

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

NEWSPAPERS AND EXPERTS

A correspondent has called my attention to a leading article in the *Pioneer* of 5th April, 1950. It argues as follows against the move to compel colourization of hydrogenated oils:

"If *vanaspati* is unobjectionable on all other grounds, it is difficult to see why its colourization should be prescribed by legislation as a preventive against adulteration of some other product. If this contention were accepted, it should be possible to plead with equal force for the colourization of all water which is chiefly responsible for the adulteration of milk. Investigation into the possibility of colourization, it is worth pointing out, has not so far produced any satisfactory result. For one thing, the colour ought not to offend the eye of the consumer, who.....is certainly prejudiced against black *ghee* resembling boot polish or red *vanaspati* resembling bright paint.....The other and the more serious one is best stated in the words of Dr. S. S. Bhatnagar: 'It is true that adulteration of pure *ghee* should be stopped. But vegetable *ghee* is the least harmful of all the adulterants commonly used in India. In no country of the world, is the sale of *vanaspati* prohibited or made difficult by deep colouring. We shall create a bigger problem than the problem of rice and wheat shortage if we close down or damage the industry which provides solid fats by hydrogenating vegetable oils.'"

The article shows the amount of influence which the industry is able to wield over newspapers and experts. The analogy of water and milk has been advanced rather for bamboozling its simple readers than for serious consideration by responsible ministers. On this analogy, a Government should do nothing to prevent adulteration of food-stuffs, if the adulterants have some other use in life; for instance, the adulteration of white oil or linseed oil with rape-seed or *til*-seed oil.

Adulteration of milk in water is a dishonest practice, and it may be very difficult to prevent it. There are so many wicked things done in the world which it is difficult to stop. That does not mean that Governments should not take such steps as are possible to prevent them, or should diminish their efforts to seek remedies against methods which seem baffling.

The fact is that there is no strong case for the manufacture of hydrogenated oil. It is an artificial product, which is neither essential to life in that form, nor better (if not worse) than the same substance in the liquid form. If it is to be still allowed to be manufactured it should

be so done on the condition that it is not made an instrument for practising fraud.

Dr. S. S. Bhatnagar is a scientist of world renown. I understand that he was asked by the Government of India to find a suitable medium for the colourization of *vanaspati*. His duty was to report what colour he has found suitable, or to confess his failure. If he has been correctly quoted by the *Pioneer*, his argument against colourization can justifiably suggest the inference that with these views of his, he might not have made any serious efforts to find a suitable colour. I hope it was not so. His arguments about the problems of shortage and the rest are both fallacious and irrelevant to the point. At any rate, these views of his have no expert value.

Enormous amounts have been spent on these experts. Once they declare that hydrogenated oils are so dangerous that even mice should not be fed on them. In less than a year opinions of the opposite type are produced. The layman will refuse to believe any and will suspect that the experts are made to say what their patrons desire of them, and that there is a dearth of independent scientists in India with a sense of social responsibility. Let Indian scientists beware of building this reputation for themselves. It will make them untrustworthy.

K. G. MASHRUWALA

Enlighten Workers

Pandit Nehru while inaugurating the National Planning Conference in New Delhi the other day rightly laid stress on the 'mass enthusiasm aspect' of an enterprise. He said:

"You should not forget the public approach aspect. If the workers know what is involved in the work, then the work would be better, then you get some co-operation from them. They feel what they are doing and that they are partners in a big enterprise. If anything they are to learn from Russia, it is the way in which they enthuse the whole country about the work they undertake."

This is very timely. For, in spite of our declaration of a Sovereign Democratic Republic, much of our administration and many of our institutions are still running on the old British model of 'Reasoning for the top and obedience for the rest'. This is a serious impediment in our ventures, which shall prosper only through cent per cent democratization.

R. S.

ARGEMONE POISONING

Mustard oil is the only fatty constituent within the reach of the masses in the major part of North India. Of late the oil is being adulterated with argemone oil. Argemone seeds resemble mustard seeds, but its oil is a deadly poison to the human body. It acts over the circulatory system causing a failure of capillary circulation. This produces in the first stage swelling of the dependent parts of the body. Later on it affects the heart and the man succumbs to heart-failure; in some cases it affects the eyes leading to blindness. The pathological conditions produced being absolutely painless, man does not pay any heed to it in the earlier stages, but when the heart or the eye is extensively damaged, medicine is of no help.

Recently, cases of argemone poisoning have been reported from U.P., Bihar and Bengal in an epidemic form. The extensive distribution shows that the adulteration is not an accidental matter, but intentional and on a large scale. Our ill-fed countrymen are already suffering from many a deficiency disease; diets necessary to maintain a normal health are yet unknown to us. And yet men in order to satisfy their unlimited greed for money do not hesitate to poison innocent human beings on a mass scale. Physicians realize how the members of many a poor family have become the victims of the dreadful action of this poison. The earning of these people is so meagre that it is absolutely impossible to have one's whole family treated at a time. The result is heavy mortality wrongly reported as due to natural causes.

It is usual to designate this disease as beriberi or epidemic dropsy. But it appears to be a wrong designation, and should be regarded as a distinct disease called argemone poisoning, because this misnomer results in the matter being taken lightly. If a man administers arsenic to another, he is liable to be punished for homicide. More so should be the man who adulterates food or deals in food adulterated with poisonous matter, since he commits murder on a mass scale.

But punishment is not sufficient. The prevention of this heinous crime is more important. The people have a right to claim that the source of such acts should be immediately searched out and such thorough measures be taken that such product cannot reappear on the market.

A new danger that now threatens is that since the recent agitation, businessmen have concealed their adulterated stocks. When the atmosphere gets calm, these oils might again appear in the market for sale and by the time evident poisonous effects are noticed and authorities start their investigation and detect some stocks, the people will have consumed the whole of the adulterated stuff, thus producing another tragedy.

Therefore, it is necessary that a thorough search should be made and all tins should be examined and every adulterated tin must be

destroyed or altered in a manner so that it cannot be mistaken for an edible oil.

PARESHCHANDRA SEN

Note: The above is one more instance of the wickedness, which passes in the name of industry and commerce. But while the fact of adulteration is undoubted, I am afraid that the belief about the actual adulterant used may be mistaken.

In the first place, the word 'mustard oil' itself appears to be a wrong description in English of the edible oil generally used in Bihar, Bengal, etc. What the people use there is *sarsav* or rape-seed oil, and not the mustard, or *rai* oil. Mustard and rape-seed are very much similar in appearance, and it takes a little time to learn to distinguish them. But mustard is costlier than rape-seed, and would not be deliberately used to adulterate rape-seed oil with. Mustard oil is not very easily tolerated in the stomach and, I believe, is used only as a medicine. Mustard seeds and powder are, of course, used for flavouring vegetables, *dals* and pickles.

Argemone (rather, *argemone mexicana*), I am given to understand, is the botanical name for the weed known in Hindi and a few other languages as *satyanashi* or *kataila*. It is also known as *darudi* in Gujarati. It is supposed to have come from Mexico, but is quite abundant in India. It is difficult, however, to collect it in quantities sufficient enough for being used as an adulterant on a commercial scale. The *Ayurvedic* authority consulted by me does not think that it would produce the symptoms mentioned in the above article. It can be used as a purgative. If it is the adulterant used then its seeds should be available in the market in tons. Whether it is so should be enquired into. The enquiry about the actual adulterant used is likely to be pursued on a wrong track, if a mistaken supposition is made about its identity.

My *Ayurvedic* authority suggests inquiry in the following directions:

(i) A seed known in Punjabi as *taramira*, in Cutch as *jambo*, and in Bengal as white *sarsav* (Bot. *eruca sativa*) is widely cultivated in the Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Sindh, and is pressed for oil. It is cheaper than the rape-seed and is an irritant which causes even blister on the tongue. It is not easily distinguishable in taste from the genuine rape-seed oil and is, therefore, capable of being adulterated with it. Whether it is capable of producing the symptoms above complained of is a matter for investigation.

(ii) There is also another possibility, and a more probable one. There are traders who import essence of *sarsav* oil (rape-seed oil). This essence, if mixed with linseed or white oil, would give an odour and taste of *sarsav* oil and could be easily passed off as such. I am informed that it is actually purchased for such purpose in Ajmer at least. This leads to the suspicion that *sarsav* oil is not merely mixed with a little white

oil, but it is while oil or linseed oil which is sold in the name of *sarsav*.

The whole thing shows the depth of degradation we have sunk to.

Wardha, 1-5-'50

K. G. M.

NAI TALIM CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

[The following resolutions were passed at the *Nai Talim* Conference held at Angul (Orissa) in the second week of April, 1950.]

Resolution 1

This Conference notes that where the programme of Pre-Basic Education for children up to the age of seven has been carried out, it has proved itself not only a most valuable preparation for the work of the Basic schools but also an excellent starting point for Adult Education and the whole constructive programme. The Conference, therefore, urges that the State Governments and private agencies should take up Pre-Basic Education as an integral part of the educational programme and should open special sections for the training of Pre-Basic teachers in all the Basic Training Schools and specially in all the schools which provide for the training of women teachers.

Resolution 2

This Conference reiterates the resolution on Adult Education passed at the fourth All-India Basic Education Conference at Bikram and emphasizes the desirability of Adult Education being planned on the *Nai Talim* pattern.

The work of Adult Education (*samagra grama sewa*) should be closely co-ordinated with the work of the Basic and Pre-Basic schools and these schools wherever they exist, should be developed in this direction and an additional member of the staff provided for this purpose.

Resolution 3

This Conference emphatically endorses the principle that eight years' Basic Education course for children from 6 to 14 should be regarded as one whole and that it cannot be regarded as consisting of comparatively independent junior and senior sections. In accepting Basic Education as their future educational pattern, the Governments have accepted this integral eight years' course, and the Conference, therefore, urges them to consider their whole educational policy and the programme of the older traditional schools in the light of their acceptance of Basic Education.

The Conference notes with regret that policies inconsistent with the healthy development of Basic Education have been adopted in some provinces. The continued provision for teaching English in the 5th or 6th year of schooling in the traditional schools, while no provision is made for it before the Post-Basic stage in *Nai Talim*, is one such inconsistency and draws children away from Basic schools, just at the time when their Basic Education is beginning to show fruit. Such inconsistencies should be eliminated and every modification of the traditional school should be such as to bring them closer to the Basic standards which should be regarded as the *Norm*.

Resolution 4

The Conference notes with interest and pleasure that the recommendations of the University Commission of the relationship of the Post-Basic Education to the whole span of the educational programme are in harmony with the policy followed by the Hindustani Talimi Sangh. The recommendation reads as follows:

"The Duration of Rural Education: The duration of the rural Post-Basic or Secondary school period should be related to the entire span of education. One suitable distribution of this entire span would be:

8 years of Basic Education,
3 or 4 years for Post-Basic or Secondary Education,
3 years for college,
2 years Post-graduate University work for the Master's degree.

Resolution 5

This Conference notes with satisfaction the progress made in the established Post-Basic schools towards complete self-sufficiency and the development of the variety of productive activities adapted to the actual needs of the present day in India.

Resolution 6

The Conference notes the tremendous and growing demand for teachers to implement Basic Education throughout the country and the plans for the rapid expansion of training facilities. It urges that every possible effort should be made by all training agencies, both Government and non-Government, to improve the quality of training imparted and to see that every student in training acquires a thorough grasp of the constructive programme which *Nai Talim* is designed to serve. This cannot be done for the great majority of our students in less than two years of training and the courses provided in the training schools should in no case be shorter than this.

Resolution 7

The Conference has heard with satisfaction the results of the work undertaken by the Hindustani Talimi Sangh in organizing *Nai Talim* in the camps of Faridabad and Rajpura. The lakhs of displaced children now in India, offer a great challenge and opportunity both to *Sarvodaya* workers and to the State Governments to provide a sound Basic Education through which they can be trained as self-reliant and self-supporting citizens. We urge the Governments to start *Nai Talim* centres in their refugee camps utilizing the services of all the Basic Training personnel they can spare. In some States, such trained teachers are at present unemployed or employed in non-Basic schools and these may be employed immediately in meeting this need or their services be placed at the disposal of private agencies, who are prepared to undertake the work.

Resolution 8

The Conference notes with regret that in the present economic crisis there is a tendency for work in Basic Education to be postponed or even retrenched. In view of the fact that Basic Education is the accepted type for the future, this conference urges that whatever reductions are absolutely necessary should be made by closing the old-type schools. The development of Basic Education should not be dependent on the availability of special sources of income; it should be the first charge on the ordinary State education budget.

Resolution 9

In view of the need for successful experiments in *Nai Talim* in any part of India being made known to all other workers in the field, this Conference recommends that full information about all special features of their work should be supplied by the authorities concerned to the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, for circulation to all agencies of Basic Education throughout India.

Earth-worms and Chemical Manures

In his *Gardening without Digging* (R. Wigfield) Shri A. Guest describes an experiment made in order to discover the effect of artificials on earth-worms:

A box was made into four compartments so that worms could pass through the partitions at will. The same soil with a different treatment for each compartment was placed in the box. Five worms were put in each compartment, and this is what had happened after only four days:

Soil treated with	Number of worms in Compartment
Sulphate of ammonia	2
Complete artificial fertilizer	2
Ripe compost	11
Compost made with the use of a Chemical Activator	2

(Three died in the course of the experiment)

V. G. D.

HARIJAN

May 20

1950

WHY IS THE HINDU HATED ?

"Stop wooing the Muslims. We can never get on with them. Our generosity towards them is taken for our weakness. They will not behave well, until they begin to fear us. 'There is no love without fear,' says Tulsidas." We have heard such opinions expressed by many a Hindu for many a year. They are repeated with great emphasis and by a greater number of people for some time past.

Let us assume that the Muslim is an incorrigible and unrelenting hater of the Hindu and that he has made up his mind once for all that the Hindu religion does not deserve to exist, or if there are people who insist on sticking to it, they should be tolerated only in the position of more or less political subjugation. In that case, it is our duty to examine the reasons for this inveterate hatred. What is it in our life or in our dealings and practices that makes us contemptible in the eyes of others, but which we stick to in the name of religion? We Hindus, rightly or wrongly, are firmly of opinion that there is something in Islam, which makes even its decent followers fanatical and bigoted; that they are afraid to denounce even the grossest actions, if perpetrated in the name of religion; and that somehow they are trained to look upon woman with lustful eyes, on account of which one cannot be sure of the safety of her honour — particularly if she is an 'infidel' — if kept with them. But those who entertain uncharitable opinions for others must also seriously consider what it is that makes Hindus intolerable to them. Are we so, because of our extraordinary goodness, or because of some gross defects in us?

"The hunter, the fisherman and the wicked hate without any cause, the deer, the fish and the good, who subsist respectively on grass, water and contentment," says Bhartrihari. Is the hatred of the Muslims for the Hindus of this type? Or, we might leave the Muslim opinion alone as being too unreasonable and biased, and turn to the people belonging to religions other than Islam. What do they think of Hinduism? Let us also examine the attitude and feelings of Harijans, Adivasis and other backward classes of our own faith, towards *savarna* Hindus, who may reasonably be considered to be the pillars and trustees of Hinduism.

These thoughts come to me mainly as a result of many tragic reports which are brought to my notice from time to time from different parts of the country. Recently I received two reports of an identical nature. In one, a Harijan child had inadvertently touched his Brahman teacher while handing over a slate to him. In the other,

it so happened at the hands of an assistant teacher who was a Harijan. The inadvertent touch so much upset the *pandits* who had come after a bath, that in the first, the teacher beat the child with a shoe causing a permanent injury to one of his eyes, and in the second, the headmaster beat the assistant with a stick in the presence of the students. The first matter went up before a Court of law. The *pandit* then realized the gravity of his misdeed and appealed for mercy. Would it be wrong for a Harijan to feel that in Hinduism, the washed body and clothes of a Brahman are more sacred than the limbs and self-respect of a Harijan?

Another case: Being strongly persuaded by a Harijan-*sevak*, the Harijans of a village consented to send their children to a Government village school. The village was mainly inhabited by rigid orthodox *kisans*, which did not appreciate this 'pollution'. As soon as the Harijan-*sevak* and the Government officials had left, they scolded the teacher, gave threats to the Harijans and organized a boycott against them. They forbade the village shop-keeper to sell them grain, kerosene and other necessaries, and stopped employing them as labourers. For some time the Harijans did not give in, whereupon they received a threat that they would be beaten and their houses burnt down. This had the desired effect. Upon receiving the information that the Harijan children had discontinued attending the school, the Harijan-*sevak* decided that he should live in the village for some time if he was to succeed. So he settled down there and, what with persuasion and service and what with the help of the Government officials and law, succeeded in inducing the *savarna* Hindus to adjust themselves to the new situation.

In another village, the opposition came from the Rajputs. Their arrogance was greater than that of the peasants in direct proportion to their higher rank in caste. They beat the Harijan-*sevak*, Harijan parents and their children as also the school-master with stones and sticks. The conflict has not yet ended.

Let me narrate one more incident. There are three wells in a certain village. One belongs to the *chamars* (tanners), but is also used by the *kumhars* (potters) for their donkeys. The water is very little and generally muddy. Another belongs to *balais* (Harijan weavers), and the third one is in the joint use of 'Hindus and Muslims'. But here the term Hindu does not include *bhangis*, *chamars*, *balais* and other Harijans. The *bhangis* have no well of their own, that of the *chamars* being also closed to them. They fetch water from a 'river', which is no river at all, but a streamlet of muddy water. Under these circumstances, a few *chamar* women with the support of some Harijan-uplift-workers, took courage to draw water from the common well of the Hindus and Muslims. But the adventure had a very unfortunate end. The report of the deed spread immediately and as the Harijan workers were returning from the site

of the well, a crowd of men and women collected on the main street. The women armed with shoes were put in the vanguard of the party and prompted to belabour the workers. Later on the village roughs also joined the game. There was a shower of *lathis*, shoes, fists and kicks on the workers. After a brief respite, the assault was repeated. A gang emptied over the head of one of them a bucket of dirt and soot. The situation was brought under control only when the host with whom the workers were staying went to the people and gave them the assurance that he would get the well 'purified' at his own expense. While the workers were taking their punishment, it was disclosed later, that in the *chamar* locality, the *chamar* women were also assaulted and abused.

Let us consider what all this means. Is it any wonder, if these scavengers and cobblers develop hatred for the Hindus and Hinduism? We are very proud of our *Vedanta* philosophy of *Advaita*, but is there anything better in our daily religious life and conduct than the invidious sense of caste-distinctions and untouchability? Do we ever care to see the selfishness and inhuman hard-heartedness, which the caste-bigotry has developed in us? If per chance, these same *bhangis*, *chamars* and other so-called low-caste people became Christians or Muslims, they would be freely allowed to attend the common school or draw water from the common well. Why then should they not have the temptation to become Christians or Muslims? And since, even after conversion, Hindus would not give them equal treatment and would continue to exploit them in their business relations, why should they not aspire that the reins of Government must be in the hands of any but the Hindus?

Let us consider to what extent the Hindus themselves are responsible for the spread of Christianity and Islam. It is said that the Christians or Muslims suffer from a fanatical passion for proselytization. But this is not the whole truth. Much of their success in conversion is due to the many injustices which we have continuously inflicted upon them for centuries. We kept our artisans and craftsmen tied to a position of poverty and humiliation. We freely exploited their labour and services, and yet we regarded them as untouchable or low-caste. In this way we nearly compelled them to change their religion. Often many were taken to have become Muslims or Christians under a ridiculous sense of pollution of food or water. If a person even unknowingly partook of the forbidden food or water, he was excommunicated and driven to seek shelter in another faith ever after. While, on the one hand, the social boycott of the converted was continued, on the other hand, out of fear of the ruling authority, they were placed in a position superior to that of their kinsmen, who had still remained Hindus. Thus a Muslim or a Christian convert enjoyed a higher status than

an unconverted Hindu. To this day, this has been the policy of Hinduism which, in its practical form, has reduced itself to a bundle of observances of rules of bathing and eating. Many of us are convinced that there is no religion superior to Hinduism and we reveal this superiority complex by regarding every other religion as less developed than ours. Who, with any sense of self-respect, will tolerate this kind of arrogance?

Some of us are inclined to believe that every Muslim in India is a fifth-columnist. Suppose for a while that they are all expelled to Pakistan, but we continue to treat our backward and depressed and oppressed castes in our traditional way. The consequences will be that the suffering Harijans will continue to forsake their own religion in favour of another. If they cannot become Muslims, they will become Christians, Buddhists or Communists; or try in some other way to organize themselves and bring about a revolution, or found a separate Government.

This dismal future, which is nothing less than the total extinction of the caste-ridden Hindu religion in course of time, appears to me almost certain. Gandhiji said that, if untouchability remains, the Hindu religion cannot live. It behoves us to reflect over this grave prediction, and realize why the followers of other faiths hate the Hindus.

Akola, 2-4-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

(Translated from Hindi)

NOTES

Sir Hurkisondas Hospital

Sir H. N. Hospital of Bombay, which is celebrating its Silver Jubilee next week under the presidentship of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, is one of the model institutions of its type in India. It is by no means one of the largest hospitals of India and, on Western standards, is perhaps a very modest one. But, particularly among the Gujarati-speaking population, all over the country, it has won a popularity, which should be emulated by every institution meant for the service of the people afflicted with disease and physical injury. Treatment with the most modern up-to-date methods and drugs by first class physicians and surgeons is not, as is often believed, the greatest comfort and consolation to a patient in his illness. What a sick man and his friends need even in a greater measure than treatment is sympathy, consolation, understanding of the pecuniary and other difficulties, — in short, a touch of kindness and warm feelings on their strained nerves. For, when a patient enters the hospital, he is not the only person who feels miserable, but it is a whole family. The popularity of Sir H. N. Hospital is due in a very large measure to the great mental comfort, which the patient and his relatives experience within its premises, in addition to up-to-date treatment at the hands of the most eminent Gujarati physicians and surgeons of Bombay, working honorarily for all free patients.

This particular feature of this hospital is a legacy of its first Managing Trustee, the late Sheth Tulsidas Tribhowandas and the first batch of its honorary as well as salaried medical and nursing staff. They all combined to create a tradition which has been continued and further developed by its present Managing Trustee, Shri Gordhandas Bhagwandas, as well as the doctors. Gandhiji first came into direct contact with this hospital in 1926, when it was only a one-storey building with about 40 beds as against its present three storeys and 280 beds. He then wrote as follows in the Visitors' Book :

"I offered a mental tribute to the philanthropy of Sir Hurkisonadas. The cleanliness of the hospital struck me as deserving to be imitated by others. I personally felt through my son (Shri Devadas Gandhi, who was operated upon for appendicitis) that many a poor patient found comfort here. The son-in-law of Sir Hurkisonadas, who has constituted himself the soul of the Hospital, gives all his services to it. This is very creditable to him and makes it possible for the Hospital to work in such an efficient manner. I have just learnt that all the doctors working for the Hospital give their help free of charge and in a spirit of service. I congratulate them."

This testimonial is as good today as it was 25 years ago. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was pleased in 1936 to find in it "a beautifully and efficiently equipped hospital", and Acharya Kripalani, who had been its patient for a fortnight, expressed his satisfaction unstintedly.

The Hospital was originally intended to serve only Gujarati Hindus. But it became impossible for it to restrict itself strictly to the people of a single language and religion, and people of almost every province have received its services. During communal and other disturbances it has served without any distinction of caste, creed or language.

A word must be said for the almost forgotten Lady Mankorbai, wife of Sir Hurkisonadas. The donation left by Sir Hurkisonadas was worth under rupees three lakhs and was inadequate for founding a hospital. When Lady Mankorbai learnt this, she gave almost the whole of her own property—about rupees four lakhs—to add to her husband's, and thus made the hospital a practical proposition. "What about the name in that case?" she was asked. "My husband's name, of course. You may keep my name somewhere as you do for a donor of one lakh." Thus it was Lady Mankorbai's almost unconditional gift and devotion to her husband, which made the Hospital possible.

The Hospital in spite of its expansion during all these years has become rather too small for the calls upon it. The Trustees have made an appeal for public funds to enlarge the Hospital and maintain it in these days of high cost.

I hope, the Hospital will continue to enjoy the popularity it has won and to receive the patronage of donors.

Wardha, 8-5-'50

Indo-Pakistan Press

The Delhi Agreement has been followed by other acts in the same spirit. The most important of these is the joint conference of the Press representatives of Bharat and Pakistan. In democratic countries, the Press wields even greater power than the States and Universities. A very large part of the newspaper-reading public credulously make their own the views preached by the editor of the paper usually read by them and take the information supplied by him as authentic even if it is a mere rumour or conjecture. Even those who do not care to read the leading articles are influenced by the way in which reports of events are dressed up for public consumption. Thus the Indian public knows only such facts as are favourable to India, and the Pakistan public the other way. If the Indian and the Pakistan Press speak the same voice, the people of both the sub-countries would form identical views. If they put themselves in opposite camps, their people would be trained to look upon each other as enemies. It is to a very great extent in the hands of the Press of the two States, whether there should prevail peace and prosperity or hostility and adversity in our common fatherland.

The resolution made by the Press representatives of both the sub-countries to foster peace and amity in the mutual relations of the people of the two States is very welcome.

Wardha, 11-5-'50

K. G. M.

SOCIALIST SUPPORT TO THE AGREEMENT

[In a long statement to the Press (May 6th), Shri Jaiprakash Narayan reviews the history of the Indian politics which led to the Partition of the country and states the position of the Socialist Party in regard to the difficult problem of migrations and communal troubles, and gives his reasons for supporting the recent Nehru-Liaquat Agreement. It is a well-reasoned document and deserves to be studied with a cool mind. I regret I am able to reproduce only a few of its important passages.

— Ed.]

Partition and Its Problems

"The principle and the practice (which) combined to partition the country.....solved nothing. While the two-nation theory brought into being two separate States, the two separate 'nations' still faced each other on both sides of the border. The prime question then was: Would these 'separate nations' live together in amity and be welded into a common nationality?"

"The question was the same that had faced undivided India; and if the answer was found to be affirmative, Partition and all the attendant bitterness and hostility had been unnecessary; the two nations might as well have lived together in undivided India.

Solutions

"What is the solution of this awful problem?" was the anguished question that millions asked. In the opinion of the Socialist Party there are only two solutions of this problem and no third.

"One solution is to accept the full implications of the two-nation theory. That would

mean the expulsion of all Hindus from Pakistan and of all Muslims from India. I understand that the exchange of Hindus and Muslims from East and West Bengal was the solution suggested by Dr. Shyamaprasad Mookerjee. Some others too have made the same suggestion. But it is not realized that such an exchange of population can never stop with East and West Bengal. The logic of the situation would drive us to its inexorable end.

"This solution is wholly repugnant to me, as it must be to all who believe in the principles of human civilization. To be forced to accept the principle that two human beings could not live together because their religions were different, was to go back to the Dark Ages and to deny everything that one had stood for.

"The practical aspects of this solution are no less repugnant. People cannot be forced out of their homes except by force. Application of force on such a mass scale cannot but brutalize the whole people and reduce life in this country to the 'brutest' level.

"Further, such gigantic migrations must disorganize the country's economy and put a strain on the State that must prove unbearable. Again, exchange of a crore of Hindus for four crores of Muslims must start the train of a new conflict, because Pakistan would feel justified to demand new territory to settle the excess population. The remedy would thus have created a new disease.

"The acceptance of this solution would also mean the victory of Hindu communalism and the ascendancy of the Hindu *rashtra* mentality. That would inevitably stimulate separatism further; and then the separatist mentality might not be restricted to religious communities, but might spread to racial, linguistic, and even caste groups. That would be the end of India.

"Thus considered from every point of view, the idea of exchange of populations must be given up.

Both States to be Secular

"That leaves only one possible solution: namely, that both India and Pakistan be secular States and the minorities in both have full security and equal citizenship.

"It was in the light of this basic analysis that the Socialist Party Executive had enunciated at Rewa its policy in regard to East Bengal situation. Since it still remains our basic policy, let me bring out the main points. The main points were three:

"First, India must hold fast to its secular character, and no matter what happened in Pakistan must give full protection and security to its Muslim citizens and guarantee them equal rights of citizenship.

"Second, India should, by friendly approaches to Pakistan, try to persuade that country to join hands to guarantee in words and deeds full protection and opportunity for development to all minorities. The Executive went on fur-

ther to say that 'in this connection the Prime Minister's suggestion for a joint inquiry commission and a joint tour with Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan was a commendable beginning. That suggestion bore no fruit. But further attempts should be made and the idea of a joint tour and inquiry should be expanded to wider joint actions.'

"The last point provided for a way out in case of a possible failure of these efforts. To quote the Executive again, 'if the earnest attempts of our Government do not succeed and the people and the Government of Pakistan persist in their present policy, India must finally, and sooner rather than later, act on her own and take every measure to protect the minorities and human rights in Pakistan.'

"I still stand four square by this policy and hold that there is no alternative.

Peace and War

"While it is true that I had suggested what is known in international law as 'measure short of war', it is not right to overlook the qualifying conditions and fasten attention only on the final step. Let me remind the reader of the conditions I had set forth. First, I had emphasized that there must be peace and order in India and our Muslim citizens must live without fear and in enjoyment of equal rights with Hindus. As I had said in a later statement, we cannot rush to protect minorities and human rights elsewhere, when we fail to do so at home. Second, I had insisted at Nagpur that though Nehru's friendly approaches had proved infructuous fresh attempts should be made to reach a peaceful solution.

"It was only in the event of all peaceful efforts failing and when we had succeeded in keeping peace at home and doing justice to our minorities, that I had suggested what was described as armed intervention.

"As it turned out, Nehru's hope was justified, and a peaceful settlement was arrived at. To oppose that settlement or to sabotage it is to play with fire, for as Nehru has said the alternative is war. War is a frightful affair and no sane person would rush into it when other avenues of settlement are open. Nor would war necessarily save the Hindus of East Bengal nor help in the rehabilitation of the refugees.

"There is a great deal of talk about the honesty of purpose of Pakistan. 'Will they implement the agreement?' we are asked on all sides. It occurs to no one to ask if WE will implement it. Judging from the temper of the people of West Bengal and the attitude of its Press, one may well ask that question.

"Let us remember that if we implemented the agreement and Pakistan did not, a solution — though a tragic solution — would yet be available. But if we both failed to do the job, no solution could ever be found. A war wrought in a communal climate on both sides would only result in mutual destruction. It would be quite a different affair, however, if an India which had upheld the principles of civilization and

respected human rights, used force for the enforcement of those very rights and principles. The result of such force cannot but be the defeat of the forces of evil and reaction.

"As a Socialist, I have ever been an enemy of communalism. I was a bitter opponent of the League and its two-nation theory and of Partition. I was also, and am an opponent of Hindu, Sikh and all other communalism.

Gandhiji's Position

"Let me remind my critics of what Gandhiji had once said at the time of the Punjab riots. When the gigantic forced migrations began, Gandhiji firmly set his face against them. He declared solemnly that he would never accept the migrations as final and would never bow his head before the principle that human beings could not live together just because they professed different faiths. He said that conditions must be created in India so that every Muslim who had fled with his life might return to his home and live in peace and with honour. And he said further that in Pakistan similar conditions must be created so that every Hindu and Sikh could go back to live with honour and happiness.

"And then he made a most startling statement. He said that if we succeeded in creating such conditions in India, and Pakistan failed, he would be prepared to fight with Pakistan on that issue. Let it be remembered that it was in trying to create those conditions in India that the Nation's Father was martyred.

"My proposal was no different in principle from what Gandhiji had said. There is no doubt, of course, that the Mahatma was sure that if he succeeded in creating the conditions for which he was working, the moral force of his success would have conquered Pakistan and the 'fight' of which he talked would have been unnecessary. Lesser man like me might nurse the same hope.

"At any event, let it be remembered that there was no room for *force majeure* in my proposal if we failed to create the conditions for the Muslims in India which we were demanding for the Hindus of Pakistan. But if we did do that and Pakistan did not, and withal rejected all peaceful methods of settlement, then I did expect all Muslims in India to join hands with other Indians in compelling Pakistan by force to do its duty by its citizens.

Re-union

"Lastly, a few words about *Akhand Bharat*. There is a great deal of talk about the re-union of India and Pakistan in Hindu communal circles. It is tragic, however, that these circles do not realize that by their actions they do everything possible to defeat their purpose. It was communalism, both Muslim and Hindu, that was responsible for the division of the country. Communalism now can only further divide and alienate.

"If the Hindu communalist is dreaming, as he well might, of re-uniting the broken pieces by a war of conquest, he is living in a fool's paradise. Ten crores of Muslims of Pakistan

and India could never be forced to become citizens of India by sword.

"Even if the world allowed the battle to be fought and India were victorious, its victory would become its defeat, for it would have a hundred million rebels on its hands, backed by millions outside. It would be a task beyond the powers of any nation to keep a hundred million people under subjugation. And why should India want to subjugate any one? Did we win our freedom from subjugation only to subjugate others? If I understand my countrymen, their overwhelming answer would be 'no'.

"Strange as it may appear, I too dream of a re-united India. I dream of it because I am a Socialist. I dream of it because I have faith in the toiling peoples of the earth. I dream of it because I dream of an Asian federation and ultimately of a World Government. But a World Government is a far cry from a Hindu imperialism."

Rural v. Urban

An educationist writes:

"If you do not take care, you will find that basic education in urban areas will take a different form from the rural areas. For instance English will be introduced to the injury of the mother-tongue and a kind of superiority complex developed."

I must confess that my scheme was conceived in terms of the villages, and when I was developing it I did say that some variation will be necessary in applying the scheme to the cities. This had reference to the industries to be used as media of instruction. I never thought that English could even find place in the primary stage. And the scheme has so far concerned itself only with the primary stage. No doubt the primary stage is made equivalent to the matriculation, less English. To inflict English on children is to stunt their natural growth and perhaps to kill originality in them. Learning of a language is primarily a training in developing memory. Learning of English from the beginning is an unnecessary tax on a child. He can only learn it at the expense of the mother-tongue. I hold it to be as necessary for the urban child as for the rural to have the foundation of his development laid on the solid rock of the mother-tongue. It is only in unfortunate India that such an obvious proposition needs to be proved.

Seгаon, 31-8-'39

M. K. G.

(From *Harijan*, September 9, 1939)

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