

# MARJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

## THE NASIK CONGRESS

Despite apprehensions expressed by several papers and individual Congressmen that the Nasik Congress might make a sensational event, my own feeling was that so far as the session itself was concerned nothing of the kind was going to take place. A radical departure from the current policy, even if contemplated, does not usually take place, unless there is a preponderating majority in its favour. The election of Tandonji by a small majority showed that even if there did exist keen differences of opinion on any major issue, time was not ripe for making them a point of quarrel. A narrow majority often operates in practice as a victory of the minority. It is a notice to the winning party that it must stoop to conquer the minor section, if it does not want a schism in the organization. Delegates on both sides, (if, indeed, there did exist two sharply divided sides), instinctively realized that they must control themselves so that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru should not feel that his position was being weakened. Whatever dissatisfaction there might be about him in the minds of a section of the delegates, every one seemed to think that he must continue in power. And so the delegates adjusted themselves to that position.

In the same way as the voting in the election of the President operated as a warning to the winning side, that on the resolution on controls must be taken by the Prime Minister as a significant warning to him. Out of more than 2,000 delegates only about 300 delegates cast their votes on this resolution, and the official resolution won (or was saved?) only by a narrow majority. This should be regarded as a practical victory of the minority. It shows that a considerable section even among Congress delegates — not to say the general public — is unable to understand the policy of the controls. If they are necessary and good, people must understand how they are so, and their advantages must become obvious to the people. What is obvious, however, is the amount of inconvenience, nepotism, corruption, black-marketing, and demoralization which they have created. Either the controls, at least a majority of them, are quite unnecessary, or the way of imposing and working them is too crude, dishonest and inefficient. In either case the present policy must be radically revised.

Immediately before the elections, Shri Purushottamdas Tandon wrote, "The Prime Minister is the pivot of our Government." In his presidential address, he took good care to support

him. The Congress has also strengthened him through the various resolutions. I believe that in the disposal of future business, the differences, if any, which might be looking very large in abstract, will resolve themselves satisfactorily in actual practice.

To my mind, the most important item in the future business is the purification of the Congress organization itself from within. The selection of candidates for the next general elections is regarded by some as the most important matter. My humble opinion is that unless and until the organization becomes a clean body, the selection, no matter to which body the work of doing it is entrusted, cannot be done in a way which will bring credit to the Congress. In what way Shri Tandonji proposes to purge the Congress of evil is a matter which the public will watch with interest. I hope he will not mind, as he has said, if the number of members is reduced to a handful in order that the standard of honesty may become high.

Warana, 25-9-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

## CONGRESS RESOLUTION ON KHADI

"The Congress is of the opinion that in all schemes for increasing the production of wealth in the country, it is essential that the vast manpower in the villages should be progressively utilized. Employment should be given to the millions who have no land to cultivate or whose holdings are so small as to leave much time at their disposal for other gainful employment. This should lead to the general adoption of a policy of encouraging and organizing home industries.

"*Khadi*, which Congressmen have, for years, adopted for their use on political and economic grounds, is the central home industry which can give employment to a very large number of our rural population. Several other subsidiary industries can be helped by an increase in the production of *khadi*.

"The best way of assisting *khadi* and other home industries is to give them the benefit of scientific research in the fullest measure.

"With improved technique and co-ordination with large-scale industries, the disadvantage of village industries in respect of quality and price as compared with the products of large-scale industry will greatly diminish. To overcome where handicaps still remain, Government should give further assistance in suitable form particularly by the purchase and use of *khadi* and other products of village industries as much as possible."



**GANDHIJI'S "HINDU DHARMA" \***

(Extracts from the Editor's Introduction)

Gandhiji was born, brought up and lived his entire life a Hindu. He called himself a *Sanatanist* or orthodox Hindu, who based his beliefs on the ancient Hindu scriptures. He drew freely, it is true, from other religions also. But the main source of his religious life came undoubtedly from the religion of his forefathers. Hinduism was his life-breath, the very marrow of his bones, and he clung to it through all his tempestuous career as a child to its mother's arms. He looked to the *Bhagwadgita* for inspiration and guidance, called it his mother, and moulded his life on the *Gita* ideal of the *karmayogin* who did his duty irrespective of pleasure and pain, or the *sthitaprajna* who subdued his passions in selfless pursuit of the Divine. So much was this true of him that one may rightly say that his life was nothing but the *Gita* ideal in action. Next to the *Gita*, Tulsidas's *Ramayana* formed his meat and drink.

He tried to put into practice the Hindu ideal of *advaita* or unity without difference, and so regarded all men, without distinction of race, caste or creed, as one. Not only men, but also all living beings as symbolized by the cow were, according to Hinduism, to be treated with sympathy and fellow-feeling. This, accordingly, formed an essential part of Gandhiji's teaching and practice. Then again he believed, as Hinduism always taught, that all religions were equally ways of reaching God, and therefore to be looked upon with friendliness and respect. He lived a life of renunciation, austerity and self-control, so characteristic of Hinduism. *Ramanama* remained for him a never-failing remedy for all ills, and he died with the name of Rama on his lips.

Even like the prophets of old, Gandhiji feared none but God. He condemned uncompromisingly the evils that had crept into Hinduism and sought to remove them. He exhorted Hindus to live up to the best teachings of their religion, and called on all to pursue truth, morality, and love and service of fellow-beings. He would not allow the scriptures to stifle man's conscience. His ultimate appeal was always to the still small voice within, even if its verdict was in conflict with the *shastras*, so long as it was in conformity with truth and non-violence. His religion was, therefore, a religion of freedom and growth, not of bondage to tradition and authority, and therefore of stagnation and decay. In him we have a great prophet similar to the Buddha, Muhammad or Christ. His teachings come from the depths of his being. They were the outpourings of a soul in living touch with its Maker. He spoke with authority and conviction, an authority which came from a realization that he spoke the word of God. No Hindu, no student of Hinduism, indeed no individual whatever his religion, can afford to ignore his teachings, as

they have a universal appeal. If Hinduism has a future it is Hinduism, as presented by Gandhiji, that has it in certain and abundant measure. Gandhiji's Hinduism is the Hinduism of old in all its pristine purity, reborn and practised under modern conditions. Hindu doctrines and terminology, which at times appear to us of today as strange, outmoded and unintelligible, disclose new meaning and value as interpreted by Gandhiji. In him Hinduism speaks to modern man in his own language.

BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

**INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO  
PEACE AND GOODWILL****VII**

Gandhiji's scheme of rural organization holds good not only for India but for the world, and there are thinkers in the West whose views are similar to his. For instance, Gustave Thibou, the French sociologist, writes in *What Ails Mankind* (Sheed & Ward): "Man is not made for solitude, but neither is he made for multitude. *Misereor super turbam*. Man is made to live in small vital groups beginning with the family and the local community, and extending to the fellowship that arises normally from participating in a common undertaking or from following the same craft. Those groups alone are capable of putting him in the way of fulfilling his self and connecting him successfully with vaster organisms" (*Times Literary Supplement*, January 15, 1949, p. 33).

And Aldous Huxley, in course of a lucid exposition of Gandhiji's ideas, writes (*Pra-buddha Bharata*, August 1948, p. 326): "His social and economic ideas are based on a realistic appraisal of man's nature and the nature of his position in the universe. He knew that the triumphs of advancing organization and progressive technology cannot alter the fact that man is an animal of no great size and generally of very modest abilities. On the other hand, he knew that physical and intellectual limitations are compatible with practically infinite capacity for spiritual progress.

"What sort of social, political and economic arrangement is most appropriate for men amphibious on the borderline between the animal and the spiritual? Gandhi said that men should do their actual living and working in communities of a size commensurate with their bodily and mental stature, communities small enough to permit of genuine self-government and assumption of personal responsibilities, federated into large units in such a way that the temptation to abuse great power should not arise. The larger democracy grows, the less real becomes the rule of the people, and smaller the say of individuals and localized groups in deciding their own destinies. Again, love is an emphatically personal relationship. Consequently it is only in small groups that charity (in the Pauline sense of the word) can manifest itself. The smallness of a group in no way guarantees the emergence of charity between members; but it does at least create the possibility of charity. In

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a large and differentiated group the possibility does not even exist, as most members cannot in the nature of things have personal relations with one another. 'He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is Love.' Charity is at once the means and the end of spirituality. A social organization so contrived that over a large field of human activity it makes a manifestation of charity impossible is obviously a bad organization.

"Decentralization in economics must go hand in hand with decentralization in politics. Individuals, families, and small co-operative groups should own land and instruments, necessary for their own subsistence and for supplying the local market."

Huxley points out that if Jefferson, the great apostle of Western democracy, had had his own way, there would have been not only forty-eight states but also thousands of self-governing wards in the United States. Jefferson was in favour of 'decentralizing government to the limit'.

V. G. D.

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26 Students of the Nai Talim Adhyapan Mandir, Vedchhi	57 5 0
12 Students of the Uttar Buniadi Vidyalaya, Vedchhi	7 14 0
Teachers, Vedchhi	83 6 6
Workers, Vedchhi	26 0 0
Villagers, Vedchhi	10 0 0
Smt. Santhakumari, Bangalore	10 0 0
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Shree Hiralal Chunilal Dholerawala, Vascodegama	100 0 0
Shree Kikabhai Manishankar Trivedi, Ahmedabad	100 0 0
Shree Dalsukhbhai Jamnadas Shah, Mujpur	30 0 0
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Shree S. M. Kundinia, Jabbalpore	10 0 0

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Clerical Staff of the Ramkrishna Oil Mills, Mangalore	7 0 0
Shree M. Viswanathan, Kallai	5 0 0
Smt. Kooverbai Jamshedji Dastur, Broach	25 0 0
Sum already acknowledged	5,376 4 6
<b>Total Rs</b>	<b>6,456 1 0</b>

**A. I. V. I. A. Annual Meeting**

The following points from the minutes of the meeting of the A. I. V. I. A. Board of Management are published for general information:

The Secretary reported that the new approach to Adult Education through craft work, founded on the system of Basic Education, now called Gram Udyog Nai Talim, began at Maganwadi on the 1st July last. There are at present 48 students of whom 12 are women.

The annual report and Audited Accounts to 30th June, 1950 were passed and ordered to be published.

Shri Shrikrishnadas Jaju and Laxmidas P. Asar have resigned their membership of the Board of Management as they felt they were no longer able to contribute anything to the work of the Association.

Now that the Sarva Seva Sangh has come into existence to carry out all the various items of constructive work formulated by Gandhiji, to enable the work to be carried on more efficiently and effectively, the Board decided to merge the Association with the Sarva Seva Sangh. The President was authorized to take the needed legal steps to implement this resolution.

G. R.



# HARIJAN

Oct. 7

1950

## UNDERSTANDING THE CHARKHA

By the time this falls into the hands of the readers, the celebration of the Charkha Week will have reached conclusion. Wherever Gandhiji's birthday might have been celebrated in India during these days, spinning must have found a place in the programme. It might have been done intensely or just symbolically according to the faith of the organizers, but it could hardly have been omitted altogether.

The Nasik Congress has defined its faith and policy regarding *khadi* in a special resolution on the subject. (*Vide* text reproduced elsewhere).

The resolution is good so far as it goes. But in its expression of the hope that "with improved technique and co-ordination with large-scale industries, the disadvantage of village industries in respect of quality and price as compared with the products of large-scale industry will greatly diminish", the framers of the resolution betray a lack of realization of the problems of village industries and the implications of "co-ordination with large-scale industries".

Shri Purushottamdas Tandon in his presidential address also dwelt upon *khadi* at some length and made important observations. He said:

"In the field of production, the vital question is whether we will give our support to the policy of starting big mills and factories and centralizing industries and of moulding our social structure to suit that policy, or whether we will extend our industries through the vast number of villages in the country and help the inhabitants of villages to take to production in their homes. The system of production of wealth has a deep effect on all aspects of man's life, including his mode of living and his food and to a great extent determines the lines of his culture. In this matter, I have been a supporter of the principles of Mahatma Gandhi.

"I submit that important industries .....where a large number of labourers can live and work together at one place, should be treated as exceptions. For the fulfilment of our ordinary needs, our aim should be to get the workers to undertake production in their villages and homes while living with their families. In this method I see the protection of human and moral values. If we accept this policy we should make organized efforts to produce our necessities in villages and in this work encourage and enthuse the public by our personal example.

\* \* \*

"The leadership of the Government lies in creating a demand throughout the country for the articles that we wish to produce in villages. The ordinary rule about cheap and dear will not apply in this matter.

\* \* \*

"It is the duty of the entire country to take part in the production, use and propagation of *khadi*. Such is, of course, the duty of individuals. It is much more so of Governments following Congress principles. To me it appears to be proper for the Congress to emphasize that Government formed by the Congress must follow a policy of encouraging the consumption of *khadi* and the products of our village industries. If the Governments and their officials take up this work with faith and zeal, many of our existing economic problems, which today appear difficult and complex, will be solved."

He also pleaded for village self-sufficiency, and giving "the art of producing things" a place in education as a means for the development of character and bringing about self-sufficiency. He laid down,

"There should be no person without work in the whole country, every one should make a proper use of his time and should give whatever time is left after his ordinary avocation to the production of useful things.

\* \* \*

"The need is that we should make our limited resources go to their utmost capacity. Governments must be alert in not allowing the tendency towards pleasures and luxury to lower the level of society. One of the chief items in the list of the functions of a Government should be the investigation of means for keeping the moral discipline of society. An all-out effort to achieve a society with moral grandeur, should be the object of our administration. This was Gandhiji's conception of *Ramrajya*. The existence of the Congress will be justified only if it advances towards this consummation."

Shri Tandonji has rightly laid a great emphasis on the necessity of enthusing and encouraging the public by the personal examples of the leaders. I also share with him the belief that "if the Governments and their officials take up this work with faith and zeal, many of our existing economic problems, which today appear difficult and complex, will be solved."

The question is how these 'personal examples' are to be set and the faith and zeal to be made visible. The speech and the resolution desire to provide employment through the *charkha*, to push *khadi* by creating a market for it, and to disregard the ordinary rule of 'cheap and dear' for this purpose. But it is remarkable that there is not even a passing reference to the duty of the believers of *khadi* to spin with their



own fingers. Here both the Congress resolution and the Presidential speech fall short of the expectations and lifelong endeavours of Gandhiji, whose name was more than once mentioned in this connection.

The Charkha Sangh had worked for 25 years intensively and successfully for the production and sale of *khadi* through spinning for wages. It distributed during the period some crores of rupees to wage-earners, besides providing decent employment to several hundred middle-class people and laying by a good capital fund for itself. But ultimately Gandhiji came to the conclusion that if *khadi* was to take root, spinning for wages would not be able to achieve it. And he laid down the following maxim in 1945 :

"Spin; spin with understanding; the spinner must wear and the wearer must spin."

"(1) To spin 'with understanding' means, to realize that *charkha*, that is, spinning, is the symbol of non-violence. Reflect, and it will be clear to you.

"(2) 'To spin' means to pick up cotton (*kapas*) from the field, to separate it from its seeds with a rolling-pencil, to card it, to make slivers of it, to spin it to a desired count, to double-twist it, and to wind it into a hank."

Congressmen need not be reminded of the persistent attempts made by Gandhiji to make them regular spinners. Several times he tried to introduce the spinning franchise and the yarn subscription for becoming a primary member of the Congress. During the 'individual satyagraha' campaign against war, he laid down the knowledge of spinning as an essential qualification for offering the Satyagraha. They need not also be reminded of the equally persistent manner in which they foiled his endeavours and often deceived him in the observance of these conditions while they lasted. As a body the Congress never could understand his emphasis on spinning, and its significant absence in the Congress deliberations shows that the want of realization continues as before.

However much this may be a matter for concern and regret to the constructive workers, it is clear that the Congress cannot be blamed for not doing what it does not understand. If, in spite of want of understanding, Congressmen occasionally take part in spinning demonstrations, constructive workers must thank them for it, and again and again try to explain to them the connection between regular self-spinning and *khadi* and village industries programme. Until this connection is realized, I am afraid that the Congress resolution as also the moral uplift of the Congress organization will remain an unrealized dream. Congressmen instinctively knew that if spinning was a necessary condition of membership, they could not enrol *lakhs* of members. This they regarded to be essential to

make the Congress a powerful party machine. And 'power' they understood mainly in the sense of material power of money and numbers, and not moral power. It was easy to wear *khadi* even habitually; it was also easy to evade it or to observe it in a make-believe manner. But it was not easy to spin and to pay subscription in the form of yarn. Though there is nothing in the world where fraud cannot be practised, still it is less easy to practise fraud in the spinning of yarn than in the wearing of *khadi*. So, again and again pressure was brought to drop this qualification of membership from the Congress Constitution, until Gandhiji, as a votary of truth, more than once suggested that even the *khadi* qualification be rather dropped. I humbly submit that the introduction of spinning as a qualification for membership will provide a more efficient means for the purification of the Congress organization than anything yet devised. It will also furnish the moral leaven for the abrogation of the ordinary rule about 'cheap and dear' in the matter of *khadi* and village industries. If Congress leaders and ordinary members regard their own half or one hour as too valuable to be spent in spinning, and would rather devote it to smoking and taking tea with important or fashionable visitors than to spinning with them during the interview, it is not to be expected that even the most stupid villager would be willing to spin for as much as even eight annas a day, if, for instance, bidi-making gave him a rupee per day. And he would also rather spend his leisure hours in gambling and smoking than in plying the *charkha*, which is traditionally a woman's work, and which gives less wage than what he considers to be his right market-price for eight or ten hours of leisurely labour.

The office-bearers both in the Congress Government and the Congress organization and their respective staff from the Chief Secretary to the peon must attach to spinning yarn and wearing *khadi* the same value as they do to "standing at attention" at the time of a rally of armed forces, or the flag-salutation, or to putting on the right dress on ceremonial occasions and during office hours. Moral value means the value of discipline.

Wardha, 25-9-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

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## THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT'S INTENSIVE KHADI SCHEME AND THE A. I. S. A.

[Shriyut Krishnadas Gandhi, Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association, has issued the following statement:]

### The Honourable Minister's Allegation:

Sri B. Parameswaran, the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Madras Government Intensive *Khadi* Scheme, is reported to have said in the Assembly, in reply to questions from members, that "the A.I.S.A. were themselves not particular in enforcing this ban (meaning ban on entry of mill cloth in Intensive *Khadi* Scheme areas) and they wrote to say that unless the people wanted, the ban on the other cloth need not be imposed."

This statement is not correct. In fact, in the earlier part of the same proceedings, Sri Parameswaran himself admitted that "the A.I.S.A. expressed its inability to co-operate with the Government in the work of this scheme, because the Government did not accept the recommendation of the Association that the entry of mill cloth and hand-loom cloth into the centre should be banned."

### The Cause for this Statement

We are not in a mood to blame or criticize the Government in respect of this *Khadi* Scheme, but we wish that the A.I.S.A. should not be misunderstood. Rather, as in the opinion of the A.I.S.A. this Government scheme was a very important one, it wholeheartedly co-operated in its execution for four long years in spite of many difficulties. Ultimately we had to withdraw from it with deep regret. Let us explain why we had to do so. We had no mind to speak out on this subject; but in view of the Minister's remark given above, it has become necessary to issue this statement, specially as the *khadi*-loving public are deeply interested in this scheme. In doing so, we shall confine ourselves to a few very relevant points only.

### Genesis of the Scheme

Be it remembered that Sri T. Prakasam had taken an active part in *khadi* work when it was first introduced in Andhra—about the year 1920. He had his own ideas about the way of doing it and was of the opinion that the A.I.S.A. was working on wrong lines, otherwise *khadi* work could be developed by leaps and bounds. When he became the Premier of Madras Presidency he got a scheme prepared according to his ideas which aimed at making the 27 *firkas* in the Presidency self-sufficient in cloth through *khadi* in a period of about 18 months. The A.I.S.A. thought that there was little chance of making such a scheme successful in such a short time and without some essential conditions being fulfilled. The failure of such a scheme would have harmed the cause of *khadi*. The Secretary of the Association, therefore, wrote to him to say that the Association was interested in this matter and would like that the scheme should be modified so as to make it practicable. Sri Prakasam readily responded and deputed Shri S. Venkateswaran, the then Provincial Textile Commissioner, to have consultations with Gandhiji and the workers of the Association. As a result a moderate scheme was drawn up, which was to be worked in seven small areas only. These were the areas where the A.I.S.A. had already been doing *khadi* work on a large scale. In some of them hand-spun yarn was being already produced in very large quantities. The adoption of these very areas by the Government in the first instance was suggested to avoid the need of labouring on production of fresh yarn in adequate quantity from the very start as would have had to be done in other undeveloped areas. Though the yarn was being already produced there in a fairly substantial quantity, the local consumption of *khadi* itself was meagre, and a substantial part of it had to be sent away for sale to cities and distant places. Circumstances were, therefore, to be created there, by force of which the local people, including the spinners, would themselves consume their own cloth to a greater extent.

## Conditions for Success

The scheme originally drawn up contemplated many direct compulsions at various stages, beginning from introduction of spinning wheels upto the stage of wearing *khadi*. *Khadi* work could not be based on such compulsions and Gandhiji said, "Compulsion there should be, but it should be the compulsion of circumstances."

At that period, uncertified *khadi* dealers used to buy yarn from those areas. The needy spinners could not resist the temptation of selling it away to them. The result of allowing this to continue would have been that yarn would not have been available for the use of local people. Of course mill cloth was available to them almost at their doors. Two conditions were, therefore, considered essential for the success of the scheme; namely, the elimination of the operations of the uncertified *khadi* dealers and making the mill cloth scarce in those areas.

When Shri T. Prakasam met Gandhiji, the latter asked him a question the purport of which was, Can the spinning-wheel go on along with the increase in spinning and weaving mills? The former understood the implications of the question, and the Madras Government decided to cancel the sanction of the erection of new mills and addition of more spindles and looms in the existing textile mills of the State. With these understandings the scheme was inaugurated on 2nd October, 1946, at Vellakkoil (Tamilnad) and Guravareddipalyam (Andhra), and by January 1947, the A. I. S. A. handed over to the Government its well developed *khadi* centres in the six of those seven areas. The seventh centre was transferred to the Government by another organization which was doing famine-relief work in Andhra.

### Declaration by the New Ministry

In April, 1947, there was a change in the Madras Ministry and the new Government gave up the mill prohibition policy of its predecessor. As regards the intensive *khadi* scheme, however, the Hon'ble Minister Shri Bhaktavatsalam declared on behalf of the Government, "I wish to make it clear that there is no difference of opinion on this side of the House in regard to the need for going forward with the *khadi* scheme. The *khadi* scheme that was already approved by Government and is being worked in districts will be vigorously pursued. We also propose to implement effectively the resolution passed by the A. I. S. A. at its meeting in Delhi held in 1946 for the extensive development of *khadi*. The intensive part of the scheme has already been introduced in seven selected *firkas*. The extensive part will be introduced shortly in 27 other *firkas*. I wish to reiterate, that there will thus be no deviation from the policy so far pursued regarding the development of *khadi*."

The A. I. S. A. resolution of the 9th August 1946, referred to above, said:

"1. Governments should introduce hand-spinning in all the schools upto the middle standard and normal training schools of the State within a period of 5 years, and there should be a handloom in working attached to every school;

"2. *Khadi* production should be undertaken as a part of village uplift work through multi-purpose societies;

"3. Workers should be trained in the various *khadi* processes and research in *khadi* work should be undertaken by the States;

"4. The employees in the co-operative, education and agricultural departments, who have to work in villages and those employed by District and Local Boards should be such as have passed a *Khadi* Examination, as all these employees will some day or other have to deal with hand-spinning in village uplift work;

"5. Uncertified dealers should not be allowed to trade in cloth under the name of *khadi*;

"6. Government Textile Departments should make use of only hand-spun yarn;



"7. Hand-spinning and weaving of hand-spun yarn should be introduced in jails."

Let the Madras Government say what they have done towards giving effect to this resolution, which they had promised to implement effectively.

#### 1947 Conference with the Premier

In July 1947, there was a conference with the then Premier Shri Ramaswami Reddiar when Shri Jajuji, the then Secretary of the A.I.S.A., and the Association's regional secretaries in the State discussed in detail several aspects of the Intensive *Khadi* Scheme. Shri Jajuji suggested that in order to make the scheme successful it was absolutely necessary to adopt immediately two measures; namely, (1) restricting and ultimately stopping the entry of mill-yarn and mill-cloth in the intensive *khadi* areas; and (2) prohibiting the uncertified merchants from operating in the areas either for purchase of yarn or for production and sale of cloth.

He warned the Government that it was no use going on with the scheme if this could not be done.

We now quote from the official report of this Conference:

"After discussion it was agreed:

"1. that the intensive portion of the scheme should continue to be worked in the 7 centres;

"2. that the elimination of uncertified dealers should be done in all the intensive 7 centres and in the area covered by named villages in a belt of ten miles around it; and

"3. that the distribution of mill cloth should be stopped in four of the 7 centres, two in Andhra (Yerragondapallyam and Kotaurtla) and two in Tamilnad (Avanasi and Vellakkcoil), where spinning had progressed sufficiently to enable the people to clothe themselves with the hand-spun yarn produced in the areas."

#### Implementation of Conference Decisions

It was a year after this decision and about eighteen months after the inauguration of the Scheme (which contained in itself a clause to eliminate the uncertified dealers), that an order was passed by Government to stop their operations in those areas. The execution of this order, too was, however, not strictly enforced, and such dealers managed anyhow to do some business there. No steps were taken by the Government to eliminate them early enough, although it was necessary to do so in the interest of the scheme. It appeared that the Government had a soft corner for them, though their selfish activities, being prejudicial to the cause of *khadi*, had been denounced all along by the Congress Working Committee and by prominent Congress leaders including Gandhiji, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and others. Government went on extending time to them on the ground that they should be allowed time to dispose of their goods. This was unnecessary because the disposal of their stock had nothing to do with their going on buying fresh yarn in those areas.

On the question of the ban of mill-cloth there was a long and continuous correspondence between the A.I.S.A. and the Government. In the course of this correspondence, on 26th August 1949, the Secretary of the A.I.S.A. had written to the Hon'ble Chief Minister, "We would request the Government to again review at this stage the whole situation and to decide whether the scheme has to be continued or not. It is our considered opinion that it is absolutely essential to control the entry of mill-cloth and mill-yarn within the areas to make the scheme successful. If the Government do not think it possible to do so, we say that the scheme should be given up. Any way it would not be proper for us to continue to be a party to this unfruitful labour and expense without that essential condition being fulfilled. In the event of the Government deciding to give up the scheme, we would take back the intensive area centres and work them as before. The assets and liabilities will have to be valued at proper rates. We would be prepared to take them over and pay the price in cash."

#### Second Conference, 1949

In pursuance of this correspondence, one more conference took place on 5th September, 1949, with the present Chief Minister, Shri P. S. Kumaraswami Raja, when there was a clear indication that the following points will be favourably considered by the Government:

1. Cancellation of mill-cloth licences in the four selected centres of Yerragondapallyam, Guruvareddipalam, Vellakkcoil and Avanashi;

2. Initiation of legislation to prevent hand-loom cloth produced in the four centres from being sold within the centres and to allow it to be taken outside for sale.

A letter dated the 4th October, 1949, from the Secretary to the Government, to the Secretary, A.I.S.A. said; "As urged by the representatives of the A.I.S.A., this Government has decided to reconsider the question of cancelling mill-cloth licences issued in the four intensive *khadi* centres (above said) and initiating legislation to prevent hand-loom cloth produced in the above said four centres from being sold within the four centres and allowing it to be taken outside for sale."

The Secretary, A.I.S.A., again went on pressing the Government to take steps in respect of the ban of mill-yarn and mill-cloth and intimated that in case they could not do so the A.I.S.A. would have to withdraw from the scheme. Ultimately, after a long time, on 10th April, 1950, the Government wrote to say that the Cabinet could not agree to ban the mill-cloth as there were certain difficulties. It further stated, "The notes of the discussions held between Shri Jajuji, the then General Secretary, A.I.S.A., and Shri S. Venkateswaran, I.C.S., the then Provincial Textile Controller, Madras, in connection with the framing of the scheme (meaning 1946), show that one of the points insisted upon by Shri Jajuji for the success of the scheme was as follows: 'Stoppage of mill cloth etc. should not be forced down from the top and should be ordered only in response to the public demand.'"

#### Are the Government Justified?

The direct compulsion would not have been necessary in view of the then Government's policy of restriction on textile mills. Indeed, direct compulsion was the method originally contemplated under the scheme of no less a person than the Premier Sri T. Prakasam himself, who was so earnest about it. But after the change in the Government mill policy, Sri Jajuji had to and did all along press for the ban of the mill-cloth. The Government accepted his demand as shown above. Is it now fair on the part of the Government to say that the A.I.S.A. were themselves not particular for enforcing the ban? If that was the case, why did they not point it out for long three years during which the A.I.S.A. was persistently asking them to take that step? Had they said so at the time of the conference in July 1947, the A.I.S.A. would have withdrawn from the scheme then and there and would have been saved the expenses, troubles and worries for so long a time.

It is a different matter whether or not there should be a ban at all, whether the Government consider it practicable or not, and whether there should be compulsion, that is, pressure of circumstances or not. The A.I.S.A. does not consider the step suggested by it to be a compulsion. At the first stage the Government themselves decided to restrict the textile mills in the whole of the State; at the next stage they agreed to take steps to prevent the mill-yarn and the mill-cloth entering in the four areas; and lastly, the matter came down only to not issuing licences to cloth dealers to sell their stuff in those areas. It affected a few traders only. So far as the inhabitants were concerned they were not to be prohibited from buying mill-cloth. Only its availability at their doors was to be stopped. Some of the local *Khadi* Committees already requested the Government to ban the mill-cloth from their respective areas. The Government may or may not do certain things, but the question is whether they are justified in now quoting



what Jajuji said four years ago in a different context, and against definite undertakings by the Government.

### Return of Centres

The Government have refused to return the centres to us on the ground that the *Khadi* Scheme forms the integral part of the rural reconstruction programme of the Government. Can the *khadi* work carried on there by the A.I.S.A., be less helpful in rural reconstruction than that done by the Government workers, many of whom may have no faith in *khadi*? We know that none can prevent the A.I.S.A. from resuming their own *khadi* activities in those areas. But our Association does not want to come in clash with the Government which may possibly lead to friction. It is, however, painful to the Association that the Government should in this manner cruelly cut off the living contact of the A.I.S.A. with about thirty thousand artisans,—a contact which has existed for the last over 25 years with the sole object of materially and morally improving the condition of the people.

On the question of the return of the centres, we would like to bring out a piece of relevant fact. The previous secretary of our Tamilnad branch says, "After finalizing the revised scheme about 21st September, 1946, there was a joint discussion with Shri Prakasam, Shri S. Venkateswaran and the three regional secretaries of the A.I.S.A., I raised some important points for clarification. I suggested that the A.I.S.A. centres in which the Government's intensive scheme will work should continue to be under the control of the A.I.S.A. These centres were placed at the disposal of the Government only for working the scheme and naturally they should be restored to the A.I.S.A. in the event of the failure of the scheme or its termination for some reason or other. I pleaded for introducing specific clauses in the scheme to keep the centres directly under the supervision of and in close contact with the A.I.S.A. in the day to day activity. There was an apprehension that the close and continuous association of the A.I.S.A. with those thousands of artisans whom they were serving for the last 25 years will otherwise be severed. As a result two special clauses were introduced. By these the A.I.S.A. was enabled to instruct and guide the Government centres in their day to day activities. As regards the return of the centres in the event of the failure or termination, it was objected strongly that it would not be proper to anticipate a failure and provide a clause for that purpose in the scheme. But there was obviously the implied assurance that the Government will return the centres under such circumstances."

Even if there had been no such specific discussion about this, the A.I.S.A. is definitely of opinion that the Government were morally bound to return these centres to the A.I.S.A.

### Government-Part

We do not think that the Government will now be able to run these centres on self-sufficiency basis. There will be mostly production of commercial *khadi* only (which will be no doubt costlier) and regional self-sufficiency will recede into the background.

There have been many points of difference between us and the Government while working this intensive *khadi* scheme. We do not want to go into them and lengthen this statement. We may, however, state that the Government did not worry themselves much about its self-sufficiency aspects. They felt mostly concerned about the disposal of the accumulated stocks. From this the A.I.S.A. relieved them to the extent of about Rs 2½ lacs worth of *khadi*. But even in the matter of disposal of the stocks the Government did not feel inclined to stick to the policy of the A.I.S.A., though on account of their connection with the A.I.S.A., they had to place a restraint on themselves. In the matter of exhibitions they went against the policy of the A.I.S.A. and put us in an awkward position.

### A. I. S. A.—Part

We feel that the A.I.S.A. on its part did its utmost for making the scheme successful. It kept down the cost of the working of the scheme to the minimum. Its regional secretaries gave honorary service which involved a good deal of time, labour and worry. It gave to Government experienced workers on the scale of low allowances of the A.I.S.A. standard. There was no waste or loss in the quality of yarn and *khadi*. This would have been inevitable if the Government had started work in new areas in the 27 *firkas* as originally contemplated. It is now for the Government to consider whether it is worth while to go on with commercial *khadi* work in those areas when there is sure to be a departure from the basic principles and framework of the scheme.

### Sad Experience

We have heard some ministers in some of the States complaining that the A.I.S.A. does not fully co-operate with them in the matter of their *khadi* schemes. The difficulty is that the Governments themselves are not prepared to go to the extent, which a serious effort for the success of such schemes requires. Half-hearted measures cannot make for success in *khadi*. There have been many experiences, when constructive workers tried to fully co-operate with the Governments in welfare work, but had to give it up because of the half-hearted policy of the State Governments. In fact many workers have returned disappointed after giving their best for making the scheme successful. This Madras Government scheme may be taken to be one of such sad experiences.

KRISHNADAS GANDHI,

Secretary,

All India Spinners' Association.

Sevagram — Wardha (M.P.),

Sept. 30, 1950

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CONTENTS	PAGE
THE NASIK CONGRESS ... K. G. MASHRUWALA	265
CONGRESS RESOLUTION ON KHADI ...	265
GANDHIJI'S "HINDU DHARMA" ... BHARATAN KUMARAPPA	266
INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE AND GOODWILL—VII ... V. G. D.	266
ASSAM EARTHQUAKE RELIEF FUND ...	267
UNDERSTANDING THE CHARKHA ... K. G. MASHRUWALA	268
THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT'S INTENSIVE KHADI SCHEME AND THE A.I.S.A. ... KRISHNADAS GANDHI	269
NOTE:	
A. I. V. I. A. ANNUAL MEETING ... G. R.	267