

# HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

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TWO ANNAS

## TAKE CARE

(By Gandhiji)

Unless the Governments and their Secretariats take care, the English language is likely to usurp the place of Hindustani. This must do infinite harm to the millions of India who would never be able to understand English. Surely, it must be quite easy for the Provincial Governments to have a staff which would carry on all transactions in the provincial languages and the inter-provincial language, which, in my opinion, can only be Hindustani written in *nagari* or *urdu* script.

Every day lost in making this necessary change is so much cultural loss to the nation. The first and foremost thing is to revive the rich provincial languages with which India is blessed. It is nothing short of mental sluggishness to plead that in our courts, in our schools and even in the Secretariats, some time, probably a few years, must lapse before the change is made. No doubt, a little difficulty will be felt in multilingual Provinces, as in Bombay and Madras, until redistribution of Provinces takes place on the linguistic basis. Provincial Governments can devise a method in order to enable the people in those Provinces to feel that they have come into their own. Nor need the Provinces wait for the Union for solving the question, whether for inter-provincial speech it shall be Hindustani written in either *nagari* or *urdu* script or mere Hindi written in *nagari*. This should not detain them in making the desired reform. It is a wholly unnecessary controversy likely to be the door through which English may enter to the eternal disgrace of India. If the first step, that is, revival of provincial speech in all public departments takes place immediately, that of inter-provincial speech will follow in quick succession. The Provinces will have to deal with the Centre. They dare not do so through English, if the Centre is wise enough quickly to realize that they must not tax the nation culturally for the sake of a handful of Indians who are too lazy to pick up the speech which can be easily common to the whole of India without offending any party or section. My plea is for banishing English as a cultural usurper as we successfully banished the political rule of the English usurper. The rich

English language will ever retain its natural place as the international speech of commerce and diplomacy.

New Delhi, 11-9-'47

*Harijan*, 21-9-'47

## THE STORY OF A SLAVE

(By Vinoba)

What is happening today? Big industrialists invade the cities. Cities in their turn exploit the villages. Villagers exploit Harijans and landless labourers; they exact maximum work from them, but pay them minimum wages. Harijans and labourers exploit their women. It is an usual sight in the cities to find men-scavengers confining themselves to the driving of the night soil cart while the women are made to clean the latrines and carry the filth to the cart, that is, to do the dirtiest part of this dirty business. What do women do? They avenge themselves on the animals under their charge. They do not give them adequate feed and exploit them by making them work to utter exhaustion. Thus there is an unbroken line of exploitation running all along the social scale from the top to the bottom.

It reminds me of the story of a slave. Being unmarried he had no children. The parents were dead long ago. The master, as was his wont, beat him, — certainly when there was any fault in his work, but also when there was no such fault. The slave thought: Whosoever wants can beat me just for the liking. How sad that I cannot beat anybody! It did not occur to him that his victim would feel the same pain as he did. He felt that in any case he could not escape being beaten. The most, therefore, that he could hope for was to find out someone whom he could also beat. So he kept a dog and whenever the master beat him, he avenged himself — or so he thought — by beating the dog. But the dog was a clever animal. It learnt very soon that when its master received beating, he invariably turned to give vent to his anger on it. Afterwards, therefore, it would always run away whenever it scented any trouble.

This is only a story, but it has a lesson. Even the exploited do not hesitate to subject others to similar exploitation. Such exploitation pervades entire social and economic life in India today. We are out to end such exploitation.

(Adapted from Hindi)

## ABUNDANCE vs. SELF-SUFFICIENCY

(By William B. Greene)

Most of the world's population seems bent on trying the way of "social abundance", rather than Gandhi's way of "abstinence and asceticism". The pursuit of "social abundance" raises the following questions:

(1) Are there sufficient resources in the world to support abundance for everyone? Today, the United States is notoriously dependent on South-East Asia and Africa and South America for the raw materials which support our high standard of living. Is not the major problem facing Europe today the readjustment in standards of living made necessary by the loss, or the imminent loss, of colonies? For, as these under-developed areas, also seeking abundance for themselves, progress, they will be less disposed to part with raw materials, and Europe, and eventually the United States, instead of enjoying virtually all that is produced, will have to live only on a just portion.

(2) Does not the pursuit of "social abundance" inevitably encourage the philosophy of self-indulgence? It seems to me that this deification of appetite is the very basis of materialism. It is responsible for cheapness and vulgarity of popular culture, and perhaps ultimately provokes most of our social maladjustments—juvenile delinquency, marital unhappiness and the rest. Is there any evidence that we can pursue abundance, and yet escape these?

(3) Do we really know how to prevent an economy of abundance from breaking down? The only solution I have heard of is Keynes' use of deficit spending, balanced by taxation and accumulation in good years. What one of our political leaders accepts this theory? The federal government cannot accumulate now because of the huge arms expenditures. Would it do so even if it were free from arms expense? To my knowledge, there is not a single State government which is gathering a surplus to be used for hard times. Will limitation of credit extension, the federal guarantee of bank deposits and all the rest prevent collapse? I am not qualified to judge, but I am sceptical. Of course, totally planned economy can avoid pitfalls, but we have not yet learned how to get a planned economy without getting centralized political control and loss of liberty.

These are some of the problems which attracted Gandhi's attention and which contributed to the development of his thinking.

Gandhi's Utopia is probably familiar to you: A system in which the village is the economic and political centre, each village or group of villages aiming at the highest degree of self-sufficiency, with authority resting in elected village councils. Freedom would be based on self-sufficiency and pacifism on an absence of interest in foreign markets. Gandhi was not, as so many

assume, an unqualified enemy of the machine. He offered prizes to those who could develop a more efficient spinning wheel, and was full of praise for the Singer sewing machine. Any machine, hand or electrically driven, was admissible to his Utopia, provided it fitted into the home or village, where men would be masters over it, and not mere appendages to its mechanical operation or victims of a complex economic structure large machines make possible.

It is thus incorrect to describe Gandhi's Utopia as impoverished materially. Packards, TV sets, skyscrapers might be absent. But would they be missed?

Gandhi framed his Utopia in a country with abundant human resources and relatively meagre raw materials. Is not the United States approaching a similar condition, in view of the new automatic factories science has made possible, and the probable gradual loss of raw materials, either as they are exhausted from the earth's crust, or as the backward nations withdraw their sale?

Of course, American conditions differ from Indian. Gandhi cannot be transplanted here. But there are some Americans who have begun thinking in terms of the decentralized economy, which is the first step. And perhaps, unknown to me, there are others who have gone very far to think out America's problems with the insights which Gandhi provides.

Toledo, Ohio

(From *Manas*, 17-2-54)

### 'Lancet' Correspondent on B. C. G.

The following is taken from the 'In England Now' column of the *Lancet* of December 12, 1953:

"As a conscientious M. O. H. (Medical Officer of Health) I have been put in a quandary. Shall I or shall I not advise my authority to accept the Ministry's latest suggestion, and offer B. C. G. vaccination to school leavers? If B. C. G. is good for contacts, it may protect children when they leave school for the wider world of exposure. On the other hand I am co-operating in the M. R. C. (Medical Research Council) trial to find out how worth-while mass vaccination of this age-group is. To take action now is rather assuming an answer before the result is known. I was mulling this problem over in my head yesterday evening while I read my son to sleep with *Through the Looking-glass*. Later, drowsing myself, B. C. G. and the book began to be mixed up.

"Does B. C. G. work?" asked Alice. 'In some people', the Duchess replied, 'but we've arranged a trial to see if it would be useful in school children.' 'How long will the trial take?', Alice inquired. 'About 3 years,' answered the Duchess. Looking around, Alice noticed crowds and crowds of children carrying cards. She asked who they were. 'Those are school children being given B. C. G. said the Duchess; 'every one of them can have it.' 'But I thought you were having a trial to see if it would do them any good', said Alice puzzled. 'That's quite right, my dear', rejoined the Duchess, 'but you see we're having the verdict first and the trial later.' 'Very interesting', commented Alice, as she went to get her own card."

V. G. D.

## VANASPATI AND OUR SCIENTISTS

(By Suresh Ramabhai)

In the recent budget session of the Parliament, Smt. Chandravati Lakhnupal (of Pilibhit, U. P.), urging a ban on the Vanaspati industry, truly pointed out that it was not only injuring the health of the people but also ruining the *ghee* industry. Replying, the Finance Minister remarked that the "question of colouring Vanaspati had been accepted by the Government, but the difficulty was that a suitable colouring material which could not be decolourised had not been evolved." (*Statesman*, April 28, '54)

It is gratifying to learn that the Government of India has conceded at last the country-wide demand for colouring Vanaspati. But it is well-nigh impossible to believe that the Government's efforts to find a "suitable colouring material" have proved in vain.

The obvious and harmless colour is yellow which can be obtained without much difficulty from the commonly used condiment called *haldee* (हल्दी). I am given to understand that India's well-known village-industries expert and chemist, Shri Satish Chandra Dasgupta, has repudiated the myth of the inavailability of the required colouring stuff and has since long promised to offer the same. But his has proved to be a cry in the wilderness and the Vanaspati menace aggravatingly continues to occupy new houses and areas, to the utter detriment of the nation.

Should the Government be enthusiastic enough to colour Vanaspati, it can entrust Shri Satish Babu with this work and later get his findings confirmed by its own official experts. Or, it can directly call upon the Ministry for Scientific Resources to carry out this job within a specified time. Surely where there is a will there is a way.

One is inclined to feel that if our Government, which has a wide-spread net of scientific laboratories all over the country and is out to yoke the atom for peaceful energy driving purposes, is not able to get through this all-too-simple task of a colour, it is hardly likely to achieve anything substantial in any walk of life. It cannot but be concluded that our scientists can only imitate and execute the blue-prints coming from the West and are themselves incapable of any original research.

This is a very harsh conclusion indeed. I, for one, refuse to subscribe to it. But this is the inevitable conclusion if our scientists' attempts to carry out the Government's mandate to colour Vanaspati have virtually come to nought.

There is, however, one point that must be noted here. That is, the pressure of the Big Business. Needless to state that colouring Vanaspati will lead to its segregation and *ghee*

adulteration will stop. Whence the unfair expansion of Vanaspati would suffer.

Thus the industry may be a material source of hindrance in the way of implementation of the accepted policy of colouring the Vanaspati. Now if that is so, our scientists must, in the name of science, speak out the truth. They owe a duty above all other duties, a duty to their conscience.

15-6-54

## POVERTY AMIDST PLENTY IN U. S. A.

(By J. A. M.)

[Adapted from an article, 'Opulent America' appearing in *The Western Socialist*, Sept.-Oct., '53, Boston, Mass.]

Our economists tell us that the wealth of the United States amounts to so many billions of dollars that one would require the mathematical genius of an Einstein to really appreciate how wealthy we are.

Yet, there is evidence that we do not seem to possess that poise and peace of mind that should logically follow in the wake of such lavish advantages.

Everywhere we look, there are ample signs of strife and contention pervading the ranks of those who toil. Big as the take-home pay appears in the light of dollars and cents, it is unusually dwindling in relation to the prices marked on the commodities the workers must have in order to exist. Social discontent is apparent in all directions.

How, then, can we reconcile these opposing attitudes on social conditions? Boundless wealth, a plethora of oil, steel, grain, wool, cotton and leather, on one side, and poverty, trouble, and strike action, on the other.

Even the Government representing, as it always does, big business, occasionally reveals that the data compiled shows inequality in the distribution of the things produced. The Census Bureau, in the month of December, 1951, reported that the top fifth of the U. S. population gets nearly half of the national income, while the bottom fifth gets only 3 per cent. This was certified by those who analyse the information gathered by the 1950 census.

Breaking down the distribution of incomes into fifths, which seems to be the prevailing fashion, financially as well as liquidly, the report shows:

- highest fifth — 47 per cent ;
- second highest fifth — 24 per cent ;
- third highest fifth — 17 per cent ;
- fourth highest fifth — 9 per cent ; and
- the poorest fifth — 3 per cent.

The outfit releasing this report hastens to assure us that they did not take account of the fact that a much bigger percentage of the big incomes is reclaimed in income taxes than is the case with small incomes. They do not have to high pressure this information. Backward as we happen to be in perceiving the fine points of financial logistics, we can readily concede that more income taxes could very well be extracted

from 47 per cent than from 3 per cent. One would scarcely think it necessary to stress the point. We can even go a step further and frankly admit that we can not get it through our head how this 3 per cent lot can pay income taxes at all.

Anyway, the fact remains that the lowest 20 per cent on the social ladder contact only 3 per cent of the national income. Enormous stores of every conceivable form of wealth are to be found in America today. But all this fabulous pile of gold, spuds, oil, and sausages is corralled by a gang of social hijackers who have acquired a penchant for keeping them safely out of the reach of the common herd. Every avenue through which wealth can be produced is guarded and controlled by those who rule, while a considerable section of society tries to make ends meet on a measly 3 per cent.

## HARIJAN

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### BASIC PRINCIPLES OF WORLD PEACE

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

The American Pacifist leader, A. J. Muste, quoting a British economist says, there seems to be a natural frontier of poverty running right about our globe. Its limits are roughly the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn.

And he adds that 18 per cent of the world's population earns about 70 per cent of the world's income; however these are not disposed to do anything about the problem of world's poverty.

And he notes that the world economy today is at a point where individual Western economies were in the last century, and the Marxist prophecy is forcing its reappearance on the world scene in the relations between nations.

What can be done to relieve this dangerous situation? Muste quotes the British economist who makes a revolutionary proposal that there should be introduced among nations "the equivalent of a progressive international income tax, according to which all nations, whose per capita wealth is above a certain figure, should contribute one or two per cent of their national income to the development of the backward areas."

One will naturally admit that this would be the most correct and legitimate thing to do. It will be a peaceful way of resolving one of the most potent causes of world tensions, viz: debasing inequality that kills the self-respect of economically backward or poor peoples of the globe.

It is a matter of some satisfaction that the principle of economic aid to backward areas of the world is accepted in some way by modern international thought, as can be illustrated from the Marshal Aid, Colombo Plan, various UNESCO

and WHO programmes, etc. But that is only its side show. The main plank in today's international programme is the cold war organized through what is called 'collective security' which in practice means 'collective preparation for war'. Thus the world's surplus value that accumulates in the hands of its 18 per cent population only goes rather to arm the peoples of the world for war rather than to relieve the needy world from want and hunger. Not only that, these few but more powerful people, propelled by an ever-increasing avarice and acquisitiveness, have created a world economic order wherein the industrial life and labour of the peoples is so planned into a pattern that it takes in its compass the great mass of mankind leaving no choice or freedom to the individual. A mass mind and a mass man is born and a collectivist and centralized society grows up to be managed and ordered by an all-powerful Welfare State. A World Government then is sought to be established. But what really happens is that like the old rivalling imperialism an idea of a new type of world imperialism takes shape and we find, to our cost, two powers striving to be such a world imperialism dominating the life of the whole mankind. The world's surplus money is pooled by the dominant power and it is then used in aid of implementing the establishment of the world order of its choice. The peace that is sought to come to the world is one that might be possible only as a result of such a world imperialism. The result is, as observed at the beginning, a Marxist duality that needs must be quarrelling on a world scale. And this is what we see today. Therefore it is doubtful whether it might be a practical proposition to have a world income tax etc. which become more or less only happy suggestions or mere utopia.

The remedy should rather be sought in a decentralized or 'Swadeshi' order as Gandhiji said, where not machine and money rule man, but man is first and supreme and machine or money are his servants, which they really are meant to be. Our need is collective peace and a world-wide co-operative effort to wage war on want, disease and unhappiness. It is tragic that instead of collective peace we seek collective security through political regionalization of the world by grouping States almost on old lines of 'Balance of Power' diplomacy.

World peace requires certain basic principles to be honoured by all States. These are well put down in the joint statement by the Prime Ministers of India and China who met at New Delhi just a few days ago. They are:

1. Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty;...
2. Non-aggression;
3. Non-interference in each other's internal affairs;
4. Equality and mutual benefit; and
5. Peaceful co-existence.

"If these principles are applied not only between various countries but also in international relations generally they would form a solid foundation for peace and security and the fears and apprehensions that exist today would give place to a feeling of confidence."

As the two Prime Ministers declare, it must be "recognized that different social and political systems exist in various parts of Asia and the world. If, however, the above-mentioned principles are accepted and acted upon and there is no interference by any one country with another, these differences should not come in the way of peace or create conflicts. With the assurance of territorial integrity and sovereignty of each country and of non-aggression, there would be peaceful co-existence and friendly relations between the countries concerned."

1-7-'54

### SARVODAYA AND BASIC EDUCATION \*

(By Vinoba)

We have been put up here in a basic school. What does the word 'basic' mean as applied to education. The base is that on which something stands. It is the foundation. If the foundation is strong, the building raised on that foundation is also strong. The character and the composition of a society is largely determined by the education given to its children. This is therefore of primary importance in any scheme for the uplift of the country. The education imparted in these schools has been so conceived as to produce the right kind of citizens needed for our country.

In India it has been held from very ancient times that boys must devote the first twenty-four years of their life to the acquisition of knowledge and development of their character. Everyone must acquire knowledge which should be useful to mould and guide his subsequent life. A student was required to live with his teacher and then spend his time and energy till he was twenty-four and mastered *vidya*, i.e. knowledge and *vrat* i.e. various moral vows which form the core of man's character. When both these things had been completed, the teacher bathed him with his own hands. This bath—whence he was called a *snatak* i.e. one who has had such a bath—symbolized his initiation into the society. He then returned home and lived a noble life devoted to knowledge and service. It has to be remembered that the student was not regarded as a full-fledged *snatak* until he had completed both the *vidya* and *vrat*. He had to be both a *vidya-snatak* and a *vrat-snatak*. Then only was he considered fit to enter the *grihasthashram* or the house-holder's stage of life. Alas! This most valuable ancient custom is now no more than a dream and a tale.

Today when we want to rebuild our country, we ought to see that the education of our boys and girls consists of both *vidya* and *vrat*. The *vrat* would include control over the senses and proficiency in Karma-yoga. A student must be proficient in agriculture, cow-keeping, spinning and weaving, and a few other useful crafts. He should be good at all things which are helpful and necessary for village-life. He must have acquired the capacity to earn his living in an independent way so that there never will be any occasion for him to feel driven to seek employment and thus suffer loss of freedom. If he has learnt to control his senses, serve his teacher and do his work efficiently and devotedly, then he may be regarded as having mastered the *vrat*. Then he must also acquire *vidya* or knowledge: Knowledge of the body for health, knowledge of the self for spiritual development and knowledge of the language for social intercourse. Knowledge of these things will enable him to do his *dharma*, that is, to do his duty towards himself and towards the society of which he is a part. Proficiency in this knowledge makes him a *vidya-snatak*. After he has become both a *vidya-snatak* as well as a *vrat-snatak*, the teacher may permit him to go home and embark on the life of a house-holder.

There is an idea that in case agriculture and crafts are taught to the boys as important subjects of study, the teaching of the language, of reading and writing will suffer. This idea is quite wrong. The truth is other way about. In fact, it would make reading and writing easier to learn. It is the present mode of teaching which makes it difficult. When reading and writing is taught in correlation with agriculture and handicrafts, the teaching becomes at once more natural and much easier. I have taught a number of students in this way who are now engaged in the service of the country and are doing their work quite well, which would show that the introduction of agriculture and the crafts and the curtailment of time at present spent on reading and writing will improve the quality of teaching. In fact, reading and writing should not be allowed to take more than an hour in a day. There can be more teaching in this one hour than in all the five hours in the prevailing high schools, for the simple reason that they go on changing from subject to subject in every 40 minutes.

Another prevailing misconception in regard to education is that people think their education to have ended with the completion of their student career. My belief in this respect is different. Just as a man continues to eat till the end of his life, so also should he continue to learn and acquire knowledge till the very end. Our entire life should be a period of continuous mental growth and therefore of education and not merely the five or ten years spent in the school at the beginning of the life. Man must learn something

\* From a speech at a village in the Shahabad District on 28-5-'54.

new every day of his life. Before one goes to sleep, one must meditate or talk with friends about things which are likely to add to his knowledge. In the same way, in the morning before one takes up work, one must have done a bit of good reading. How nice it will be when with the spread of education in the villages our Kisans will have acquired the capacity to discuss national and international news in an intelligent manner and decide for themselves what they had to do at any time in the given circumstances.

I am, as you know, ceaselessly on the move in connection with my present work, but hardly a day passes when either I do not read something or meditate. Knowledge has to be acquired every day of one's life. How much time does one take in eating? Hardly an hour or two. The rest of the day is taken up in digesting it. Even so one should read only for an hour or two and spend the rest of the time in meditating upon it.

It is your good fortune that there is a basic school in your village. I wish that your children will acquire both *vidya* and *vrat*. If there is anything wanting either in the matter of imparting knowledge or in the teaching of crafts, in either case there must be something wrong in the method or the management. Just as one cannot walk by using only one of his feet, but must use both, in the same way both knowledge and work must go together. Knowledge gives strength to work and work gives strength to knowledge. Teaching in correlation with work brings students in touch with nature and the world outside which broadens the mind. Teaching through books alone narrows the mind.

The present system of education has divided our society more and more into two exclusive classes: those who work with the intellect alone, and those who work with the hands alone. The former exploit the latter. We seek to blend the two classes into a harmonious whole by making it compulsory for everyone to work both with the intellect and with the hands. The workers are today looked down upon because they have no knowledge. When they have acquired knowledge, as they will with the spread of basic education, their status will rise and the inferiority, which attaches to their position at present, will come to an end.

One of the major objectives of the Bhoodan movement is to abolish this distinction of high and low. This idea can be best propagated through basic education. Agriculture and crafts will be taught to all boys irrespective of whether they are from the poor or the rich classes. We therefore give the greatest importance to basic education as a means of abolishing present distinctions of high and low.

There is one more aspect of basic education to which attention may be drawn. Where does the wife of the basic education teacher come in in this picture? Then it often happens that

while the teacher serves in the basic education school, his children continue to study at other non-basic schools. The right thing would be for the teacher's wife also to associate herself with her husband's work, and for their children to study in the basic school. In the absence of the participation of the teacher's wife in the teaching work, the students will not have the right atmosphere of the basic school. But the tragedy is that in many cases the teacher's wife is without any education and quite unable to participate in the teaching work. This should be corrected. She should be fully equipped to play the role required of her and help her husband as fruitfully as does the wife of the Kisan her husband.

Then there should be no difference in the scales of pay of the different teachers in the school. Equality of all work is an accepted principle of basic education, neglect of which will rob it of much of its value. I would suggest that where such difference exists, the teachers should collect their earning and distribute them according to need. This will give a great fillip to basic education and make our leaders see that the present education is entirely worthless.

In the Government Agriculture Colleges the admission qualifications are that the candidate should have passed the I.Sc. examination. Which means that these colleges admit only such boys who for the first eighteen years of their life have never known what it is to work in the rains or under the sun and who are therefore utterly unqualified for agriculture work. Then why should the knowledge of English be regarded as necessary for training in agriculture work? And why should these colleges be located in cities like Nagpur and Poona where the students can hardly acquire any idea of the rural conditions under which the Kisans have to carry out their work? While the Kisan works in his field for eight hours a day, these students work for eight hours in a week! And when they have finished this so-called education, they ask for employment. It does not occur to them that what they have learnt would be put to better use if they would settle down in some village, do cultivation work, carry out necessary research and popularize valuable improvements among the Kisans. If I had any say in it, I would have such a college started amidst rural surroundings, and give them a hundred or two hundred acres of land. The boys would be forbidden from receiving money from home and the professors would not get any salary. They would have to carry on with whatever they can grow on the given land. That would give them real education in agriculture.

When the land is redistributed, we would start basic education in every village. This in short is our Sarvodaya programme.

(Adapted from Hindi)

## THE ERROR THEORY OF GOVERNMENT

(By Norman Cousins)

[The reader will find the following very interesting, as I felt when I came across it in Norman Cousins' recent book *Who Speaks for Man?* (MacMillan Co., New York). In our own land, during the days of our fight for freedom, we were repeatedly told by Gandhiji, that Swaraj meant freedom to commit mistakes. Obviously this freedom means also the freedom to own and acknowledge them when we know we have erred, as also the freedom to rectify them. It was such an approach to problems of life and society which Gandhiji termed as 'experiments with Truth', and it is such freedom that constitutes the democratic spirit. While it is bold and free to err, because it wishes to see and act truly, it is humble and perceiving enough to observe and accept its own fault.

In such hands, even errors render themselves harmless as they pave the way to further realization of truth. The following few quotations bring out the above sublimating potential of error in a very catching manner. 22-5-54 — M. P.]

I use the word "error" not only in the familiar sense of blunder or mistake, but in the broader sense of avoidable failure. For history can be viewed as an accumulation of error; the nature of the error and the thought proceeding out of error often determine the rate of progress and the type of progress. Indeed, the story of men and nations is largely the story of their attitude toward error. The less democratic a society, the smaller the margin for error of its subjects and the greater the margin for error of its rulers. The more arbitrary the definition of error, the less important the machinery of justice. The more protection error receives in high places, the less scope for public opinion and an ungoverned press.

Again, the key to good government was in the approach to error. There were two broad groups of error. The first grew out of the neglect or violation of principles. The second was on the operational or functional level, and proceeded out of the fallibility of man.

On the level of principle, this meant that states within a geographic unit must have binding obligations among themselves for the great safety of all. But these obligations were to be limited only to those matters affecting the common security and welfare. In all matters pertaining to the relationships of the states to one another, particularly when and where there were disputes, the central government was to have jurisdiction.

On the operational level error was to be taken for granted. For no man was deemed wise enough to be free of error. The important thing was to limit the effect of those errors by depriving their makers of the natural secrecy in which errors breed and multiply. The dictator enjoys the privilege of enshrouding his errors; a democracy's chance for progress exists in direct proportion to its ability to keep errors out in the open. If one branch of the government makes the error of attempting to arrogate too much power to itself, another branch of the government should be able to correct it, or at least to call public attention to it. The head of the government, for example, must remain within reach of

free and open criticism. If any of the military services acts too arbitrarily, even though the action may seem natural according to military lights, it must subject itself to public scrutiny and judgment. The general term for all this was "checks and balances"; more accurately, perhaps, it is the error theory of government. In short, there must not only be an accounting of error, but an accounting for error.

### STATE ADVERTISEMENT

(By Kshitindra Kumar Nag)

One of our State Governments has of late hit upon a novel idea to launch a campaign in order to bring home to people the message of its activities and achievements by advertisements prominently appearing in a number of influential English as well as vernacular dailies and thereby enthrone people to extend their helping hands to its plan. How many can at all read the message in English!

Whatever motive there may be behind such a campaign government seems to be aligning itself with the policy of commercial interests who generally seek advertisements as a means of selling or assisting sales. Numerous advertisements notoriously associated with misrepresentation, are often prominent in the columns of the Press. For example, the public has been made to believe that a vegetable product like Vanaspati is as good as *ghee*; it was even called *Vanaspati ghee*. As a result, just as bad coins drive away good coins, the Vanaspati is speedily driving out *ghee* from the market. In this manner the greed of individuals, sufficiently shrewd to create a popular demand for their goods, plays a great role these days only in their own interest and not for the consumer.

Just as it is ridiculous for the father of a family to pompously declare how much he is doing for them so it is for a government to point out its merits—that too by means no better than advertisements—while merely doing its duties to the people. On the other hand, the dealings of the Government should be such that they set correct example to the people at large to follow. Next, it is a simple truth that no plan can lead to a lasting benefit unless it is based upon the action and life of its author and surely not upon advertisements, no matter how well the advertising language—not merely words but design, colour, illustrations, type and the like—may read. The benefits if any that a people derive from the actions of the Government are too patent to require any announcement by advertisements.

Enormous amounts of money are being spent for such publicity. Often a single insertion costs as much as rupees twelve hundred. On the other hand, we often hear Governments talk of shortage of funds to carry out their objectives. Thus how can a responsible Government stoop to spend public funds to ape the spirit and techniques of business organizations and play the role of a propagandist to enlist the support of the credulous public? And how can such publicity have any appeal for the reader?

## NOTES

## The New 'White Man's Burden'

Prime Minister Churchill of England and President Eisenhower of U.S.A. have issued a joint statement on their recent talks held at Washington. Therein they declare—

"We uphold the principle of self-government and will earnestly strive by every peaceful means to secure the independence of all countries whose peoples desire and are capable of sustaining an independent existence (italics mine). We welcome the process of development where still needed that lead toward that goal."

The words italicized by me above seem to be a revised edition of the old 'white man's burden' theory of colonial occupation of other people's land. We in India know full well about this British cant of preparing subjected peoples for freedom and independence. The reply that we had ultimately to give was to 'quit India' and leave us even to anarchy and God. Freedom is not a gift in the possession of the overlord; it is a thing to be achieved and asserted by those who are under subjection. Therefore the best and the most effective 'peaceful means to secure independence of all countries' in the hands of colonial or imperial or protectorate powers of the West is to quit those countries and restore to their people the first essential condition of any progress or development worth the name, viz. freedom and independence or self-government.

3-7-'54

M. P.

## Smoking and Cancer

The following news-item (*The Hindustan Times*, Friday, May 21, '54) must move cigarette-smokers to think seriously about their smoking habit:

London, May 20.

"Dr. Everts A. Graham, one of the world's foremost experts on cancer, said here on Tuesday that study had shown a very definite statistical relationship between excessive smoking and cancer of the lung.

"Dr. Graham was speaking at a conference being held in London by the American College of Surgeons.

"He said that while he was carrying out investigations into the effect of cigarette-smoking on the lung in America, similar inquiries had been going on in Britain. "The results were so nearly identical that they could have been soon superimposed," he said.

"Dr. Graham—who 21 years ago was the first man to move a whole lung in a cancer operation—said, "one of the curious things about cancer of the lung is that it occurs five to six times more frequently in men than in women."

"Attempts over the years to produce cancer artificially from cigarette smoke had in general been failures. Out of a total of many hundred attempts there had been only seven successful results in the production of cancer in mice and one or two in rabbits. Tar extracted from cigarette smoke had had to be painted on a special strain of mice three times a week for over a year to produce cancer. But a year was about half the life-span of a mouse. It needed 20 to 30 years to get cancer in a human being—also about half the life-span.

"Dr. Graham said investigations had also been carried out to try to discover the effect of petroleum products in producing lung cancer. But it had been

found garage mechanics and oilfield workers did not have a higher incident of cancer of the lung than people in other occupations.—Reuter"

Heeding to this deadly warning of Dr. Graham, can we not as a people, save crores of our money that are being puffed away and lakhs of our acreage that is being wasted after tobacco?

1-6-'54

M. P.

## Limitations of Pasteurized Milk

Some people in Bombay congratulate themselves on the fact that the city is now getting pasteurized milk, but milk thus treated is not an unmixed blessing. For as Dr. Hugh Nicol, formerly Assistant Bacteriologist at the Rothamsted Experimental Station, says in his *Microbes by the Million* (Pelican Books), pp. 117-118, 'if you do not sterilize your milk-jugs or at least heat them to pasteurizing temperature (about 145 ° F), I do not see why you should use pasteurized milk. Pasteurization is a form of partial sterilization whereby the majority of the harmless souring organisms are killed, together with tubercle bacteria, while tougher micro-organisms escape. The purpose of pasteurization of milk is mainly to enable it to keep saleable for a longer time than it would if the souring bacteria were present in large numbers. Therefore pasteurization is a boon to wholesalers because it enables them to 'handle' originally dirty milk; it avoids a lot of fuss in buying (such as insistence on standards); it also simplifies selling.....

'It seems to be that to advocate pasteurization disinterestedly is a confession of failure to secure decent milk to start with; while to say that pasteurization does not harm milk is to pronounce on the subject of protective qualities of foods about which our knowledge is by no means complete. That commercial interests use pasteurization does not mean any more than that considerations of profit may retard an advance or even turn back the clock: Not all that is new is necessarily progress, however loudly it be so proclaimed by interested parties.' (The italics mine.)

V. G. D.

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