

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

Vol. XVIII. No. 40

AHMEDABAD — SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1954

TWO ANNAS

INDUSTRIALISM *v.* FULL EMPLOYMENT

(By Dr. Rajendra Prasad)

[Being the President's inaugural speech at the Conference convened by the All-India Khadi and Village Industries Board at Poona on November 17, 1954.]

I am glad to have got this opportunity of saying a few words about khadi and village industries. I have always welcomed such occasions because I think cottage industries have an important role to play in the economic set-up of our country today. Perhaps it would be unnecessary to lay emphasis on this point if there were not an impression prevailing among the people that cottage industries have no place in the present-day world when industrialization is looked upon as the hall-mark of material progress. I am afraid this impression is as groundless as it is misleading.

It is evident that in a country like India where 80 per cent of the people live upon agriculture and allied callings, the only result of excessive industrialization will be more production by fewer men, which, instead of solving the problem of unemployment, will render it more complicated. Its proof lies in the fact that although our country has advanced sufficiently on the road to industrialization, the incidence of unemployment instead of coming down appears to have gone up.

In our country special significance attaches to handicrafts and such small-scale industries as can be easily managed at home during spare time. If we lose sight of this fact and imagine that we can solve the problem of unemployment through industrialization, I am sure we shall only have disappointment in store for us. Unless the problem of unemployment is tackled successfully, we cannot remove poverty, because whatever the quantity of wealth available in the country, it can be shared only among those who have some kind of work to do. The main victims of poverty are, after all, those who are jobless or who may be partially employed. Therefore, it is in the interest of the people of the rural areas and of our country's prosperity as a whole that the wrong impression referred to above is corrected and all efforts made to popularize and improve our cottage industries.

The most important step adopted in this direction in recent years is, as pointed out by

Shri Vaikunthbhai Mehta, the establishment of the All-India Khadi and Village Industries Board by the Government of India. By doing so, Government has not only recognized the importance of village industries but also taken upon itself the responsibility of improving them. It has been accepted as a matter of policy that in our planning for social and economic betterment small-scale industries ought to be given a place. Government has also undertaken to provide the necessary means to achieve this end.

I do not think it is necessary for me to say much about the first Five-Year Plan. All of you know that Government has laid down its policy with regard to village industries in its Plan in most unambiguous words. As for the second Five-Year Plan, it has been decided that before finalizing the draft of the section dealing with industries, representatives of the various small-scale industries should be consulted. The real problem is that of adjustment between the small-scale and the bigger industries. The aim of all industrial undertakings is to increase production and national wealth. We must see what place should be given to village industries and bigger industrial undertakings in order to ensure India's maximum prosperity.

I admit that handicrafts and cottage industries can flourish only if certain concessions and facilities are offered to them. So far as facilities are concerned, Government of India has accepted, in principle, to provide such concessions to these industries as are likely to help them without at the same time affecting adversely the bigger industries. I should, therefore, think that the real problem is that of suggesting the right type of facilities needed by village industries.

Khadi has received some impetus by whatever direct help has been given to it by Government. Consideration has also been given to the question of reserving a field for khadi and handloom industries, so that the element of competition between handloom and mill-made cloth is eliminated. I think we have to extend this concession by reserving the fields for other cottage industries as well, so that in those fields bigger industries are not allowed to operate.

Till such concessions are given to cottage industries and as long as heavy industries are permitted to compete with them, it is difficult,

if not impossible, for cottage industries to grow. But at present it is the bigger industrial undertakings which are being afforded facilities like concessional railway freights, etc. These developments are having a deleterious effect on the growth of village industries. I am afraid this process has not only to be stopped but has, at least in some cases, to be reversed. Let us understand it clearly that financial subsidies alone will not mean much for small-scale industries.

I know that Government has been helping the bigger industries to the tune of crores of rupees, and to be able to do so it had to impose the burden of heavy taxation on the people. Take sugar, for example. To save sugar factories from the competition of foreign producers Government has been subsidizing Indian sugar industry for a number of years at the cost of many crores. Similarly, steel industry in India has had to be subsidized heavily.

I see no reason why Government should not extend similar help, on the same scale, to village industries, when millions of people benefit from them and get employment because of them. It is no argument to suggest that it is useless to manufacture an article on small scale when the same article can be manufactured and offered at a cheaper price by bigger industries. Our hesitation to offer certain articles at a slightly higher price would virtually mean growing unemployment for millions and consequently forcing them to starve. We have, therefore, to choose between unemployment and starvation on the one hand and a slightly higher cost of certain manufactured articles, on the other. No wise man, I am sure, would prefer large-scale unemployment to paying higher cost.

I would, therefore, suggest that we must act courageously and draw a list of those fields which have to be reserved for village industries and in which these industries have not to contend against either indigenous mill-made goods or foreign imports. This is the economics of village industries. This alone will suit our country, whatever may be the requirements of other countries. Let me hope that keeping in view the fact that village industries are the biggest source of employment, Government will do all that is possible to encourage them.

I am at one with Shri Vaikunthbhai that increase in production cannot be accepted as our sole ideal. Our real aim should be to make the people prosperous and to keep the maximum number of them employed. It is widely known that millions of our countrymen derive their sustenance from handicrafts and small-scale industries. To encourage these industries and to develop them is, therefore, one of our foremost duties. I admit that production can be increased more easily by installing heavy machinery, but if such increase in production is achieved at the cost of cottage industries, it will mean more harm than good to our people. This is now generally accept-

ed as true, and the Government of India also appreciates this fact. We have, therefore, no reason to feel concerned on this score.

Now that we know that Government is pursuing a policy of encouraging village industries, let us address ourselves to the task of developing them from the economic and artistic point of view. I would, in this connection, advise you to study the growth of small-scale industries in other countries. In some of those countries, cottage industries have been improved and developed to such an extent that they are able to stand on their own feet in their own right. There may be certain industries in our country which can benefit from the supply of electricity. The day is not far off when our countryside will be electrified. As the various river valley projects, which are under execution at present, are completed, there will be no dearth of power in India. With the help of electricity we can certainly save time and labour and also perhaps improve the quality of the manufactured goods. We have only to be careful that the use of electricity does not reduce the level of employment and in the sphere of production quantity does not take the place of quality. Art is one of the features of our handicrafts. Electricity should not be allowed to spoil it. With these precautions, we can certainly employ electricity for the improvement of cottage industries. Our aim is to develop these industries to such an extent and to create such a wide demand for their products that these can flourish, in course of time, independently so that they are able to dispense with the special concessions and facilities offered to them by Government. I hope you will agree with me that this should be the aim of the All-India Khadi and Village Industries Board.

I am very happy that all of you connected with the Khadi and Village Industries Board are working enthusiastically. Your annual report shows that the Board has made some headway in popularizing the products of village industries. You should draw inspiration from the fact that the work to which you are devoting yourselves has its foundations in social justice, economic equality and self-sufficiency. The more you progress in this direction, the greater will be the employment you provide to the people, particularly in the countryside.

Today when the problem of unemployment threatens to assume alarming proportions, nothing can be of greater advantage to the nation than an avenue which promises employment. This belief should be your sheet-anchor and you should be able to draw inspiration from Babu's sacred memory. Although village industries have been a feature of Indian life since ages, the credit of raising them in the eyes of the people and getting for them a place in our national economy, goes to Mahatma Gandhi.

Nothing is farther from my mind than to suggest that sentiment can provide the basis for village industries to stand upon; but even so we

need not be chary of accepting that many a good cause often benefits from sentiment and the enthusiasm it generates. In actual fact, however, we may be sure that the real basis of the development of village industries can be only economic.

I fervently hope that your efforts will bear fruit and that village industries will continue to progress in India.

EMPLOYMENT PATTERN IN INDIA

(By Dr. J. D. Sundaram)

The available classified employment data set out in Table below shows that independent workers or self-employed workers constitute the majority of the labour force of the country. Closer study of the figures shows that self-employment is the dominant form of employment, accounting for 78.5 per cent of agricultural employment and over 50 per cent in non-agricultural employment.

TABLE I
Self-Employed Population*

Categories	Agricultural	Non-Agricultural	
		(Lakhs)	Total
1. Self-employed	545	165	710
2. Total productive employment (Incl. of Govt. services)	694	324	1018
3. Total productive employment (Excl. of Govt. administrative services)	694	302	996
4. (1) as per cent of (2)	78.5	50.9	69.7
5. (1) as per cent of (3)	78.5	54.6	71.3

Source: 1 Census of India Paper No. 3, 1953, Summary Tables IV and V.

The overall picture including agricultural and non-agricultural employment but excluding Government services, shows that self-employment accounts for 71.3 per cent of all employment in the country.

Self-employment and National Income

Not only is self-employment the predominant form of employment in the country, but also it is the most important single source of India's national income as shown in Table 2, accounting for 49.9 per cent of India's national income for 1950-51.

TABLE 2
Contribution of self-employment to National Income

	No. of earners (Lakhs)	Income per earner		Total income Rs. crores
		Rs.	Rs. crores	
1. Agricultural Income	545	500	2725	
2. Non-agricultural Income	165	1232	2032	
3. Total	710	670	4757	
4. National Income	1423	670	9550	
5. (3) as per cent of (4)	49.9		49.9	

NOTE: This table has been worked out on the assumption that the income per self-employed person in a sector is the same as the average income per earner in that sector.

The analysis of the employment pattern in India proves that self-employment prevails and is the dominant form of employment in India's economy; and, therefore, its introduction in the country involves no more than correction of the defects under which it suffers at present.

*The figures of employment in this Table exclude earning dependents and self-supporting persons whose principal income is not derived from actual work.

By Vinoba Bhawe
BHOODAN YAJNA
[Land-Gifts Mission]

Pages viii + 134 Price Re. 1-8-0 Postage etc. As. 5
NAVAJIVAN PUBLISHING HOUSE
P. O. NAVAJIVAN, AHMEDABAD-14

AT-ONE-MENT WITH THE DIVINE

(By Ernest Swift)

Whatever religious expression we may choose to follow, whatever outer ordinances we may choose to observe, whatever creeds and philosophy we may accept, and however different we may be from the rest, there is only one Cosmic Spirit of God that impels man to seek for the Beautiful and the True in all manifestation. With all religious groups we share this Divine urge towards the Ideal, the Perfect. This is a common heritage and the final point of contact, one with each, and each with all. Our philosophies may be poles apart, but the one Principle operates through every life.

This is the guiding idea behind the steps of today — to strengthen and develop the tie that a common origin and a common heritage has established, and to break down the barriers that divide souls who, in so many varied ways, are seeking At-one-ment with the Divine.

The outer paraphernalia of our religious expression will pass away, though oftentimes Divine Truths are expressed through that medium, but the Inner Reality will abide.

(From the Steps Unto Him, June, '54)

B. C. G. VACCINATION IV

It is admitted that vaccinated persons have later contracted tuberculosis.

Dr. J. A. Myers, M.D., stated in 1951: 'All admit that illness and death occur among the vaccinated'.

The Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry of the American Medical Association holds that 'the protection afforded is not complete nor its duration predictable. . . B.C.G. must not be regarded as a substitute for public health practices.'

Please bear in mind, insists Dr. Bayly, that vaccination with B.C.G., so far from helping to eliminate the tubercle bacillus, actually disseminates it. Dr. Hugh Paul wrote in the *Lancet* (1953),

'As regards B.C.G. vaccination, no one would seriously contend that it is a method of eradicating the tubercle bacillus. The persons to whom B.C.G. vaccination is given do not harbour any tubercle bacilli; on the contrary B.C.G. vaccination actually injects these organisms into the body in a living condition, and therefore increases the incidence of the bacilli in the Community.'

Dr. James suggested that the solution to the tuberculosis problem depended on 'a final assault' on an extremely 'resilient organism', the tubercle bacillus. Criticising this suggestion Dr. Paul said this was surely ironical 'during a period when so many people are vigorously engaged in injecting live tubercle bacilli into the largest number of non-tuberculous subjects. Forty million persons have been vaccinated during the past few years and each year there are in the world more persons infected with tuberculosis and fewer with tuberculosis disease,

'The tubercle bacillus is ubiquitous, and it is ridiculous to suggest that the disease can be conquered by physical eradication of the organism itself. History does not give any instances of the eradication of any such epidemic disease in this way.'

(To be continued)

V. G. D.

HARIJAN

Dec. 4

1954

THE ALL-INDIA CONFERENCE OF CONSTRUCTIVE WORKERS

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

The A.-I. Conference of State Khadi and Village Industries Boards and Constructive Workers, convened by the A.-I. Khadi and Village Industries Board at Poona, was a success in various ways. The President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad gave a bold and unequivocal lead both to the Government and the people in his inaugural address (reproduced elsewhere in this issue). It reiterated what he and the Prime Minister had said when inaugurating the A.-I. K. & V. I. Board about two years ago. Shri B. G. Kher, president of the Conference also emphasized the great importance of Khadi and the village industries in the economic reconstruction now before us and their pivotal position as the prime instrument of removing colossal unemployment in our land.

This was the Prime Minister had said two years ago when inaugurating A.-I. K. & V. I. Board :

"In my own mind an idea is growing daily that the yardstick by which one can measure the economic progress of a country is the extent of employment... Khadi and village industries have a great role to play in this sphere of solving unemployment. The issue, therefore, is not merely the advancement of the cause of Khadi and village industries. In it is involved the advancement of the cause of the nation and the well-being of the people. This should therefore be dovetailed into the general planning for the people as a whole."

We know, to our sorrow, that the First Five Year Plan did not base itself on this principle; and naturally it has therefore been found to be a failure, as measured with the yardstick given by the Prime Minister. It is the duty of our Planners and the Government now to see that the Second F. Y. Plan that is at present in the making improves itself in the light of the experience gained during these years.

The Poona Conference took a bold step of advising the Planning Commission and the Government of India regarding what shape the Second F. Y. Plan should take, if it is going to be something worthwhile and really helpful. It declared that :

The Second F. Y. Plan should base its programme for the solution of India's economic and

social problems on the fundamental need to provide immediately for the full employment of our entire people, as the topmost priority. To this end, it must integrate and co-ordinate its entire plan of the programme of the nation's economy.

The First F. Y. Plan viewed the general structure of our industrial progress in two sectors—the private and the public. The same terminology holds good till now. That it is fallacious and misleading is apparent from the simple consideration, that in a planned economy for a nation, what may be termed private is not too private to be directed and controlled by Government in the nation's larger interests and broader welfare. The Poona Conference in its deliberations avoided this terminology and adopted another which is surely more helpful for clear thinking and for devising an integrated and well co-ordinated plan.

The Conference said that the pattern of employment as revealed by the Census Report figures* is threefold: 1. Employers, 2. Employees, and 3. Independent workers. Of these the third group is by far the largest and the most important from the point of view of people's welfare and happiness. However, as we find, it is the most neglected, unorganized and backward. Therefore, it must be the nation's immediate aim to attend to this self-employed sector of independent workers as the central or local point of the Second F. Y. Plan. It should concentrate on the need to protect, strengthen and develop this main section of our employment picture.

And hence, the Conference decided to recommend to the Government to accept economic development through self-employment as an integral part of their policy and to make it the basis of their Second F. Y. Plan.

Having decided this main principle as the true basis of the Plan, it said that Khadi and Village Industries are meant to be and are pre-eminently suited as aids to self-employment; their capacity to help remove unemployment here and now is obvious and is now generally admitted; this capacity must be effectively and fully exploited by the nation through a thorough-going socio-economic plan so that they may form an integral part of the life of the people and our objective of maximum production, full employment and social justice is achieved in the near future. It, therefore, recommended that Khadi and Village Industries be given due place in the industrial and educational programme of the Second F. Y. Plan.

When recommending as above, the Conference had in mind the common criticism that might be levelled against it. To meet it as also to clear its own position regarding some of the main issues that face constructive workers at present, the Conference declared its opinion that :

* These are given elsewhere in this issue in 'Employment Pattern in India'.

In order that the self-employment sector may not continue to operate, as at present, only at low production or sub-subsistence level, but may, in the interest of nation's maximum production policy, rise as a general measure for all, the Conference declared that neither is the present position the objective of the programme of Khadi and Village Industries, nor is its inherent limitation, as is wrongly held by some schools of economic thought in our country. Rather, the Conference believed that it was possible and desirable to raise production and the standard of living of the people considerably through this Programme. Hence, the Conference declared that :

Organizational devices in the economic field like co-operation, labour banks, easy credit ways and means for savings etc ; and adoption of proper State policy in regard to protection and subsidy by the judicious use of Government's tariff and export import policies, transport rates etc. that may be helpful and are consistent with social justice and full employment, will be availed of,

Technical improvement of tools used in the Khadi and Village Industries must be made with due help of science ; and research to this end should be instituted ; and

Bullock-power and wind-power should be exploited, and cheap electric-power may also be made available for lighting, irrigation, as well as for industries as and when these can make the best of it, and consistently with social justice and full employment, and not merely in the interest of mass production anyhow.

The Conference keenly felt that the real issue for the nation's decision was to see that the large-scale and mechanized industries that competed unfavourably with and tended to destroy the people's small-scale industries in the self-employment sector should be judiciously controlled and dovetailed into one integral pattern of a plan for full employment which will obviously tend to and result into maximum production. Therefore, the chief consideration that should govern the formulation of the Second F. Y. Plan should be to take an integrated view of the nation's economy which may be directed to achieve the goal of a non-exploitative decentralized economy for our country and to frame programmes with the immediate objective of providing full employment to our people. The State policy in this regard should, therefore, aim not only at providing operative conditions for the self-employed sector in general and Khadi and village industries in particular, by adopting protective measures such as those enumerated in the First F. Y. Plan, viz. :

1. Reservation of spheres of operation ;
2. Non-expansion of the capacity of the large-scale industries ;
3. Cess on large-scale industries ;

4. Supply of raw materials ;
5. Research in technique etc. ;

against competition of the centralized industries, but also at controlling the centralized and heavy industries in the interests of the small producer. In other words, State policy should be so regulated as to avoid conflicts between different sectors of economy, the centralized ones of which should be oriented into the service of the self-employment ones, in the process of achieving the objective of full-employment and non-exploitation.

The Conference also went into the question of the basis for additions to be made to the list of industries to be included in the programme of the Khadi and Village Industries Board. It said that the industry to be added should be related to the basic needs of food, cloth, shelter, health, education etc. of the family and the community, and it should be capable of being organized on a self-employment basis, i.e., it should not be of such a nature as may necessarily require for its execution, the creation of employer-employee relationship.

We hope, the Planning Commission and the Government will heed to these deliberations of the Poona Conference when framing the Second F. Y. Plan.

27-11-'54

CLASH OF TWO IDEOLOGIES

(By Dr. Rajendra Prasad)

[The following is the English rendering of the speech delivered in Hindi by Dr. Rajendra Prasad on the occasion of the 13th Convocation of the Gujarat Vidyapith on 14-11-'54. The President pointed out the clash that is going on at present in our country between two ideologies. Not only our progress, but peace and happiness of our country as also of the world depend on the choice we make from these conflicting ideologies. It is but proper at this juncture that the educational thinkers take into consideration this point and decide the all important question of education.]

24-11-'54

M. P.]

I am sorry that for several reasons I could not come here earlier. I very much wished that there should not be any delay caused in your work on my account. But this could not be and I have been able to come here only now after two and a half years.

I have felt fully satisfied with what Shri Kulanayak and Shri Mahamatra have said regarding the work you are doing here, your future programme, and the aims and ideals which you have set to yourselves under Mahatma Gandhi's noble inspiration.

There is a great deal of serious thinking being done at present in regard to education in our country. At a time when we are planning for a thorough reorganization of our national life, this is not only essential but also inevitable. Even after the attainment of freedom we are carrying on the old system of education introduced here by the British rulers. We have not yet fully accepted the system of education proposed and propagated by

Gandhiji, first under the name of National Education, and later as Basic Education. Only a few institutions like the Vidyapith are experimenting with the latter scheme, though some of it is also being tried now in Government schools here and there.

Compared with the number of old-type universities and colleges, such institutions are certainly very few and yet the work they are doing is of vital importance. Indeed, I hold that if we want our country to realize and manifest its distinctive genius and make its distinctive contribution, we must give serious thought to this system of education. Because I have no doubt that through it we can remould the life and the thinking of the next generation in the way we want.

We are at present living in the midst of a clash of two ideologies: one which has come from the West, which received a great deal of impetus and encouragement during the British period and which dominates the world at the present moment; and the other which is ours and which is vastly different from the first.

The world is today furiously engaged in a blind endeavour to bring under its control the forces of nature and yoke them all to its service. Conquest of nature and an abundance of material objects have come to be held as the very aim of life, and regarded as the measure of advancement and happiness achieved by a country. Happiness is being made to depend not on the inner peace or knowledge but on the possession of material things. Possession of material things has become a craze with both the individuals and the nations.

The progress of science in the last two hundred years has been directed to the conquest of nature. The more the conquest of nature, the greater would be our advancement—this seems to have been the formula followed. Science has certainly given us many things which are quite useful in fulfilling our physical wants or otherwise in adding to our physical happiness. But it has now placed in our hands a power which is wholly destructive. The world does not yet know whether it can be put to any constructive use at all and it is asked if it would not be wiser to reject it and throw it away altogether.

But our aim and ideal from the dawn of our existence on this land has been different. We have sought for happiness within the heart and not outside. Though our ancestors did not altogether disregard the means for fulfilling bodily needs, they did not consider them to be the one thing desirable or the sole source of happiness. These are the two ideologies fighting each other.

After freedom we are now in a position to consider whether we could also just drift away along the same current as the rest of the world, or try to keep our cultural distinction intact so that we may give something to the world. If we would really understand what we are receiving from the West and assimilate what is valuable in it with our own, we might be able to produce and give to the West something which it does not have.

This is the only way in which we can make our contribution to the progress of the world. For the West has so planned and shaped its education that they are daily going ahead in their chosen direction. It is futile to hope that we can catch up with them or excel them in the near future. But if we would only turn our attention to what we have, we should find that there are things in our possession which we can give to the world and which it needs and for which it looks to us.

Therefore, when I think of Gandhiji's teachings and of these institutions which he founded and fostered in order to inculcate those teachings in us, I feel that here is a thing which we can give to others and which they also want from us. But we must first acquire the power to give. If we do not strive ourselves to understand it and implement it, how can we give it to others? Here we must remember that Mahatmaji did not cut up life

into compartments without any relation among them. He viewed human life as a single whole. Therefore, whatever he said on any subject was of a piece with the rest of his ideas. If we put them all together, we get a picture of the whole life as he wanted it to be—a picture which applies not only to India but to the whole world.

It is to be regretted that we are not looking at things in the light of this integral view of life. We now have political power in our hands, but we are neither trying nor want to reorganize and reconstruct the country on the basis of this ideology. Taken in by the dazzle of the West we are still following in most respects an alien ideology and not the Gandhian one. We just take up one or two items of his programme and feel content that we are doing and fulfilling what he wanted of us. But this can only give a very incomplete picture of his teachings. What is required is to reorganize the entire national life on the basis of the full picture of his teachings. Then only can we get the full benefit of the experiment. Otherwise the result of such a one-sided effort will also be one-sided and will, therefore, please nobody. Hence institutions like the Vidyapith have a responsibility to put this ideology before the country and to see that Gandhiji's teachings do not remain merely a matter of intellectual knowledge, but are translated into action.

I, therefore, hope that those who are associated with these institutions will always bear in mind the need for giving a practical shape to his teachings. If only a few people continue to work for it in this spirit, I hope and trust that the time will come when the world will realize its importance. Maybe, I sometimes feel that they would realize it even before we did. It has happened thus in many cases and may happen again.

It is the duty of these institutions to keep the light burning. Yesterday, speaking at the Basic Education Conference at Sanosara, I said that the Nai Talim work was like a lighted lamp. Sometime in 1924 Shri Rajagopalachari had said in his convocation address of the Bihar Vidyapith that such national educational institutions were like lamps reminding us of the days of the 1921 movement. Speaking at Sanosara, yesterday, I said that they were certainly like lamps, but not like those which merely serve to remind us of what was. They are pointers, on the contrary of what is going to be. Each of them has the capacity to light a hundred others which in their turn will light thousands thus illuminating the whole country.

I hope that your institution and others like it will not limit themselves merely to imparting intellectual knowledge, but also devote themselves to moulding the pupils under their charge. Besides, they must also continue to propagate their ideas through their publications among the wider public. I am sure that if you continue to do so the time is bound to arrive when people will listen to what you say and learn to look inwards for real happiness and give up the mad race for material abundance in which they are at present engaged. It is a task worth doing. It is necessary both for the good of the country and the world. I will therefore urge that you go on doing your work with faith and devotion. I am sure that you are making steady progress and am much pleased with your achievements.

May God give you the strength to fulfil your task.
(From Hindi)

By Mahatma Gandhi
BASIC EDUCATION

Pages viii+114 Price Re. 1-8-0 Postage etc. As. 6

By M. S. Patel

THE EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF
MAHATMA GANDHI

Pages xv + 288 Price Rs. 5-8-0 Postage etc. As. 15

NAVAJIVAN PUBLISHING HOUSE
P.O. NAVAJIVAN, AHMEDABAD-14

VINOBA IN PURNEA

(By "Dadu")

Purnea is the north-eastern-most district of Bihar, bordering West Bengal, East Pakistan and Nepal. When Vinoba first entered it at Kursela on November 19, 1953, it presented him with more than thirty thousand acres of land, half of it being collected earlier and the other half on the eve of Vinoba's arrival. Perhaps no other district of Bihar could claim this distinction of doing so much substantial work even before Vinoba's visit. The credit for this must largely go to Shri Baidyanath Prasad Choudhury, one of the most honest, industrious and unostentatious public workers of Bihar. Beloved of the people of his own (Purnea) district, Shri Choudhury rose to the secretaryship of the Bihar Provincial Congress and was meant for greater heights in the Congress hierarchy. But he gave up all in obedience to the call of Bhoodan Yajna, to which he has devoted himself with single-minded sincerity for the last two years. Hence Purnea's prominent place on the Bhoodan map of Bihar.

Bengali devotional songs greeted Vinoba on the way when he entered the Purnea district for the second time on 17th October, 1954. After wading through knees-deep and waist-deep water for about one hour, we reached Narpatganj at eight. It was a delightful walk in which we enjoyed the fragrant breeze and soothing sunlight. Up beyond the northern horizon were visible the sky-soaring tops of the Everest and the Gauri-Shankar, the former being locally known as Dhaulagiri. And the moon, though tired after the night journey, was there with its refreshing sience.

Addressing the assemblage gathered to receive him, Vinoba said, "I have had my fill of air, water, light and sky on the way. But not that of land. I want it in plenty."

An old man with a bent spine and long golden beard (who sat just in Vinoba's front in the first row) interrupted. "That too you would get." Vinoba acknowledged in gratitude, "How be blessed!" And added, "Now when both the children and the old agree, the rest would be caught in between as by a pair of tongs. The work in Purnea district, therefore, must be accomplished fully (Poorna). Then alone would it deserve the name Poornia (full and complete), otherwise they would call it Apoornia (incomplete)."

The evening prayer began at 3.30. In his post-prayer address, Vinoba said that once somebody approached Vysa Muni saying, "You have written so much. Where is the time to read it? Can't you tell us the substance of your entire writings?" Quick came the reply from the profound sage, "Yes, half a *shloka* (verse) will do: **परोपकारः पुण्यय पापयो परपीडनम्**. (To help others is virtue or religion, to hurt others is sin). So also the burden of the Bhoodan song which I have been singing for the last three and a half years, i.e. share each other's weal and woe and behave like the various organs of the body."

Calling upon them to turn the village into a family and be self-reliant, he observed, "If the Government or city people come to open shops and schools and hospitals in your village, it won't help you. Strength comes from within. The city people may provide you with spectacles, but not with eyes. As the Gita says, your wellbeing depends upon you. People inquire of me the reason of so much misery after Swaraj. Well, have you given up the evil habits that you practised before Swaraj? When the differences of high and low, touchable and untouchable continue, when miserliness and drinking etc., go on, how can there be happiness at all? In fact, that lies in your hands. Purify the heart and love your neighbour. Then misery would disappear."

Our next halt was Kanali Bazar. In the morning Vinoba stressed the need of study and meditation: "As we take a water-bath and food everyday, we must have thought-bath and thought-food daily. What has saved Hinduism? Some immortal books. The Muslims believe that only those with the Book will live. Of course, one need not become a slave of books. One must study them

with an open eye and discrimination. But regular study and thinking must continue."

In the afternoon a friend posed his difficulty before Vinoba, "Man makes certain Sankalpa (resolve). But he is not able to fulfil it. Why so? And how can Sankalpa-shakti (power of resolution) grow?"

Vinoba dilated upon it in his evening speech. He said that Kalyug differed from Satyug in the sense that while people have definite objective before them in the latter, they sleep in the former. Whence in the Satyug, not only individuals but the whole society takes one good resolve after another and man thus progresses onward. In modern India, too, the objective of Swaraj was followed by another, viz. of Sarvodaya. And with the initiative of the Bhoodan Yajna, the gateway of Sarvodaya was opened and a new awakening seemed to mark the people.

Forbesganj was our halt on Tuesday. It was after full three weeks that we were near a railway station. Also there was a High School. So among those gathered to receive Vinoba were many students and youths. Vinoba told them that Bhoodan Yajna was just the beginning of a process which would culminate in the establishment of the Sarvodaya Samaj. The main instrument to bring out this transformation is right thought which first touches the head, next the heart, whereafter the whole life of the individual is changed. Later the society is altered and then follows the change in Government. He added, "The village people are direct servants of God and support the whole nation. The city people must be servants of village people and their activity must be Gramabhimukh (directed towards the village)."

In his post-prayer discourse Vinoba observed that so far as Samaj Shastra (science of social evolution) was concerned, India had very precious and living experience of it. But with the adoption of the Western form and system of administration, that had been rendered valueless. He pointed out the three main evils—the *tridoshas*—wrought by the British in India: Firstly, the collapse of the village industries amounted to the breaking of our spinal chord. Secondly, it led to the uprooting of our decentralized village economy and killed our Panchayats which were highly talked of by many eminent thinkers of the West. Thirdly, money economy crept in and not only land but everything became a marketable commodity, not excluding men who claim 'Tilak' (or cash dowry) in marriage. "These three evils," added Vinoba, "sapped the vitality of our five lakh villages and rendered the people inert. They say that few people in our country are literate, as if literacy and wisdom necessarily go together. Who does not know the unlettered Prophet of Islam Mohammed? No doubt the people of India are illiterate. But they are not devoid of experience. The last elections made it crystal clear. They have experience of ten thousand years. They are not uncivilized like the Americans who throw eggs in elections. Nor like those in England where women had to fight for securing their right to vote and threw eggs in their Parliament. From eggs to Hydrogen bomb! This shows that Indian people are not childish but rich with the wisdom of the age. I, therefore, want you to realize your strength. The *tridoshas* pointed out above must be cured off. Bhoodan Yajna is an endeavour in that direction."

Vinoba was at Kusumaha on the 20th. It is a small village of thirty houses. Its area is about two thousand bighas of which only one forth belongs to local people. In the evening meeting, Vinoba declared that the village people must have their own schools. There should be one hour school, in which all the village children, rich or poor, must attend. They must be taught crafts by local artisans. The teacher should be given grains by the villagers and he should also work like others in the field or at some craft. Every child must have good and clear handwriting and learn songs of Kabir, Tulsidas, Surdas and Mirabai by heart. He added that there should be a co-operative shop and no private shop in the village. If somebody cannot give his share in cash, he can offer bodily labour. Also they must settle their quarrels among themselves. "There

are," he said, "wise men in every village. When there was a Vibhishan even in Ravan's Lanka, would not there be a noble soul in your village? You must follow his advice." Lastly, "The whole village is your family. Everybody should get land. There should be no landless. If your neighbour is unhappy, how can you be happy? Village happiness and your happiness go together."

As Vinoba walked down to Kaparphora next day, some local elite joined him in the way. He regretted that these days people had begun to like Aram (rest) and given up Rama.

Addressing the prayer assemblage he said that in the society we should make use of the same force or power which we employed in the home. What is true for the family is also true for the greater family called the village. On the contrary hoarding was in fashion and everybody seemed to exploit others by whatever he had—knowledge, money, land, etc. For this our education was responsible. Things would improve with right education. He concluded, "They say that a strange thing is happening in India. Well, that is not so. Man's nature is to love. But the curtain of the greed or illusion has covered it. Once this curtain is removed, love would flow in torrents."

The workers' meeting was very interesting. Some of them said that they could spare time only after two to three months. Then Vinoba related a personal story. Once he was asked, "What do you get by subtracting nine from twenty-seven?" "Eighteen," was his spontaneous reply. "No," he was told, "twenty-seven minus nine is zero. For there are twenty-seven constellations out of which nine occur during the rains. In case you eliminate those nine, there would be no rains and everything would dry up." "So also," said Vinoba, "twelve minus three is zero. If you do not spare these three months and also do not avail of the new atmosphere built up now, you cannot do anything hereafter." Fifteen friends agreed to serve the *Jail*.

While going from Kaparphora to Bardaha on Friday, Vinoba halted for a while at the village Tira Kharda where he was presented with 26 acres of land obtained from 71 landholders, a hundred acres having been donated earlier. Knowing that every landholder had offered some land, Vinoba asked them to contribute one-sixth and provide land for every landless. Also they should grow their own cotton and prepare their own cloth as also other necessities. They would then find Swarga (heaven) established in their village itself.

In his post-prayer speech, Vinoba regretted that our educated folk ridiculed physical labour or Shram. "The truth is," said he, "that Shram begets Lakshmi. In the new order, everybody must be a Shraman or Shram-devoted. Both intellectual work and physical work stand on the same footing. There should be no distinction between them. In fact, in the India of tomorrow, those not able to do *shram* (physical labour) will feel *sharam* (ashamed)."

Kaliyaganj was the last halt of the week. From Forbesganj onwards, Vinoba's route was almost exactly in the eastern direction, parallel to the Himalayan ranges. The population in this locality—the Araria sub-division of Purnea district—is rather scarce and scattered. The villages are small, few and far between. There seemed to be shades of Mongol blood in the people. A charming innocence marked their faces. Mostly illiterate, they could, however, appreciate the depth of Vinoba's message.

In his post-prayer address, Vinoba pointed out that we suffered from lack of management and indolence. "We are," he remarked, "growing lazy day by day. Our mothers used to get up early at four and grind corn. But not so now. I remember that when my mother sat at the *chakki* and sang a song, the latter awoke me up. But what is the condition now? The country rises up one hour later today than it did forty years ago. "We lose valuable morning time." Thirdly, there were hosts of differences in our

society whence we could not work shoulder to shoulder. The Bhoodan Yajna programme sought to eliminate these defects and usher in Sarvodaya. "For this," he added, "the first step is to knock out landownership. I demand on behalf of the dispossessed millions. Everybody says my demand is right. During the last three and a half years, I have met none who has objected to this truth or justified the private ownership of land. This truth, like all truths, will stay. You need not be afraid of it. Give me your share and live happily."

Before I close, I must convey to my readers a very significant piece of news. People of no less than ten consecutive villages have offered their entire land, i.e. their whole villages, in the Bhoodan Yajna. They belong to the Balasore district of Orissa. Who knows that this humble and forgotten province would blaze the trail that the rest of India may follow!

16-11-54

Communist Duragraha Against Prohibition

Addressing a public meeting (Kurnool Oct. 2), in connection with the Gandhi Jayanti celebrations, Mr N. Sanjeeva Reddi, Deputy Chief Minister, Andhra State, reiterated the Andhra Government's determination not to scrap Prohibition or to open toddy shops in the State. He appealed to the public to support the Government and make the Prohibition policy a success.

Mr Sanjeeva Reddi, after tracing the history of the Congress movement since the advent of Mahatma Gandhi, said that the main plank of the Congress was Prohibition. The Andhra Government were not prepared to reopen toddy shops. The Communists were trying their best to get Prohibition scrapped. He was aware of the lapses in the enforcement of Prohibition and prevalence of illicit distillation, but because there was illicit distillation they should not scrap Prohibition, which had conferred much benefit on the poor. 'Satyagraha' to get Prohibition scrapped makes the term a misnomer, for Satyagraha could be only for good causes. Anything done to propagate wrong doctrines could never be termed Satyagraha. It must rather be called *duragraha*, he added. (From *The Hindu*, 6-10-54)

Shri Reddi is completely right where he says that Satyagraha to get Prohibition scrapped makes the term a misnomer. Is drinking a truth to strive for? How then can an action to get drink-shops opened be at all termed Satyagraha? Papers and publicists must not allow this sacred word to be misused in such light and misleading manner.

And do the Communists in India stand for Prohibition or no? If they do, then their *duragraha* in Andhra must be called off. Prohibition, service of the Harijans, Basic Education, causes of women and children, Bhoodan, etc. should not be misused by political parties to further their own partisan ends. These must be above-party items of our national programme.

13-10-54

M. P.

CONTENTS	PAGES
INDUSTRIALISM v. FULL EMPLOYMENT	.. Dr. Rajendra Prasad 317
EMPLOYMENT PATTERN IN INDIA	.. Dr. J. D. Sundram 319
AT-ONE-MENT WITH THE DIVINE	.. Ernest Swift 319
B. C. G. VACCINATION—IV	.. V. G. D. 319
THE ALL-INDIA CONFERENCE OF CONSTRUCTIVE WORKERS	.. Maganbhai P. Desai 320
CLASH OF TWO IDEOLOGIES	.. Dr. Rajendra Prasad 321
VINOBA IN PURNEA	.. "Dadu" 323
NOTE:	
COMMUNIST DURAGRAHA AGAINST PROHIBITION	.. M. P. 324