

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor : K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

THREE CIVIC DUTIES *

Love

From time immemorial we have conceived *Bharatavarsha* as one country. But from the Ashokan days until today there had been no unitary government in this country. Even then *Bharat* has been one culturally and spiritually. Even in the days of Ashoka, India was not one, because, if I remember aright, the Pandyas in the South remained as a separate sovereign entity. Today India has become politically united for the first time. Ashoka reigned wide and far in this country, but that was only nominal; because the methods of government of those days were different from those of today and, therefore, effective rule could not be enforced over wide areas as now. Today an order issued from Delhi comes into force throughout the country from the very next day. But in those days, it would have taken many years, not to speak of days.

Now that our country has become one, great responsibilities have devolved on us. We need not be afraid of them, but we should be careful about them. The unification of our great country under one government is a great event in the history of the world. Our country is almost a continent—a Federation of many units. China is similarly a big country, but what is happening there is dreadful. We are not afraid of the spread of Communism but the civil war going on there is terrible. Similar events are taking place also in Burma after her independence. In India too there were great disturbances after Independence. These in fact started before Independence and we know to our cost what a great harm they have done. By the mercy of God we were able to overcome them, but we must take a lesson from them.

We are a country of many provincial and sub-provincial distinctions. Therefore the lesson we should take is that in a big country like ours, whatever may be our distinguishing characteristics, *inter se*, we must turn them to our advantage. They can be used as much for our disadvantage as for our advantage. We can benefit from what is good in the various provinces, languages and castes or we can start

quarrels over such differences. In order to reap benefit, we must spread goodwill among ourselves. We must love one another as brothers and sisters. Then only can we sing aloud : *Vande Mataram*. For this, we must understand the distinction between the body and the soul; then we shall take the inner meaning of things, ignoring the outward differences.

Productive Labour

The next duty for maintaining our country's freedom is that every one must do some productive physical labour. Without that, the burden will fall on a few and there will be no peace in the country. We know that our country has been impoverished on account of foreign subjugation during the last 150 or 200 years. We have lost our occupations. Our lands have become exhausted. The area of agricultural land *per capita* is very little. Unless, therefore, every one works and produces, there cannot be peace and happiness in the country.

Character

The third duty is the building of character. There is widespread bribery and corruption all around. Black-marketing is of course there, but even the open markets are not honest. We must put right this state of affairs. We must take a vow to keep away from bribery and corruption. Instead of blaming others, we should purify our own lives. We should see that in all circumstances—whether in a train, bus or other place—our conduct is right. Even if we have to face difficulties in practising what is right, we should not take to the path of untruth.

You are all *khadi*-workers and wear *khadi*. You should imbibe the purity of *khadi* in your lives. The swan and the crane are both white. *Khadi*-wearers must be like the swan which separates milk from water and not like the crane. The country expects *khadi*-wearers to discriminate between truth and falsehood and pursue the path of truth. If we do so, even though we might be a handful, we will be able to influence the people and the atmosphere will change. It is of course needless to say that strength lies only in truth and not in untruth. A spoonful of curd can convert a bucketful of milk into curd, but a bucketful of milk cannot turn even a spoonful of curd into milk. Similarly,

* Post-prayer speech at the Tirupur Khadi Vidyalaya on 23-5-49.

if a few develop the strength of character, it will have its own effect on others.

In brief, the three things required are love, productive labour and purity of life. If we develop these things, we shall raise India and her rise will help the world to rise high.

VINOBA

(Translated from Hindi)

NOTES

'Save Food' Programme

In aid of the 'Save Food' programme, our Committee has decided to collect 26,150 (denoting 26-1-'50) signatures from our Suburban District of people who will forego their rice quota for the week in which the Independence Day falls, i.e. from 23-1-'50 to 29-1-'50. These signatures will be presented to the Premier of Bombay. It is estimated that thereby a saving of 817 maunds of rice will be made.

I. A. SHAH

Secretary, Food Committee

Bombay Suburban Dist. Congress Committee

Ethics and Exports

The following information has been reported in the *Hindu* (of Madras) of 10th November :

"The Government of India have accepted the recommendations of the Export Promotion Committee to develop India's export trade and entrusted the Chief Controller of Exports with this responsibility, a Commerce Ministry Press Note said today.

"The Government will bring to the notice of the Provincial authorities the observations of the Committee regarding the effect of wasteful, indiscriminate stoppage of cattle slaughter on the export trade in hides and skins."

It is obvious that this trade policy is immoral and brutal. The importance of export trade is great. But the moral standards should neither be lowered nor trespassed. If the Government manned by the nation's leaders and headed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who is doing a great service to world humanity by dinning into their ears the message of Mahatma Gandhi, accepts un-ethical policies, the people will follow in their footsteps and the leaders' exhortation to the masses to re-establish morality in their individual, social and national life, will be meaningless and will sound false.

If the Light of Morality goes dim even in a particular sphere, the entire moral realm also gets darkened.

If it is our objective to bring some material betterment to our country by the increase of exports, the means we adopt should not be such as to lower and worsen the moral betterment of the country.

Instead of peeling the skin of some cattle alive, we must and can find out other sources for our export trade.

And what if we cannot do so? It is better to remain poor and in want than to sacrifice principles.

V. SAHAJANANDA

ALL INDIA SPINNING COMPETITION

Competitions in spinning and other allied processes were part of the efforts not only to introduce new ideas in *khadi* but also to revive the art. Such competitions were continued to be held for some time in the beginning of the Khaddar Movement, but were discontinued later on.

Dexterity, speed and general efficiency of the hand in spinning and other allied processes and other handicrafts, which were witnessed by those who started the movement, even in the dying stage of these crafts, have become more or less legendary now. We think that we imparted new life into *khadi*, but our faith to attain that efficiency and speed of production is waning today. When such things are not witnessed nowadays, it is but natural that our faith in them should also disappear. It is also possible that after some days even the belief in the legend about the speed of the hand may be lost. The present machine-age has not only weakened our hands but has also weakened our imagination regarding the efficiency hands are capable of attaining. This is a danger to the progress of *khadi* and village industries.

It will strengthen our enthusiasm and faith in our programme if we search for this skill of hands in all parts of the country and encourage it wherever it still lives. This work can be done by organizing competitions in these activities. The Charkha Sangh, therefore, realizes the necessity to revive them. A good opportunity for such all-India competitions will be the ensuing *Sarvodaya mela* during April 6 to 13. The Charkha Sangh has decided to make the necessary arrangements, provided the organizers of the *mela* give the necessary permission.

Schemes have been drawn for such competitions in fast spinning, combined spinning, break-less spinning, fine spinning, carding, *tunai*, weaving, etc. and a committee has already been entrusted with the work of framing rules and regulations. Only those who have attained a specified standard of efficiency will be allowed to take part in the various competitions. Prizes will also be awarded. A leaflet regarding this scheme is under preparation and will be available by sending postage stamps of four annas to the Central Office of the Charkha Sangh, Sevagram.

We hope that *khadi*-lovers will carry this information to all those qualified and encourage them to take part in the competition, and thus help the Charkha Sangh in its *khadi* work.

Sevagram

KRISHNADAS GANDHI
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CONFLICT BETWEEN BUFFALO AND COW

Of the two varieties of cows in Gujarat, viz. *kankarej* and *gir*, the former is well known for its good breed of cows and bullocks and high yield of milk. There are three centres of the *kankarej* cows in the Kheda District distributed as follows :

Centre	No. of cows	Acres of land
Asamli	500	608
Nayka	279	265
Hariyala	168	103

The Sangh has been carrying on agricultural and cow-breeding activities in these three centres through co-operative societies of *Rabari Bharwads* (hereditary cow-breeders). At Asamli, a water-pump has also been installed. The Sangh also maintains a *goshala* of *gir* cows in the Sabarmati Ashram. Similar efforts must be made in every district of Gujarat, wherever land is available, so that cultivators might be induced to maintain cows. But except for a meagre one in the Kheda District, there is no sufficient co-operation in favour of the cow.

The cultivator of Gujarat prefers to keep buffaloes. The result is that cows are reared only by *Rabaris* and *Bharwads*. But these have no land. They, therefore, have to take their cows to distant *gochars* and forests for grazing them and to let them loose in the fields of cultivators after the crops have been removed. This practice sometimes harms crops also. The *Rabaris* and *Bharwads* are illiterate and poor. There is no proper institution to instruct them and guide them to adapt themselves to changing times and no co-operation is given to any who attempts it. Rather this class is looked down upon with some ill-will by the cultivators (including Congressmen), because their cows and other animals frequently harm the crops. Thus there is none to sympathize with them, and still less to look to their difficulties. The Government is not free from this antipathy towards them. They are making use of District Police Act, Public Securities Act, etc. against them and more penal laws are under contemplation.

No doubt crops must be protected. But as against innumerable penal laws there is not a single piece of legislation meant for the welfare of cows. They are like a remedy which will kill the patient instead of curing him of the disease. Under the effect of these penal laws, many cows have been destroyed bringing ruin to their keepers in its train. They too have now taken to buffalo-keeping. That buffalo-milk sells at a higher price is also one of the reasons for this change-over. Cows are fast decreasing in numbers, resulting in dearth of bullocks. Cultivators are not able to purchase such costly bullocks and this in turn tells upon agriculture. Some lands remain uncultivated for want of bullocks.

In the 'Grow More Food' drive, the Government has begun giving fallow land to cultivators for the purpose of cultivating crops only.

Consequently no land is available for cow-grazing. If the Government had stipulated that cultivators should maintain one or more cows as a condition of taking new pieces of land, some cows could have been maintained. Instead, the difficulty of grazing cows has increased. In order to bring more land under cultivation Government has offered some concessions and facilities. But though *gopalan* is a part of agriculture itself, there is no provision for its protection and development. There are seven talukas in the Kheda District where attempts are made to improve the breed of the cow. But Government has given up till 1948 only 17 bulls to serve 1550 cows. So a large number of cows are served by indifferent bulls. The result is deterioration of the race. To this must be added want of adequate nutrition as a contributory factor.

Several constructive institutions founded by Mahatma Gandhi, such as the All-India Spinners Association, Harijan Sevak Sangh, All-India Village Industries Association, are carrying on work throughout the country in an organized manner. But the *Go-Seva Sangh* has still remained unorganized. In Gujarat, the Government and the Congress organize from time to time functions such as Jayanti celebrations, Charkha Week, Harijan Day, training camps, etc. But none of them give any place to *go-seva* work in its programme. Congressmen seem to take no interest in this item of work. The result of this indifference on the part both of the people and the Government is that cows are disappearing from Gujarat and buffaloes are on the increase.

In pursuance of its pro-buffalo policy, the Government of Bombay have launched a scheme of providing modern stables fully provided with water, fodder, and other facilities for buffaloes at a cost of Rs. 2.5 crores, and with a view to make the Kheda District the Denmark of India, they have installed water-pumps, arranged for fodder, oil-seeds, stables, roads, etc. and organized co-operative societies of buffalo-keepers, who will sell all their milk to the city of Bombay. Similar plans for other large cities are also under contemplation.

This policy requires to be carefully considered. In *Cow V. Buffalo*, Gandhiji observed : 'There should be no necessity of either buffalo or its milk in Bombay. An effort should be made on a large scale to obtain pure cow-milk at cheap rates.' The policy of the Government of Bombay is just the opposite of this. The terrible consequence of this will be the total disappearance of the cow in Gujarat. Since buffaloes are reared by cultivators, they get sufficient grass, etc. They do not need any protection. Even then great schemes are undertaken to protect buffaloes, while, *gopalaks* being helpless and poor, cows do not get sufficient nutrition and are exterminated.

MANSINH B. DESAI

Secretary, Gujarat Go-Seva Sangh

HARIJAN

January 15

1950

SHALL WE NOT PRAY ?

Shri H. V. Kamat writes :

"I have given notice of a resolution to the effect that the inauguration of the Republic of India be preceded in the Assembly by a solemn prayer to God. I shall be grateful if you will support my suggestion through *Harijan*. I think that such a ceremony will be in consonance with our national genius, in tune with the teachings of all our prophets and *rishis* including Mahatma Gandhi, and will impart a sacred or holy touch to the unique occasion."

I regret that the words like 'God' and 'Prayer' should have created such an amount of fruitless debate among those who speak in the name of the people of India. The subject well considered reduces itself to the following : Do we start our Republic with a curse ? If curse is a very strong word, I ask, whether we do it with indifference and levity ? If that is ruled out, why should we fight shy of acknowledging the fact that we start our new life with faith, seriousness and solemnity, and express these feelings in a suitable manner ? Whatever that manner is, it is Prayer. And to whom is that faith, seriousness and solemnity addressed or dedicated ? Is it to Satan ? If that again is an improper suggestion, is it to the individual egos of the representatives who will take part in the function ? With all their greatnesses, all of them combined are but a particle of dust in the universe. If there is faith anywhere, and serious and solemn dedication to any power, it is a power (or, if you like, multitude of powers) which includes them and the whole creation and even that which is beyond creation.

Since we all unanimously wish that the Republic of India should prove a blessing to *Bharat*, and that we should all be guided to work for it, our common wish is our common prayer and that common wish should be suitably expressed on an auspicious occasion. When expressed in the beginning it becomes *संगलाचरण* (auspicious invocation) ; when at the end, it is *समस्तवाक्य* (concluding benediction).

Above all what the representatives should bear in mind and consider conclusive is that they are to inaugurate the Republic in a representative capacity. Their own personal likes and dislikes, faith or want of it, must be subordinated to those of the people. What do the vast bulk of the millions whom they represent expect to be done on such great occasions ? How do they carry out major functions in their own private or group life ? This is a ceremony much greater than the coronation of a King. Can there be any doubt about the place of prayer on such an occasion against the background of *Bharat* ?

But if the representatives cannot decide upon any form of common prayer, or take part in the one fixed upon, let them all keep a few

minutes of silence in token of solemnity and seriousness. And whether there is any uttered prayer or a silent prayer, let those who cannot pray, silently and respectfully watch those who do.

Wardha, 3-1-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

WORLD PACIFISTS AT SEVAGRAM

The last week of December at Sevagram, — the week of the World Pacifist Meeting — though filled with physical strain for me, was also in many respects a period full of significance.

The guests came from all the continents of the globe, and represented 34 countries including India. It was regretted that there was no representative from Soviet countries, though there were some who had lived or travelled in Russia, and were acquainted with individual Pacifists there. None came from West Pakistan also. Also every colour from Black to White was literally represented. Every one could see that under variously coloured skins and physical characteristics and through various languages, religions and civilizations, there was a common humanity with common aspirations and sentiments, and that every one gave evidence of being a member of one family under Heaven.

The way in which the work was divided and carried out deserves to be told. In the first place, a Steering Committee with a convener was appointed. It was in charge of the business as a whole. It arranged the programme for each day, its Chairman, the names of persons who had to introduce or elucidate the subject of the day before it was opened for general discussion, the time to be allotted to each speaker and such other details. It also arranged for taking notes. Any one who wanted to take part in a particular subject had to contact the convener of the Steering Committee and communicate his wishes to him.

Several important topics had to be discussed. If they had all to be discussed before the whole meeting, none could have been tackled with satisfaction to enable the meeting to come to speedy decisions. Even a Subjects Committee could not have dealt with them adequately. So the topics were divided into three parts, A, B and C, and a separate 'Commission' was appointed for each to consider matters entrusted to it. These Commissions were again sub-divided where necessary into sub-sections called 'Committees'. Thus one of the Commissions was divided into as many as eight Committees. Each Committee or Commission made a short report of its conclusions to the whole House. Members of the House commented upon it, their suggestions were noted down and the Committee or Commission, as the case may be, was asked to consider its report again in the light of the remarks made and see what alterations were necessary. The meeting was conscious that they were a very small part of the Pacifists the world

over and, therefore, they could not do anything which might be binding upon all. Therefore, no attempt was made to pass any report as a 'resolution' of the meeting, unless it was unanimously approved and even so it was passed more or less as a 'recommendation', which Pacifist organizations in the world might consider. Generally the resolution was that the report had been received and entrusted to the Editorial Committee for circulation or publication in such manner as might be suitable. The Editorial Committee was authorized to exercise the editorial privilege of pruning and amending in the light of discussions held. If there was a fundamental difference of opinion on any report, the report was simply received and recorded. This meant that the subject needed further study and should be reconsidered in future.

Thus within a short period and without lengthy speeches, amendments, counting of votes, etc., a good deal of work was done in the full meetings. Of course, to enable the full House to work expeditiously, the various Commissions and Committees had to work night and day. The Committee members had hardly any leisure to idle away.

I am not in a position to give even a gist of the various reports. They will be published in course of time by the Editorial Committee. The reports which would interest all Pacifists were those relating to Principles of Non-violent Way of Life and Education for Peace (presented respectively by Richard B. Gregg and Wilfred Wellock). Both of them were very lucidly worded. The resolution on Indo-Pakistan Mission (moved by Richard B. Gregg) was important for Indo-Pakistan workers; there were similar others such as those relating to Palestine, War Criminals, Refugees and Displaced Persons, etc. of interest to other countries. They were all drawn up by persons who had made a careful study of these problems.

In a vast country like ours, unless the management adheres strictly to fixed limits such meetings might easily become unmanageably big and from the point of view of serious work and discussion not very fruitful. Nevertheless, I wish that it had been possible for a few more Indian workers in the cause of non-violence (who were also anxious to participate in it) to be invited, and also some arrangement made for a few junior promising workers to profit from the discussions by listening without causing distraction and disturbance.

These World Pacifists wanted to come to India to learn at the feet of Gandhiji himself. His death having made that expectation impossible, I entertained, ever since, a doubt about the qualifications of ourselves—the Indian recipients of his message—to invite them to India. What treasure, I thought, had we collected and preserved from which we shall give with confidence to our distant friends? Like the "Prophet" of Khalil Gibran, I constantly asked

myself, if this was to be our period of harvest, in what fields have we sowed the seed and in what unremembered seasons? But those who knew the foreign Pacifists in a more personal way than I, did not think that this meeting should be dropped, and so it came about. And now that I have seen it, I must say that it was a very wholesome thing for us to have known them. The visitors came here in a spirit of learning. One who comes to seek, and to seek only good, never goes away empty-handed and finds good even from a heap of rubbish. So they must have taken only what was good and wholesome. But I feel that they also taught us much. It is difficult to say whether those, who presume to meet them as teachers or privileged disciples of a great master, benefit from teaching given by people classed as learners. The egoistic attitude might prevent them from benefiting from even a wholesome lesson. My experience as a teacher and even as a head has been that I have often learnt as much from my pupils and assistants as I have imparted to them. In this particular Conference, I had no teacher's ego, and so I reaped all the benefits of a learner.

With Vinoba I say, 'my salutations to them all.'

Wardha, 3-1-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

COW AND VILLAGE PROSPERITY

Shri Mansinh Desai's article published elsewhere requires serious consideration both by the people and the Government. Living for the day without worrying for the morrow is a good policy provided one condition is fulfilled; namely, that this day's difficulties are solved in a right manner. But if we think of removing our worries of the day anyhow, it is certain that tomorrow's worry will come with redoubled force.

Let us leave aside for a moment all such problems as: whether or no cow-milk is superior to buffalo-milk or vice versa; and whether ghee or *vanaspati* is to be preferred as an article of diet; and consider this question from the point of view of agriculture only. Are bullocks necessary for agriculture? If yes, how far? and whether India needs animal milk? If yes, how much?

If we believe that we cannot do without bullocks in agriculture at least for the next twenty years, it will not do to make them unaffordably costly. If bullocks are too costly and there is scarcity of grass and fodder for them, there cannot be increase in agricultural production, prices of agricultural produce cannot be brought down and the standard of life of the cultivators cannot be raised. These propositions should be accepted as indisputable. Even if we contemplate for the future a policy of total elimination of the bullock by mechanization of agriculture, i.e. introducing pumps and tractors in it and of solving the ghee problem through *vanaspati* and of milk by rearing buffaloes (male-buffaloes being allowed to be slaughtered,

or done to death by neglect as heretofore), people must realize and Government should declare that all sentimental and religion-based talks of *gopalan*, *go-seva*, and *go-raksha*, should be given up, propaganda against *vanaspati* should be abandoned and no protests should be made against slaughter of cows and buffaloes. In India dead animals are more valuable than living ones. The Indian Export Committee has already opined that the indiscriminate banning of the slaughter of animals has adversely affected the export trade in hides.

Whether an objective is right and good, or wrong and bad, being definite about it helps clarity of thought and implementation. Its uncertainty leads to adoption of mutually inconsistent measures, so that not a single object is achieved.

Even with a national policy as laid down above, it is necessary to consider its effects on the present food scarcity and high prices. If the aim to make our country self-sufficient in food by 1951 is not to be retreated from, the question to be considered is whether the aim is to be achieved by resorting to tractors and engines only or shall we need bullock-cultivation also? If all food crops are to be produced by tractors alone, and the bullock is to be used for raising only commercial crops, such as groundnuts, cotton, tobacco, tea, coffee, plantains, sweet potatoes, fruits, etc., it may be possible to assume that the difficulty is solved; for these non-food crops fetch good prices and hence their cultivation can afford to pay the high prices of bullocks, grass, fodder, etc. And, in that case, the cultivator should be so duly advised. But if the major portion of food crops is to be produced with the help of bullocks, and there is little doubt about this, there is no alternative but to make bullocks, grass and fodder cheaper than now, and there is no way out but to accept the cow for the sake of bullocks. For the latter cannot be manufactured in any man-made factory, nor through the buffalo or any non-grass-eating animal. Though methods of artificial fertilization dispensing with the physical presence of the bull have been discovered, science has not so far found a method to have calves without the intercession of the cow.

Thus the problem of agriculture is such as cannot be separated from *go-palan*. If it becomes impossible to maintain cows and bullocks on account of exorbitant cost, the aim of self-sufficiency in food must remain a mid-summer day's dream.

All experts, both official and non-official, are unanimous that cow is more economical than buffalo. Gujarat, however, seems to feel otherwise. This is not because the buffalo is cheaper than the cow but there are other reasons for it. In past years, people used to consume very little milk. The ordinary people, including buffalo-keepers themselves, took butter-milk for their own consumption and ghee was a rare commo-

dity used only by the rich or at the time of festivals and dinner parties. There being no rival for ghee, the profit they earned from ghee enabled them to maintain the buffalo. But now when *vanaspati* has come in the field as a competitor of ghee and prices of grains, fodder, oil-seeds, etc. have gone high, ghee does not fetch even its prime cost. Hence the usefulness of buffalo has shifted from ghee to milk itself. The increasing habit of tea and coffee contributed to making the demand for milk larger than ever before and big markets opened for milk in the cities. This made milk-trade a profitable occupation for some time and so cultivators took to it rapidly. It made up for the loss in agriculture and the buffalo became a helpful investment particularly to widows and to agriculturists in times of unemployment. This position has changed now. The buffalo is not even self-supporting, far less a profitable occupation. Even though there are co-operative societies, etc., the rates at which milk is sold are hardly adequate to meet with its basic cost. The result is that the buffalo which had come in to make up for the loss in agriculture, now wants its own loss to be met from agriculture! But if there had been sufficient income from agriculture, the agriculturist would not have gone in for the buffalo at all. Cow would have been preferred. It was the high price of ghee which induced him to prefer the buffalo to the cow; and then the high price of milk induced him to part both with milk and ghee. Even then buffalo has not become self-supporting and so attempts are made to make it self-supporting by constructing good roads and running speedy motor-cars. While this will help speedy export of milk, there is no reason to believe that it will make buffalo self-supporting. The only thing certain is that cow and bullock rearing will be made more difficult.

Whether the Government and traders realize this or not, the people of villages — agriculturists — at least should realize their self-interest. To throw away milk, ghee and grains for collecting bundles of currency notes is suicidal. The first pillar of prosperity of the village is its people brought up on plenty of food grains, milk, ghee, etc., healthy and handsome cows and bullocks, trees giving building-wood and good fruits; and all-round unity, contentment and co-operation in all classes of people. After satisfying the requirements of the local people that which remains may be exported. To reduce this wealth, to remain half-starved, or to starve the people of the village and the labourer, and in order to collect bundles of currency notes, to grow commercial crops, produce ghee and milk for the market and to think of building impressive houses and sending away sons to become doctors and lawyers or engineers, and keeping motor cars is wrong business. Its consequences are that milk, ghee, grains and health are lost to the village. Along with them go

cows and bullocks; also intelligent boys, who give up the village, and settle down in cities; and the currency notes that seemed to flow into the villages go back to cities in exchange for city goods and luxuries. Ultimately no one remains in the villages, even to look after the expensive houses built by them. If the people of villages realize all this fully, the remedy is in their hands. *Rabaris* are not the enemies of the village. It is lure of apparent prosperity of commerce which is ruinous to villages and the cause of village unemployment.

Wardha, 8-12-'49

K. G. MASHRUWALA

(Translated from Gujarati)

COMMUNISTS AND CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME

"The following paragraph has just come to my notice:

'To the North in Cape Breton, the miners, studying and working, had set up their own stores. Here the men of St. Francis Xavier (college) were a little better than wise. They chose as leaders of the Consumer Co-operative movement there the men who were most active in Communist organization. They reasoned shrewdly that a man who was intelligent enough to lead his fellows in one revolt would be intelligent to lead them in another more practical and thoroughly constructive revolt. In one bold move, therefore, they robbed the Communist Party of its best leaders and started the Co-ops on the road to prosperity. For in the Consumer Co-operatives these leaders found a pattern of constructive action that made common sense to them. As they organized Co-ops and built up membership, they found themselves no longer able to accept the Communist ideology. The Co-ops gave immediate and realistic proof of the soundness of the idea.'

"The constructive workers and organizations should make a bold bid to assimilate such Communists with faith and determination. With faith because this can be done and with determination because one has to persist with infinite patience. The least that may be expected for this is an intelligent understanding and study of the fundamental principles of Constructive Programme and actual concrete work. Only then these Communist youths are likely to have found a pattern of constructive activity that made common sense to them."

Thus writes Shri Sam M. Neksatkhan, a co-operative worker in Bombay. The illustration given by him is of the nature of an experiment in non-violence, and can be undertaken by capable men possessing self-confidence and faith in the inherent capacity of perfect non-violence to meet every situation created by possible mischief-organizers. Ordinary workers will hardly have courage to try the method. But it is a praise-worthy approach.

Wardha, 18-11-'49

K. G. MASHRUWALA

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Its Meaning and Place

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Price As. 6

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CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME

Some Suggestions

By Rajendraprasad

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THE REALISTIC APPROACH

Now that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel has been able to devote greater attention to the programme of economic recovery of the nation, there is a natural expectation that some concrete results will be achieved. The Sardar has appealed to everybody to be realistic. Let us approach this problem in the same spirit and work towards the same end, namely, as suggested by the Sardar, maximum production and the raising of the standard of living of the masses. Let us analyze the factors that lead to this end.

The first and the foremost factor that seems to be indispensable for achieving this objective is to harness the creative energy of every individual in society. A few giants at work in the midst of a dormant mass of people can hardly play the trick. The analogy of the history of the Congress struggle for freedom will illustrate this point. The freedom's struggle could gather momentum and the energy of the whole nation could be released only when Congress, under the guidance of Gandhiji, turned itself into a mass organization rather than remain restricted to a few intellectuals. This logic inevitably leads us to the programme of village industries and self-sufficiency.

But at this point two questions are raised: (1) The nation followed Gandhiji in the freedom-struggle. Will it follow his economic programme? (2) Are village industries capable of raising the standard of living?

If Gandhiji's programme means the full participation of every individual member of society rather than the participation of a few big giants, it should be accepted as an axiomatic truth that the nation wants to, nay, is eager to follow his programme in the economic field. If the nation did not adopt Gandhiji's economic programme in full upto now, it must be for some special reasons. For instance, because the time was not ripe for it. The demand of the age was political revolution. This demand has now changed. It is economic revolution now. There is a craving in the whole mass of the people for finding an outlet through which their creative energy could be released. If there is unrest and discontent, it is because such outlets are not available to the majority of the people. Rather, such formidable artificial barriers have been set up in the way of small-scale production and business that even those who were carrying on such occupations have been thrown out of work. The Gandhian programme is mentioned on national and international platforms as the only one that can solve world problems. While such talk creates high hopes, there is no lead given to this programme in our country, with the resultant feeling of frustration in the people. Let us, therefore, interpret Gandhiji's economic programme broadly as the full participation of every individual member of society in the economic activity of the nation and plan our production drive accordingly.

As regards the standard of living, a general misconception prevails in our minds. The one-sided propaganda of the vested interests has dinned into our ears an erroneous idea of the greater efficiency of large-scale factories than that of village industries. If this position is accepted, the adoption of village industries will appear as idealistic or as a sweet dream. But what is the reality? In matters of food in which there are a few simple processes to be carried out and where there are hardly any industries in the proper sense of the term involved, the standard of efficiency is the lowest when recourse is taken to factories. In such cases food is spoiled rather than produced. Three illustrations will bear this out.

On the question of power-driven cane-crusher *v.* the bullock-driven cane-crusher, the *Gur Market Review* of the U. P. Government, in its issue dated 12th July, 1941, observed as follows:

"The argument that the introduction of the power-crusher would improve the percentage of extraction of juice is not based on facts. Improved type of bullock-driven cane mills extract 65 per cent to 70 per cent of the juice in cane as against 60 per cent to 62 per cent obtained by three-roller power-crushers. Thus the percentage of extraction is rather 3 to 8 per cent higher in the case of the *kolhu* which makes for a difference to the extent of one to two maunds of juice on a day's crushing by the *kolhu*."

Paddy-husking provides another illustration. If consumption of unpolished rice is accepted as the basis, as it will have to be accepted both from the long-term nutritive as well as the short-term quantitative point of view, then rice factories stand at a disadvantage as compared with hand paddy *chakkis*. The greater efficiency of rice factories lies in the process of polishing rice and not in that of paddy husking for preparing unpolished rice. In other words, rice mills can function only at the expense of the nutritive value of the rice produced.

Oil pressing is the third illustration. In the first place, oil-mills have failed to supply pure and fresh oil to the consumers. Mill oils are adulterated, even with mineral oils, like 'white oil' and spindle oil. This is as good as giving a slow poison to the nation. Anti-adulteration measures of the Government have not been effective in preventing this. As the oil, extracted long before it can be put to use, gets rancid, mill-owners have to recommend the consumption of refined oils. This constitutes an additional burden on consumers. Refined oils are costlier and less nutritive than *ghani*-pressed oils. The oil-cake produced by the mill is not as good a cattle-feed as the *ghani*-pressed oil-cake. The myth of the superiority of the mill oil-cake over the *ghani* oil-cake is exploded by the fact that the Indian Oilseeds Committee of the Government of India, in the absence of any scientific data available on the subject, had to sanction a scheme costing over a *lakh* of rupees for finding out the comparative food values of

the mill cake and the *ghani* cake. The mill oil-cake and the hydrogenated vegetable oils prepared by the mills have spelt ruin to the cattle-wealth particularly the dairy animals of the nation. And after all, are oil-mills more efficient than *ghanis*? While the godown cost of pressing oil may be lower in mills by about one anna per pound of oil than in bullock-driven *ghanis*, the collection and distribution costs in the case of mills practically make up the difference. Thus from the consumer's point of view, no better service is rendered by the oil-mills. Nay, they cause an additional burden of transport on the railway system.

Thus from both points of view, viz. nation's readiness to follow Gandhiji's economic programme as well as of the standard of living, village industries offer a truly realistic solution to our economic problems. Planned economy implies the full and efficient employment of the working population of the nation. If this principle is applied to agriculture, there will be a minimum number of families required for cultivation on the basis of economic holdings and the balance will be thrown out of employment as superfluous population. Actual surveys carried out in this direction suggest that there is a huge waste of man-power and that there is a tremendous superfluous population available in the villages waiting to be diverted towards gainful occupations. This is the basic problem of our economy. This is also the reason for our low production and the consequent low standard of living. The nation's economy cannot settle down until this basic problem is solved. Is there any alternative to village industries for solving this problem? This is the reality of the situation from the point of view of the village people which form the bulk of our population. If we want to be realistic and mean business, let us begin harnessing the energy of the superfluous population in the villages by developing village industries at least in respect of the primary necessities of life such as food and clothing.

JHAVERBHAI PATEL

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