

# HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

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TWO ANNAS

## AUGUST FIFTEEN

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

Democracy and freedom are eternal hard task-masters. Not only are they to be won by sweat and blood and enduring faith, but also they require to be paid their unescapable price as well, which is eternal vigilance. On this memorable day of our people's history, let us examine, each within himself, whether we are paying that price or no. If yes, it only means, and should so demonstrate itself, that we are growing richer and richer in our only worth-while human good — our freedom. If not, no more proof is necessary to show that we are going down in that our real human wealth.

Complacency and self-love are the worst enemies of eternal vigilance. They lull it to sleep and create a false sense of satisfaction by masquerading themselves as happy progress, which may be, at best, only a feeling of an overlording class selfishness. I may well quote here, Shri Jawaharlalji's words from a press report of his speech at Dalhousie, East Punjab, the other day :

"The time has come now for hard gruelling work and no longer can softness of any kind be tolerated. Eighty to ninety per cent of our people are backward and needy. We should uplift them all."

"I want everybody to get into the thick of it in right earnest. There is too much of fashion in Punjab and well-to-do women seem to have no work and are accustomed to wear silk and chiffon. This is not correct. People who display well are not today considered in the world as high or mighty. Today that person is honoured who works and labours and lives simply and identifies himself with the poorest of the poor."

"I want to warn you against becoming complacent and thinking that India has become a great Power. We have emerged from bondage as a free nation recently and heavy responsibilities have come on us."

(The Times of India, August 5, 1954).

May we, in the sacred memory of all our countrymen and women who sacrificed themselves for the glorious achievement of freedom and independence, be ever vigilant. I may, chiefly for the readers of this journal, name late Shri Mahadevbhai who fell in harness on this day twelve years ago, and to whom they owe so much through these columns.

6-8-'54

## THE MEDIUM OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE

(By Jawaharlal Nehru)

I have no doubt whatever that Hindustani is going to be the common language of India. Indeed it is largely so today for ordinary purposes. Its progress has been hampered by foolish controversies about the script, *nagari* or Persian, and by the misdirected efforts of the two factions to use language which is either too Sanskritized or too Persianized. There is no way out of the script difficulty, for it arouses great heat and passion, except to adopt both officially, and allow people to use either. But an effort must be made to discourage the extreme tendencies and develop a middle literary language, on the lines of the spoken language in common use. With mass education this will inevitably take place. At present the small middle-class groups, that are supposed to be the arbiters of literary taste and style, are terribly narrow-minded and conservative, each in its own way. They cling to antique forms that have no life in them and have few contacts with their own masses or with world literature.

The development and spread of Hindustani must not and will not conflict with the continued use and enrichment of the other great languages of India — Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Oriya and the Dravidian languages of the South. Some of these languages are already more wide-awake and intellectually alert than Hindustani, and they must remain the official languages for educational and other purposes in their respective areas. Only through them can education and culture spread rapidly among the masses.

(From An Autobiography)

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6-10-'54

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## NOTES

## French and Portuguese Colonialism in India

The French Premier, M. Mendes-France is adding some more feathers to his cap after his brilliant and epoch-making performance at Geneva in regard to Indo-China. He evacuated Mahe peacefully and the reports are that the French are finally quitting the remaining Indian soil under their possession in Pondecherry, Karaikal etc., on the eve of our Independence Day, August 15. The Indian people will sincerely congratulate the French people for this their gift to us on the memorable occasion of our Independence Day. The French Premier, reading the signs of the times, also flew over to Tunisia immediately after Geneva decision, and settled a sort of Home Rule for that French colony. European colonialism in the modern context of the world situation is looking almost like a neo-feudalism in the present age, and it must be carefully liquidated, if the new idea of peaceful and co-operative co-existence of all nations is to be made a living ideal for mankind. The Portuguese people here have a lesson to learn. Taking a leaf from the French book, they also should quit their feudalistic hold over Indian soil. Let us hope what they are exhibiting at present in Goa, Diu, and elsewhere is only the last flicker of a dying flame.

M. P.

## Khadi Uniform in Educational Institutions

I share the following letter from a reader of the *Harijan*, with others. He writes :

"Your article on "Uniform and Khadi" in the *Harijan* dated 31-7-54. This is to endorse the attitude of the educational authorities about the use of Khadi for Cadet Corps in the schools and the Universities. This actually happened when my younger brother was sent to the Allahabad University and had to take Military Science in B. Sc. just after the Partition. But our father blankly told the authorities that education or no education but he could not suggest the use of mill-made cloth for any purpose. And we all endorsed his views and practice in this regard. They agreed but with difficulty.

"Last week there again was the similar problem. The Principal, Government Nursery Training School, Allahabad, would not admit my elder sister's children because she would not allow them to use uniform which the school provided, as it was made of mill-made cloth; and on the other hand the Principal would not budge to allow Khadi to be used as uniform. However, she was brought down by forceful reasoning. But for how long all this?"

Surely, the attitude and outlook of our educational authorities on matters of education and otherwise require to be radically changed. What goes on all around at present should surely not last long, unless the so-called educated few still wish to sit tight over the poor through the ways taught to us by our ex-rulers, of which English education was the most potent and important one.

4-8-54

M. P.

## RATIONALIZATION AND EMPLOYMENT

(By P. Srinivasachari)

Of late one hears much talk about rationalization. The spokesmen of large-scale industries are never tired of pointing out that unless the latest technological methods are adopted and the machinery in the mills is modernized it would not be possible to expand production, reduce cost, and increase the standard of living of the people.

At the outset we wish to make it clear that we have no objection to the introduction of scientific methods and the installation of improved machinery, if thereby we can increase the level of employment and the living conditions of the people. But it should also be made equally clear that by blindly following the example of some other countries, we would be deceiving ourselves if we think that we are achieving our goal, since the conditions in our country are totally different from those in the highly industrialized nations of the West.

According to the recent census figures the number of persons who are self-supporting without depending on others is miserably low :

	Population in Millions	Percentage of Total Population
Self-supporting persons	104.40	29.27
Earning dependents (that is, whose total income is not enough to meet even the bare necessities)	37.94	10.64
Non-earning dependents	214.29	60.09
	* 356.63	100.00

It is indeed depressing to note that 29 per cent of the population supports fully 60 per cent of the population and partially another 11 per cent of the population. About 104 millions of persons who themselves struggle for subsistence have to bear the burden of 214 millions who are entirely dependent and cannot earn anything for want of work and another 37 million earning dependents throughout the year. Even giving a wide margin for the old, the sick, the invalid and children, the number of entirely dependent persons reach a colossal figure of more than 100 millions for whom work should be created if we want to make any real progress.

The whole question of rationalization should be viewed with this background. Mere increase in production and slight reduction in cost will not contribute to the economic progress of the country, if the large number of the unemployed find no scope for work. On the other hand, there is every possibility that, if the policy of rationalization is followed without any human consideration, it may throw large number of people out of employment and worsen the situation.

\* Figures of 0.25 million persons relating to Jullundur Division were not included. Hence the total population given differs slightly from the actual total population.

For example, in the cotton textile mill industry, a weaver normally looks after two to three looms. With the introduction of automatic looms a weaver can easily manage more than thirty-two looms, which will lead to large-scale unemployment among the weavers in the industry. According to Mr Neville N. Wadia, the chairman of the Mill-owners' Association, Bombay, only 75,000 men out of 2,00,000 weavers would be retained (a very high figure on the basis of nine men for 48 looms in the early stages) if the industry is rationalized. The displaced labour should wait until further employment opportunities arise from the increased demand of the consumers due to reduction in price which will be about six piers per yard.

In fine, we should not be blind to the actual conditions prevailing in our country, and be carried away by the apparent success achieved in some countries. Even in America which has reached highest perfection in technological improvements there are more than 3 millions who are to be supported by the State. In our country about 70 per cent of the population are engaged in agriculture, who have no work to do for about 3 to 4 months in a year. The annual rate of increase in the population comes to more than 4 millions. The number of people who are added to the working population every year comes to 1.8 million. That means apart from the present unemployed and under-employed persons, we have to create employment opportunities to absorb nearly two million people every year, owing to the increase in population. The stupendous problem of finding employment to the vast army of unemployed and under-employed is not an easy one. Any scheme of improving technical methods and modernizing plant must be preceded by an increase in the pool of employment to absorb the displacement of labour through rationalization.

Further the chronic unemployment and under-employment in the country cannot be solved if the vast human power that remains idle is ignored. Increase in productivity does not furnish the true picture of economic progress. We are seeing the sad spectacle of growing unemployment in spite of the fact that cotton textiles, cement and jute industries have vastly expanded their production and have already reached the figure set under the Five Year Plan. Large-scale industrialization will not touch even the fringe of the problem. In a poor country like India where the per capita income is very low the capital formation required for big undertakings is very difficult of realization.

Hence the remedy to solve the plight of the 60 per cent of the population who should be provided with work urgently to eke out a living could be found only in the labour-intensive schemes rather than in the intensive utilization of capital.

The recent report of the I.L.O. says :

"The problem of the effects of higher productivity on job security is especially difficult in countries with a large amount of unemployment and under-employment. When there is a surplus of labour, displaced workers are most difficult to absorb, and it might seem that policy in such countries should aim rather at increasing production and employment than at higher productivity. It would be inappropriate in such countries where labour is abundant and cheap and capital scarce and dear, to adopt the capital-intensive and labour-saving methods of production which are appropriate in such countries as the United States and Canada."

In this connection, we point out that unless bold steps are taken to decentralize gradually those industries which produce consumer goods, India's problem of unemployment will never be solved for years to come. Decentralization need not necessarily mean higher cost and low standard of living. If we take into account the social costs of mass unemployment, over-crowding in cities, etc. resulting from large-scale industrialization, one can easily perceive the apparent illusion of the cheapness of the centralized products. The inventions and improvements in modern technology should be rightly utilized in providing better tools and implements to the labourers, which would increase production but not displace labour.

It is estimated that the rationalization of the cotton textile industry alone would cost about Rs 300 crores. Such a huge amount of capital should be employed in developing big industries like engineering, chemicals etc. which cannot be decentralized. The policy of rationalization to be successfully contributing to human welfare should not stop in modernization and scientific management of industries but must also rationalize the bountiful labour whose conditions grow worse day by day for want of employment. We should strike at the correct margin between intensive employment and intensive capital utilization. Therein lies India's salvation.

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# HARIJAN

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## THE WELFARE STATE vs. VILLAGE SELF-GOVERNMENT

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

'Social Welfare' and the 'Welfare State' are gradually coming to be adopted in our country too as popular social and political slogans. The slogans, as some have shown, suffer, like other manifestations of group psychology, from the serious defect of weakening or even suspending clear thinking on the part of the individuals. One cannot be sure if this danger is absent in the present case.

The Congress Working Committee, which met a few days ago at Ajmer, has used this term in its resolution on the national objective which states that 'the objective of the Congress is the establishment of a Co-operative Commonwealth and a Welfare State.' Perhaps it is the first time that the Congress has used this term. Hitherto the objective was Poorna Swaraj. But after the attainment of freedom, the term Swaraj needs to be clearly defined — a task which is by no means an easy one. The Congress has affirmed in its revised Constitution that

"The objective of the Indian National Congress is the wellbeing and advancement of the people of India and the establishment in India, by peaceful and legitimate means, of a Co-operative Commonwealth based on equality of opportunity and of political, economic and social rights, and aiming at world peace and fellowship."

It has now added the word 'Welfare State' in interpreting the above. This deserves serious consideration. As we know, words have meaning. Swaraj was an Indian word. Gandhiji used either the word Swaraj or Ramarajya to denote the ideal for which we were striving. The adoption of an English word instead of one of our own to express our ideal is hardly likely to conduce to clear thinking on this subject. Even in the West which is the birthplace of the word 'Welfare State', it is held to be a new word and the ideal which it suggests is not fully understood. But somehow it has passed into fashion and become the current coin of the political jargon of our times. We must therefore take good care to see that it does not cause any confusion in our thinking in regard to matters with which it is concerned.

Mrs. Margaret Cole, an English authoress, has written a booklet on this subject (*Social Welfare*, Casement Publications, Bombay) from which the following would bear quotation here :

"The phrase 'Social Welfare', as a general political concept, has only recently come into common use. Neither it, nor the parallel phrase 'Welfare State' appears, for example, in the index to the *Encyclopedia*

of the Social Sciences, which was published as recently in 1948. The fact that both are now on the lips of all practising politicians in almost every country — though behind the Iron Curtain the actual wording is probably rather different — shows how fast a fundamental change in thought is still proceeding.

"Social Welfare is, of course, rather a loose and not very precise term. Broadly it might be defined as the acceptance and carrying out in practice of the belief that States have a responsibility for seeing that minimum standards of living are assured to all within their borders; and this, if widely interpreted, might cover almost all the activities of any government except the duties of defence and police. It might, for example, be held to include all the economic acts of government — taxation, price policy, wage policy, trade policy, investment policy — since all these, particularly when operated by a government anxious to make changes in society, evidently affect the standard of living."

These slogans are not to be found only in the democratic States. In totalitarian countries also they are in use in one form or another.

Mrs. Cole notes it and says in her book :

"This great growth of social welfare is almost entirely independent of the particular political complexion of any one country; and the second, that it has pursued its course almost, though not quite, unaffected by the general economic situation in any country or group of countries. . . . The two great power-repositories of the modern world, the U. S. A. and the U. S. S. R. are both heavily committed to social welfare."

It is very significant that there is no noticeable difference between democracy and totalitarianism in regard to the ideal of the Welfare State. It means that both will have to proceed almost along similar lines to realize this ideal. What is then the sense in differentiating between the two by persisting in designating the former as the "free world" and the latter as "dictatorship"? We want India to develop into a democracy based on freedom. But if we allow to be lured by the slogan of the Welfare State, as we seem to be doing, what will happen to the freedom that we seek? How far are the two ideals, of freedom and of a Welfare State, compatible with each other? May not the Welfare State prove to be a form of tyranny so far as the liberty of the individual is concerned? Take for example, the Government Health Service Scheme which was criticized by a correspondent in a recent issue of this paper (*Harijan*, 24-7-54) and an observation made by Lord Douglas in the House of Lords which I had quoted with approval. The Welfare State means that the State holds certain things as conducive to the welfare of its subjects. Next, it undertakes to provide for carrying out those things in practice. This means a large amount of additional expenditure which is met by levying additional taxes. Then it has to employ a large staff in order to operate the services which it seeks to secure to its people. In effect, the State is thus enabled to interfere in the lives of the people from birth to death. Could we regard this as freedom in any accepted sense of the term? As Mrs. Cole has noted, the Welfare State can reach its arm over the entire area of our life to the farthest corner.

There can be no limit to it. Inasmuch as every man is entitled to have his own conception of welfare according to his point of view, the question can be justly asked whether a central ruling authority — with the power vested in a single individual or a body of individuals — imposing what it considers necessary in our interest on us, can be regarded as freedom?

It is said that the best government is one which governs the least, and that in the end "even this best government will disappear leaving the society entirely free." This ideal has been preached by champions of human liberty like Gandhiji and Thoreau and accepted even by Marxism. If we now transfer our allegiance to the ideal of the Welfare State, how would this fit with the former?

The Congress has also resuscitated our old ideal of Grama-panchayat or village self-government. This ideal is based on the decentralization of political power and the economy of self-sufficiency. Even granting that the Welfare State will be wedded to democracy in its intention, it will still be necessary for it to centralize the political power. Eventually, it is bound to end at its best as a strongly centralized democracy. How will it be compatible with the decentralized democracy of the Grama-panchayats? It is incumbent on the Congress to provide a satisfactory answer to this question.

Mrs. Cole has also pointed out this danger inherent in the ideal of the Welfare State in her own way. She writes:

"What the particular pattern or patterns will turn out to be, is another matter; and there are two possibilities which must be viewed with some concern. The first is that where the bulk of social services are non-contributory and non-contractual, they may be geared to the political system, made to depend upon "satisfactory" behaviour and refused to "unsatisfactory" individuals. This is a particular danger in authoritarian States. . . . The second possibility, which is more to be feared in countries of democratic intention, is that the cost of social welfare, particularly under conditions of inflation or semi-inflation, may prove too heavy a burden on the productive and trading powers of any particular country. If this happened, . . . what would happen is . . . that benefits would be allowed to sink in real value until we again had a large depressed section of the population living at a standard substantially lower than that of the rest, and that the equalizing effect which the first champions of social welfare sought to achieve would have disappeared."

This danger is no mere conjecture. We find enough cause for it in the economic and political history of the present-day Western world. The Welfare State idea is the product of the industrial and money-centred civilization of Europe and America. But we are a nation consisting mostly of a rural population with a village-centred civilization. Agriculture with us is not just an occupation; it is for us a way of life. Land is not for us just a means of productive wealth but is the mother giving food to her children. The industrialized countries regard land like their factories as just a means of earning profits. For us land is synonymous with life. This intimate relation between the land and the life of our

people was the source from which we developed in the glorious days of our old history the unique institution of the village-panchayat. This institution which we are now out to revive has become almost extinct during the British period. If we are not to forget the *panchayat* ideal again — and we cannot, because it is an ideal deeply ingrained in the national consciousness — we must seriously ponder, now that we have also adopted the ideal of the Welfare State, how we are going to reconcile the two. There are many other important questions involved in this. But we will postpone their consideration to some future date. The main question is clear: How are we going to relate the ideal of the Welfare State or the centralized democracy with the ideal of decentralized democracy as represented by the Grama-panchayat? In this connection the following observation by late Shri Kishorlal Mashruwala made by him almost towards the close of his life is well worth serious reflection:

"We do want every person from the moment of conception till death to enjoy the objectives of the Welfare State. But if this can be done only by making him from birth to death something like an A, B or C class prisoner of the State, under the outward semblance of democracy (and U.S.S.R. also regards itself to be a democracy of its own type), it is much better to live, as we have lived from the birth of humanity till now, in some sort of hard struggle for existence than be just comfortable well-kept animals by a small powerful group of our own species."

6-8-'54

(From the original in Hindi)

### TRUE BASIS OF HUMAN SOCIETY

(By Vinoba)

You all know that mere individualistic life — a life lived for and by oneself does not satisfy us. We live in society and only by serving it — whether one's conception of society be as narrow as one's own immediate family or as large as the whole humanity — do we get real inner satisfaction. We cannot live in isolation from the society. This is an innate human tendency which we cannot obliterate. A man wants to associate others with his happiness and sorrow and vice versa. That is why there is such a thing as society.

There are also various kinds of laws — religious injunctions, social conventions and legal enactments — for the governance of society. And men do generally try to observe them. They may appear to be a sort of bondage, but men agree to regulate their conduct in accordance with these laws in deference to the social will. They may criticize them when they find them unreasonable, but they do not generally violate them. It is thus that society is enabled to hold together and go on.

But the laws, however good and effective they may be, are not enough. They do not make the society strong. What gives real strength and cohesion to the society is trust. There is a bond of trust between the parents and the children. In the absence of such trust there would be hardly any joy left in the institution of the family. They may still live together, but

there will not be that coalescing of the lives of different members, which builds up a harmonious family life, nor will there be any joy, for joy is the product of harmony. In the same way if there is no trust between the husband and the wife, there would be no joy in conjugal life. They may pull on somehow, but the joy which must suffuse the conjugal relations will not be there. Even so if there is no trust between the people and the government, that community cannot become strong. Laws will of course be made and people will observe them as well as they may. But that may not add to the strength of the nation. If the people have no trust in the government, they might fail the latter just at the time for test, with disastrous results for both. In the absence of trust between teachers and students we find the invigilators being kept, in the examination hall in order to prevent students from copying. But has it improved matters? And what is the value of an education which has failed to produce trust even between the teachers and the students? The trust between the teachers and the students is the first test of a sound system of education.

Thus we see that law cannot create trust which alone is the source of strength. Law cannot create love and respect. Only *dharma*, that is, the consciousness of a moral imperative or sense of social obligation — this only can do it. (Adapted from Hindi)

### BAN ALL ATOMIC WEAPONS

[The following are the important resolutions passed at the World Pacifist Conference in Japan held during April (April 1-22, '54).]

#### I

Considering that Hydrogen Explosions cause horrible suffering, incurable disease and death, and also poison the limited food supply of the world, as was demonstrated so forcibly in the recent Hydrogen tests.

Considering that continuation of atomic war plans will lead to such serious destruction of all moral value that peace and right relations among men will become impossible.

We, the members of the World Pacifist Conference in Japan assembled in Tokyo from various parts of the world,

Hereby resolve to appeal to all governments and people and the United Nations:

1. To halt immediately the manufacture and tests of Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs,
2. To dismantle the bombs already manufactured,
3. To divert atomic research to constructive purpose to serve mankind.

#### II

Whereas, the evil effects of the first atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima still persist even after nine years, and continue to cause incurable diseases and death, thereby threatening man with total annihilation unless he exercises discretion in the handling of nuclear energy; and

Whereas, at the present moment, research in atomic energy is being conducted along lines that forebode the ultimate destruction of mankind, as has been so clearly demonstrated by the recent atomic explosion tests which have seriously imperilled innocent lives, and shown that man must choose between total extinction

and unprecedented prosperity through the use of atomic energy; and

Whereas, the World Pacifist Conference in Japan is now holding one of its sessions in Hiroshima,

Be it resolved therefore:

1. That any and all use of atomic weapons, even for the purpose of retaliation, shall be absolutely prohibited, and all atomic weapons now in existence shall be effectively destroyed;
2. That manufacture of atomic weapons and experiments with them and any other attempts at utilizing nuclear energy for military purposes shall be permanently banned;
3. That atomic energy resources shall be placed under strict international control so as to make them available for peaceful use only, for which purposes all information relating to the manufacture of atomic energy shall be made accessible to all countries;
4. That the crime committed by using the atom bomb shall never be allowed to be repeated, and

That as a token of this solemn determination, the City of Hiroshima shall henceforth be known as the City of Peace, which will stand as a monument calling on all men to strive for the abolition of war.

(From *The Peacemaker*, June 7, '54)

### FARM MECHANIZATION UNSUITABLE FOR INDIA

(By V. M. Kothari)

It is calculated that the surface of the globe, both land and water, is about 20 crores square miles. Of this total only a little more than one quarter is land. And of the land area — only about one-third is cultivable, i.e. about 160 lakh square miles. This comes to about 1,000 crores of acres. Of this cultivable land only 300 to 400 crores of acres are cultivated at present. The world's total population is estimated to be 235 crores. So the cultivated land per head in the world is about 1.5 acres. In India it is only 0.75 acre per head.

It is a problem for the world in general how to increase agricultural production, with such a small acreage of cultivated land per head. Can it be done by large-scale agriculture or the small-scale agriculture? It is perhaps possible to increase production by large-scale mechanized agriculture. But some experts believe that the land will deteriorate thereby and in the long run that will spoil the fertility of the land.

This is a pertinent question for India. Let us see the opinion of Dr. L. Dudley Stamp, the world's leading authority on the land use. He gives his considered opinion as follows in his publication, *Land for Tomorrow*.

"If the millions of cultivators could be given fertilizers and better implements and seed, and instructed in their proper use, they would get better crops with a better yield, build up their own strength and that of their families and their animals, and have a surplus for sale, — unless the net result of increased production would merely mean the increase of the family and a still larger number of mouths to feed. . . .

"It is well however to stress that nothing would be gained at this stage by any change in the agricultural production that resulted in saving of manpower. That would simply throw the entire rural economy of the country out of gear. It may even be doubted whether there is room for the gas or oil

burning machine which would rob the cultivator of his bullocks and the manure that they yield. India might better use some of the smaller specialized types of farm implements rather than attempt large-scale farm mechanization."

And further he strongly asserts,

"I repeat unequivocally that agricultural machinery designed for American conditions is by and large unsuitable for the old world,.....The whole world is trending and must trend toward a balanced, mixed farming, in which field units will be small....."

It is thus possible to increase agricultural production by systematic small-scale cultivation, without spoiling the land in any way. It is thereby even possible to maintain four times the present population of the world.

Shall we heed to this advice, before trying to introduce machines in place of our bullocks?  
28-7-'54

### VINOBA IN MUZAFFARPUR

(By "Dadu")

Having stayed for a month in the district of Champaran, Vinoba entered Muzaffarpur district on July 14th. This was his second visit to this district, the first having taken place early this year when he came from the eastern side (Darbhanga district and crossed the Gandak and Ganga at Hajipur) on his way to Patna. On 19th, he reached Motipur, a railway town on the Muzaffarpur-Mothari route of the N.E.R.

At about half past ten, the manager of the local sugar mill met Vinoba. There were 390 labourers in his mill which owned about 5,000 acres of land. Vinoba suggested to him to make all the labourers the trustees of the mill and allot three acres of land to each of them. The manager welcomed the proposal but expressed his inability to put it into practice until he had consulted the authorities concerned. Vinoba asked him to plead for the cause as one of his own.

Just at half past five, when Vinoba came on the dais for the prayer meeting little rain-drops were falling. Cries of, "*Hamare gaon men bina-zamin Koi na rahega. Koi na rahega*" (there would be none landless in our village), echoed and re-echoed. Vinoba joined the resolve of that village mass by raising his own hands. The rain-drops grew larger. Vinoba said, "By God's grace rains have come. Now we shall all pray together. Let it rain heavily, but you must observe utter calm. Close down your umbrellas. You are not to leave your spots and should stand erect. The women should also stand and we all shall offer our prayers in company." It was a serene scene. About five thousand people praying together, all standing under the open dark sky and heavy rains.

Vinoba himself conducted the prayers. After it was over, Vinoba said, "I am sure you will always remember this prayer, this combined prayer to God in the midst of His bounteous gift of showers." Looking towards the sky, he said, "What do these clouds teach us? To serve all equally, uniform selfless devotion and service of one and all. These are also the characteristics of a servant of God. He should love all equally. So also does the Sun, the messenger of God. It makes no distinction between a Brahmana and a Harijan. The moon also gives equally both to the prince and the pauper. The Ganga gives the same refreshing, sweet water to anybody coming at its shore, whether it be a cow or a dreadful lion. Likewise, God has given air equally to one and all. So also He has given earth or land. None can own it, while everybody can work upon it."

Vinoba was at the village, named Nariar, on the 19th. It rained almost the whole day. But the sky was clear at the prayer time. Vinoba, however, held the prayer as yesterday, all standing. Addressing the gathering, he said that the world was fast changing and that it was not possible for us to wait indefinitely for the solution of immediate problems like those of land. "To start with, I

demand," said Vinoba, "one-sixth of what you have. Later I would request you to transfer the ownership of all the village land to the village. Even today there are some fifty villages where land is owned by the village. What is possible in fifty villages should be possible in the whole country."

Next day, Vinoba encamped at Bhalalpur. In the afternoon was held a workers' meeting. The questions asked therein were rather elementary. Vinoba has answered them several times and they can also be found in popular pamphlets and booklets. Vinoba regretted that they did not go through them. Nay, he asked them to develop a taste for study and reading, in keeping with India's time-old tradition.

The evening prayer meeting was largely attended. A cheer on account of the recent rains marked their face. In his post-prayer address, Vinoba asked them to stand on their own feet, to use cloth, oil, gur and other requisites made by themselves in the village. He also inspired the workers to revive the ancient tradition of our country of walking on foot for years and years. He wanted that there should be at least 80 workers constantly going round in this district of 4,000 villages. He also appealed for improvement in the tools and implements of cultivation as would be within the reach of one and all, and for acquisition of knowledge. Finally, he asked the workers to take to this work which was above all differences of caste, creed, sect or party.

On 21st July, Vinoba reached Sirsia. On that day, a humble Khadi worker of ordinary resources donated more than a bigha out of the six bighas he owned and also presented five hanks of yarn spun by him and his wife. The latter also parted with a piece of her jewellery.

After the evening prayer meeting, Vinoba said that kings came and went away but the society continued its course. For the latter did not depend on kingdoms or governments but on religion. The more a society acted according to the tenets of religion, the more it went up. Vinoba pointed out that there were three essentials of Dharma or religion: Labour, love and sacrifice. They are the three fundamentals upholding the citadel of Dharma. The Bhoo-dan Yajna stressed on all these aspects. If people donated land and worked themselves, that would bring the hearts of people together and infuse the true spirit of religion. Vinoba concluded with the words, "Those who agree with the idea should donate one-sixth as well as persuade others to do the same. I hope that workers giving ample time to this movement would come forward as also those who would dedicate their life for this mission."

We encamped at Bairia next day, a small village about six miles away from Muzaffarpur city. In his post-prayer speech, Vinoba expressed his pleasure at the signing of the Indo-China peace agreement. He observed that the greatest credit for that memorable event was due to the Prime Minister of France who fixed a certain date by which he promised to establish peace or resign in case of failure. Calling this as a very important and lesson-bearing happening, Vinoba characterized it as a spiritual illustration in the political field and remarked, "When a man makes any resolve at the call of an inner inspiration, that resolve is bound to fructify. The *bhaktas*, bear testimony to it that all divine powers help in its fulfilment. I feel that in the days to come, many things are likely to happen as a result of collective resolve. The future times are of collective *sadhana*. So far there have been individual *sadhanas* resulting in some spiritual investigations. Now these are to be tried on a mass scale. This is the age of science, an age of big things being carried out on a giant, world-wide scale. Hence many right resolves are bound to be of a collective nature."

Vinoba then referred to the resolve he had made, viz., land should cease to be a personal property and must belong to the society as a whole. "Somebody says it would be realized in 1957. Well, I won't be surprised if it is realized still earlier."

Continuing his address, Vinoba referred to the tragic news of firing at Indore. He said, "It must set us thinking. In face of things like this, how can we hope to establish peace in the world? Let us first set our own house in order. Let us all decide not to resort to arms in our disputes and problems. I admit that India is a museum of problems. And we must be anxious to solve them. But we should not lose our balance, nor take to violence. The days of sword and gun are gone for ever. In the days of atom and hydrogen bombs, there is no fun in using puny things like gun or pistol. Public workers may carry on their movements on various issues, but they should see to it that violence is not resorted to at any stage. So also the Government must resolve never to resort to gun in dealing with country's affairs. There should be no firing at all, nothing of the kind."

"Here lies," he continued, "the significance of the Bhoodan Yajna movement. There is no doubt that the land problem would be solved. But the peculiarity is that we have resolved to solve it by methods of love and peace. We shall do it by dint of the popular strength of the people, Jانا-Shakti or Loka-Shakti, and that through it we shall bring about Dharma-Chakra-Pravartan or turning the wheel of Dharma. This movement would not only solve the land problem, but would show us the way to solve all other problems." Vinoba concluded saying: "I can say that my work in Bihar is over. For there is no part of this province where one may refuse to offer land. A climate has now been produced in which the workers have only to approach the landholder. My work finishes, while that of the workers' begins. This is why I ask you to suspend your secondary works and take to Bhoodan exclusively. Once this work is over, your all other works would flourish and prosper."

On Friday, the 23rd, Vinoba entered the city of Muzaffarpur and encamped at Kandhault, now named Sarvodayagrama, a colony established by Sarvodaya workers on the outskirts of the city. Vinoba came here for a long stay of no less than eight days. From 24th to 28th was to be held a camp of those Bhoodan workers (of Bihar) who had offered "Jiwandan", in obedience to the call of Shri Jayaprakash Narain at the Bodhi-Gaya Session of the Sarvodaya Samaj in April last.

The evening prayer meeting on that day was held in the zila school. Addressing the Muzaffarpur audience, Vinoba said that freedom had thrown new responsibilities on us. Besides we were living in the age of speed and invention when the whole humanity had become like a body, forming a single and united whole. Hence our thinking had to be on wide lines and we have to keep the world in view. As free people it was our duty to make the poorest among us taste the fruit of Swaraj. So we could not ignore the millions in villages. "If somebody asks me," remarked Vinoba, "whether we can press oil by a bullock in these times, my answer is a positive 'Yes'. Well, if we do not have *kolhu-ghanis* in India today, men will have to be pressed in lieu of oil-seeds. But, while running the *kolhus*, we must think of the whole world. I go on foot, but think about everything on earth or on the sky above. Rather I would say that those who want to do deep and wide thinking should adopt the poor man's means, like walking, etc. God has provided man with only two legs and not four as to animals. On account of his four feet, the animal has to look down below. This is what distinguishes man from animal." "It is with this wide vision," added Vinoba, "that we should meet our problems. I want revolution, but I also want peace. Without peace, India cannot survive. And without revolution, the poor of India would know no end of their misery. If we adhere to aggressive or violent methods, we are bound to seek shelter, like Pakistan, of some expert military guru. Hence I insist on a peaceful and non-violent revolution."

On Saturday, the 24th July, Vinoba inaugurated the camp of Jiwandan workers hailing from different parts of Bihar. He declared, "There cannot be any class or caste of Jiwandanis. It is only after death, that it can be decided whether somebody was a Jiwandani or not. A meeting of Jiwandanis can really take place only in Heaven. On this earth, we, ordinary folk, can meet. The conference of Jiwandanis will be in Heaven. All after death. Nothing earlier."

He went on to say, "Those who enter the Jiwandan Yajna will help, advise and care for one another. This is not a herd of sheep requiring a shepherd. As free men and women, you have come out into the open to undertake the task ahead. Everybody would be on trial. Those who survive will survive, while the rest would go. I am with all those who come with me. If anybody wants to part company, he can do so by all means. And I have the right to go onward."

He closed with the remarks, "Our reliance is solely on Him to whom we have dedicated our life. This is the path of devotion or *bhakti*. If there is any ego or self working therein, it would not be Jiwandan. One's resolve should be for *bhakti*. And the work would be done according to one's strength. But strength would grow with the progress of work. So also would grow the capacity to do it. A Jiwandani can be short of strength or capacity but not of *bhakti* or devotion."

In the afternoon, the Jiwandan workers related their own experiences and also placed their difficulties. One of them posed the question: Why should the Bhoodan workers employ the name of 'God', the same 'God' in whose name the 'haves' were exploiting the 'have-nots' and perpetrating their exploitation ceaselessly?

Vinoba dealt with this question in his post-prayer speech. He remarked that it was not possible to do away with both God and the exploiter in the same breath. The former was too powerful to be knocked out. He added, "There is no sense in disarming ourselves by handing over our own weapon to those who do not know its use or pretend about it. It is wrong to abandon our *the* weapon." Further, he observed that that god who had disillusioned the new thinkers who had consequently given up that name, was, as preached by the devoted worshippers of the West, a resident of Heaven. That conception differed from the one prevailing essentially in India, of an All-pervading and In-dwelling God. "Our God is an objective truth," remarked Vinoba, "that cannot be speeded with. Our belief in God makes us *atma-avalambi* (आत्मवलम्बी) and fearless and leaves no ground to seek any shelter."

On account of the Jiwandan workers' camp the next week was going to be a very important one.

Muzaffarpur, 31.7.54

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