

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

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TWO ANNAS

ANDHRA'S OPPORTUNITY

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

Today's morning papers announce the good news that Swami Sitaram of Andhra ended his fast at 12 noon, March 24. He began the fast on March 5, and it is a matter of very great joy indeed that before the aged Swami might succumb to the ordeal, good sense had its victory and leaders of Andhra could, by giving due satisfaction, prevail upon him to end the fast. All who stand by the Constitution of India and wish that Prohibition should prevail in the land, may well congratulate themselves that God in His mercy has blessed us with sparing the Swami to serve Andhra further more.

The cause of Prohibition is a national responsibility. It is fast on its way to be a world movement for the greatest humanitarian reform of our times. If mankind wants to live in peace, happiness and sanity and banish war, it will have to find out and remove some very fundamental causes—social and individual—which tend to or provoke aggressiveness, bellicosity, greed and graft, insanity, unhappiness, lust, passion etc. Human flesh is heir to these vices, I may admit. But we also know that, in spite of that, it is the abode of God, and if at all civilization, culture, education, religion etc. have any meaning, it is to achieve control over the former and to vindicate the latter truth of our being.

Alcohol is universally held to be one of the potent provocative causes for the flesh to go wrong. Opinion is fast growing in another matter also. Killing birds and beasts for food, medicine, etc. is another thing, requiring us to probe deep and find out whether vegetarianism means more than mere dietetic reform—whether it has for humanity a social, spiritual and human meaning and implication also. In these days of land and food scarcity, we are told it has economic implications as well. In India we have been taught by our great religions to shun alcohol and to avoid meat-eating. These have been generally held to be only personal virtues of piety. They are no doubt that, but they are more because of it, as they assume to have a social and cultural significance as well. This is increasingly dawning upon us due to the needs of the modern age and the dangers of the mass mind that is asser-

ting itself more and more, thanks to the technological and commercial civilization that is making mankind its victim. Mankind must, in its search for real peace, come to realize that these aspects of human life are not only personal but also social and economic. Swami Sitaram's ordeal was therefore not a mere fadist obstinacy or unreasonableness, but it must remind us that when the Indian people, during the last half a century of their history, continuously strove to achieve Prohibition, they were beginning the modern world's greatest humanitarian reform movement. To lead it India must first achieve it herself. I congratulate Swami Sitaram for helping the cause by his very life, which, thank God, is spared to us. May the fast of the Swami provoke Andhra to rally round Prohibition and to see that such an unalloyed good should not be wantonly given up for petty and doubtful gain of tainted money.

25-3-54

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DIRECTIVE PRINCIPLES

(By P. Kodanda Rao)

There seems to be some difference of opinion regarding the status of the Directive Principles of the Indian Constitution, particularly in relation to the Courts. One of the intriguing questions is whether the *recall* of any step taken in furtherance of a Directive Principle is constitutional and justiciable.

Article 37 of the Constitution said that the Directive Principles "shall not be enforceable by any Court", but added that they were "nevertheless fundamental in the governance of the country and it shall be the duty of the State to apply these Principles in making laws." It is obvious that if a State failed to implement the Directive Principles, the Courts cannot declare it unconstitutional. But, if a State *goes back* on its implementation, some authorities have taken the view that the Courts could review it and declare it unconstitutional.

Dr. N. C. Sen Gupta said :

"Further, the Courts also, while they will not *enforce* any of these provisions, will take account of them as fundamental principles to determine incidentally, for example, the question of the validity of any acts, and also to interpret the provisions of any statute in recognition of these principles." (N. C. Sen Gupta, *The Constitution of India*, p. 58)

The Advocate-General of Mysore said :

"Although the provisions of Part IV are not enforceable in a Court of law, it is nevertheless important to remember that the Directive Principles of State policy enumerated in that Part are intended to afford guidance more or less of an obligatory character as indicated in the words 'It shall be the duty of the State' contained in Art. 37 of the Constitution..... It is true that a legislation made by a State in derogation of the principles stated in Part IV of the Constitution may not be constitutionally incompetent merely for that reason..... But it seems to me that, apart from any question of a technical infraction of the constitutional provisions which may not be a consequence of the proposed amendment, it would not be proper for the State to make a legislation, which far from giving effect to the principles enumerated in Part IV, contains provisions clearly repugnant to it."

The Law Secretary to the Mysore Government said that it would be quite within the scope of the Courts to take cognisance of the Directive Principles in reviewing any legislative or executive action of the State, and that a step repugnant to them would be "constitutionally bad". For example :

"Though no citizen of a State in which no provision is made for free and compulsory primary education, can approach a Court for redress, I think that, if he is in a State in which there is legal provision made for free primary education, he can challenge attempts made to alter the existing law in the State to his disadvantage."

Mr M. C. Setalvad, the Attorney-General of India, in his paper on "The Indian Federation" read at the International Legal Conference, held in Delhi on the 28th Dec. 1953, said that the Courts did and would take the Directive Principles into consideration in their judicial review of executive and legislative action. He said :

"These fundamental axioms of State policy, though of no legal effect, have served as useful beacon-lights to Courts. It has been held in the context of the Directive Principles that legislation making land resources of the country effectively available to the larger mass of the cultivating community is acquisition of land for public purposes. Restrictions imposed by laws on the freedom of the citizen may well be reasonable if they are imposed in furtherance of the Directive Principles. Thus, these Principles have helped the Courts in exercising their power of judicial review. They will, therefore, not only form a dominating background to all State action, legislative or executive, but also be a guide, in some respects, to the Courts."

According to him, the Courts took note of the Directive Principles in construing the Fundamental Rights and even made the latter subsidiary to the former !

It should be noted, however, that the Supreme Court in *Madras v. Champakam Dorairajan* (2nd April 1951) took the view that the Directive Principles could not override the Fundamental Rights and had to be subsidiary to them. It would seem, in any event, the Courts could and would veto any action reversing a step taken to implement a Directive Principle, particularly when it did not conflict with any of the Fundamental Rights. Prohibition has been held by the High Courts of Bombay and Nagpur and by the Supreme Court also to be no infringement of any of the Fundamental Rights.

A PLEA FOR PEACE AND SANITY

(By J. C. Kumarappa)

[The following is an abridgement of Shri J. C. Kumarappa's two articles, 'Encirclement of India' and 'Our Friends' that appeared in the *Gram Udyog Patrika*, Wardha, of March 1954.]

In the world today the Capitalist machinery and the Socialist organization stand in juxtaposition in battle array led by the U.S.A. and the U. S. S. R. respectively. Between these two there is little difference in their methods or the quantum of violence resorted to. Yet they are both wooing adjacent nations and countries to serve their own ends.

In this context where do we stand with our neighbours? Our erstwhile joint family is divided and some members are being induced to seek modern military bases and equipment. What is our duty?

We must realign the world powers into a pattern that will eliminate the violent forces and bring them into constructive co-operation. When we look at the warring elements we find a great deal of the belligerency is created largely by vigorous propaganda and unthinking following and such feelings can be countered by a cool and calm approach.

China and India have never had any quarrels through the ages. Britain and Germany are halfway to becoming Welfare States and their differences with the wholesale Socialist States cannot be insurmountable. Hence if spheres of influence within these groups can be actively promoted by our statesmen in a spirit of give and take and we form a pattern of world powers and use the economic sanctions against any bellicose State in a combine adopting non-violent non-co-operation, we should be able very quickly to swing back the warring elements into sanity. Further attempts at armaments will only destroy humanity. Already the bulk of human energy is being led into arid fields of fruitless efforts.

The U.S.A. is stalking the world as a giver of all good gifts. It is boasting of the service it is rendering, not only to Germany and Japan, but to humanity as a whole, in being able to rearm these two militarist nations.

We trust such nations realize the tremendous loss they incur by wasting their revenues on such destructive expenditures. If the funds directed towards expanding the Japanese 'security forces' were used for constructive purposes, over 5,80,000 homeless families could be provided with houses, apart from various forms of relief for millions of people. It is calculated that if the last three years military expenses had been used on land 3,00,000 hectares (hecto-acres?) of damaged farm lands could have been rehabilitated and broken dykes, bridges etc. could have been restored. When shall we return to reason?

VINOBAJI IN GAYA — II

Speaking at a prayer meeting at Rafiganj, Shri Vinoba asked the people, "Do you not see that land has already slipped away from the present owners and gone over to Daridra-narayana? You have vested everyone with the right of vote. Pandit Nehru and his orderly both have it equally. Do you not see then that the poor are bound to come into the possession of land? The change is inevitable, but we want it to take place in an atmosphere of love. The landholders and the landless must love each other and help each other. That is exactly the purpose we are striving to achieve through this movement. Collection of land-gifts is merely an excuse for this real work. It provides us an opportunity to approach the people and exhort them to undergo sacrifice and even suffering for the good of the community. We are not interested so much in securing gift-deeds though it is certainly a part of our work in its outer aspect and is important in its own way for rousing the people to do their duty. Far more important than the gift-deeds is the gain of workers — of men who will be free from egoism and totally devoid of selfish desire. And when we find such a one we feel as though we had found the man of our heart."

Giving friendly advice to the landholders at the prayer meeting at Goha, Shri Vinoba said, "Land must really belong to the poor who work on it. He alone should be allowed to own a book who can read it. Land, in the same way, must belong to those who will cultivate it. If you want to retain your possession of it, you too must learn to work."

Vinobaji however realizes that the immediate implementation of this change would cause great difficulty to them, so he added, "We do not want you to take to work immediately, but you must begin to learn and also get your boys to learn it. You may take five to ten years for it. The labourers will continue to help you till then. But you cannot hope for this facility to go on for ever. That attitude would neither be fair nor indeed in your interest. In fact it may well hasten your fall."

He stressed this same thing in his speech at Dabur that the redistribution of land is inevitable, but if the landholders themselves took up this work they would not only save their prestige but also invest the change with grace and glory. He said, "If there is love between these two classes, if the distinction between the masters and the servants is obliterated and both co-operate for the common good, our villages will soon become abodes of happiness and prosperity. Otherwise there will be conflict, internecine strife and even bloodshed. Nothing will then avail us to stop it. It cannot be that those who have no land and nothing else to live upon and

who are therefore dying of hunger will continue to suffer silently. The slogan — 'The hungry will no longer put up with their suffering,' is abroad. I love to hear this cry. It shows people are waking up and are on the march. I therefore say to the landholder, you too wake up and cry out, 'we on our part will no more put up with tainted happiness. We will distribute these lands.'

"Man can be worse than a beast and, if he likes, even better than a god. He can brutalize himself or, if he so wills, even divinize himself. The beast is fixed in its nature. It can neither be worse nor better than what it is. It is only given to man to improve himself. It therefore behoves him to be vigilant lest he should deteriorate and to do his utmost for realizing his divine possibilities." In these words, Shri Vinoba impressed upon his audience the great superiority of man over other animals and his concomitant duty to put this superiority to the best advantage.

Many in India today carried away by the dazzle of scientific achievements of the West are inclined to look to the West for the light that we need in order to rebuild and renovate our worn-out and effete society. Shri Vinoba however is too clear-sighted to be taken in by this dazzle. He therefore wants us to profit both by the Western science and the old Indian wisdom in the task of rebuilding the society. He said, "We have to learn a lot from the West in the field of science. But so far as the science of social organization is concerned, we must rely more on our own old experience. There is not much to learn from the West in this respect. The saints in our country made careful experiments in this field. The teaching of the Shastras rests on those experiments and would prove immensely fruitful in the task of rebuilding our society."

Speaking at Rafiganj he gave an illustration of this fact. He said, "The *ashram* scheme of how a man should plan and utilize his life is the best both from the individual and the social point of view. An individual was enjoined to acquire knowledge during the Brahmacharya stage. Then as Grihastha i.e. a householder, he was to serve the family. And thereafter in the Vanaprastha stage, he was to cut himself away from the narrow family circle and to devote himself to the service of the society at large." A large number of selfless workers were thus always at the disposal of the society for its service. It was sad, he added that, today, they could not get even twenty-five such workers from a whole district. It was proof of the fallen state of our society.

(From Hindi)

L. N.

WHY PROHIBITION

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THE NEW CENTURY IN TEXTILE INDUSTRY

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

The textile industry is celebrating its centenary these days. The event marks the turn of one full century of our recent history. It followed an equally eventful century before that, during which the East India Company successfully smashed down our world famous hand-cloth or Khadi industry and built up on its ruin its own English textile industry. The Indian mill industry that grew up in its wake flourished as much only as was allowed to do by the overlordship of English industry. If India's people, out of patriotism, had not given it the preference and patronage, the history of that industry's centenary would have been surely different.

The new century that sets in now is marked out by the advent of freedom. But there is much more that is coming in its wake, though it is not apparent at present. The new century is destined to be a new age in our economic and industrial history. Naturally, therefore, questions of far-reaching importance for our nation are in the offing.

Shri G. D. Birla touched this point in his address the other day in Delhi at the meeting of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce. He said,

"We are unaware—may be unconsciously—of the new developments that have taken place. Before independence,.....there were only two interests, the British interest and the Indian interest. We always talked of Indian interest and rallied round the slogan. As independence came this has been changed, because the question arose as to what were the Indian interests—" (quoted from a press report).

The textile industry cannot truly answer this question, because it is solely interested to exist anyhow as private enterprise. Its sole interest is profit and more private capital formation. It has grown into an Indian edition of what in Europe brought about capitalism. The industry talks very much of providing more employment; but that is not its main work nor intention. And we should also note that it is beyond its competence. Even though a century has passed by, it could employ only a few lakhs of people. And now it intends to renovate its old machinery, thus displacing more men from employment. Its only worry is to have capital for it and therefore it cries hoarse against increasing taxation.

The industry has another fear also, viz., nationalization. And it seeks guarantee from Government that it will not come on them.

Looking from the industry's point of view, these fears are understandable. But the new century that sets in now is one of Swaraj—the Welfare or the Sarvodaya State. Industrialists like Shri Birla and others do not seem to have read the signs of these times properly well. Shri Jawaharlalji gave a few glimpses of these things while addressing the Federation. For example he said, "One has to remember that there are a number of social forces at work today and they should not be ignored. They look in the right direction. They may go wrong occasionally and they may misbehave occasionally, but they are obvious developments of the age." He accepted the principle of higher techniques, subject always to the human problem, as the human factor could never be ignored. He therefore laid stress on cottage industries and village industries and he wanted to improve their technique regarding marketing etc., while wanting to use them to keep a large number of people in employment.

Shri G. D. Birla also referred to cottage and village industries, but in a different way and from a different angle. He said, "We are all in favour of small-scale and cottage industry; but the whole question is: Are we going to replace large-scale industry by small-scale industry? Or is it going to be supplemented?"

And his other observation was, that industrialists could give employment to everybody in his cottage, (a very bold statement, indeed!) provided small-scale industries played their part all right in the industrialist's own scheme of things economic. And he complained saying, "When we talk of small-scale industry we cannot think of anything else except Charkha, Ghani, etc., which we have been talking about in the last 30 years."

Shri Birla's observations are justified, because they are born of the shape of things to come in the course of the in-coming century. We saw above that industrialists are afraid of nationalization. They should similarly be afraid of socialization of industries also, which is what is implied by Gandhiji's principle of Sarvodaya. It says that the primary needs of our masses, viz. food, cloth, shelter etc. should be met by the decentralized efforts of our small-scale village industries spread over the whole country. Industries for these should not be allowed to centralize in a capitalist way, bringing its evils in their wake to our people. It is therefore that simple small-scale industries like the Charkha, Ghani etc. are spoken of for the last 30 years. They are born of such a larger vision of a socialized economy which will avoid capitalism and usher in a new order of Sarvodaya. It is therefore not surprising that clever industrialists should note, though lightly to begin with, this new danger to their industry.

The industrialists feel safe at present that Government swears by private enterprise and

like them, is not so keen about small-scale industries. However, obviously Government should have a larger view of the question and it cannot overlook unemployment in the country. It has therefore begun to take steps to rehabilitate our handloom industry and to help Khadi and other village industries. These steps bespeak the coming tide of socialization through decentralized small-scale industrialization. Industrialists should accept that this is now the Indian or the national interest. The Socialist way of nationalization of industries has proved itself to be defective, as it is fraught with all evils of capitalism, it being only another name for State Capitalism. It is therefore that Gandhiji suggested a decentralized or socialized way of industrialism, so far as the primary needs of our villages were concerned. Heavy industries like Railway, Motors, Mines etc. which remain might be looked after by Government and/or private enterprise. The new century that begins requires us to arrange our industrial order in this manner. Though slowly, we are turning towards it. There are not sufficient people today who devote themselves to think, plan, and make researches for quickening the pace. Therefore apparently there is slow progress. However we should not lose sight of the objective, otherwise we shall lose the vision of the new age, and the nation would perish like a rudderless ship.

24-3-'54

(From the original in Gujarati)

ACHIEVE EQUALITY AND LOVE *

(By Vinoba)

The heart of India lies in the villages while the intelligence is in the cities, though even there the real intelligence is to be found only in the villages. A city-dweller, when he falls ill, finds himself utterly helpless and runs straight to the doctor. The city has divided the intelligence into bits. The bit of it concerning health and medicine is known only to a few, that is, the doctors. This division and specialization has proceeded so far ahead that there are special doctors each for teeth, eyes, ears and so on. In the villages, there are no doctors or physicians, but the people manage to do without them. This is not to deny that there is room for improvement in what they know and how they do things. But they cannot be accused of lack of intelligence and knowledge. For example, they know the art of cultivation. Besides, they are resourceful and courageous. Above all, they are tender and kind-hearted as befits human beings. In cities like Bombay people living close to one another in the same house — these houses known as *chawls* may have as many as fifty rooms, each occupied by a family — do not even know their next-door neighbours! Each one is exclusively busy in his own affairs and has little time to look beyond. Where they do not even know one another, how can there be any

love between them? But in the villages people share in one another's joys and afflictions. The birth of a child or a person falling ill in the village are occasions when the entire neighbourhood would collect at the place of the person concerned to maximize his delight or to minimize his suffering. As a saying puts it, "God made the country, and man made the town." It means that while people live together in the villages out of love for one another, they crowd together in the cities out of greed. Hundreds of flies flock together on a heap of cow-dung, all intent on enjoying the filth. It is the same with the people in the cities. That is why I say that the heart of India is in its villages and that is why we are moving about on foot and through the villages. This gives us an insight into the soul of India.

People are giving land to me, — why? What do I tell them? I do not tell them either of the transformation in Russia or the achievements of New China. Nor do I speak to them of economic doctrines. I simply say to them: God has made light and water and air. In the same way, He has made the earth. We cannot be the owners of land. The idea of ownership is wrong. God is the only owner.

I cannot sit eating and enjoying sweets while some one near at hand is crying. Only a Satan could do it. He who shares the joy and pain of his fellow beings is a man. This is his distinctive mark which separates him from the animal.

People hoard money. They forget that money gives rise to discord even between those who would have lived ordinarily in love and harmony with each other. I know several friends who are rich but who are unhappy, because there is no love among the members of the family. The scriptures say that the miserly people who hoard wealth are the progenitors of the thieves. It is they who are responsible for the thieves coming into existence. But while they are considered respectable members of the society, the latter are held guilty of anti-social activity. The policeman, the lawyer, the judge, the jailor are all a useless burden on the society. They have to be maintained in order to restrain the thieves and such other anti-social elements from doing harm to the society. But if there is no hoarding of wealth and everyone gets provided with the means for earning his livelihood, these anti-social activities will automatically stop and there will be no need for the upkeep of this army of parasites.

What is needed is a change of values. Man must wake up to his higher nature. Let him realize that he is different from animals. Man rejoices in going without food so that others whom he loves may be fed. He takes delight in sacrifice and suffering for doing good to his dear ones, to his community, and to his country. That is his nature. The animals cannot do this.

* From a speech at Poldit (Palamu) on 8-3-'54.

Extend the love that you feel for your own family to the whole village. The village should be looked upon as one vast family. It is only when you cultivate this all-embracing love that the villages will be happy.

I have come to wake you up to the God in you. In the words of Tulsidas what I am doing is just to go to everyone, knock at the door and call out: "Prince Rama, wake up. It is morning, the birds are chirping about and singing a welcome to the rising sun."

We have placed two things before you: Achieve equality with those around you, if not in full, at least in such degree as you can. And secondly, extend your love to the whole village. Do that and you will be happy.

(From Hindi)

EDUCATED WOMEN'S ROLE *

(By Sushila Nayyar)

Whenever I address a gathering of students I begin to feel nostalgic about my own student days. In spite of the hard work and examination worries which are a part and parcel of student life, no one will deny that student days are the best period of one's life. This is the time when young people prepare themselves for the tasks ahead. And in free India the scope for national reconstruction is so vast, the challenge to put our newly won freedom on a sound footing so great that the most adventurous amongst you will find full scope for the spirit of adventure and the desire to make substantial contribution to the task of nation building.

Our Shastras have defined true education as that which liberates the human mind — सा विद्या या विमुक्तये । A mind freed from the shackles created by man himself has unlimited scope to soar as high as he likes in the realm of idealism. But to be of service in the present day world, he or she must also translate that idealism into action and to do that, tread on the firm ground of practical reality. Mahatma Gandhi has opened unlimited vistas before us by presenting to us the ideals of truth and love and by showing to us how these can be used to find a solution to every problem, human and social. It was ordinary men and women, who by joining in their thousands a Satyagraha campaign, enabled India to win independence and it is they who have today to accomplish the task of national reconstruction. The essential requisite for it is a free mind that can soar high, free from fear and free from hatred, full of love for the country and for humanity. Education sets free the springs of energy — to which there is no bound — by freeing the mind. That alone is the test of true education.

* Being extracts from the convocation address delivered before the students of Dev Samaj College for Girls, Ambala.

I hope those of you who are getting your degrees today have had the benefit of this type of education. No professors and no books can possibly teach you answers to all the questions that you will be faced with as you go through life. But if at the threshold of life you have the self-confidence that your professors have taught you how to search for and find those answers, they have given you all that you need. If they have liberated your mind from the narrow grooves, so that you are ready to face life with courage and confidence, undaunted and unruffled, by the difficulties that will come in your way, they have given you true education; you have experienced the truth of the saying — सा विद्या या विमुक्तये ।

We live in the days of Democracy and Democracy puts a special responsibility on each individual particularly those who, like you, have had the privilege of university education. It is not enough that each one of you should think and act correctly yourself, you must carry the people with you. Democracy unlike dictatorship cannot flourish if there is a genius here and there. It has to be based on a good average. Therefore wherever you go, each one of you must carry the torch of knowledge and the message of true freedom.

Most of you are displaced students. You have seen with your own eyes the degradation of man resulting from fear and hatred. Man has both the godhead and the devil within his breast. It is the education one gets that will bring the one or the other to the fore. I hope the experiences that you have gone through will have enabled you to realize once and for all the ugliness of hatred which is the twin brother of fear. Freedom from fear is the most vital of the four freedoms which constitute the goal of Democracy. The task of nation building can only be performed in an atmosphere of freedom from fear. An eminent President of the United States of America once said that there was only one thing one should be afraid of and that is fear itself.

On you, the educated young women of India, rests a still greater responsibility. You hold the key to progress. Firstly, you must realize your duty towards those sisters of yours who have not had the opportunities that you have had. And then you must own the burden of keeping the men on the right path. It is the mother who imparts the education which takes deepest roots. Again, every man loves some woman as wife, sister, mother or daughter, and the woman must become conscious of her power and her duty to use that power for promoting the welfare of all mankind. True education should enable you to widen your horizon and broaden your circle of love so that it grows from the family to those who live around you and ultimately to all mankind. सा विद्या या विमुक्तये ।

ECONOMICS OF PROHIBITION

[The Government of Bombay submitted Memoranda to the Indian Taxation Inquiry Committee, 1953. Three of them are out till now. These contain a fund of valuable and important information about the finances of Bombay State. As we know, the State has introduced total Prohibition in the whole province. Memorandum I is a 'General Note on State Taxation and Budgetary Position', and contains a statement on the financial aspect of this reform. It is worthy of study by other States in India, even to realize that really speaking it pays to have Prohibition as it brings about a general betterment of even the finances of a State—let alone the real welfare of our poor people.]

17-3-54

—M. P. J.

In a system of mixed economy, planning does not merely consist in increased Government expenditure and an extension of the public sector in the interests of the socio-economic welfare of the people. Successful planning should also aim at measures leading to wiser spending in the private sector towards socially desirable ways. In 1946-47, purchasing power to the extent of Rs 35 crores was being ill-spent by the private sector on the drink evil, more than half of which was a heavy drain on the purse strings of the poorer sections of the population represented by industrial and agricultural labour, Adivasis, farmers and the lower middle class population.

Apart from post-war reconstruction and planning, a major plan in the budgetary and financial policy of the popular Ministry during the post-war period is the fulfilment of the process of readjustment of the tax structure by the abolition of the drink evil and reduction in the inequitable taxation on poorer sections of the population through excise taxation on intoxicants. The revenue from State excise has been brought down from Rs 976 lakhs in 1946-47 by quick stages of reduction in the consumption of intoxicants culminating in complete Prohibition with effect from 6th April 1950 to Rs 100 lakhs in 1953-54. The excise receipts in 1946-47 do not while the excise receipts in 1953-54 do include receipts from merged areas. In the absence of Prohibition in merged areas and taking into account the increase in price levels from year to year it may be stated that State excise receipts in 1953-54 would have been about Rs 12 crores if Prohibition had not been introduced.

The reduction in the loss in excise revenue through Prohibition policy has been more than recouped by additional taxation measures in 1948-49, 1949-50 and 1952-53. The problems of the Bombay Government recouping the loss in excise revenue through other taxes should be weighed against the advantages offered by a release of an annual purchasing power of over Rs 35 crores to the private sector for meeting their more urgent socially desirable wants. There is no doubt that the funds spared to common man by the Prohibition policy since 1st April '50 have substantially helped him to meet a part of the difficulties created by rising cost of living indices since that date.

The State Government simultaneously with the decrease in the burden of taxation due to Prohibition policy has more than recouped the loss by other additional taxation measures more equitable in character. The tax on general sales first levied in 1946 has been more and more fully exploited. Additional taxation has been imposed during the post-war period in the years 1948-49, 1949-50, and 1952-53. The financial effects of these additional taxation measures are indicated in Table 7. From the gross additional taxation in each year, the reduction in the burden of excise taxations as a result of Prohibition has been deducted. It will be seen from the statement that during the seven years 1947-48 to 1953-54 the Government of Bombay have imposed a gross additional taxation of Rs 87.9 crores which reduced by the reduction in the burden of excise taxation comes to a net additional tax burden of Rs 36.2 crores. The receipts from additional taxation have greatly helped the finances of post-war reconstruction and planning activities.

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION — A HUMAN RIGHT

A number of people, well-known and of the highest reputation and integrity, from many countries, have written to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights urging that the right of conscientious objection to military service be included in the Convention on Human Rights which is at present being drafted.

At the date of writing, compulsory military service is in force in fifty-eight countries, but only eighteen of these make provision for conscientious objection. As a result many men are imprisoned, often for many years.

It is to be hoped that the next Session of the Commission on Human Rights which begins on 23rd February, 1954, will give serious and favourable consideration to this request for international legal recognition of conscience.

The text of the letter to the Members of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights is as follows:

"Believing that the protection of individual citizens against the arbitrary action of officials and of government is one of the marks of a politically mature State,

— and that the recognition of the inviolability of conscience is an essential characteristic of a civilized community and of fundamental importance to human progress,

— and noting that the United Nations has, as one of its declared aims, the protection of human rights and has set up a Commission to specify those rights and to prescribe machinery for their enforcement,

We, the undersigned, desire to urge the Human Rights Commission to give special attention to safeguarding this right and in particular to specify under the heading of freedom of conscience, the right of conscientious objection to compulsory military training and war service."

(From a News Release, W. R. I., England)

VILLAGE SHOE-MAKER vs. SHOE-MAKING FACTORIES

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

The Secretary of the Bombay State, Kutch and Saurashtra Mochi (Shoe-makers) Conference, Baroda, sends me the following requesting me to draw the attention of the Government to it:

"Village *mochi* work and leather goods industries are a centuries-old important industry of India. In point of importance it ranks next only to the cottage industries of weaving and tanning. Those who earn their bread from this vocation are quite a large number, amounting to millions. Indigenous shoe-making industry is the only means of livelihood for these millions of our brethren. But foreign firms like the Bata and the Flax have been dealing a death-blow to this cottage industry by their gigantic mass production. They have begun to bring wreck and ruin to our community. We strongly believe that if the Government do not act in time to stop even at this stage the worsening condition of our industry, it will soon die out. And millions of village artisans whose only means of livelihood is this industry and who know no other vocation will be hurled into jaws of unemployment and starvation."

Continuing further he writes:

"It is a painfully surprising fact that the Five Year Plan has altogether omitted to note our cottage industry. We humbly request Government to consider the sorry plight of our industry before it is too late and soon take effective measures to stop the exploitation of the India footwear market, that foreign firms like Bata and Flax do at the cost of lives of our half-naked and half-starved brethren."

Whatever thing Economic pundits may say on this question, it is obvious that the above grievance of the *mochi* community is genuine. It is an undeniable fact that though the large-scale industries with great capital at their command are pouncing upon this small-scale cottage industry and are virtually ruining it, none thinks it their responsibility to pay them compensation or give them a substitute employment. The Government do not hold owners of large-scale industries responsible for this ruin; and why should the latter care to worry about the *mochis*? Such painful neglect of the poor is at the base of the capitalist social structure. Governments, based as they are on this structure and are of it, helplessly tolerate such things.

The latest central budget has taxed products of large-scale shoe-making industries. I hope it is done not only with a view to earning revenues but also for extending protection to the indigenous industry of *mochis*.

The Secretary of the Conference has at the end of his submission made a reference to the Five Year Plan. I hope the planners of the Second Five Year Plan will consider the case of the indigenous small-scale industry of *mochis* and give it its rightful place in the nation's economy and make the best of it in the solution of the unemployment problem.

The Secretary while writing on the question of *mochis'* industry vis-a-vis the shoe-making fac-

ories has drawn my attention to the following observation by Gandhiji:

"Any article is Swadeshi if it serves the interest of the millions, even though the capital and talent are foreign but *under effective Indian control*. . . . Bata's rubber or other shoes would be foreign though the labour employed may be all Indian and the capital also found by India. The manufacturers will be doubly foreign because the control will be in foreign hands and the article, no matter how cheap it is, will oust the village tanner mostly and the village *mochi* always. Already the *mochis* of Bihar have begun to feel the unhealthy competition. The Bata shoe may be the saving of Europe; it will mean the death of our village shoe-maker and tanner." (*Harijan*, 25-2-39).

Abstention Pledge for Government Staff

The following news is reproduced from a press cutting:

"Nagpur, March 4: New Government employees in Madhya Pradesh will have to sign a pledge of abstention from drink.

"Mr Brijlal Bivani, Finance Minister, told the State Assembly during his budget speech today that while this was a condition for new employees, old Government servants were expected not to obtain liquor permits.

"He said that full Prohibition continued to be the Government's objective." (*The Times of India News Service*)

I congratulate the M. P. Government for the decision and suggest that such a pledge can very well be the pledge for all Government servants in all the States and the Centre whether they are under Prohibition or off it still. Like the pledge of loyalty, secrecy etc. that are necessary for Government servants, this one also should be held necessary even as a moral obligation and loyalty to the Constitution of India.

22-3-'54

M. P.

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