

# HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)  
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TWO ANNAS

## GANDHIJI AND THE WORLD CRISIS

(By Pyarelal)

The world today stands uneasily poised on the brink of a catastrophe. As Jung remarked in 1946, it is as if a little boy of six were given a dynamite among his birthday presents. "How can we save the child from the dynamite that nobody can take away from him? The good spirit of humanity is challenged as never before.... It is high time that civilized man turned his mind to the fundamental things. It is now a question of existence and non-existence."

We have wars because we are not sufficiently selfless for a life which does not need wars. The battle for peace, Gandhiji taught us, has thus, in the first instance, to be fought and won in the heart of the individual.

Gandhiji summed up his entire philosophy in one sentence: "I recognize no other God except the God that is to be found in the heart of the dumb millions.... and I worship the God that is Truth or Truth which is God, through the service of these millions."

And as a corollary to this: "I believe in the absolute oneness of God and therefore of humanity. What, though we have many bodies we have but one soul. The rays of the sun are many through refraction. But they have the same source. I cannot, therefore, detach myself from the wickedest soul nor may I identify myself with the most virtuous."

What could not be shared with the least he held to be of little account and not worth having. If we do not keep this, which is the core of Gandhiji's teaching, viz. adoption of voluntary simplicity in the spirit of the full practice of truth as embodied in the ideal of oneness of all life, before us constantly, we shall not be heading for peace but strife only.

Einstein has given us his well-known equation, enunciating the relation between matter and energy, which says that when even an infinitesimal particle of matter attains the velocity of light — the maximum velocity attainable in the physical universe — it acquires a mass which is in-

finite, and since this condition is approximated within the structure of an atom, theoretically there is no limit to the destructive energy that can be unleashed by the conversion of atomic mass into energy, as happens during an atomic explosion. The possibility of race suicide by the untutored mind of man mishandling atomic energy is thus by no means remote. With what can that peril be countered?

It is here that Gandhiji's philosophy comes to our aid.

Physical laws have their counterpart in the spiritual world. Gandhiji set forth the corresponding formula governing the release of spiritual energy by enunciating that when Ahimsa is completely established in one's being so that one's whole being—whether on the plane of thought, speech or action—becomes as it were a function of Ahimsa, then since Truth alone is and all else is nought, one becomes filled with a power—the power of love, also, known as soul-force—to which here is no limit and before which all hatred and opposition is dissolved. The condition is that one must have reduced oneself to an infinitesimal by absolute surrender to "God which is Truth and Truth which is God."

"With Truth combined with Ahimsa," said Gandhiji, "you can bring the whole world to your feet.... When once it is set in motion, if it is intense enough, it can overtake the whole universe.... Working under this law, indeed, it is possible for one perfect Satyagrahi to win the battle of Right against Wrong."

There is an ancient philosophical belief in India that one who has been true to the law of his essential being without a single fault throughout his life can cause anything to happen by the simple act of calling that fact to witness. He becomes a "living conduit" of cosmic power, the power of truth—*Satya*—"the highest expression of the soul". This is known as making an "Act of Truth". The truth must be firmly rooted in the heart so that it manifests itself in human relations as infinite compassion or identification with everything that feels.

A few hours before the end, Gandhiji was asked by a foreign journalist: "How would you

meet the atom bomb....with non-violence?" The reply he gave was: "I will not go underground. I will not go into shelter. I will come out in the open and let the pilot see I have not a trace of evil against him. The pilot will not see our faces from his great height, I know. But that longing in our hearts—that he will not come to harm—would reach up to him and his eyes would be opened."

Then guessing probably what was passing in his interviewer's mind, he added: "If those thousands who were done to death in Hiroshima, if they had died with that prayerful action—died openly with that prayer in their hearts, their sacrifices would not have gone in vain."

We are sometime told that Gandhiji's method was all right in regard to the Indian scene, but is unsuitable to the people in the West whose psyche is differently conditioned. There could not be a greater fallacy. Gandhiji held that a valiant fighter sometimes is more qualified to attain the ideal of non-violence than those who lack a soldier's discipline and courage to face death and this was proved when the fierce warriors of the North-West Frontier Province—the Pathans—turned themselves into soldiers of non-violence, *Khudai Khidmatgars*—Servants of God—under Gandhiji's inspiration and the Frontier Gandhi Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's lead. Let no one therefore try to take refuge in that spurious alibi. We have the authority of Jung that there is a bi-polarity in the psyche—when a pandulum swings so violently in one direction it is just capable of operating just as far on the opposite side. What he said about the Germans holds good in respect of the whole of the West. They have only to gird themselves up and may be they will find that the deliverance is far nearer at hand than they had hoped or suspected.

New Delhi, 19-1-55

### Mere Prejudice

Shri P. N. Virkar in his presidential address at the 10th session of the Bombay Head Masters Conference, Panchgani, November 3, 1954, said, "the prohibition of the study of English in lower standards had handicapped Bombay State students appearing for public examinations." (*Times of India*, November 4.)

It is common knowledge that the first batch of students who ceased to have English in lower secondary standards will first go to colleges in 1955. Therefore, it is difficult to follow what Shri Virkar says, for the simple reason that such boys cannot still appear at all-India public examinations.

19-1-55

M. P.

By Vinoba Bhawe  
BHOODAN YAJNA  
[Land-Gifts Mission]

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## VINOBA ENTERS BENGAL

(By "Dadu")

Leaving Bihar

In the small hours of the morning of the New Year's day, from the Bihar of Buddha and Mahavir, Acharya Vinoba Bhawe stepped into the *Vihar Bhoomi* (pilgrimage land) of the Valshnavite saints and seers. It is his first visit to this devotional land which, however, has attracted him ever since his boyhood. Early in 1916, when he gave up his college education, 'insipid' and 'futile' as it seemed to him, he had a mind either to go to the Himalayas for penance and identify himself with the Eternal Being or to Bengal to join the revolutionary movement for India's emancipation. He straight came to Kashi, the ancient home of learning and wisdom. When he was on the point of deciding his line of action, he came across a report of Mahatma Gandhi's historic address in the newly opened Benares Hindu University. This took him to the Mahatma where he found both the eternal peace of the Himalayas and the revolutionary fire of Bengal. Thereafter he buried himself deep in utter *sadhana*, negotiating one spiritual summit after another as well as identifying himself with the poorest, the lowliest and the lost. Mahatma Gandhi's sudden departure threw new responsibilities on him. He came out of his self-sought seclusion and sprung a surprise all over the country (even abroad) by the discovery of his Bhoodan Yajna mission. As an ambassador of universal comradeship, self-reliance and soul-force, he has been ceaselessly conveying his message from door to door during the last four years. Embodying the immortal religious tenets of non-possession and 'love-thy-neighbour-as thyself', together with the call of the age for equality and justice, Vinoba walks, not as a beggar, but as a tower of strength and hope to the millions, heralding a new era.

We got up at about quarter to three on Saturday morning, 1st January. The sky was lit with brilliant stars and a cold wind, coldest of the current winters, was blowing across the wide arid land near Dekshila (in Manbhumi district of Bihar) where we were camping. The morning prayers were held at usual at 3-30. It was Vinoba's last prayer meeting in Bihar. Vinoba took his morning cup of cold milk and left the place at 4-12. Hundreds of people followed him.

### Entering Bengal

After walking down four miles we reached the Bihar-Bengal border at 5-40. Shri Charu Chandra Bhandari, convener of the West Bengal Bhoodan Yajna Committee, received Vinoba at a tastefully decorated gate erected at the border. The sky resounded with the echoes of 'Sant Vinobaki Jai' and 'Amader grame bhoomihin keu, thakebe na, thakebe na!' ('Long live Vinoba and None would remain without land in our village'). As our charming sisters of Bengal sang welcome songs amidst the blowing of conches of the sonorous lipping of 'Ulu' sounds (an auspicious sign), the showering of flowers and the clicking of the cameras in excited hands, tears trickled down the cheeks of Bihar friends for whom Baba (as Vinoba is lovingly called) had become a family member. On their behalf, Shri Jayaprakash Narayan spoke a few words of promise and resolve. Vinoba was too full of words to say anything. He simply folded his hands and marched on. In the southern sky stood Venus as witness to the historic scene. Not far from it was the dim Saturn, shy of its slow speed!

Murlu was the first Bengal village of our way. Men and women and children rushed to touch Vinoba's feet even in that piercing cold. They had been waiting for hours! And as we crossed Murlu the bright sun appeared on the horizon in ruby and gold. The crowd grew larger. Children ran to catch Vinoba's glimpse. But the adults pushed them away. We little know that by such a cruel treatment we spoil the builders of the India of tomorrow and instil in them a strong feeling of fear, a great undoing. Vinoba is very conscious of this falling of ours. When he could not bear the sight that day, he asked to let children



come forward. With happy faces they joined him. He gave his hand, to one on his right and another on his left and they thus formed a U like chain. Vinoba asked them to go as fast as they could. Their joy knew no bounds. Vinoba began to run. They also ran. And thus with firm and fast steps, Vinoba reached Saltora — our first halt in Bengal — at 6-55. We encamped at the Dak Bungalow atop overlooking the Sal forests and the Santhali huts scattered all round.

#### 'My Right of Love'

After Mangal-Gana and Welcome songs, Vinoba made his maiden utterance on the soil of Bengal. In slow moving tone he said,

"I have no words to describe the joy I have felt while coming to this place. Children came with me. I believe that these young folks will accomplish the idea of peaceful revolution and carry the society onwards. Though I am sixty, I feel like a child of six. And for years I have taught children, — not the stories of birds and beasts, but Upanishads. I found that children quickly grasp the *Brahma Vidya* of the Upanishads and the sense of the Gita — a thing which is difficult for elders to follow because of the elements of vanity and discord in them. I have come here as a child and want my share in the home."

Vinoba continued, "The learned of Bengal say that there is not much land in Bengal. But when a son approaches the father, the latter does not refuse his request. The Government may not get much land from the people, but a son like me must get one-sixth of Bengal's land. If there is less land in Bengal, I would get less, but one-sixth at any rate. This is my right of love I claim before you."

#### Rhodian and W. B. Government

In the noon there was a press conference. They put two questions. One of them was: How does your movement fit in with the West Bengal's Government's programme of acquisition of the rights of intermediaries in land?

Vinoba replied: "There is no comparison between my work and that of the Government. While I could get land by love, the latter can by force of law. If the zamindars would give any land to the Government, they would first keep the best with them. On other hand, I would get both good land and bad. Love unites hearts, which law cannot. By law, they cannot get more than four lakhs of acres, while I demand one-sixth, i.e. 25 lakhs. Again, the Government would have to pay compensation, while there is no question of it in Bhodan. Nay, besides land I would ask for other things too in gift, like bullocks, seeds etc. to help the peasant. Further, land-gift through love not only solves the land problem, but also generates *janashakti* (self-reliant power of the people). Moreover, Government can acquire land only from those who have above the ceiling, while I can claim from every landholder, big or small. Above all, I endeavour to tell the people that land-ownership is meaningless and wrong. I can, therefore, obtain whole villages as a gift. So far I have received about a hundred villages including two of Bengal. Thus this movement will result in the villagization of all land, a thing which the Government cannot even dream of. Land gifts lead to mutual co-operation in the village, not possible through official acquisition. Thereby we can try to build up a united or collective life in the village and establish *Gram Raj*. All this is beyond the scope of law. Hence there is no comparison between the two."

#### Work of Land Distribution

The second question was about land distribution. Vinoba said, "After fixing in April 1952, a target of collecting 25 lakhs of land within two years, about 33 lakhs were obtained by April 1954. This produced a confidence in the people that land would be thus collected. Now we have decided to distribute up to April 1956 all the land so far donated. Out of this 33 lakhs, about 22 lakhs belong to Bihar. If this is distributed within the next 15 months it would again convince the people of the

fact and method of distribution. Our object is five crores of acres. As a specimen we would distribute this 33 lakhs. Then the village people will rise up and divide land duly among themselves of their own accord."

#### The Role of Right Thought

The prayer meeting commenced at 3 in the afternoon. Except for the two Sanskrit couplets it was all in Bengali — just as we had it in Hindi in Bihar or U. P. Addressing the gathering assembled to hear him Vinoba observed, "I value not so much the land that is given to me as the love and affection with which it is donated. This work implies a revolution in thought. Right thought has always been in this country the sheet anchor of our faith. Once a thought pervades society, the latter is transformed of its own accord. The role of right thought in the growth of our country cannot be too much stressed. The people of Bengal do not go by the rule of three. Let a thought or sentiment inspire them, they do things in no time. No sooner they grasp the thought than would they give with open heart. Therefore, Bengal fills me with enthusiasm. I have not come to ask for land-gift or property-gift; on the contrary I have come to give you something. I want to convey to you the right thought."

Vinoba further remarked, "They say that there is not much land in Bengal. Is it more in Bihar? My experience is different. When I was in Bihar I saw as much earth below as the sky above. So also I see in Bengal, I have, therefore, no misgivings that I won't get one-sixth of Bengal's land. I tell you that the need for Bhodan is very paramount in Bengal. I tell you that in such conditions as here, Bhodan is inevitable. The concept of *Sanya Yoga* is very appealing to the people here, is native to the genius of this soil."

He concluded, "The existence of several parties in Bengal shows that the problem here is very serious and deep. In case that problem is not solved by love, more parties would grow. I claim that Bhodan will eliminate Bengal's party differences and raise her political strength. I want you to study Bhodan literature. Mine is to abolish ownership of land and transfer it to the village as a whole."

In the evening he met some workers of Bengal and also bade farewell to Bihar workers who had walked down to Saltora. Swami Anand who had been with us for about a week also left the same evening. Later Vinoba took a stroll. And the busy day came to a close at 8-30 p.m. when he retired for rest.

6-1-55

#### Who Is At Fault?

Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar speaking to a lawyers gathering at Madras on 30-12-54, is reported to have remarked:

"In the Benares University they had made a law to the effect that papers answered in English, such as philosophy, economics, mathematics etc. could be answered in Hindi. The result was that whenever he spoke to audience of students, he found that about 30 to 40 per cent kept staring with fixed eyes and detached minds. (Laughter.)" (*Hindu*, 31-12-54).

The question is, who is at fault in this episode? — the students or the speaker in English who could not or would not speak in Hindi? If the law is to allow the Hindi medium, is it not up to the Vice-Chancellor of the University to respect it by himself speaking in Hindi and not keep a "detached mind" on the question? The tragedy of Indian education at present is that while we think for and talk of radical reforms, the people who are at the helm of affairs educational, and therefore are expected to execute them are of the old order, clinging to the traditional values of English education. This is a dangerous thing for a people that wishes to progress under its new-found freedom.

13-1-55

M. P.

# HARIJAN

Jan. 29

1955

## THE GANDHIAN WAY

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

I have described (vide *Harijan*, 1-1-'55, p. 352) the village and home industries sector of our economy as the third sector, the first two being the Government-managed or nationalized industries called 'the public sector', and the private-owned mill industries called 'the private sector'. Is this classification not open to a rider, similar to one posed in regard to the terms 'third area', 'third bloc', 'third camp' etc. in international politics at present?

This objection in politics is met by paraphrasing the idea by saying that it is really not third, but is a unique camp entirely of a different order and outlook from the usual two. It is rather an 'area of peace' and the aim is to extend it by resorting to measures for collective peace on the principles of co-existence, non-interference and mutual helpfulness and regard towards one another.

Similarly, what is said as the third sector of India's economy is not really third, but is also unique as it represents quite a different outlook in economics and endeavours to seek a social and economic order wherein the poorest of the poor can live with self-respect and honour and work freely and in the joy of creativeness, in his own village home. This is a totally different thing to aspire for and achieve, in comparison with what the private mill industries sector or the public Government sector will do. The aim of this so-called third sector is, rightly speaking, to extend the area of co-operative and peaceful ways of employment of our whole people. The aim of such employment is necessary and sufficient production and not unscrupled mass production, relegating the essential demand of full employment and equitable distribution to a secondary place and thereby creating national and international problems it can hardly solve.

In this field of social activity also, the doctrine of the unity of ways and means is applicable. If we desire a co-operative commonweal for ourselves, or an equalitarian social and economic order, the means must be similarly designed. Therefore, the third sector is really the area of equality, non-exploitation, and co-operative commonweal, and the idea is to extend it so that the private capitalist sector or the public State capitalistic sector may, in course of time, fade away from their present undeserving all-engrossing importance and find a niche which may be proper for them in the context of our common life. Is this not the way to a really socialist pattern of society?

Thus viewed, the third sector is, really speaking, not third; the term 'third' is only to say that the sector is different from the conventional first two ones. It is a new idea peculiar to and born of our situation in India. We are a rural civilization; most of our people live in villages. If freedom means anything to them, it must be in terms of their life and economy in their own villages. These latter must be better places to live in; and conditions for working there in a free, satisfying and creative way must be assured to them. If we desire to have Socialism in our time and in our land, it has to solve this peculiar problem.

The Western world's pattern of Socialism is unsuited to us. It has landed that world in a programme for collective warfare in defence of the order it has produced for itself. It has brought the world to the status of a combative or quarrelsome camp under a dichotomy of the 'free democratic world' and the 'dictatorial communist world'. Both these worlds really work in the framework of a capitalist ideology or economy. It is either entire State Capitalism as in Russia, or private Capitalism under the label 'free enterprise' as in U.S.A., or a mixture of these two under the label 'Democratic Socialism' as in Great Britain. All the same, they are one in their capitalistic genus, which is the chief attribute of the industrial age in the West.

In the last century when Socialism came to be seriously considered, the idea was mostly or mainly economic; war and imperialism were not disliked as now. Hence, Socialism in those days never concerned itself with no-war and no-exploitation, as we have to do now. Balance of power was the doctrine of peace and security. Co-existence on the basis of mutual regard and recognition of sovereignty of all nations was unthought of then. Now, in the present world, we have to add or translate these new claims also in the content of 'Socialism'.

The Western world might not do it; maybe it cannot. It may find it difficult to lift itself up out of its past history without a pull from those who are dubbed at present as 'backward' peoples of the world, at whose cost it prospered through colonialism. How can this pull be administered? It has always been in history that civilization, when it began to decay, was invaded by so-called barbarism on its borders and succumbed to it to begin anew. It is more politic and polite to change the word 'barbarism' to 'backwardness'. It is, therefore, now a question for the backward peoples of the world how they will behave *vis-a-vis* the Western civilized world. Will they resort to the traditional ways of violence? Or is there a new and human way as an alternative?

The Gandhian way is an answer to it. It is the way of non-violent revolution — a moral equivalent of war, with non-violent non-co-operation with evil and civil disobedience of immoral laws, as its chief weapons and the constructive



programme as its popular sanction and mainstay. What is called the third sector of our economy is a part of its technique and an important one; it is real Socialism of our time and need.

8-1-55

## GANDHIJI ON DEMOCRACY

(By Bharatan Kumarappa)

Gandhiji was one of the greatest democrats that ever lived. He loved man irrespective of race, caste or creed, regarded the human personality as sacred, and gave his life to freeing man from suppression, whether political, social, economic or religious. His views on democracy are, therefore, well worth study, especially as they are so vitally different from what passes for democracy today.

Modern States think that they are democratic if they have adult franchise, whereby people are enabled to elect their own representatives to government. But the question is how far these representatives really represent the people; for, in large groups such as nations with populations of several millions, in which the voters and the candidates for office can have little personal knowledge of one another, the vote is captured, very often, not by the most deserving by knowledge and capacity, but by one who has the money to buy up votes, the backing of an influential party or the gift of a long tongue that can carry audiences away with empty promises. Gandhiji, therefore, concluded that real self-government or democracy was possible only in small groups like villages where people knew one another from day to day and had personal relations with one another. So he wrote:

"My idea of Village Swaraj (self-government) is that it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbours for its vital wants, and yet interdependent for many others in which dependence is a necessity..... The government of the village will be conducted by the Panchayat of five persons, annually elected by the adult villagers, male and female, possessing minimum prescribed qualifications. These will have all the authority and jurisdiction required..... This Panchayat will be the legislature, judiciary and executive combined to operate for its year of office..... I have not examined here the question of relations with the neighbouring villages and the Centre if any. My purpose is to present an outline of village government. Here there is perfect democracy based upon individual freedom. The individual is the architect of his own government. He and his village are able to defy the might of a world. For the law governing every villager is that he will suffer death in the defence of his and his village's honour." (Harijan, 26-7-42)

It is important that the village should thus depend on itself for defence, for if it does not, it will lose its independence.

But such a decentralized political order requires, as its necessary counterpart, a decentralized economy, in which each village will produce primarily for its own requirements. For, if it does not do this, but corners production for itself through large-scale centralized manufacture, it will work against the

self-dependence of other areas. "Therefore we have to concentrate on the village being self-contained, manufacturing mainly for use." (Harijan, 29-8-46). His insistence on the spinning wheel was merely symbolic of his desire to revive village and cottage manufacture, by means of which people would learn to be self-reliant, be owners of their tools and work on their own initiative:

"But the ideal of Khadi (hand-spun cloth) has always been as a means, *par excellence*, for the resuscitation of villages and therethrough the generation of real strength among the masses—the strength that will *ipso facto* bring Swaraj..... We have to awaken villagers themselves and make them capable of tackling their own problems and forging ahead through their own strength." (Swaraj through Charkha, compiled by Kanu Gandhi, p. 8; 15-9-45)

Otherwise, in a centralized economy, as under industrialization the individual loses his independence, becomes a mere employee doing the will of another, and is easily regimented. Moreover, political power is perforce concentrated in the hands of a few and there emerges an all-powerful State which ever increasingly controls every department of the life of the individual—food, clothes, housing, education, health, recreation and travel. The individual is hedged in on all sides by controls and has for all practical purposes forfeited his freedom. Gandhiji disliked this greatly and wrote:

"I look upon an increase in the power of the State with the greatest fear." (The Modern Review, 1935, p. 413)

"Self-government means continuous effort to be independent of governmental control.... Swaraj government will be a sorry affair if people look up to it for the regulation of every detail of life." (Young India, 6-8-25)

In an ideal democracy, accordingly, the State will have little or no place, as the individual will manage his own affairs in co-operation with his neighbours.

"There is then a state of enlightened anarchy. In such a state everyone is his own ruler. He rules himself in such a manner that he is never a hindrance to his neighbour." (Young India, 2-7-31)

For this, however, self-restraint should be the guiding principle in the life of an individual under democracy. But modern nations under the influence of industrialization are ever multiplying wants. Their ideal seems to be not self-restraint but self-indulgence. This leads inevitably to greed and selfishness, and consequently to the monopolization of power and wealth, inequality, colonialism and war, which are the opposites of democracy or true brotherhood. Gandhiji therefore concluded:

"Swaraj cannot be attained by the erection of huge factories..... Western civilization is a mere baby, a hundred or only fifty years old. And yet it has reduced Europe to a sorry plight. Let us pray that India is saved from the fate that has overtaken Europe where the nations are poised for an attack on one another, and are silent only because of the stockpiling of armaments. Some day there will be an explosion, and then Europe will be a veritable hell on earth, Non-White

... races are looked upon as legitimate prey by every European State. What else can we expect where covetousness is the ruling passion in the breasts of men? Europeans pounce upon new territories like crows upon a piece of meat. I am inclined to think that this is due to their mass-production factories. (Gandhiji's Conclusion to his Paraphrase of Ruskin's *Unto This Last*, pp. 62 and 63)

Gandhiji wrote this in 1908. The disease "which was then in its early stages has now spread, and threatens to destroy the entire world because of policies followed by the big industrialized powers. Gandhiji saw where it would lead, and denounced it with all the indignation of a prophet:

"It is my firm belief that Europe today represents not the spirit of God or Christianity but the spirit of Satan.... Europe is today only nominally Christian. In reality it is worshipping Mammon." (*Young India*, 8-9-20)

"I wholeheartedly detest this mad desire to destroy distance and time, to increase animal appetites and go to the ends of the earth in search of their satisfaction. If modern civilization stands for all this, and I have understood it to do so, I call it Satanic." (*Young India*, 17-3-27)

Gandhiji was so deeply devoted to the democratic ideal of man as master of himself that he hated for this reason not only industrialization which, with its ceaseless quest for a "high" standard of living, made man a slave to self-indulgence but also drink, tobacco, drugs and contraceptives, which dragged man further into slavery:

"Drugs and drink are the two arms of the devil with which he strikes his helpless slaves into stupefaction and intoxication." (*Young India*, 22-4-26)

"The conquest of lust is the highest endeavour of a man or woman's existence. Without overcoming lust man cannot hope to rule over self. And without rule over self there can be no *Swaraj* or *Rama Raj*. Rule of all without rule of oneself would prove to be as deceptive and disappointing as a painted toy-mango, charming to look at outwardly but hollow and empty within." (*Harijan*, 21-11-36)

Since democracy is essentially the rule of the individual over himself, and violence or compulsion is its very antithesis, in that it takes no cognizance of the opponent's right to rule over his own thought and action, violence will never be resorted to by one pledged to true democracy. Thus:

"Democracy and violence can ill go together." (*Harijan*, 12-11-38)

"Our motto must ever be conversion by gentle persuasion and a constant appeal to the head and the heart. We must therefore be ever courteous and patient with those who do not see eye to eye with us." (*Young India*, 29-6-21)

If, on the contrary, we are today impatient and resort to violence, it is, Gandhiji held, because of a feeling of helplessness and fear on our part due to irreligion or lack of faith in the things of the Spirit:

"This feeling of helplessness in us has really arisen from our deliberate dismissal of God from our common affairs. We have become atheists for all practical purposes. And therefore we believe that in the long

run we must rely upon physical force for our protection." (*Young India*, 25-5-21)

"The business of every God-fearing man is to dissociate himself from evil in total disregard of consequences. He must have faith in a good deed producing only a good result; that in my opinion is the Gita doctrine of work without attachment. God does not permit him to peep into the future." (*Young India*, 29-12-21)

Not only in regard to the means, but also for the end, i.e., for the democracy of his conception, Gandhiji depended ultimately on his religion:

"If all that there is in the universe is pervaded by God, that is to say, if the Brahmana and the Bhangi, the learned man and the scavenger,.... no matter what caste they belong to—if all these are pervaded by God, there is none that is high and none that is low, all are absolutely equal." (*Harijan*, 30-1-37)

"In the purest type of Hinduism, a Brahmana, an ant, an elephant and a dog-eater are of the same status.... Hinduism insists on the brotherhood not only of all mankind but of all that lives. It is a conception which makes one giddy, but we have to work up to it." (*Harijan*, 28-3-36)

The ideal, accordingly, is the realization of God through identification of oneself with all beings.

"Man's ultimate aim is the realization of God, and all his activities, social, political, religious, have to be guided by the ultimate aim of the vision of God. The intimate service of all human beings becomes a necessary part of the endeavour, simply because the only way to find God is to see Him in His creation and be one with it. This can only be done by service of all.... If I could persuade myself that I should find Him in a Himalayan cave I would proceed there immediately. But I know that I cannot find Him apart from humanity." (*Harijan*, 29-3-36)

Consequently, under true democracy, according to Gandhiji, the entire world, being as it were the body of the Infinite, will be knit together in a single organic whole consisting of small units, self-dependent for all primary needs but mutually helping each other for other purposes:

"Every village will be a republic or *Panchayat* having full powers.... This does not exclude dependence on and willing help from neighbours or from the world. It will be a free and voluntary play of mutual forces.... In this structure composed of innumerable villages, there will be ever widening, never ascending circles. Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it will be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals never aggressive in their arrogance but ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circle of which they are integral units. Therefore, the outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle but will give strength to all within and derive its own strength from it,.... Let India live for this true picture though never realizable in its completeness." (*Harijan*, 28-7-46)

What a profound contrast between this picture and that presented by modern "democracies," highly centralized, arrogant and lustful, seeking to divide the world among themselves by sheer brute force!

(From *The Aryan Path*, October, 1984)



## INTERNATIONAL VEGETARIANISM\*

(By Dr. J. de Marquette)

Some people think Vegetarianism is only an aspect of the Hindu religion. This is an erroneous view restricting considerably the scope and value of bloodless diet. In reality under one form or another it has been advocated in the name of many religions and philosophies and has been practised by the elites of most countries from the dawn of history.

Nowadays, it receives the support of numerous devotees of a non-religious character. Many modern vegetarians in the West, which are not practically religious, or even atheist, follow the bloodless regimes for a variety of new reasons supplementing the old religious and ethical motives of traditional vegetarians.

Some are prompted by scientific reasons. Two great scientific disciplines help man to appraise his nature and his proper place in the world: Comparative anatomy, showing his status among other animal species and anthropology, which sums up the researches in the nature of man. The founders of these two sciences, both Frenchmen, Cuvier for comparative anatomy and Broca for anthropology, both emphatically proclaimed that man was not a carnivorous animal, nor a herbivorous one, nor a mixed feeder, but belonged to the frugivorous family which feeds on fruits and grains, these being the fruits of herbs and gramineous plants. Consequently, many men who desire to live in harmony with the laws of nature have abandoned the eating of flesh.

Since 1890, which was about the date of the beginning of scientific dietetics, vegetarianism has received a tremendous impetus. Repeated laboratory experiments in many countries in Europe and America have proven beyond any doubt that meat, far from being an indispensable aliment, or even necessary and beneficial, was really responsible for a great many diseases. Europe was covered with a real network of nature cure establishments in which innumerable invalids suffering from chronic nutritional diseases were restored to health by a well-balanced scientific vegetarian diet. Switzerland in particular, with its many vegetarian rest homes and cure establishments has become a veritable Mekka for chronic health seekers; and a great many among the numerous vegetarians in Europe and America were prompted to adopt their pure regime by health reasons.

Yet another even more powerful reason bids fair to bring the majority of mankind to the natural and pure regime. The population of the world has more than doubled in the last hundred

years, and if this continues, mankind will be menaced by a terrible food shortage even with the improved methods of cultivation. These may be more harmful than helpful. Experiences show that in many countries they led to a dangerous decrease of the fertility of the earth which the merciless exploitation allowed by chemical fertilizers robbed of some of its essential constituents.

The analysis of food chemists in agronomical institutes show that while one hectare (slightly over 2 acres) produces annually 2 millions food calories in meat and milk, it produces 10 millions calories when planted in potatoes, 15 millions calories when cultivated in average crop of wheat or other cereals, and over 25 millions calories when cultivated with intensified methods of truck gardening with constant rotation of crops. Thus one could feed ten times more vegetarians on a land devoted to vegetables gardening than meat eaters on the same area.

Statistics from the Department of Agriculture of the United States confirm this view, showing that in the continental United States, although the per capita consumption of meat has decreased by 2/3 since 50 years, more land is devoted to produce cattle food than is used in producing crop for human food. This is why many governments of the most civilized countries are considering measures to induce their citizens to eat more vegetables.

This rapid survey suffices to show vegetarianism in its broader and wider aspect. It is more than a practice based on the more or less effete taboo of more or less absolute beliefs. It is a way of life based upon the noble and fine ideal of new world where people will be healthier, more humane and happier, because in following the laws of nature they shall cease to accumulate causes of disease in their daily life and will find it easier to solve political and social conflicts in a brotherly way.

This is why vegetarianism is a growing international movement to which the religious and spiritual idealism of the East is supplemented by the practical, scientific and progressive spirit of the West.

United by a common ideal and common practices of life, Vegetarians the world over aim at forming a new International, the green international of nature in harmlessness, health and hope.

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\* From a statement of Professor Dr. J. de Marquette, President, French Vegetarian Association and Vice-President, International Vegetarian Union, at a Press Conference held under the auspices of the Bombay Humanitarian League on Saturday the 25th December 1954 at Bombay.

## THE STATE ACCORDING TO GANDHIJI

(By Dr. Shri Krishna Sinha)

[From a paper on the 'State in Gandhian Philosophy' read on 27-12-54 while presiding over a symposium held under the auspices of the A.I. Political Science Congress at Muzaffarpur, Bihar.]

Writer of repute has said (of a class of politicians), "Mediocracy has won. Everywhere intelligence has fled from the hustings of democracy as from an engulfing torrent. Fools are in the saddle and ride mankind." That politics has got its unsavoury side also appears from the fact that another writer of repute had to coin the phrase "the politics of the unpolitical" to describe the politics of those who desire to be pure in heart; the politics of men without personal ambition; of those who have not desired wealth or an unequal share of worldly possession; of those who have always striven, whatever their race or conditions, for human values and not for national or sectional interests. In the small list of such a type of politicians the writer has included Gandhiji also. This definition and inclusion of names of illustrious persons among politicians shows that there is another and nobler side of politics and perhaps it is this which made Plato regard political science as a science from which men drew wisdom.

It is said we have reached a moment in human history in which for the first time, the mere continued existence of the human race has come to depend upon the extent to which human beings can learn to be swayed by ethical consideration and base their conduct on them. There is a serious search for a new faith and an urge to find out a way of living together from which violence will be eschewed and which will be based on co-operation and love. From time to time there have arisen men in whom that period has 'reached its greatest luminousness and consciousness' and it must be said that this urge for a new faith in this age has attained its greatest illumination in Gandhiji in his motto of a good life based on truth and Ahimsa, the ideal which a world afflicted with blind violence and aboriginal cruelty is to strive after if it is to be saved from the nemesis of destruction which threatens to overtake it.

At such a moment in the history of man a study of the philosophy of Gandhiji and the State envisaged by him should be a serious concern of those engaged in the study of political science and research connected with that.

Every social philosophy has got behind it its own conception of man. The man according to Biblical thought is not the same as he comes to be after the renaissance. The man behind the economic theory of Adam Smith and other classical economists is not the same as the man behind the philosophy of Marx. To understand a particular social philosophy it is necessary to understand the conception of man behind it. In my humble opinion it is Gandhiji's conception of man which stands as a sun in the solar system of his philosophy. He himself has repeatedly said that in all his schemes of men and things, man was his supreme consideration. Accept the truth of his conception of man and his entire scheme of the structure of human relations and also the State become illuminated. According to him the divine powers within man are infinite. God as reason, and love works through man. Man has free will, reason, conscience and love and he is the maker of his destiny.

It is this which makes the democratic State, which Gandhiji, envisaged a type of its own. We began even the modern age with a declaration that man was the measure of all the things. But circumstances have made him a mere clog in the wheel of the great Leviathan which has arisen in the form of State or Nation. Democracy

was devised to enable man to govern himself. But it is felt that modern governments may be of the people and for the people but it is not by the people. States have grown so much in dimension that it is not conducive to the growth of man to the height to which his spiritual nature would entitle him. The nation has grown but the individual has suffered. Man has shrunk in stature. He finds himself bewildered and lost in the complex phenomena which the modern State has given rise to and the State, instead of man, has become the measure of things.

Gandhiji had a conception of man which would not permit the individual to be swallowed. According to him man has free will, reason, conscience and love and he is the maker of his destiny. God as reason and love works through him. He admits that man has his limitations and so may require the institution of a State. But this State must be such as not to swallow him. It must be there not to dominate him but to be of service to him in slowly overcoming his limitations and reaching the grandeur which is his. The State is to be the means and not the end. It is because of this that in giving his idea of a State he wrote, "there is then a State of enlightened anarchy. In such a State everyone is his own ruler. He rules himself in such a manner that he is never a hindrance to his neighbours but the ideal is never realized. Hence the statement of Thoreau that that Government is best which governs least."

A man of such a conception cannot make multiplication of wants and consequent amassing of material wealth a profession. Wants engender wants and so he must control them to the minimum consistent with his physical needs. He must eat to live not live to eat. Non-possession and non-stealing would naturally be the cardinal virtues of such a man.

Co-operation based on proper understanding and love (truth and non-violence) only can be the cardinal rule of his conduct in relation with others. If there is conflict of wills he must solve it by an insistence on truth through non-violent means. Man according to him is inherently rational and loving and so such an instrument of solving conflict of wills cannot fail him.

Creativeness is a great virtue in man. In this a man finds self-expression and self-realization. It is also the dynamic source of all human advance. To stifle it would be to stifle human progress. If he as a result of this power of creativeness earns more than his limited want needs he must treat himself as the trustee of the superfluous wealth.

Society and the State for such a man must consist of small self-contained units united together in a greater unity only for ends which cannot be served by these little republics. But in creating these bigger units care must be taken to see that man as man does not get himself lost. Man as man is the supreme consideration of Gandhiji and so what remains if man as man gets lost in the State?

These, in my humble opinion are the main principles behind the State of Gandhiji's conception.

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