

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)
Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

Vol. XIX. No. 22

AHMEDABAD — SATURDAY, JULY 30, 1955

TWO ANNAS

BHOODAN — THE MOVEMENT OF COMPASSION — I

(By C. Rajagopalachari)

[Shri Rajaji presided over the 3rd Sarvodaya Sammelan of Tamil Nad on June 4, 5 at Tiruturaiipoondi. The following is from the summary of his speech in Tamil on the first day. His concluding remarks on the second day will be given in the next issue. The summary is adapted from the report of the *Sarvodaya* of July, 1955.]

We have achieved freedom. We have now to build up our strength. For 150 years we lived as slaves under British rule and for about 1000 years we enjoyed no freedom. Today we are a free bird liberated from its cage. It will take long before we could establish ourselves.

Sarvodaya — Happiness for All

The next step is to strive for our prosperity and happiness. Sarvodaya is the way. Sarvodaya is not a *Potti Udaya* (rise by competition and conflict). It is the means through which all can become happy. Purity of mind and heart is the fundamental basis of Sarvodaya. It is the absolute rule. Every one and all should try and become pure at heart. No Government can achieve this by its law and regulations.

Sarvodaya — Not an Institution

We should always bear in mind that Sarvodaya is not an institution or organization. There can be no president or secretary or a committee for it. It is not a Trust or a Math. Is there any institution for the enforcement of such rules of conduct as the mutual affection between father and children, love between the master and servant, to offer food for the hungry who comes to your door, not to utter falsehood etc. etc. etc.? Similarly there can be no organization for Sarvodaya.

Sarvodaya is a Way of Life

Sarvodaya is a way of life. Welcome addresses, reading of messages, loud-speakers etc. which I see before me now in this gathering, make me doubt whether Sarvodaya has become an institution. If it takes the form of an institution, with president, secretary etc., it means it becomes dead. For Heaven's sake don't make it an institution. Let it remain always a movement to guide the people to follow Dharma.

Sarvodaya and Land Problem

Sarvodaya includes all that is good. Gandhiji was ambitious to see that every one became good and for that he placed this ideal of Sarvodaya. Sarvodaya takes within itself all constructive activities. Any such activity, if left out or omitted by others, the Sarvodaya workers have to take up and fulfil.

Land problem is a tough one. Landowners will not easily agree to willingly surrender their rights for others. Hence Bhoodan work is not an easy task. People may easily part with cloth or money for the sake of others. But when it comes to the question of land, they will certainly hesitate.

Bhoodan — Not a Struggle

Bhoodan movement is not a fight in the sense of a struggle. *Dan* and fight are contradictions in terms. In *dan* there is no place for force or violence which are in fight. This basic difference the workers should well grasp and remember. Such words of intimidation as "the Government will bring in land legislation which will certainly take away land from you, so you better leave it off now as donation to Bhoodan" amount to compulsion. The workers may well understand that such methods spoil the cause and will kill the work.

Land — The Basic Need of Life

Every one should have the basic needs of life. It is against Dharma that some should suffer and others may enjoy. Can it be ever imagined for any one to claim ownership over air and water and to demand money to part the same for others' use? Like air and water, land also is a basic need for human existence. It is on land that food is grown. Any one keeping it as owner, excluding others and saying that he will part with it on payment of money value, is wrong. This wrong has crept in somehow or other and the poor had to suffer so much. To undo this wrong is Bhoodan movement. The tiller must get the land, just like a

thirsty man receives water to drink. Land problem is not a new one. It is a very old one and requires a cautious approach for its solution.

A Hard Case

Many, through righteous means and by their hard work and suffering, have acquired possession of property. Many are now in possession of the same through their predecessors who earned them through similar means. Imagine the case of the wife and children of an elementary school teacher in possession of an acre or two of land. The teacher who worked for 35 years, saved a thousand rupees—one or two rupees every month—and bought this land with the hope of maintaining the family in his old age, and he died leaving the same to the family. Suppose a Bhoodan worker goes to them and says, "To keep land with you on which you do not toil, is exploitation. Don't lead a life of exploitation." They will certainly retort by saying, "Your very demand to give up the property which is earned by our hard suffering throughout our life is itself exploitation. Now you are the real exploiter." Hence the problem is a long standing complicated one. On it Government and others also are bestowing their attention. Some want legislation. Others advise nationalization first. 'The landlords won't give up possession of their own accord. So take it from them by force by creating conflicts,' so say yet others.

Bhoodan — A Dharmik Approach

Our country has an ancient culture and tradition. We have got our own ways to solve our problems. The Sarvodaya method is that way. A man who sees others suffering, feels the pain. He feels compassion. It is our ancient Dharma that makes us feel it is our duty to help the suffering and feed the hungry. Bhoodan movement is that same Dharmik approach to solve the land problem.

Zamindari was abolished through legislation and the Zamindars are angry against the Government. The Rajas voluntarily relinquished their States. So the Government is sympathetic towards them. Gift is a free and voluntary act. The socialists are for land legislation. And the communists demand not only legislation but more than that and say that in case it is not done, they will use force. The ends for both are the same. But Sarvodaya desires to reach it through the means of *dan* (gift). This is what is known as Bhoodan movement. It inspires compassion in the hearts of people. The feeling

of compassion for each other is personified in Bhoodan.

Don't be in a hurry to get things done. Government can hurry up things. At certain times they may happen all of a sudden. For instance, if in a village a certain person freely and voluntarily gives land, that act may immediately influence others to come forward and offer lands. Bhoodan is a movement of the world.

Land Repels Irresponsible Owners

There are many poor peasants in our villages with good experience in agriculture, who really desire to engage themselves in it. If they are given lands, production will increase. It is reported that in the North in some places whole villages were being offered for Bhoodan. In some places such things may not happen. Conditions vary from place to place. Hence it becomes our duty to act according to the particular conditions of each place and also in a way which will make the people happier. Able young men inspired with the feelings of compassion and love should come forward to join the work and persuade the landlords to give away the extra lands with them. They who possess lands know the difficulty to maintain them. They who have more than what they need find it still more difficult to manage. It is said in Tirukkural that land, if not properly cared for and maintained well, will repel its lord as the neglected wife behaves to her lord who proves irresponsible.

Caution and Care Needed

With caution and care the movement has to be carried on. There is the danger of violence creeping in if quick and easy results are expected. Enlightened good men with *bhakti* in their hearts should come forward and do the work.

Land Distribution

Distribution is indeed a difficult job. I would suggest that it may be done at the place as and when the gifts are received. Care must be taken that the new owners do not develop in them also the same kind of attachment that is found among the present landowners. Government's help may also become necessary for distribution work. Land should be distributed among the deserving, experienced and enthusiastic peasants. It should also be given to those who have already bulls etc. with them for agricultural work.

(To be continued)

NON-VIOLENCE THE ONLY TRUE STRENGTH

(By Vinoba)

[From the speech delivered before workers at Raj-sunakhala on 18-4-55]

Bhoodan Yajna, village Industries and Basic Education, the three together give us a complete plan of work. But if the latter two do not have their foundation on redistribution of land, neither will village industries sustain themselves nor will Nai Talim progress. Gandhiji strove for good twenty years to resurrect village industries and now even Government has begun to pay attention to them. Still the process involving the break-up of village industries which has started continues the same way. New machinery is still being imported and the traditional industries are breaking up.

I have recently received a complaint from Rajasthan to the effect that a textile mill has been set up there which spins coarse counts also. This has led to the break-up of the indigenous Khadi industry which used to produce the same counts of yarn. I believe Government should look into this matter and afford protection to village industries. Unless village industries were resorted to we could not hope to remove unemployment. Government, too, is devoting its attention to them with that purpose in view. No government wishes unemployment to be a permanent feature of the nation's economic life. Because, if unemployment is not removed not only does government itself break, but the strength of the nation is also sapped. Government, therefore, will give its mind to this problem of course.

But all these traditional village industries could not be set to work again till an unjust distribution of land continues. Unless land was redistributed village industries could not take root in the life of the people. Land, therefore, will have to be redistributed. And along with it mechanized industries will have to be boycotted. The people in the villages should stand up and declare that they will manufacture the goods and articles they need in the villages themselves and will not buy goods and articles, though cheaper, from outside.

We seek to establish Samyavoga, i.e. an egalitarian social order. To that end land will have to be redistributed, discrimination between one class of industries and another will have to be given up, equal value will have to be assigned to mental and physical labour, and the custom of having grades in services on the basis of supposed responsibility will have to be given the go-by. You, workers, should feel confidence and courage to bring about all these items of our programme in actual practice in our national life even if the whole world was against your doing so. Ours is an idea based on truth and we will give our lives for its fulfilment. Even if the whole world was inundated our villages can escape the doom by putting this idea in actual practice. Non-violence has the capacity to set up a single individual on his feet and to save him from the surrounding deluge. Our Puranas tell us the story of the Sage Markandeya who was able to swim through and save himself when the whole earth was submerged under the deluge. Non-violence has the strength to save a man from destruction who in his turn can save the world also.

All of you have therefore to realize that you have found a new mission in the world. You will therefore act inspired by a new religious fervour. We have to carry on our mission with this psychological attitude in the background. Ours is not merely to distribute a few acres of land among the poor to give them some relief. From what we will do, the poor will not only get relief but they will triumph also. The Narayana in the Dardranarayana will

triumph and the *daridra* or the poor will be no more. The idea informing the mission we have undertaken is so inspiring that even new words and phrases strike us as we go along with our work. Indeed, we are basking in the rays of the sun of knowledge. No darkness can last for a moment before his light. Are we not moving about among the people like sovereign kings with the feeling that it is we who are ultimately going to win through though some ideas other than ours might be seemingly gaining strength for the time being? We do not care and are not discouraged even if we received only a few acres of land in Bhoodan. We understand that the owners of land have not yet been able to see the truth. And we are sure that they will give land when they see it. But certain it is that they will not regenerate themselves till they accept the truth of the Bhoodan idea.

The acreage of cultivable land in India is small as compared to its vast population. Science or technology too, has not sufficiently progressed here. Therefore let us take up the tools we have and set our villages on their feet. We can surely discard the old tools when the new ones will be available.

Looking at the history and conditions of India one feels that we can never build her strength on violence. And unless non-violence was firmly established here even India's Swaraj or freedom will not be able to maintain itself. Billions of rupees will have to be spent for building the strength of violence in India. She can never afford the expenditure. And suppose India was able to do so the consequence would be a great danger for the world. If nations like India and China emulated America in building up their strength of armaments the world will be facing a danger much greater than it faces from Russia and America today. But by the grace of God it will not be.

Therefore India either has to build up her non-violent strength or choose to go back to slavery. But the people of India show evidence of a faith in non-violence which they do not have in violence. The people of India are weak in their physique. Their bodies are emaciated. We cannot hope to make them strong in the physical strength of giants. But they, surely, can easily develop the strength of the spirit. And then they will be as strong as steel. However physically weak and emaciated they may appear, no power on earth will be able to match their strength of the spirit. I do of course believe that our physique should be better, it must be improved, our people should have proper nourishment and food and to that end we should increase our agricultural and such other produce. Our bodies should be truly healthy, beautiful and clean. But with all this it would be impossible for a region like Orissa to be the leader of the nation only on the strength of the physical prowess of her people. But it can certainly aspire to lead on the strength of the spirit. All of you, workers, should therefore clearly realize that the strength of India will be her non-violence. Do keep this fact of our position in mind when you plan your work and carry on your movement.

(From Hindi)

By D. G. Tendulkar

MAHATMA

(Available in a set of 8 Volumes)

Price Rs. 220

Postage etc. Rs. 16

By Vinoba Bhave

BHOODAN YAJNA

[Land-Gifts Mission]

Pages viii + 134 Price Rs. 1-8-0 Postage etc. As 5

NAVAJIVAN PUBLISHING HOUSE
P.O. NAVAJIVAN, AHMEDABAD - 14

HARIJAN

July 30

1955

WHY BHOODAN

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

Papers report Dr. Mahatab, Governor of Bombay, having come out with a view that the Bhoodan movement of Shri Vinoba was merely 'distribution of poverty' in India. One does not know what made a Governor of a State speak so about a movement which is commonly recognized as good and beneficent on all hands except the Communists. Shri Mahatab avers that the biggest and most acute problem facing India today is not land but poverty. To put a concrete thing like land alongside the abstract condition like poverty does not help clarity of thought. What Shri Mahatab wishes to convey seems to be that * "the legal possession of land by a few was of little consequence so long as the actual cultivator got a fair deal and a fair share of the fruit of his labour." Therefore, he holds that "the basic land problem would be solved if the right of the tiller were safeguarded and guaranteed," as for instance, by Bombay tenancy laws.

Hence, he argues, "As soon as the cultivator got his fair share of the fruits of his toil, he did not care who owns the land," and observes that "for this reason, Bhoodan movement could make headway only where there was no tenancy legislation."

Therefore he would not mind landowners continuing ownership of their lands, provided they were fair to their tenants both in the matter of rent and occupancy rights, i.e. there should be no unjust or illegitimate ejection or rent-extortion.

We know how Gandhiji argued with the Socialists in regard to the Princely order which, the latter held, should be abolished. He said that he rather wished to avail of their services, if the Princes became trustees of their people and lived and worked to serve them. Shri Mahatab appears to take a similar position regarding the landowner. "Comparing the methods and views of Mahatma Gandhi and Acharya Vinoba Bhave in the matter of solving the economic problem of poverty," Dr. Mahatab says, "Bapuji strove for removal of poverty while Vinobaji is distributing it. Bapuji advocated the theory of trusteeship of the rich and wanted the rich to feel that they were holding their wealth as trustees for the common good. Vinobaji, on the other hand, is asking even the comparatively poor people to part with their land for what he thinks is the common good."

* In this article, I am quoting from the report in *The Tribune* of July 11, 1955.

Dr. Mahatab is also critical of increased fragmentation which, he feels, will result from Bhoodan. He also feels that the landless may not be as intelligent and capable as the land-owning classes, thus causing decay in agriculture. "Land should therefore be possessed by those who, in addition to knowledge of tilling, had 'the power of organization and development to get the best results economically out of land'. It follows that land should be possessed in economic units. The basic land problem would be solved if the rights of the tiller were safeguarded and guaranteed."

The fine distinction drawn by Shri Mahatab in the approach of Gandhiji and Vinoba is, I think, academically true. The emphasis by Vinoba on the right of ownership and its disposition is based on his belief that like air, water etc. land also belongs to all and therefore there should be no property right in it. The proposition is not as good logic as rhetoric. For all practical purposes, we know, land is to belong to A, B or C. The only consideration should be that the possession must be just and economically the most productive and conducive of maximum social good. It is therefore any day a healthy rule of land economy that the tiller must be in undisputed possession for use of the land he tills. It is a good thing if he legally owns it. It would not do to say against it that he is less capable or intelligent than the absentee landlord. The condition, if true, may very well be the result of lack of opportunities denied to him till now.

The charge of fomenting fragmentation on the part of Bhoodan is also not tenable, for it is not a part of its programme to have fragmentation. As Vinoba put it at one time, the greater evil in India today is the fragmentation of the heart which he is out to remove. This is done by the hoary method of *dan* of whatever we may have to those who do not have anything. If we have poverty in abundance as our wealth, let us share that, as it is any day noble and life-giving to do so. It would be a wholly wrong thing to describe it as 'distributing poverty'. Bhoodan accepts that there must be a unit of five acres for every individual tiller. This is to be strengthened and reinforced by village industries, cattle-breeding etc. to make it a tolerable economic proposition.

It is any day good that we have as many village home- and hand-industries as we can restore to our neglected village economy. Dr. Mahatab notes this. Let us not forget that the one largest and the most important industry in our country is agriculture, allied with Goseva and small-scale industries. They are one composite whole. To energize and rehabilitate it is the most urgent and immediate thing to do. It is in the most poor and neglected condition. There should be a direct attempt on our part to ameliorate it. That will have solved more than half of our heavy task in the economic and social field.

In doing this let us note that village industries hold a unique position of marginal importance. Without their help agriculture cannot be economic, nor can the village community come to its own. These industries, therefore, must be immediately rehabilitated. In our unthinking hurry for or biased attitude to heavy industries, there is the danger of losing sight of the real industrial problem in India, which is not heavy industries, important though they may be in their own way, but is to industrialize the whole countryside. It is a vital problem, not merely monetary, industrial or economic. It touches the largest of the Indian humanity, whose interests have been lost sight of by the powers that be in our country during the last few centuries. The Bhoodan or, to use the apter term, the Sarvodaya movement is a genuine attempt to draw the attention of our people to this the first and foremost task of Swaraj.

21-7-'55

EDUCATION FOR ALL

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

The Economic Review, Bombay, in its July 9, 1955 issue, asks, "What is the cost of sending all of India's children to school?" and discusses it under its first page editorial headed as "Education Not For All". The question is surely timely, though a little uncomfortable, particularly for our planners, because they cannot, without exposing themselves to bitter criticism, escape it on the plea of want of necessary finance for it. The above E. R. editorial notes this aspect of the question and says:

"True, in putting the question like this, one may be accused of making simple things complex. Was not all this worked out in the Sargent Scheme many years ago, even before the British left? But many things have happened since then, and educationists not only in India, but in other underdeveloped countries also have come to realize that on the ground of cost alone, if for no other reason, the type of primary and secondary education so far contemplated cannot be extended to cover even a substantial proportion of children of a particular age group, not to speak of all. Hence, educationists from Asian countries, who met in Bombay under the auspices of the UNESCO some years ago, seriously thought of looking into the alternative system of Basic Education."

I congratulate the journal on its thus bringing out the aspect and merit of Basic Education, which is today forgotten or is not duly taken note of in our educational and economic planning. We know that this was the point which stirred the mind of Gandhiji to suggest Basic Education as the system most suitable for India.

It not only suggested a new method of imparting education, but also it improved and reformed the old method of English education in India along with it. It was not a mere pedagogic reform suggested by the Mahatma; it was a basic reform in reconstructing life and education in our country. The idea of Basic Education was a bold critique of, and a potent programme for, radically changing the old and outworn sys-

tem of English education. The E.R. editorial misses this very important point—the core idea why we should have Basic Education, where it says:

"It was not the superiority of its educational theory however which commended Basic Education to other underdeveloped countries, but the mundane economics of it. Not many children can be put to the old type of school. Let them, then, have schooling in a manner which will equip them for life and yet not cost too much. It is finance which in the last analysis keeps down the pace, since, as is always the case, there are more pressing demands on it."

Mahatmaji, when he suggested education through productive labour or handicraft, not merely saw the immediate economic or financial aspect, but also he intuitively forestalled its superior virtue of the capacity of the idea to educate the whole man in the most natural and pedagogically sound way. To quote him here:

"As a nation we are so backward in education that we cannot hope to fulfil our obligations to the nation in this respect in the given time during this generation, if the programme is to depend on money. I have therefore made bold, even at the risk of losing all reputation for constructive ability, to suggest that education should be self-supporting. By education I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man—body, mind and spirit. Literacy is not the end of education nor even the beginning. It is only one of the means whereby man and woman can be educated. Literacy in itself is no education. I would therefore begin the child's education by teaching it a useful handicraft and enabling it to produce from the moment it begins its training. Thus every school can be made self-supporting, the condition being that the State takes over the manufactures of these schools."

"I hold that the highest development of the mind and the soul is possible under such a system of education. Only every handicraft has to be taught not merely mechanically as is done today but scientifically, i.e. the child should know the why and the wherefore of every process."*

The E. R. concludes its observations on the draft programme of the Union Ministry of Education during the next Five Year Plan period with saying:

"A more adequate measure of the cost and the alternative means of attaining it should be presented before the country, if the Directive in the Constitution for compulsory primary education is to be realized speedily. What is to be attained has also to be set out clearly and in a forthright manner. For it is high time to free education from the vagaries of State or local finance and to make the same standard of teaching open to all children in India, to whichever State they may belong. This is a minimum demand and it has to be met."

To spend money for expanding education in the prevalent manner and without a long-view

* *Basic Education*, By M. K. Gandhi, page 30, price Re. 1-8-0, postage etc. As, 6, Pub. Navajivan, Ahmedabad-14.

plan as envisaged by the idea of Basic Education will be unpardonable waste; it will be self-defeating as that way would confront us with the dead wall of absence of necessary finance, apart from other considerations of its unsuitability and such other demerits, well known to all by now. Our educational ministries will be well advised to consider this aspect of the question when framing their plans for the next five years.

14-7-'55

GANDHIAN CONCEPT OF DECENTRALIZATION

(By N. Prasad)

Gandhiji's greatest contribution to the social thought of this century is perhaps his insistence on decentralization of the means of production (i.e. say economic power). There are many who are ready to give thoughtful consideration to his theory because it is the only way out of the problem of unemployment in this country. They argue that it is desirable to go in for decentralization because huge capital accumulation is needed to industrialize the country through large-scale industries. They also contend that because large-scale industrialization presupposes the existence of foreign markets which this country cannot have, decentralization is the only cherishable goal. In other words large-scale industrialization will be preferable in case the problem of capital formation and foreign markets are solved.

Now this line of reasoning constitutes a danger to the whole theory of decentralization as put forward by Gandhiji. It would be wrong to presume that Gandhiji propounded his theory only to suit Indian conditions. On the other hand Gandhiji's theory of decentralization was the result of his keen and almost prophetic insight into the numerous political, social and cultural ills which the age of large-scale industrialization has brought in its wake.

This is what Bertrand Russell has to say as regards Gandhiji's concept of decentralization: "In those parts of the world in which industrialism is still young, the possibility of avoiding the horrors we have experienced still exists. India, for example, is traditionally a land of village communities. It would be a tragedy if this traditional way of life with all its evils were to be suddenly and violently exchanged for the greater evils of industrialism and they would apply to people whose standard of living is already pitifully low....."

Therefore, one has only to understand the magnitude of those 'horrors' of which Russell speaks, before one can truly appreciate Gandhiji's idea of decentralization.

Large-scale industrialism is at the base of the centralization of political power in few hands. It is in the very nature of large-scale industries to centralize economic power in the hands of a few individuals. Under capitalism, this power comes to be concentrated in the hands of individual capitalists and under socialism it is

arrogated by managers, technocrats and bureaucrats.

Thus the centralization of power in the State negates the very conception of democracy. This is why Gandhiji did not favour the so-called democracy in the West. In his view, Western democracy was only formal. In reality it was totalitarian in so far as only a few could enjoy the political power in this system.

Apart from the political consequences, there are the evil effects of industrialization on the personality of man. Industrialism starts by snapping the naval chord of man which binds him with soil and nature. He finds himself lost in the corrosive and all-enveloping shadow of giant machineries. As a result he is reduced to a mere cog in the wheel.

Since industrialization is based on the division of labour, it limits man's self-expression. The famous illustration of Adam Smith that a pin has to pass through ninety hands before it is completely manufactured only reaffirms the above charge. Hence the work loses its variety, initiative and 'colour'. No doubt such a division increases the productivity. But it obstructs the full foliation of man's natural skill.

Not only this, industrialization does not cater to the biological needs of man. Man as a biological being requires "a specific temperature, a specific quality of climate, air, light, humidity and food." It is by working in such conditions that man maintains his 'bodily equilibrium'. Industrialization usurps these 'organic needs' of man.

Moreover industrialization tends to gather man in the collective. This inevitably fosters the growth of totalitarian impulse in man. Man becomes oblivious of his own sovereignty. He merges his personality in the collective with the result that ultimately he is accustomed to tolerate every form of tyranny and cruelty in the name of the collective wellbeing of the society.

There are some of the most eloquent ills which result from an unchecked pursuit of industrialism. As a matter of fact, many thinkers and social reformers, Wen, Simon, Fouriser and especially Marx tried to go into the causes of these ills. According to them, therefore, the root of the malady lay in the system of ownership; all social, political and cultural ills were due to private ownership of the means of production. Once this private system of ownership was removed and instruments of production socialized, they thought, the malady would disappear, rather 'melt' as if 'into thin air'.

But experience gave a lie to the rosy picture which these reformers and especially Marx had painted. Even after socialization the ills tended to appear in diverse other forms. Liberty disappeared. And the mad pursuit after power tended to reduce man to the lowest denominator of beast living, as George Orwell would like to call, on 'Animal Farm'.

Where lay then the root of the disease, the fallacy in the whole approach? Undoubtedly many of the evils originated from the system of ownership. Gandhiji accepted Marx in this respect. But he went a step further and delved deeper. According to him both the system of ownership* and the technique of production were the real cause of the malady. Marx attacked the system of ownership in his humanistic zeal. But he left the technique of production altogether untouched. Gandhiji focussed his attention to the technique also. He suggested that large-scale technique should give way to small-scale technique. This therefore forms the core of his decentralization theory.

Does this mean that Gandhiji was against the application of science to the instruments of production, i.e. machinery? To this he replied, "What I object to is the craze for machinery, not machinery as such....." (*Young India*, 1925). Indeed he favoured the application of science towards developing the small-scale technique: "I would welcome every improvement in the cottage machine," he wrote in *Young India*. Replying to a suggestion whether he was against all machinery he said, "My answer is emphatically No. But I am against its indiscriminate multiplication. I refuse to be dazzled by the seeming triumph of machinery. But simple tools and implements and such machinery as saves individual labour and lightens the burden of millions of cottages, I should welcome." (*Young India*, 1926)

We see, therefore, that Gandhiji was not against machinery as such. His whole approach to machinery and the use of science was radically different, deeply revolutionary and humanly conscious. A technique which tends to make man a robot, robs him of his perennial urge to freedom and makes an all-out invasion on his political, economic and social liberties is not acceptable to Gandhiji.

"Science in so far as it consists of knowledge, must be regarded as having value, but in so far as it consists of technique, the question whether it is to be praised or blamed depends

upon the use that is made of the technique. In itself it is neutral, neither good nor bad and any ultimate views that we may have about what gives value to this or that must come from some other source than science." This is what Bertrand Russell has to say about the use of scientific technique.

According to Gandhiji, the scientific technique, therefore, must be informed by a deep awareness of values which it is out to create. In other words, the advancement of technique and perfection must accord with the general aims. Large-scale technique strikes at the very root of the general aims. Gandhiji, therefore, does not show any quarter to it.

GOD IS THE MASTER

(By Vinoba)

[From the prayer speech delivered on 30-5-55 at Jampur Koraput Camp in Orissa]

Just as, because, air, water and the light of the sun have been created by God all have an equal right to them, so as land also is His creation it is meant for all. Land is needed by everybody. We obtain our food from it. The grass on which our cows feed themselves comes from it. Our houses are also built on it. Thus, everything depends on land. So, everyone should have a right to it.

But the British who came here in between made a law regarding land so that some had more of it than they needed and some others none. People then began buying and selling land. Now, do we sell water and air? Just as air and water are not things to be bought and sold, so too land is not something to be bought and sold. Land is our mother. The idea of determining her value in money is entirely wrong. But during the British regime such a shabby law was imposed on us that buying and selling of land started amongst us. The law is still in existence. But we intend to remove that law. We are persuading the people from village to village and if they are persuaded to see the truth law will be no more.

No one can be owner of land. Land is, as I said, our mother. Even as all children go to their mother to ask for something to eat, so too everyone will approach the soil to serve her and get his food. When the peasants need cash they go to the money-lender and mortgage their land to him and borrow money on it. Then interest on the loan goes on mounting so that in the end the land passes into the hands of the *sowcar*. But it is against religion to set a price on land in this manner. Land belongs to the whole village. The people of the village will together work on land and so will have their food to satisfaction. If there was more land in our village than we needed and the neighbouring one had less of it, people belonging to the latter can come to ours and live here with pleasure. Our hearts are open

* While agreeing with Marx on this point, Gandhiji went further and said that what is ownership in usual legal terms is really trusteeship; one who owns the means of production does so, and is entitled to do so, on condition that he holds himself in trust to society, for exploiting them to their very best and put them to the largest social use for the good of all. In short, right to own is governed, both in civics and ethics, by such trustworthiness on the part of the so-called owner. Therefore, Gandhiji emphasized more on every citizen growing to be so trustworthy than on his legal ownership of material means of production. The ownership of course must be just and the means of production be equitably distributed. The best way to do so was to aim for and organize a decentralized industrial and agricultural economy of a people living in village communities which will have face-to-face—direct social and human relationships.

to all and our land also is open to all. Anyone can labour on it and have his food.

Just as no one can be owner of land so we also wish to bring about conditions in which no one can own for himself factories and such other means of production. But we want to begin with land. If you, friends, set about your work firmly, we will build up strength and power enough to transfer the ownership of these factories to society.

The position about factories and mills today is that some therein are workers and others masters. But we want both to be masters and both to be workers. If someone has more of brains he will work more with his brains and if some one has a strong body he will work more with it. But both will be masters. Ultimately you cannot have two masters. You can have but one. So this will mean that the whole of society, that is, God will be the Master, and all of us will be workers and servants. God alone is the Master and whatever comes to us from Him we will distribute equally among ourselves and work for the good of society. This is why in every meeting I repeat the *mantra* that land like air, water and the light of the sun is a gift from God and so is for all. This *mantra*, friends, is like Ramanama.

(From Hindi)

NOTES

Curious

The *Times* of Bombay carries a news-item that a training class has been started under the auspices of the Bombay University, the uniqueness of which lies in the fact that no other Indian University has been able to think of it till now. Its purpose is to give some knowledge of the life and habits in Western countries to students who intend to proceed to them for studies. Professors, government officials and others who have a good knowledge of how to use the knife and the fork, how to imbibe liquid food without making noise which is so disagreeable to civilized ears, where to live in England, how to meet together, how to behave when doing so and such other various vital matters, will train the young hopefuls in them. The foreign legations in the city will help in the training.

This is not bad so far as it goes. A student who intends to go to a Western country would find it easy if he were to do so armed with the precious knowledge of such things. But the curious part of the business is something else. How did the wisdom of starting such a class strike the University now when the British have at long last wound up their regime from this country? Is it not really something very curious

that now under Swaraj when various new tasks like a proper study and teaching of Hindi, organization of labour camps, village service, teaching the students how to deal with their countrymen living in the villages etc. are waiting to be earnestly and seriously taken up, the importance of none of them strikes the University and it starts special class to cater to the petty needs of a mere insignificant handful who want to go to foreign countries? If anything it indicates what queer notions regarding its field of service the educational institution holds. It is true the city of Bombay has developed and thrived during the British regime, but the University seems to forget that the city is essentially Indian and mainly for the service of the people of India. The small news-item clearly demonstrates where the heart of the University administrators is.

12-7-55

(From Gujarati)

M. P.

Pope and Goa

To

The Editor, *Harijan*

Sir,

A correspondent says that he has written to the Pope to intervene on behalf of India in the dispute with Portugal about Goa.

But it is also said that the Pope cannot interfere in politics.

Surely, His Holiness can tell the Government of Portugal to act in this matter in the light of moral and ethical teaching of Christianity, which is common to all religions and which requires all men to abandon pride and greed of money and be upright, righteous, truthful, humble, honest and just in their daily dealings with fellow-men in common life, in business, in politics, in national and international affairs for peace, prosperity and happiness of all nations of the world.

If the Portuguese Government would act according to this noble moral teaching, it would give Goa to India, as an act of religious honesty and justice. "Religion is morality in practice."

54, Wodehouse Road
Colaba, Bombay-5

Yours faithfully,
Sorabji R. Mistri

CONTENTS	Page
BHOODAN — THE MOVEMENT	
OF COMPASSION — I	.. C. Rajagopalachari 169
NON-VIOLENCE THE ONLY	
TRUE STRENGTH	.. Vinoba 171
WHY BHOODAN	.. Maganbhai P. Desai 172
EDUCATION FOR ALL	.. Maganbhai P. Desai 173
GANDHIAN CONCEPT OF	
DECENTRALIZATION	.. N. Prasad 174
GOD IS THE MASTER	.. Vinoba 175
NOTES:	
CURIOUS	.. M. P. 176
POPE AND GOA	.. Sorabji R. Mistri 176