

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

Vol. XIX, No. 40

AHMEDABAD — SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1955

TWO ANNAS

A COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY FOR ENGLISH

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

The University Grants Commission of the Government of India have recently appointed a committee for a notable enquiry. Shri Hridaynath Kunzru is its chairman; and Dr. Ramaswami Mudaliar and Professor Siddhanta are the two members. They are asked to go into the question and find out to what extent the complaint that an imperfect knowledge of the English language has adversely affected the standard of knowledge in the universities, is true. I have not here with me as I am writing this the official papers which contain the exact terms of reference; I have stated above what I have learnt from newspaper reports.

If the terms of reference and the question posed for enquiry by the committee are as I have stated, the question is not properly formulated; it remains partial. Besides, if it is supposed that an imperfect knowledge of the English language adversely affects the standard of all knowledge that also is not true. True, an imperfect knowledge of English would affect the student's knowledge of the English speech. And it is also true, the standard of knowledge would deteriorate if English is blindly and foolishly continued as the medium of instruction as in the past. More precisely the question referred for enquiry to the committee should be: Please find out how the standard of knowledge would be affected if English is continued as the medium of instruction when students and teachers both do not know it well.

If the question for enquiry is posed as I have suggested, I believe, not much of an enquiry would be needed, because it can at once be stated without much trouble that the answer or the finding is obvious. On the contrary, the question would be from the other side: Why there is this unseemly insistence on English as medium!

The truth, however, is that the elders of the past generation have not been able to shed their infatuation for, what they believe is, the ravishing beauty of the English tongue. And there are a good many of them in this country who have formed the evil habit of measuring the standard of knowledge by a knowledge of that language

and, worse, who are in charge of the universities of this country. They have not the time to bring knowledge into their own languages, nor have they the inclination to do so; they do not, in fact, care to do so. These people are still suffering from a craze for old standards. Otherwise, one naturally feels like asking what high or for that matter any standard there is today in our education, over whose deterioration we should feel so sorely exercised!

One wonders why the obvious is not recognized that if the movement of the standard on the inclined plane is to be remedied and reversed the student should now be begun to be taught in the language he understands. What can be expected if this obvious and natural truth of all education is not recognized and is in fact avoided for ulterior reasons? Where this natural rule has been recognized and adopted, as in Gujarat, a welcome change has been immediately manifest. The real standard to be preserved and maintained is regarding the fundamental considerations we should have in all such matters where anarchy has entered.

The Kunzru committee may not, however, be dismissed as useless. It is certainly to the good of all concerned that the problem of the English medium of instruction has reached the all-India level and is exercising the minds of the people there. It is, therefore, essential that the committee applies itself to the task assigned to it without feeling sore over the natural abdication of the sway of the English speech.

English may be taught as a subject; but it must be removed from the place of medium of instruction which it has usurped and the rightful and natural occupant of the place, the student's own regional language, should be employed. Essentially, the standard of knowledge depends on the teacher's devotion for it and his prayerful application to his pursuit. Books can, certainly, be of help to him. English may be learnt and English books may be utilized for the purpose. There are some who are eternally shouting for books! Where, they ask, are the books? But let them realize that people or students would read books only when you have created in them a thirst for knowledge. The reason why it is said that the student be compulsorily taught English

is only this that he may learn it for his needs of knowledge. If the Kunzru committee were to look at the problem with the future in view it will be able to perceive this simple truth very easily indeed.

24-10-'55

(From Gujarati)

WAR AND SATYAGRAHA

(By Bertrand Russell)

[Bertrand Russell was a staunch pacifist at the time of the First World War. In one of his essays that he wrote during those years of the War is one which is interesting to remember at present, specially when our thoughts are provoked by the Goa issue on the question of war and Satyagraha in international affairs.

Russell in this essay describes vividly how Non-operation and Civil Disobedience can combinedly give us a weapon as strong and effective as lethal ones, if not more. The non-violent equivalent of war will also necessitate for its successful use the virtues of bravery, courage and fortitude as well as in armed warfare, if not more.

Recently we have heard that the Portuguese authorities in Goa are stopping the teaching of Marathi in schools and order that of Portuguese. They are also asking the people to deliberately insult our Father of the Nation and the National Flag etc. It will interest the reader to see in the following quotation from Russell's essay such things being resisted non-violently in the imaginary illustration of a German invasion on non-violent England which has deliberately relinquished arms and trained itself to resist with non-violent bravery.

The illustration is reproduced from the essay "War and Non-resistance" (written in 1915) included in Russell's book *Justice in War-Time* issued in 1924. The author will excuse me its reproduction here after 40 years when the world situation has radically changed and the author, I fear, might have come to think about all this in a different way. However the fantasy of the illustration, vivid and bold as it is, is interesting indeed, and the world till now has not seen the like of it to happen, in spite of its having a leader of men like Gandhi who stood for such technique of resistance to injustice and war.

5-10-'55

M. P. J.

I

Let us imagine that England were to disband its army and navy, after a generation of instruction in the principles of passive resistance as a better defence than war. Let us suppose that England at the same time publicly announced that no armed opposition would be offered to an invader, that all might come freely, but that no obedience would be yielded to any commands that a foreign authority might issue. What would happen in this case?

Suppose, to continue the argument, that the German Government wished to take advantage of England's defenceless condition. It would be faced, at the outset, by the opposition of whatever was not utterly brutal in Germany, since no possible cloak could be found to hide the nakedness of aggression. All civilized countries, when they engage in war, find some decent excuse; they fight, almost always, either in self-defence or in defence of the weak. No such excuse could be found in this case. It could no longer be said,

as the Germans now say, that England's naval preponderance keeps other nations in bondage and threatens the very existence of any nation which depends upon imported food. It could no longer be said that we were oppressing India, since India would be able to separate from the British Empire whenever it wished to do so. All the usual pretexes by which aggression is justified would be lacking. When America attacked Spain, it was to liberate Cubans, against whom Spain was carrying on a war. When England attacked the Transvaal, the Poet Laureate, *The Times*, Messrs Werner, Beit and Co., and the other imperialist magnates who represented the ancient traditions of the British race, solemnly assured us that our intervention was necessary for the safety of English women in Johannesburg, and for the liberation of the natives from virtual slavery to the Boers. These pleas deceived many people, who, though no doubt unwilling to be deceived, would yet have shrunk from an aggression which could not be in any way disguised. And it was said that the Boers aimed at the conquest of the whole of South Africa; we were told that, if ever England found itself entangled in a European war, Cape Colony would be overrun, and its English colonists would be subjected to tyranny. In any civilized country, arguments of this kind are always used in justifying even the most aggressive war.

If England had no army and no navy, Germany would be hard put to it to find a pretext for invasion. All the Liberal elements in Germany would oppose any such enterprise; so would all other nations, unless Germany offered them a share of the plunder. But let us suppose all home opposition overcome, and a force despatched to England to take possession of the country. Such a force, since it would meet with no military opposition, would not need to be large, and would not be in the state of mingled fear and ferocity which characterizes an invading army among a hostile population. There would be no difficulty in preserving military discipline, and no opportunity for the rape and rapine which have always been displayed by troops after victory in battle. There would be no glory to be won, not even enough to earn one iron cross. The Germans could not congratulate themselves upon their military prowess, or imagine that they were displaying the stern self-abnegation believed to be shown by willingness to die in the fight. To the soldierly mind, the whole expedition would be ridiculous, causing a feeling of disgust instead of pride. Perhaps a few impudent street-boys might have to have their ears boxed but otherwise there would be nothing to lend dignity to the expedition.

However, we will suppose the invading army arrived in London, where they would evict the King from Buckingham Palace and the Members from the House of Commons. A few able bureaucrats would be brought over from Berlin

to consult with the Civil Servants in Whitehall as to the new laws by which the reign of Kultur was to be inaugurated. No difficulty would be expected in managing so tame a nation, and at first almost all the existing officials would be confirmed in their offices. For the government of a large modern State is a complicated matter, and it would be thought well to facilitate the transition by the help of men familiar with the existing machinery.

But at this point, if the nation showed as much courage as it has always shown in fighting, difficulties would begin. All the existing officials would refuse to co-operate with the Germans. Some of the more prominent would be imprisoned, perhaps even shot, in order to encourage the others. But if the others held firm, if they refused to recognize or transmit any order given by Germans, if they continued to carry out the decree previously made by the English Parliament and the English Government, the Germans would have to dismiss them all, even to the humblest postman, and call in German talent to fill the breach.

The dismissed officials could not all be imprisoned or shot; since no fighting would have occurred, such wholesale brutality would be out of the question. And it would be very difficult for the Germans suddenly, out of nothing, to create an administrative machine. Whatever edicts they might issue would be quietly ignored by the population. If they ordered that German should be the language taught in schools, the schoolmasters would go on as if no such order had been issued; if the schoolmasters were dismissed, the parents would no longer send the children to school. If they ordered that English young men should undergo military service, the young men would simply refuse; after shooting a few, the Germans would have to give up the attempt in despair. If they tried to raise revenue by customs duties, at the ports, they would have to have German customs officers; this would lead to a strike of all the dock labourers, so that this way of raising revenue would become impossible. If they tried to take over the railways, there would be a strike of the railway servants. Whatever they touched would instantly become paralyzed and it would soon be evident, even to them, that nothing was to be made out of England unless the population could be conciliated.

Such a method dealing with invasion would, of course, require fortitude and discipline. But fortitude and discipline are required in war. For ages past, education has been largely directed to producing these qualities for the sake of war. They now exist so widely that in every civilized country almost every man is willing to die on the battlefield whenever his Government thinks the moment suitable. The same courage and idealism which are now put into war could quite easily be directed by education into the channel of passive

resistance. I do not know what losses England may suffer before the present war is ended, but if they amount to a million no one will be surprised. An immensely smaller number of losses, incurred in passive resistance, would prove to any invading army that the task of subjecting England to alien domination was an impossible one. And this proof would be made once for all, without dependence upon the doubtful accidents of war.

In internal politics, in all democratic countries, the very method we have been considering is constantly practised, with continually increasing success. Even in Russia, it was the general strike which secured the Constitution of 1905. For a generation, terrorists had uselessly copied the methods of militarists by bomb-throwing and assassination; they had achieved nothing except to afford the authorities an excuse for ruthless repression—an excuse not only to the public, but also to their own consciences, since they appeared to themselves, as soldiers do, to be brave men facing death in the public service. After all the years of fruitless violence, it was the method of passive non-obedience which secured the momentary victory, afterwards lost through disunion and a return to violence. And in all the dealings of democratic governments with labour troubles or with irreconcilable minorities, it is this same power of passive resistance that comes into play. In a civilized, highly organized, highly political State, government is impossible without the consent of the governed. Any object for which a considerable body of men are prepared to starve and die can be achieved by political means, without the need of any resort to force. And if this is true of objects only desired by a minority, it is a thousand times more true of objects desired unanimously by the whole nation.

(To be continued)

By Mahatma Gandhi

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HARIJAN

Dec. 3

1955

THE CRISIS WE ARE IN

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

I draw the attention of the reader to the article reproduced elsewhere in this issue, "India in Transition". It was written a few months ago. However the issues that it raises and the points that it tries to make are not oldened at all. They are serious enough to be noted by all who mind the trend of thoughts and events in present-day India. We are today in a transition the like of which our people had not had for a few centuries last.

As the writer of the article says, the question before us is not merely economic, though apparently it looks so and our leaders in the Government are crying hoarse about our economic and industrial advancement through industrialization. It should now be realized that technology and modern economics in the West have given birth to a social, moral and political philosophy of their own, which has created in its wake a way of life all its own. Thanks to British rule and English education, all this has also come to us in India and is being bodily implanted among a people whose way of life, culture and philosophy have a stamp and uniqueness of their own.

Again, more than 90 per cent of us live in their hoary past, almost ignorant of this new age coming from the West. Therefore the industrialization that is the order of the day now is only a small class-activity and not an organic growth of the body politic as in the land of its birth, viz., the West. The 19th century problem of the West meeting the East is as if reviving itself in the new context of free India. A serious question is therefore posed, how the endeavour to industrialize us in a Western manner will go. Will the impact of the West on an Eastern society tend to result in a happy amalgam, or by some unknown freak of social alchemy produce a dynamite that might be dangerous? These are questions that we are not discussing in India. Are we aware of them? The signs of the times do not assure us that way.

The correspondent from New Delhi in his article confirms this view. He counts three important social problems before us. Well may we add a fourth one, viz. exploitation of the weak by the socially and politically strong, and the deep-rooted malaise of embezzlement, misappropriation, bribery and corruption appearing off and on right from the Jeep purchase scandal up to the Bhakra Nangal recently. Surely these tell us that there is somewhere a dangerous dissonance in the process of imitating Western economics and technology here.

The editor of the *Manas* in the same issue, discusses the point raised by the correspondent and remarks,

"Wherever technology moves in, ancient handicrafts are first corrupted and then eliminated. . . . What can be done? The only resistance movement against tasteless industrialism that we know of is *Sarvodaya*, started by Gandhi, but while *Sarvodaya* may qualify India's rush to industrialize, it cannot, as our Indian correspondent makes clear, reverse the tide of 'progress'.

"It remains for the West to 'rationalize' its technological and industrial gains in terms of human values. Offhand, we can think of four writers who have devoted attention to this problem. Ralph Borsodi (*Flight from the City, This Ugly Civilization*) has mapped a programme for the individual, Arthur Morgan (*The Long Road, The Small Community*) has examined the prospects for intelligent community life, and Lyman Bryson and Lewis Mumford have attacked the question from the viewpoint of total culture."

The editorial remarks amply show that even in the West what goes on is not felt to be satisfactory or all to the good. Really speaking, a cultural and spiritual crisis is slowly coming over the whole world, and the causes thereof are deeply human and spiritual and not economic or technological or industrial as some of us superficially observe. The *Sarvodaya* movement started by Gandhiji is therefore significant and is deeply meaningful. May we not bypass it with using the new slogan — "a Socialistic Pattern of Society."

9-11-'55

INDIA IN TRANSITION

[Being a letter from New Delhi by an Indian correspondent that appeared in the *Manas* of April 20, 1955.]

India is passing through a period of transition, building huge power and irrigation projects and new industrial units, based, by and large, on economic and technological patterns evolved by the West. But this development of an underdeveloped economy has brought social and moral problems to which very little attention is given. A greater understanding of the "qualitative", the human, side of the problem is required to assess the social effects of this technological advance.

India has to meet three important social problems which, though not new, have assumed enormous proportions in recent years — problems of (a) student indiscipline, (b) increase in crime, and (c) mounting unemployment, particularly amongst the educated middle classes.

The present generation of students lacks restraint and respect for the teachers. With the breakdown of family life, the head of the family is not able to exercise a healthy influence, and with the classes swelling to unwieldy sizes, teachers cannot give personal attention to children. But more than these is the intangible atmosphere prevailing in society which has upset old values. A sort of "trade union" spirit prevails among the students, who go on strike if the college or university authorities do not listen to them. Not only their respect for law and order

but also their intellectual attainments have declined.

No less serious is the problem of crime, not only in respect to its incidence, but also in respect to its virulence. Crimes of violence and particularly dacoities (robbery by murderous gangs) have become more frequent.

Reliable figures of unemployment are not available, but unemployment, both rural and urban, is very widespread. Middle-class educated unemployment is the chief cause of concern. While there are some relief measures for unemployment, the individual has to manage the best way he can. The old sources of charity have dried up, and no State aid is given to the unemployed.

These three symptoms — amongst many — of social malaise are mentioned, not with a view to criticize, but to indicate that India cannot solve her problems by following orthodox Western remedies. Much of our social disorganization is due to the impact of Western technology on Indian society, which for the most part we copy blindly. The result is that old patterns break down. There is no studied effort to harmonize Western technology with traditional social patterns. Before Western technology is applied, its effects should be gauged on the social life of different communities, in all its ramifications. This is not being done adequately as yet; hence, India is passing through a phase of social disorganization. It is not here suggested that technology should not be applied to improve the condition of man, but that man should not be remodelled to suit technology; technology should be made to serve man.

When one looks around these days, one is not quite sure what is happening to us. One hears so much of "progress" and of raising the standard of living, of mighty river valley projects, of a great deal of nation-building work being done. But when one inspects the tangible results, he finds disunity and a lot of grumbling. In family life and in the sphere of community life, there is not the same cohesion and unity of purpose, and our manners, whatever they were, have deteriorated. Life has become less secure, with mounting unemployment and increasing crime. In a sense we have destroyed many of the internal controls that a cultured and civilized life needs, and our main check is the Government. Although it is our own democratically chosen Government, the attitude of a large number of us is as if it were an alien Government.

Now why is this all happening? It is possible to explain it in terms of history, social psychology, and on various other grounds. The Government would probably say that we have inherited the situation from the previous administration, and have not had enough time to put it right. Others, who are adversely affected by the changes planned by the Government, blame misguided zeal for reform. Others blame

partition, Pakistan, communism, and Hindu Mahasabha — according to their bent. There may be some truth in all these points of view, but it is like half-truth which misleads more than it enlightens.

It is not possible to make a historical survey of our present position, but it can be safely said that the impact of Western culture and civilization on Indian society has been rather shattering. In the early stages, the Indian society resisted the impact and the impetus to change, unless it affected only the superficial periphery, but the cumulative influence of two centuries of Western contact has not been slight. Mainly during the present century vast changes took place in industry, gradually undermining our economic, social and ethical structure, until our whole ethos has become impregnated with Western values.

The values of Hindu life — and most Indians are Hindus — are in direct opposition to the values of modern scientific technology and statecraft. The highest values of traditional life — deeply entrenched in its social structure and life — are *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha*. The supreme value is *Dharma* (duty), which the other values support, though the final and transcendental value is *Moksha* (liberation). However much the ancient Hindu social order may have decayed or been disrupted, even until some forty years ago, *Dharma* — as Indians understood it — was supreme, and not *Artha*, and the majority still aspired to *Moksha*. The Hindu way of life — *Dharma* — was one whole and indivisible, each part interdependent. But when the West introduced its money-based economy and power-based culture, it gradually undermined and upset the *Dharma*-based stability of social structure. In the old system a set of inner virtues was important; in the modern, external appearances and appearances — clothes, money, cars, houses, etc. In the old system, virtue consisted in being free from *Kama* (lust), *Krodha* (anger), *Lobha* (greed), and *Moha* (attachment), and to conquer one's appetites and ego (*Ahankar*), while the modern way gave full rein to appetites and ego, and success became the object of worship, howsoever attained. "Progress" is another deity of the modern world, though many of us do not understand what exactly that word means. The four "Ragas" (*Kama*, *Krodha*, *Lobha*, and *Moha*), which were considered undesirable and steps to degeneration, have assumed the form of desirable qualities. *Kama* or lust and attachment has become desirable — almost a virtue — and its attraction boldly flaunted in the pages of newspapers and in the films, so that practically no one is immune from its influence. In much the same way, other undesirable qualities like *Lobha* and *Moha* have assumed the status of goals. *Lobha* has become a virtue in the Capitalist Economy. Without it one cannot have money, and success is another name for having money.

Dharma has become old-fashioned, if not actually undesirable. "Progress" has taken its place.

It would be difficult to convince many people that this is not a healthy state of affairs. There are many who do not believe in a life beyond the present, and who also do not believe in a social or moral law. To them, their immediate needs (or more properly appetites) are paramount, with ever-increasing doses of satisfaction required to keep them happy. These people are mostly self-centred. But to a keen observer of society, the ill-effects of such a social philosophy, — if it can be called by that name (nihilism would be more appropriate), — are apparent.

No doubt there are other sociological and psychological factors responsible for the spectacular increase in crime. It is partly the last war, when thousands learnt the use of fire-arms, the partition and its aftermath, the uprooting of millions, the worship of success, money, ostentation, cinema films, and to a small degree poverty. But the main cause is the disappearance of traditional religion and moral values, while nothing has taken their place.

GIRI COMMITTEE'S REPORT ON AGRICULTURAL LABOUR

Agricultural labour forms the largest single sector of India's labour force. It represents nearly 70% of the total population of our country. About 25 crores of our people look to agriculture for their livelihood. On the other hand organized industries employ a maximum of 24 lakhs of workers or a bare 0.96 per cent of the agricultural labour.

A number of ameliorative and security legislations exist today in our country for the benefit of the workers employed in those organized industries, while for the agricultural labour, comprehensive data on essential aspects relating to their economic conditions are not even available.

This Giri Committee on agricultural labour has now presented a detailed report of its painstaking survey which places before the public authentic information on the economic conditions of the large masses of our country's population. The report contains many revealing statistics which need to be carefully studied by every responsible citizen.

A few other salient points in this report call for a mention:

1. Agricultural families are employed only for 218 days in a year.

2. Average annual income per family is Rs 447/- i.e. Rs 104/- per capita. This compares badly with the average annual income of each worker in the organized industry of Rs 1,111-8-0.

3. The average primary expenses of each agricultural family are as stated below:

Food	Rs 393/-
Clothing	Rs 29/-
Fuel and Lighting	Rs 5/-
House-rent and Repairs	Rs 4/-
Service and Miscellaneous	
Expenses	Rs 30/-
Ceremonies	Rs 7/-
Total	Rs. 468/-

Therefore it follows that all the agricultural labour families are today living beyond their means. Every year they run into a debt.

4. It is a notorious fact that our rural families are ill-fed. The report records its findings on the matter as follows: "The diet of the workers consisted mainly of either boiled rice or chapatis made of wheat or millet or other cereals locally grown, supplemented by a little of pulse or vegetables. Some amount of fish was consumed in the riverine areas. The consumption of milk and milk products was almost negligible except in some States in the North and North West zones."

"It can therefore be stated that 79.2 per cent of the food budget of an agricultural labour family was spent on cereals alone. The remaining 20.8 per cent of the expenditure was spent over a number of items, important amongst which were pulses, spices, and edible oil accounting for about 10 per cent of the food budget. Another 5 per cent was accounted for by gur, sugar, vegetables, meat, fish and eggs."

5. The Committee has also taken pains to study the nutritive content of the diet of many of the agricultural labour families and have found them to be far below the calorie requirement as also protective food elements. These and such other authentic facts and figures in this report make it valuable. The Government, after having obtained the detailed data, should now voluntarily hasten to ameliorate the grave situation of our poor agricultural population.

It is stated that there are 82 clear days of leisure available to every one of our agricultural labourers after allowing 52 weekly holidays and 13 extra festival days. If only work could be found for them for these 82 days at the same rate of wages as they get in agriculture, many of them can hope to have a better standard of life free of the depressing weight of debt.

M. V.

(From *Gram Udyog Patrika*, October, 1955)

THE SARVODAYA SCHEME OF THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

(By *Vaikunthbhai L. Mehta*)

As one who was associated with the creation of Sarvodaya Centres in Bombay State, I would like to offer some observations on the analysis of the Sarvodaya Scheme of the Government of Bombay contained in the article on "Patterns of Social Service" published in the issue of the *Harijan* for 19th November.

In the first place, it is not any Government-conceived programme of Sarvodaya which was sought to be promoted by this experiment. The underlying objective of the scheme is set forth in the Budget Speech for 1948, an extract from which I give below:

"There is one recent development about our reconstruction programme to which I should like to refer here. 'The fulfilment of the constructive programme', Gandhiji often used to observe, 'is Swaraj.' Subscribing as they do to this conception of Gandhiji's, Government wish to incorporate in their plans of development some distinctive feature which would serve to bring into prominence the peculiar aspects of the constructive programme that appealed to Gandhiji. During the last few years, Gandhiji had come to believe that no individual part of his programme for improving the lot of the villager, such as the promotion of hand-spinning, the revival of other village industries, the welfare of Harijans, the protection of the cow, stood alone; it was essential that they should be all part of an integrated whole. Service of the village community, he held, should be service in all walks of life. The basis of Gandhiji's social philosophy was the good of

all, 'Sarvodaya' as some have termed it. It is Government's desire to select for all-round intensive development—educational, social and economic—certain backward areas in the Province and treat these as concentrated areas. Each of these units will consist of a compact group of 30 to 50 villages with more or less homogeneous social and economic conditions in parts of the Province which are undeveloped and mostly peopled by the backward tribes or classes. The details of the plan have still to be worked out; but it is Government's intention to make a beginning with the work early next year. For this purpose, Government have decided to make available a sum of Rs 1 crore to cover a period of four years from 1948-49."

Secondly, the scheme is not put in charge of officers of Government. Before the scheme was to be inaugurated, the Government of the day first applied their mind to the selection, in every District, of a Sanchalak drawn from the ranks of social workers engaged in the pursuit of Gandhiji's constructive programme. It is the Sanchalak who had a determining voice in the appointment of his co-workers and in the drawing up of comprehensive programme of work.

No set pattern was recommended to the Sanchalaks to adopt. All that they were requested to do was to take a comprehensive view of their duty to promote socio-economic development in compact groups of 30 to 50 villages. The details of the programme were left to them to settle in consultation with local workers, so as to suit the special requirements of those whom they were expected to serve. The integrated programme was, so far as possible, to touch all the aspects of rural life: agricultural, cottage industries, education, health and hygiene, and, lastly, social amenities, recreation, and cultural activities.

The details of the schemes were, however, to be worked out by the Sanchalaks, these details to include the number and remuneration of the full-time workers to be engaged. There were, however, two or three limitations under which the programmes had to be executed. A ceiling of Rs 1,00,000 was placed on the expenditure to be incurred in a year. During a year, expenditure could be incurred, subject to a certain amount of relaxation, only on approved schemes. Besides, there was provision for the periodical audit of accounts by Government through a staff working under the Registrar of Co-operative Societies. However, neither the Registrar nor the staff could interfere with the working of the schemes. But the schemes had necessarily to be got approved by the State Sarvodaya Committee, consisting, mainly, of Ministers of Government.

It may be that the pattern of working does not conform to what may be termed a Sarvodaya form of organization. I should like to point out, however, that it differs essentially, from the normal functioning of nation-building activities undertaken by Government, as also from the new method or the new agency represented by the Community Development Projects and the National Extension Service Organization.

LOGIC OF DOUBT ABOUT BHOODAN

(By Damodardas Mundada)

"It was due to the favourable circumstances in Koraput that Gramdan on such a big scale was possible. You cannot expect that phenomena to be repeated everywhere." The logic of such a remark is not new to Bhoodan. On Vinobaji's return to Wardha from Telangana three years ago, people raised the same sort of doubts regarding Bhoodan's success in other parts of the country. According to them, but for the terrorism of the Communists which prevailed in Telangana, Bhoodan even in that part, would have been out of question. Vinobaji had even then expressed his surprise at such an argument which presumed 'Sarvanash' i.e. total destruction as a precondition to Sarvodaya.

The objections and doubts, however, have been and are being constantly raised and repeated at every new step that unfolds the progressively developing idea of the movement. According to these friends, whose criticism has done more service than harm, U.P. and Bihar responded because there were big landlords due to the existence of the Zamindari system there and a similar response was out of question in other parts of the country. But what about the Gramdan in Utkal? The atmosphere was favourable in that area is their only reply.

It has also become a fashion to whisper that the area being inhabited by the Adivasis the villages must be tiny ones and the holdings very small. As if these villages do not form part of the five lakhs of the total number of villages in India! The fact is: These Gramdan villages, like other villages in the country are average ones, both big and small. I was myself present at many a redistribution ceremony. I have come across villages ranging from ten to hundred families with a maximum population of one thousand people and with area measuring from twenty-five acres to five hundred acres and even more. The list sent to me by the Convenor of Utkal Bhoodan Samiti shows an area even in four figures. I have witnessed the villagers formerly in possession of 25 acres accepting only 5 to 7 in return in the process of redistribution according to the units of their families. Shrimati Nirmala Deshpande, in her bulletin, narrates how at Dangsurda, the Naik of the village, who till the other day owned 180 acres, had the next day, having become a member of the village family, gladly accepted only 7 acres, the share according to his quota. The whole village, with one voice and most sincerely requested the Naik to accept at least a few acres more than the rest. "How can I take more?" came the reply. "You have made me the head of the village; mine is, therefore, to accept my due and not more and that, too, in the end after every one else has received." His bright eyes, adds Shri Nirmalaben only reflected the joy and peace within and revealed how blessed he felt that evening. And such illustrations were being daily multiplied at the land redistribution ceremony.

As to the oft-repeated contention regarding the ripeness of the atmosphere Vinobaji pointed out that so long as the object was not achieved, one was often shy to acknowledge that the miracle was within the range of possibility. But once it was established, it was often contended that nothing else could have happened. The minds of those that are trained to think that way lack vision. But those who possess insight and think seriously think differently.

It will not be out of place to recall in this connection Shri Lokanayak Aney's analysis of this phenomenon. Shri Aney in his recent Poona speech, said: "When Shri Lokamanya Tilak collected one lakh of rupees for organizing public work during those days, it was but a wonderment to us. And Gandhiji's call to the nation to contribute one crore to the Tilak Swaraj Fund and the response our nation gave to that call and fulfilled his demand within the prescribed time limit, was indeed a miracle. And now there was the Bhoodan movement. Imagine the value in coin of the 40 lakh acres of land, which could be easily counted in crores of rupees, apart from the moral

values and forces which the movement has been able to establish and release." The Lokanayak in his analysis, has come to the same conclusion which is arrived at and often emphasized by Vinobaji: "Our people," adds Shri Aney "can rise to the highest peaks of sacrifice, provided the idea appeals to their hearts. The renunciation of ownership through Bhoodan and Sampattidan, the contribution of voluntary labour through Shramdan and the unique sacrifices made by our men in Goa—all go to prove but one fact that the heart of the country is still intact."

Appeal to the Hearts, Not to the Heads

And Vinobaji has not made any secret about it that it was more through his appeal to the heart than to the intellect of the Utkalwasis that they readily embraced the idea of Villagization and renounced their ownership rights in favour of the society.

The Only Way

And it has been now conceived, and rightly too, not only on the basis of sentiments but on that of scientific planning that voluntary surrender of individual rights is the only remedy for all the evils of the day including exploitation, litigation, unemployment, poverty, inequality, illiteracy and injustice. This renunciation alone can lead us to the Kingdom of God that is within. And this transformation within is the one basis of the transformation that we want to bring about in the society. The sooner we realize this, the better for all of us.

FEARLESSNESS, SWARAJ AND SELF-RELIANCE

(By Vinoba)

[From the prayer speech at Dabugon Camp (District Koraput, Orissa) on 9-7-55.]

II

The nations of the world today are afraid of one another and are manufacturing huge bombs to frighten others. But, surely, you cannot usher in peace by frightening or being afraid of others. Nor can you have any settlement of disputes thereby. Today's newspapers carry the news that Einstein confessed it was his blunder to have aided government in making bombs. People who have been gifted with intellect should realize that they have to utilize the gift not for the annihilation but for the good and welfare of society. If those who have received the gift of intellect from God will use it for the protection of others less gifted they will deserve His love. If those who have strength were to harass the weak God's wrath shall descend on their heads. The plenty of one who uses his land and wealth to fill it with utility will not be so filled; but he who will utilize his land and wealth in the service of others will be blessed with His love. Those who have been given the gift of the strength to perform labour will be blessed by the love of God if they use their gift in the service of others; but if they were to keep their strength to do labour only for themselves, if they do not exercise it out of their indolence or if they use it for their own self-interest they shall not receive the love of God.

God has given intelligence to the intelligent so that they may use it for deeds for the good of the world. Let scientists therefore, endeavour to make inventions which will give more crops to the world, or which will cure diseases to which men fall victims. Let them find out ways for increasing the yield of milk by cows so that the world could be persuaded to give up eating meat. If they feel inspired to work on the lines suggested God's blessings and mercy will descend on them.

True Swaraj or freedom does not exist in any of the countries like England, America, France, and Russia. Under true Swaraj, in real freedom everyone should be his or her own master. Every child will proclaim under freedom that it could not be tyrannized by any one. Under Swaraj the smallest child will have the strength to stand against the whole of society to declare its resolve not to suffer injustice. The society in which even a person who lacks physical strength stands firmly to express his independent opinion against the whole of it for the protection of morality is free. If I am on the side of truth I will

stand in opposition to the whole of society even if it were against me and I were weak, to declare that the way society has adopted is wrong.

We shall not obey the tyrant even if he persecutes us physically; we shall not be afraid of anyone; and we shall not swerve from truth but shall willingly suffer hardship;—a nation whose citizens can say these words is truly free. The society which values the least and weakest of its members in the same way as it values its big personalities is free. Now, it is true every adult has been given the right to vote. Every adult person whether great or small has now one vote for himself. But conferring the right of itself does not mean Swaraj. Swaraj will come into being only when all are valued equally, all are honoured equally and all are socially held equal. But Swaraj of this kind does not exist in any country of the world. The world is, surely, hankering for such Swaraj and is seeking the way to it. It has not yet been able to find it. I, however, believe that the illiterate peasants of this region have opened the way for the world to real Swaraj. A revolution is taking place here. Conversion of the heart is the name given to non-violent revolution and we have here the model presented to us.

We wish everyone of our workers to go to every village to carry the message of world peace to every person and also to tell him that to collect things for private use or enjoyment is as much wrong and as much a sin as it is to steal. Just as when thieving goes on in society there is no peace so also there is no peace when things and goods are privately collected. Those who collect goods and wealth for private use are parents of thieves because they give birth to the latter. But the order of society which holds sway today is such that the thieves are punished by law while those who give birth to them by robbing society to collect wealth for themselves move about as honourable members of society. Those who give sentences to thieves are greater thieves. The poor man who steals does it under fear at night but these others who collect wealth do it openly by day. Baba has not much of collection to call his own but he has put on one dhoti and covered himself with another. If a person were to approach Baba to tell him that he has no dhoti at all it becomes Baba's duty to part with the one he is covering himself with.

When once land has been distributed the villages should start various industries. If we wish this army and these armaments to disappear and peace be established our villages will have to be self-reliant. Our villages will then be able to tell the cities and city people not to be worried on their account. They will declare with confidence that no army need be maintained for them. They will then be able to say that there are no burglaries in the villages because they did not collect goods. Therefore, they would say, they do not need the police, the courts, the lawyers, the army and many such other items. If a policeman were to bully a village boy when he comes to the village the boy will fearlessly warn him not to do so because he has not committed any crime. This is the kind of Swaraj we want to usher in in every one of our villages.

(From Hindi)

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