

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

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TWO ANNAS

LAW, DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM

(By Vinoba)

God has created diversity in the world. This diversity is the source of all the joy that there is in life. Had He fashioned the world on a pattern of uniformity, life would have lost all charm. Diversity is an inalienable constituent of delight and must always be welcomed by us.

Every man has his own capacities which are different from others. If we are able to synthesize them and utilize them to good advantage, it will be a source of ever-new zest in life. But in the absence of the wisdom to utilize these diverse capacities they will collide against one another and in consequence produce clash and conflict and unrest in society.

Indeed, how many are the languages and the ways and customs etc. to be found in different societies which people the human world? And each has its peculiar beauties which add to the richness of life. But today wherever one turns one's eyes, one finds people growing increasingly incapable of appreciating the good in others. They are proud of their country but disdainful of others, proud of their race, religion, language etc. but they regard those of others with contempt. The result is that the entire world is living in a state of mutual fear. Whole societies and nations are gripped with this morally and intellectually enervating emotion.

About the most tragic and dangerous aspect of this situation is that humanity has entrusted its destiny in the hands of a few persons. As long as there was monarchy, it was evident that the fate of communities lay in each case in the hands of one single person. But now when it is believed that monarchy has been replaced by democracy, it should not be so. And yet there is no real democracy to be seen in the world anywhere. Once the elections have taken place, the power is entrusted to a few persons. It is claimed that they carry on the government on behalf of the people for the people. Thus democracy has been reduced to a form. But nowhere do we see the spirit of democracy. In every country the power is concentrated in the hands of a few indi-

viduals. They can make or mar the destiny of the country they rule. And what is worse, they themselves develop the conceit to believe that on them rests the responsibility for the progress of the country.

Look at our own country: Some eight or ten — albeit very able — persons have been entrusted with the task of planning for our five lakh villages and some thousands of cities. Now however competent they may be, it does not seem right that such a small number of persons be asked to draw up a plan for the whole country. Then the people demand legislation for the most ordinary things. In Bihar, for example, there is the evil of dowry; people demand that this should be abolished by legislation. They demand legislation for the abolition of child-marriage, smoking and a lot of other social evils. Economic reforms such as the distribution of land and equalization of wealth, nationalization of industries are all sought to be achieved with the help of legislation. In short, for every little thing we are tending to place reliance on legislation. It is clear that we have failed to develop and manifest the spirit of true democracy. If our dependence on legislation is thus allowed to increase, in the course of time we may cease to be human beings possessed of the powers of will and initiative. We will then become automatons willing and acting as others want us to do.

It would seem that we have exalted the institution of government to the position of a goddess who will give us all that we desire without our having to do anything for it. Like Sarasvati and Lakshmi, we now have another goddess — Goddess Government. For example, someone who is suffering from ill health and is in need of nursing comes to us, we do not give him shelter in our home; we just content ourselves by asking him to go to a hospital. It does not strike us that there is something like human sympathy and that every individual is morally bound to express it in action towards every other individual whenever an occasion demands it. We just leave all social responsibility to be borne by the Government.

The protagonists of the Government as the means of fulfilling all social needs seem to have rationalized their attitude in some such way: "How long are we to strive for the development

* From a speech at Betla in the Champaran District on 18-6-'54.

of human virtues? It does not seem to be a practicable proposition—at least, not in the foreseeable future. Saints and prophets have tried to do it over the centuries. The people have listened to them and followed them to a limited extent and for limited periods of time, but then they have slipped back into old ruts again and again, so that in effect nothing has come out of it. There must therefore be some sort of an automatic arrangement for the ordering of the society along right lines, which will do away with the need of exercising our minds and hearts.”

This is actually happening in industry where people have become divided into heads, that is, those who manage and supervise, and hands or the workers, i.e. those who execute whatever the heads ask them to do. Here there is no scope for anybody to exercise his mind or heart in the human way. Everything as it were, gets automatically done.

Take another example of the tendency of unthinking reliance on the Government for doing what the people can easily do by their own efforts. There is an idea that unless the Government starts a school in their village, they cannot do anything for providing education to their children. Apart from the fact that this idea is altogether baseless, and people can certainly arrange for the education of their children without any help from the Government, let us see what happens when the education is thus allowed to be controlled by the Government. A Government school does not conduce to the free development of the pupil's intellect; instead it casts his mind in a given mould. In the hands of a partisan government the schools become the chief means of indoctrinating the youths with the particular ideology which they seek to propagate. This is happening all over the world at the present time. In Russia they have installed Stalin in the place of God. In capitalistic countries, the schools sing the glories of capitalism which is presented as a force for all-round progress. The same might happen in our country, if the present trend towards the expansion of Government control over more and more segments of our life continues unchecked. The boys will then be taught that all that is worthwhile in what has been achieved in our country is the result of the Five Year Plan. It is clear that it is dangerous to entrust education in the hands of the Government. So long as education is not free, so long as the people in every village do not undertake experiments in education in an independent way, there can be no freedom. For freedom means essentially the freedom of mind—the freedom to think and act independently.

In the same way so long as the people do not decide to settle their disputes among themselves, they will not get justice. How can it be that while they can create disputes they cannot

compose them? They surely can with the help of the men of character in their own village.

People ask me why, since I have enough influence with the Government, I do not bring pressure on them and get the necessary legislation passed. But will the said legislation help us in creating love? Will it bring about the conversion of hearts and minds that we want to achieve? Legislation is the resultant end of the process the beginning of which is the change of thought.

The Bhoodan movement is not limited to the distribution of land. It is a revolutionary movement for the reconstruction of society with new values. Land will be free from individual ownership. Everyone will be required to do bread labour. The days are past when one could live without working for it. The new world which we want to create will belong to the workers.

(Adapted from Hindi)

OH THE SHAME OF IT!

It is nine years since Hiroshima was atom-bombed. On the occasion of its anniversary, a group of American peace-lovers have staged a demonstration in New York and their delegation will present to the Consul General of Japan a message to be delivered to the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The following is reproduced from that message. The ring of sincere repentance in it is a very healthy and pleasant sign of American opinion. We may only wish that it spreads and envelops the whole land as a salutary corrective to the anti-Russian fanaticism that pervades the majority there. This is surely not to condone, much less to applaud, Soviet fanaticism, which is only an antithesis of the former or vice versa. As the message below says, neither of the blocs deserves any support from one wedded to real peace in the world.

10-8-54

—M. P. J

Dear friends of Hiroshima and Nagasaki:

Nine years have passed since the atom bomb was dropped on the people of your city of Hiroshima at the orders of our government. Three days later another, more powerful bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. As we recall this, a pain in our hearts demands that we send you some message. But what can we say? No words can undo what we have done. Nothing can bring back the lives of the children, mothers and fathers who were burned alive those days. No prayers or fasting can turn back the clock of history so that we might have another chance to prevent our government from doing this demoralising thing.

And yet we must send some message to you who have survived. We are most deeply pained to recall that it was our country that first unleashed the life-destroying power of the atom, that first dropped it on the people of Japan. We are filled with shame that having done this, we as a nation did not see the great evil we had committed. We did not renounce forever these weapons and all weapons. We did not say: "We will have no more to do with war or any killing of our fellow human beings."

Instead, we shortly began to build more atom bombs, did research toward ones of greater destructive power, and finally unleashed again upon the world the most destructive weapon to date. This time it was the hydrogen bomb. Of its power, reported by the Atomic Energy Commission to be between 600 and 1,000 times that of the bomb which fell on Hiroshima, you, the people of Japan, regrettably already know a little by the experience of the fishermen of the Furukuryu Maru. Shameless, our government and many of our fellow Americans seem proud of these acts.

We want to tell you that there are Americans who are deeply filled with shame and horror by these acts. The American people were not told that we had the atom bomb. We were not told that it was to be dropped on your country. We were not consulted about building it. Many such decisions of a military nature are made without our having known anything about them, or at best, without having been told all the facts. We have not even been told all the facts about the power of the new hydrogen bomb.

And yet, while we are filled with shame that it was our country which has done these things, we know that the development and use of these weapons is but the logical extension, the natural development which was bound to follow since men first began waging war on each other. Wars in recent history have become increasingly more inhuman, more destructive of all human values. Modern total war and the modern totalitarian State have arisen hand in hand. We know that had it not been our country that first developed these weapons and used them, it would have been another. It might have been Germany, the Soviet Union, Japan, or some other, but they would have been developed and used. The very nature of modern war requires weapons of greater and greater destructiveness. And they would have been used, against you, the French, the Russians, ourselves or some other people.

We therefore know that if we are fully filled with shame because of the development and use of atom and hydrogen bombs, then we must also repudiate that from which they sprang: Fear of one's fellow men, the desire for revenge, the absence of forgiveness, violence, the use of evil means to attempt to gain a good end, total war. Unless we do this, we have no sound moral ground for raising our voice in protest against those acts which follow with deadly logic from these basic assumption.

It is our conviction that there is no solution to a world threatened literally with annihilation by supporting in any way either of the power blocs—American or Russian. Both of these in some degree practise undemocratic rule, exploitation of one class or nation for the benefit of

another, the control and manipulation of people, the use of modern war, the building and stockpiling for future use of atomic and hydrogen bombs, participation in an arms race which can only end, if continued, in a Third World War which would make the destruction at Hiroshima and Nagasaki look like the work of firecrackers.

It is only by pursuing a Third Way that we can truly express our sorrow for what has happened in the past. It is the way of the Buddha, of Jesus and of Gandhi, of non-retaliation, return of good for evil, of renunciation of all outward weapons and taking of human life. It is the way of righting injustices, of building a just social and economic order. It is the way of actively struggling against evils with non-violent means as Gandhi led the Indian people in their struggles for national freedom.

We, with Gandhi, are convinced that :

'There is no escape from the impending doom save through a bold and unconditional acceptance of the non-violent method with all its glorious implications. Democracy and violence can go ill together. The States that are nominally democratic have either to become frankly totalitarian or, if they are to become truly democratic, they must become courageously non-violent.'

In the kind of a world in which we live, this means that in addition to trying to apply this in our own lives, we must become non-violent revolutionaries, opposing war, totalitarianism, and injustice and dedicated to the building of a Third Way of love, non-violent resistance, justice and freedom.

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CHRISTIAN ATTITUDES TOWARD OTHER FAITHS

(By Floyd H. Ross, School of Religion, University of South California)

Few Christians have sought to understand the non-Christian religions at *their best*. On a shrinking planet where diversity is the rule (and where we hope it will remain the rule), every Christian church might well have study groups seeking appreciatively to understand what the non-Christian religions teach. The attitude should be that of the honest inquirer, not of the evangelist or apologist. Some of the shorter Oriental classics like the Bhagavadgita and the Dhammapada and the Tao-Te-King should be read and discussed as thoroughly as the Bible.

The basic human questions having to do with meaning and destiny have been grappled with for thousands of years; yet many of us have been allowed to fall into an idiomatic rut. Some of us might be awakened from our dogmatic slumbers by the words of an Oriental poet or sage where the repetition of Occidental phrases has operated to lull us to sleep or to superficial conclusions about life. Those who are quite sectarian-minded should ponder the words of King Asoka, of ancient Buddhist fame:

'He who does reverence to his own sect while disparaging the sects of others, with intent to enhance the splendour of his own, in reality by such conduct inflicts the severest injury on his own.'

The attitude of those who insist that Christianity is "the only way" to salvation betrays a lack of faith and an undue reliance upon certain scriptural passages. The relevant question to ask is, "Why do such people seek certainty so inordinately?" To seek certainty is to die; to accept uncertainty is to live, to grow, to be strengthened. Our society today has a plethora of persons cursed with neurotic anxieties, anxieties out of all proportion to real life situations, anxieties regarding all manner of things. The resurgence of tribalism, or nationalism, is but one more evidence of this profound disease. Many persons are trying to escape from facing the basic question of life, "Who am I?", by identifying themselves with various causes, some religious, some economic, some political. They are selling out to partial areas of integration, party, sect, class. These partial areas of integration thrive on feelings of "special chosenness" and exclusiveness. They are made up largely of persons who cannot forget the Mayflower in their past and are haunted by their unlive lives in the present.

In times of widespread commotion and unrest, it is natural that religions should look to their past. This is healthy insofar as the persons doing this are mindful of the necessity to incorporate insights so gained in the living present. Since the past holds us in its embrace, we need to understand it, but woe unto us if we cling to it or glory in it. Any "truths" so-called that cannot be directly appropriated in the present are of doubtful validity, so far as the fundamental integrative growth processes are concerned. The "eternal now" is the straight way and the narrow gate into the abundant life.

Christians who call themselves orthodox tend to ignore this. They urge us to take only one segment of human history seriously, that segment culminating in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. This emphasis was quite understandable in the earlier centuries of Christian history. The early theologians knew no other religious histories save that of the Hebrews and those writings that came to be called the "New Testament". They interpreted the meaning of their new outlook on life in the only terms they were intimately acquainted with.

To continue to interpret human history solely in terms of early, orthodox Christian interpretations of the Bible is no longer excusable. Let Christians make their confession of faith that for *them*, Jesus is Lord; but let them not try to legislate to Jews, Hindus and Buddhists, that Jesus must also be Lord for them.

There have been persons in every age, I suppose, who, while profoundly appreciative of what has come to them through their cultural heritage, have refused to apotheosize it or get nervous about defending it. God is not to be defended but explored. Revelation is not to be defined but developed.

We live in a time when increasing numbers of people are a little weary of being labelled "Jew" or "Gentile", "Negro" or "White", "Christian" or "Buddhist". That which unites us is our humanity, not our culture or our colour. Part of the curse of the modern world lies in the fact that so many of us have *not* discovered our humanity, but rather insist upon identifying ourselves unduly with fragments of ourselves. Like the Prodigal Son, once we "come to ourselves", we will start on the journey back to the source.

We religionists have made too many forthright proclamations or affirmations and then have prostrated ourselves in front of them. But the *via affirmativa* is never as profound as the *via negativa*, as some of the greatest mystical teachers have reminded us.

Only as we negate our fragmentary interpretations of the meaning of life and history do we remain teachable. Every historical religion is a strange mixture of superstition, magic,

credulity on the one hand, and wonder, curiosity, reverence on the other. They have been vehicles for delivering man into further bondage whenever the former elements have predominated. They have been vehicles for delivering man from fear into true blessedness whenever the latter elements have been primary.

Let us honour a Moses, a Jesus, a Gautama, a Lao-tse, a Confucius; but let us not linger too long in the shadow of the wayside shrines of the past. If the spirit of these men is an eternally present as we of the "faith" have said, then we should not be concerned unduly over the particular robes that it may wear in differing cultures. What one man calls the "Eternal Christ" another man may call the "Eternal Buddha", and who among us is dogmatist enough to stand in judgment upon equally honest professions of personal faith?

Labels are of primary importance only to the census-taker, or to the person who subtly uses labels to libel. To all others, a label is simply an incidental handle for taking hold of a specific problem; it is not a club to be used against fellow human beings.

The rightness and tightness of some Christians' attitude towards the non-Christian religions suggests to me something of the depth of such persons' feelings of "cut-offness". Feeling cut off from the ground of his own true being, he compensates for it by assuring himself that it is the *others* who are cut off from God, from the true pathway, from the only way. Only as such a person finds release from the clutches of his anxieties, his sense of alienation, his shadow selves, through the insights that come through redemptive relationships with his deeper self and with other selves, can he move beyond his dogmatic brittleness. As John Oman put it in *Honest Religion*, fixed ideas, fixed institutions, and fixed theologies are all symptoms of a spiritual sickness. As Lao-tse put it centuries ago, one must become sick of his sickness if he wants to be cured of his sickness.

Christians have nothing to fear from a two-way educational or missionary process, though they have much to learn, even as Hindus and Buddhists have learned from contacts with Christendom. "There is no truth that does not include all truth", that is, if it be experienced deeply enough. Nor is it that we need to appreciate Semitic history less; rather we need to appreciate Oriental wisdom more in order to be wiser in reinterpreting our own heritage. We must not idealize the East or its religious concepts; but we *must* cease idealizing ourselves and our own religion.

I personally do not look for the conversion of great numbers of the adherents of the other religious traditions to some form of Christian sectarianism. Overlooking the ever-present pro-

blem of "rice-Christians", the major impact of Christian values upon these other peoples or cultures will be registered in a continuation of those traditions but with changed emphases. I would hope for the same thing to happen to Christianity. In any event, the process should be gradual and certainly non-coercive. We must respect the right of each person to travel at his own tempo insofar as the fabric of a society is not jeopardized. Just as we must let a child *be* a child in order that he may move through childhood to true maturity, so we must be willing to let persons be "Christians", "Buddhists", "atheists", "theists", "Moslems", "Sikhs", with the hope that each will grow towards an ever larger spiritual maturity.

'The world is a divine vessel:

It cannot be shaped;

Nor can it be insisted upon.

He who shapes it, damages;

He who insists upon it loses it.'

Tao-Te-King, 29.

(Adapted from *New Outlook*, April, '54)

SHOULD WE COMPEL?

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

As the saying goes, half-baked truths are more dangerous than even untruth. One of such half-truths is often to be found in the remarks of high placed persons, about the place of English in our life and education now.

For example, a P.T.I. message says that

"The Union Health Minister pleaded today (Aug. 5, Madras) for compulsory teaching of English to children as a third language, the other two being the mother-tongue and Hindi.

"She said that in Russia and Switzerland children learnt four languages in the school and 75 per cent of the Russian children took English as one of the four.

"Stating that knowledge of English was extremely useful, (she) said that she had led several Indian delegations to international conferences and had found that India's success in international affairs was owing to her knowledge of English."

All agree that English is necessary and useful for some of us in some ways, and that schools must provide for its teaching. The question is, should all learn it? Are all going to visit foreign countries, e.g., for international conferences? And are we all the while going to speak English and not gain the status to speak Hindi in these conferences? Can we not allow those that wish to study an Indian language other than their own, as a third language? To many of us will it not stand in better stead than English which is any day going to be necessary to only a few among us? When quoting Russia should we not note that children there have a choice in the matter? Why should we compel in India then? These questions and many more like them are very relevant, and they cannot be set aside as born of mere prejudice against English, unless we are blind to the cultural interests of the masses, whose good is the chief criterion in all our plans and policies.

Those who know English have rather today a greater responsibility now than merely harping on the teaching of English. They should provide the treasures of that great language in suitable form in their own languages. This is a task that we ought to have undertaken to discharge long ago. Now that we are free and wish to see our people function as a democracy, it has become very urgent and immediate. Our leaders should rather call us to this urgency so that we may, in the shortest possible time, educate our people by making all knowledge available to them in their own tongue.

13-8-'54

DEVELOPMENT OF PALM GUR

If we can make good use of the gifts of Nature like palmyra date palm and coconut trees, it will not only remove our shortage of gur and sugar but will also open to millions of people avenues of earning their livelihood. Moreover, by substituting gur for sugar we can, to some extent, remove our food deficit by growing food crops in lands released by the sugarcane crop. The amount of land thus released is about forty lakh acres.

With this end in view, the West Bengal Government have taken up the development of the palm gur industry since January, 1948. This industry had been rather undeveloped so far. The manufacture of palm gur by unscientific methods resulted in the deterioration of its colour, flavour and lasting qualities, and owing to excessive consumption of fuel in boiling the juice, the cost of manufacture was high and consequently the profit very small. Naturally gur producer lost interest in it.

The Government have in addition to training up nearly 1,200 men helped 37,637 professional palmyra and date-palm gur-makers by instructing them in the scientific method of gur-making and supplying them with necessary equipment.

In 1950 the professional palm gur-makers of West Bengal manufactured altogether 40,014 tons or nearly 270,500 maunds of palm gur.

Besides manufacturing gur from palm juice, various kinds of articles may be made from the different parts of the palm tree :

(a) Many kinds of flowers, toys, baskets, etc., may be manufactured with the dyed soft young leaves of the palm.

(b) Mats, large bags, fans, dishes for serving refreshments, whistles, umbrellas, etc., may be prepared with the strong mature leaves of palms.

(c) Fences, sandals, cots for children, etc., may be made with the branches.

(d) With the fibres may be made ropes for *khatias*, baskets, fish baskets, winnowing fans, brushes, etc.

(e) From the trunk, beams and rafters, walking sticks, posts, boats, bridges, tubes etc., may be made.

(f) Baskets for catching fish, fuel, etc. may be made from the unused trunk and roots of the palms.

A palmyra tree can be tapped for 100 years and a date-palm tree for 60 years for gur-making.

The gur and the sugar obtainable from the juice of 50 palm trees is equal to that obtained from the sugarcane grown on an acre (3 bighas) of land. Hence 3 bighas of fertile land used for growing sugarcane can be released for the cultivation of other food crops by arranging to procure juice from 50 palm trees.

In the Malaya Peninsula, match boxes are being made with the leaves of palmyra trees. Palmyra leaves are thin and smooth ; by cutting them up according to size, strong match boxes may be easily made. No machines are necessary to smooth down the pieces used for match box making.

The idea of the general public about Neera (the sweet juice of palm trees) is that it keeps well for 1 to 2 hours in the morning after which it ferments and becomes unfit for use. But it can be preserved for 10 to 12 hours by proper scientific treatment.

In Bombay, Madras, Bihar and many other States of the Indian Union, Neera is being used as a drink in large towns and cities through Government and private enterprise. For the town people, it will firstly be a cheap, healthy and tasteful drink ; secondly, vast natural resources will be utilized, so long left altogether neglected ; and thirdly, it will secure employment for many poor villagers and unemployed youths of the town.

It is worth noting that :

1. Palm tree is the free gift of Nature ;
2. The palm gur industry requires only Rs 50/- as capital ;
3. The palm gur industry does not drain away the resources of the village, but rather brings money from outside ;
4. The palm gur industry supplements other cottage industries ;
5. Nine crores of palm trees constitute the permanent wealth of India ;
6. Palm tree neither requires irrigation nor manure ;
7. Nectar lies hidden in the palm ; it requires the touch of the skilled artisan to bring it out ;
8. Palm trees can give employment to people during the whole year ;
9. The palm gur industry turns the toddy tappers into gur-makers.

(From the weekly *West Bengal*, Calcutta, 8-7-'54)

By R. K. Prabhu

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CONSEQUENCES OF ATOMIC RACE

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

To mind and honour other's point of view is almost a religious or a moral maxim. The great moral maxim which is echoed in the scriptures of almost all religions is :

आत्मनः प्रतिकूलानि परेषां न समाचरेत् ।

'Do unto others as you would them do unto you'.

The present international situation seems to demonstrate the truth of the above maxim. The U. S. A. thought that she would become invincible if she could manufacture atom bomb, hydrogen bomb etc. She could do it. She did it all secretly. Here in India if anybody knew some alchemy or had a knowledge of some master drug he would not share his knowledge with anybody but would keep it a secret. Today the same condition prevails in the sphere of technology and armaments.

The U. S. A. then came to know that even her enemies possessed atom secrets. So the whole question took quite a new turn. The vanity and arrogance of being in the sole possession of unparalleled and monstrous weapons, began to wane, and sobriety and considerateness took their place. It is the Hydrogen Bomb age, it is said, that has made a staunch imperialist like Sir Winston Churchill evacuate the Suez Canal area.

From the world's point of view this is a very important change of heart. But it would be still better if such a change took place from moral considerations, viz. how should we suffer if a bomb is thrown on us? The sufferings of our opponents would be the same if we throw a bomb on them. Therefore bombs should not be used.

This line of thinking is sound even from the point of view of one's own safety. Because if this policy is accepted no country will throw bombs on any other country. But if anything is wanting today it is such a faith. The followers of Buddha, Christ or others as a group have no such faith. So they go on stock-piling bombs. But their opponents also do that. So both are equal. As a result both are prevented from precipitating war out of mutual fear. Thus the world gets peace automatically. This is no small gain.

But the soul-corroding fear persists: What would be our lot if at all war breaks out? How to save the people from ravages of bombs? America is seriously thinking on these lines. Is it not a funny situation?—To manufacture atom bombs enthusiastically and then fear the same as well! This is something like inviting trouble for nothing. Is it not creating a trouble out of sheer folly?

There is one thing more. Millions of dollars have been spent on the manufacture of atom bomb and now they think to spend the same amount to be saved from the devastating results

of those bombs. If anybody acts like this in his household affairs we should call him a stupid person. But this is no small household affair. This is international high politics! How can we call it stupid?

17-7-'54

(From the original in Gujarati)

BUSINESS, EMPLOYMENT AND FOREIGN AID

(By C. K. Narayanswami)

In a recent press conference in Bombay, Mr B. M. Birla claimed that businessmen all over the country employ about 6 crores of people directly and at least another 4 crores more indirectly *via* the channel of the directly employed. In other words, "next to Agriculture, it is business—trade and industry—that provides the largest employment to people in India." That is to say, Mr Birla would have us believe that trade and industry employ directly and indirectly about ten crores of people.

Fortunately for the student of economics, the Census Commission has worked out the census of working population and the pattern of its employment. The total working force in the country is stated to be about 143 million, which is about 40 per cent of the total population.

The following table is revealing :

Pattern of Employment

A. Agricultural Classes.

	Total	In millions)	
		Rural	Urban
1. Self-supporting.			
i. Males ..	58.5	56.6	1.9
ii. Females ..	12.5	12.1	0.4
	71.0	68.7	2.3
2. Earning Dependents.			
i. Males ..	10.5	10.2	0.3
ii. Females ..	20.6	20.1	0.5
	31.1	30.3	0.8
3. Non-earning Dependents.			
i. Males ..	57.2	54.9	2.3
ii. Females ..	89.8	86.4	3.4
	147.0	141.3	5.7

B. All Non-agricultural Classes.

1. Self-supporting.			
i. Males ..	28.7	14.0	14.7
ii. Females ..	4.7	3.0	1.7
	33.4	17.0	16.4
2. Earning Dependents.			
i. Males ..	3.0	1.7	1.3
ii. Females ..	4.0	3.1	0.9
	7.0	4.8	2.2
3. Non-earning Dependents.			
i. Males ..	25.4	12.5	12.9
ii. Females ..	41.9	20.1	21.8
	67.3	32.6	34.7

C. Self-employed persons other than employers: 165 lakhs.

They form 49.4 per cent of all self-supporting non-agricultural population or 15.7 per cent of all self-supporting population.

It will be seen that of the 142.5 millions who constitute the working force, only 40.4 millions

come under the description of *Non-agricultural classes* who are self-supporting and have earning dependants. Of this total 21.8 millions belong to the rural sector. Self-supporting persons with earning dependants in the urban areas number 18.6 millions only.

Let us now see the pattern of employment in business, i.e. industry and trade:

Industries: i.e. factories employ hardly three million people. To be exact, the employment here works out to be 2.9 millions.

Active employment in *mines and manufactures including even handicrafts* does not exceed 15.3 millions.

Commerce, transport and communications together employ 11 million people. (It is important to note here that much of Transport and Communications are Government-owned.)

Thus total employment in all business undertakings, viz., in all industries, comes to only 26.3 million people, that is, a little over 2½ crores. In this figure is included what is generally known as employment created through the rippling effect of large-scale industrial operations as also over 1½ crores of self-employed people who certainly do not belong to business employment.

Referring to the need for a change in India's import policy, Mr Birla is reported to have said that the total annual value of the import trade of India is about 400 crores. He claims that goods worth at least Rs 300 crores, — goods which are at present imported, — can easily be manufactured in India. It is contended that an outlay of Rs 300 crores would mean additional employment to some 15 lakhs of people earning on the average Rs 2,000/- per annum. For a period of five years capital investment required will be of the order of Rs 1,500 to 2,000 crores, which constitutes very nearly the total investment under National Five Year Plan. He omits to mention that an investment of this order will have to be supported by the investment of an equal amount for transport and communications. Where is all this money to come from?

He admits that this investment capital is not available in the country, and cannot be raised within it. "Hence we must," says Mr Birla, "be prepared to have foreign aid, foreign aid without strings to be sure. The advanced countries of today — for example, U. S. A. — did not feel shy of foreign aid when the need was there. Has not Japan been doing her utmost even today to secure foreign aid?"

What he, however, forgets is, in the context of the world politics of today, foreign aid raises a multitude of problems and pressures.

Again it should be noted that "the Western

countries industrialized during a period when the pressure on the Government to introduce welfare legislation came at the fag-end of the process of Industrial Revolution." But today backward countries on the road to rapid industrialization come, at the very start, face to face with the conflict between expenditure on capital formation and that on social service and welfare.

Mr Birla quotes the case of Japan as a country which is doing its utmost even today to secure foreign aid. Indeed, Japan today is a classical example of the consequence of foreign aid, and it is accepted by knowledgeable persons the world over that Japan has been virtually reduced to the position of an American colony! It is obvious that foreign aid under present conditions must necessarily carry implied obligations. Where these obligations are not rightly understood and accepted, aid does not flow in as one desires. To accept foreign aid, therefore, is to agree to shoulder foreign burdens.

Bombay's Smoke Bill

A reader sends the following interesting cutting from the daily press:

"Bombay, July 24— Greater Bombay with an estimate of about 36 lakhs of urban population smokes about 55 lakh cigarettes a day or about 1-1/2 cigarettes per head per day at a nominal average cost of 1-1/4 annas a day. Bombay thus spends nearly Rs 4,00,000 a day on cigarettes alone.

Besides, the city spends approximately 72,00,000 *bidis* everyday chiefly to its labouring and lower middle classes which present a total of nine lakh heads. The *bidis* consumption costs Bombay more than Rs 20,000 a day.

Tobacco worth Rs 20,000 is chewed with *pan* every day in Bombay and snuff worth about Rs 15,000 is sold to its connoisseurs a day.

Though pipe has grown out of fashion, Bombay sells nurtured tobacco to its pipe-addicts to an approximate value of Rs 4,000 a day.

The Indian *hukka*, which yet finds favour with a particular community in this modern city, calls for Rs 3,000 worth of indigenously prepared tobacco a day. — U. P. I"

So the total daily smoke bill for the city comes to Rs 4,62,000 i.e. an annual waste of about 17 crores! And if we may calculate for the whole country, it would be a staggering figure indeed! Can we not economize in this and secure better health and more wealth to the nation?

30-7-54

M. P.

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