

# HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

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TWO ANNAS

## A CURSE IN DISGUISE

(By Gandhiji)

[The following lines were written by the Father of the Nation fairly a whole generation ago. The generation that read them when they first appeared in print had hailed them as a great and spirited pronouncement on behalf of the nation that really felt the crushing burden of 'this blighting imposition of a foreign medium upon the youth of the country'. Times seem to have changed since then. The generation that felt the stir of this historical pronouncement by the one man who could speak with the unique authority of self-experience and who knew both the West as well as the East in his own life in the most intimate manner possible by any one of his contemporaries in India and the world,—this generation has almost forgotten these memorable words and we have the queer misfortune of hearing from some, who say that English forged our national unity, it is one of our national languages, etc., etc. This would be pardonable if it did not perplex and bewilder the youth of the new generation that has not read these words nor known the stirring times of the fight for freedom from one of the most entrenched and enlightened imperialisms in history. It is chiefly for these young men and women that the following words are reproduced. It is as well the passing generation is reminded of them. It is really a pity and the most deplorable sign of our times at present that this curse of the English medium is not still removed by the concerted and prompt action of our universities. It is a veritable curse in disguise, and may the new generation realize it and not succumb to the reactionary gradualism of the passing generation.]

30-7-54

M. P. ]

The spirited plea on behalf of the vernaculars as media of instruction of Nawab Masood Jung Bahadur, Director of Public Instruction, Hyderabad State, recently delivered at the Karve University for Women, has evoked a reply in *The Times of India* from which a friend sends the following extracts for me to answer:

'Whatever is valuable and fruitful in their writings is directly or indirectly the result of Western culture.....Instead of sixty, we can go back a hundred years and yet say that from Raja Ram Mohan Roy down to Mahatma Gandhi every one of the Indians who have achieved anything worth mentioning in any direction was or is the fruit, directly or indirectly, of Western education.'

In these extracts what is considered is not the value of English as the medium of higher instruction in India but the importance and influence of Western culture to and on the persons mentioned. Neither the Nawab nor any one else has disputed the importance or the influence of Western culture. What is resented is the sacrifice of Indian or Eastern culture on the altar of

the Western. Even if it could be proved that Western culture was superior to Eastern, it would be injurious to India as a whole for her most promising sons and daughters to be brought up in Western culture and thus become denationalized and torn from the people.

In my opinion, whatever reaction for the better the persons named in the extracts had upon the people at large was due to the extent they retained their Eastern culture in spite of the adverse influence of the Western. I regard as adverse the influence of Western culture in this connection in the sense in which it interfered with the full effect that the best in Eastern culture might have produced on them. Of myself whilst I have freely acknowledged my debt to Western culture, I can say that whatever service I have been able to render to the nation has been *entirely to the retention by me of Eastern culture to the extent it has been possible*. I should have been thoroughly useless to the masses as an Anglicized denationalized being knowing little of, caring less for and perhaps even despising their ways, habits, thoughts and aspirations. It is difficult to estimate the loss of energy caused to the nation by her children being obliged to resist the encroachments of a culture which, however good in itself, was unsuited for them whilst they had not imbibed and become rooted in their own.

Examine the question synthetically. Would Chaitanya, Nanak, Kabir, Tulsidas and a host of other reformers have done better if they had been attached from their childhood to the most efficiently managed English schools? Have the men named by the writer of the article in question done better than these great reformers? Would Dayanand have done better if he had become an M.A. of an Indian university? Where is among the easy-going, ease-loving English-speaking rajas and maharajas brought from their infancy under the influence of Western culture one who could be named in the same breath as Shivaji who braved all perils and shared the simple life of his hardy men? Are they better rulers than Pratap the intrepid? Are they good specimens of Western culture, these Neroes who are fiddling in London and Paris whilst their Romes are burning? There is

nothing to be proud of in their culture which has made them foreigners in their own land and which has taught them to prefer to waste the substance of their ryots and their own souls in Europe to sharing the happiness and miseries of those over whom they are called by a higher power to rule.

But the point at issue is not Western culture. The point at issue is the medium of instruction. But for the fact that the only higher education, the only education worth the name has been received by us through the English medium, there would be no need to prove such a self-evident proposition that the youth of a nation to remain a nation must receive all instruction including the highest in its own vernacular or vernaculars. Surely, it is a self-demonstrated proposition that the youth of a nation cannot keep or establish a living contact with the masses unless their knowledge is received and assimilated through a medium understood by the people. Who can calculate the immeasurable loss sustained by the nation owing to thousands of its young men having been obliged to waste years in mastering a foreign language and its idiom of which in their daily life they have the least use and in learning which they had to neglect their own mother tongue and their own literature? There never was a greater superstition than that a particular language can be incapable of expansion or expressing abstruse or scientific ideas. A language is an exact reflection of the character and growth of its speakers.

Among the many evils of foreign rule this blighting imposition of a foreign medium upon the youth of the country will be counted by history as one of the greatest. It has sapped the energy of the nation, it has shortened the lives of the pupils, it has estranged them from the masses, it has made education unnecessarily expensive. If this process is still persisted in, it bids fair to rob the nation of its soul. The sooner therefore educated India shakes itself free from the hypnotic spell of the foreign medium, the better it would be for them and the people.

*Young India, 5-7-28*

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## DANGERS OF 'AIDS TO BEAUTY'

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

A Reuter's message from Bonn, Germany dated July 8, says:

"A stern warning to German women and girls of the harmful effects of nail polish, eyelash black, lipstick and other aids to beauty has been given recently by a 45-year-old German woman doctor Ingeborg Niemand-Anderssen.

In articles published in several West German medical journals and giving the result of a survey which she has made, she has stressed the suffering caused to some women by certain commonly used products.

Dr. Niemand-Anderssen began her survey in West Berlin nearly two years ago while practising as a dermatologist. She said that her survey was not meant as an attack against manufacturers of cosmetics and beauty aids, but as a warning to women and to help doctors to detect the real causes of skin damage and other diseases more easily.

'Pleasant as modern fashions may be, they can have considerable ill effects,' she tells her readers. 'Not a few of our women and girls have to pay later for their initial attractiveness with an ugly, irritated skin or various diseases.'

Health disorders caused by 'cosmetics and beauty aids are 'already pretty frequent, and are on the increase.'

Among the most common, she names acute dermatitis, eczema, conjunctivitis, bedema, rhinitis (an inflammation of the mucous membranes), and asthma. They are caused by allergic reactions of the skin, the mucous membranes and the respiratory tract.

In addition to cosmetics and other beauty aids, Dr. Niemand-Anderssen states, some textiles, specially those made from synthetic fibres, hand-carried articles such as umbrellas and handbags, as well as some kinds of jewellery, produced an allergic reaction.

The most dangerous cosmetics are perfumes, lipsticks, nail polish, eyelash black, creams, pastes and powders; ill effects can also result from the use of hair dyeing substances, particularly those containing parapheny endiamine, hair lotions, brillantines, and the thioglycol acid used for cold waves.

Expensive soaps and hair shampoos are often more harmful to the face and scalp than simple household soap or coal-tar soap, Dr. Niemand-Anderssen declares.

Scents containing bergamotte oil, which women often use to clean their faces can cause not only skin diseases but also, by inhaling rhinitis and asthma.

Many people do not realize that cheilosis, another skin disease, may be caused by lipstick, particularly by the eosin contained in it.



Allergic reactions to powders are generally due to the perfume.

Allergic reaction to garments made of synthetic textiles has been traced to the dyestuffs used in processing them, mainly those containing ursol (paraphenyl endiamine). The fact that more women are allergic to synthetic fibres, such as nylon or perlon, than to natural textiles is due to the fact that synthetic fibres absorb dyestuffs less. With artificial silk, it is generally copper and sulphur combinations contained in the fibre-hardeners, with which the silk is processed, which cause the trouble.

Allergy-producing jewellery products, such as modern necklaces, bracelets, earrings, hairclips and combs usually contain plastics. Plastic handles of umbrellas or walking sticks and plastic watch-straps, handbags, hats and internal fittings for shoes are also potent skin disease breeders, as are rubber beauty aids like shoulder paddings 'falsies' and stocking belts."

I need not describe how much significant and important the German dermatologist's survey is. How far the conclusions arrived at by her are true is for the experts to test and find out. In any case, they are arresting enough, deserving our close and immediate attention. In our own country, use of these 'aids to beauty' is fast increasing. It is mostly an urban phenomenon. I am told it is spreading to villages also in some parts. Our doctors also must go in for research and find out the truth about these aids. But as a layman, it may be asked whether all this fuss and craze about 'aids to beauty' is at all necessary? Are we not overdoing it? Is it, artistically speaking, aiding beauty at all? And does not woman do something unnatural or out of the way when she paints and polishes herself to look more beautiful to her 'worse' half, the man? In this age of equality of the sexes, does such a question not become even more relevant?

In our modern age, these questions assume economic and industrial aspects also. The Press message goes into these as well where it says:

"No reaction from cosmetic producers is available, but one of West Germany's chief manufacturers of pharmaceutical products and cosmetics, the firm of E. Merck, of Darmstadt, reprinted Dr. Niemand-Anderssen's survey in full in its own magazine and distributed it to all physicians in West Germany.

West Germany last year produced 276,500,000 marks (about £ 23,000,000) worth of cosmetics—about 15 per cent more than in 1952. Skin creams represented some 57,000,000 marks (£ 4,750,000), or about one-fifth of this amount.

In addition, West Germany imported 5,600,000 marks (about £ 466,000) worth of cosmetics in 1953—10 per cent more than in 1952.

The 1953 production of soap totalled 110,000 tons of which roughly 70 per cent was used in households and the rest for industrial purposes. On the average, every West German last year used 5.6 marks worth of soap—compared with about 30 marks worth used by every citizen in the U. S. A."

I request, someone among the readers may prepare statistics in regard to India also, so that we may know how much we spend away after questionable ways of 'aids to beauty'. If the findings of the German doctor are true, these aids are unhealthy also. And one might well say there is no artistic worth or value in them too.

15-7-54

### YOUR LIGHT NOT THE ONLY LIGHT

Mr Clifford Diment writes:

'Henry Vaughan thus describes what St. John of the Cross called "the dark night of the soul":

There is in God, some say,  
A deep but dazzling darkness; as men  
here  
say it is late and dusky, because they see  
not all clear.

O! for that night! where I in Him  
Might live invisible and dim!

'Men are for ever attracted to this dazzling darkness which swallows up their own little lights. It is in fact a light too bright for them. It shines on all the ways by which men approach God; it shines in all directions. One we call Judaism and another Christianity; one Buddhism and another Love and another perhaps Art. No man has the right to call his light the only light. He has done so in the past and still does so, persecuting and killing and hating, and reviling and suspecting in the name of Truth, all manifestations of man's terrifying arrogance. Arrogance which theologians call the sin of pride, keeps man away from the life in God.' (*Man without God*, pp. 10, 11, published by Vox Mundi)

V. G. D.

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# HARIJAN

Aug. 7

1954

## "PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE"

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

In the editorial article in the issue of July 10, p. 152, I had quoted, from the joint statement of the Prime Ministers of India and China, the five basic principles of peace laid down in it. The fifth principle was named, 'peaceful co-existence'. In common parlance, it is only the general idea of 'live and let live', which is rendered so in international diplomacy.

Prime Minister Churchill referred to these words in the British Parliament in the following noteworthy manner. He said :

"In the speech which my Right Hon. friend, the Foreign Secretary, made in winding up the debate before our departure, he used, in speaking about the relations of the communist and free worlds, the remarkable phrase 'peaceful co-existence'.

"This fundamental and far-reaching conception certainly had an influence upon some of our conversations at Washington, and I was very glad when I read, after we had left, that President Eisenhower had said that the hope of the world lies in the peaceful co-existence of the communist and non-communist powers, adding also the warning—with which I entirely agree—that this doctrine must not lead to appeasement that compels any nation to submit to foreign domination.

"The House must not underrate the importance of this broad measure of concurrence in what was, in this case, the English-speaking world. What a vast ideological gulf there is between the idea of peaceful co-existence vigilantly safeguarded, and a mood of forcibly extirpating the communist fallacy and heresy! It is, indeed, a gulf.

"This statement is a recognition of the appalling character which war has now assumed, and that its fearful consequences go even beyond the difficulties and dangers of dwelling side by side with the communist States.

"Indeed, I believe that wide-spread acceptance of this policy may in the passage of years lead to the problems which divide the world being solved—or solving themselves, as so many problems do—in a manner which will avert the mass destruction of the human race and give time, human nature and the mercy of God their chance to win salvation for us."

(B.I.S.: from *The Hindustan Times*, Friday, July 16, 1954).

As I said at the beginning, the conception of peaceful co-existence is very old in human relationships. As a matter of fact, that is the broad law which governs our family life. Good neighbours always live and let live one another; so only can we hope for peaceful co-existence in society. The law must equally apply to the whole human family consisting of different nations. But the trouble has been that aggressive Bolshevism which was wedded to world revolution among all peoples recognized no limit or fallibility to its idea and way of life and fanatically worked to foment revolution among other

nations without any scruples for the means to be adopted for it. Unlike the early Christians or the Buddhists, theirs was not a peaceful mission wedded to persuasion and hoping only true or heart conversion. It did not accept co-existence of diverse ways of life and economy. It seemed as if Soviet Russianism was out to impose on the world the one pattern that it thought was good. Thank God, the position seems to have changed since then and the world today is in a happy position to realize that peaceful co-existence with the richness of various ways of life and economy in the great human family living in its diverse national mansions, is the true ideal, and world diplomacy must work to achieve that end. The law of such enlightened and humane diplomacy is peaceful persuasion and discussion only. To speak in ancient terms of Aryan politics, *Sama* (Peaceful Persuasion) is the only right way; — not *Bhedd* (Division and Partition), nor *Dama* (Economic Aid), nor *Danda* (Military Aid and Armed Action). To our cost and to the peril of world peace, the latter three are rampant in the international relationship today. This should change, and peaceful co-existence should be established instead. That will be the true basis for happy and mutually beneficial inter-trading, inter-visiting and inter-communicating between nations, to the common end of the great glory and advancement of the human family.

28-7-54

## THE COMING REVOLUTION \*

(By Vinoba)

We aim ultimately at abolishing the ownership of land. It should be free and not subject to individual ownership as it is at present. Land is the mother of us all. It is the foundation of life. We need it not only for maintaining our life but also when we die. It is obvious that such a thing cannot be allowed to be the subject of exclusive ownership. The first thing therefore we have to do is to see that everyone is provided with some land. There should be no one in the village without land. After this we will ask the people to collect all their land and make it the joint property of the village and cultivate it co-operatively on a planned basis. They would find out what things they needed and in what quantity and grow the different crops accordingly. At present, there is no such planning; they grow just those crops which seem to promise the maximum return in money, with the result that, notwithstanding our unsatisfactory food position, about eight and a half lakh acres of the country's land are being used for growing tobacco!

There is a new kind of landowning class growing up lately — the farmowners. They too do not live in the villages. Like God Mahadeva in his Kailas, they also live far away in the

\* From the prayer-speech at Chaita (Champaran) on 9-7-54.



cities beyond the reach of the labourers who work in their farms. I would like to tell all concerned very frankly that the labourers and the workers must have the same share in these farms as their proprietors or this disguised introduction of commercial exploitation in the sphere of agriculture would not be tolerated. After all the people are the real masters and anything which goes against their interests will have to be scrapped. It is to arouse the people to their rights and their duties that I am moving about from village to village.

I not only ask for land but also for the gift of their intelligence from the landowners. I want them to take up this work as their own. It would give them real prestige. What prestige have they today? Only yesterday a labourer came to me weeping. Utterly tired after the day's work, he had begged leave to go home whereupon the master not only did not allow him to go home but also beat him very severely. I ask—what prestige is there in this? People forget that the workers are also entitled to a sense of self-respect. What should be the plight of the so-called owners, if the labourers—because one of them had been unjustly beaten—were to declare that they would not work? Would they not be reduced to utter helplessness? Well; if the owners do not mend their ways, it is going to be so in India. In the same way, the workers also have to change some of their ways, before they can justly claim equality of status and respect. They must be honest in their work. They must not fight among themselves and they must give up evil habits, such as drinking etc.

When a big landowner gives me only a hundred out of his one thousand acres, I am asked how I am going to get the remaining nine hundred. I reply I do not worry about it, for I am sure that they will come to me automatically even without going through the formality of the filling in the gift-deeds once the poor get well-organized. Let the poor give away all their lands and become united; it will produce such a big army of Bhoodan workers that none will need to go to anybody and yet the work will get done in no time.

Only the other day, there was land distribution at Senha in Palamu District. The distribution ceremony was performed by the Governor of your province. How did it come about? All the small landowners gave away their lands. Only one big landholder, who did not even live in that village, remained. The workers wrote to him that all the villagers had given away their entire land and it was now for him to give his. This had immediate effect and he answered that he was also giving his entire land. He also wrote that at the time of the distribution he may also be given a few acres. In his speech at the distribution, the Governor referred to this incident and said that there were very clear indications

that the Bhoodan and the Sampattidan Jayna were going to bring about the social revolution. Now what happened at Senha can also happen in every other village. The Senha people are just ordinary men and women like you; the only difference is that they have realized the importance of the Bhoodan Jayna while others have not till now.

The Communists say that I am doing injustice to the poor by asking for land from them. One Communist asked me why I was robbing the poor. I told him that this was a non-violent fight which had its own peculiar technique. It requires that first we rob the near ones and then only the distant ones. Like the charity it must begin at home. But the Communists do not understand this supreme art of a non-violent fight. I have received three lakh gift-deeds till now of which more than two and a half lakhs must have come from the poor. It is this which has prompted the big landlords like those of Ramgarh, Darbhanga and Palkot to offer their big donations. The mother and the sister of the Raja of Ramgarh have donated their jewellery. Once the good come over to our side, no one will dare pit himself against us. We will then become absolutely irresistible. The year 1957 is drawing nearer and I tell you that by that year India will see the glorious rise of the Raj of Daridra-narayana—the Poor. The rich are intelligent and we can be certain that as they see that fateful year coming closer, they will willingly give up at least half of their possessions. This is not meant to frighten the rich. In a non-violent fight no party suffers defeat; both win. We are not going to humiliate the rich; we will love them and respect them.

We love them even today. It is love which makes me speak these words. We are not the enemies of the rich. We are in fact going to save them—we, that is, this Bhoodan movement. It is following the same non-violent path that was pointed out to us by Gandhiji in the present and by the Buddha in the past.

(Adapted from Hindi)

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**KHADI GRAMODYOGA BHAVAN, BOMBAY**

[From Shri V. L. Mehta's speech on the occasion of the opening of the Khadi Gramodyoga Bhavan in Bombay.]

In many senses, the auspicious occasion of the opening of the Khadi Gramodyoga Bhavan, is a unique one. In the assembly that has gathered here today there will be many, I believe, who will recollect the scenes that were enacted, at the entrance of the premises that the Bhavan occupies, in the eventful days in the national upheavals of 1930 and 1932. The huge departmental store of Messrs. Whiteaway Laidlaw & Co. Ltd., represented something that was repugnant to the spirit of Swadeshi which was considered an inseparable part of the ideal of Swaraj, on which the nation had set its heart. The picketing of the departmental store in an organized but undemonstrative and peaceful manner, mainly by brave women, was an integral part of the campaign that was then launched in Bombay City. Numerous arrests took place in front of the shop and occasionally there were demonstrations on the part of sympathizers of the movement. It is a veritable transformation that has taken place with the advent of Swaraj that these very premises should now stand for all that is cent per cent Swadeshi!

Let us turn to another aspect. This is the first occasion on which the national Government of the country actively interests itself in the marketing of Khadi, the purely home-made product which is indissolubly linked up, in our minds with our country's struggle for freedom. The political implications of this economic aspect of the national programme do not concern us any longer, now that Swaraj has been won. But we cannot forget that, while these implications were never absent from Mahatma Gandhi's mind, it was always the economic aspect of this revolutionary programme that counted most with him. It represented to him a movement for reawakening the dormant skills of the people, for revivifying life in the country-side, for checking the drain of money from villages, for eradicating sloth and for teaching lessons of organized self-help. The Bhavan subserves a movement which stands for all these objectives that by his advocacy of the cause Gandhiji laid before the nation.

The promotion of this industrial revival was, until the advent of Swaraj, the responsibility of an organization founded by Gandhiji and run by his followers in a spirit of service, with the aid of such resources as the organization could secure. The Government of the day, when it was not actively hostile, scoffed at the revival, appreciating little what it signified in the life of the people. Until about a couple of decades back, it was, again, unthinkable for Government to be associated with any attempts at organizing the marketing of the products of village industries. But though subsequently there was a change in the outlook, it is only now,

with the establishment of the All-India Khadi and Village Industries Board, that the resources of the State have come to be harnessed for the production and sale, first, of Khadi and along with it of other products of village industries.

It will not be out of place to refer briefly to the factors that have induced this change in the outlook of Government. This arises not merely by reason of the fact that the Government of the day is a Congress Government and hence it does allegiance to the constructive programme of Gandhiji. Practical visionary that he was, Gandhiji's theories always had relation to fact. And the most glaring fact of our social life today is the need for employment and yet more employment. Industrialization in its organized large-scale form has definite limitations as can be seen from the fact that all the large-scale organized industries put together do not provide employment for more than 30 lakhs of persons, whereas an equally large number is even now engaged in the handloom weaving industry. The scope for increase in these numbers will, for whom large-scale industries can provide employment, as experience shows, be strictly limited. With the growth of industrialization, moreover, the numbers engaged in cottage industries tend to diminish, thus swelling the ranks of the unemployed or the under-employed who flock to towns and cities in search of employment. In his days, Gandhiji pleaded for a reversal of this process and the adoption of a national policy to stimulate employment in and through Khadi and other village industries. It is this policy that is sought to be implemented as part of the First Five Year Plan through the All-India Board and cognate bodies in the various States.

A visible symbol of this reorientation is the warm and active interest that the Government of India have evinced in the Bhavan. The Bhavan will be run by the Board out of funds provided by the Government of India against the allotment placed at the disposal of the Ministry for Commerce and Industry.

The Bhavan is mainly a sales emporium where the principal commodity on sale is Khadi. This is a pioneer enterprise of its type in the sphere of State effort at organized marketing of commodities, stimulation of the production of which is deemed to be in the interests of national economy as a whole. The opening up of such a market is the main purpose of the Bhavan. Those who are in charge of the Bhavan are not well-versed in the technique of high-pressure salesmanship nor have they resources for resort to modern methods of advertisement. Their appeal is, however, based on the needs of our economic situation which calls for action to promote rural employment and to preserve the skills of the artisans in our towns and villages. Coupled with this appeal is their assurance that



all possible steps will be taken to bring about improvements in tools and techniques wherever necessary and thereby to effect a reduction in costs of production, at the same time ensuring increased earnings for the artisans.

### VINOBA LEAVES CHAMPARAN

(By "Dadu")

It was on 14th June, 1954, that Vinoba entered Champaran. Having spent 27 days in it, he reached Chakia on 11th July. As he was to leave the district on the 14th, workers from different parts of the district assembled at Chakia to chalk out a programme for carrying out the Bhoodan work in the district.

Chakia is a railway station as also a sugar-mill town. The manager of the mill, a European, saw Vinoba in the afternoon. On learning that the mill has donated only 50 acres out of 600 acres of its land, Vinoba looked at the manager smilingly and said, "But I want one-sixth." The latter blushed. Then Vinoba added, "Well, I take it that it is your first instalment and more will follow." At this we all had a hearty laugh.

The workers' meeting was held at four o'clock. Vinoba told them that if those present gave one-sixth of their family property each, it would pave the way for a non-violent revolution in the district. In case the problem of poverty was not solved by peaceful means it would excite violent forces. Asking the workers to take up the work, Vinoba said, "I claim that if the forces of violence are not making any headway today, it is due to this movement."

Then rose up a prominent Congressman of the district, an M. P., and said, "Baba, that is true. But you are a Brahmachari who has renounced everything, while we are family people with our own responsibilities. How can we meet your call so quickly?"

Vinoba retorted, "The Vinoba before you is no more the family-less Vinoba of Bapu's time, but a Vinoba who has as many as five crores of members in his family for whose sake he is constantly on his feet."

The whole assemblage, consisting of about two hundred people, roared with laughter. With a beaming face, Vinoba added, "You will confess that nowhere in the world has an agrarian revolution been achieved at so cheap a price."

The attendance at the evening prayer meeting was fairly large. Addressing the gathering, Vinoba remarked that if one who had served the people all through his youth took to comfort and pleasure during the old age, he would be regarded as a failure, even as a swimmer who swam across a major portion of a river, say eighty hands, but lost his balance and sank in the remaining few, say ten hands, would be regarded as drowned. What went with one was not the wealth one acquired, but the love and respect of the people that one earned. Hence they should all store up such wealth as would go along with them and serve at all times. Vinoba added, "God has provided us all with a rare opportunity of building the society on the basis of love and peace. Love which keeps a family together will surely make society also united and strong. But presently people have doubts about the potentialities of love-force and are prone to lean on organizations based on violent forces. I tell you that it is a wrong idea. The strength commanded by organizations is a result of mutual love among the members. Organizations based on hate do not last long and fall down under their own weight as in the case of Japan and Germany. It is love alone that contributes to relieving and liberating strength. And that is the basis of Bhoodan Yajna."

On 12th July, we were at Bakarpur in the Kesaria thana of Champaran. In the workers' meeting, Vinoba observed that if the masses remained indifferent the Swaraj would not long survive. In all foreign invasions, the people of the villages and those at the lower strata

took no interest and with the defeat of the Kshatriya rulers the kingdoms were changed. "That should," he said, "happen no more. That is why I ask the poor to donate land and come into their own. I worry little about the rich. If they do not yield, they will not be able to face the times. Either they will have to bend down before the moral strength of the poor man's gifts, or they will be victims of violent forces, or the landless labour would refuse to co-operate with them, or, lastly, Government would deprive them of their lands. There is no fifth alternative. My endeavour is to awaken them to the might of the moral force."

In his post-prayer address at Bakarpur, Vinoba pointed out that we had three alternatives before us: First, the capitalist ideal; secondly, the communist ideal; and thirdly, the Sarvodaya ideal. If they accepted the first, they should not part with their lands and found an *A-data Sangh* (Non-donors Association) pleading for the abolition of small holdings and setting up of big farms of not less than, say, 500 acres each in which the cultivators must work as wage-earning labourers. In case they liked the communist ideal they would have to surrender their entire holdings to the State and do according to its behest. But if they preferred the Sarvodaya ideal, they would have to be active and quick. "I tell you," he said, "these are the days of collective action and speedy action. Whatever you want to do, please do together and do quickly. If you offer your one-sixth and complete the district quota of 14 lakhs as well as other district quotas are also realized, it will be then my responsibility to see that no legal measures are adopted by the Government, for they would be of little use. But if you part with your share haltingly, and simultaneously desire that legal measures should not be adopted, then it would amount to a betrayal of the country in these days of science." He concluded, "If you are neither inclined to the capitalist ideology nor to the communist one and nor to Sarvodaya but are content to confine yourselves to your own clan or caste then only God can help you."

Thirteenth of July was the last day in Champaran district. We encamped at Kesaria. In the workers' meeting, Vinoba asked them not to let the iron get cold. He felt sure that the district of Champaran would not lag behind any other district in this great cause.

In his post-prayer address, Vinoba placed some essential points before the workers. Firstly, they should be courteous and never wound anybody's feelings. They must take a vow not to speak ill of others. Secondly, whatever they do they must do regularly and without any stop. Lastly, they must develop friendship and fellow-feeling with all whom they met. He said, "Ours is not merely to obtain land but to explain an ideology. If somebody refuses to part with land, you can persuade him to put on Khadi or to take to Gram-udyoga (village industries) or village sanitation or to some other programme. Thanks to Mahatma that we have got so many types of nets that no fish can escape us. You must turn yourselves into voluntary servants of the people. Bhoodan is simply an instrument to approach the masses and render some real service unto them to win their heart and respect. I have every hope that my friends of this great district will expand this work."

In his sojourn of 30 days in Champaran district, Vinoba got 3,564.23 acres of land from 4,116 donors. Taking the previous collections into account the total came to 4,869.32 acres from 4,962 donors. Literature worth Rs 2,811.40 was sold in this tour and of *Gita Pravachan* alone more than two thousand copies were sold out.

Next day we were to enter the district of Muzaffarpur. As usual, Vinoba left Kesaria at 4.10 in the morning. Hardly had we walked for five minutes when it began to rain. And the downpour grew heavier. But with his characteristic calm, Vinoba went on. He said that that was the occasion to rejoice for rains brought about a meeting of heaven and earth. As the road was *kachcha* and slippery our movement had to be slow. As we were

marching along, rains became all the more wild. Everybody was quietly following Vinoba. In this serene silence, Shri Ram Bilas Sharma, the convener of Bhoodan work in Champaran began reciting the famous couplets of Ramayana: *Sauraj Dhiraj Tehi Rath Chaka* (bravery and patience form the two wheels of the chariot of victory), Tulsidas' immortal lines in which Rama sets out the essentials for victory in battle. I wondered how Vinoba fulfilled the same conditions in his grim fight against poverty and disease in India. A faith as strong as his can move mountains and we felt blessed to be the soldiers of the Great Journey.

As Vinoba set his foot in the precincts of Muzaffarpur, a district an eager crowd, drenched with happy rains, offered him a hearty welcome. Joy marked their faces, joy for Baba (as they call Vinoba lovingly) who brought rains with him. The halt of the day was at the middle school in Sahabganj. In the afternoon, a deputation of Communist workers met Vinoba and sought clarification on certain questions. Vinoba told them that his reliance was on the popular strength of the people and by its dint he wanted to show the country the way to solve its various problems. He expressed his gratefulness to the Communists for their thoughtful queries, and specially so for one of them on which he dwelt at length in his post-prayer address.

The Communist friends' question was: "What do Bhoodan-wallahs do or want to do for world peace?" Vinoba replied that, Bhoodan had no 'ism' or 'vada' of its own: It was but an aspect of Sarvodaya. He said:

"Thoughtful people in the world today are anxious to establish a third force away from the two threatening forces of America and Russia. Bhoodan is also interested in the creation of a third force. But the Sarvodaya ideology has its own philosophy about the nature of this third force. It holds that there would continue in the world as long as people continue to seek the solutions of their mutual problems by means of violence. By working on the basis of violence we create far more problems instead of solving any. Hence we should no more think of solving our issue on the basis of violence."

"The second feature of Sarvodaya thought," he added, "is that governments based on the might of law or arms cannot efface themselves. And wars can be avoided only to the extent to which the people do away with their governments. The utmost that governments can do is to maintain the balance of power. Hence they go on increasing their strength of arms in rivalry with others. This results in more and more militarization. Hence there is no disarmament." Vinoba continued, "The third force that we want to raise is called constructive force or the force of love. It has no reliance on military or legal force. We want the people to stand on their foot more and more and rely on governments less and less. Hence the need for decentralization in the various spheres of public life and administration. Every village should be self-sufficient in its basic requirements and run its own school and have its own independent and trusted judiciary." Vinoba closed with the words, "In spite of the advancement of science, man's mind is less free today than before and domination in one form or other is on the increase. America though so very rich, is terribly fear-stricken. So also are other countries. In these circumstances, the only way to real and lasting peace is to solve people's problems by means of people's strength—*Jana-Shakti* and Bhoodan Yajna is an humble effort in that direction."

The second halt in Muzaffarpur district was at Manain. On that day also Communist workers met him and gave him a welcome address in which they, offering him a welcome in the district, posed some questions. Vinoba replied to these questions at length in his evening speech. At the end he appealed to them as also to workers

of other parties to come forward and take to Bhoodan work. He felt sure that if all worked untidely the problem of the landless in the country could be solved in three months.

On 16th Vinoba reached Brahaman Bazar. In the workers' meeting, one worker regretted that though he had full faith in the movement he could not overcome his attachment. This formed the theme of the post-prayer address. Vinoba said that for breaking up Arjuna's attachment or *moha*, God taught him the lesson of the Gita. Arjuna then came to realize that his attachment was an obstacle in his way. So also they should feel that ownership of land was no blessing but a curse. He regretted that they did not realize that they themselves were their enemies. But times were not far when land would belong to the village, production would rise up and with it the happiness of the people. Vinoba gave the warning: "Let the landholders know that they would have to part with their land. Let the landless know that it is their right to take land, not as beggars but as sons! Convey this message of mine to every village. And let the main workers untie their own knots within and propagate this theme. Then this work would be accomplished in no time."

On the closing day of the week, the party camped at Kathayan some eight miles from Motipur, a small station on the Muzaffarpur-Narkatiaganj branch of N.E.R. In the workers' meeting, Vinoba asked them to fulfil the quota of their thana which was about six thousand acres.

In his post-prayer address, Vinoba said that there were two sorts of people in society, the conservatives and the new revolutionaries. He asked the former to read the signs of the times and wake up betimes. As regards the latter he observed that a revolution did not consist in changing merely the external forms; things must be set right at the base. Vinoba also explained how legal enactments failed to bring about fundamental changes in the social structure. He added, "Buddha had a whole kingdom in his hand. But he felt that would not help him to bring about a revolution. Hence he abandoned everything and went from village to village preaching the message of love and kindness. And he succeeded in bringing about Dharma-Chakra Pravartan. So also Bhoodan is a work of the same nature which cannot be accomplished by legal force. Kingdoms come and go. But the ideas of basic revolutionaries remain. Once there was a time when people propagated good ideas with spirit and vigour. Indians went to foreign countries and spread over them only by the might of ideas. We should work with a similar enthusiasm today."

Early next morning, Vinoba left for Motipur.

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