

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

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TWO ANNAS

INDUSTRIALISM — A PROPHECY

(By Gandhiji)

Industrialism is, I am afraid, going to be a curse for mankind. Industrialism depends entirely on your capacity to exploit, on foreign markets being open to you, and on the absence of competitors. It is because these factors are getting less and less every day for England, that its number of unemployed is mounting up daily. The Indian boycott was but a flea-bite. And if that is the state of England, a vast country like India cannot expect to benefit by industrialization. In fact, India, when it begins to exploit other nations — as it must do if it becomes industrialized — will be a curse for other nations, a menace to the world. And why should I think of industrializing India to exploit other nations? Don't you see the tragedy of the situation viz., that we can find work for our 300 million unemployed, but England can find none for its three millions and is faced with a problem that baffles the greatest intellects of England? The future of industrialism is dark. England has got successful competitors in America, Japan, France, Germany. It has competitors in the handful of mills in India and as there has been an awakening in India, even so there will be an awakening in South Africa with its vastly richer resources — natural, mineral and human. The mighty English look quite pigmies before the mighty races of Africa. They are noble savages after all, you will say. They are certainly noble, but no savages; and in the course of a few years the Western nations may cease to find in Africa a dumping ground for their wares. And if the future of industrialism is dark for the West, would it not be darker still for India?

Young India, 12-11-'31

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By Richard B. Gregg

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NEGLECT OR REPUDIATION?

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

A few days ago we came across statements by important dignitaries of some States in India, which amount to neglecting, if not repudiating, the directive principle of the Constitution regarding Prohibition. Thus, for example, as the PTI reports,

"Hyderabad's Excise Minister, Mr K. V. Ranga Reddy, said at Khammameth on October 29 'that Hyderabad could not introduce Prohibition, as excise was a major source of income for the State.' Replying to an address presented to him jointly by the Taluk and Town Congress Committees of Khammameth asking for the introduction of Prohibition in the State, Mr Reddy said that the income of the State has suffered due to the abolition of import and export customs duty. Under these circumstances they could not think of Prohibition." (*The Hindu*, November 2, 1952).

Sheikh Abdulla is reported to have expressed himself as follows for his State, Jammu and Kashmir:

Shrinagar, Nov. 15

"It would not be in the State's interests to enforce Prohibition, because the tourist trade, which was the major trade in the State, would be adversely hit." (*The Times of India*, Nov. 17, 1952).

Further, I have before me valid and just complaints from the Punjab and Bihar asking why Prohibition is not being thought of by those State Governments. The people ask for it, but their Governments do not heed to them.

The explanation for such a tragic situation is simple. It is drink-revenue and absolutely nothing else that is the cause for this overt disregard of the plighted word of the Nation.

The main question that arises from this is, does the Constitution permit these dignitaries of the States to circumscribe by, or subordinate to, the greedy claims of revenue, the paramount directive of..... "bringing about Prohibition of the consumption except for medicinal purposes of intoxicating drinks and of drugs which are injurious to health"? Obviously not. How then do these servants of the people, who swore allegiance to the Constitution, dare violate its spirit by such bold disregard? The reason is ultimately to be found in the Congress and the Central Government going lukewarm and indifferent regarding the directive. The very salt as if loath its savour. It is the same old greed of revenue cramping them also in their work which, the

people were promised, will be done immediately they came to power.

The question then remains, what to do then? The answer is equally simple and clear. The people must move on their own, as they did for their fight for Swaraj. Workers should organize the people to demand of their Government to do what they had pledged to do. Ministers of States also should be wiser in their statements regarding the implementation of Prohibition in their territories; they might go slow if at all they should, but they cannot deny the directive as they virtually seem to do in their speeches as reported in the Press. It must be noted that the plea of revenue not to legislate for Prohibition is *ultra vires* of the Indian Constitution, and we all have to see that the respect for the Constitution is not allowed to be belittled in any manner by anybody in the country.

2-11-'52

LAND REFORMS IN BOMBAY

(By Vasant Nargolkar)

The Bombay Tenancy and Agricultural Lands Act 1948 as amended recently bids fair to be a bold step for a Government which seems to be wedded to an over-cautious gradualism in the matter of land reforms. The Government expects to achieve the following results through the amendments adopted:

1. The tenancy of a ten-year tenant would be continued for another lease of ten years automatically at the end of the first period of ten years unless the landlord then requires it for his personal cultivation.

2. In case of partial or complete failure of rains or similar calamity, the affected tenant would get one year's grace time to pay the arrears of rent.

3. A protected tenant would be in a position to compel the landlord to sell the land leased to himself at a reasonable price if the latter owns more than fifty acres of land. The tenant has been given the option to pay the price in a lump sum or in not more than ten instalments spread over 15 years. If he chooses the latter course, he must continue to pay the fixed annual rent till the last instalment is paid.

4. A landlord would not be able to terminate the tenancy of a protected tenant under the pretext of his requiring it for personal cultivation unless he proves that agriculture is going to be his main source of income.

A landlord owning only four acres of paddy or bagayat land or sixteen acres of jirayat land would be able to take away all the land leased to a protected tenant. Those holding more would be entitled to terminate the tenancy of a protected tenant with regard to only half the area leased to him thus leaving with him the other half.

5. Those tenants who belong to classes declared by the State Government as socially and educationally backward or who are members of the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes

would be entitled to purchase land at a special concessional rate to be fixed by Government.

It would thus be seen that the total effect of the amendments passed would be, firstly, to give further security to the two types of tenants and secondly, to enable the protected tenants to become owners of land by facilitating to a certain extent the purchase of leased lands.

It is not much of a surprise that the radical suggestion made both by Shri Mashruwala and Shri Narharibhai Parikh in the columns of *Harijan* that under no circumstances should the landlord be allowed to terminate the tenancy of a tenant on the ground of failure to pay rent for a year, has not found favour with the Bombay Government. But it is certainly surprising that Government thought it expedient to yield to pressure from certain quarters and to go back on the official draft of the Bill as originally published with regard to another type of eviction, namely, termination of tenancy on the ground of the landlord requiring the land for personal cultivation. The original draft provided that other conditions being fulfilled, a landlord could take away only half of the land leased to a protected tenant who held on lease less than 30 acres of land. The Bill as it has emerged from the legislature allows, as mentioned above small landlords to take away all the land from their protected tenants. This is regrettable.

Another anomaly that has crept in is the provision making it obligatory upon a protected tenant who intends to purchase land by paying the price in instalments to continue to pay the fixed annual rent until the last instalment is made. This is nothing but compelling the tenant by law to pay an exorbitant rate of interest on the purchase price fixed by the Mamlatdar or the Tribunal. What would have been equitable was to have made a provision in the amendment for automatic proportional reduction in rent on payment by the tenant of each successive instalment.

The Bombay Government deserve sincere congratulations for one bold step they have taken in issuing a notification on the 21st of August, 1952, reducing the rate of rent in all Adivasi areas of the State. The maximum permissible rate of rent in Thana District, for example, was $\frac{1}{4}$ of the total crop, which in actuality amounted to anything between 20 and 30 times of the assessment. Under the new notification, the rent has been fixed at only five times the assessment or Rs 20 per acre whichever is less. This welcome measure of Government would give considerable relief to poor Adivasi tenants in Thana District who were hard hit by failure of rains during the last four years successively. In fact, it was long overdue. Would it be too much to expect that Government would follow this up by issuing another notification under powers conferred by the amended Act, fixing the rate of amount of the maximum price for purchase of land by Adivasi tenants at, say, forty times the assessment?

IN THE CITY OF LORD BUDDHA *

The Three Great Avatars

It has been a great pleasure to me to have come to this holy city. The scene of Lord Buddha's austerities, it has given me the joy of feeling his presence. Lord Buddha was the ninth *avatar* (i.e. incarnation) of Vishnu. Rama and Krishna and Buddha, the three best known *avatars*, blessed our land one after another. They were and still are our great teachers. They rendered great service to our people and saved us from many pitfalls to which man is prone as an individual or as a group. That is why we honour them as *avatars*.

Shri Rama

Shri Ramachandra placed before us the supreme example of right conduct. One should perform one's duty with absolute honesty,—this is the essence of his life. He illustrated right conduct in various capacities and varying situations and laid before us the standard of a righteous life. His great name still serves to inspire innumerable men and women throughout our country.

Shri Krishna

Rama was followed by Shri Krishna. He taught us that we should go about all that we have to do in life in the spirit of detachment, that is, without any desire for the fruit. Whatever the duty we may be called to, we should do it without any hesitation and without losing our mental equipoise. He thus inculcated in us the great lesson of detachment. His teaching is still before us in the form of the Gita which has inspired numberless men in every age to a nobler life and sustained them in their endeavours. Great men, throughout our history, from Shankaracharya to Gandhiji, have drawn inspiration from the Gita.

Bhagawan Buddha

After Krishna came the Buddha, who was the very embodiment of compassion. He taught us that so long as there is poverty and oppression it would not do for us to enjoy complacently our individual happiness. We must also share the sufferings of our less fortunate brethren. So long as the oppressed of society, unsheltered and unprotected are not restored to happiness, we must also abjure happiness as taboo. The Buddha said that sorrow and suffering are in the world because we lack sympathy and do not care for their victims. We just look to our own narrow interests. On the other hand, if we set out to care for these our unfortunate brethren, sorrow and suffering may be rooted out, and all may be happy—they as well as we. Thus Buddha showed us the way to true happiness.

The Hindus are greatly indebted to Lord Buddha. He was a Hindu and he died a Hindu. He had never intended to found a new faith, but after him his disciples started one in his name. They carried it into countries outside India. And people in those countries also had the benefit of Buddha's teachings, which provided them with a sustaining faith. It spread to the East as far as Japan and also to the West. There is a reference in the Bible about the wise men of the East being present at the time of the birth of Christ. And scholars are of the opinion that those wise men were no other than the disciples of the Buddha. Thus the disciples of the Buddha had the credit of propagating India's culture and message in countries outside India. And though they classed themselves under a new religion, yet the difference between them and the Hindus is only this that though the Hindus respect Buddha very much, they do not worship him as they do Rama and Krishna. They accept his teachings and class him among the *avatars*. In our rituals we always speak of the present times as belonging to Buddha-*avatara* though he is not worshipped.

But we do not also worship Gandhi, for the simple reason that he belongs to our age. Buddha also belongs

to our own age, the Kali Yuga. Rama and Krishna belong to an older age: Rama flourished in the Treta Yuga and Krishna in Dwapar. And because they are so old, they have become objects of worship. We do not worship the contemporaries whose life has been lived before our own eyes. The followers of the Buddha who worship him and we who do not, are both correct. Worship helps devotion, while the way we look on great men like the Buddha inclines us to follow them. We cannot follow Rama and Krishna, they seem so far away from us. So we worship them, but in the case of the Buddha we do hope to follow him. In the same way, we also hope to follow Tulsidas. And it is right that we should like to follow and not worship the great men of our age. This is our view. But the followers of the Buddhist faith worship him as a *guru*. That is also right. This is the only difference between them and us.

Hinduism and Buddhism

In my studies of the Buddha's utterances, I have never come across any which I may not accept as a Hindu. In my opinion there is close similarity between what he preached and the Gita. The saints of India have grown up under the influence of the Gita, the Bhagawat, and Buddha and Mahavir. This has enabled them to put before us a body of teaching which is whole and complete. They have assimilated into their sayings the essence of Rama and Krishna and Buddha. Thus I for one do not see any difference between Hinduism and Buddhism. There may be superficial differences as there are between the different branches of the same tree. Even individuals belonging to one and the same religion differ in the ways they follow to reach the same goal, each one emphasizing an aspect which most appeals to him. Tulsidas was devoted to Rama, while Surdas was devoted to Krishna; on the other hand Kabir spoke of *atmaram*. However, it is not that each practised a different religion. There are different forms of *upasana* only. Therefore this site is very sacred to the Hindus, and worthy of their profoundest veneration or *shraddha*.

Buddha Gaya

At the place where Lord Buddha performed his *tapasya*, there is a temple which should certainly be regarded as truly great. Then there is the Bodhi Vrliksha, i.e. the tree under which Bhagawan Buddha obtained enlightenment. The old tree does not exist today, but the present one has grown from an offshoot of the old and hence is equally sacred.

Thus, this place is as important to the Hindus as to the Buddhists, for the followers of the Buddha did so much to spread the message of India. They carried our wisdom and our love to distant lands. It is our duty to respect this place and to keep it immaculately clean. All *tirthas* i.e. the holy places should be kept clean, but specially this one because it is visited by pilgrims from all over the world. The slightest appearance of dirt and untidiness here may soil our reputation abroad. And we must also accord the most loving welcome to these foreign pilgrims and provide every convenience to them. As foreigners they will be different from us in many ways, in their physical features and complexion and language and dress, but they should be received as our own. This affords to the inhabitants of this place a great opportunity for promoting love and understanding between us and the various countries of the world.

As to the mission which has brought me here, let me tell you that I am but following the footprints of the Buddha. The essence of Buddha's teaching is to deliver the unhappy amongst us from their misery, to render succour to those who live uncared for as the castaways of society. This is also the teaching of the Vedas and the saints. We have now to practise this teaching. And hence I have taken up the land-problem. I invite you all to co-operate with me and carry this task to a successful conclusion.

(Adapted from Hindi)

* Shri Vinoba's speech at Gaya, 3-11-52.

HARIJAN

Dec. 13

1952

THE THIRD STAGE

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

The country will be observing the anniversary of the death of one of the most eminent of its servants on the fifteenth of this month. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel departed from our midst on that day two years ago. It is in the fitness of things that we on that day remember him with gratitude and remembering him think of the next stage in our journey to our goal as a nation.

As time passes we are able to understand and appreciate more and more the immense task the Sardar has performed in the service of the country. And we also wish along with this feeling of growing appreciation, how well it would be for us if he were still with us in the difficult and perplexing times we are facing today! But man has to carry on his journey with the faith and knowledge that only God's will prevails in His world.

To deal with the thing on hand and to find out and concentrate all one's energy and attention on the immediate task the particular occasion demanded was the most valuable quality of the Sardar's personality. This singular virtue has been of immense advantage to the country. Till the country was under foreign domination the Sardar devoted all his energies to the cause of our freedom from it. This was the first stage in the nation's journey to its goal.

Gandhiji proposed to the nation that it should adopt the self-reliant and brave but novel method of constructive work and Satyagraha as a means to cover this first stage. The Sardar immediately saw the latent power of the method and devoted himself with all his means and capacities to its development and perfection. It was indeed a very fortunate and momentous circumstance that Gandhiji met, in the very beginning of his mission in India, a leader of men of the Sardar's calibre, a man of efficiency and insight in affairs and having an almost uncanny gift for judging men. This new method sponsored by Gandhiji demonstrated its unique power at the Sardar's hands; the country began to feel assured that this method will lead it to its goal. To go to the people and organize and perform work in their service; to enter their hearts by adopting programmes that would make them self-reliant and brave; thus to share their joys and their sorrows—this the Sardar saw was the secret of the method of work and organization proposed by Gandhiji. And he clearly saw that if the people were approached and served in this manner, they would not only become of one mind and organize themselves, but would be trained and prepared to stake their lives in times

of crises also. The Sardar understood the power of organizing men to effective activity that was latent in constructive work; he also fully understood that service won the hearts of the people.

But to him all this work was but a means to an end. He never for a moment forgot that our original purpose and aim was to drive the foreigner out of our land and to establish our own rule. He never allowed his mind to waver or move away from this aim.

After the advent of Swaraj the Sardar's energies were devoted to the immediate problems of its consolidation. The first task he devoted himself to was to bring the whole country under one government. This was the second stage in our journey to our goal. The Sardar could see that if we could not solve the problem of evolving our Constitution and adopting it as the fundamental law of our new State, the people would not be able to visualize the next stage in their journey, they would not take to the democratic way, and would be wandering aimlessly now in one direction, and now in another. But framing the constitution of a country is not a mere lawyer's legal business. Unless all classes of our people undertook the work as their own loyalty and with full heart and unless it was achieved with the consent of them all, it would not unite us into a strong and powerful nation, nor would it build up for us the power and strength to carry us to our ultimate aim. To this end the minority communities and the Princes had to be persuaded to recognize the spirit of the times. The third power that stood between the communities and prevented their unification into one community had gone; the foreign backing that incited the Princes against their own people was removed; and the power to rule was now in the hands of the people. This happy circumstance had to be exploited to the Nation's best advantage. It was not to be that the minority communities and the Princes would by themselves readily appreciate and wisely decide about their own true interest. Someone from amongst us had to rise to the occasion and show intelligence, foresight and the capacity to have a clear realistic view of the future so that we could take full advantage of the favourable conditions created by the advent of independence. The Sardar manifested all these necessary virtues and thereby rendered a great service. The English statesmen who had during their rule driven wedges in the fundamental unity of our people had so spoilt the situation that they were led to believe and hope that India would be so miserable after they left it that she would call them back, or seek their help and would be under their sphere of control. This dream of some of those who were reluctant to leave their hold on India was destroyed at one stroke and we could quickly make and adopt our Constitution and put it into force. The country considered this achievement a miracle, it could perceive the sound advantages it brought to it so quickly.

The other force which held down the country in bondage was the bureaucracy. There was of course no question of destroying it. Public servants would always have a place in a well-ordered community. What was however necessary was to make them function for a self-governing people. The Sardar adopted the first measure to this end. He brought the bureaucracy under the control of the Government of India. The Indian Civil Service was also placed under the Government of India and whatever settlement in this regard was necessary was concluded with the British people.

The Sardar during all his life was doing the nation's work step by step and went away while doing it. Latterly he had come to feel that the time to turn to the work of building up the prosperity of the nation had arrived. He had expressed himself that if it was necessary to take aid from foreign countries there should be no objection to it. The tiller of the soil had to be looked after and made prosperous. Measures to that end had been started. By the time our journey to Swaraj had reached this stage he left us. Before he left us he had the satisfaction to see the two stages on our journey to our goal—the achievement of independence and the consolidation of the State under one government—well completed.

Now the third stage has begun. The task of this stage is for every one of us—all classes and all individuals—all the various constructive forces in our country to co-operate and turn our national effort to the welfare and progress of *all*. This stage of our journey is difficult; it may perhaps prove the longest. In the task to be achieved during this stage we have to persuade our vested interests in land, capital, trade, industry etc. into serving the poor and suppressed masses. We have to train our bureaucracy also so that it may perform its part in the service of the people and especially the poor. Besides, we have to achieve this task by the democratic strength of our people and in a democratic way; we do not wish to achieve it by the methods and power of a dictatorship. It means that if the task of the third stage has to be performed and achieved in the manner indicated above, we have to adopt the same old way of serving our people and thereby conserving and marshalling our energies to the fulfilment of the great task before us. At the time when this task stands before us the question arises: Is the one organization of the people—the Congress—which is expected to undertake it and achieve it prepared to do it? The Sardar, during the whole of his life of service knew this institution alone and devoted his time and energy to make it a strong and efficient instrument in our people's service. But it appears as if this organization so beloved of the Sardar is not able to see or do its

work. On the other hand the rich and the advanced classes of our people seem to be in a hurry to take care of what they have and to see an order brought about in which what they have remains with them. The government servants too seem to be behaving in such a manner that one does not feel confident that much could be done by depending upon their strength. However our work must go on. Our journey to our goal has to continue. The stage we have begun has to be passed. The map of the stage is clear before us. The large masses of the people of our country who under foreign domination were forced into poverty, unemployment and driven to wretched helplessness have to be made to realize their strength and to do their work on their own. Such a task does not belong to governments. And surely no government can prevent the people who wanted to turn to this task; rather the government should cultivate their fitness to be helpful in this work. That the people themselves should have to undertake this task means that they should mobilize their strength and energy to undertake their own small and big schemes of work. Popular organizations should persuade and lead the people to this way. When Gandhiji said that the Congress should turn itself into a Lok Sevak Sangh now under Swaraj, he meant to suggest that the Congress must organize itself so as to be able to perform the new task before it in the manner suggested. The question one is drawn to ask is: Is the Congress able to see its work, appreciate its function in the third stage? There is none and there cannot be any objection to granting and accepting that to form governments in the country and to make them work properly is also one of its functions. But even in order to properly perform this obligation it should train and organize the people to undertake and finish their own small and big schemes of work. Even governments can hope to succeed and achieve something if the people were so trained and organized. This method of work was the secret of the Sardar's power and strength. Let us remember it and make it our own, for unless we do so we will not be able to progress on the third stage of our journey to our goal. We must cover and go ahead on this stage quickly, 'because otherwise our poor and suppressed masses who have become conscious of the power of Swaraj will not be able to organize and go ahead. In our progress along the Stage the heaviest and foremost responsibility lies on our vested interests and on the Government Servants. It is essential they recognized the spirit of the times and realized their duty; and the representatives of the people should see to it that Governments' authority is not misguided by their narrow selfish interests and does not play into their hands.

5-12-52

(From the original in Gujarati)

INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION IN REVERSE

(By Wilfred Wellock)

[Wilfred Wellock is well known as one of those in the West who love to see established a peaceful and non-violent order of society in the world and are wide awake that such an order requires us to begin with probing deep into things as they are today and why, without which we cannot arrive at what truly should be done to change them. It is such self-inspection in the search for true means to achieve true ends that he is at present devoting himself to and has proposed to issue its results from time to time in the form of a series of articles named "The Orchard Lea Papers". He has kindly sent its first two numbers to me with a request to make the best use of them through the *Harijan*. The first is "The Supreme Crisis of Our Civilization"; the second, "The Economics of a Peaceful Society". He has cared to see that these papers might be made available in India and tells me that they will be stocked at—*Sarvodaya, Sarvodaya Pracharalaya, Devji Colony, Tirupur (S.I.)*.]

The following is adapted from the first paper and is given below as the first instalment under a suitably changed heading, 'Industrial Revolution in Reverse'. At a time when we are trying to industrialize our country, the lesson contained in this first instalment becomes even more noteworthy. Let it not be said again about us that we are mere blotting papers of Western civilization.

19-11-52

M. P.]

The Present Crisis

At this moment the whole world is in a major crisis. In our age of super science every country is confronted with a daily problem of scarcity, either of food or raw materials or both, of rising prices and falling markets, of fear and military preparations, of deepening social divisions and international conflicts, of increasing helplessness before gigantic power blocs: a Russian, an American, and in embryo, an Eastern.

Superficially the crisis is economic and political, but its roots are spiritual. Our ideological conflicts have sprung from the economic conflicts born of capitalist industrialism; which arose and flourished in a period when culture and religion were in decline, whence for nearly two centuries a tidal wave of materialism has swept across the Western world.

The Industrial Revolution

We are still in the era of the Industrial Revolution, which has revolutionized much more than industry, indeed our entire civilization,—personal and social life, all our valuations, our principles, faiths and hopes, our outlook and way of life.

The origin of that Revolution was very simple, namely, the application of steam, through compression, as a driving power to machinery. It quickly led to the factory system, and ultimately to giantism in machines, factories, industrial towns, business organizations, Trade Unions, and so on. As machines rose in power and importance, the importance and value of men declined: the ancient Freeman became the modern Mass-man.

Fundamental Changes in Social Order

These outward transformations were responsible for fundamental changes in the social order, in personal and social habits, in international relations, later in men's values and the quality of their life, and finally in man's nature itself.

Speaking internationally, the new industrialism soon became the monopoly of a very few powers which down to very recent years consisted of some half-dozen West European countries and the United States. Japan forced her way into it at the end of the last century. These countries amassed great riches, and thus developed considerable military power, which became the basis of modern power politics. They then forced their machine-

made goods upon country after country, thereby destroying numerous home and village industries and upsetting the balance of their national economy; thereafter they pinned them down to primary production, and thus became the Imperial Powers of the modern world.

Monopoly of Economic Power

By these and other means, in a very short time the world's economy was revolutionized on a pattern which was designed and controlled by a small monopoly of powers which for over a century—down to the second world war to be precise—sold dear and bought cheap, while their victims were doomed to buy dear and sell cheap, and thus to live in abject poverty, a condition from which only recently they have begun to emerge. At long last, in the second world war, Nemesis stepped in to square accounts, whence today the once mighty Colonial Powers are verging on bankruptcy and becoming increasingly dependent upon American dollars. The necessities of "total" war demanded that all those who took part in it should secure the aid of every country willing to render it, even if it meant supplying them with machinery in order that they might do so. As a result, nearly all the pre-war primary producing countries are now on the industrial road and doing their utmost to achieve a well balanced agro-industrial economy and their financial and economic independence. Thus have the tables turned and one aspect of the Industrial Revolution been put in reverse.

Its Disintegration

Indeed the world economy established by the Industrial Revolution has been in process of disintegration ever since 1914. Its complete collapse would have occurred long ago but for the intervention of two world wars and the present cold war. In crisis after crisis since 1914 rearmament and war have provided the markets and the demands necessary to maintain a world industrial productive power which inevitably outstrips the world's purchasing power. Only a few weeks before the Korean trouble arose, O.E.E.C. estimated that by 1952 Western Europe would have a 5,000,000 tons surplus steel production, and by 1953 a surplus of 8,000,000 tons. That annual surplus foreshadowed a major economic breakdown. Rearmament saved the situation.

Latterly a new problem has arisen. To the struggle for markets has been added a struggle for food and raw materials. The problem of a long-continuing world food shortage first became apparent during the closing years of the war; that of a long-continuing raw materials shortage, during the Korean war. This new problem has four primary causes: a new high rate of world population expansion; the industrialization of the primary producing countries; the enormous demands of highly mechanized warfare in the era of permanent war, hot or cold, and a worldwide movement for maximum material-living standards.

Birth of a Bitter Conflict

The economic, military and ideological upheavals of the last forty years have produced a revolutionary upsurge throughout the Near, Middle and Far East. A bitter conflict looms ahead between the just demands of an impoverished East for a substantial rise in living standards, and the irrational demands of a wasteful West for soaring standards of material living. This new hot Gaspel reaches its maximum intensity in the U.S.A., whose demands upon the earth's resources are rapidly becoming a world problem.

A New World Situation

This new situation, moreover, indicates a serious change in the terms of trade for most countries, and that from now on the advantages of trade will pass from the secondary to the primary producers, since food and raw materials will be in short supply, while new competitors in industrial production will lower the prices of most consumer goods. It is now the turn of the primary producers to sell dear and buy cheap.

Despite the warnings of this new revolution, which is the Industrial Revolution in reverse, the Big Industrial Powers are slow to learn the lesson. Amidst palpable disintegration they fail to see that the world's economic contours are rapidly changing and that unless they adjust their economic policies to the new situation a major economic and political impasse is inevitable. Britain, who occupies a pivotal position in the world's economic life, pursues with the frenzy of growing uncertainty an economy which daily reveals a widening incompatibility with world economic facts, trends and prospects, and indeed belongs to a world order that is rapidly passing. It is pathetic to see so great a country preparing to capture more markets than ever to meet her expanding domestic and military demands at the very moment when markets are contracting in every direction. Even the timely, forceful warning of the recession in Lancashire's cotton industry is being ignored.

British Example

Britain has overlooked the fact that owing to the complete absence of German and Japanese competition and the weakening of French, Dutch and other competition, due to the disabilities caused by the war, she and the U.S.A. have had the run of the world's markets for close on six years after the close of the Second World War. It was in that period that she built her Welfare State—a highly artificial period which, as above stated, is rapidly passing. If we add the fact that the markets of the Communist bloc cannot be relied upon in a crisis, it becomes clear that Britain, with her heavily over-balanced industrial economy, will soon have to choose between bankruptcy, servitude to the U.S.A., and a complete recasting of her economy.

A Useful Brochure

The All-India Spinners' Association and its Work (published by the A.I.S.A., Sevagram, Wardha, price Annas Six) is a brief account (upto 1951) of the work of our great national institution, the A. I. Charkha Sangh. The account is given by Shri Jajuji, who has been in and of the institution almost the whole period from 1925 when it was established up till now. Every lover of India should go through this account of a heroic story of our people trying to fight through the Charkha the colossal might of the Western machine. The fight is very very unequal indeed—almost ridiculous, like an urchin challenging a formidable Ravana—a giant. However, there it is and the Charkha did and does challenge the gigantic mills even today. The crying need of today is full employment of our whole people to produce our first needs of food and cloth and to *distribute them equitably and well*. The machine has failed to do it; rather worse: It has created new worries and numerous questions involving the very peace and safety of the human world. The new turn of events both in science and politics after the two world wars shows abundantly that we need a new way and a different approach. The Charkha and the handloom reveal themselves in this context as emblems of such new approach. This booklet will help the reader to recollect what has been done by us till now in this matter and how and why we should go further on, as the Charkha has a message even now.

2-12-52

M. P. J.

FROM PILLAR TO POST

The Editor, Harijan, Ahmedabad.

It is strange that those who want decontrol should ask the Government to carry it out. They must organize to carry it out themselves.

The Government would, however, be glad to free itself from the trouble of organizing food production, procurement, prices and distribution. But it feels it will be accused of leaving the people to their fate in regard to food at least. Who wants to take responsibility for others' wellbeing? None.

Food control and distribution were started during the First World War by the Germans; they just introduced the ration system, but it was complete. Later on other belligerent powers considered it necessary to introduce it. Since then the Bolsheviks took over the rationing system from the German militarists. Neutrals also introduced rationing of some articles.

But the rationing in Germany was not only for household consumption alone—so that a person could eat either at home or in the restaurant only. In India, I think also in England, one can eat both at home and in restaurant. One can eat in several restaurants in a day also. The rationing here is child's play.

It is taken for granted that supply and demand keep the prices as low as possible. But an artificial scarcity can upset even supply—by resorting to hoarding or some "natural" bottleneck. Why should a businessman go in for considerable trouble of having to replenish his stocks at uncertain prices when he can sell a small stock by creating artificial scarcity and make more money on it than going in for further stocks?

I was living in 1921 in far off Ferghana (near Suikiang border). There were some people who were selling rice and even matches in the black-market. They did not know each other and were selling at competitive secret rates. Later on they discovered one another and put up a higher price. The Government officials who had been sent to shoot black-market dealers had to tolerate them, in order to find rice and matches, because the Government did not provide them with these. They had to send friends and servants to fetch them secretly. There was black-marketing without rationing! (Our Sindhi merchants in Central Asia were also black-marketing there!)

I have seen during the First World War in 1916 in Iraq that prices were put up because the Turkish Government withdrew gold coins from circulation and issued paper currency. The merchants refused to accept paper currency, but the Turkish Government threatened them with shooting. Some traded secretly with gold coins—4 currency notes to 1. The consequence was all prices went up 4 times and even more. Since no Government official could buy anything with his paper currency salary, the Government threatened to shoot shop-keepers. The shop-keepers kept

their shops open without goods and offered to bring the goods to those who agreed to pay black-market prices. The Government threatened to shoot those who hoarded the goods and sold secretly. Even though shops were open, they said they could not replenish goods and sold from home or friends' houses, at black-market prices. Black-marketing has come to stay whether there is going to be control or not. Letting black-market loose is not the way to reduce prices.

I have heard that in many parts of India, peasants themselves practise black-marketing. They sell small quantities at a time at high prices!

Cheap prices of food-grains are not also advantageous to peasants for the middlemen get *too cheap* from the peasants to sell at a lower price in the market. As the peasants are divided and have to pay cash to buy other things and to pay taxes, they have to sell as early as possible to meet their requirements which they do by selling away at a very low price to middlemen who come to them with money. The peasants do not unite and cannot hold out to sell only when they get an economic price.

Formerly whole crops of villages were mortgaged by peasants, who received loans from Volkart and Rally Brothers. I do not know if this practice continues. Naturally the crop estimators put a very low value for the crop.

The solution is not control or free-marketing but treating food as social goods, not to be sold at all, but distributed where needed, i.e. for producers. Food must be owned not privately, not Governmentally, but *socially*. No food for sale. All others are patch solutions which will create other black-marketing — piously. All other proposed solutions are quackery.

Shri Kumarappa says that the Government must interfere only when the market is upset but wait till that time with stocks of food and keep the organization of rationing ready. Shri Rajagopalachari said the supply regulation and rationing apparatus is costing plenty of money. So this Government apparatus must be paid regularly to keep it ready for intervention. In that case the cost of the apparatus must be added to the prices of goods even when goods are not distributed by it. Is it economical?

The peasants have supplied food to all for thousands of years, but have been starved all over the world. Because, although, unlike manufactures with hand or machine which are quantitatively less when finished, nature, soil and climate have enabled them to increase production beyond the seeds planted, many hundreds of times more. *The peasant's poverty cannot be abolished through the market, whether State or private persons run it. They are but wage-workers running production on their own responsibility and at their own risks. They will remain victims of*

the market — regulation of "supply and demand".

I do not for the present deal with control of other goods, not even textiles.

Control and decontrol experts alike are wandering from pillar to post or playing blind man's buff.

Bombay, 21-11-52

M. P. T. ACHARYA

(What to do then will be the natural question on reading the above. If decontrol means *laissez faire*, delivering the community to the tender mercies of trade and commerce as we see them today, surely has the Government of the people to step in with its planned economy and controls, as the next best under the circumstances. If that is also not what we want, then what is left to us? Shri Acharya does not discuss nor describe this aspect of the question, but rests content with saying at the beginning that "those who want decontrol must organize to carry it out themselves". In other words, as I understand it, if we are not satisfied with Government's rationing food to us, i.e. a sort of nationalization of the distribution of cereals, the next course is that the community must *socialize* it, which means that the people themselves must organize proper production and equitable distribution of their food. Or as Gandhiji said, people should not depend upon their own Government even for their basic need of food and cloth. These two things must be socialized. Just as we mostly cook our food in our homes, so also corn and cloth should be produced on such a localized and socialized basis and thereby they should at least be taken out of the clutches of big markets and the stranglehold of modern money economy. The orthodox economist, like the old politician who laughed at Satyagraha in the twenties of this century, will also perhaps laugh at this idea; however it is there and if the Indian people will it, they can easily move to implement it. It is surely as new a thing as Satyagraha; but then Satyagraha did work and do the trick; so also if we in India aspire to bring about and evolve a non-violent and peaceful social order, we have to find out appropriate economics also for it. The people should organize themselves so as to assure to themselves due supply of their own need of food and cloth; and Government as well as trade and commerce need not be depended upon for it. This is our next great task. In the meanwhile we have to see that Government does its job of control-cum-decontrol in the interests of the poor consumer.

5-12-52

M. P.

FOOD SHORTAGE AND AGRICULTURE

By Mahatma Gandhi

"My endeavour has been to find ways and means to make ourselves self-supporting.....If the mercantile community and the official world would become honest.....we can just tide over the difficulty."

— Gandhiji

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