistent and overwhelming, the practicability of satisfying public demand with its implications and consequences must be examined;" and also, "we, as democrats, have to submit to it, but subject to certain limitations in regard to the good of India as a whole."

Agitators have to take up the clue and work it up!

Everyone knows that, let alone democracy, ultimately every government has to submit to public opinion. But in a democracy there are two ways of submitting to public opinion: one is to accept the public opinion and work it out, whether it is wise or foolish. The other is to say that such and such a thing is, in our opinion, good for the people and we cannot do anything else; but if the public want something else to be done, we shall get out of their way, and allow them to choose their own agents. Having given a deliberate advice in the latter, the High Committee ought to have taken the second stand and not the first. To the extent it accepts the formation of certain new provinces under certain conditions, it should have set down a programme for doing so and investigated the question of boundaries and bilingual areas and given its definite and detailed award. This Committee is not of the same type as the Dhar Committee. It consists of three topmost and duly elected leaders and representatives of the people with power to decide on their behalf. Instead, they have chosen to act as if they were merely secretaries of certain government departments or organizations, awaiting further orders of the most effective group.

The problems of the creation of provinces are of the same nature as those relating to consolidation and merger of States. The latter problems were all solved at high level and the people have accepted the arrangements with faith. The reason is that these problems are too intricate and subtle for

the ordinary people to understand. They leave them to their leaders. How may, say, poor Bhils of Nandurbar decide whether they should be in Gujarat or Maharashtra? Gujarati agitators will claim the former, Maharashtrians the latter. If the matters are not decided at high level, the result can only be that both must talk at the top of their voices and hold a hundred meetings and send two hundred reports to the Press. And these reports would be read by far away people who will conclude what public opinion is according to the reports they have come by most. Is it democracy that we wish to evolve or groupocracy? Surely this was a much simpler problem for the three talented leaders than the many they have resolved before, without waiting for the development of "insistent and overwhelming" sentiment!

Wardha, 9.4-'49

K. G. MASHRUWALA

FALL OF CABINETS

Recently the Prime Ministers of Madhya Bharat, Madras and East Punjab have had all to resign for want of adequate support by the members of their respective parties. A similar thing had taken place in Madras once before and also in West Bengal. From what accounts appear in the Press, it does not appear that these changes involve anything more than intrigues of influential power-seeking politicians. There is very little chance of any change in the policy or improvement in the administration of any of the provinces by reason of the retirement of one group and the succession of another. And so beyond getting a subject for gossip at leisure time, the changes in these governments do not mean anything substantial in terms of people's comforts. Rather, new favourites might be expected to get importance in the people's day-to-day affairs. The game of politics once so common in Indian States in the pre-British period seems to have commenced again.

I understand that the various Congress Assembly parties have a rule that the election of the leader has to take place every year. I have not been able to see the wisdom behind this rule. It is not difficult to see its mischievousness. If the Assembly is elected for four or five years, the election of the leader for one year only must mean uncertainty of tenure and so indecision, desire to please particular interests, and connivance of abuse of power and position, and too much expenditure of time in tours, lectures, parties, etc. instead of serious desk-work and attention to one's departmental work.

The leader once chosen should not be dismissed in the middle of the Assembly's life, except for grave reasons. In none of the present cases any such grave reason seems to be in existence.

Indeed, some of the members of the three Cabinets that have fallen have the reputation of being men of high principles and character, ability and past experience, and their disappearance from the administration is hardly in the interests of the people. But politicians have their own special points of view which laymen cannot understand and I am not better than a layman in this respect. All I can say is that these events do not augur well for the country or the Congress organization.

Wardha, 8-4-'49

K. G. MASHRUWALA

THE PROBLEM OF WAR

Struggle is as old as life, but war would be traced back to the origin of man only. It is not a law of nature, nor even a law of human nature, but all the same it is a purely human phenomenon. Animals fight against the members of other species. Man is unique in committing mass murder of his own.

Is war the natural outcome of man's structure? There have been people who believed so, but a study of the problem of war shows that it exists more because men wish it to exist. Such a wish has varied from an absolute zero to a frenzied maximum. History shows it. China is an example.

All war is inhuman in nature, its worst aspect being not physical suffering but reckless flouting of all the best and highest in mankind. Notions of right and wrong, good and evil are reduced to the biological righteousness of victory and sinfulness of defeat. The ends are all important and means of no consideration.

There has been for long an agreement with regard to the ultimate human goal. Peace is the common dream of all those who desire a better state of society. Every road to such a state is however blocked sooner or later by war, by threat of war and by preparation of war. With the advance of civilization, this end drifts further and further away. All civilized societies are warlike. Eskimoes are an example of peace-loving race. Europeans glorify war more than the Asians.

But is war merely a social disease? In order to study its causes and methods of prevention, we have to go deep into the structure of the human mind. Broadly speaking, we have to know what conditions prevail in peace time that make the common man welcome the advent of war. War, therefore, is not a single problem but an embodiment of many forms of maladjustments.

First of all, combatants and even non-combatants find war a welcome relief from the tedium of peace. Life becomes more interesting by expansion of war industries, propaganda of the Government against the tyrannies of the enemy and various sorts of rumours. Artificial prosperity is induced. All these factors provide comfort as well as recreation to

the common man. Hitler's Nuremberg Congress, for instance, was designed to exploit the warlike forces inherent in the crowd. Such eloquence is used by the mighty heroes to satisfy their own lust for power. And it casts a spell over man, weakening all that is noble in him. He loses all mercy towards the enemy, who is a man like him. This is the method of psychical rape.

The natural outcome of all this is a wrong type of nationalism, which is psychologically more satisfying. It is a good antidote against inferiority complex. The national symbol represents the idea of self-esteem which is another exciting emotion. Its followers are devotees of one idolatry. There arises in them the wish for the disparagement of others.

Hatred of this kind renders the preparation of war and ultimately the waging of war inevitable. In war-time nation personified becomes a strange deity, demanding righteousness and sacrifices. It is super-human in strength, but sub-human in morals. The bullying that follows serves an outlet for pride and joys of criminality. It satisfies the lower in man. When the country bluffs or steals, even the "good" citizens feel a thrill of delight. However high the ideals of a nation, this process inevitably occurs during the war. Experiences and observations of psychologists have proved that every man craves more for the doing of things forbidden.

Some wars are fought for the sake of seizing a valuable piece of territory, strategic point, a frontier from which it is easy to defend and still easier to launch attacks, and some for the sake of furthering religious or political creed. In the latter case, there is the ideological motive paramount no doubt, but not without non-ideological considerations, are the greed for wealth and dominions and desire for glory.

In all wars armaments play a large part. The statesmen insist that armaments in their particular country are for purposes of defence only, while the same in other countries are a menace to peace. This vicious circle is spreading endlessly. In the whole civilized world, there is a race for these defensive measures. In such an atmosphere of hatred and suspicion, resentment and fear, even a small dispute may end in war.

The scientists that work towards these measures must be called morally weak. They are mere playthings in the hands of politicians. But for the developments of newer type of armaments many decisions which are now decided by war could be made by friendly negotiations. Today those countries which have no capacity for war have no voice. Many such countries are over-populated, but a part of their population cannot migrate to any other colony with an over-abundance of food and lack of men, for it cannot fight for it in the right sense.

There is a large body of opinion today which believes in the outlawry of war, but no way has yet been found to stamp out this greatest enemy

of humanity. Is aggression then a part of human nature? Is there a primary need to hurt and destroy as there is to love or eat or drink? There are people who think otherwise, because simple and uncivilized people do not war. But if they have no wars, nor do they have peace. In any case, unprovoked aggressiveness is not an inherent element of human nature. The aggressive in man, therefore, can be channelled into paths other than war.

War occurs because of the conditions of peace. Peace is not a negative state in which conflict is absent. In peace disputes are settled by constitutional means. The basic cause which is fear and hatred persists. Frustration is there in the form of poor living standards, lack of prestige and opinions and prejudices. Every child acquires there pre-formed pictures from the culture, education, newspapers and family conversation and all help to build them. Education for war is more openly carried out in many countries. Children are taught that certain countries are natural enemies. These antipathies are, in course of time, exaggerated and the very first opportunity the child gets to combat against the hated nation is welcomed by him. By a strong twist of logic these ideas are made to appear as inborn.

What the modern State needs to work for is, therefore, the betterment of the conditions prevailing in peace time. It should see that war is not a welcome relief from the boredom, difficulties and training of life to the citizens. The void and pointlessness in the life of the ordinary man must be filled in by making life more interesting. It could also be done by suitably rearranging the individual's tasks. Variety in labour will be one important method. Any doctrine that restores point and purpose to life will be immensely helpful. Wars, apart from all terrible evils they bring, bring only a passing relief to the victims. When they are over, sense of pointlessness becomes all the more intense.

A new cosmology must spring, which is more nearly corresponding to reality. War rejects conversion, compromise and discussion, but men can live better only if they proceed in life through these. To achieve this ideal a new and better type of education for children and a kind of self-education for adults are necessary. Through these, aggressive tensions formed in countries, would in course of time find direction in relatively constructive channels.

The factor of inequalities of every sort must not be overlooked, but the teachers must see that this realization of inequality does not result in black-white, Hindu-Muslim or rich-poor tension. The State must see that every child lives in an atmosphere of comfort, self-respect and security. Repression, compulsion and fear work towards the development of an inferiority complex which later finds expression in compensatory cruelty. Time is ripe, therefore, for the emergence of a new commu-

nity of men and women who should live and work together on the basis of love and freedom, devotion and fearlessness. We have seen for long now the nature of success that the disciples of violence have achieved. Their power has failed in the test of humanity. Following them will take us to the path of darkness and destruction. Let a newer team lead humanity to its worthy goal!

SAVITRI NANDA

RELIGION, GOVERNMENTS AND POLITICS

When in England, America and Europe, religion began to be separated from government and politics, the reason was that real religion had ceased to affect the individuals who professed it, and that it had become more a sectarian prejudice than a moral force, which should have affected the life and conduct of its followers. Thus it had lost its uplifting influence on its followers and had become merely a sort of communal and sectarian factor in human conflict. For this reason our Government is perfectly right in excluding it from politics and administrative activities.

This tendency to exclude religion from the public life is thus based on the fact of the deterioration of the religious influence on the moral tendencies of the followers of religion.

But if religion means the recognition and belief in the Universal Spirit which underlies the universe and all beings living here, and if its natural effect should be the moral uplift of its followers, and consequently a sense of justice and sympathy among human beings, then there can be nothing more effective in raising society and its institutions, both governmental and social, than incorporating real religion in all the activities of life. And the exclusion of this factor means the deterioration of governments and social institutions through a lack and deterioration of belief in ethics which are really based on the essence of every religion when it is not misunderstood and misapplied. For, where a sense of justice and fellow-feeling exist, there alone true religion exists, even if ethically advanced people do not profess belief in the Universal Spirit which is the deity. Because even if they do not believe in spiritual things, they unconsciously accept the fundamental fact of universal life through their moral nature. Thus no Government or social institution can properly function without religion in its proper sense. For a morally low people can corrupt society and governments, whether they call themselves religious or not.

6-3-'49

A STUDENT OF RELIGIONS

KEY TO HEALTH

By M. K. Gandhi

Translated by Dr. Sushila Nayyar

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RESUSCITATION

I described the *bhangis*' case at length in the last issue. But there are avocations in which the conditions of life are almost as abject and apparently as hopeless as those of the *bhangis*, so far as prospects of improvement in the near future matter. For instance, the case of village landless labourers, tenants of landholders with very small pieces of land available to them, resourceless refugees, the neglected government servants of Chittagong, and primary school teachers, is no better than that of *bhangis*, except that they are not socially ostracized like the *bhangis*. But the last two have at least one advantage, namely, that being regular employees they can go or threaten to go on strike and have their grievances redressed to a certain extent at least. But whom will the landless labourer or the petty tenant or the refugee strike against? The refugee, for the time being, might be fed by the Government. But who is going to feed the agricultural worker, if he refuses to work? The development of violent movement among them is, I believe, due to not being shown any remedy against their helpless situation. What they earn is too little for their daily sustenance. If they give up that too, there is nothing to fall back upon. If they go on strike, even though this labour is absolutely essential, still, as by their temporary suspension of work, no dirt and filth accumulate, no factory remains idle entailing a daily loss of thousands of rupees, and no school remains closed, their strike is not regarded as a matter of urgency. Even teachers find it difficult to strike, because the closure of schools for a few days is not felt so severe an inconvenience as non-cleaning of latrines and the stoppage of factories, railways, posts, etc.

The masses, in their heart of hearts, do not like violence and it never pays them in the long run. For even if it succeeded in bringing about the overthrow of the Government in power and creating disorder and chaos, it entails destruction of immense property raised by hard labour in course of generations, and homelessness and displacement of thousands of people. Hundreds of able-bodied men meet a violent death and the survivors are often the aged, the infirm and the orphans. But the masses being ignorant and unthinking, are easily led into violence and under a temporary impulse of infectious insanity, cause loss or injury for which they have to repent for a whole generation. And it will be seen that those among the masses who actually participate in violence belong to one or other of the avocations mentioned above.

Unless they are able to see a non-violent way, which will give them hope of a better future,

and a consciousness of their own strength, and the confidence that they themselves are the makers of their destiny, they would be, more likely than not, susceptible to the epidemic of violence. I do not know if it has been realized that the systematic propaganda both of communalism and communism along with their incitement to violence has been done through teachers. And this has been done not, as might be supposed, as a part of the government policy, but voluntarily and if necessary, secretly and at personal sacrifice.

The only sure and non-violent way for achieving this, that I am able to think of, is through the *charkha*, and its companion, the hand-loom. Let everyone who feels his present conditions hopelessly bad, plod on with his present difficulties as best as he can, but let him side by side take to hand-spinning and hand-weaving. And this he should do, not for getting a few more pice (as it used to be said once), but for his own clothing. As such he need not give up his normal avocation nor should he give up trying to secure better terms for it or to seek some other more lucrative occupation if possible. But he should devote his leisure to spinning and weaving, and forming a group of spinners and weavers of *khadi*. After a time he and his group may find that as a matter of fact they are collectively able to spin and weave more than they themselves need. This will generate a consciousness of strength unknown to them before. They will find themselves masters of an art, open to all and producing a commodity needed by all. Further, the adoption of the *charkha*, at this juncture of their life in particular, will create an atmosphere and develop a mentality favourable for bringing about other social and moral reforms in their life. It will organize and unite them in a deeper way than a mere trade union membership can. All these factors will enable them to get better terms of employment in their normal avocations, or in the alternative to give a goodbye to that vocation for good. They might also find that they can set themselves up as regular *khadi* producers. The real All-India Spinners' Association would have then come into being. Its membership would be larger than all labour or political associations put together. It will be independent of employers in their own sphere, a brotherhood or trade union of their own; and at the same time it will be closely connected with several avocations of life—both rural and urban, mechanical and manual, productive and distributive. It would be an entirely non-violent and constructive movement, without mass upheaval even when an occupation is abandoned for good.

Hand-spinning and weaving will, I feel, resuscitate the poor, the downtrodden and the unhappy as nothing else can.

Wardha, 5-4-'49

K. G. MASHRUWALA

AVANTIKABAI GOKHALE

Death on 26th March, 1949 of Shrimati Avantikabai Gokhale, wife of Shri Baban Gokhale, the talented engineer of Maharashtra, has removed from our midst one more of Gandhiji's earliest associates. In Babu's "wider family" she held a place all her own. She readily responded to his call when, after the successful Satyagraha campaign in Champaran, he invited women workers to volunteer for service of the villagers in Champaran. Under Shrimati Kasturba Gandhi's inspiring leadership, she, along with Durgabehn Desai and Manibehn Parikh, took up educative and other constructive work in Motihari. They ran a school for children and took up scavenging and sanitation work, distribution of medical relief and education of illiterate, ignorant villagers in the basic principles of health and hygiene. This was before the birth of *khadi*. Before long they had earned the love and undying gratitude of the villagers and forged an indissoluble link between them and Gandhiji. I remember, as late as December 1946, Gandhiji once telling a lady doctor whom he had long known, "Do not leave my Champaran. To serve Champaran is to serve me."

The experiment in Champaran embodied a special technique of village work which Gandhiji always commended to those who wanted to take up constructive work as a means for building up a non-violent social order and which might well serve as a pointer to all future village workers. The central point in this technique was that it laid more stress on service through the spirit than material means. It meant completely getting under the skin of the village folk whom you wanted to serve, and identifying yourself with them in all their trials and ordeals, sorrows and sufferings, like a senior member of the family and harnessing in their service whatever talent you had, material, moral, intellectual or spiritual. To work out this programme in all completeness, he needed and evolved his own type of emancipated womanhood in which emancipation would not mean breaking down of the family ties or truancy from the discipline of family life, but transcending of family barriers and cultivation of the inner discipline of purity and penance that would enable our women to move about at the call of service freely and fearlessly, in the midst of chaos and indiscipline without the aid of the nine-fold wall, which orthodoxy had prescribed for their protection. Shrimati Avantikabai Gokhale was an example *par excellence* of this type of emancipated womanhood. She was highly cultured and educated in the truest sense of the term. She was a devoted wife and a valued helpmate to her husband and impressed everybody who came in contact with her, by her courage, fearlessness, balanced judgment, serenity, gentleness, purity and strength of character. An indefatigable spinner and lover of *khadi*, she would not let a single birthday of Gandhiji pass without sending him the offering of a piece of cloth woven from her own yarn, as a mark of devotion and duty towards him. Her passing away will be felt as a sore personal loss by members of Gandhiji's "wider family", but her example will live and lend

strength and inspiration to many a foot-weary traveller on the dusty road of service of the lowliest and the lost.

Delhi, 4-4-'49

PYARELAL

NOTES

Harijan Day in Nellore

It will be remembered that the Madras Government has decided to observe the 30th of every month as the day on which intensive work should be done for the Harijan cause. The last 30th accordingly saw the launching of that programme. Shri Potti Shriramulu, who was instrumental in bringing about this decision, writes from Nellore :

"The 30th was celebrated with great enthusiasm all over the province. In Nellore fortunately the collector and staff took great interest and made it very successful throughout the district. All those who doubted how this work could be done through the Government have a convincing answer now. The special features in Nellore were as follows : A government propaganda van and a police band impressed people much. Slides were shown in cinemas. This will continue throughout the district throughout the year. Harijans' enthusiasm knew no bounds. 200 Harijan women came to the temple. There was a dinner at all places. The Congress Committees, social organizations, scouts, district boards, municipalities and many departments of Government took part. This month the time was very short. Next month every village in the province will take part in the programme. Also the M. L. A.s and Ministers."

This is a programme, which might be undertaken by other provinces also.

Wardha, 5-4-'49

K. G. M.

Addendum

[By an oversight which is regretted the concluding portion of Shri Vinoba's speech which appeared in the *Harijan* of 3-4-'49 on page 39 was left out. Being important to the subject treated in the speech it is reproduced here. Readers are requested to add it at the end of the speech on page 40. — J. D.]

Please do not misunderstand me, I do not say that if we give up *khadi* we are engaged in untruth and violence. But I do feel that if we come to regard *khadi* as an impracticable programme, social non-violence or peace, which we look for, is in danger.

We have been spinning for thirty years, and have tried to make several improvements in the quality of the hand-spun yarn. Yet the fact stands that hand-spun yarn still greatly troubles the weaver, who is unwilling to weave it or is persuaded to do it only at special rates. We must realize that this cannot go on for ever. I have come to the conclusion that the difficulty of weaving can be remedied only by double twisting of the yarn. It is then easily woven, in fact it can be woven even at home;—and several of our self-spinners must also be self-weavers.

There must be *khadi* atmosphere around every constructive worker. If it is not there, you will not be able to create Gandhian ideology round about you to any appreciable extent.

(Translated from the original in Hindustani)

THE SECOND STAGE IN KHADI

Five years ago under the inspiration and guidance of Gandhiji, the Charkha Sangh changed its policy of producing *khadi* for sale into that of spinning for self-sufficiency and total village uplift. The change was not appreciated and approved by many. But the Charkha Sangh continued to pursue the new policy slowly and steadily. Last year it resolved to disengage itself from the commercial *khadi* completely and to confine itself to pursue the policy of self-sufficiency only. The former work was either transferred to approved institutions or the centres were converted into self-sufficiency centres. Of course, it was difficult to say how far it would succeed and what shape the new work would assume in course of progress. It required both technical knowledge on the part of workers as well as a clear idea of how to set about the work. The change was therefore slow. But it had begun and I give below the description of a fairly successful experiment in that direction. It will be instructive not only to *khadi* workers engaged in similar work elsewhere, but also answer the doubts of such *khadi* lovers who still have misgivings about the wisdom of stopping the activity of commercial *khadi*.

Kalhal is an old spinning centre of the Karnatak branch of the A. I. S. A. The village has a population of 750 divided in about 200 families. About two years ago, the village spinners (all women) expressed a desire to learn weaving. Their object was to earn a better wage through weaving than what they could get through mere spinning. But the Charkha Sangh under its new policy wanted to encourage spinning and weaving with a view to self-sufficiency. Its representative explained to the village people that they could have weaving taught to them if they undertook to spin all the yarn that was needed for the looms and consumed their own *khadi*. The people agreed to the proposal and Shri Nilakantharao, a tried and trained worker, who had once worked in the centre and was known to the people, was deputed to the village. This took place about fifteen months ago.

Shri Nilakantharao set about the work earnestly. At the end of the year in a population of about 750 souls, the number of *charkhas* plied is 132. Eight women and two men have learnt weaving and together they weave all the yarn spun in the centre. The Charkha Sangh has granted eight looms out of the ten. During the last year, 70 of the families have at least one *khadi* piece of home-manufacture; some have even three or four. The total production of self-sufficiency *khadi* in the village has been 1000 sq. yards, including 10 saris for women. One family is completely self-sufficient.

Under the old system, the average production of *khadi* per worker employed by the Sangh was less than 10 sq. yards per day. Kalhal's production during the first year comes to about 3 sq. yards per day, but there is every hope that it will soon reach the old mark. But the more important

thing is that the relation between the worker and the people, which formerly was similar to that between a commercial agent and artisans has been changed into that between a friendly guide and the guided. Formerly the village yarn was sent out for being woven; now it is all woven locally.

Along with spinning and weaving, Shri Nilakantharao has been able to institute the following activities in the village during the year.

SANITATION AND HYGIENE

The village had no latrines before. Nuisance was committed openly on roads, by-lanes and fields by the old and the young alike. They have now prepared long trenches at a few places near the village, with plank-seats placed over them and surrounded with fencing for privacy. For the present these are open only to women but the scheme will be extended for others by and by. The youths of the village took their full share in digging the trenches and preparing the fencing. They also assist Shri Nilakantharao in sweeping the village lanes. There is a weekly and monthly programme of cleanliness.

ANTI-TEA PROPAGANDA

At the commencement of Shri Nilakantharao's mission, about 300 persons (mostly men) were addicted to tea. It was not made at home but was taken at tea-shops. There was no liquor-shop in the village, but a few used to visit a neighbouring village where liquor and toddy were available. There was also an increasing fashion for smoking cigarettes instead of *bidis*. Shri Nilakantharao's efforts resulted in the total abandonment of tea, as well as liquor and toddy. Cigarettes have also stopped and *bidis* also promise to decline.

GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS

Shri Nilakantharao has also organized a small group of volunteers, who will assist him in all items of social service. The Patel, the headmaster and an aged leader of the village give every encouragement and assistance to Shri Nilakantharao and the latter gets all reforms initiated through them.

EDUCATION

The males are literate; women are not. Their education was neglected, because it was thought that it was no use educating them since they would generally go to other villages after marriage. This idea has now changed and female education has made its beginning. A school was already in existence. Shri Nilakantharao has introduced spinning among the pupils.

The above account will be helpful to other workers. It shows that if *khadi* has to stay at all, it can do so, not for what it means in terms of money so much, but in terms of self-reliance and total self-uplift. It also shows the object to achieve which the Charkha Sangh is devoted.

KRISHNADAS GANDHI

(Secretary, A. I. S. A.)

(Translated from the original in *Hindustani*)

FROM VINOBA'S SPEECHES AT THE SARVODAYA CONFERENCE—III

IMPLICATIONS OF SARVODAYA

8-3-'49, Prayer meeting

The meaning and implications of the word Sarvodaya might expand in course of time, but one of its meanings is quite clear. Human society could not have been created for conflict between man and man or clash of the interests of one with those of another. There might be differences of opinion among men because an individual person's experience and vision are partial and limited, and therefore his thinking will be imperfect. Their aggregate thinking should lead to perfect thought but not to difference of interests among them. But we have made life so ill-adjusted that there is also conflict of interests between man and man. We attach so much value to wealth and other articles that we want to possess them regardless of the needs of others, nay, even by snatching them from others. We attach more value to gold than to love. Owing to the importance attached to wealth, concordance among mankind, instead of becoming natural and easy, has become extremely difficult and various social sciences have arisen out of the search for this concordance. But we are still nowhere near discovering a method which will resolve all conflicting interests.

But there is one simple maxim which everyone can understand and practise. It is this: Have concern for other's needs and do not mind your own needs in a manner as would cause hardship to the other. This is the rule on which happy families are reared and it should not be difficult to extend it to the whole society. Rather, it should be felt normally easy and natural. The observance of this rule would contribute to Sarvodaya, and will lead to the discovery of more rules. For instance, it naturally suggests also the rule that one must earn one's bread by one's own labour and not be a burden upon others. Earning by one's own labour does not mean earning anyhow; for instance, by somehow obtaining a right over wealth produced by others. But it means earning by producing more wealth.

If the world adopts the two rules, of self-earning and productive labour, it will pave the path to Sarvodaya.

VALUE OF PRODUCTIVE LABOUR

10-3-'49, Prayer meeting

Shri Gulzarilal Nanda gave a very thought-provoking speech at the Conference today. I fully share his earnestness about it. He asked his audience to be up and doing while there was still time, or else they might lose the opportunity for ever.

Shri Nanda has spent his life working among labourers. I have passed my days working among villagers. I have come to the same conclusion as he. The moral level of the people has been falling lower day by day. I for my part am pledged to do everything in my power, to do whatever is necessary, to raise that level.

Nandaji called for a radical change. Nothing less would work. This means, as I view it, a revolution in thinking. The fundamental basis of our idea about correct living must change.

We have some idea of what our problems are. But what is the cause of these problems? To my mind, it is want of love for manual labour. I do not think that our population, large as it is, is too big to be maintained in the country. If there are many mouths, the hands too are many. But the hands do not labour with love; they regard work as an infliction instead of as a privilege. So the hands do not produce their utmost but only what they unavoidably must. Everyone claims his full share for the mouth but not in the work to be done by the hands. This want of devotion for work is a greater misfortune even than want of sufficient production.

I regard this as an age-long defect in us. We are never in want of finding an excuse for suspending work. If it is *Ramanavami* or a day of observance we must have a holiday; we would also cease work, if it is a day of festival, say, *Divali*, or a marriage in the family, or the birth of a son, or the birthday of Gandhiji. We do not wish to work if there is a death, or anniversary of death of a family member, or again of, say, Gandhiji. If we have a guest in the house, or the arrival of a great leader in the town, it is a sufficient reason for us to suspend work. In short, we would not let go a single excuse if thereby we could have an opportunity to keep our hands idle.

It was not merely for producing *khaddar* that Gandhiji laid the greatest stress upon spinning. Of course, spinning would produce *khaddar*; but the stress was on the revolution involved in the insistence of productive work. He placed before the nation a type of physical work which, besides producing wealth, was such as could be done by the aged and the young alike. Productive labour is not a thing from which anyone who can at all work, should claim an exception. All those who take a share in the consumption of goods, must also take a share in their production. A judge or a teacher may not say that he is rendering some other service to society. For, he does not live on books and records alone but also on food and needs cloth like all other beings. He must, therefore, share directly in their production.

But unfortunately the Congress could not understand Gandhiji and attached more importance to the payment of four annas than to yarn. It made the usual confusion between wealth and money. It was not realized that payment in the shape of hand-spun yarn was payment through production of new wealth, which the payment in the shape of money was not. Money, we have plenty of, at present; but wealth, which indicates prosperity, has diminished. If we give prestige to money, the prestige of labour is necessarily reduced. Under Gandhiji's scheme, a person giving a *lakh* of rupees to the Congress would have been considered its donor but not a member entitled to vote. The contributor of hand-spun yarn would have become the voter. It was a revolutionary idea, which the Congress failed to understand. It is not too late to do so even now. If this revolutionary change is made, it might be possible within two or three years to bring about such change in the society as will mitigate the anxiety felt by Shri Nanda.

(Translated from the original in *Hindustani*)

STARTLING FACTS—I

Since writing the article *Development or Destruction*, I have received many letters on the subject. Nearly all the correspondents agree warmly with what I said. The rest express interested surprise and want to know more particulars.

Here are some further facts and figures on the subject:

GRAZING LANDS

In the U. P., "the average figure for the grazing incidence for the major part of the Province works out to nearly five and half animals per acre for twenty selected districts and the figures vary from four to seven animals per acre, ignoring sheep, goats, equines and camels. Such intensity of grazing, in the words of Mr. Smythies, 'is almost incredible by world standards even for the best pastures...' (Report of the Usar Land Reclamation Committee, page 49, para 3, quoting *Cattle Census Report*, 1935).

In Oudh and Gorakhpur, the grazing areas are reduced to "precarious footholds for the starved cattle. There is not enough room for them to move about." (*Ibid*, page 65, para 2).

"Two acres per head of cattle is the minimum considered necessary by the most moderate standards, eleven times more than the average available today in the U. P. At the same time this inadequacy is not made up by the cultivation of fodder crops. In the United Provinces as a whole there are fewer than three acres of cultivated fodder crops per hundred animals. In Gorakhpur and Banaras divisions, where grazing areas are very limited in extent, there is only one acre of fodder crops per hundred animals..." (*Ibid*, page 69, para 3).

The average should be half an acre of cultivated fodder crop per animal, i. e. twenty times more than the acreage (according to this authority) under fodder crops in the U. P.

CANAL IRRIGATION

"Waterlogging in the irrigated area of the Punjab has become a very serious matter. It is due to the rise of the water-table and the harmful effects of this rise appear in two forms. First, the saturation of the soil, locally known as *sem*, or in the worst affected areas, the appearance of water on the surface and the formation of *jheels*; and secondly, the concentration of salts in the upper layers of the soil, locally known as *thur*. The seriousness of the situation may be judged from the fact that whereas in 1932 the areas seriously affected by *sem* and *thur* were 26,000 and 300,000 acres respectively, they now amount to 34,000 and 1.4 million acres. In addition there are large areas which are affected to a less extent." (*The Famine Inquiry Commission Final Report* (1945), page 138, para 2).

This shows that land is going out of cultivation at the rate of about 80,000 acres a year in the Punjab. Sir William Stampe referring to the same problem in the limited area of the Ravi-Jhelum tract alone states as follows:

"Waterlogging—and its associated evil *thur* or soil alkalinity—is a phenomenon caused by various factors far too complex in their interaction to be analysed in a brief address on irrigation. Suffice it to say that due mainly to (a) the diversion of 24,000 cusecs (the aggregate flow of the canals in the Ravi-Jhelum tract alone) from the river bed to the uplands and (b) certain subtle and adverse characteristics of the local sub-soil (which I shall refer to later), the ground water-table in this zone has risen steadily for the twenty years and, over a tract of many thousand square miles is now dangerously near (only 7 ft. or so below) the surface! I am reliably informed that as a result some 50,000 acres are going directly out of cultivation and worse than that—due to alkalinity—the yield is declining seriously over a very much larger* area." (*Planning for Plenty*, address by Sir William Stampe to the Institution of Engineers, India, Nov. 10th, 1944, page 15, para 5).

In the United Provinces, at the lowest computation, the total area of *usar* and *reh* land is 2,037,119 acres. Investigations of the Usar Land Reclamation Committee, 1938-39, go to show that *usar* and *reh* are directly connected with canal irrigation and interference with the natural drainage of the land. Referring to this, the Commission says as follows regarding canal irrigation to be introduced in the Pratabgadh District: "We have bitter experience in the past of canal irrigation having been introduced in the Aligadh District without providing for necessary drainage with the result that there was a rise of the sub-soil water-table and fields were thrown out of cultivation on account of the salts in the soil profile coming up in solution by capillary action to the surface of the soil and depositing themselves there as a result of evaporation. Canal irrigation is to be shortly introduced in the Pratabgadh District. It is an intensely cultivated tract. We have no knowledge about the tolerance of the soil to further irrigation of the flow type. We are without data as to the necessity for the provision of drainage channels so as to prevent the disastrous consequences of any adverse changes in the lateral and vertical flow of the sub-soil water." (*U. L. R. C. Report*, page 115, para 4).

(To be continued)

MIRABEHN

*The yield of several hundred thousand acres is said to have fallen by 75 per cent in the last 10-12 years.

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