

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)
Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

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TWO ANNAS

MAN PROGRESSING TOWARDS

NON-VIOLENCE

(By Gandhiji)

If we turn our eyes to the time of which history has any record down to our own time, we shall find that man has been steadily progressing towards Ahimsa. Our remote ancestors were cannibals. Then came a time when they were fed up with cannibalism and they began to live on chase. Next came a stage when man was ashamed of leading the life of a wandering hunter. He therefore took to agriculture and depended principally on mother earth for his food. Thus from being a nomad he settled down to civilized stable life, founded villages and towns, and from member of a family he became member of a community and a nation. All these are signs of progressive Ahimsa and diminishing Himsa. Had it been otherwise, the human species should have been extinct by now, even as many of the lower species have disappeared.

Prophets and *avatars* have also taught the lesson of Ahimsa more or less. Not one of them has professed to teach Himsa. And how should it be otherwise? Himsa does not need to be taught. Man as animal is violent, but as Spirit is non-violent. The moment he awakes to the Spirit within, he cannot remain violent. Either he progresses towards Ahimsa or rushes to his doom. That is why the prophets and *avatars* have taught the lessons of truth, harmony, brotherhood, justice, etc. — all attributes of Ahimsa.

And yet violence seems to persist, even to the extent of thinking people like the correspondent regarding it as the final weapon. But, as I have shown, history and experience are against him.

If we believe that mankind has steadily progressed towards Ahimsa, it follows that it has to progress towards it still further. Nothing in this world is static, everything is kinetic. If there is no progression, then there is inevitable retrogression.

Harijan, 11-8-'40

MAN'S INJUSTICE TO MAN

(By Gandhiji)

Every species, human and sub-human, has some distinguishing mark, so that you can tell a man from a beast, or a dog from a cow and so on. Have the so-called untouchables any distinguishing mark declaring them to be untouchables? They are as much human as every one of us, and we do not regard even sub-human beings as bearing the mark of untouchability. Why and whence, then, this monstrous injustice? It is not religion, but the grossest species of irreligion. I want you to cast off that sin, if you still happen to have it in you.

The only way in which you can expiate this sin of centuries is to befriend the Harijans, by going to their quarters, by hugging their children as you do your own, by interesting yourselves in their welfare, by finding out whether they get enough to eat, whether they get pure water to drink, whether they have the fresh light and air that you enjoy as of right. The other way is for each of you to start the spinning sacrifice and to pledge yourselves to wear Khadi, which supports millions of these submerged human beings. The spinning sacrifice will help you in some slight measure, to identify yourselves with them, and every yard of Khadi you wear will mean some coppers going into the pockets of the Harijans and the poor. The last thing is to contribute your mite to the Harijan fund which has no other end but the amelioration of the lot of the Harijans.

Harijan, 31-8-'34

By Mahatma Gandhi

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THE CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF 'TAPAS'

(By Arthur E. Morgan)

[The article is reproduced from the American weekly *Manas* of 8-10-1952, with its original title "Appetite for Difficulty" changed as above.]

I come back to my cabin in the woods, and find the forest inexorably creeping in upon me. Young trees and brush spring up in the open land. But for persistent clearing them out the forest would soon be back at my door step. The wild creatures explore every nook and corner for food. Almost every fruit-tree and garden plant is appropriated by rabbit, ground hog, bird or insect. My plant and animal environment constantly reminds me of the tremendous aggressive energy with which life presses for a chance to survive, to grow, to multiply.

It is the same with men. Sometimes, as in pioneering America, the momentum of great effort to master the wilderness not only does master the wilderness but carries people beyond immediate pressure for survival to a condition of relative security and affluence. Then, with the relief from economic stress, there tends to be a softening of character. We even have theories that economic competition can be dispensed with. Such theories are due in part to softness and shrinking from competition.

There can be no long-time survival without toughness and aggressiveness. If one has not made himself at home with hardship, scarcely anything is more important to him than to make its acquaintance. An appetite for difficulty can make attractive and interesting a type of experience which is necessary for survival. He who rests on his oars, no matter how secure he may seem, is on his way out.

Some men have appetite for difficulty. Arctic explorers and athletes show it. A big businessman may keep on striving long after all his humanly necessary wants have been met. The politician, the artist—many a man in many circumstances keeps going for the same reason.

A soft person usually is a negligible person, though a man may be soft in some respects and tough in others. Herd-mindedness which often is a bar to social accomplishment, often is softness which does not dare to stand against the mass. A college community is an excellent place to learn to stand for one's convictions against pressure.

It does not follow that quiet and contemplation are not good for those who can live best that way. Civilized culture is extremely varied, with room and need for many kinds of excellence. One who has deliberately achieved detachment from the prevailing rush and hurry, and has gained quiet and leisure in which a significant life may develop, has himself acquired a rare kind of toughness to withstand social pressure. Such power is not the fruit either of timidity and laziness or of drifting with the current.

Civilized culture will not try to escape competition but will try to make it serve the highest values. Brute force is always in the offing, ready to take control if civilized culture weakens. Whoever through softness shrinks from competition surrenders culture to brute force. (We would include in brute force the cunning of the fox as well as the crushing power of the python—all that is not subordinated to cultural and ethical discipline).

Elimination of war is desirable because war is essentially wasteful. It will be eliminated aggressively or not at all. Soft people will not eliminate war, they will only succumb to it. Periods of softness have destroyed civilized cultures by making culture susceptible to brute force. The competition for which there can be no relaxation is that between civilized culture and brute force.

How can civilized culture prevail over brute force without using brute force? First, by eliminating in itself arbitrariness, selfishness, privilege, and all injustice. Brute force feeds on those qualities, and in their absence does not develop strength to challenge civilized culture. Second, civilized culture overcomes brute force by non-participation in arbitrariness, injustice and violence wherever they are found in other societies. If America should refuse to participate in or to profit by exploitation, injustice or privilege over the world, it would find that to be a heroic undertaking. The rubber we use, the tea and coffee we drink, the tin which is so necessary, and a hundred other products we import from the cheapest market are produced by holding millions of men in economic servitude and poverty. If we should buy only where economic and social justice prevailed, and where political and social thralldom was eliminated, we should experience much going without, and would pay more for the food, luxuries and raw materials we import. Such action would win the respect and admiration of decent people the world over, and would starve brute force to a point where its aggressive power would be small.

What is the chance of our taking such a course, even to the extent of suffering the terrific hardship of going without the morning cup of coffee? We now profit greatly in our economy by buying the "cheap" products of oppressed and exploited labour. The regimes which control this labour, and sell us the products, are of the kinds which rely ultimately on brute force to maintain their power. Rebellion of the oppressed produces another form of brute force, a form which America is concerned about just now. We would go far to eliminate both the brute force of the exploiter and the brute force of red revolt by refusing to share in the products and profits of exploitation.

These cases illustrate the fact that there are possible ways of successfully competing with brute force without using it, providing we have the necessary sustained alertness and aggressiveness. However, it takes much less aggressiveness to spend scores of billions of dollars for military preparation and for war itself.

Brute force or arbitrary power—they are essentially the same—does not spring suddenly into being. A stable, civilized culture keeps them in check by maintaining a regime of fairness and justice which does not give them food and exercise on which to grow strong. Timidity, softness, and indifference provide sustenance on which arbitrary power and brute force feed and grow strong. No social formula in the form of a constitution will keep power and force in subordination to civilized culture. Only toughness, vigour and aggressiveness in that culture will do it. In a relatively opulent country like America, where there is a tendency to softness, the development of toughness of fibre and an appetite for difficulty are essential. They will find plenty of exercise in aggressively participating in the competition between humane living and arbitrary power and brute force.

Yellow Springs, Ohio

[On reading the above I was reminded of the following grand aphorisms contained in our ancient lore: तपसा चीयते ब्रह्म (Eternal Life conserves and sustains itself through *tapas*—penance). तपो वै ब्रह्म (Verily life is righteous striving—penance) etc. The 'Appetite for Difficulty' is not a morbid craze for self-torture for its own sake, but is an urge to face real difficulties so that true life may prosper and survive. Like self-torture for its own sake, softness—मिथिगाराम—also is a morbidity resulting into wastefulness, decay and consequent death; on the other hand toughness—वित्तिसा, तपस्—is a virtue which gives health

and makes for heroic living, life's survival and consequent realization of its eternity. It was this gospel of true life through *सत्यं* that the ancients gave to us. Therein lie the roots of true civilization, noble culture and abiding peace. There-through only can we come to the surest way to eliminate war.

In the article given above, Mr A. E. Morgan describes that message of eternal life of peace and joy to be achieved through work requiring toughness and vigour and a new kind of aggressiveness which is not brutal, but is cultural and peaceful through noble suffering. Coming as it is from acquisitive and overactive America, it has great meaning and significance at least for the modern English educated Indian, who is perhaps rendered blind to the wisdom of his own past.

13-1-'53

— M. P.]

ADOPT GANDHIAN ECONOMY OR PERISH

(By Wilfred Wellock)

Although India is probably in a better position to adopt the Gandhian economy than any other country, including the highly industrialized countries of the West, that does not exempt the latter from the necessity of adopting that or a similar economy. The two world wars of the last thirty years, along with the feverish preparations that are now being made for a possible, far more devastating third, should not be regarded as accidents or as the products of super-maniacs without cause or reason, but as the signs of a moral decadence that will terminate civilization itself unless spiritual health be restored to the body politic.

Britain is supposed to be the financially and economically strongest power in Europe today, yet her solvency is in jeopardy. No economist or politician dare say that Britain's present economy, founded as it is on the power politics of the Industrial Revolution, will survive the crises that are inevitable as the pre-war primary producing countries advance towards self-sufficiency, or a sufficient degree of self-sufficiency to ensure their financial and economic independence, which is their aim, and as the highly industrialized countries, in the attempt to perpetuate the economy of 1939, enter into keener and still keener competition for markets, food and raw materials with new as well as old rivals.

So pruned, planned and restricted is the British economy at the present time that the opportunities for developing a new economy by voluntary group action are almost nil. So carefully must Britain plan her economy, allocate her raw materials home-produced or imported, in order to insure the functioning of all her vital services and to be able to turn the maximum percentage of her production into exports so as to keep solvent even with the Marshall Aid, that there is nothing

left over for the purpose of personal and group experimentation. One cannot procure the raw material to erect a small workshop unless its production will help to swell the export trade.

How long this hide-bound condition will remain none can say. It depends upon two things: the possibility of the complete collapse of the unbalanced world economy founded by the leaders of the Industrial Revolution and the determination of the people in these countries to end that economy and construct one on new foundations.

In the last analysis, however, it is the personal responsibility of all those in all lands who are deeply concerned about the future, the need of a revival of spiritual values and moral responsibility and a quickening of the social consciousness, that really matters. No thinking person can doubt the need for a Gandhian revolution in the West, and we must all play a part in bringing it about. That revolution must be basically personal, as every effective revolution is. Its beginning is a change of values which results in a new way of life.

The materialism of our age, camouflaged as high standards of living, is leading us whither we know not and indeed would not, even to the third world war, were we alive to realities. The need is to face ourselves, reality, the ends our lives are serving wilfully, and those they would serve were we courageously to face the truth. Material values must be controlled by spiritual values, which means that we must contract out of the false evaluations of our age, little by little and stage by stage, as our vision becomes clearer and our faith grows. The personal revolution of a revived or awakened faith is the most powerful force in the world, as Gandhi proclaimed in word and proved in deed. Probably none of us will ever get near the goal he reached, but we can tread his road some distance at least. As we proceed, our vision of truth will become clearer, whence we shall be able to travel farther than we expected. This, in truth, is also the Christian road. Indeed I witnessed more "Christian" living, more personal revolutions, in one short visit to India than I have ever witnessed anywhere. In spite of appalling poverty and a long history of social decay, there are more spiritual miracles to be observed in India today than in the whole Western world. And one soon realizes that great material sacrifices have been rewarded with great spiritual gains. That knowledge was the most valuable thing I brought back with me from India. Heroic living is the supreme need of our age. It offers to our youth the finest of all opportunities, that of pioneering in the art of creative living. Will they accept it? At least let us encourage them to do so by giving them a lead.

(Abridged from the article "What of Britain—of Welsh and Scottish Independence?" in *The Sower*, Spring, '52)

HARIJAN

Jan. 31

1953

SARVODAYA AND INDEPENDENCE

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

The last week of January is unique in our national calendar. It has in it two of our most important days—January 26, the Independence-Republic Day and January 30, the day of Gandhiji's departure from our midst. Both these days are highly significant in the birth of Free India. It was at Lahore that we first took the oath of independence for our country; and twenty years after we fulfilled that oath and on the same date declared ourselves a free and independent Republic under a constitution forged by ourselves. It is a queer irony of fate that today Lahore is outside the limits of our new-born State. In the course of these eventful twenty years many more such queer things have happened. However it is a matter of great joy indeed that we fought for freedom with non-violent and peaceful means and that at the end we have become a free people. It is a very great and noteworthy event of our modern history, for which we should be very joyful.

The day will be celebrated by the Government all over the country, in the manner which is usual with governments for its celebration. On that day there will be police and military parades and salutations; representatives of various countries will meet and felicitate India on the auspicious occasion of its fourth Republic Day. And people will see all this with curiosity and joy that they are free. However, there appears a certain restraint holding down the joy of our people; they do not get enthused as they should. This is indicative of the position in which we are and of the feelings in the popular mind. Both the leaders of the people and the Government should take note of such sullenness in the popular mind. Why should it be so? It may be, there might be understandable causes for it. However, it is obvious that an event like the birth of a nation's freedom and independence should naturally be one of spontaneous rejoicing like Diwali.

Four days after the Republic Day we come to an equally great eventful day, the day of Gandhiji's martyrdom. It has its own significance. It gives us the other side of the birth of our national freedom. By the Constitution of India we formulated in words what freedom will mean to us. We embodied, as it were, our urge of freedom through it. But the spirit of freedom was implanted in our hearts by Gandhiji. The moment we saw that spirit taking shape and ourselves in possession of it, we perhaps

thought that what we wanted from the Father of the Nation was in our hands and we parted with him. It is recorded in the Mahabharata that King Duryodhana went to Shri Krishna who asked Duryodhana to say whether he wanted him or his great army to be on his side in the Great Battle. Duryodhana opted for Krishna's army. It might be said that a similar decision seems to have been made by us. The Father of the Nation achieved for us a free and independent political status; immediately we got it we almost forgot him and have been forgetting him more and more, as is amply evident from what is going on around us. Even for truth's sake, we must admit it. This is not to find fault with anybody, because we have been behaving as we really are as a people. And it is as it could be. It is but natural for a son that he behaves himself as he sees and understands by himself after the father is gone from him. He has to assume the responsibility as best as he can and should feel to be in his own, even to give out his very best. However, he has to revive within himself his own inheritance; otherwise he stands to lose his own moorings. The Sarvodaya Day is a day of such humble remembrance. Let us on this day remember Gandhiji who kindled in our hearts the lamp of freedom, so that we might guide ourselves aright to true Swaraj. Let us purify ourselves and remind ourselves of what he taught us. Today we are saying at one another what he told us to do; that avails nobody. Rather it worsens the situation. If this is what we can do about Gandhiji, it is any day better that we forget him. It will at least save us from mutual wordy recrimination and poisonous quarrelsomeness. Therefore, on this day of Gandhiji's martyrdom, we might better ask ourselves how much we try to understand him and act accordingly. Let us also not quarrel over the meaning of what he taught us; for, otherwise it will lead us astray from *doing* whatever little we understand of him. We have to be on our guard, as there is no denying that there is some fear today of our going astray in that manner. Our Republic is three years old by now. The work of reconstruction is gradually going on and taking shape before us. Naturally people ask, what about Ramarajya or Sarvodaya which is to be our ideal? The question is natural. The answer to it must be sought by each one of us within one's own self. What is one doing oneself to get it? The Constitution has laid down that we are to be a democratic sovereign republic. Its ideal will be Sarvodaya, which means the rule of the poor. When can this be achieved? Its one and only condition is that the people as well as the Government have before them the good of the poor as their chief concern and that they act accordingly. The State should keep this main thing before it in its law-making and administrative activities. But surely it is not by legislation alone that we can achieve Sarvodaya; we have to have public

opinion also. Today it seems to be neither here nor there. We are getting more selfish and class-minded. The poor millions are dumb still. The zest and joy for life that is killed out of them by the outgoing centuries of slavery and crushing unemployment is still not restored back to them by the advent of Swaraj. Those classes who are vocal and leading today should therefore think for them. Gandhiji was their voice. Do we still hear that still small voice? During this week we should attune ourselves to hear it. All internal recrimination and devitalizing strife must disappear before the common objective of working for the poor — unto the last among us. Without that we cannot establish true Swaraj. This is the lesson of this unique week of our national calendar.

24-1-'53

(From the original in Gujarati)

TO LOVERS OF GANDHIAN THOUGHT

(By Vinoba)

The 12th February draws near. It is one of the great days of the year, for it calls us to a duty very close to our hearts, the duty to make yarn-offerings. People are not yet conscious of the power which lies behind this act of offering. But in the building up of the Sarvodaya order it may very well fill in the same place as that of Hanuman in the life of Rama. As I think of it, it evokes in my mind a vision of the most exquisite charm. Throughout India, wherever these fairs are held, I fancy there is rising up, hank upon hank, a veritable mountain of the yarn-offerings. This is no vain fancy. The people are mentally ready for this consummation. There is however the scarcity of workers. The few that are, lack imagination and the fewer who have imagination lack the capacity of organization and execution. We are thus an odd assortment of 'cripples'. I hope, however, that God willing we may yet be given to gaze upon the marvel of the 'cripples ascending and crossing the mountain.'

Last year our people, even those who belong to the Sarvodaya Samaj, were so far swept away by the spell of the elections that the yarn-offering — *sutranjali* work was mostly neglected. I was then touring the region of the Ganga and the Yamuna on the *bhoodan* mission. I continued in my work without break, though under the excitement of the elections some of my companions who, it was expected, would help me left me much in the same way as the proverbial relatives of a rich man who desert the latter when he is reduced to poverty. But my work went on. People helped me in full measure and I was able to collect enough land. There were friends, however, who went to the extent of suggesting to me that I had better wait for a month until the elections had passed off. This is just to illustrate from personal experience how distressed the mind of the workers had then become.

All that is past story now and we

may well forget it. Let the workers and the lovers of Sarvodaya take up the work with earnestness and devotion this year and I am sure if they do so we can bring into sight a glimpse of the New India that is to be. The lakhs of women spinners in the Charkha Sangh will gladly offer a hank of yarn in Gandhiji's memory. What is required is to approach and explain them the significance of the act. And so will the students and teachers of the Nai Talim and other educational institutions. There are numerous institutions throughout India which owe their existence to Gandhiji. They can also contribute to this work. The members of the Congress and the Praja Socialist Party and others who grew up under Gandhiji's beneficent care and who swear by his name on every conceivable occasion can easily offer a hank each. Supposing we carried the message to every nook and corner of the country, we would easily collect 30 lakh *gundis* at the rate of one *gundi* for every hundred individuals, and the mounts of yarn-offerings which are only a hope at the moment would be a veritable reality.

Last year, it was resolved to collect two and a half lakh *gundis*, but actually only a lakh were collected. That would suggest that 30 lakhs are still a far cry. I would say therefore that we should jointly strive to collect as many as we can. Young workers of Gujarat have declared the resolve to collect fifty thousand *gundis* this year. I wish they had resolved to collect a lakh and a quarter *gundis* at the minimum, at the rate of one for every hundred. But this is the first time they have made a resolve in this regard. I therefore consider this somewhat light resolve quite sufficient for them. Gandhiji belonged not only to India but to the whole world and yet he belonged more particularly to Gujarat. He did a very substantial part of his writing in Gujarati. And we cannot forget that though he was invited by several other cities, he chose for his *ashram* the *patnagar* i.e. the capital city of Gujarat, so that he may serve India through serving Gujarat. Therefore, I hope that, if not this year then next year, Gujarat will lead the way and guide the rest of India in this respect.

The Congress is faced with the problem of 'bogus' members at present and they do not know how exactly to eradicate this particular evil. If for their membership fee, they had prescribed productive labour instead of the four anna piece, as they do at present, much of this danger would have been removed, and besides, they would have gained something more worthwhile. Gandhiji had tried for it once, but he did not succeed. Though there is no lack of sermonizing about the dignity of labour, in practice all the plethora of speech about labour ends only in the fact of the four-anna piece. However if the Sarvodayists and other lovers of Gandhian thought are able to make a success of the

programme of yarn-offerings it will lead to labour being restored to its deserved place and a way will have been opened for others to follow suit.

Afflicted with poverty Mohan-das* of old took to Lord Krishna a handful of rice which too he secured by begging. If this idea had occurred to him, he need not have begged; for, then in place of the rice procured through begging, he could have taken to Him self-spun yarn-gundis including his and those of the members of his household. And I have no doubt in my mind that the Lord would have been so highly pleased that instead of investing him with the doubtful favour of a golden city, He would have conferred on him the boon of self-sufficiency and the consequent freedom from the bondage of gold. The modern Sudama ‡, however, who willingly accepted poverty, found out this truth and has left it with us as his most precious gift. And who will be more unlucky than we, if we who are his children fail to realize the value of this gift?

Chandil, 10-1-'53

(From Hind)

THE SARVODAYA FORTNIGHT

(By Dharendra Mazumdar)

For the last four years we have been remembering Babu by observing particularly a Sarvodaya fortnight from Jan. 30 to Feb. 12. Last year one special feature of the programme was the organization of Sarvodaya Yatras in which hundreds of our workers toured the countryside. They received offerings of yarn—Sutranjali and took to the people in the villages the message of Bhoodan and Bahishkar—the boycott of all centralized production in food and cloth. As a result, and chiefly due to Shri Vinoba's Bhoodan movement during the last twelve months our people have now begun to feel that Sarvodaya is no longer a mere pious sentiment; it is, in fact, a complete non-violent solution of all our problems. It is, therefore, with this background of initial success that we shall be observing the fortnight this year. As to the programme the Sarva Seva Sangh has already passed a resolution calling upon workers to go out in yatras and follow the usual programme of yarn-offering (Sutranjali), prayer (Prarthana), land-gift (Bhoodan), boycott, and sale of Sarvodaya literature.

The resolution rightly stresses the programme of yatras. But in order to make them yield good result we shall have to do one or two things. The first thing is that we should immediately bestir ourselves and establish contact with the villages which we propose to visit later in our yatras, so that when we actually visit them

during the fortnight we may not be strangers to the villagers and they may be mentally prepared to receive, and participate in our programme. Of all the items in our programme we should this year devote our maximum effort to (1) securing offerings of yarn (Sutranjali) and (2) land (Bhoodan), (3) persuading people to take vows, by filling appropriate forms, to avoid using centralized products—food and cloth, and lastly (4) selling Sarvodaya literature. The second thing is that when we leave a village of our halt we should persuade the maximum number of residents to accompany us to the next halt. Thus with suitable songs and slogans the yatra will become a continuous procession. Of all the people, spinners, weavers, paddy-thrashers, oil-men, carpenters, ironsmiths, cobblers and other craftsmen should specially be persuaded to join the march. This will help people in realizing the real significance of the new boycott movement.

We must remember that the whole programme for this fortnight is intended to inspire the people with the ideal of Gramaraj as visualized by Babu. We must tell them what Gramaraj in terms of a decentralized self-sufficient order means, and how Bhoodan and the boycott of centralized products are but the first two steps in that direction. We have to tell the masses that their Swaraj will come only when the means of production, both agricultural and industrial are fully decentralized. The present Swaraj with centralized ownership of the means of production cannot but mean unemployment and exploitation. Swaraj for the five lakhs of our villages, and not only for a handful of the cities and towns, will mean self-sufficiency for each one of them, as far as possible, in food, cloth and internal management, so that not one man in the village may remain idle and the village as a whole may be free from dependence on the city for its daily necessities. We have to tell the villagers that they in their millions can never get bread and work unless the centralized means of production are completely given up. But for the establishment of such Gramaraj it is the villagers themselves that must come forward and work. Our workers can only inspire and show the way. They cannot assume leadership because they do not believe in capturing power for themselves.

Vinoba's 'Bhoodan' and 'Sampatti-dan' are today the two visible symbols of that total Gandhian revolution in the social, political and economic organization of society which is popularly known as Sarvodaya. It is now our duty to go and explain this to our people.

(Abridged)

GANDHI AND MARX

By K. G. Mashruwala

With an Introduction by Shri Vinoba

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* This refers to Sudama who was a devotee and friend of Lord Krishna. 'Mohan-das' literally means servant of Krishna.

‡ This refers to Gandhiji.

INDUSTRIALIZE AND PERISH

[This is the second instalment of the passages culled from Shri Richard B. Gregg's *Which Way Lies Hope?** The first appeared in the *Harijan* dated 4-10-'52 — V. G. D.]

II

There is yet another weakness appearing. While the economic and political machinery and problems of industrialized nations are increasing in complexity there is evidence in both Great Britain and the United States that the average intelligence of the population, as measured by standard I. Q. tests, is decreasing by about 1 to 2 points on the I. Q. scale each generation; also that the percentage of highly intelligent people in the population is also gradually decreasing. Whether this points to the eventual decay of any kind of civilization or culture or only to the decay of Capitalist-controlled civilization we cannot be sure.

Moreover, in the United States the amount of mental disease is very great. The Medical Statistics Division of the Office of the Surgeon General of the United States, 1946 states that out of about 15,000,000 men examined in the draft for the U. S. Army in World War II, 1,846,000 men, or 12 per cent were rejected for neuro-psychiatric disorders. There were 38% of all men rejected for all causes. Out of the approximately 10,000,000 accepted, 250,000 were discharged administratively for similar disorders, and 382,000 were discharged medically for neuro-psychiatric disorders. In 1945 there were 657,393 beds in all the mental hospitals of the country, which was 38 per cent of all the hospital beds in the entire country. The data of the American Hospital Association for 1946 indicate that about 40 per cent of all hospital beds were for mental patients. It has been reliably estimated that the costs and losses due to mental illness in the United States in 1944 amounted to \$1,295,000,000.

Very plainly this is one of the phenomena of industrialism.

Nor is the physical health of citizens of the United States anything to be happy about. According to Journal of the American Medical Association, if a group of 1,000 Americans aged 15 and over were to be examined for anaemia, obesity, tuberculosis, and some 20 additional physical defects and ailments, there would be found 976 instances of disease or disorder. Out of some 14,000,000 young American men examined for the military draft prior to and during World War II, only 2,000,000 were fully up to standard. This was the finding of a U. S. Senate Sub-Committee on Wartime Health and Education. In the United States the percentage of increase in the incidence of diabetes outages the increase in the birth-rate. More than 7,000,000 Americans are arthritic. One out of ten of so-called "healthy" American men has a stomach ulcer. One out of six is sterile. Not a pretty picture of a country generally rated by material standards to be the strongest, most "progressive" and most prosperous in all the world. If you wonder why and how ill health can be blamed onto Capitalism, the answer is that for the sake of making more money, the millers, for example, in grinding flour (*ata*) extract, by sifting, all the bran which contains mineral elements, such as phosphorus, essential to human health, and most of the protein, also the germ of the wheat which is rich in Vitamin B. This devitalized flour does not get rancid and does not attract any weevils or worms. Those little creatures are too sensible to even try to eat it! Thus devitalized, the flour can be transported long distances and sit on the grocer's shelves for months and still be saleable to human beings who lack the wisdom of the weevils. Furthermore, the foolish human consumers persuade themselves that bread made from white flour is more aristocratic than common gray flour ground daily in the home hand-mill. Thus they feed both

their stomachs and their pride on folly. Such bread is one of the causes of ill health in the West. The same holds true for polished rice and white "refined" sugar. Most people now know that a diet predominantly of polished rice causes beriberi. Tinned foods are also lacking in vitamins and other essentials of human health. Capitalism is responsible for large cities, and the food of city dwellers is stale and devitalized. There is ample evidence of the harm caused by such processed foods. In addition to poor food, the competition, unnatural pressure of factory work, speed, mechanized life, sooty air, congestion of living quarters, unhealthy stimuli and frustrations of city life, all cause nervous strains.

THE SPIRIT OF INDIA

[Dr. Matta Akrawi of Iraq, Secretary General of UNESCO, was deputed by the UNESCO to make a critical study of the educational work carried on by the Hindustani Talimi Sangh at Sevagram. From 29th Dec. '52, he spent two days at Sevagram and gave a talk to the staff and students on the work of the UNESCO and regarding what he had seen at Sevagram. He said:]

"It is difficult for an outsider who has been in India only a month, to talk about the spirit of India. But I feel that something of that spirit is epitomized here at Sevagram. The principle of education through work — not mere activity — is a profoundly sound one, however simple a form it may take with young children. With adequate safeguards against the conscious or unconscious exploitation of the child for the sake of mere production, it helps to integrate the child in his society to develop his intellect and his sense of responsibility.

"There is another profound principle on which the experiment at Sevagram seems to be based. It is the Buddhist, Christian, Gandhian principle of love and dedication to our fellowmen coupled with the principle of renunciation of the acquisitiveness of worldly goods and of personal ambitions as methods of building up a new, peaceful society. I feel sure that no peaceful society can be built on personal ambitions and interests and on acquisitiveness and competitive search for profits. Inevitably the profits and possessions become the ends, and fellow human beings are sacrificed and exploited for them. Moreover, ambitions and interests clash and lead to personal, group and national conflicts — hence war. The only legitimate group ambition is to come in contact with and gently and discreetly serve other groups. When every human being feels concerned about the welfare of every other human being *all over the world*, we can hope to have a new, ethical and peaceful world order.

"Sevagram in its own humble way is trying to practise these principles of its master and founder — Mahatma Gandhi. If it keeps on experimenting with ever fresher ways of applying its principles, and if it has the courage to utilize modern science in the service of these principles, it may yet have a lesson to give to India and the world."

* Price Re. 1-4-0, Postage etc. As. 4, Navajivan Karyalaya, Ahmedabad-9.

SAMPATTI-DAN — AN ALL-INDIA PROGRAMME *

I have received a very welcome letter from Tamilnad. Some friends from there have donated one sixth of their property to the *Sampatti-dan-Yajna*. It shows that the idea has begun to draw attention of the people even at this early stage. But I am not in haste. I want to proceed with this work rather slowly and build it on deeper foundation. That is why I have enjoined that it will be a life-pledge, and once a person agrees to it, he will continue to give the pledged portion of his earnings year after year.

But our minds are so firmly fixed in old grooves that many cannot even bring themselves to think of it. Their minds shrink from the prospect of having to part with their money every year for the whole of their lives. However if they stop to think they will see that there is nothing very strange about it. For example, marriage is a thing which binds a man for life and yet they accept the bondage and observe it. It is true, Hinduism provides a way of escape in the form of *sannyas*, but how many avail themselves of it? So why should those who willingly accept the lifelong bondage of marriage hesitate in accepting this pledge which is no bondage at all, because it is the way of *tyaga*, i.e. sacrifice and not of *bhoga*, i.e. enjoyment. It is *bhoga* which binds and not *tyaga*. Those who are anxious to know the truth and practise it should readily adopt this idea as a part of their life. Just as we insist on wholesome food and clean air throughout our life, so will we donate a part of our wealth to the needy throughout our entire life. In truth, we should agree to give not a part but the whole of it. But we may be permitted to keep a portion with us as trustees and make over the rest to society.

The *sampatti-dan* does not involve the physical transference of money from the donor to me. The money will remain with the donor. This saves us from many difficulties. We had raised many small funds in course of the national movement. Recently we raised quite a big one, viz. the Gandhi Memorial Fund. But we hardly know what to do with it. And the money lies unused. There is no such fear in *sampatti-dan*. Whatever we get will be put to immediate use the same year. For this, at this moment, I have two things in mind: first, the provision of the means of livelihood to the poor, and next, help to the self-sacrificing workers for their physical maintenance. But as the work goes ahead, I will have many more items to add to this programme. There is so much work to do that we can use all the money immediately as we get it.

We are going to distribute land to lakhs of people who will need other kind of help too before they can stand on their legs. Not only that, I also want to raise an army of workers. If India continues to be the poor and miserable country which it is at present, there is no hope for India. Even at the rate of two workers for a group of fifty villages, one of whom will be out touring about them and the other settled at some central place, we will need 3000 workers for Bihar only. For India, at that rate, we will need many times more. But how few, alas, they are! I am not

worried at all about the maintenance of the workers provided, of course, they are real workers. Six persons each giving a sixth share can take care of one. And six families may well undertake to maintain one family. In that way, we may maintain thousands. This may easily grow into an extensive programme, but I will not do it all at once. I want to achieve personal intimacy with each donor and enter into his life as it were. I would accept only what he offers me with full deliberation and with the consent of other members of his household. I want to set about it with care and circumspection so that it should be free from every blemish. That is why I am not entrusting it to any organization at present. There will be time to decide further as our work prospers. My satisfaction lies in the fact that people are giving freely and after mature thought about it. Of course, I want that ultimately there would be none but would make the offering to this great *yajna*.

We aim at nothing less than obliterating the distinction of rich and poor. God in His infinite bounty has certainly given one thing or another to each one of us. Then why should not every one share a portion of that God-given thing with others? When this happens, all around us will immediately begin to change giving rise to a happier and brighter Bharat. I am sure the *Sampatti-dan-Yajna* will also bring forth the same strength and power as did the Bhoodan movement.

After Bhoodan, I was thinking of the problem of *sampatti*, i.e. the inequalities of wealth and all the evils which arise from them. We accepted *parigraha*, i.e. possession of wealth for our institutions. The *Sampatti-dan-Yajna* will show us how to run them on the basis of non-possession. We are not going to raise funds. Our funds will lie with whosoever accepts our ideology. Non-possession is infinitely more powerful than possession. *Sampatti-dan* will show the power of non-possession to the people.

(From Hindi)

CONTENTS	PAGE
MAN PROGRESSING	
TOWARDS NON-VIOLENCE .. Gandhiji	469
MAN'S INJUSTICE TO MAN .. Gandhiji	409
THE CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF 'TAPAS' .. Arthur E. Morgan	410
ADOPT GANDHIAN ECONOMY OR PERISH .. Wilfred Wellock	411
SARVODAYA AND INDEPENDENCE .. Maganbhai P. Desai	412
TO LOVERS OF GANDHIAN THOUGHT .. Vinoba	413
THE SARVODAYA FORTNIGHT .. Dharendra Mazumdar	414
INDUSTRIALIZE AND PERISH .. Richard B. Gregg	415
THE SPIRIT OF INDIA .. M. Akrawi	415
SAMPATTI-DAN — AN ALL-INDIA PROGRAMME .. Vinoba	416

* Shri Vinoba's prayer-speech at Chandil, 30-12-'52.