

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

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TWO ANNAS

A NEW UNIVERSITY IN GUJARAT

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

The Government of Bombay have published a bill to incorporate a new university in Gujarat at Vallabh Vidya Nagar, Dt. Kheda.

Bombay was the first university in the State, established in 1858. With some changes, it still functions. The changes are more quantitative than qualitative. The most noteworthy one is that its jurisdiction has been now confined to Bombay city. This change occurred about 90 years after its existence. The reason was the emergence of a new idea during the course of our march to freedom. This was to have, as far as possible, linguistic States and to have regional languages as media of entire instruction and administration. Bombay State implemented this new idea by establishing its three regional universities, carving out their areas from the mother-university. The main principle of this change was to have regional languages as media of instruction.

During these 90 years, the British Government also had presented to us a new idea in university organization, viz., the idea of a residential and teaching and unitary university on the lines of Oxford or Cambridge, as a reform in old London model of an affiliating one. In Gujarat we have the Sayajirao Gaikwad University, Baroda, on this model, created on the eve of that State's merging with Bombay State.

Now it is proposed to add a third university in Gujarat at Vallabh Vidya Nagar, the objects and reasons for which are said to be (i) to have Hindi as the medium of instruction and examination, and (ii) to have a "university in a rural setting.....so that the programme of rural education outlined by the University Education Commission may get under way", so that "the process of regeneration of villages by application of modern arts, sciences, and technology to rural requirements" may be accelerated.

And it is proposed that the Vallabh Vidya Nagar University can be of the affiliating type, even though the apparent idea is to have it as of the other, viz., the residential and teaching type. Clause 5(4) of the Bill says that if any educational institution using Hindi in Devnagari script as the medium of instruction, situate in any other university in the State of Bombay, is refused affiliation on the ground of the medium

of instruction in such institution, then the new University may, with the sanction of the State Government, affiliate it with itself.

Over and above these two things which are noteworthy in this move, there are a few others which are not to be found in the Gujarat University Act. For example, among the aims for the university we find: (i) training for competitive examinations for services under the Union and State Governments; (ii) to make provision for military training of students and make grants for the purposes of the N.C.C.

The merits and the demerits of this move for a rural university must be adjudged in light of these its chief aims and objects. The idea of a rural university is welcome enough. Even though we as a people are predominantly a rural community, all our universities have been working for the cities only and particularly for training personnel for Government services and some urban professions. The Vallabh Vidya Nagar institutions have been functioning, by now, fairly for a decade; however, they also follow the same orthodox university tradition. Rather, the things in the new Bill noted above spotlight the fact that, inspite of the professed aim of a rural university, the old ideas have full sway. The approach to the question of the medium amply bears this out.

The idea of a rural university is worth while implementation. The Government of India last year instituted a committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Shrimali to examine what should be done in this matter. It has by now reported its findings, which are published. I do not know whether the Government of Bombay saw them when preparing the Bill for a rural university.

To establish a university with Hindi as its medium in an entirely Gujarati-speaking area is also another great drawback. The proposed university is to be a rural one and to be named after late Sardar Patel, who stood for Gujarat as the medium of instruction. This renders the clause for the Hindi medium quite surprising and is detrimental to the main aim of rural higher education.

What is even more surprising is that there is a provision in the Bill enabling the new university to be affiliating. The Government of Bombay have already by now incorporated affiliating universities for the three linguistic regions, — Gujarat, Maharashtra and Karnatak. And it is contemplated therein that a deserving

place in those areas, if it so desired, can opt out to be a new university of a unitary and teaching type. But there can be no question of having another *affiliating* one in the same linguistic area.

Accordingly, it is good that the new university has been demarcated to have an area within a radius of five miles as its jurisdiction. This is rendered even more necessary by the need of its becoming a rural university. But this is nullified by providing for Hindi as its medium and by allowing, on that count, any institution in the State to seek affiliation with it. Thus the Bill makes the worthy object of rural higher education only nominal and ineffective and relegates it to a position of insignificance and unimportance.

What is still more objectionable about it is that it unduly interferes with the working of the regional universities, hindering their normal course of development and progress, without any advantage to itself. Therefore, this provision for affiliation must be deleted, thus giving deserved prominence to the aim and object of a rural university.

I have referred to the Hindi medium question above. The thing is so serious that a point or two need to be noted at the end. Only a few days back, speaking at Delhi, the President assured the people that Hindi is not to impose itself on nor usurp the legitimate and rightful place of our regional languages; Hindi will have certain well-defined spheres of activity only. The place of the regional language as the rightful medium of education is undisputed. The Radhakrishnan Commission has well laid it down; and recently a year ago the Congress Working Committee cleared the whole position about the language problem.

Moreover, the above principle has been accepted as the corner-stone of the propagation of Hindi as the A-I. common language. If this is compromised in any way, it will create suspicion and fear about Hindi and its place in our educational and cultural life, making the work of propagating Hindi itself difficult, if not impossible. There is therefore even greater reason to be very careful and circumspect about deciding the medium of instruction and administration. This should rather be left to the decision of the new university senate.

The reason for such infatuation for Hindi medium is the lure of Government services competitive examinations. Now we can feel assured that it is the duty of the State to see that no candidate is put in any unjust or unfair conditions of competition. Therefore it is increasingly being recognized now that the candidate will have the option to use his own regional language also, and will also know Hindi as a language, thus removing any fear on this count.

Thus when certain ideas for the reconstruction and reorientation of our national system of education are crystallizing themselves, the nature of the move for the new university at Anand

should not disturb that welcome process. As the Bill stands at present, it creates a reasonable fear and doubt about the process and harmonious development of our regional universities too. The latter and their vice-chancellors also should draw the attention of the Government to this aspect and it is necessary that the leaders of the people and the Government should consider to amend the Bill accordingly. It is as well the Legislature may send it for public opinion before finally considering it.

16-8-'55

(From the original in Gujarati)

BUDDHA AND THE MODERN WORLD

(By Suresh Ramabhai)

The world is richer today than ever before. Nor did it ever command more pleasant means of life and comfort. All things can be had now in plenty.

Yet the life of man was never so insecure as today. The blessings of science threaten to be a curse. All material progress or scientific advancement is failing to cope with the gravity of the situation and meet man's inner urge. The biggest intellects and the mightiest potentates seem to be but show-boys incompetent to grapple with the fundamentals. The very existence of life and civilization is in jeopardy.

Man faces the question of to be or not to be. He wonders whether all this is worthwhile. And the pace of events impels him to arrive at the same conclusion which has been reached by the wisest men of the world who were greater geniuses than Galileo or Newton, greater warriors than Alexander or Wellington.

The foremost among them was Buddha who declared the Eternal Law more than two and a half milleniums ago :

न हि वेदं वेदनिं सम्मतीयं क्रुदाचनं ।
अवेदं च सम्मन्ति एष धम्मो सनन्तनो ॥
धम्मपद - ५

(Never in this world can hatred be stilled by hatred; it will be stilled only by non-hatred — this is the Law Eternal.)

In other words, never in this world can violence be overpowered by greater violence; it can be overpowered only by non-violence. Hatred and violence cannot but beget more hatred and violence... a process which will culminate in the vanquishment of both the hater and the hated.

Politicians and military experts endorse this truth. The British Labour leader Clement Attlee says, "War cannot be regulated like a football game. It cannot be humanized. It must be abolished. Delay increases the danger that some spark may set the world ablaze." Captain Lidell Hart, one of Britain's most eminent experts on war, holds, "Any war in the atomic age would lead to the destruction of all the nations concerned."

This had also been foreseen by Einstein, the scientist-sage of the twentieth century. He was once asked, "The second world war was fought with atom bomb, the third will be fought with hydrogen bomb, what will the fourth world war

be fought with?" Straight came the answer, "With bows and arrows!"

The futility of war as an instrument of resolving peace is, therefore, unquestioned. But the citadel of world peace will not be something airy. It must have a foundation to stand upon. There can be no peace in the world unless there is peace in every country of the world, in every province of every country, in every district of every province, and again, in every village or town of every district. To expect peace in the world without peace in the village or town is like expecting a tree without sowing its seed.

This is the crux of the matter: How to preserve peace in the village? Obviously, by eliminating or humanizing the sources which disturb that peace.

This is not something new or unprecedented. In fact man always practises it at home. Why does he feel happy and peaceful at home? Simply because:

(1) There is no individual ownership of things in the home;

(2) Everybody gets there according to his or her need and works according to his or her capacity;

(3) Disputes of the home are resolved in the home itself.

The same can very well be true in the village. That is to say:

(1) All land and property in the village should belong to the village as a whole;

(2) Everybody—be he literate or not, man or woman—would work according to his or her capacity and get according to his or her need;

(3) Disputes of the village should be resolved in the village itself.

World peace demands this. It is also the call of science. Modern science says that there cannot be one law for the atom and another for the universe. It has now compressed the universe in the atom and the same law is true for both. Likewise, what is true for the individual should be true for the world as a whole. Buddha tells us:

अत्ता हि अत्तनो नाथो अत्ता हि अत्तनो गति ।
तस्मा संयमयत्तानं अस्सं भद्रं व वाणिजो ॥

(Ibid, 380)

(Self is the lord of self. Self is the goal of self; therefore control thy self as a merchant controls a horse of noble breed.)

This message of Buddha is not confined to one country, creed or sect. It embraces the entire mankind. Penetrating to the central truth, he spoke for all time:

अक्रोधेन जित्ते कोधं अराधुं साधुना जित्ते ।
जित्ते कदरियं दानेन सत्त्वेन अजीकवादिनं ॥

(Ibid, 223)

(Let a man conquer anger by absence of anger, wickedness by absence of wickedness, miserliness by liberality, and a liar by truth.)

The Bhoodan Yajna movement* provides us with a key to live this message and make it

* I would rather prefer to use the more comprehensive and wider term, viz. the Sarvodaya movement, here.—M.P.

a vital reality. It is for the people to stand up and resolve to save the world by leading a life, individually and collectively, as Buddha or other prophets called upon us, or, as science is intimating us now. The matter cannot brook any delay. Buddha gave a warning:

अभिन्धरेय कल्याणे पापा चित्तं निवारये ।
दधं हि करोतो पुञ्जं पापस्मि रमती मनो ॥

(Ibid, 116)

(Let a man make haste to do good, let him keep his mind from sin, (for) if a man is slow to do good his mind delights in sin.)

The responsibility of the countrymen of Buddha and Gandhiji is far greater. Let us set up new values and transform the social, economic, political and religious order in India. May we leave no stone unturned to deliver the message of love and peace—of truth and non-violence—to mankind! May we fulfil the great mission of our land!

A Suggestion for the Next Plan

In our country, the pressure of living population is greatest on land due to no village industries. It is .83 acre per capita, while in Canada and U.S.S.R. it is 6 to 3 acres. The only occupation of 80 per cent of the population is on land and as there is no sufficient water all the year round, everybody does not get full employment and the process reduces them to further poverty.

The essential and primary needs of human being are (1) Food, (2) Cloth and (3) Shelter. Food is grown already in villages, but as said above, it is not sufficient to give employment to all. It therefore goes without saying that the next primary need of cloth industry should be diverted to villages. Thereby most of the population will regain some occupation and there will be equal distribution of wealth. The purchasing power of the people in villages will be increased and thus they will be able to buy other consumer articles and thus help increasing other industries.

The second Five Year Plan should therefore plan this cloth industry to be diverted into villages, and within five years, we should see that everybody is employed usefully and is earning something to stand on his own legs. This will create a spirit of self-reliance and there will be no pressure on cities. Many educated people will have useful occupation in villages.

Along with the above, let there be adult education so that everybody reads and writes. No propaganda can serve the purpose unless people themselves read the periodicals and learn new things awaiting all round.

There are many other ways to keep our villages occupied with useful employment. Things like rice milling, extraction of edible oils etc. etc., can be done by village labour which is done at present by machines.

During the English rule cloth industry of our villages which was uprooted and diverted to England and thus enriched England should now be reversed to our villages to make them prosperous again.

HARIJAN

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1955

B.C.G. VACCINATION — WHY I OPPOSE IT *

(By C. Rajagopalachari)

The more I examine this subject, the more firmly am I convinced that this B.C.G. mass campaign lacks true scientific basis and is no more than a form of quackery. It is of no use whatsoever in the vast majority of cases and harmful in quite a few. B.C.G. is based on a weak and undemonstrated theory that artificially produced allergy is a defence, which is not supported by that quantity of confirmation which the method of scientific induction demands before acceptance. It is sought to be guarded and buttressed by admissions that meet every case of proof against it. B.C.G. is of no potency, it is admitted, where the re-infection is strong and this can be an explanation for every failure. In cases where it leads to harm, it is explained by 'low resistance' in the victim. Every circumstance of quackery attends this mass campaign that has been started in India, despite the caution observed in civilized countries abroad wherever it is tried. Indian children are being offered for mass experimentation on the same plan as was put in operation among the people in the war-ravaged areas and uncivilized dependent communities.

Not only is the basis of the B.C.G. scheme scientifically inadequate, but the propaganda employed for its rapid furtherance on a mass scale smacks of the methods of quackery. It has been often officially stated and repeated in the press that so many lakhs of children have been immunized this year against tuberculosis and so many millions will have been immunized by the end of the next two years and so on. Any one who remembers the nature of the very limited claims put forward on behalf of B.C.G. vaccination can discover that the public propaganda in this respect is misleading, because the alleged immunity is not claimed to last more than a couple of years after the child is vaccinated and during even that period it is not potent enough against severe infection, and because there is no scheme for re-vaccination for extending the period of immunity. In fact medical opinion is clear that repeated vaccination with B.C.G. would be dangerous.

This is an issue of general national importance and not a matter to be left for disposal according to the majority opinion among them

* Being an introductory note to a collection of a few important statements of eminent medical men, which is issued as a pamphlet, printed at the *Indian Express*, Mount Road, Madras.

when experts differ. In the adventures of science opinions may vary. Where it is a matter that does not affect the bulk of the people, the difference of opinion may be left to be solved by the scientists; not so, when on the basis of a theory, men's persons are touched for good or evil.

I am certain that one day in the future this B.C.G. will be declared as of no value and given up by the world of scientists and forgotten. As the Health Department of the Government of India is throwing its great weight on the side of this unscientific adventure, the rejection will take time. Meanwhile the children and the finest section of them all over the land are being deliberately infected on a mass scale with a variety of one of the deadliest living bacilli known to man. Some among the most eminent men of science have expressed their grave doubts as to what the bacilli introduced in the human system may be capable of becoming and doing in the course of time if not at once. The risk is aggravated by the immense number of persons thus affected and by the unavoidable chances of contamination in a hurricane mass campaign.

The stated object of the mass campaign is to prevent the occurrence of clinical tuberculosis among children. In the first place, the statistical data generally given for mortality among young people from tuberculosis in India are not real statistics but only inferentially deduced conclusions. In the next place, the disease never has occurred or will occur in an epidemic form, so as to justify mass injection with a poison not by any means fully proved to be harmless. Again, the claim put forward for the vaccine is an admittedly undependable immunity and that, too, only for a couple of years. Taking all these into account, one must come to the conclusion that the campaign is thoroughly unjustifiable.

One of the worst incidents of a mass campaign is the ceaseless effort by men whose words carry weight, to rouse a dread of the disease in the vast majority of people. Fear considerably reduces the power of resistance among those who have hitherto coped with dormant infection. Another general consequence of the campaign is the neglect of other measures such as would go far towards real control of tuberculosis.

I am not against modern 'western' therapy or modern science. B.C.G. has nothing to do with modern western medicine. In fact, it is more akin to the principle of homoeopathy than to what is generally known as modern medicine. It proceeds on a creed very similar to that of homoeopathy, namely, that diseases are to be dealt with by the administration in mild forms of the very things that produce the disease. The difference is that the homoeopath does not introduce what multiplies in the human body, but the B.C.G. man introduces a large body of living multiplying organisms, which never leave but are intended to remain for ever in the body of the person vaccinated.

Informed readers have to forgive me for devoting even a little space to this, namely to point out that the B.C.G. vaccine is not a cure for anything. The claim is that it may serve as a preventive in some cases and for a brief period of time. I need not have had to say this but for the fact that I have met quite a few respectably educated men who ask why I oppose something that is proposed to relieve sickness! B.C.G. does not relieve any sickness. It is not intended for it.

Quackery is bad whether it be modern or of the time-honoured variety. It is easy to deal with the latter type but modern quackery is difficult to cope with, as it absorbs for its purposes modern medical terminology and methods of procedure.

"A lie which is all a lie
may be met and fought with outright
But a lie which is part a truth
is a harder matter to fight."

A principle is discovered which is not universal but it is sought to apply it to cases, where it cannot be applied, and exposure of error is resisted. B.C.G. is an extension of the principle of immunity underlying the artificial introduction of the very same virus or bacilli that cause the disease, with the object that the human body may be stimulated to produce a defence, as it is observed to do when catching the infection in the normal way. The extension of this principle to tuberculosis is wrong because it is known that tuberculosis infection does not lead to the creation of any defensive antibody in the system. But struggling against this hard fact and insurmountable objection to the application of the pasteurian method of producing immunity, the B.C.G. protagonist proceeds to depend on the mere allergy or hypersensitivity created by the introduction of the poison, as a substantial defence against infection and asks us to accept all the unknown risks of the injection for the sake of this allergy, even which admittedly lasts only for a couple of years. The ultimate argument is merely statistical which, according to the best appraisers, as will be seen, is inconclusive. Mere figures of inoculation done, without any well-confirmed observation of results as regards immunity, do not form a valid statistical argument beyond proving the energy and resources at the back of the operating organization.

This is what I respectfully say, is the quackery involved in B.C.G. I am not a medical expert. But my conclusions are not based merely on my *a priori* fears and doubts, but on the definite pronouncements of most eminent and illustrious medical men of the civilized world. The Indian medical men that have been recruited by the Health Ministry to conduct and speak for this campaign, the biggest among them, are not as eminent as any of the medical men, on the basis of whose observations and opinions, I have come to the conclusion that this mass campaign

of inoculation with live tubercle bacilli is wrong and must be given up.

Newspapers are not all of them very willing to oblige one who opposes a Government-sponsored campaign with large space, even though the subject be of utmost general importance and though the object be to reach truth and not the furtherance of a particular administrative or political policy. Even when they are generous and willing to publish written criticisms or the reports of speeches dealing with the subject, they are necessarily unable to find space for publishing all the authorities that may be quoted or referred to. This booklet is intended to make up for this. I have here collected and present to readers a few important statements of eminent medical men. I have reduced my own remarks to the minimum that is necessary to explain the relevance of the extracts.

KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES

(By Gandhiji)

[The importance of these industries is being recognized in a manner and to an extent at present. Though it is not satisfactory one may rest content at this stage of our economic thought that it is only thus shall we begin to realize and appreciate their true value and basic importance in our national economy. Their importance was shown to us by Gandhiji. It is well, therefore, that we remind ourselves of what he said about them. The following is from his studied statement, *the Constructive Programme*, which has been accepted by the Congress and stands as its declared policy till now.]

28-55

— M. P. J

"The Khadi mentality means decentralization of the production and distribution of the necessities of life. Therefore the formula so far evolved is, every village to produce and use all its necessities and, in addition, produce a certain percentage as its contribution to the requirements of the cities.

"Heavy industries will necessarily be centralized and nationalized. But they will occupy the least part of the vast national activity in the villages." *

"Other village industries stand on a different footing from Khadi. There is not much scope for voluntary labour in them. Each industry will take the labour of only a certain number of hands. These industries come in as a handmaid to Khadi. They cannot exist without Khadi, and Khadi will be robbed of its dignity without them. Village economy cannot be complete without the essential village industries such as hand-grinding, hand-pounding, soap-making, paper-making, match-making, tanning, oil-pressing etc." †

Real Planning

[And therefore he repeatedly warned us that real planning lies not in heavy industries but in these small-scale ones. The following is his answer to a direct question on the matter put to him in 1947:]

Q: The Government has been introducing schemes of industrializing the country for the

* *Constructive Programme, Its Meaning and Place*—(P. 8), Pub. Navajivan, price As. 6, postage etc. As. 3.

† *Ibid.*, P. 11.

maximum utilization of her raw materials, not of her abundant and unused man-power which is left to rot in idleness. Can such schemes be considered *svadeshi*?

A: The question has been well put. I do not exactly know what the Government plan is. But I heartily endorse the proposition that any plan which exploits the raw materials of a country and neglects the potentially more powerful man-power is lopsided and can never tend to establish human equality.

Real planning consists in the best utilization of the whole man-power of India and the distribution of the raw products of India in her numerous villages instead of sending them outside and rebuying finished articles at fabulous prices.

Harijan, 23-3-47

CASE OF LARGE-SCALE CORRUPTION

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

The Railway Corruption Inquiry Committee has reported to the Railway Minister on July 11. From the short press summaries that are available it is easy to see that the document is a study not only in railway administration but also reveals a cross section of our social and business morality and sense of good citizenship.

Examining the background of railway corruption, the Report says that "corruption on the railways was nothing new. During the early periods, under company management, the wages of the station staff were very low and what they collected as *bakshish* from the public was connived at. This form of corruption was almost universal.

"The system of priorities introduced during war-time and the extreme shortage of transport resulted in new forms of corruption which continued even after the termination of the war as the transport position remained unsatisfactory."

It should not also be forgotten, says the committee, that the first essential condition for eliminating corruption in any Government department is an efficient and honest police force trained in the latest and most scientific methods of detecting and apprehending crime.

"It is difficult for a department to discharge its special functions and also effectively tackle the anti-social elements working in its ranks. It has not the necessary machinery to do this," the committee remarks.

It is also true, the committee says, that the lack of adequate civic sense and business morality is to some extent responsible for the encouragement of corruption amongst the railway staff.

"Unless this deep-rooted attitude of indifference to public good and one's duty as a good citizen is changed, it would be difficult to eradicate corruption from Government employees," says the committee.

Urging a psychological approach, the committee says that the problem of corruption is not

confined to the railways. "It is common to all Government departments and is deep-rooted. Change of outlook on the part of all concerned is, therefore, essential for grappling with this evil." Since the attainment of freedom the role of the railways has completely changed, and "there should be a corresponding change in the attitude of those who run this huge machinery as also of the using public." While there has been a growing consciousness of this problem, the committee says, the steps taken so far have not borne satisfactory results.

After making a general survey of the problem of corruption on the railways against its larger background, the committee has proceeded to make a number of suggestions and recommendations on specific points. Implementation of these recommendations, the committee says, would create an atmosphere congenial for honest and efficient discharge of duties by railway employees.

Shortage of transport, according to the committee, is one of the main reasons which encourages corrupt practices. It is, therefore, necessary that adequate provision be made in the second Five Year Plan not only to make up for the arrears but also to build up sufficient assets to enable the railways to cope with the present transport demands and the further demands that would be made by an expanding economy during the period.

While a major part of corruption exists in the handling of goods traffic, the committee observes that the booking of passengers and luggage is not free from it. Here, too, the last war accentuated an evil already in existence. There had been some improvement of late, but the prevalence of corruption was still extensive.

The committee deals in some detail with the forms of corruption prevalent in the booking of passengers and luggage, reservation of berths, fraudulent use of tickets, harassment of illiterate passengers and ticketless travelling.

Stern action in cases of harassment of poor and illiterate villagers by railway staff has been recommended.

A separate chapter in the report deals with the internal working of the railways, as, in the committee's view, corruption amongst the railway staff in their dealing with the public is closely interlinked with corruption *inter se*. Such corruption is usually in respect of appointments, training, increments, promotions, leave, passes, PTOs, postings, selection boards, railway medical departments, and misuse of railway materials and railway labour.

Often the Government railway police officials themselves indulge in corrupt practices, says the committee.

Several paragraphs in the report are devoted to ways in which the railway consultative committee can play a positive role in eradicating corruption. It is recommended that the scope of

these bodies should be extended to cover all matters of public interest barring individual cases of railway employees.

The committee has emphasized that legislators should avoid sending recommendations to the ministers or Government officials regarding individual cases of railway employees for promotions, transfers, cancellation or reduction of punishments etc. In cases of punishment where legislators feel that injustice has been done, these may be forwarded to the Railway Minister for review. Questions relating to appointments, transfers, and promotions should be left to the administrations. Under no circumstances should a legislator approach officials for favours.

From this short summary readers will see that this is a case of a chronic disease rampant on a large scale, requiring, therefore, a long and careful treatment from all sides, not only the police and the railway departments, but also commerce and industry, railwaymen's unions, and the large number of our people who use the railway in diverse ways. Only a total effort on the part of all of them can eradicate the evil, though deep-rooted in our social order.

28-7-'55

EDUCATION AND PLANNED DEVELOPMENT

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

Mr T. Balogh, a British economist examined the 2nd F. Y. Plan and the result of his findings is published in *The Hindustan Times*, Delhi, 30-7-'55. It is interesting in various ways. I note here only one of them, which appears to me to be the most striking and really noteworthy :

"It is perhaps altogether surprising in particular that the authors being distinguished members of the academic profession, none of the documents has pointed out that their proposals would demand instant and far-reaching reform not merely of education but of recruitment to the civil service. The whole tone and accent on education must be changed now in order to get the result years hence. It is on this point that, in my opinion, the gravest of all dangers lies."

The criticism is true and well-earned, for we know, to our cost, the peculiar perblindness of educational thought in India about the vital link between national education and social and economic reconstruction.

The British economist, in the course of another observation, casually reverts to this subject and makes further observation which is equally important :

"One cannot help feeling that the treatment of education, sports, social security and welfare, the implications of the vast increase of expenditure on health are conducive to the feeling that the author has not even cursorily considered the enormous additional burdens that would be entailed if a really earnest start is made with raising the standard of life in all these fields of collective consumption. When, e.g., in treating educational advance the Plan flatly states that 'on the basis of merit every student at all levels and increasing numbers must be provided with adequate living and educational expenses to enable him to receive education up to the highest standard.' One wonders whether some caveat ought not to have been

entered at least to emphasize the need to stimulate, *specific* rather than *general* education which in India is far too much orientated towards non-technical, non-vocational training. Is the Indian Government not even to influence the directions in which the new *élite* is to be strengthened? The results hitherto achieved do not, on the whole, support the contention (just as they do not support it in Britain either), that what is needed is mere effortless superiority bred by the study of classics thought to be capable of tackling anything at a moment's notice."

Will our planners realize even now that the basic reform for any development worth the name is educational and that the wise lead given by Gandhiji to reorient education through the medium of productive labour or industry and through direct social contact with the people by means of the service of the neighbourhood,—this has the vital and far-reaching effect of changing the whole of our people and preparing them for a total effort to rebuild not only our shattered basic national economy—the economy of our villages, but also social and political life and morale of our people?

5-8-'55

THREE FORCES WORKING FOR THE LAND REVOLUTION

(By Vinoba)

[From prayer speech at Taraboi camp in Orissa on 13-4-'55]

Three forces are working with us on whose strength we boldly tell the poor that they should get land and that they will surely have it.

Truth

The first among them is the force of truth. That there cannot be ownership in land is a plain truth. Land is for everyone. Therefore it should be available to any landless labourer who wants to till it. We assure the poor on the strength of the truth and because it is not merely human but God's own truth that everyone has to recognize it. I have not yet come across a single person who denies the truth. During the past four years followers of all religious persuasions whether Hindu, Mussalman, Christian or the others have all subscribed to the idea that the creation belongs to God, that we are all His children, that we have the same equal rights, and that in this House of the Lord there cannot be more rights and privileges for some and less for others. As children of the Father Who is in Heaven all of us have the same right to the wealth He has created and left to us. We should all recognize the force of the truth and dare not deprive anyone of His children of his or her right. This is God's own Truth.

Austerities

The other force working for and with us is the strength of our landless peasants who labour on the land but who do not have any fields to call their own. We have our entire faith on the austerities they practise. These men and women toil in the fields day and night. There is no end to their toil. But they do not receive the fruits of their labour. The labour that they undergo are the austerities they practise. And the austerities cannot but bear fruit. The landless peasants have to get the fruits of their labour. Their austerities continue day in and day out and we will one day realize that the whole nation stands on their labour and that if those whose toil creates the wealth of the nation do not in justice receive the fruit thereof, their bodies will be worn out so that the entire nation will fall for want of the true support on which it stands. These people toil in fields which are supposed to be owned by others who do not at all work on them. This is to say that they have to work in the fields even as bullocks do. But all of you surely know that the old political order has

gone and we have people's own rule now in the country. Every adult person enjoys the right to vote under the new order. The bullocks have not obtained the right nor have they the strength to do so. The bullocks will, therefore, have always to be at our mercy. But the labour and toil that is, the austerities of the landless labourers who have the right to vote will now surely bear fruit. We cannot now hope to put them under slavery for long. If those who create wealth by the sweat of their brow do not receive the full share of the fruits of their toil on one hand and if on the other, they have secured the full right to cast a vote to select the people who are to govern for them, their austerities are surely going to bring them their legitimate share of the wealth they create. This is the second force working for and with us and its name is the force of austerities.

Love

The third is the force of love. All people in India have always had their sustenance from love. They therefore fully understand what love is and what it means. You have seen with your own eyes what has recently happened in this land. When the British power withdrew itself from the country it left behind hundreds of kings and princes, knights and princelets. They could if they so chose create enough trouble here. Of course, in the end they could not make good and would have gone under. But they could surely have made themselves a source of trouble for some days. But they did not do so. They saw the reality and gave up their kingdoms large and small. This phenomenon is a peculiar contribution of the culture and civilization that is Indian. Even so it is our faith that those who own wealth and land will certainly understand and recognize the demand of love. On that very faith we started the land-gift mission. Depending solely on that faith on the first day on the eighteenth of April four years ago we made the demand for land and a generous, great man gave it to us in response to it. I have firm faith and absolutely no doubt that those in India who possess land and who possess wealth though they may appear to go with the current, though as a consequence they may have been responsible for various kinds of injustices and tyrannies, their hearts within have remained whole and have not been tainted. Love resides in those hearts, generosity resides in those hearts. We have our trust on that love and that generosity. India has been familiar with an uninterrupted tradition and constant flow of *dan* and from ancient times people in India have recognized giving *dan* as a duty. This was to such an extent that instances of those who ruled over kingdoms having given them wholly in gift to society have not been uncommon. We have in India a good number of stories of such kings. This is the third force working for and with us.

Thus we have three forces working on our side: The force of God's own truth, the force of the austerities of the poor and the force of the love and generosity in the hearts of the wealthy. We are carrying on our mission on the strength of these three forces. And we are going to build up a great power on their basis. In the land where the three great forces are emerging in this manner this problem of land is surely not going to remain where it is; indeed, it is going to solve itself very soon.

Endeavour for the Establishment of Equality

We are thus witnessing a miracle in this ancient country. If our workers were but just to awaken themselves they will see that the problem is going to be solved in each one of our villages and that the people in every one of them are together going to do so completely by themselves. If all of you who have met here are landless, please try to think and find out what your duty is and if you own land please also do so. Let both think and find out their respective duties and help each other to shed the problem. It is the duty of the landless to shed their indolence and give up their laziness. Let them prepare

themselves to work with enthusiasm on the land they will get. Let them also give up all their evil habits. Let them give up all untruth. And it is for those who own land to give to the landless who labour in the fields their legitimate share of land, that is, the sixth of it and also along with it, all other necessary things like bullocks and seeds. Let the landowners set up the landless on their feet even as they do their sons. It is also the duty of the landowners to prepare themselves to farm by their own hands, the land that would remain to them after parting with the share which should go to the landless. And if they have not now the courage and strength to do so, if they are too old to do it let them train their sons for the work. The landless will come to work on your fields for two years more at best four. But then onwards the owners of today will have to prepare and train their sons for the job. Times, my friends, are changing, fast changing. You will have to prepare and train your minds and bodies for the coming change. The wise always prepare themselves for the coming circumstances with foresight.

This, then, is how we propose to efface the difference between the owners of land and the landless. Then onwards all will work on the land as its sons and not masters. Land in the village will belong to the whole village and all in the village will till it together. This way will also have to be applied to wealth and to factories. The factory-owners, too, will have to train and prepare themselves to have love and co-operation between themselves and their men, and to work the factories together. All the work carried on in the factories will be with the good of the whole of society in view and the benefit of the endeavour will go to the whole of society. This is how we want to distribute land and wealth and to strengthen as well as harmonize society.

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