

# HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

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TWO ANNAS

## SARVODAYA AND SARVA-SEVA

### An Ocean of Nectar

The Sarvodaya Samaj is like an ocean, the depth of which no one has yet fathomed. But it is an ocean of nectar, in which there is no fear of being drowned to death. One can swim in it without any misgiving. It is vast in every direction. One may leap into it singly or in company with others, keep on the surface or dive beneath and stay in it so long as one pleases.

### The Nectar of Satya and Ahimsa

The *sevak* (member) of the Sarvodaya Samaj is free from all organizational control. There is no external authority over him. He may work at his own place, alone or with others as he likes; he may even form an organization if he needs it. Many activities have been suggested for his pursuit; he may select one or more out of these according to his capacity. Or he may take even some other work of a like type though not mentioned in the list if it commends itself to him and is felt by him as one for which he is particularly fitted. Several well-known institutions of constructive work exist to give him their help. They have now federated themselves together into an all-inclusive body called Sarva-Seva Sangha. He may seek its assistance; but he is also free, if he likes, to go ahead without their aid. He may seek the advice of the experienced people and act as they direct, or he may mark out his own path and act on his own initiative. He may as a worker have his name registered with the office of the Sarvodaya Samaj or may dispense with that formality. A conference of the workers will meet annually. He may attend it of his own accord. No one will prevent him. But he may not go there and no one will compel him to do so. If he does anything on his own initiative to put the Sarvodaya ideal into practice, no one can question his membership. As a worker he carries no rights but does carry all the duties attached to that title. In the performance of those duties, he may seek co-operation of any good man, no matter what party or ideology he may belong to. But one thing he may never do; he may not abandon Truth and Non-violence, for, verily, it is the nectar of the Sarvodaya ocean.

### Link with Sarva-Seva Sangha

We had decided at Sevagram not to found any new party or creed. We aimed at mixing

ourselves completely with the entire society and try to give our shape to it; 'our shape' does not mean the shape of our passions and egotism, but the shape of the pure spirit, free from the taint of all egotism, one and universal, — beyond race, nation, caste, creed, class or colour. That is the shape we ourselves aspire to take and also that which we wish to give to the world. For that we shall have to serve all in all manner of ways. With that end in view, we formed the Sarva-Seva Sangha at Rau. At Angul, the Sarvodaya Samaj and the Sarva-Seva Sangha were linked together. An attempt was made to elucidate the relationship between the two and their common and differential characteristics. Instead of clarification, it has created a confusion in some minds. There was discussion on the subject and at times discussions in open sessions lead to such results. But the idea behind the two is quite clear, and there should be no difficulty in understanding it. The Sarvodaya Samaj is a conceptual association of people with an allied way of thinking about the way of life. The Sarva-Seva Sangha, on the other hand, is an all-India Institution of experts for planning and executing programmes of work. Every member of the Sarvodaya Samaj is a worker who is his own master. When the same person is both master and servant, automatically evil disappears and good develops.

### Ideological Revolution and Politics

A friend says: "I am fully in sympathy with the Sarvodaya Samaj. But I do not join it because it eschews politics, and in the modern world there can be no social revolution without an institution being organized for political purposes also." I say to this: "You have made three assertions, each of which is erroneous. First, you seem to think that one is required to join the Sarvodaya Samaj. It is not so. Whoever believes in the Sarvodaya ideal is in it whether or not he gets his name registered in it. Only a few thousand will have their names registered but we hope there will be tens of thousands of *sevaks* whose names are not shown on the register. If an unregistered *sevak* asserts that he also belongs to the Sarvodaya Samaj, he has to be accepted as such. Secondly, you assume that there is no politics in the Sarvodaya ideal. Of course, it does not contain the short-sighted politics of the power-seeking variety, because that

does not make for *Sarvodaya*, the 'well-being of all'. It is centred round either the self or a narrow group. Tulsidas has expressed this in a very telling manner: "Generally people desire their personal good. A few desire the good of their own people. But only the servants of God desire the good of every one." The servants of God cannot subscribe to the politics of this or that party. Certainly theirs is not the politics which makes for disunity and dissipation of energy. They have their own kind of politics which is meant for uniting and strengthening all. Thirdly, to think that in modern times, the social revolution can be achieved through political power betrays an incapacity to read the future. Monarchy is gone; gone too is the aristocracy; democracy is in the process of liquidation; the stage is now being set for the rule of all by all. He alone sees who sees this. And rule by all does not mean voting rights for all, but a sincere co-operation emanating from the unity of hearts. The age is approaching when the truth, "One in all and all in one", will rule the world. If we put ourselves on its side, we will share the credit of success. If not, it will come in spite of us. An ideological revolution is what we aim at. And an ideological revolution can never become the handmaid of politics in any age, not even in this age. People often think that they could rapidly bring about great changes if they were in power; they could educate as they liked and convert the people to their way of thinking. But this is an illusion. A tower of cards is easily built, but it topples down also with equal ease. Where political authority assumes control over education and imposes uniformity of mind, (which is nothing but the absence of independent thinking), it is a complete preparation for the total annihilation of that power. A gust of wind is sufficient to bring down the tower with a thud.

#### Illusory Organization

The peculiar characteristic of the *Sarvodaya* idea is that it allows scope for the existence of different views and freedom of thought. A *Sarvodaya* worker does not insist on a rigid system or form. He does not believe in fixed frames and moulds. He does not mistake mere organization for strength. He pins his faith in the power of Truth. He is not deceived into thinking that if weakness is organized it becomes strength. It is idleness, which seeks the easy method of becoming strong thus. It is illusory strength. If it were possible to produce health merely by heaping together the ill and the ailing, there should have been no need for either doctors and nurses or medicine and nutritious food. These methods have place only in violence. They raise an army of a million men and think that the entire nation has become strong. When soldiers win a battle, they think that it is the victory of the nation. They quote the adage, "Organization is power in the *Kali* age." But they forget that there is no longer *Kali* now;

*Kali* has passed away. It is *Kritayuga* now — the age of action, brave and virtuous action. How can it be *Kali*, when the soul has become awake? Therefore, we must not labour under the illusion that we can bring about *Sarvodaya* by going on a war, or winning elections.

#### True Organization

This is the logic of *Sarvodaya* for not feeling interested in building up an organization. At the same time, I have said that a *Sarvodaya sevak* is free if he feels the need to organize locally. Such organization will be on the plane of common ideas. All members will be fully and intimately acquainted with one another. There can be no room in it for hypocrisy or egotism. In a small-scale organization, it is easy to avoid such blemishes. But hypocrisy and egotism are such subtle evils that they can get in anywhere. If the *sevak* finds that evil has entered even in his all-too-small organization, he will at once disband it. He will not let things come to a head. But for all that he does, the responsibility will be his. He will act out of his own sense of responsibility and be prepared to suffer for it.

#### Sarva-Seva Sangha and Politics

Having thus defined the nature and the form of the Sarvodaya Samaj on the one hand and the individual duties and freedom of the *Sarvodaya* worker on the other, let us now see where the Sarva-Seva Sangha comes in between these two. The Sarva-Seva Sangha is a confederation for tendering advice and help to the workers of the Sarvodaya Samaj. It is an organization indeed, but it is not an organization of men but of activities. It will maintain the *Sarvodaya* file, organize *Sarvodaya melas*, co-ordinate the work of the Charkha Sangha, the A.I.V.I.A., the Talimi Sangh and other constructive bodies, publish *Sarvodaya* literature and do many other allied activities. As I conceive it, even this body will have no force except that of service, and will not be connected in any way with any political party.

VINOBA

(Translated from the *Sarvodaya*, May, 1950)

#### Clarification

In reference to the Annual Session of the Sarvodaya Samaj at Angul, my attention has been drawn to the report that has appeared in several news-papers that the Sarvodaya Samaj has been dissolved and an institution called Sarva-Seva Sangha, federating all constructive organizations, was set up and entrusted with the work of the Sarvodaya Samaj. This is an erroneous report. The facts are that the Sarva-Seva Sangha was already in existence and *the Sarvodaya Samaj has not been dissolved*. What happened at the Angul Session was that *the managing body* of the Sarvodaya Samaj was dissolved and the Sarva-Seva Sangha took upon itself its work and responsibility.

VALLABH SWAMI,  
Secretary,  
Sarva-Seva Sangha

(From the Hindi *Sarvodaya*, May, 1950)

### AN INTER-RELIGIOUS MARRIAGE

[An inter-religious marriage was performed at Gopuri, Wardha, on 24th May, 1950, of Shri Lakshmichand Gosar (the bridegroom), a Jain Hindu, and Shri Fatima (the bride), a Muslim, both of Madhya Bharat. Shri Amin-saheb, the brother of the bride, is a constructive worker of Indore. The bridegroom and bride did not know each other previously, and the marriage was negotiated by their friends. The parties did have a chance of meeting for some days before marriage to find out whether they suited each other. The marriage may not be called a love marriage, but one contracted on a principle. The following speech of Shri Vinoba who blessed the couple discusses the merits and demerits of such marriages.

—D. D.]

We have taken a step of heavy responsibility. Shrimati Fatima is a Muslim and Shri Lakshmichand a Jain. Both of them have taken the decision after full deliberation. They deserve our congratulations. Still greater congratulations are due to their parents and other relatives who have come here and blessed the union. Really there is no need for our congratulations. A good deed gets its own reward. But under the prevailing circumstances, a certain amount of courage is needed to take such a momentous step, and praise is due to this couple for showing that courage.

You must have witnessed that *mantras* of several religions were recited in the course of the ceremony. Many people seem to think that the scriptural texts of one religion abhor the touch of the texts of another. This erroneous belief arises from the fact that these texts are in languages which the common man does not understand. The Quran is recited in Arabic. More often than not neither the reciters nor the listeners understand its meaning. The same is true of the *Vedic mantras*, and the hymns of Zend-Avesta. People recognize only the sounds, and the great difference in the sounds is responsible for maintaining the feeling of separateness. We may stick to this practice if we want to maintain this feeling. But if we translate these texts in our own spoken languages, the differences begin to disappear and we discover that all the religions teach the same thing: namely, truth and goodness.

Of the texts which were recited here, there was one from the Quran, which says, "May God show us the right path." I feel that the step taken today is on the right path. But there are others who disagree with this view. This situation demands that we recognize our responsibility. It would not be proper to enter into an argument with them. Let those who are taking this step prove by their life and conduct that in doing this, their sole aim was to serve the cause of religion. They can do it only by leading a life of service and self-restraint. If this is done, those who disapprove of the act will be converted to our views and confess that the step was right.

During my recent tour in the various parts of the country, the problem of fostering love between people of different religions constantly engaged my attention, and I meditated over it.

Various solutions were suggested by friends. Some suggested that we must encourage inter-religious marriages. They said that such marriages would lead to the elimination of ill-will and hostility between the communities, and to the resurgence of love. While I accept this proposition, it should be realized that goodwill between the communities should not be made dependent on marriage; it can and must be developed independently of marriage. Ill-will and hostility should be got rid of by sound thinking. Indeed sound thinking is the only way to foster friendship. Marriage may follow as a consequence of the good relations established by sound thinking. I do not approve of bringing about inter-religious marriages as a mechanical device for promoting goodwill and love. I welcome them as an outcome of friendly relations, and not as a means of creating good relations.

Islam is in India for the last twelve hundred years. Other religions and sects are also here; some of them came even before Islam did. All have been tinged with the colour of the land. Ours is a country of love and synthesis. It has given shelter to all races and communities; it has even lovingly invited them. The more we concentrate on the fundamental oneness of humanity, the more do the different religions appear as enriching and strengthening one another. I regard the different religions as merely different forms of worship. Each form has its distinctive merit. When the different ways meet together all these merits gather together and make a rich and full pattern.

I hope that those who have brought about the union of these two religions through this marriage will assimilate the virtues inculcated by these two, nay, also by other religions. May God give them the strength to achieve this.

(Translated from *Hindi*)

### List of Certified Khadi Dealers

It has been brought to the notice of the Charkha Sangha that there are scattered all over the country various Bhandars dealing in so-called *khadi* under names which mislead the people and make it difficult for them to distinguish certified *khadi* dealers from uncertified ones.

It has, therefore, been decided to publish a list of certified *khadi* dealers. The list will be available at all certified Bhandars at an anna per copy after 1st July, 1950. In the meanwhile, the attention of *khadi*-lovers is drawn to the sign-boards of authorized Bhandars. In case it is a branch of the Charkha Sangha, the words *All-India Spinners' Association* . . . . . *Branch* and in case it is a certified Bhandar the words *Certified by All-India Spinners' Association* will always be found on the board. Before entering a shop the visitor will do well to read the board and be certain that he is entering the right shop.

SECRETARY,  
A. I. S. A.

Camp, Bardoli, 8-6-'50  
(From *Hindi*)

# HARIJAN

June 17

1950

## THE PROBLEM OF TIME

Have the villagers, particularly women, enough time to engage themselves in all those occupations, which according to the *Sarvodaya* scheme of life, are necessary to make themselves or their villages self-sufficient in respect of the essential needs of life? The question is particularly important because, in the *Sarvodaya* philosophy, what is envisaged along with self-sufficiency is that the villagers, both men and women, are not expected to lead a mere creature life, but one of enlightenment, joy, culture, cleanliness, tidiness, health and reasonable comfort.

If Dr. Lokanathan had an opportunity to put this question to Gandhiji, he would have found that Gandhiji had had that problem placed before him as early as the foundation of the All India Village Industries Association itself in 1934. If my memory is correct, three different aspects of it were presented to him directly or through friends by three different individuals independently of one another.

One of them had attacked *khadi* as even a greater exploiting industry than capitalist mills, because of the insignificant wage which till then was paid for spinning. It worked out at about 1½ to 2 as. for a full day's labour in its most efficient centres. At other places, it was even less than an anna at times. Gandhiji himself had calculated that even in those days of low prices and with his own ideas about a proper standard of life (by no means a luxurious one) a family of five with two earning members would need an income of Rs. 30/- a month, i.e. 8 as. per day per each earning member. 1½ or 2 as. per day was without doubt sweat labour. The reply of the A.I.S.A. workers to this charge was that spinning was unemployment relief work, that even this income would not be available to the spinners if it was wound up, and that it was impossible to pay more, because *khadi* was already costly and could not afford to be made still more so.

This defence did not satisfy Gandhiji. Whether it was relief work or regular employment, if a person was set to work for a full day, he must get at the end of it sufficient for his maintenance. If 8 as. per day were needed to live fully, it was clear that the wage earner's family would be ill-fed, ill-clad and ill-housed at 2 as., unless he had also other sources of income. None could say that a majority of spinners had other sources of sufficient income.

These considerations led to the enunciation by Gandhiji of his famous theory of the minimum living wage and to the reorientation of the All-India Spinners' Association in accordance

with it. The step was a revolutionary one. Spinning, weaving and other wages were raised without any demand from workers, and *khadi* was made even costlier than before. It was a revolt against the accepted ideas of money economy. The credit of bringing about this radical change in the *khadi* policy belongs, if I am not misinformed, to Shri Harin Chattopadhyaya, one of whose letters to Shri Kaka Kalelkar attacked *khadi* as a sweating industry.

In a world where money was the measuring rod of prices all-round, it was not quite possible to overlook it altogether. And it was good that it could not be so overlooked. So, along with the raising of the wage commenced also the efforts to increase the efficiency of the spinner for producing more and better yarn, and of making improvements in the various implements of *khadi* production. The efforts were not confined to the sphere of *khadi*. They pervaded all the activities of the A.I.V.I.A. also. The prevailing village methods of *ghani* (oil-presser), *chakki* (grinding stones), *dhenki* (pounder), paper-making, etc. were also investigated and what technical talent was available was applied in this direction.

Of course, only such improvements could be made as were consistent with the *Sarvodaya* view of life. The improvements must not be also such as would make man himself just a machine yoked to another machine; and the improved machine must be within the then capacity of the villager; it should be capable of being repaired in the village itself, lest it might throw him suddenly out of work; and further, since the aim of the constructive economic programme was to create more work and employment, the machine itself should not be such as would create unemployment by making a large number of workers superfluous.

I have related this account because it provides a partial answer to the problem of villagers' time. The present villager is an inefficient worker; his tools are still more inefficient. As a people, we have all—whether educated or illiterate—developed the habit of carrying on our work with clumsy, indifferent and untrained hands, insufficient, inefficient and crude tools, and inconvenient and quickly fatiguing postures and paraphernalia. We are often even proud of being able to do so. Slovenliness and shabbiness do not worry us much. The result is that we are all inefficient workers, and take longer time and feel more exhausted than what we should in getting through our daily work. Improvements in the method and manner of work as well as the tools of work of villagers will go a great deal to reduce the time of work and the fatigue of the villagers. The Constructive *Sanghs* have always been alive to the necessity of these improvements.

This is only a partial answer and a part of the problem. The case of Dr. Lokanathan's 'economic woman' will need a separate answer.

Wardha, 6-6-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

### THE KOLTAS OF JAUN SAR

Shri Dharmadev Shastri has been running for several years a centre known as "Ashok Ashram" at Kalsi (Jaunsar Bawar) near Dehradun for advancing the welfare of the people in that hilly region. In September last, I was able to spare a couple of days to see the *ashram* and to study from close quarters the condition of these hill-people.

Jaunsar Bawar is a northern sub-division of Dehradun District having its headquarters at Chakratta. It is inhabited by ancient tribal people and is administered under the Excluded Areas Act of 1935. The area of this sub-division is about 400 sq. miles and according to 1941 census, its population is 50,000 souls. Due to geographical contiguity, these people have a natural affinity with the people of Tehri-Garhwal on the one side, and the Sirmor State on the other. In spite of the political separation, people inhabiting the two regions are united by ties of language and marriage. Classification by caste shows that the population is composed of Brahmans, Rajputs, Bajgis and Koltas, the last two being Harijans. The Brahmans and the Rajputs migrated here about five centuries ago from the districts round about Manipuri, Delhi and Agra during Muslim rule. The Koltas and the Dewas who were the original inhabitants of this area, resisted the advent of the immigrants in the beginning, but when the new-comers adopted the worship of their God, called *Mahasu*, they gave them refuge and befriended them. Since then both the sections have lived together, and shared houses, lands and facilities of hunting and cultivation. Though the new-comers belonged to two different castes, they started intermarriages between themselves. Being more skilful and advanced, in due course, their population grew larger than that of the Koltas.

After the establishment of British rule, the first land settlement took place in 1815. The Brahmans and the Rajputs, being more resourceful and influential than the Koltas, betrayed their benefactors and got all the land settled on themselves, turning the original masters into landless paupers. The settlement, called *wajib-ul-arz*, made these ancient people subservient to the new zamindars. It created a new class called Saiyanas. They were Brahmans or Rajputs and were given such large powers as enabled them to convert the Koltas into veritable slaves. They made the Koltas cultivate the land for them without the right of ownership; also denied them the right to bring the uncultivated hilly lands under cultivation. True that they gave them food and shelter, but this was done in the same manner as that of a cattle-owner who looks after his cattle. They allotted the Koltas some land to eke out a scanty living for their families, but it was not enough to meet their needs. As a result, the Koltas had to beg or borrow from the Saiyanas, who for a petty loan, kept them in bondage for generations.

There are instances to show that the Koltas served their masters for generations and yet the paltry sums which their forefathers had borrowed, were not repaid.

I would like to give here some details about the Koltas. They are divided into three classes —

1. **Khundit Mundit**: They are looked upon as members of the zamindar family and like them they shave their heads when a death takes place in the family, and observe all the social practices incumbent on a family member on occasions of birth, marriage and death.

2. **Mat**: These are Koltas, whose ancestors took loans from the zamindars, only two or three generations ago, and in lieu of which the whole family is reduced to a state of slavery. Not only the head of the family has to work for the zamindar, but his whole family, whenever required, has to work without wages. The head of the family is fed by the zamindar, and the rest are given a small piece of land for their maintenance.

3. **Sanjyat**: They are Koltas, who are not attached to any particular zamindar, but have to serve the whole village. They do odd jobs for the zamindar and also work on the land.

This amply shows that the social and the economic condition of the Koltas is most pitiable. As a consequence of long servitude, they have become victims of disease, poverty and moral degradation. The evil practice of polyandry prevails among them even at the present time. Boys and girls are married at a very tender age. In a village which I visited, I asked such young boys and girls as were married to raise their hands. The hands of all the children went up without an exception.

A majority of men and women suffer from venereal diseases. Syphilis amongst women has grown to an alarming extent. Maternal mortality is reported to be very heavy. The problem of traffic in women is woefully serious. Every year a number of Harijan women are taken to the plains by their own relations and lodged in brothels in various cities. Illiteracy exists to a very large extent both amongst the Koltas and the Saiyanas; but the former are far more backward than the latter. They are also of an unenterprising nature, and their sufferings are aggravated mostly because they cannot exert themselves.

The Congress Government in U.P. have tried to give the Koltas some relief, e.g., (i) All debts of more than three years' standing have been declared unlawful. The zamindars, however, have been shrewd enough to get new agreements made for the old debts. (ii) The land settlement of 1815 is also being reviewed. Accordingly, the land which was given to the Koltas for the maintenance of their families is recorded as settled on them. Officers are busy doing the work, but the obstacle in the way is that no records proving their ownership are

available. Here also the zamindars are trying by various means to deprive the Koltas of their right of ownership in these lands. Social and economic boycott is being exercised against those, in whose favour, houses and lands are being recorded by the Settlement Officers.

It will thus be seen that the two well-meant measures, viz., the cancellation of the old debts and the revision of the land settlement, have both aggravated the sufferings of the Koltas. Half measures never succeed, and more effective methods must be devised to better their miserable lot.

In the course of my visit to Chakratta, Sayya, Kalsi and adjoining places, I learnt that Shri Dharmadev Shastri and his band of workers together with the leading residents of the area have placed before the Government a few demands, which I shall presently mention. But before I do so, I must record my sense of great appreciation for the excellent work done by Shri Dharmadev Shastri and his workers. It is extremely difficult to work amongst such backward people as these. On account of their ignorance, they resist all changes and new ideas, but I could see that they had great faith in Shastriji and a little awakening amongst them was visible. This was all due to Shastriji's efforts during the last many years. I appeal to the public as well as the Government to extend help to this most urgent and good work. He is planning to extend the scope of his work, but it cannot be done without the requisite finances. I hope that it will be freely given by the public and the Government.

The demands referred to above are :

1. A Government officer should be appointed to look after the interests of the Harijans and secure for them in actual practice, the benefits conferred on them by laws.
2. The Government should advance loans to them on easy terms to save them from the clutches of the zamindars. Unless this is done, the ownership of land and the freedom from debt cannot be secure.
3. Cottage industries should be developed. Training in bamboo-work, wool-spinning, weaving and jute work should be arranged.
4. A Rescue Home and a Maternity Hospital, equipped with V. D. Clinic, should be opened and the Naik Girls' Protection Act extended to the areas. This will prevent the exploitation of the women.
5. Special arrangement should be made for the education of Kolta children. They should be given small scholarships for attending schools.
6. Last, but not the least, the Excluded Areas Act of 1935 should be abolished

and Jaunsar Bawar should be made a part of the Dehradun District. This is very essential, as much of the backwardness of the area is due to its administrative separation from the adjoining areas.

RAMESHWARI NEHRU

### PROGRAMME AND POLICY OF THE CHARKHA SANGH

The All-India Spinners' Association has been devoting all its attention during the last 25 years to the production and distribution of *khadi*. It has so far produced about Rs. 15 crores worth of *khadi* and thus has given some relief to the poor and the distressed in villages in the form of spinning, weaving and other wages. It has endeavoured to develop the quality of *khadi* fairly to the level of other cloth. The A.I.S.A. has thus shown by its ceaseless service that some relief could be given to the poor and that the country's need for cloth could be met by the *charkha* to some extent.

But the virtue of *khadi* does not lie merely in the wages that have been distributed nor the *khadi* that could be produced and supplied. Its virtue lies in its inherent, fundamental, economic and social values that it has set up in a revolutionary way. The living-wage principle that was introduced in 1936 is itself a revolutionary change from the money value in economics to the moral basis.

The self-sufficiency programme implying freedom from exploitation of all kinds is therefore the logical economic ideal in which *khadi* is rooted. This was already insisted by Gandhiji in 1936 along with the living-wage principle. The spinner should use the yarn for his or her own need of cloth before labouring for others for a dole or wage and can sell the yarn only if there is surplus. This essential point was missed for a long time till Gandhiji emphasized it again in 1945 in the form of yarn quota from the *khadi* buyers. Gandhiji explained that *khadi* represents a wholesome movement for totally changing the economic basis of society and putting an end to exploitation of all kind. This meant a new social order, ensuring full economic freedom for the *lakhs* of villages of India.

*Khadi* will lose its special mission if the self-sufficiency and non-exploitation principles are ignored and if *khadi* work is not immediately reorganized on this basis. Therefore the present form of *khadi* work has to be thoroughly overhauled, divesting it of the present commercial form of production in one place and sale in another without disturbing the work built up during the last 25 years at huge sacrifice. This became the declared policy of the A.I.S.A. from 1948 March, when it passed a resolution to hand over the present commercial portion of the *khadi* work to Public Trusts who would carry on this part of the work as a programme of relief to the poor and to meet the demand of *khadi* lovers with the same zeal and sacrifice as

the A.I.S.A. has been carrying on till now. Then the A.I.S.A. would become free to dedicate all its resources in future to the development of *khadi* work purely for self-sufficiency through *Samagra Grama Sewa* towards creating autonomous economic units of village *raj*. A few Trusts have come forward in some provinces in response to the A.I.S.A. and have relieved it to some extent. But in some provinces like Tamilnad, no Trust has yet come forward to take over the work on the terms of the A.I.S.A.

It need not be understood that the A.I.S.A. has decided to liquidate itself. Nor can the A.I.S.A. indefinitely carry on the present commercial form of *khadi* work waiting for some Trust to come forward to relieve it. The development of the *Katai Mandal* movement started in 1949 October has offered a unique opportunity for all *khadi* lovers inspired by the revolutionary ideals of *khadi* to rally together and form small *mandals* in all parts of the country. Time has now come for the A.I.S.A. to decentralize its work, harness the activities of the *Katai Mandals* with local initiative and responsibility in shouldering the *khadi* work in several regions. The Provincial Branches of the A.I.S.A. being very unwieldy may not be able to do intensive and concentrated work of this kind in the various parts of the province. Intensive self-sufficiency and *Samagra Sewa* will become easier if the province is redistributed into small compact regions or circles to work for achieving regional self-sufficiency in *khadi* with the co-operation of the various *Katai Mandals*.

Each circle will be called a *vibhag* in charge of a *sanchalak*. Each *vibhag* will be an autonomous unit with its own budget, capital and full responsibility to develop the *vibhag* towards the ideal of individual and regional self-sufficiency. The *vibhag* though forming part of the province will be free to take all the initiative for working a definite programme suitable for the *vibhag*. The *vibhag* will be directly responsible to the Central Office at Sewagram. It will have an intensive programme for cultivation of *kapas*, giving necessary training for ginning, carding, spinning and weaving etc. It should become progressively self-sufficient in finding its own cotton and making its own *charkhas* and other implements required. It will register the *khadi* customers and will have closer contact with them by periodical visits to their homes, wards, and the villages in the *vibhag* giving all possible help. The *khadi-sevaks* will be able to do more propaganda for the ideology of *khadi* by distributing necessary literature. The *Katai Mandal* movement will gain great fillip in each village and group of villages. Each *vibhag* will work with a definite programme to become progressively and completely self-sufficient in meeting all the requirements of the *vibhag*.

There will be all possible co-ordination between the various *vibhags* in each of the pre-

sent provincial region without seriously displacing the present form of work.

In accordance with this policy Maharashtra and some provinces have been reorganized into *vibhags*. Similarly in Tamilnad and Andhra about six *vibhags* will be immediately set up. The A.I.S.A.'s ideal being purely regional self-sufficiency and the creation of a new order of society based on the principle of non-exploitation and the establishment of village *raj* it cannot obviously divide the *vibhags* on the basis of the present political or other divisions. The only consideration will be the compactness of each circle, the number of *khadi* devotees and the special facilities acquired as a result of the A.I.S.A.'s long work. The A.I.S.A. has decided to create the Madras *vibhag* as a distinct circle. There is no need for two branches under two provincial managements in Madras City. It should be conducive to concentrated work towards our ideals under a single management. This will give an opportunity to the Madras Khadi Vibhag for developing itself with all initiative and local responsibility. Thus the *khadi-sevaks* in *vibhags* will be able to do more intensive service with greater contact with the *khadi* lovers through training classes, and propaganda through literature. *Khadi* production will develop in the City for domestic and regional self-sufficiency enabling the *vibhag* to progressively curtail the import of *khadi* and implements etc., from outside the *vibhag*. The *vibhag* is expected to plan its work in order to be not only self-sufficient but self-supporting in the general management.

We hope that the people of Madras and the suburbs will appreciate the noble purpose with which the Madras Khadi Vibhag is started today and we request all *khadi* lovers in the *vibhag* to give their best co-operation in realizing the object.

Madras, 31-3-'50

KRISHNADAS GANDHI  
Secretary, A.I.S.A. Sevagram

#### PLANNING FOR VILLAGES

[The Gujarat workers of the *Sarvodaya* plan of the Government of Bombay met last month in a ten-day camp at Vedchhi to discuss various topics relating to constructive activities. The camp was addressed, among others, by Shri Vaikunthbhai Mehta (Finance Minister, Bombay), Shri Narahari Parikh, Shri Gulzarilal Nanda, Dr Maganbhai Patel and others.

Explaining the importance of the *Sarvodaya* Scheme, Shri Vaikunthbhai Mehta, the Finance Minister of Bombay observed:

"The Government of Bombay contemplate to erect suitable memorials of Bapu. But the true memorial of Bapu can be built only through the constructive work which was dear to him. The *Sarvodaya* Scheme of the Government of Bombay is that type of a Gandhi Memorial."

The discussions centred round the following heads: *Khadi* and Village Industries, *Nai Talim*, Agriculture and Cow-keeping, Co-operation, Health, Planning Commission, and Labour and *Kisan* Problems. On each of these the gathering arrived at some definite conclusions, a brief summary of which was made by a recorder appointed for it.

Among these that on the Planning Commission was one of topical and wider interest. The campers had the

benefit of hearing Shri Gulzarilal Nanda, Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission. This added to the importance of the discussion. As the conclusions arrived at during the course of the discussion upon it deserve a careful study both by the members of the Planning Commission and the public, their summary is reproduced below.—Ed.]

### Conclusions

1. The aim of the Planning Commission should be to revitalize and improve villages so that the people should feel an attraction for village life.

2. All National Planning, therefore, should be based on principles of *Sarvodaya* (well-being of every one), self-sufficiency, decentralization, life of physical labour, restraint on possessions, and *Swadeshi*.

3. The success of village-centred planning will largely depend upon the extent to which people respond to it favourably. For this it is necessary that the education of the country should be organized on *Nai Talim* lines right from the primary to the University stage.

Leaders and workers also should concentrate their efforts to enthuse the people for this. For this ideology, they must not rest content with any propaganda from the press and the platform but should set an example by implementing it in their own lives. Like Gandhiji, top-ranking leaders and workers must in this respect minutely attend to such details of life as the quantity, quality and manner of their dress, food, living etc. Only then will the present wave of despair and corruption be dispelled.

4. In order that planning may proceed on the right lines, it is necessary to fix the proper standard of living in terms of clothes and other vital necessities for the nation. It should neither be so low as that of the exceedingly poor; nor so high as that of the present-day educated people.

5. On account of the extreme poverty and illiteracy of the majority of farmers, Indian agriculture is unable to make adequate use of its plans, talents and equipments. This results in exploitation. The only remedy of this economic malaise is the application of the principle of co-operative farming in villages. The Planning Commission should formulate for this a bold and comprehensive programme.

6. It is not necessary for agriculture, cow-keeping, and other village industries to frame extensive plans based on mechanization. What is needed is planning for each of these for intensive production in small areas.

7. Village industries should be given protection and encouragement against machines. The best way for the Government to protect and encourage village industries is to insist on the use of village products for all their requirements. As the largest institution of the country, Government is naturally the greatest purchaser of goods, and their purchases naturally influence the economy of the country.

8. The same principle should also be applied to *khadi*. However, it should be noted that *khadi* will remain costly so long as villages are not re-vitalized and the causes of dearth continue. As a measure to meet the present economic shortage and also with a view to inculcate in the military and Government servants the spirit of non-violence, self-help and discipline of physical labour, it is necessary to introduce spinning among them for manufacturing their own uniforms.

9. The planning must not be one, in which everything has to be carried out in accordance with the plans and instructions dictated from the centre; rather, the centre of the plan must be the village. Only then people would be able to understand their problems and take interest in developing their own resourcefulness to solve them.

This is possible only if *grama panchayats* are entrusted with the responsibility of village administration

and are given an opportunity to plan for the principal needs of their life. In particular, planning should be village-centred so far as the principal needs of life such as food, cloth, houses, education etc. are concerned.

10. The village is advancing in its imitation of the city life at such a tremendous pace, that it is in a state nearing collapse, and if suitable planning is not resorted to in time, there is every fear of the village civilization being wiped out leaving no hope for its revival in the near future.

11. Should the Planning Commission follow the above *Sarvodaya* ideology in its plans and policies, the constructive workers of Gujarat will enthusiastically render all the help they can to carry them out.

(Translated from Gujarati) BABALBHAI MEHTA  
Recorder

### Training in Nira and Palm-gur

For the last three or four years, the Government of Bombay has been working the *nira* plan under which *nira* and *gur* are produced from palm trees. One of the objects of organizing this industry is to find employment for toddy-tappers who have been thrown out of employment on account of the Prohibition policy.

It should be noted that though the *nira* work is carried on under the auspices and with the aid of the Government, it is an independent department, wholly under the management of social workers. The Excise and the Prohibition departments give their co-operation to it, but do not interfere in its work. As the work is carried on through social workers, the administrative charges etc. are also very low.

Under this scheme, the District organizers and Centre inspectors are honorary voluntary workers. Many of them are Congress and constructive workers. Workers on salary basis are selected after a thorough test. But since the work is expanding, there will be need for more honest workers.

The field offers a unique opportunity to those who are desirous of engaging themselves in constructive activities. The worker is allowed plenty of freedom to develop the work to the extent of his capacity. They can work as honorary or remunerated workers as they wish.

The department intends to open a camp after June 1950, for training intending and untrained workers. Those who are recipients of salaries will continue to receive them during the period of training.

For particulars and details, apply to the undersigned.

Provincial Nira Office, KRISHNADAS SHAH  
Old Custom House, Hon. Director,  
Fort, Bombay Government Nira Plan,  
Bombay State

(From Gujarati)

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