

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

VOL. XVI. No. 45

AHMEDABAD—SATURDAY, JANUARY 3, 1953

TWO ANNAS

DO WE PLAN FOR THIS ?

(By Gandhiji)

[The Five Year Plan (F.Y.P.) is now before the people. The planners deserve thanks of the country for doing the job of preparing a mighty thesis on what, according to them, should be the programme before the Government during the next three years. A bold claim, though in modest terms, is made for it that it is the beginning of "a mighty theme of a nation building itself, remaking itself." We are told by the Prime Minister that "we are not out merely to get more money and more production. We want not merely more production, but ultimately we want better human beings in this country with greater opportunities not only economic and the rest but at other levels also." From this we may fairly take it that the F.Y.P. is an attempt to give us an outline—though rough or incomplete—of the shape of things aimed to be brought about, in our country in the near future. Hence, however realistic it may be claimed to have been made, there is surely an idealistic or utopian element in it which is sought to be unfolding itself as we proceed further with it. The question before us is: Is it true to our sentiments and aspirations as a nation? We hold that real India lives in its villages. Our Constitution lays down that the basic unit of our Swaraj will be the village. It has been ordained that, "the State shall take steps to organize village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government." (Constitution of India, Art. 40). One would naturally ask how the F.Y.P. stands *vis-à-vis* that basic ideal of our national reconstruction. Does it acknowledge it and indicate how to proceed towards it? Does it chalk out the way to it?

That ideal has been described to us by the Father of the Nation in various ways. It has become the focal centre of our national urge for progress. At a time, therefore, when we are discussing the merits and demerits of the proposals for a planned programme of work for the nation in the form of a Five Year Plan, it is as well we remember that ideal in the words of Gandhiji, which are reproduced below.

29-12-52

— M. P. J

My idea of Village Swaraj is that it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbours for its own vital wants, and yet interdependent for many others in which dependence is a necessity. Thus every village's first concern will be to grow its own food crops and cotton for its cloth. It should have a reserve for its cattle, recreation and playground for adults and children. Then if there is more land available, it will grow useful money crops, thus excluding *ganja*, tobacco, opium and the like. The village will maintain a village theatre, school and public hall. It will have its

own waterworks ensuring clean water supply. This can be done through controlled wells and tanks. Education will be compulsory up to the final basic course. As far as possible every activity will be conducted on the co-operative basis. There will be no castes such as we have today with their graded untouchability. Non-violence with its technique of Satyagraha and non-cooperation will be the sanction of the village community. There will be a compulsory service of village guards who will be selected by rotation from the register maintained by the village. The government of the village will be conducted by the Panchayat of five persons annually elected by the adult villagers, male and female, possessing minimum prescribed qualifications. These will have all the authority and jurisdiction required. Since there will be no system of punishments in the accepted sense, this Panchayat will be the legislature, judiciary and executive combined to operate for its year of office.

(*Harijan*, 26-7-42)

Every village will be a republic or Panchayat having full powers. It follows, therefore, that every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs even to the extent of defending itself against the whole world. It will be trained and prepared to perish in the attempt to defend itself against any onslaught from without. Thus, ultimately, it is the individual who is the unit. This does not exclude dependence on and willing help from neighbours or from the world. It will be free and voluntary play of mutual forces. Such a society is necessarily highly cultured in which every man and woman knows what he or she wants and, what is more, knows that no one should want anything that others cannot have with equal labour.

This society must naturally be based on truth and non-violence which, in my opinion, are not possible without a living belief in God, meaning a self-existent, all-knowing living Force which inheres every other forces known to the world and which depends on none, and which will live when all other forces may conceivably perish or cease to act. I am unable to account for my life without belief in this all-embracing living light.

In this structure composed of innumerable villages, there will be everwidening, never

ascending circles. Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it will be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals, never aggressive in their arrogance but ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circle of which they are integral units.

Therefore, the outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle but will give strength to all within and derive its own strength from it. I may be taunted with the retort that this is all Utopian and, therefore, not worth a single thought. If Euclid's point, though incapable of being drawn by human agency, has an imperishable value, my picture has its own for mankind to live. Let India live for this true picture, though never realizable in its completeness. We must have a proper picture of what we want, before we can have something approaching it. If there ever is to be a republic of every village in India, then I claim verity for my picture in which the last is equal to the first or, in other words, no one is to be the first and none the last.

In this picture every religion has its full and equal place. We are all leaves of a majestic tree whose trunk cannot be shaken off its roots which are deep down in the bowels of the earth. The mightiest wind cannot move it.

In this there is no room for machines that would displace human labour and that would concentrate power in a few hands. Labour has its unique place in a cultured human family. Every machine that helps every individual has a place. But I must confess that I have never sat down to think out what that machine can be. I have thought of Singer's sewing machine. But even that is perfumery. I do not need it to fill in my picture.

(*Harijan*, 28-7-'46)

A NATION BUILDER AT WORK

By Pyarelal

Pages iii + 73 Price Re. 1 Postage etc. As. 4

WHICH WAY LIES HOPE ?

By Richard B. Gregg

Pages v+82 Price Re 1-4 Postage etc. As. 4

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." — Gandhi

Pages xii+226 Price Rs. 2-8-0 Postage etc. As. 11

NAVAJIVAN PUBLISHING HOUSE

Post Box 105, AHMEDABAD

HOW IS PROHIBITION A 'COMPLETE' SUCCESS

(By Vithaldas Bodani)

That success and failure are relative terms, as there is no common or universal measuring rod or formula to decide, convincingly and beyond any semblance of doubt, the success or failure of any measure or policy is well known. The more so when issues are of a controversial nature, and are so vital as building the *national character* and at raising the general standard of living. The instance in point is the policy of Prohibition.

From persistent propaganda which we find going on in certain quarters, one may perhaps carry the impression that Prohibition is a failure. I beg to submit that the basic approach in this propaganda is fundamentally wrong and faulty in that, while judging success or failure, more than necessary importance is attached to and uncalled for stress is laid on the nefarious activities of the drunkards of the *present* generation and of those who have made it their business to defiantly thrive upon the illicit supply of their contraband requirements. It is a matter of great regret that hardly any attention is paid to this glaring fact that theirs is the challenge to those who aspire to build a new social structure and strenuously work for the cultural advancement of the newly independent nation. More annoying than that, theirs is a challenge to the very Constitution of the new Republic — to the people of India who have passed, adopted and accepted this Constitution. Have we the *people* displayed so far any courage to accept this challenge of the smugglers, bootleggers and the drunkards of the *present* generation ?

There is not the slightest intention to even remotely suggest that due publicity might not be given to the activities of those who are defying the law of the land — who have challenged the people, nor that those who are in charge of and mainly responsible for curbing their activities should not be criticized for their inability, inefficiency or indifference, if any. Criticisms which are constructive both in approach and outlook are always helpful, necessary and welcome. They do have their place and utility particularly in democracy. What is, however, simultaneously needed — and that, too, very badly — is this :

To counteract the effects of and impressions created by the overloaded and one-sided publicity now being given to the activities of the smugglers and bootleggers on one hand and to the views and opinions of all and sundry vested interests in drink trade and revenue on the other, equal if not greater, importance and prominence should be given to such views, news and statistics which actually show that Prohibition is delivering the goods as desired of it. This would help to make it progressively more so at as earlier a date as

possible. Pro-Prohibition views and opinions of *common people* also should have due place of publicity, because after all, it is the common people who know where the shoe pinches and hence it is they who are going to make Prohibition, or for that matter any measure of social reform, a *complete* success ultimately. To put it in a nutshell, what is urgently needed is to create widespread and congenial atmosphere throughout the length and breadth of the country so that the significance of the success already achieved is fully realized and a clearer way is carved out for its further and ultimately complete success.

Through these columns, therefore, I take this opportunity to humbly submit to all Editors, Journalists, and other friends—particularly to those who believe in and are convinced of the great value and significance of Prohibition—to take up the suggestion in right earnest and regularly devote a few columns and assign prominent display to them. I may here also suggest that institutions engaged in social and constructive work should endeavour to prepare something like a census report by collecting specific data in respect of the benefits of Prohibition particularly among lower middle and working classes in the industrial centres and also in the rural areas. Students of the institutions like *Gujarat Vidyapeeth* at Ahmedabad, or of Schools of Economics, or members of *Sarva Seva Sangha*, to mention just a few, can do excellent and systematic work in this direction.

Further, what is primarily and essentially required is this that we shall have to learn anew and afresh to modify or altogether change our fundamental approach to this particular issue and reformulate our basic idea of its 'success'. It can be best done by realizing that, notwithstanding all that is being said or done contrariwise, the success of Prohibition lies obviously in the fact that by introducing this measure a great many will be easily off the drink for the simple reason that the public drink shop will no more allure them to their ruin as before; and further that there would be fewer and fewer *fresh or new* victims of alcoholism every year and that we, *as a nation* would have the happy satisfaction that we are no more directly helping to create a *new* generation of drunkards or addicts to alcohol. No sacrifice is too great if we can achieve this for the good of our posterity. Truly can we say here in the words of the Gita, (2-40):

स्वल्पसम्यक्त्वं ब्रह्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ।

(Even a little of this righteous course delivers one from great fear).

In the second place, it should be also borne in mind that Prohibition has been a success since the day it was adopted in our Constitution and accordingly introduced by any State. It must be remembered that public opinion is there. Hence

the directive of the Constitution. It must be helped and buttressed by suitable law. Therefore, if anything has failed so far, it is only its all-India introduction. I for myself believe, the most irritating 'failure' of Prohibition in India is this: It has not as yet been introduced *everywhere* in the country. But it must be noted that this is, in fact, our failure, not that of Prohibition. Therefore let us henceforth hold that Prohibition in India *has* come to stay, and turn to make it a *complete* success so that we can forge ahead as a nation.

NOTES

Illusion of Averages

The averages in all countries are themselves illusions. For as in Russia, the managers and technicians as well as directors get far higher salaries than the averages. In Russia, the managers and Stakhanovites get also bonuses and high earnings for competitive production so that *most* workers get *far less* than the average.

If we add earnings of all investors, we will get a higher average "national" income—the average earning between one million and zero will naturally be $\frac{1}{2}$ million—the average between a millionaire and a pauper. That is how national incomes and averages are calculated.

M. P. T. ACHARYA

Food and Money

[In a letter to me regarding his article, 'From Pillar to Post' (vide *Harijan*, 13-12-52), Shri M. P. T. Acharya follows up his argument in that article with the following lines which should be shared with the readers.

17-12-52

M. P.]

If a part of the people—say fifty or sixty, if not less—produce and supply food free for *all*, then the other part can give work free for productive and useful services for the benefit of all including themselves. We then require no money. All gold becomes useless for us although it may be of value for foreign countries. It is only thus all can be put to work. But unnecessary work by which many are kept fed out of the productive work of all must be abolished. Otherwise there will be more non-producers "at work" than in production.

Without all being satisfied for food, all will be a prey to bandits even if they pretend to work for socialism. There can be no socialism if food has to be bought with money. Those who do not put their shoulders to the wheel can take care of themselves if they want. But they can get food only if they join others in production and useful and absolutely essential services. It is a hard way, but there is no short cut nor solution along other paths.

All industries and arts will only then put to the service of society.

M. P. T. ACHARYA

HARIJAN

Jan. 3

1953

THE SPIRITUAL BASIS OF DEMOCRACY

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

It is being repeatedly said that democracy is a great social ideal, is an entire philosophy of life, and not a mere political device or method of government of men by the State. It is the way of freedom, unlike Communism or Bolshevism which is a dictatorship based on the denial of the individual and his freedom. Therefore democracy as an ideal is not materialistic like Communism, but has its roots in the spirit of man in society and is therefore a spiritual doctrine. It is in this aspect of these two doctrines that their basic difference lies.

In a previous article (vide 'Welfare State and Democracy', *Harijan*, 27-12-'52), I had tried to show how the idea of a Welfare State that is evolved by Socialist Democracy and is being implemented and enlarged in the West will not be an essentially different thing from the Bolshevik ideal of total planning of the life of a community with the coercive powers and machinery of the State. One may grant that for man as he is today the coercive power of the State is a necessary evil. However it is not an unmixed good. As such, it cannot be the main operative force for building up the life of a free community wedded to a really democratic way. This way implies that the individual in his freedom and of his own choice has a law within himself which makes him, without any coercive power from without, a willingly co-operative unit in the life of the community. He should learn to feel it as his Dharma. This only can be the basis of a democratic order and not force or the coercive powers of the State.

Such an idea of the spiritual basis of democracy or a well ordered community has been proclaimed to us from olden times in terms of religion and philosophy of man on earth. I find that this was very well enunciated by Shri Rajaji in his introduction to a book published in 1946. It was cited by some speaker in the course of a debate in the Madras Legislative Assembly, and is reproduced below from *The Hindu* of December 13, 1952:

"Planned co-operative economy is sought to be enforced in most civilized countries in place of profit-motive, discarding the so-called civil liberty of private competition. But this is sought to be done without creating the necessary social culture therefor and depending on the coercive power of the State. But a change of this far-reaching character cannot be made with success by mere external authority however powerful. We must have a culture and a generally accepted code of spiritual values which work as a law from within. Without such spiritual control, mere material planning results in irritation and must needs culminate in widespread corruption and fraud. Vedanta

and the ethic which follows from it and which is expanded and fully set out in the Bhagavad Gita are pre-eminently fitted to serve as the spiritual basis for planned, co-operative community life, wherein every one must work according to capacity and receive according to need.

"If men and women should work without aiming at personal profit and with an eye only to the welfare of the community, just this is the way of life taught in the Bhagavad Gita. It lays emphasis on the equal dignity and sacredness of all labour that falls to one's lot and on honest disinterested effort. Indeed, the Gita lays down in unique manner the socialist doctrine in terms of relation (religion?). The performance of one's allotted task, says the Gita, is nothing less than worship of God in the truest sense.

"Everywhere in the civilized world, men want a wise allotment of work to individuals as well as groups in accordance with the demands of the general interest in place of *laissez faire*. We have had enough of the divine right to make private profit. If we want society to control individual life so as to produce this result, we cannot depend only on the spy and the policeman watching over citizens. We must build up a spiritual life which makes joy out of discharge of duty. We must bring into being a law that acts from within, making the execution of State-imposed laws easy. In Vedanta, we have a teaching rooted in immemorial tradition in India, which can serve as the spiritual and cultural basis for a new and juster economy of life."

17-12-'52

EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN BOMBAY STATE

[The following is culled from the Report of the Ahmedabad Headmasters' Association on the proposals for educational reorganization in the State of Bombay as contained in the note of the Director of Education, Poona, dated 27th October '52. As the reader knows, this note of the D. E. was noticed in these columns in the issue of 20-12-'52.]

The Ahmedabad Headmasters' Association on going through the note feels that some of the suggestions made to the Government are unrelated to facts and they could have easily been ignored by the Department, but the Association appreciates that Government have an open mind on the points raised in the note.

Two major problems are sought to be tackled therein viz. (1) the structure of the S. S. C. Examination and (2) the place of English in our Schemes of Studies at the school level. These were the major issues that confronted our first popular Ministry in 1937. As a result of it the Joshi Committee and many other Educational Boards were appointed and after about ten years of deliberations and exchange of views major steps in the direction of Educational Reorganization in our State were taken in 1949. They were (1) the establishment of the S. S. C. Examination Board; and (2) the abolition of English from the lower Secondary and upper Primary standards. Both these steps were of far-reaching consequences, and it is but natural that they have created a good deal of opposition, as happens in case of every revolutionary change. The Ahmedabad Headmasters' Association would very strongly like to assure the Government that the measures they have adopted so far for Educational Reconstruction have been in the right direction and have for their justification sound educational principles that are universally accepted. Apart from the fact that the measures taken by the Government should not be permitted to be interfered with before the same have been given a fair trial, the Association feels that nothing has happened to warrant a revision of or even a review of the Government measures of establishing the S. S. C. Examination Board and abolishing English from the middle school stage.

It is alleged that "the present structure of the S. S. C. Examination is unsound." In furtherance of this charge

it is stated that "the various options that are open to students do not provide that minimum of basic knowledge, so essential for useful work in life", that "this wide choice of optional subjects and the non-academic character of many of them have resulted in a dilution of educational standards." One cannot help asking the persons from whom this accusation has originated if they have ever cared to inquire as to the number of candidates taking these optional subjects for their S.S.C. Examination. It will be worthwhile recording the fact that an overwhelming majority of the S.S.C. Examination candidates takes the same eight subjects as were prescribed for the old Matriculation.

Then there is one very startling proposal with regard to making English a compulsory subject for the S.S.C. Examination which deserves a very serious and emphatic refutation. In the old Matriculation no candidate could ever dream of appearing for the Examination without English. The S.S.C. Examination made that possible with the result that it has created new hopes in the hearts of hundreds of primary teachers and others who, but for their lack of knowledge of English, are in many respects better equipped for life than some of the University students. The unusual prestige attached to the knowledge of English had created tremendous social complexes. The S.S.C. Examination has at one stroke rent down that iron curtain and made it possible for thousands to outgrow their inferiority complex. With the Universities introducing regional languages as media of instruction for their various courses, new horizons are opened out to many of these young men and women who for no fault of theirs are perpetually doomed to a state of humiliation. Now as the fresh proposal in the Director of Education's note would have it, this sound position is sought to be subverted, and the knowledge of English for passing the S.S.C. Examination is deemed indispensable. It is indeed amazing that such a proposal could ever be put forth. It must be borne in mind that the S.S.C. Examination serves much wider ends of life than facilitating entrance to University courses. For fifty thousand and odd appearing at the S.S.C. Examination we have only four or five thousand graduating at the other end. The requirements of these four or five thousand candidates should in no way be permitted to influence the basic requirements of thousands and lakhs of others at school for whom the S.S.C. Examination provides wide options suited to the individual talents of many. English, therefore, can and should never be a compulsory subject for the S.S.C. Examination.

It has been argued that "so long as English continues to be a medium of instruction in the Universities and as the medium of expression in trade and commerce and in Public Service Examinations...it would be unfair not to provide facilities in Secondary Schools for a proper course of instruction in English to ensure a working knowledge of that language."

Conceding for the sake of argument the correctness of the preamble in this statement it will be worthwhile asking as to what constitutes a working knowledge of English. Does it imply ability to write with ease and facility and speak fluently that language as had been customary so far? If that be so it must be admitted that that standard has been conspicuous by its absence from our educational institutions for well nigh two decades and the standard of English goes on deteriorating more and more from year to year, not because English has been abolished from the lower standards but because of several other reasons. The aim of teaching English therefore needs to be redefined, and it must be once for all conceded that English should be taught only for comprehension. If that aim be accepted the present educational structure of our State can very well serve that end.

Now as to the plea of reintroducing English from the Vth or VIth standard on the ground of its being a medium of instruction at the University, the statement is hardly in keeping with facts. Our State Universities, e.g. the

Gujarat University, have started taking measures of introducing the regional language and/or Hindi as the medium of instruction. The other universities are likely to follow the same in due course. But even otherwise it is worth considering if out of about five lakhs of students studying in the fourth standard of whom about six thousand would be graduating, the requirements of these six thousand students should condition the educational pattern for the rest of the students. Surely for less than two per cent of students the remaining 98 students cannot be subjected to a scheme of studies educationally unsound and harmful. The same thing would hold good with regard to the necessity of teaching English for Public Service Examinations. What is after all the number of students going for these examinations? Not even point one per cent! The argument for trade and commerce is also exaggerated. All these arguments are based on the belief that the social and cultural pattern that existed in India before 1937 is to remain eternal. It is rapidly being replaced and those that cannot see that change today will soon discover that there has been a complete change in values and their outlook has become out-of-date.

It has been suggested that the education of a large number of students ends at the end of VIth standard for whom it is necessary to introduce English from the Vth standard to avoid wastage. It will be interesting to know from the advocates of this theory as to what use they intend to put a study of three years of English secured at the cost of the general education of the student. If anything could be termed as wastage this surely is a very graphic illustration for the purpose and no argument could be more forceful against reintroduction of English than this one. On this very ground reintroduction of English from the VI standard is also untenable. As a matter of fact, till the end of primary education i.e. for seven standards a sound general education should be given to the pupil without encumbering him with a foreign language and equipping him with a fairly good command over Hindi.

The Association, therefore, once again reiterates its firm conviction that nothing has happened so far to warrant either a change or a review of the working of the new educational system introduced of which a part dealing with the High School Courses of studies still remains to be formed.

[It is gratifying to learn that very many secondary teachers and Headmasters and their Associations in Gujarat and Maharashtra do not favour the D.E.'s suggestions. Thus, for instance, the Bombay Secondary Teachers' Association, Bombay 4, in its detailed report on the D.E.'s circular says, "We hope the Director of Education's note.....will be summarily rejected by the Education Minister inasmuch as it contains proposals which seek to perpetuate all the defects of the present system in a worse form without introducing any good features suited to the present times."

The other day there met at Thana all the workers of the Maharashtra Rastra Bhasha Sabha under my presidentship. They discussed the D.E.'s circular and opined that English should not be made compulsory in the S.S.C.E., that its study should not begin earlier than Standard VIIIth, and that Hindi and the mother-tongue should be compulsory subjects upto the XIth Standard.

Primary Teachers' Associations also resent English being compulsory in the S.S.C.E. as it would disable them to avail of that examination with optional Hindi as at present.

30-12-52

— M. P.J

THE NEED OF A PEACE-MAKING ECONOMY (By Wilfred Wellock)

[This continues the argument that we saw in "A Permanent War-making Economy" in the last issue of 27-12-52. We ended with the observation there that "the real problem of our age is to discover and make possible a way of life which harmonizes with man's nature and brings satisfaction, contentment and peace to men and to nations. This way of life will evolve a new economy which will be a peace-making economy." Now read on.]

It Will Be a Reasonably Self-sufficient Economy

What will be the nature of this new economy? In O.L.P. No. 1* I described some of the social crimes which were committed in establishing the economy of the Industrial Revolution. The ending of that economy and its crimes will constitute one of the major tasks of the next twenty or thirty years. In the cause of peace and the good life for all peoples we must help to restore the right to every nation to achieve a reasonably self-sufficient economy, and to the people of every nation, including our own, the right to responsibility, creative opportunity, and the vital relationships of a well integrated, organic society.

This will constitute a major social and spiritual revolution. As this revolution gets under way it will modify personal and national demands for supplies, and national demands for markets, and thus gradually remove the tensions which lead to war.

The revolt of the under-developed nations against the economy of the Industrial Revolution is now in full swing, as I have explained. Even Africans have discovered that a well-balanced, largely self-sufficient agro-industrial economy is a basic condition of national and personal independence. Moreover there resides in every people an innate desire to satisfy its needs, and especially its basic needs, to the utmost. The pride and satisfaction of being able to do this develops a sense of inner strength which is of more value to a nation than great riches.

It Will Mean Lowering Living Standards

In the conditions of today this new economy is inevitable. We therefore ought to accept it gladly for its own sake, notwithstanding that it will mean lower material living standards for the Western nations. But its gains in terms of Life will be incalculable, as important spiritual values will take the place of material values. The values of creative living, including the vital social relationships which it develops, are so superior to the values of abundance and self-indulgence, that once they begin to be experienced, the new economy, with all its spiritual implications, will be widely and increasingly accepted.

As yet, however, the West has failed to grasp the real significance of the present situation and the spiritual opportunities which it offers. Despite the world economic revolution that is now proceeding, the West still hopes to maintain its one-sided economics and its high monetary living standards. It fails to realize that the rapidly rising demands of a world population that is expanding at the rate of 20,000,000 a year and is everywhere trying to raise its living standards, are exhausting the earth's resources at a faster rate than mankind, with all its science, is able to replenish and increase them. The world-wide expansion of armaments is further widening the gulf between supply and demand. Even now the problem is: who is to get the supplies—the peoples with the strongest currencies and the armaments of greatest killing power, or the peoples in greatest need? Who is to answer that question? Why not Britain?

It Is a New Philosophy of Life

It is obvious that if we are to escape the horrors of a new and more frightful competition for markets and supplies, including competition between Eastern penury and

Western affluence, and finally of the third world war, we must find and pursue a "good" which outweighs that of maximum consumption of goods and services. I have indicated the source and nature of that good. We must therefore accept the discipline of a philosophy of life which takes account of the health and well-being of the whole man, spiritual as well as physical, also of the needs of the entire human race.

For over a century the materialism of capitalism was confined to its authors, but the long struggle of the workers for economic justice has caused the latter to take over much of the capitalist way of life, and to lose sight of the spiritual content of the objectives of the early Co-operative and Socialist pioneers. There is now some danger that the materialism which is sweeping across the Western world may travel to the East, dominate the agitation for social justice that is raging there and swamp the fine spiritual qualities which have kept its civilizations alive for many millennia. Should that happen, the outlook for mankind would be black indeed.

Is the American Way Good?

Western nations see in the American way of life a new Arcadia of abundance and romantic gadgetry. Yet it is demonstrable that the world's resources and man's present power to exploit them could not sustain any raising or extension of American living standards, and at the same time an appreciable and long-overdue rise of those of the East.

British Socialists and Pacifists used to ask: why war, when there is enough for all? But there is enough no longer. An expanding materialism, with its satellite militarism, has brought us to scarcity, and the fear of starvation, Communism, and war.

But is the American way of life the really good life for man? That question is crucial and must be squarely faced. The plain truth is that it is too feverish, too irrational and ephemeral to be satisfying, as the more thoughtful Americans freely admit. The U. S. is one of the most restless and fear-ridden nations in the world today, and these characteristics make even the rich poor, and more discontented than the poor.

On the Cross Roads of Civilization

To satisfy the deeper cravings of the human soul, that is, of the whole man, life must be creative and co-operative, "social" in its means and in its ends. At its best it is an all-out working together for common ends—the enrichment of the local life, the community in which one has one's being.

Once again civilization must decide whether its well-being resides in the abundance of its possessions, or in a balanced spiritually controlled life, the needs of the body being regulated by the needs of the spirit.

The time has come to call a halt. Our need is a simpler life, plainer living and deeper thinking and the substitution of a qualitative for a quantitative civilization.

The New Way of Life

The transition to this creative way of life involves a spiritual revolution, the discovery and adoption of a new order of values and a new system of education, also the recovery of the right to responsibility, creative opportunity and the vital social relationships of well integrated small communities.

The outcome will be a new personal and a new national economy.

The basic demands of this new way of life are:

(1) A reasonably self-sufficient agro-industrial economy, as this will reduce international economic tensions to the minimum and make possible the pursuit of a qualitative civilization.

(2) The small community, such as the village and the small country town. Its actual size will be determined by the need of enabling all its members to embrace the entire community in their imaginations, all its leading spirits and its manifold activities; to feel their unity with

* This was reproduced in *Harijan* of 13-12-52 and 20-12-52.

it and share the responsibility for its welfare. The organization of the local economic life would be the backbone of its politics, which would be vital because directly connected at all points with the life of every citizen. In such conditions economic and social planning would acquire new meaning and help to develop a powerful civic sense and a satisfying consciousness of community strength.

(3) The unification of agriculture and industry so as to bring everyone into contact with nature, with the values, interests and influences of the countryside, including neighbourliness.

(4) Small-scale industries as far as possible, to which end new industrial techniques will be required. Even now technicians should be giving attention to this need. Not all industries can be decentralized, of course, but many can, while experience in operating small machines and small industrial units will lead to their extension. Quality, beauty, variety, and durability will supersede quantity and the monotony of over-standardization, and the waste of rapidly changing fashions.

(5) Homecrafts and handicrafts of all kinds, as these have a powerful integrating effects in those who perform them and in the homes and communities where they thrive. They develop self-confidence, individuality, personal, family and social strength.

(6) A new culture, which will develop a keener social awareness and a deeper appreciation of creative and social values. Every social order embodies distinctive values, which are inculcated in the general community. One of the major tasks of our age is to supersede the art of money-making by the art of living. That is the function of education. Indeed the fundamental purpose of all education should be to teach the art of living, of discerning and estimating human values with a view to achieving the good life. This calls for meditation. Church, school and workshop would constitute a trinity whereby persons might achieve wholeness, and communities unity of purpose in all their institutions.

(In future Papers the above items will be expounded in greater detail).

The Finest Expression of Democracy

In the social and political organization above proposed, democracy would reach its finest expression, and political and economic power their completest and most beneficial distribution. The vital centres of power would be in the peripheries of the State, while the chief function of the latter would be to facilitate the smooth working of the Local and Regional Councils.

These changes would constitute a many-sided reversal of the Industrial Revolution: in its economy, its social and political organization, and its culture. As a result, the social emphasis would pass from riches, power, and quantity of goods, to culture, vital human and social relationships, and quality of goods and of life. Trade would be less in consumer goods and more in the things of culture, and this would strengthen the bonds of international friendship and peace. We should then know that world peace is not a product of diplomacy nor a bargain in power politics, but a spiritual creation, the fruitage of right living; indeed, a "way of life".

"Judge Ye Not"

I cannot resist the temptation of sharing with the readers of the *Harijan*, the following beautiful couplet from an obscure writer, reported to be by name, Edward Wallies Hoch, which I came across quoted in one of the Bombay journals (I forget the name):

'There is so much good in the worst of us,
And so much bad in the best of us,
That it ill becomes any of us,
To talk about the rest of us.'

11-12-52

M. P.

AMONG THE ADIVASIS OF CHHOTA NAGPUR

Shri Vinoba reached Tirl from Ranchi on the morning of the 30th November. Delegates to the All India Youth's Conference, held recently at Ranchi, came to see him and he explained to them at considerable length the ideology underlying the Bhoodan Yajna and Sarvodaya. In the evening, after the prayer, he met the leaders of the Jharkhand Party. These leaders insisted on the need of a separate Jharkhand province as the only solution for the economic, social and cultural problems of the Adivasis. The proposed province is sought to be constituted of the six districts of Chhota Nagpur. Replying to their questions, Vinoba said,

"How do you expect to solve the problems of the Adivasis merely by carving out a separate province? If it were possible to root out poverty merely by the reconstitution of provinces on the linguistic basis, then provinces like Orissa and Gujarat which are so constituted should have been able to perform this feat long ago. Do you think the rich in Gujarat do not exploit the poor? No man who is alive to the immediate needs of today talks about linguistic provinces. The thing which occupies most thinking minds at present is how best we can solve our difficulties, whether by pursuing Communism or by following Gandhian principles. One must attend to the call of the time. There is no guarantee that the generation to follow those who are today agitating for linguistic provinces will also continue to beat the same drum. The world is marching ahead, and those who do not keep pace with it are bound to be left behind and thrown in the scrap-heap of time. There was a time not very long ago when the people of Maharashtra fancied they should have a Maratha State, but now none gives any thought to that outmoded idea."

Speaking about the actual disabilities and difficulties of the Adivasis, Shri Vinoba said, "If you want to have your grievances redressed and difficulties removed, I will certainly help you with all my might. But if you insist on 'Jharkhand first' and everything else afterwards; then I must differ from you. The demand for separate Jharkhand out of greed for the mineral wealth of Chhota Nagpur is even more short-sighted. Because in future important mineral resources like coal and petrol as also big engineering works like those at Tata Nagar are not going to be left to the provinces. They will be under the direct control of the Centre. Things have moved even farther, and suggestions are afoot that all such things should be placed under international control."

"Again the characteristic community life and the village culture of the Adivasis will be safe only so long as they keep away from the influence of modern city life and Western civilization. As soon as the railway makes its appearance in the forests of Chhota Nagpur, the balance of their present life will be upset. The formation of a separate province is not going to solve any of their difficulties. They can be saved only by our enabling them to build self-sufficiency and a happy village life. And that is the aim for which Bhoodan movement has been launched."

Since he is touring this Adivasi area, Shri Vinoba has been devoting himself to the study of the problems of the Adivasis. He has made a good collection of books and other material on this subject. In several meetings of the workers, he said it was greatly to be regretted that while Christian Missionaries from thousands of miles away had come and served them, we had done practically nothing. There is still a great scope for work and service in this field and there is need for self-sacrificing social workers for the wellbeing of these neglected and backward sections of our people. The word Adivasi, he said, was a misnomer. Who knows who came first and who later? The term is misconceived. All have equal rights and must have equal opportunities. All of us also have equal freedom of doing service to the needy. In the

context of this equality of rights and obligations, this distinction of Adivasis and non-Adivasis is unreal and misleading. We stay here on this earth for our appointed time and then depart when the call comes. It therefore behoves us to live our allotted span in love and amity. Why then these barriers like Hindus and Muslims and Adivasis between man and man?

In the prayer-speeches delivered during these days Shri Vinoba dwelt at length on the unity of all religions and the futility as well as the utter pointlessness of the rivalry between different religions and their sects and sections. He pointed out that different religions were only different ways of worshipping the same God. They are all alike in essentials. Every religion enjoins the observance of virtues and rejection of vices. The essence of religion lies in being good and doing good to others and in this respect there is no difference between different religions. Speaking in this connection, Vinobaji advised the people to hold collective prayers, whatever their particular creed or religion. This, he said, will add to their inner strength. Just as the physical body draws sustenance from food, so is the *atma* strengthened by prayer.

Shri Vinoba also criticized the so-called educated for their scornful attitude towards physical labour. He said, those who eat without doing any labour are not doing their part in the task of increasing the production of the country. Granting that the lawyers, teachers and traders serve the society in their own ways, I must say that merely following their own trade or profession is not enough. They must devote at least an hour every day to some productive work. They may do spinning, or grind corn, or engage in some form of agricultural labour. When we earn our bread by the sweat of our brow, then only it is bread, otherwise it is sin. All must take a share in all-important work of food-production. Equally important then is the question of self-sufficiency of the villages. The villages will be happy only when they produce all their needs, such as *gur*, oil, cloth and foodgrains by themselves.

Speaking about the almost universal approbation with which the Bhoodan movement had met, he said that all the parties and leaders, and all sections of people had supported the movement. All have expressed sympathy with the idea and promised their help for its furtherance.

Proceeding further, he said though the Congress has passed a resolution and had invited co-operation from others, yet it was said that the organization was riven with internal dissensions. It passes understanding how in such a trifling affair as the election of the delegates, they went to the extent of using violence against one another. These are signs of a festering sore. It is indeed a sad sight to see the Congress, which had once the privilege of the leadership of a man as eminent as late Shri Dadabhai Naoroji and of being made the instrument of his experiments in non-violence by Gandhiji, degrading itself to such ignominy. No organization can endure for long unless it adopts and works for a programme of service and sacrifice. Had Gandhiji been alive today, he would have certainly put forward such a programme. As it is, if the parties see their way to adopt the Bhoodan work as their own, and devote themselves to it with sincerity, all these differences and the strifes they breed will come to an end and the hearts will be purged of malice and spite.

(The total land-collection in Bihar received so far amounts to 29,704 acres).

Chalvasa, 10-12-52

(From Hindi)

D. M.

DRINK, DRUGS & GAMBLING

By Mahatma Gandhi

Pages xi+175 Price Rs. 2-8 Postage etc. As.10

NAVJIVAN PUBLISHING HOUSE

Post Box 105, AHMEDABAD

Subscription Rates—Inland: One year, Rs. 6; Six months, Rs. 3; Foreign: One year, Rs. 8 or 14s. or \$2.
Printed and Published by Jivanji Dahyabhai Desai, Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad 9.

LIQUOR HAVOC IN AMERICA

(By Bharatan Kumarappa)

America went back on Prohibition, and today some people there are regretting the fact, as will be seen from the two following extracts from American journals in regard to the prevalence of crime in U.S.A. owing to alcohol.

The Journal of the American Businessmen's Research Foundation says in its issue of January-February, 1952:

"Alcoholic beverages have recorded an enormous toll of our nation's crime record in the past seventeen years. Various estimates of alcohol's role in crime have been made.

"In 1946 the Foundation directed an inquiry concerning alcohol and crime to States' Attorneys throughout the U.S. Overwhelming testimony showed liquor an outstanding cause in 50 to 95 per cent of actual cases brought before these officials.

"Several years ago, Judge Joseph T. Zottoli of the Municipal Court of Boston conducted an intensive study of the relation of alcoholism and crime in Massachusetts. He concluded: 'More than 90 per cent of the adult population of prisons in Massachusetts, to which prisoners are sent for misdemeanours, are there through offences caused by drunkenness. About 50 per cent of persons receiving sentences to penal institutions have committed offences relating to alcoholism.'

The *Union Signal*, a journal of Social Welfare, in its issue of August 16, 1952, publishes a note written by C. Aubrey Hearn, saying:

"Whether purposely or by accident, the newspapers are beginning to tell the truth about the outrageously conducted liquor business in the United States.

"Almost every divorce has liquor behind it. Two-thirds of the murders and major crimes also have liquor as a contributing factor. Automobile accidents are largely caused by liquor.

"Liquor is costing the Government twice as much as it is contributing in taxes and other revenue. Liquor is fast becoming America's No. 1 calamity.

"Of course the old lie still continues to be told and we are informed over and over again that Prohibition was an awful curse, and yet any man who wants to know the truth can ask any policeman on the beat or any police judge on the bench and he will tell you that crimes, lawlessness attributable to liquor have quadrupled since repeal. America has touched a new moral bottom since liquor was restored to its place of despoliation."

Let us be warned by the experience of the U.S. against following in her footsteps and scrapping Prohibition.

CONTENTS	PAGE
DO WE PLAN FOR THIS? .. Gandhiji	377
HOW IS PROHIBITION A 'COMPLETE' SUCCESS .. Vithaldas Bodani	378
THE SPIRITUAL BASIS OF DEMOCRACY .. Maganbhai P. Desai	380
EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN BOMBAY STATE ..	380
THE NEED OF A PEACE-MAKING ECONOMY .. Wilfred Wellock	382
AMONG THE ADIVASIS OF CHHOTA NAGPUR .. D. M.	383
LIQUOR HAVOC IN AMERICA .. Bharatan Kumarappa	384
NOTES:	
ILLUSION OF AVERAGES .. M. P. T. Acharya	379
FOOD AND MONEY .. M. P. T. Acharya	379
"JUDGE YE NOT" .. M. P.	383