

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

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TWO ANNAS

THE WAY TO A STATELESS SOCIETY*

(By Dr. Rajendraprasad)

It is after a long time that I am having this opportunity to speak in this part, and before such a huge gathering — a gathering, moreover, which is being attended by visitors from all our provinces. But I have lost the habit to speak to a gathering of this kind and I do not know what I shall say to you. Shall I tell you of things which I usually do nowadays, or speak in the way I did before, though do not take it that there is much difference between the two. However a sort of difference comes in the approach as also in the topics, though there is no difference in the basic thought behind them.

I believe that now when the people have the right of the government of the country in their own hands, they should use it after fully understanding its meaning and importance. When people complain to me that the Government is not doing this or that or that many of the things which it is doing are bad, I say to them that the people get a government which they deserve. If there are defects in the Government, we must understand that they are essentially those of the people and are merely reflected in the Government. People then say in reply that this is merely a device to hide the misdoings of the Government, and they are wrongly blamed. This may also have an element of truth in it. Nevertheless it has to be admitted that in a democracy if the people who have the right to choose their government exercise this right thoughtfully and well, no government can stay in office for long against their wishes. It is a characteristic of the democratic form of government that, worked well, it can and does reflect the wish of the people. But those who choose and those who are chosen must realize their responsibility and discharge it conscientiously.

This form of government is being introduced in the country for the first time. Undoubtedly we had democratic republics in our country in olden days, but they were too small to bear comparison with what we have today. Besides, the mass of the people did not exercise such control over them as they do now. The society existing at that time

was also different in many ways. Their means and methods were different and much weaker. Hence the present democracy is the first of its kind in India and those who are working it are doing so on a large scale. Maybe, it has defects or even mistakes committed by those who are in authority which require to be corrected. In a way I am myself realizing that the elections which are a part of this democracy give rise to much which is undesirable, though I have myself been put in the place I hold at present in the same way. But the place which I occupy demands a non-partisan attitude which enables me to have a detached view of things. And so I will try to speak a few words to you about what I see and hear from this detached position.

It is a good sign for our country that in spite of differences of opinion, the elections passed off quite peacefully. There was no breach of peace such as would have caused us concern about the future of democracy in our country. From the work that has been done in the last five or six years, it is clear that notwithstanding formidable difficulties which could overwhelm or even crush us we have stood firm. There has been no falling back from our position; if anything, we have marched forward. This provides ground for the hope that our infancy will soon be over, and with greater experience, we will do even better.

Of all these good signs, one which gives most hope is the beginning of the Sarvodaya movement. This movement will certainly contribute the most in keeping us going on the straight path. When I think over what I have seen and heard here and at the Khadi Exhibition recently held in Delhi — I do not mean merely the implements, and the Khadi and other village industry products which were displayed there, but the spirit behind them all, — I feel greatly heartened. I feel sure that if this thing spreads, if it is well understood and adopted, our country will go ahead very very quickly. The democracy which the Constitution has set up is after all an ersatz. We made that Constitution on the basis of the experience of other people. Our system of education and our ideas and opinions have also been borrowed from the same alien teachers. And so perhaps we could not have made a different kind of the Constitution. But even so there is in it something which we can mould and develop and

* Speech at Sarvodayapuri, Bodhi Gaya, on 20-4-54.

reorient our existing social and political structure in the direction of our goal of Sarvodaya.

I fully subscribe to the view that we should build up a Stateless society — a society free from government. I feel puzzled to see that in almost all countries of the world today the way things are being done is resulting in the extension of the area of the government. Everything is being brought under the control of the government. The totalitarian countries are denounced for trying to control every aspect of man's life even as they do the various parts of a machine. But look at those who denounce them and we find that they are also tending in the same direction. We see similar things being done in our country also. Not that all this is being done deliberately, but any way the result is that State control over man is steadily increasing. One small but irrefutable proof of it lies in the fact that all the State assemblies as well as the Central Parliament are busy enacting more and more laws every day and there is no knowing how many more will still be enacted. Laws are being made for the smallest as well as for the biggest of things. Those in authority, the members of the legislative assemblies and the people — all seem to believe that enacting more and more laws is the only way of getting things done. Early marriage, dowry, abolition of zamindari, right of the untouchables to enter the temples, regulation of relations between employers and workers, protection of the rights of cultivators — indeed for every social or economic problem that demands solution, we seem to have one answer only, namely, the passing of a suitable legislation. And thus the area of Government control is getting more and more enlarged. This is not a defect of our country in particular. In a way we are only copying others. The defect is universal.

Now it should be observed that whether the Government is alien or our own it makes for a division of the people into the rulers and the ruled — a division which takes away from freedom as we visualize it in its ideal form. Must this division remain for ever? Is it necessary that we should bear this yoke of Government — a yoke to which we ourselves cling? Granting that we are rather badly caught in it and that we cannot throw it off at our will, is there no way out to escape from it and emerge into full freedom?

These thoughts haunt our minds and we do desire freedom from Government. Similar thoughts are being expressed by people in other countries too. Thinkers and philosophers agree that the best government is that which governs the least. But somehow the circumstances today are such that in all countries efforts are being made to regiment man and society by increasing the powers and the jurisdiction of the governments.

This is evidently a very sad state of affairs and the trend which it indicates is indeed dread-

ful. If we want to save our country from it and make it truly free, we must take to some other path. Government there has to be — we cannot do without it. But why should it be of some over the others? Why should it not be of everyone over himself? Here is the crux of the problem. Can we bring about an atmosphere — an intellectual and a moral atmosphere in which each man will willingly put himself under self-rule? I am happy to note that the Sarvodaya Sammelan is trying to create this atmosphere quite successfully. I am also greatly impressed by people's dedicating their lives to this movement. I am sure this will contribute a very great deal to the emergence of the pure and true democracy in which every individual will so conduct himself as to do away with the need of any external government. If this is accomplished, there is no doubt that we will see heaven descended on earth. Bringing down heaven upon the earth is no easy task. It would require long and arduous austerities. But I am glad that the ground is being cleared for that eventual transformation of our earth into the celestial abode.

Lastly I hope we will give up the habit of finding fault with others for anything going wrong and instead cultivate one of finding out our own share in it either through action or inaction. In fact, it is easy for a man to know only his own faults. It is vastly difficult for him to know those of others. But somehow people tend to do in this case what is difficult and not what is easy. The Government is after all like the people whom it represents. If we want to improve it, we must improve ourselves. That is the only way how to keep ourselves going on the right path and fulfil the hope that we devoutly cherish.

(Adapted from Hindi)

LET US NOT FALTER

A large number of messages from national leaders and top-ranking social workers wishing success to the Prohibition policy of the Government of Bombay were received on the occasion of the Prohibition Week that was celebrated throughout Bombay State from April 6 to 13.

Shri C. Rajagopalachari, in his message, says:

"It is not every nation to whom it is given to make this great experiment (Prohibition). Let us not falter halfway. The way is hard and full of what may break our hearts, but we should not yield to temptation or be confused by the noises raised. It may be we fail to take men away from the path of crime. But it is no justification for committing a great crime ourselves. It is a crime for a civilized State to organize the easy supply of intoxicating liquor to the poor and distressed committed to its charge."

Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Governor of Madhya Pradesh, says:

"Prohibition is not a fantastic ideal. It is a practical reform, thoroughly consistent with the age-long traditions of the nation... Prohibition

is a profound moral asset irrespective of the crimes of illicit distillation which are trotted out as being testimony to its failure. You have enacted the Penal Code with its 511 sections. Have you wiped out crime? Of a thousand 'murderers', a hundred are challenged, ten are convicted and two or three are hanged. Shall we then do away with the Penal Code? Laws do not control crimes. The myrmidons of law only help in bringing the culprit to book. It is the moral sense that ultimately vindicates virtue and inhibits crime. Where half the population stands to suffer misery from drink, no sensible man would encourage a drop of drink for the sake of revenue."

Shri R. R. Diwakar, Governor of Bihar, says:

"Prohibition as a general policy to be followed by the whole of India with as much speed as possible was never so much in doubt and danger as it seems to be today. In spite of the fact of its being a part of our Constitution in the 'Directives of State Policy', expediency, want of finances and such other considerations are coming in the way of the implementation of this important directive.

"The Ramamurthy Committee of the newly-born Andhra Government has thrown a bomb-shell in the form of its recommendations to the Andhra Government and has opined practically that Prohibition is a failure. The main argument advanced and the main fact quoted to prove the failure of Prohibition is that illicit distillation has increased and that it has not been possible to control it. It is enough to study the figures of the increase of illicit distillation in countries where there is no Prohibition. Those figures are eloquent enough and they prove that, Prohibition or no Prohibition, illicit distillation is an independent problem by itself and people follow it so long as there is a margin of profit in that adventure. The second argument is loss of revenue. Against that the Bombay and other States which have tried to enforce Prohibition as strictly as possible have been able to get over the financial problem and also to prove that there is a distinct improvement in the economic as well as moral condition of the people who were once given to free drinking."

Shri P. S. Kumaraswamy Raja, Governor of Orissa, says:

"The better minds of the world have always denounced the drink habit and there is no difference of opinion as to the enormity of the evils flowing from it. In our country also, *Surapana* is regarded as one of the major sins or *mahapatakas* as the addicts become demoralized and many families have gone to wreckage.

"It has been the glorious privilege of the Indian National Congress to have included Prohibition as an item of the constructive programme long ago. Now that the Constitution also enjoins the enforcement of Prohibition as an instrument of national welfare, several State

Governments have introduced Prohibition in their States either partially or in entirety.

"It is at this juncture that an attempt is being made to secure a reversal of the policy which has been decided on after the utmost deliberation. It is urged that Prohibition has been a failure, that there is illicit distillation, and that the paramount needs of finance would seem to justify a return to the old fiscal policy which considered liquor income to be a natural and legitimate source of revenue for the State.

"I consider this to be a most unfortunate way of looking at what is really a moral and social problem. There may be certain chinks in the edifice that may need to be closed, but does that justify the abandonment of the policy itself? In fact, I think we should now see that no loopholes are left in the administration of Prohibition policy. Even as tax-dodgers go to other regions to carry out their nefarious plans, the transgressors of Prohibition law find it profitable to slake their thirst for spirituous liquor by surreptitious means. This state of affairs should be put an end to in the interest of efficient governance, and there is consequently a case for rapid acceleration of the pace of Prohibition so that the whole of India may come within the ambit of this beneficent reform.

"As we are building up a Welfare State, no cost is too much to effect this salutary change. The interests of the poor should not be put in jeopardy by importing considerations of high finance nor is it proper to think that the rich who can afford the luxury should be allowed to indulge the luxury through permits, rationing, etc., and that the State should tax them for the benefit of the exchequer."

Shri B. V. Keskar, Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, says:

"Though there has been a great deal of controversy raised in newspapers, I have personally no doubt that Prohibition is not only beneficial but essential. It is not relevant to compare the introduction of Prohibition in this country with that in the U.S.A. or any other Western countries. In those countries, drinking is a social habit approved by society. In India, neither the Hindu nor the Muslim religions approve of drinking. Society in India strongly disapproves of it. In fact, drinking never had any standing in our country and those who drank did it in stealth. I, therefore, think the opposition to Prohibition has little moral backing, however loud it might appear."

(Contributed)

By M. S. Patel

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CENTRALISM AND WORLD PEACE

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

The famous English philosopher and social thinker, Shri Bertrand Russell appears to be at his wit's end these days. He seems to be extremely worried at the turn that world events are taking at present. The Second World War changed him from a strong advocate of peace and no-war that he was at the time of the First World War, to be a sort of a believer in war, as he thought fascism and Hitlerism were worse than war. He has lived long enough to see that war clouds are again thickening in the international sky. May he live long enough to see that peace reigns supreme in the world; he is alive to the needs of such an eventuality and contributes whatsoever he can to world's thought in this connection.

A few weeks ago I came across an article of his, (I forget where,) in which he had expressed himself in this manner. He felt that it would be idle to expect the two blocs, — the American and the Russian — deeply entrenched as they are in mutual misgivings and suspicion about each other's intentions and good faith, to come out of that regrettable attitude themselves. It is here, he believed, that people like Shri Nehru can be of help. Such people have not lost confidence of either bloc; they can therefore mediate to clear misunderstandings and make way for and bring about goodwill and respectful rapprochement. Such a thing is very necessary and might help restore amity and friendship and a spirit of live and let live among the two sides, which are unfortunately too fanatically estranged at present to come together at all of themselves.

It is true that the immediate need of the moment in international affairs at present is to stop the two coldly warring titans of the world from coming to a clash engulfing the whole civilized world into a deadly combat. The sage-philosopher thinks that the two blocs by themselves cannot stop from going headlong to the doom of themselves and the world; a third force must come in to show them the unwisdom of the whole thing and restore them to their senses, which are beset with mutual suspicion, hatred and misunderstanding. Such a third force, he believes, can well be outcoming with Shri Nehru's India leading it. This is surely a flattering thing for us in India; but the responsibility and the fitness to deserve the honour far outweigh these apparent considerations. We must be humble and wise enough to arrange our own house in order and be at unshakable peace and goodwill with our own immediate neighbours before hazarding for the great honour and even as a

condition precedent to our capacity to deserve it.

Now has come in the H. bomb and the tales of havoc it can do to us. The English philosopher is reported to have spoken again as follows:

New York, April 25.

The famous philosopher, Bertrand Russell said to-day that people of the Hydrogen bomb age are going to have to live with one another—or die with one another.

"The Hydrogen bomb and still more, the Cobalt bomb which lies ahead, have shown that if you want to survive, you must let your enemies survive—either both live or both die," Mr Russell said.

"You cannot say: 'We exterminate the enemy and survive ourselves'! That is out. Therefore, abuse of your enemy, hatred of your enemy, anything that makes an agreement with him more difficult, does not do any good. We have to learn to make pacts with people we don't like."

Expressing his views in a television programme, Mr Russell said that people of this age must realize that hatred and fanaticism are "roads to death, not towards life." (*The Times of India*, April 27, 1954).

In these words Russell speaks directly to the two warring blocs and the hate-overpowered humanity. Fanaticism of the sort of the old religious crusade type is ruling supreme over them. In Russell's these words, there is a ring of the voice of the great author of the Mahabharata, who raising both his hands recalled the world to the sincere practice of true Dharma. The words also remind us of the eternal saying of Bhagawan Buddha:

‘अक्रोदेन जिते क्रोधेन । अतापुं तापराज जिते ॥’

[Let a man overcome anger by non-anger (gentleness), let him overcome evil by good.]

This can be heard and heeded to only if hate and jealousy are called off from world affairs and a way of life for the whole of the human family, —‘Unto This Last’—tending to peace and mutual respect and helpfulness, is scrupulously thought out by going into every one of the aspects of our social, political and economic life. Russell and many others in the West fondly believe that science, technology, centralized industrialism, and all that these mean can be squared with such a peaceful way of life. Is this belief right or justified by what we see about them today? Are the industrial revolution and western rationalism replacing, as they do, the truly Christian way enough? Is the government and direction of man and his modern world safe in their hands? Have they not instigated acquisitiveness, avarice, and selfish passions of gain and combat in man and armed him with elaborate technique to ruthlessly follow them? Does not the world need to be called back from this headlong dash to mutual destruction and death of all that we hold dear and worth our while on this God's good earth? Gandhiji's call to us, and through us to the whole world, was to heed to this need of our times which he strove to serve by showing the way of decentralization and cent per cent Swadeshi. We can help the world by following it ourselves first.

1-6-54

THE LANGUAGE POLICY AND THE SUPREME COURT DECISION

(By *Maganbhai P. Desai*)

The Supreme Court of India has decided the appeal of the Government of Bombay in regard to its order that "subject to the exceptions hereinafter provided, no primary or secondary school shall, from the date of these orders, admit to a class where English is used as a medium of instruction any pupil other than a pupil belonging to a section of citizens the language of which is English, namely, Anglo-Indians and citizens of non-Asiatic descent." The appeal has been rejected and the findings of the Bombay High Court in this behalf have been upheld and the Bombay Government order has been held to be bad in law in view of Arts. 29(2), 30, and 337 of the Constitution.

Obviously, the Supreme Court ruling creates a new situation for the State and its educational policy, chiefly in regard to the medium of instruction in primary and secondary schools. Government is, it is reported, considering the whole question in the light of this judgment; and we hope they will do it soon and decide so that the main requirement of the all-accepted educational principle of the medium of instruction finds due place in our new educational system.

I have not before me the text of the judgment, therefore what I say hereafter is on the basis of press reports available so far. I find therefrom that the Supreme Court grants that the State has the power to determine the medium of instruction for children studying in public institutions of the State. What it enjoins is that this should yield to the fundamental rights laid down by the Constitution to the extent it was necessary to give effect to them. If so, it is a very big thing. And it would be wrong to presume, as some seem to be doing, that the choice of the medium is to be with the parent.

What the Supreme Court objects to in the Bombay Order, therefore, is not the medium policy but another thing. It has remarked that granting the object of the Bombay Order, viz., the medium of education etc., the question still remained as to how that object of imparting education through the medium of the mother-tongue of the pupil was sought to be achieved. And it is here that the Court finds that certain requirements under the Constitution had not been fulfilled. It was found against the Order that a pupil was refused admission, and a public or aided institution was prohibited from admitting one, on the ground of language. Surely, it is no job for the Courts to suggest how the fundamental requirements of sound educational practice on the count of the medium should be squared with those under the Constitution. However, we hope that the legal and educational advisers to Government will do that and find the way out so that their medium of instruction policy is not torpedoed by a technically legal objection. If, it

may be found on close study of the issues, that the Constitution requires to be amended so as to achieve this object of making the way clear for this necessary and laudable reform in our education, it should be undertaken along with various others that are under contemplation at present.

1-6-'54

WORKERS ARE THE MAINSTAY OF SOCIETY*

(By *Vinoba*)

This is not just one more city like any other. It has a distinction of its own: It is a city of the workers—built and peopled by the workers. There are in India about a score of such cities and this is one of them. I however call the entire world to have been built by the workers for all real work in the world which supports and enriches life is done by the workers. There is no product but has been made by the physical labour in some form or another of the workers. Man's life, therefore, depends on physical labour and as such on the workers. Hence an ideal society would be one in which every man would take food only after he had put in some labour. Capacity for labour, it is true, differs from man to man. Some have it more than others. But all must work according to their capacity. Of course, they will not do the same kind of work which will be of many different types. There will be some work which will be mainly mental. We should regard both physical and mental labour as of equal importance. As such, their economic worth and spiritual value should also be considered equal. One man produces something by dint of his physical labour, another carries the product to those who will use it, the third conducts research and experiments to find out how the production can be increased and improved, and so on. Thus there will be various types of labour but they will all carry equal worth.

If the scavenger does not do his work properly, the health of the people will be put in great danger. His work, therefore, is of great importance for the wellbeing of the society. In the same way, the teacher's job is to teach. If he does not perform it satisfactorily well, there will be no dissemination of knowledge and social progress will come to a stop. The worker's work is as important as that of the minister. Each will work according to his capacity but the spiritual worth of all work will be the same. If the scavenger does his work honestly, if he keeps things entrusted to his care ideally clean and remains free from attachment to reward, he will have earned the right to liberation. The minister too must discharge his duty in the same spirit. The minister is not superior to the scavenger. Both are equal in ability as well as in spiritual value.

* From a speech at Dehri (Shahabad) on 5-5-'54.

He alone will be considered to be inferior in ability whose mind has not risen over selfishness and desire. Any work performed with devotion and without the sense of ego must be regarded as of excellent quality and a fit means of bringing liberation to the doer.

If, as we said, the spiritual worth of every work honestly done is the same the conclusion is irresistible that its social and economic worth must also be the same. Today they make a difference between the abilities of the minister and the scavenger and a corresponding difference on that basis in the remuneration paid to each. This is not just because there is no difference in his feeling of hunger and his need to eat on the one side and that of the scavenger on the other. So these enormous differences in economic reward based on a false valuation of 'abilities' among different persons are wrong. To value a service which we regard as worthy of honour in terms of money would betoken not its appreciation but its depreciation, and an affront to the individual concerned. It would mean putting mammon in place of God. And those who do it would be the worshippers not of the Divine but of the mammon. Any service selflessly rendered—whether it be mental labour or physical labour—can never be measured in terms of money. Because a service so rendered is a moral act—a thing of a totally different order—for which there can be no equivalent in money. One can convert an hour into minutes but not a mile—which is a unit of distance—into minutes. This kind of conversion can take place only between the things of the same category. Money only can be converted into money and not work that is service. All those who work should get enough for their maintenance and the maintenance of their families. But it is wrong to assess what is essentially a moral and spiritual product into bits of silver or gold. It is only in the capitalist society that we find money to have become the measure of all things.

Work, specially physical work is regarded as something disreputable today. People work, because they have to; not because they love to work. They have no awareness that in so exerting themselves to produce useful things they are doing something meritorious. The intellectual workers—the white-collar class of course consider physical work to be inferior. The reason for this is that physical work is evaluated economically at a low rate, while mental is evaluated at an excessively higher rate. That is why labour has lost all dignity. Today we find people making speeches about the need to recognize the dignity of labour but no efforts are made to raise its economic value, which remains as it was before.

One of our tasks therefore is to equalize the economic rewards for different types of work. We seek to reconstruct the society on a new basis. That is the purpose behind the Bhoodan work. It is not intended merely to collect land.

Collection of land I consider to be as good as done. What we want is to establish new values—to establish morality as the guiding principle of our social life and to make economics which enjoys undue importance at present subservient to the former. The characteristic quality of the Bhoodan does not consist either in the collection or in the distribution of land but in showing that the whole concept of the ownership of land is wrong. The Bhoodan is for us an instrument for achieving a peaceful and a non-violent change of values. That is the distinction of Bhoodan. And it should be borne in mind that the revolution which Bhoodan is working will not remain confined to land, it will expand and extend to the entire life.

The workers sometimes ask me: You are doing everything for the landless peasants. What are you doing for us? I reply that all we are doing is for the good of the entire labour class. Landless peasants live by working on the farms and fields of the land-holders. They also belong to the labour class, they belong to its lowest stratum. They are the most helpless of all. They do not know how to raise their voice against the enormous injustice and cruel oppression which is being inflicted by the society on them. The Bhoodan has begun by representing the cause of this most oppressed section of our society—the cause of the landless, speechless, dumb toilers. Success in this task will render all other problems easier of solution. It will restore labour to the dignity and respect which is its due and put all those who eat without working for it to shame.

The revolution initiated by Bhoodan is now making its way into the sphere of wealth and property. The Bodh Gaya Sammelan has passed a resolution that just as it is obligatory for the land-owners to part with a portion of their land to the landless, even so it is necessary for owners of wealth to give a portion of their wealth for social use. We want every individual to give one-sixth of the amount of his expenditure in this way. People should accept it as an obligatory duty to give before they eat. We should strive to raise the prestige of work and to lower that of money. Money is, as I have explained often, a liar—a false and a very misleading index of the values of different things even in the economic sphere. The so-called owners of wealth are not owners, but trustees. It is their inescapable responsibility to see that the wealth they have in their keeping is used for good ends. Just as through Bhoodan we have afforded an opportunity to the land-owners to renounce the ownership of land, in the same way through *sampatti-dan* we have provided an opportunity to the owners of wealth to free themselves from the ownership of wealth.

I have a word to say to the workers also. Just as we urge the owners to give up the sense of ownership, so do we urge the workers to work with devotion. They will get their rights only if

they work with honesty and devotion. They should take the same interest in the work which they may be doing as the owner does. Like him they should also apply their mind to finding out ways for better management and greater production etc. We want that there should be no difference between the masters and the workers. The workers should become masters and the masters should do the part of workers so that both may become one. They should all be equal partners in a joint enterprise sharing work and profit alike.

We aim at creating a new man and a new society. It is with this aim in view that we have launched the *bhoodan*, *sampatti-dan* and *shram-dan* campaigns. We should strive to rouse the people to a realization of the need and importance of the ideal that we have set ourselves and the means which we are pursuing to attain it. We should be able through our own sincerity and devotion to kindle in them a similar sincerity and devotion so that they may feel inspired to dedicate their lives to their task of recreating the man and reconstructing the society. I hope that this city too will throw up such heroic souls as will make an offering of their life and energy to fulfil this glorious aim. I assure them that this will give them the true joy of life.

(Adapted from Hindi)

HINDUSTANI PRACHAR SABHA RESOLUTION

Resolution on the language problem passed in the meeting of the executive committee of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha, Wardha, held at the Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi, on 20th May 1954, under the presidency of President Rajendraprasad.

The Hindustani Prachar Sabha, Wardha, has read with satisfaction, the resolution of the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress about its policy on the language problem.

The Sabha has always held, and it takes this opportunity of reiterating the view that Hindustani or Hindi, the national language of India, should be a compulsory subject during the whole period of education—from the primary fourth or fifth standard to the end of the college stage. It is essential that every educated man in the country should be able to use the Hindi language with perfect ease and fluency, and must be able to express himself effectively in order to persuade his countrymen as regards the various policies to be pursued for the advancement of India. But the national language should never trespass on the legitimate field of the regional languages. The medium of administration and the medium of education are two such fields. No attempt should be made to use Hindi as the medium of education in regions where Hindi is not the mother-tongue. Neither should Hindi be made the language of administration in such areas.

It is of the essence of Swaraj that the people of the different regions should be governed

through the medium of a language which they know well and it is only the regional languages which can give the glow of freedom to the masses, if they are used as the medium of administration.

The people of the south, east and west, have evinced great interest and have taken special pains to learn Hindi. It is high time the people of northern India recognized the duty of learning other regional languages of India. The best they could do is to begin to learn, with respect and care, the regional languages which are nearest to them, viz. Urdu, Kashmiri, Bengali, Assamiya, Oriya, Sindhi, Gujarati and Marathi. Let them learn at least two of these languages and some of them may do well to study at least one of the four great southern languages, viz. Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam.

People might take some time in picking up Hindi as the medium of inter-provincial intercourse and as the official language at the centre. But it is possible to introduce regional languages as the medium of administration almost immediately. The Sabha has observed with pain that in the regions where Hindi was the medium of administration and where Hindi is the regional language of the people, they changed the medium of administration overnight to English, without caring to see whether the people and the officers administering the people know the English language sufficiently. English as the medium of administration heralded the advent of Swaraj—a very strange situation indeed! The Sabha feels that it should not be difficult for the Swaraj Governments in the various regions to introduce the regional language as the medium of administration immediately, thus giving a concrete proof to the people that they have come under the rule of Swaraj.

By Mahatma Gandhi

BASIC EDUCATION

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(By J. C. Kumarappa)

There are a great many things carried out in the name of constructive work which, though good in themselves, cannot be classed as Gandhian. There are those who work for the prevention of cruelty to animals alongside of those who strive for "Go-seva". There are those who wear Khadi as a method of providing work for the unemployed. Some have stuck to Swadeshi out of pure patriotism and use village-made goods out of preference because of their instinctive feeling that there is some merit in giving work to the semi-starved. All these and more also may be done by those who seek the gates to heaven by self-control and renunciation.

These are all praiseworthy but fall short of being truly Gandhian as they do not bear a philosophy of *Ahimsa* running through them. Each item serves a definite end but the whole picture has to have a purposeful background of a way of life. Many members of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals are meat-eaters which involves killing healthy animals, while many enthusiasts of Go-seva, who will abhor killing even disabled or diseased animals, will think nothing of using an economy which makes the proper maintenance of cattle impossible or makes their lives uncomfortable. Both these well-meaning groups fail because they do not look upon *Ahimsa* as a test of life. If *Ahimsa* were the final test all members of the S.P.C.A. will be vegetarians. Similarly, the Go-seva will only promote a non-violent way of life and preserve industries which utilize animal power. Cultivation by tractors will dispense with bullocks. Water lifting by power pumps will do away with the bullock-mots. Taking away a man's means of living is tantamount to removing his basis of existence. This is an effective form of *Himsa*. Similarly, when many poor people earn their living by spinning or flour-grinding or paddy-husking, to introduce mills for these is not merely an economic proposition but is a vital moral question. This is Gandhiji's great contribution to our life.

We have to weigh all our acts from this moral standard, and it is the final touchstone to classify Gandhian items on the constructive programme. However philanthropic an item may be in itself, it cannot command acceptance in Gandhian order unless it answers this one test. Whether it be in the field of education, economics, social organization or even in politics we must apply this criterion without fail. It is just here that the American materialism and Soviet communism fall short of the mark though both seek the same social welfare. At the present moment there seems to be a tendency to palm off inferior goods with seeming exterior to

the genuine Gandhian order, so it is well to be forearmed with this acid test.

Gandhiji was primarily a prophet of *Ahimsa*. Whatever he touched was directed to promote non-violence. Hence those of us who wish to align themselves with this great prophet, must be ever watchful not to be drawn away by the many paths which will deceive the superficial follower. Let the wayfarer on the Gandhian way of life beware. Such non-violence alone, ingrained in every walk of our daily life, will lead us to true world peace.

An Epochal Event in U.S.A.

Nearly sixty years ago the Supreme Court of the U.S.A. had ruled that it was not against the law of the land to provide "equal but separate facilities" for education of Negro children. This ruling permitted such an undemocratic colour bar to persist up to this day in free U.S.A., and the Negro world was continually smarting under this undeserving insult to their humanity in a land where all were to be equal before law.

This old ruling of the U.S.A. Supreme Court has now been successfully challenged, and the Court has ruled that segregation of children on the basis of race or colour itself deprives the black children of equal educational opportunities guaranteed to them under the Constitution. As it said, "In the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place", and that "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."

The decision marks the end of an out-of-date idea in the modern world and the beginning of a chapter in white-black relations in U.S.A. As the great Negro leader and grandson of a Negro slave, Dr. Ralph Bunche, Nobel Peace Prize Winner, said "The decision would appear to be a historic event in the annals of American democracy." We congratulate the Negro world on this great occasion of the turn of America's history in its favour.

1-6-'54

M. P.

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