

HARIJAN

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(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

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TWO ANNAS

LONG LIVE JAWAHARLALJI

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

Some mad young man in Nagpur lost his balance on some count and suddenly attacked Jawaharlalji with a knife in hand. The A. D. C. of the M. P. Governor, Shri Pattabhi who was by his side in the car immediately jumped from his seat in the rear and overpowered him with the help of the police. It is God's good mercy that Panditji was saved this way. May he live long.

Jawaharlalji just took the incident lightly and went through his whole programme for the day calmly and cheerfully, as if nothing serious had happened. And he told the press to report so to the country and not make any fuss about it. For him to say so is just like him; it abundantly shows of what rare stuff he is made. But the people should seriously think about such incidents.

What provoked the assailant to act as he did is a matter for inquiry. We hope it was no political or communalistic fanaticism. There is no question of any personal grudge here. Then remains only a cause of some unbalanced thoughtlessness on his part. As far as we know from the press till now, the young man is alleged to have been provoked by some recurring mishap in his occupation! Even so, how would it avail him to act in this way? However such thoughtlessness is to be seen increasing in our present city life. Unemployment and new urban vices coming to us in the wake of the industrial civilization of the Western pattern seem to unhinge workers' minds, resulting in such incidents. It just comes to my mind what a calamity it would have been if the foolish assailant had been with a pistol! There is a lesson here for us. If along with the ideas of armed self-defence and national defence, we do not also inculcate in the popular mind the basic virtues of human love and brotherhood, peace, non-violence and balance of mind, then it will mean providing an ape with a bottle of wine, as our Indian proverb goes. As thinkers in the West say, we will have science without wisdom, — a terrible situation mankind is in today. The incident at Nagpur must be a warning to both the servants and teachers of our people. We desire to rebuild our country with non-violence and peace, on wise and democratic

lines. Therefore, we should not allow ourselves to be drawn away by merely economic motives. There are equally — if not more — important other aspects of our progress, to which the sooner we are awake the better. We know Shri Jawaharlal has undertaken this great work of rebuilding the nation. May he have long life and health to complete this noble undertaking.

13-3-55

(From the original in Gujarati)

FEAR AND MODERN LIFE

(By E. V. Pullias)

III

Some Major Fears

This age is cursed with many fears, including the extremely harmful generalized fear called anxiety. But there are three large fears more or less identifiable that have become so severe as to approach the obsession level. They affect every aspect of modern man's behaviour, and thus are very important to our subject.

1. There is the deep fear of freedom. The evidence seems conclusive that Western man has been retreating from freedom at a steadily accelerated rate for about fifty years. Perhaps he achieved too much freedom too rapidly, became frightened by the responsibilities that accompany freedom, and is fleeing from them.

This fear is the most tragic of all, for freedom is absolutely essential to all growth and adaptive change. Without freedom, thought and action become stereotyped, unrelated to reality, and finally repressive and persecutive. Thus, instead of the free mind and kind heart, man develops the fettered mind and the brutal heart. He learns to be suspicious of all that is different from what he knows, and finally is driven to continuous spying upon his neighbours and even his brothers.

The noxious plant that grows from this poisonous root — the fear of freedom — eventually chokes out all the useful and beautiful plants in the fields of man's life. The creative arts, invention, learning, co-operative service, even love itself: all of these aspects of the true dignity of man are dependent for their life and growth upon wide and deep freedom.

In spite of all this evidence, after centuries of painful journey toward the light of freedom,

man begins to doubt its worth, to become afraid of it, and retreats from it. Everything of significance in human life rests upon man's ability to conquer his fear and regain his faith in the meaning and importance of freedom guided by truth and love.

2. The fear of difference—of variety or variation—is a second great fear. Clearly it is closely related to the fear of freedom, for if men are free they will differ in ideas and action.

This fear of the different is perhaps as old as man. Often in the long history of the race that which was different from the usual in thought or action threatened or seemed to threaten the safety of the group. Only very few ideas were helpful, and many were dangerous, for mistakes were often fatal. The easiest path was to avoid all that was different or new, and to destroy as enemies of the social order those who instigated the different.

But there was another need in man; namely, the yearning to fill the gap between that which is and that which ought to be. Under the pressure of this need, choice souls proposed thoughts and actions which were new and different. Most of them suffered martyrdom.

As the modern era developed, it seemed that men might finally understand the beauty and wisdom of variety as contrasted with uniformity. Under the pressure of war and far-flung revolution man begins again to fear variety, and behaving in terms of this fear, through his government, demands a uniformity that threatens to destroy the process necessary to all progress.

3. The fear of insecurity is so common as to be the characteristic quality of this age. This phobia (for certainly it has developed a pathological aspect) also has a long history in man's experience. For countless centuries man has been striving to attain a measure of security. There has been legitimate need for a feeling of assurance and safety. To be economically, physically, mentally, spiritually secure—what could be more desired?

In the absence of a reasonable degree of these basic securities all of man's fine energies are absorbed in a sordid struggle for survival. A student of mine who had spent his childhood and youth in dire poverty in an over-populated, poverty-stricken country told me that the central thought there was how to obtain the bare necessities of biological survival. Nothing else mattered; beauty, truth, and goodness did not exist for him.

Thus it is not difficult to understand men's preoccupation with security and the corresponding fear of insecurity. He is like a pathologically deprived child: long after the deprivation has ceased, the personality traits developed in response to the deprivation remain. Thus prosperity does little or nothing to relieve this fear. A deeper change involving basic attitudes is needed.

Most important is man's reaction to this fear. He has concluded that the security which has

become the central goal of his life can be attained through material means and through conformity in thought and action. Knowing that man must have bread and order he has concluded that man can live by bread and order alone. Few errors could be more gross and more threatening to man's future. There is only one type of meaningful security and that is security based upon character which rests solidly upon ethical principles in a framework of freedom and experimentation. As Socrates said long ago: "Nothing in this world or the next can harm a good man". The converse is equally true: Nothing can give security to a bad man.

And so we come in our study of fear and its effect upon modern life to a fundamental conclusion: A deep respect for and concern about truth is the essence of wisdom. This concern for truth which enables man to distinguish the false from the true, the real from the unreal, should be the chief concern of modern man. The search for truth must be free from fear and fear's distortions. In his welter of petty fears man tends to lose the fear of falsehood which is the direst of all dangers for man. Nothing can save a man or a nation that loses the ability to distinguish the true from the false, for behaviour in terms of false perception is self-destructive.

(From *New Outlook*, December 1954)

COST OF ADVERTISING

(By Kshitindra Kumar Nag)

Papers carry advertisements, and we say the public thus get the benefit of cheap newspapers, magazines and the like. No wonder, the advertisement makes easy encroachment on space of otherwise readable journals, no matter how inaccurate and misleading, it is often, as to facts. As if nothing is wrong with a publication when it is in the form of an advertisement.

The fallacy of this is brought home when we stop to think that we actually pay for the advertisement, for the simple reason that selling price of an article advertised includes the advertising expense. And remember that most of the advertised preparations are sold at a price many times greater than their cost.

There is much to be said against the advertisements, especially occupying space in the page of the reading matter of a paper. Till not even two decades before advertising pages were seen cautiously segregated from those of the reading matter. Now the advertisements unscrupulously allowed to share space in the page of the reading matter definitely mar its aesthetic aspect and at the same time lower its value for reading. Such infiltration becomes a distinct nuisance unavoidable in case of the periodicals for binding entailing as well an additional expense for unnecessary enlargement of the volume. It will not be too much to say that this is chiefly designed to secure attention from the best place of its concentration.

The fact is that such advertisements must distract the reader's attention. That's what it's

there for. Plainly, the attention to the reading matter cannot remain undivided to one's disgust.

Even more pernicious than this sort of advertisements is the influence of the advertisers over the press. They have the power to suppress or withhold what other people have to say and thus deprive the reader of a glimpse of the other side of the picture, concerning the products advertised.

The object of purchasing a paper is primarily for reading matter, not surely for advertisements. It is therefore not right for the press to accept any advertisement irrespective of the reader's benefit. An advertisement is pretty much of an endorsement by a paper in which it is published.

The modern falsification in much of our advertising is destroying the value of all advertising. By permitting this sort of thing the advertiser and the advertising agencies are killing the goose that lays the golden eggs. Unless great care is exercised concerning the truth or falsity of the advertising material, all advertising will eventually be discredited and ignored by an enlightened public as entirely untrustworthy.

The total effects of false advertisements should not be considered trivial either, as they must influence the credulous public's outlook to a considerable extent — sufficient enough for the advertisers who are after shortsighted ends. And due to ignorance or indifference and for the want of social control we may have to observe often steadily mounting dishonesty in advertising copies.

Unfortunately enough, where it is incumbent upon the authorities to stand for certain social values and considerations, they are becoming a party to the offence for their own political ends. For example, one of our State Governments is still wasting enormous amount of the public funds for advertising their "accomplishments" to convince (or fool?) people as to how much they are doing for the rehabilitation of the refugees, with prominent illustrations consistent with tall stories in successive issues. Now, according to their advertisements if we are not still wise or convinced, it is our own fault!

There is something each of us can do about the advertisements when they become a nuisance. Remember that when their claims are too lofty, they are never to be taken for reliable buying guides. The best bargains seldom come in extravagant claims. When a particular advertisement injures the page of the reading matter, tell the advertiser that so long as his advertisement appears there, you are to buy a competitive product not advertised in the reading matter page. The customer is always right.

Also write to the papers not to make money the principal object of their profession by helping shrewd advertisers to remove money from the pockets of the many fearful and ignorant people and put it into the pockets of the shrewd few. Request the government repeatedly till they take

action against false and immoral advertisements. No use of getting tired in such an unfair state of things, too costly too, if we want them to be remedied.

A CONDITION FOR PEACE

(By Gora)

The protests voiced forth in *Harijan* dated 25-12-1954 against military training for youth, have overlooked one fact which is as vital for the establishment of peace as non-violence. Society is a close association of multifarious principles, policies and factors. Improvement in one of them cannot be brought about unless corresponding changes are affected in the rest. The greatness of Gandhiji lay in his readiness for the correlative changes. Here is what he said about a government adopting non-violence:

"A non-violent system of government is clearly an impossibility so long as the wide gulf between the rich and the hungry millions persists."*

Gandhiji clearly saw the relationship between the practice of non-violence and the establishment of economic equality. Then, how can we hope for non-violence without working for economic equality?

Gandhiji expected that "the contrast between the palaces of New Delhi and the miserable hovels of the poor labouring class nearly cannot last one day in a free India", (*ibid*). He presumed that after Swaraj land would be owned by the State; that the reins of the Government would be in the hands of those who had faith in this idea; that the public opinion had already been educated and that it was almost ready that time. (*Harijan* dated 29-12-'51, page 370 — "Bapu on Land Distribution"). But where are we today?

Because the Indian Government is moving away from the principle of economic equality that was laid down by Gandhiji, it follows naturally that it should move away from the principle of non-violence too. Violence is the prop which keeps up inequalities in social relations, especially the economic inequalities. And violence cannot be removed without readjusting the existing economic order at first.

So the foremost obligation of the votaries of non-violence is to work for economic equality instead of complaining against the increase of violence within social relations. Working for economic equality in India will mean decentralized economy, village republics, and socialization. Of late the Lok Sabha has expressed itself in favour of Socialism. Let the pacifists press upon the Government for the execution of this principle in the country.

4-1-'55

[The Avadi Congress has decided that we aim to have a 'Socialistic Pattern of Society'. If anything, it does mean to have equality. The writer is right where he says that

* 13th item 'Economic Equality' in *Constructive Programme* by Gandhiji, Price As. 6, Postage etc. As. 3.

the way to that equality lies through giving work to every one through decentralized economy etc. and I may add, through reconstructing our educational system for educating the whole of our people on basic educational lines.
21-2-55 M. P. J.

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1955

"THE ECONOMIC MANIA"

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

In these days of slogans for economic equality and planning for welfare etc.—all of them almost exclusively in terms of materialistic good of man—it is as well to remember the following from the editorial article of the *Manas*, U.S.A., of 16-6-'54 under the heading 'The Economic Mania'. It observes:

"Concentration on economics, and economic theory as the panacea for all human ills has corrupted the standard of genuine civilization in large areas of the modern world. The concentration has been natural enough, since it resulted from indefensible economic exploitation....."

"It was probably inevitable that the 19th century 'discovery' of economics should lead to elaborate doctrines concerning economic processes. The old ethical compulsions were worn out by hypocritical applications whereas the economic doctrines, supported by humanitarian fervour, were new and sanctified by the spirit of 'science'."

"But are we not able, now, to say that we have learned our lesson, to admit that economic justies is important, just as all forms of justice are important, and to stop making the mistake of assuming that, economics is somehow a total 'philosophy of life'? It seems a most peculiar folly to imitate the Communists in this way."

The last sentence contains a noteworthy observation.

In economic terms the communist argument and dialectic is so over-simplified and deeply appealing to the jealous in us, that it becomes irresistible to the mass mind.*

*It must be added here that it easily takes in the 'under-graduate intelligence' in our colleges and among the economically hard pressed middle class—the intelligentsia also. As Shri M. R. Masani in his latest book *The Communist Party of India* (p. 237) observes:

"The empty mind and soul provide as good a breeding ground for communism as an empty stomach. This is particularly true of a country where there is new literacy and new education. Thousands of young men and women in India have acquired the art of reading, the capacity to learn; they look around the world and try to understand what is happening. They want an answer to the problems—economic, social and political—that puzzle them. Why then don't they get a job which they think they deserve?—and so on. Who gives them the answers? Today the only people who think it worth their while to provide answers are the communists."

"The fact that communist propaganda is making much more headway among the bourgeoisie and prosperous groups, such as administrators, educators and scientists, than among the peasantry and the working class lends support to the thesis that it is not poverty or even starvation that primarily predisposes men to the attraction of

On the other hand, the capitalist logic is so self-centred and appealing to the acquisitive in us, and apparently to the freedom-loving in us as well that it becomes irresistible to the few gifted or powerful ones of society.

Under such circumstances, a middle doctrine of 'socialistic' or 'mixed' economy, however wise it may appear on commonsense or pragmatic grounds, becomes a comparatively weak argument, as it is neither here nor there.

However, what is noteworthy here is that all of them sail under "a most peculiar folly" that the economic motive is as if the whole or the chief or main one for man in society!

The mixed economy idea tries to have for itself the good of both the extremes, viz. capitalism and communism. From the former it accepts the idea of individual freedom and democracy; from the latter it accepts to employ the easy way of the coercive powers of the State for planning the life of the community and all that it involves, viz. regulation and control amounting to almost a regimented and centralist economy. The two ways are poles asunder. Communism solves this dilemma, at least theoretically, by positing a heaven of its own, viz. the utopia of a classless and Stateless society that will usher in an era of true human freedom and dignity. To reach this state, it discards democracy as a weak and unhelpful creed and applauds dictatorship of the proletariat as a transitional measure before reaching the final stage wherein the State will have withered away and we shall have a classless and equalitarian society.

The mixed economy as if swears by the co-existence of the two classes, viz. the capitalist and the labourer, or to use the new phrase, the private and the public sector. This, in the mind of the common man, appears as a class-war situation, intuitively and almost irresistibly preparing him to accept the Marxist formulation of dialectical materialism. It is therefore that communism goes on having its day in the climate of the mixed economy idea also. We must therefore have an ideology which cuts an independent line of its own and does not commit the "peculiar folly" of a mere economic doctrine but is, philosophically and culturally, a direct frontal answer to it. This only can meet the ideological challenge contained in the two economic doctrines that are contending for world supremacy at present.

To quote the *Manas* further, the appeal of capitalism lies in its "chief virtue as a theory of economic relations that it allows more practical freedom than any other theory we know of, for human beings living in an industrial society.

communism. While economic factors undoubtedly play a part, the basic motivations are psychological and emotional. It is the psychological and emotional void created by the loosening of the hold of the traditional religions of India that provides room for what is essentially a new religion of materialism. It is the literate middle-class man so affected who utilizes and exploits the economic conditions of the rural and urban toilers."

This does not mean that we have any great admiration for the industrial society of the present, nor for capitalism. . . . We take the view that the acquisitive drive in human beings is what gives capitalism its energy and makes it seem like the 'natural order of things'. It happens that there are better drives or motives for human enterprise, and when they replace the acquisitive drive, capitalism as a 'way of life' will doubtless be replaced by something better also."

On the other hand, the writer of the *Manas* says, "We have no sympathy with the communist theory of progress" either. "Its utter contempt for the individual as such, its assumption that men are wholly creatures of their environment, and the methods of social control which result from these beliefs have the effect of tearing down what little is left of genuine civilization."

"However," the writer admits that the question remains "why intelligent men—for founders of modern communism were intelligent, even brilliant—led their people in this direction."

And he replies, "The philosophy of communism was originally formulated by men alienated from traditional values of Western culture. This alienation was not without cause. There is truth in the Communist Manifesto of 1848—it is not the whole truth, but there is truth in it. There is guilt of bloodshed in it also, but the guilt attaches also to those who refused to read it as a warning. It is surely a mistake to believe that the revolution of the communists is the path to a better world, but it is a mistake equally great to suppose that, since the communists are wrong, there is no need to consider in what way they may have been right and to work for a better world along other lines."

Which are, what possibly can be, the other lines contemplated here is an obvious point for consideration. In a way, this question arises for us in India for the first time in its modern history. A reply given at Avadi is to strive to achieve a socialistic pattern of society with an aim to secure a Welfare State; this is to be done in a democratic way.

This formula has an immediate and pragmatic value in our present circumstances. On the political front, it is an answer to bodies like the P.S.P. The impact has already had a cracking effect on the latter. On the economic front, the capitalist and the industrialist has a warning that he will not have all as he wished to, but will have to submit to a controlled and regulated private economy. He has begun to protest against this new curb coming on him, even though in mild terms. On the social front it should mean social equality that must shun untouchability, casteism, communalism, provincialism, and, I beg to repeat, titles and awards etc. which are sure to create avoidable or undesirable social inequalities.

This is all right so far as it goes. But how does it meet the challenge of the communist idea? How does it affect the poor villager? A

merely economic answer, which the slogan of a socialistic pattern-cum-Welfare State idea conveys, will not be enough. To do this successfully well, it is necessary to have a critique and an ethic which is not only economic, but also is human and spiritual having its basis in the culture of our people. It must provide an alternative to the ruthlessly economic religion of communism.*

The Gandhian way scores here, as it gives us a new ethic, a new economy and a new critique of both communism and capitalism or free enterprise, the twin Gods of the warring modern Western and the Russian world. Do we plan to take that way?

9-3-'55

SYNTHESIS OF BHAKTI AND KARMA YOGA NECESSARY

(By Vinoba)

[From a speech delivered at Vishnupur, West Bengal, on 10-1-'55.]

Man Is Imperfect

The stream of *bhakti* that Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu set going in this land was as holy as Mother Ganges. But to be the Ganges is one thing and to be the ocean is quite another. The stream of the Ganges cannot claim to be the sea. Whatever idea, therefore, regarding the truth of life manifests itself in this world helps the development of the knowledge of one particular facet of this many-sided thing called life and the task of cultivating the knowledge of other facets remains to be done. If it were possible for the idea of life to flower fully in the manifestation of one particular aspect of it and if this was possible in the functioning of one particular sect of religion adopting it, nothing would have remained for man to do; humanity as a whole would have found its salvation long ago; indeed, human society would have ceased to exist as such. We see that even after the preachings of Buddha the world needed Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. It therefore stands to reason that if perfection was manifested in all its fullness and glory in Lord Buddha there should have been no need for Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. This leads us to the conclusion that the process of development of ideas and ideals constantly goes on in society and it thus endeavours to cultivate perfection in some one or another aspect of life. Even today we have not reached perfection in any one particular ideal.

The attitude of men of science is worth our consideration in this regard. They believe that

* By the way I may as a footnote, quote the *Manas* here: "Communism is the faith that all important questions, all important issues, are essentially political, to be answered and decided by political means. And since political action is not possible without power—the power to compel the behaviour of men in one or another direction—the morality of communism is defined wholly in political terms. Political 'anti-communism' is not the opposite of communism, but more like its twin, since anti-communism very largely accepts the methods, and therefore certain basic assumptions, of communism itself" (*Manas*, p. 1, 9-6-'54).

science is infinite and that they have been able to know but a very small fraction of it. Even the best of the scientists of today have but reached only one small aspect of science. This applies to the experience of self-realization also. We dare not run away with the impression that man has had perfect realization of the soul or the spirit in all its aspects or that there is yet no scope for progress or development in the direction of its perfect knowledge. I agree that it is possible for some one person to reach the final limit of perfection by resorting to *bhakti* or the sentiment of devotion. But that would be like the river merging in the ocean, becoming one with it, and indeed becoming the ocean itself. Even so man can reach perfection by identifying himself with some one aspect of the truth of life. This is why I believe that if someone was to reach full devotion or *bhakti* in his life we should be able to see in him ideal control of the senses, true *yoga*, *bhakti*, true knowledge, and *karma-yoga* too will be seen manifested in him.

God-Infatuated Man

If therefore someone were to tell me that devotion in the form of singing God's Name was enough, I do not hesitate to agree with him. But when it is said that singing God's Name and His praises is adequate it should mean that the man who devotes himself to it cannot have anything else in his life but His Name : that in every act of his, even in his normal activities like eating and drinking, sleep and waking there will be nothing else but His Name. If such a person eats he subsists on His Name, if he drinks he will quench his thirst by His Name; and if he goes to sleep it will be on the faith in His Name. Such a person will not have any other kind of attraction, infatuation or attachment in his life. In whomsoever and whatever he sees he will see God manifested. If he is given some bitters to drink he will say I am drinking His Name; and if he has to drink some sweet juice he will then also say I am tasting the juice of His Name. If insults were showered on such a person he will accept it as cheerfully as if God's grace was showered on him; and if honours and respect were showered on him then also will he take them as but His grace. Such a person is indeed blessed and we cannot have any feelings for him but those of respect, honour and worship.

Devotion and Service to Society

When, however, we are striving for the regeneration of the whole of society our purpose will not be served by placing before it only one ideal or one virtue. By cultivation and development of only one ideal or virtue society tends to become lopsided. I have said before that only by forgetting oneself in the intoxication of the sentiment of devotion and being content only with singing God's Name and His praises does not lead to perfection in life. Such devotion has to manifest itself concretely in deeds of service to society and in hard endeavour.

Need of Karma Yoga

I have made this statement before now on many occasions. It is not that I am saying this as something new and for the first time. The Upanishads have also said this very thing. The Upanishads say that he who has attained knowledge of *Brahma* is perfect and the best and highest among men. The Vaishnavas feel about the devotee of the Lord that he is perfect; even so the Upanishads have said that he who has realized *Brahma* is perfect. But while expounding their statement further the seers of the Upanishads have said something wonderful which testifies to the subtlety of their intellect and the depth of their understanding of life. They have said that, amongst those who have attained the knowledge of *Brahma* he who is devoted to action is the highest and the best : **क्रियावान् अथ ब्रह्मविद् बरिष्ठः**. This saying, in short, means that even the man of knowledge, the *jñanayogi*, is imperfect if his knowledge does not show itself in *karma-yoga* that is action and if it does not show in his attitude of willingly giving up the fruits of his actions. Mere devotion is prone to be void of all action and if not informed with knowledge is also prone to become lifeless and mechanical. Mere knowledge without *bhakti* or devotion is very likely to prove dry or harsh and lacking all action.

Action Alone Is Not Enough

If someone were to ask me, 'when you are glorifying action and activity so much could you also say that if a man were to devote himself to action only he will reach perfection?' I shall at once say, no. If a man of action had not devotion in him, had not also knowledge in him he is likely to develop pride and attachment in himself. His action or activity void of knowledge and the sentiment of devotion will not lead him to perfection; why, even his activity will lack fulfilment, that is, remain imperfect.

As an illustration have a look at Europe. Activity and action there have taken hold of men and women. People always feel short of time. Why, they have coined a phrase which indicates their attitude. Time is money, they say. They devote every moment available to them to activity or action. The spirit of action among the people of Europe and America has developed in them immense pride because their actions lack humanity which is born of devotion and also lack faith which is born of the realization of the soul. As a consequence people in America have begun to talk of saving the world. Whenever the President of the United States of America opens his lips on the present condition of world affairs he utters the language of their responsibility to protect the countries of Asia against aggression and of safeguarding their liberties, as if God did not exist to take care of His creation and the responsibility of ordaining the affairs of the earth has devolved upon Europe and America! As if the people of Asia totally lacked understanding and

intelligence and they were specially allotted only to Russia and America. It is thus plain that mere action or activity does not lead to a proper evolution of life, but to its lopsidedness and perversion. If I had occasion to travel over Europe and America and had opportunity to speak to their people, I would certainly tell them of the glory of the Vaishnava's religion of devotion for the Lord as also of the need for man to cultivate faith in his spirit or the soul.

Synthesis of Karma and Bhakti

But as I am travelling the land where the stream of devotion has flown in its perfect glory in the past, and where the knowledge of the soul has been cultivated to a certain extent, I feel it is my duty to give my own and draw your attention to the virtue it lacks. A verse was recited for your hearing. It said that the Lord's Name is sung in the age of Kali or the age of degeneration. What does this verse convey to us? We are firstly to understand that the age of Kali is the age of human weaknesses. So in the age wherein weakness has spread among men, wherein men have fallen a prey to the attachment of things worldly, we have to overcome the weakness by singing God's Name and His praises. The weak among us have been told, 'brethren, do not worry if you are not able to do anything else, but do sing the Lord's Name and His glory in this age, and everything else will be added unto you.' This, in a way, is an assurance given to us. This should not, however, mean that different virtues are allotted to different ages for cultivation. It only means that the importance of some virtue or the other is emphasized in view of the peculiar conditions of society in a particular age. Cultivation of the spirit is emphasized in an age when men lack spirituality.

Special Message of Medieval Saints

For example, during the age in our country when people everywhere had lost themselves to enjoyment of the senses, when the sentiment of carnal love was regarded as the highest sentiment in poetry, and when people had as consequence of dissipation completely devitalized themselves, those who sang of the divine love of Radha and Krishna and thereby raised the sentiment of love to its true sacredness performed a meritorious duty. Those who have any acquaintance with the literature of India know that during the middle ages such a stream of obscenity was let loose in Sanskrit literature as will not be seen in the literature of any other language of the world. Those who, in the prevailing conditions, transformed the very language of carnal love to the language of devotion for God saved man from his certain doom. In the age when the feeling of high and low in society was rampant, when the *Brahmana* was reckoned a superior and the *Shudra* an inferior being, when society was divided in castes high and low, when caste distinctions had become virulent and when

Islam with its message of One God and the equality of all men was attacking the country, those who cried for and established equality in Indian society in the name of *bhakti* or devotion to God did indeed put man under deep obligation. The great and difficult task of inspiring devotion for God in men and women attached to things utterly worldly, and of inculcating the ideal of equality of men and women who had fallen prey to the inhuman feeling of caste distinction into high and low was performed by Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu during the middle ages. He has thereby laid India under deep obligation.

The Message for Man in Society

So what we have now to do is to take a firm hold on the virtues he has left to us as his legacy and to devote ourselves to the cultivation of the virtues which yet remain to be cultivated. By our own endeavour on the basis of the heritage left to us by our forbears we have to add to it. I am certain you have heard the sayings of the Gita. Vaishnavas too have faith on that holy book. The Gita says: "नानृतस्मर युद्धं च" — that is to say, remember Me and go on fighting. The Gita has thus associated taking of God's Name with fighting, with *karma-yoga* — duty to act. If someone were to tell me that taking God's Name was enough, and that it contained all virtues, I will be ready to agree with him but only so far as the individual is concerned. But when we have to place an ideal before society as a whole, we have to preach that along with taking the Name of God we must as men exercise the intelligence He has bestowed on us; we must as men devote ourselves to constant action.

Need of Action with God's Name

When we think of the life of society as a whole we will have to think in terms of a synthesis of various ideas, ideals and virtues. By cultivating one single virtue in its fullness an individual may hope to reach perfection but society as a whole cannot hope to do so. But people begin to argue, would it not suffice if everyone devoted himself to singing God's Name and His praises? I would like to ask these friends: you are of course singing the Lord's praises; why then do you eat? Why not be content with it only? Why not subsist on it? And if feeding oneself was essential along with taking the Lord's Name and singing His praises, is it not equally essential that your brother too was fed? Vaishnavas devote themselves to singing the Lord's praises. But I may ask them, why then do you marry? And if marriage is allowed with singing of God's name, is not control of the senses necessary along with it? Indeed, is devotion possible without such control? I have known singers of God's praises who intoxicate themselves with the sentiment of devotion and dance and weep also. I have witnessed these things with my own eyes. But when I ask charity from these devotees of the Lord their hearts become so miserly that their hands refuse

to part with anything for the use of their brothers. This is not true only of devotees of the Lord in India; in fact, the same thing can be observed among the sects of devotees all the world over.

Action without Desire for Fruit

It is therefore my humble opinion that though the wealth of ideas and ideals that the people of India possess is valuable for their journey through the modern world and though their heritage is rich, it needs to be reconsidered. The Gita says: "धेयो हि ज्ञानं भव्यताम्". Knowledge is superior to the practice of dry rules and regulations for control of the senses and the mind and to practices of yoga like control of the breath. By practising *asanas* and *pranayams* man derives the benefit of good physical exercise, and this being a *sattvic* sort of exercise it is of course healthy. But this exercise is not good enough for casting away the inertia of the intelligence. That is why it has been said that knowledge is superior to all these practices. But where man devotes himself only to the pursuit of knowledge he is liable to withdraw from action, to take merely to the cultivation of reason and logic and to become dry. He then tends to become a mere scholar. That is why the devotee or *bhakta* is held superior to the mere man of knowledge. "ज्ञानात् ध्यानं शक्तिव्यते" Contemplation of God in devotional worship is superior to mere knowledge. But when man is engrossed in contemplation he is prone to avoid action and when concentration for contemplation is over he has perforce to fall back upon some activity. Therefore the Gita further adds, "ध्यानत् कर्मफलं दानम्." Willingly giving up fruits of one's actions is superior to contemplation. Therefore, friends, we have to bear in mind that Karma Yoga, that is action performed without an eye on the fruit thereof is superior to mere contemplation.

(From the original in Hindi)

Films of Saints

For sometime past, Film-makers in India, as also abroad, are showing a keen interest in throwing our saints and spiritual warriors on the screen. That they are not able to correctly depict the battle of life—urge for self-conquest or resolve to negotiate highest spiritual summits—of spiritual giants like Kabir, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu or Tulsidas, is obvious. Neither the Film-makers make any such claim. For their main consideration is easy money and popular pleasure. Had they been really anxious to educate the public opinion and lift the morals they could easily make it a point to punctuate their plays by only such songs as are written by these saints rather than rush, as they now unfortunately do, to cheap, enervating music which often excites the senses.

The latest target is Gautam Buddha, under the inappropriate title of 'Wayfarer'. One wonders why our Film-friends so anxious to honour

our saints are silent about Christ, Mohammed, St. Francis or others in Christian and Islamic world. It is really amazing why they have chosen only Indian shots. It is time the Government gave a thought to this problem of the production of the films on our spiritual heroes. What is important is not the outer life or word of man but his inner struggle, grace and charm.

2-3-'55

SURESH RAMABHAI

ELECTRICITY AND EMPLOYMENT

(By Rajendra Prasad)

Electricity is generally considered to be a symbol of the modern industrial age. There is no doubt that the invention of electric energy has given us many amenities and comforts which we value in life. It has also provided man with power to make the best of the natural resources at his disposal with a view to increasing the production of the necessities of daily life and eventually to making life fuller and happier. I am sure the energy which is being released today will also make a valuable contribution in our resettlement and rehabilitation efforts.

As for the part which electricity plays in the field of industry, I would like to say a few words by way of caution. The energy now made available should be used in a way in harmony with the existing man-power in the area. That is to say, electricity should supplement, rather than replace, the hands at work at present. While employing electric power for increased production and for relieving man of degrading or hazardous undertakings, we have to see that, as far as possible, this does not reduce the present level of employment. Actually, we all hope that new and wider avenues of employment will be opened for our young men by this project coming into operation. As far as I know, this is possible only by giving proper encouragement to cottage and small-scale industries, which can also benefit from cheap electric power.

I am confident that this power and light which we are commissioning today, will, in the near future, transform these States into regions of material prosperity and human welfare. May this light be symbolic of the new illumined consciousness of our Nation! I feel like praying with our ancient seers, *tamaso ma jyotirgamaya* (तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय) — Lead us from darkness into light.*

*From the speech at Ganguwal Power Project, reproduced in A. I. C. C. Economic Review, March 1, 1955.

CONTENTS	PAGE
LONG LIVE JAWAHARLALJI .. Maganbhai P. Desai	17
FEAR AND MODERN LIFE—III .. E. V. Pullias	17
COST OF ADVERTISING .. Kshitindra Kumar Nag	18
A CONDITION FOR PEACE .. Gora	19
"THE ECONOMIC MANIA" .. Maganbhai P. Desai	20
SYNTHESIS OF BHAKTI AND KARMAYOGA NECESSARY .. Vinoba	21
ELECTRICITY AND EMPLOYMENT .. Rajendra Prasad	24
NOTE:	
FILMS OF SAINTS .. Suresh Ramabhai	24