

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

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TWO ANNAS

FALSE ALARMS

(By Prantil S. Kapadia)

Fast on the heels of a recent handout to the Press by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry on the present position and prospects of the Cotton Textile Industry in the country during the Second Five Year Plan, come the reports of two important speeches of Shri T. T. Krishnamachari, the Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, on the same subject, delivered a few days ago at New Delhi, before the Export Promotion Council and the All-India Handloom Board.

His Thesis

In his considered view, the present policy of limiting the mill production of cloth at 5000 million yards is wrong because: (1) the country cannot plan ahead for a steady increase in the volume of exports, with all its attendant beneficial results on the country's foreign exchange position; (2) the handloom industry, as it stands today, does not have the capacity to produce the estimated additional requirements of 1700 million yards, which is itself a conservative estimate of domestic requirements; and (3) the present trends in the stock position of the mills show the need to take appropriate steps well in advance to avoid the emergence of scarcity-conditions in an essential consumer good as cloth. He, therefore, considers it necessary to permit an increase in the mill production of cloth by at least 500 million yards.

As regards the production of yarn to manufacture the required volume of cloth as well, he considers the recommendations of the Karve Committee to defer licensing the installation of additional spindleage till the results of the field tests on the Ambar Charkha are known, as "an impediment in the way of providing adequate supplies of yarn to the handloom industry". In fact according to him, "the recommendation (of the Karve Committee) in favour of petrifying mill production of yarn is a thing, which is not in the interests of the handloom industry". He, therefore, desires to set up 3 spinning units, each with 1,00,000 spindles in the public sector to ensure adequate supplies of fine yarn and also to regulate the prices of yarn, produced in the private sector of the industry. The decision of the Handloom Board, as reported in the Press, is that

spindleage must be increased, but that the increase should be in the public or the co-operative sector. It may be added, however, that the Board favours the decentralized method of production.

Scope for Exports

The target for the exports of cotton textiles from this country by 1955-58, prescribed by the Planning Commission was 1,000 million yards. The trends in India's traditional as well as new export markets since the last quarter of 1951 show increasing international competition, due partly to the recovery and re-entry of Japan in the textile market and partly to the increased availability of rayon and other substitutes for cotton textiles. The world-wide recovery of cotton textile exporting countries, on the one hand, and the increasing production of staple-fibre, artificial silk and rayon products, on the other, have steadily worked against increased exports. Consequently, despite the ceiling at 1,000 million yards for exports, India's cotton textile exports have averaged less than 800 million yards. In view of the probable continuation of these trends in India's export markets, on the one hand, and the probability of increased availability of substitute textile products, on the other, the Textile Enquiry Committee observed that export requirements of cloth by 1960 might not exceed 1,000 million yards. Nothing has happened since to warrant Shri Krishnamachari's view that export markets may improve.

Capacity of Handlooms

Secondly, his view that the handloom industry cannot increase their production beyond 1,000 million yards is altogether erroneous. The progressive replacement of the throw-shuttle looms by the fly-shuttle looms, which has been going on for nearly a decade, has raised the productive capacity of an average handloom from about 3 yards a day to 6 yards a day, although even today, quite a substantial number of handlooms in the Western and Eastern Zones of the country produce 8 to 10 yards a day, (vide statistical data in the Textile Enquiry Committee Report, Vol. III). At an average daily production of 6 yards and 300 working days, the productive potential of 20 lakh handlooms is (6 x 300 x 20 lakhs) 3,600 million yards or a capacity to pro-

duce 2,100 million yards over the present estimated production of 1,500 million yards.

Yarn Requirements

Shri Krishnamachari's reported statement that the Karve Committee have recommended "petrifying mill production of yarn" is a palpable mistake. Instead, the Karve Committee have specifically examined this question in great detail and at great length to show that with the full utilization of the capacity of the existing and recently licensed spindles in the spinning mills and composite mills, yarn requirements for the production of the probable additional requirements of cloth up to the end of 1957-58 can more than fully be met, and there is absolutely no danger of any shortage of yarn in the country. It is, therefore, a plain mistake to accuse the Karve Committee of having recommended "petrifying mill production of yarn".

The Karve Committee estimated that with the production of yarn by the spindles in commission with all types of mills and the percentage of the additional 1.84 million spindles licensed to be installed, yarn requirements can be fully met. In other words, due allowances were made by the Committee for the number of mills that might not be working and for the probable shortfall in the installation of the additional licensed spindles. The view of the Committee is thus based on a close, careful and objective analysis of the probable increase in the domestic demand for cloth and the probable availability of yarn from the spindles in commission and the spindles likely to be installed during the period ending 1957-58. In other words, the Committee envisaged as much increase in the mill production of yarn as was possible of achievement with the installed spindles and the additions that were licensed and most certainly did not recommend "petrifying production of yarn". The move to license additional spindles because of a probable shortage of yarn does not appear an objective or an impartial assessment of the situation.

What deserves to be repeatedly emphasized is that alarmist views such as those expressed by the Minister may precipitate the very crisis that he seems to desire to avoid by proving to be a powerful disincentive to the licensees to install the licensed spindles as well discouraging additional production of yarn.

Shri Krishnamachari's suggestion of setting up immediately three spinning units in the public sector as a means of checking prices of yarn charged by the private sector, goes counter to known and verified experience. The prices of yarn manufactured by the co-operative mills are substantially higher than those of the existing mills. Additional mills may probably raise the prices of yarn still more, particularly as management of mills in the public sector today is not an easy problem. It may defeat the very objective the Minister has in view, and confound an already confused issue.

Alarmist View

That these are alarmist views and help to prejudice the potentialities of the Ambar Charkha, which has a socio-economic objective, is further supported by the facts of the situation. Of the total number of composite and spinning mills, 18 composite and 8 spinning mills or 26 mills in all are idle. Their productive capacity can, with appropriate measures or directives, be certainly drafted for the national purpose. Secondly, in case an emergency arises, an improbability as has been shown above — fuller utilization of the existing 11.9 million spindles can be ensured. Today only 83 per cent in the first, 78 per cent in the second and 30 per cent of the spindles in commission is actually utilized, and it requires no argument to see that these spindles are capable of fuller utilization. Moreover, it certainly is possible for the Government to discourage or ban exports of yarn in the interest of domestic handlooms and/or mill looms.

Of a similar nature are the idle looms in the mills, estimated at 20,000 in the first and 40,000 in the second shifts. If a crisis does occur, there are adequate means available in the existing industry to meet it fully in the social interest.

To sum up: the repeated attempts on the part of the Ministry and Minister of Commerce and Industry to create an atmosphere of crisis and alarm in the cotton textile industry and in the country serve no purpose at all except that of prejudging the very sober, objective and well-balanced views of the Karve Committee, on which two of India's foremost economists served.

WAR AND SATYAGRAHA

(By Bertrand Russell)

IV

The armies and navies of the world are kept up by three causes: cowardice, love of dominion, and lust for blood.

It is cowardice that makes it difficult to meet invasion by the method of passive resistance. More courage and discipline is needed for the successful practice of this method than for facing death in the heat of battle. But I am persuaded that there is in England enough courage and enough capacity for discipline to make success in passive resistance possible, if education and moral teaching is directed to that end instead of to warlike prowess. It is cowardice also that makes men prefer the old method of trying to be stronger than your adversary (in which only one party can succeed), rather than a new method requiring imagination and a readjustment of traditional standards. Yet, if we men could think outside the well-worn grooves, there are many plain facts which show the folly of conventional statesmanship. Why has Germany invaded France? Because the French have an army. Why has England attacked Germany? Because the Germans have a navy. Yet people persist in thinking that the French army and the German

navy contribute to national safety. Nothing could be more obvious than the facts; nothing could be more universal than men's blindness to them.

The second reason for keeping up the armies and navies of the world is love of dominion. The Germans, in the Morocco controversy, announced that nothing of importance was to happen anywhere without their being consulted. We regarded this as a monstrous arrogance, but for two centuries we had advanced the same claim as a matter of course. The matters about which diplomatists raise a pother are usually of only microscopic importance to the welfare of ordinary citizens: they are matters involving national "prestige", that is to say, the power of the State to prevent other States from doing as they wish. This power is sometimes partly based on money, but in the main it rests on armies and navies. If our navy had been smaller, we should not have been able to defeat the German desire for an Atlantic port in Morocco. It would have done us no harm if the Germans had acquired Casablanca, but we enjoyed the thought that our fiat kept them out. The procuring of such pleasures is the second purpose served by armies and navies.

The third purpose of armaments — indeed their primary and original purpose, from which all others are derivative — is to satisfy the lust for blood. Fighting is an instinctive activity of males, both animal and human. Human males, being gregarious, naturally fight in packs. It has been found that the pack tends to be more successful against other packs when fighting within the pack is as far as possible prevented. For this purpose, the law and the police have been instituted. But the shedding of human blood is still considered the most glorious thing a man can do, provided he does it in company with the rest of his pack. War, like marriage, is the legally permitted outlet for a certain instinct. But the instinct which leads to war, unlike the instinct which leads to marriage, so far from being necessary to the human race, is wholly harmful among civilized men. It is an instinct which easily becomes atrophied in a settled community: many men have hardly a trace of it. Unfortunately, as men grow older, their affections and their powers of thought decay. For this reason, and also because power stimulates the love of power, the men who have most influence in government are usually men whose passions and impulses are less civilized than those of the average citizen. These men — the great financiers, the Ministers, and some editors of daily papers — use their position, their knowledge, and their power of disseminating misinformation, to arouse and stimulate the latent instinct for bloodshed. When they have succeeded, they say that they are reluctantly forced into war by the pressure of public opinion. Their activities are exactly analogous to those of men who distribute indecent

pictures or produce lascivious plays. They ought to be viewed in the same light; but because of the notion that a wish to kill foreigners is patriotic and virtuous, they are honoured as men who have deserved well of their country. They provide an outlet for the impulse to homicide. To gratify this impulse is the third and ultimate purpose of armies and navies.

All these three motives for armaments — cowardice, love of dominion, and lust for blood — are no longer ineradicable in civilized human nature. All are diminishing under the influence of modern social organization. All might be reduced to a degree which could make them almost innocuous, if early education and current moral standards were directed to that end. Passive resistance, if it were adopted deliberately by the will of a whole nation, with the same measure of courage and discipline which is now displayed in war, might achieve a far more perfect protection for what is good in national life than armies and navies can ever achieve, without demanding the courage and waste and welter of brutality involved in modern war.

Nevertheless, it is hardly to be expected that progress will come in this way, because the imaginative effort required is too great. It is much more likely that it will come as the reign of law within the State has come, by the establishment of a central government of the world, able and willing to secure obedience by force because the great majority of men will recognize that obedience is better than the present international anarchy. A central government of this kind will command assent, not as a partisan, but as the representative of the interests of the whole. Very soon, resistance to it would be seen to be hopeless, and wars would cease. Force directed by a neutral authority is not open to the same abuse, or likely to cause the same long-drawn conflicts, as force exercised by quarrelling nations each of which is the judge of its own cause. Although I firmly believe that the adoption of passive instead of active resistance would be good if a nation could be convinced of its goodness yet it is rather to the ultimate creation of a strong central authority that I should look for the ending of war. But war will only end after a great labour has been performed in altering men's moral ideals, directing them to the good of all mankind, and not only of the separate nations into which men happen to have been born.

(Concluded)

By Mahatma Gandhi

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HARIJAN

Dec. 24

1955

HAND-LOOM v. SPINNING-WHEEL

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

The reader is likely to feel that the heading is rather curious. He would begin wondering how the hand-loom would be in opposition to the spinning-wheel! But one is forced to witness the strange sight of some people believing and trying to make others believe that the two are opposed to one another in the new economic history of India shaping itself at the present juncture. I am writing under the caption in order to bring out and demonstrate the strangeness of the phenomenon.

The reader will surely remember that the Central Government had appointed, about two years ago, a committee under the chairmanship of Shri Kanungo, the present Deputy Minister of Industries, to enquire into the state of the textile industry and that the report the committee submitted to the Government had earned a bad name. The reader will also remember what I had written about it in the *Harijan* of 16-10-54.

The Kanungo Committee had gone into questions regarding textile mills, power-looms, fly-shuttle looms and the simple throw-shuttle pit-looms plied by the hand. The notable point with regard to the enquiry was that it concerned itself only with looms which employed mill-yarn in weaving cloth. That is to say, it did not concern itself with hand-spun yarn and Khadi woven from it. The report however contained a general statement to the effect that the Committee had not taken Khadi into account and that the question deserved a separate enquiry. But the Department of Commerce and Industries did not set up such an enquiry and the Kanungo Committee did not give any place to Khadi in its report or in the scheme it submitted to Government for consideration.

From this sort of the report of the said committee it could be plainly seen that the Industries Department of the Central Government was of the opinion, if it could have its way, that the spinning-wheel, hand-spun yarn, and its looms be ignored or avoided in the scheme for production of textile goods and articles. If the department just mentions a thing called Khadi, it seems, it does so because Khadi could not safely be ignored or avoided, being conscious that it could not hope to further its schemes and plans by daring openly to ignore and condemn an idea presented to the nation by Gandhiji, the Father of the Nation. But the dislike the minister at the head of the department nursed against Khadi is now clearly proved. He deserves congratulations

for coming out with his frank attitude of aversion to Khadi. The same thing could not, however, be said regarding the want of correctness, intelligence and understanding in the attitude.

The Industries Department of the Central Government seems to want to create favourable conditions in which along with the mill the power-loom thrives as its wing in the textile industry of the country. That seems to be the reason why it seeks to transform the hand-looms operating today into power-looms. It seeks also to utilize the finances provided for planning to the purpose. It is trying to do so through the Hand-Loom Board functioning under it.

Such procedure would result in gradually but surely transforming the simple hand-looms into power-looms and in increasing the quota of spindles in the textile mills, that is, in setting up new textile mills. But if the aim is to be achieved the existing prohibitions against starting new textile mills have to go. The Industries Department seems to have set its heart on getting them removed.

Because the Industries Department has this tendency it sees progress deserving encouragement in the weaver turning from hand-spun to mill yarn.

Now, the fact of the situation is this. Mill-yarn is not lying idle or unused to such an extent that weavers should begin buying it more and more for weaving. The fact is quite the other way. The textile mills are not able today to supply as much yarn to the looms employing mill-yarn as they need. It is, therefore, quite clear that the production of hand-spun yarn should be increased as much as can be done in order to encourage the Khadi industry. The Government Planning Commission has lent its weight and authority to the idea. But the curious part of the business is that the Industries Department is willing and eager to set up new textile mills instead and does not seem to relish the idea of the spinning-wheel getting into vogue and prospering. The attitude that is being shown by the minister at the head of the department to the Ambar Charkha clearly proves this.

There cannot be any reason to doubt that his attitude is the result of an honest conviction. He seems to believe that the civilization of the machine and power-driven machine industries is an ideal one. There may be many others in the country who have the same belief. Industrialists in the country seek not only to keep an order favourable to their interest permanent in the country but to further it and stabilize it on the strength of the support of this class of men. It is not to be supposed that all these trends have suddenly dropped on us from heavens. The situation and tendencies show themselves only more clearly as the plans for the economic reconstruction of India are taking shape and developing.

Industries which developed during the British regime not only seek to go ahead now and demand State aid and patronage for the purpose but want recognition for a place for themselves in the new view of the nation's development and progress. People like the Commerce and Industries Minister of the Central Government who occupy positions of power and who can therefore not only influence the current trends of the nation's economic development but rush into unseemly attempts at ridiculing those who advocate Khadi and the allied ideas which are opposed to theirs are vainly endeavouring to assert themselves. They have cultivated an aversion to the spinning-wheel which symbolizes an effective programme for removal of unemployment. They do not only feel that the direction in which the programme takes the country is quite the reverse of one of progress but see in it a danger to the mill industry which is very dear to them. And it is an established truth of the science of psychology that a sense of fear so clouds the minds of men that they lose all sense and fall a prey to illusory dangers. It can be proved from the recent utterances of some vocal people of this class that fear has had such panicky effect on their minds.

The original weakness of the line of thinking of this class of people lies in the fact that their method of ordering the economic affairs of the nation cannot remove the vast and chronic unemployment in the country. Indeed, unemployment increases in proportion to the increase in the industries they favour. The Karve Committee has very aptly described it as 'technological unemployment' i.e. one resulting from mechanized and centralized industries.

How can the nation afford a policy which tends to increase unemployment in that way? Removal of unemployment is the main task facing the country and its government. We had better realize sooner rather than later that the very existence of a government which did not recognize the urgency of the task would be in danger. This is the reason why Khadi and Village Industries have come to occupy an inevitable or integral place in the new plan of the nation's economic reconstruction.

The Industries Minister, Shri Krishnamachari, dare not openly oppose the policy. He cannot, however, one can understand, like it. One may hope, though, that just as Shri Rajaji, by his insistent propaganda, was able to convince him of the significance of the hand-loom to which he had an intense dislike, he will ultimately swallow this to him the bitter pill of the spinning-wheel which follows from the hand-loom as a further natural consequence. Today, however, he seems to feel nausea while swallowing it. That also seems to be the reason why the department in his charge proceeds on the assumption that the hand-loom is opposed to the spinning-wheel and seeks to implement the conclusions of the Kanungo Committee in order to defeat or set aside the conclusions of the Karve Committee.

There is hardly any need to say or prove that the attitude of the Commerce and Industries Minister is, to say the least, strange. Truly speaking he should be able to see that the expectation of the Kanungo Committee that another committee should go into the question of Khadi and the spinning-wheel has been fulfilled by the Karve Committee and should be pleased on that account. But at the present moment the reports of the two committees seem to be waging a war with each other in his mind.

If the Kanungo Committee's findings may be called a report favouring mechanized industries and the power-loom, those of the Karve Committee can be called a report favouring Village Industries or the Ambar Charkha. Truly speaking the two are not opposed to each other but are mutually complimentary. And the Government as well as its Planning Commission have accepted the policy of dovetailing the two into one integrated whole. If the Industries Department proceeds without a true appreciation of this fact it will have proved to have entirely missed the right direction in its task.

The direction of the economic progress of India does not lie in imitating the West with the blind arrogance of superior knowledge but in finding out and following the path of a peace-loving, humane Sarvodaya economic order. What Shri Krishnamachari ridicules as the *ashrama* and the conservative or orthodox methods is really one which has the seer's prophetic faith that the welfare of mankind lies in that direction; it is, of course, true that the dazzling but blinding and killing light of the West has not found its way in the thinking of this school.

It would, therefore, be well for the Industries Department of the Central Government to welcome the efforts at making the spinning-wheel a better implement and to appreciate them as a good beginning of an attempt to plan an instrument which the textile industry lacks. The department should be made to realize that without such an implement all attempts at removing unemployment would be vain. And the industrialists should also be able to see that their true welfare lies that way.

9-12-'55

(From Gujarati)

By Mahatma Gandhi

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RACIALISM AND RELIGION IN SOUTH AFRICA

(By Naboth Mokegatle)

In this article, I want to bring to the notice of Christians and peace-loving peoples of the world, the conditions of the Africans in South Africa. I shall use the terms Africans and Europeans to enable the reader to understand that by Africans I mean the black people, and Europeans the whites.

There are eight-and-a-half million Africans and two-and-a-half million Europeans in South Africa. The country is rich in minerals of many sorts, and grows crops of all kinds. The control of the country is exclusively in the hands of the Europeans. There is a strong colour bar in every walk of life in South Africa.

The Africans occupy thirteen per cent of the land and the Europeans eighty-seven per cent. Africans without land live on European-owned land as squatters, and work three months a year for the landlord for the right to live on the land. Men, women, and children are required to work for the landlords. In some areas the Africans are required by the landlords to work the whole year round without pay. In some areas the Africans, instead of working only three months a year as provided for by law, are forced to work four months a year.

Because of lack of land, Africans are always faced with years of starvation, and have to go about to look for places to live in, and for work to earn wages in order to support themselves and their families.

Every African male child of sixteen years of age and over has to carry a pass with him wherever he goes. His pass must be issued by his chief, headman, a European Native Commissioner, or his employer. Under the pass laws, an African cannot leave his employer without the employer's consent. This is proved by the employer signing his pass off.

Since 1945 a system known as Influx Control of Natives into European towns and cities has been introduced by law. Under this system only the Africans wanted by Europeans for work may be allowed into European cities to take up employment. The unwanted must be sent out of the towns and cities. Any African found in a town with his pass endorsed 'refused entry into the urban area' is liable to arrest, and after being convicted he is sent to one of the farm prisons built all over the country, and from the prison sold to a farmer.

Africans living in towns and cities or those allowed to take up employment are not permitted to seek work of their own choice. Labour Bureau are set up in towns, and employers go there for the workers they need. If an African worker refuses to go to an employer with whom he is told to take employment his permit is cancelled, and he is ordered to leave the urban area within seventy-two hours. If he is found there by the

police after the expiration of seventy-two hours, he is arrested and sent to prison. The law gives the Influx Controller wide powers to refuse or cancel an African worker's permit if he thinks the African an undesirable in the urban area.

An African coming for the first time into an urban area is given conditional employment; that means, he is allowed to work for one employer only, and if the employer dismisses him, or he leaves that employer, his permit gets endorsed 'not allowed to work in the urban area of'

The Europeans in South Africa say that they are superior to the Africans because they are white and have education. They go further and say that because they are Christians everything they do to the Africans has God's blessing, and God gave them the power to do it. They say they are God's chosen people, and as such they are the master race. They claim that God made the Africans for them to rule over as an inferior race, and to work for the Europeans without rights, for ever. It is therefore the duty of real Christians and peace-loving peoples of the world to investigate this defiance of Christian law and human rights in South Africa. It is not a domestic issue, but a world-wide problem.

(From *The Plough* Vol. III, Number 1, 1955)

SOIL AND SEED

(By Lady Eve Balfour)

(Organizing Secretary, The Soil Association)

If nutrition is a cycle—a flow of vitalized materials from the soil and back to the soil again—then it must be studied as a whole and any specialized study of the part must be recognized as a study of the part. Its relation to all other parts must never be lost sight of. Given that our major contention is correct, we may in fact be led seriously astray if we attempt to diagnose cause and effect, in any manifestation of living organisms, without taking into consideration their relationship to this wider whole. It is therefore of great practical importance to discover if this cycle is purely hypothetical, or if it exists in fact.

I have recently come across strong supporting evidence for its existence in a summarized report, by Dr. F. M. Pottinger, of a feeding experiment on cats, printed in the *American Journal of Orthodontics and Oral Surgery*, Volume 32, No. 8, August, 1946. The experiment extended over 10 years and involved 900 animals.

The main purpose was a comparison between cooked and raw food, though there were various sub-divisions using different combinations, such for example as groups of cats fed on raw meat with pasteurized milk, and others on cooked meat with raw milk. The animals who received an all-raw-food diet, both milk and meat, remained healthy and bred normal healthy litters from generation to generation, while all those of which cooked food formed the major portion of the diet, whether this were meat or

milk, became progressively degenerate through succeeding generations. For example 25 per cent of abortion occurred in the first generation and 70 per cent in the second. The animals also fell prey to a varied range of diseases, all listed in the report, and in many cases by the third generation the kittens had become so degenerate that they failed to survive for six months.

The important point about these experiments is not the evidence that heat kills living cells, we knew that already, but that divitalized food, fed to an animal, could start a train of malnutrition that continued to manifest its efforts right round the cycle, for when the food was devitalized, not only did the cats which fed on it become devitalized, but the soil to which their excreta was returned was able to produce only devitalized plants. Vital living food on the other hand produced vital, healthy cats whose excreta in its turn produced vital soil capable of producing vigorous, healthy plants. From this fact it seems to me that we must draw the conclusion that plants can only reach their maximum vitality when grown in fully vitalized soil, and that soil can only reach its maximum vitality when it is fed with the waste products of fully vitalized plants and animals, for one thing is very certain, we cannot create vitality in a laboratory.

Is it surprising then, that we set up a vicious circle when we first feed our soil on the lifeless product of the factory; then subject the weakened plants that result to every kind of life-destroying poison, powder and spray; then feed them to our livestock — often further devitalized by heat processing — and finally partake ourselves of food derived from such plants and animals, usually still further devitalized by various methods of sterilization or processing.

It is against this destructive vicious circle that the ever-growing numbers of organic cultivators are in revolt. They endeavour to substitute for it an ever mounting spiral of increased fertility by seeking to operate the nutrition cycle in the opposite and creative direction, fostering the living principle in all its phases. This is why they lay such stress on growing their own seed, or buying it only from other organic cultivators. It is why, too, they endeavour as far as possible to feed their livestock and themselves on their own produce, for they know that soil, seed, and animals, and their waste products, all go together and that maximum health and vitality, with the disease resistance that goes with it, cannot be built up in one generation, or from good soil alone, or from good seed alone.

Many examples exist to confirm the truth of this.... It is not the presence of the pest or disease organism that matters, so much as the vitality of soil, plant and animal.

We have thought too long in terms of destruction as the only remedy for the ills that

beset us. Kill, burn, or poison, is the advice we get, more often than not, if we seek it in official circles. It is the advice of despair. Let us try for a change the constructive approach, and endeavour to build vitality and natural resistance through the operation of the nutrition cycle. It will get us further.

S. R. C. AND THE SOUL OF OUR PEOPLE

(By Vinoba)

Our Scriptures speak of the Soul as "Nityashashwata" (नित्य शाश्वत) meaning that the soul is eternal and immortal. This is equally true of Bharat — India. We read in the Vedas: प्रतिगृहीत मानवं सुमेधसः । "pratigrihita manavam sumedhasah" — which, construed literally, means: "Oh, the Talented One! Recognize the Individual and his dignity, and be humane and humanitarian!" In this way, India has sung with ecstacy the Song of the Glory of Humanity. Nothing short of humanity or humanness at its highest has ever been acceptable to or congruent with the culture of this ancient country. The learned and the blessed in this country have always aspired and endeavoured to reach levels higher than and beyond the ones of humanity — to transcend it and thus to extend the very horizon of their true Love and Respect and Compassion as far and as wide as possible. It is precisely on these premises that the cow, for instance, is loved and respected in this country and finds a definite place in our social structure.

Unfortunately today in this country we witness a painfully strange state of affairs. It is in respect of the reorganization of the States on linguistic basis consequent to the Commission's Report and its recommendations thereon.

People of this country have today compartmentalized themselves into the people of particular provinces, some magniloquently calling themselves Andhriles, some Kanarese and still some others as Bengalis, etc., etc. A country whose people not long ago used to say "सोऽहम्" — I am He — the One who is all pervading, omnipotent and omnipresent — have now stooped to believing that they are of this caste and that class, of this group and that province! Those who transcended the heights of humanity have now reduced themselves to believing to be something short of and separate and distinct from Bharatiya, the Indians! Surely, we are presently witnessing a farce when, on the publication of the States Reorganization Commission's Report, the people of one province have been dancing with joy while those of the other are drowned into dejected moods. What pleases one has become the eyesore to the other. Such a one, if any, is definitely not a Sarvodaya Scheme.

All the Bengalis — and I do not know if there are any exceptions amongst them — are enthused over the recommendation that Manbhoon district should merge with West Bengal. And under this uniform demand and unanimous opinion are inundated all of them including the Congressmen, the Communists, the Socialists, the Hindu Mahasabhaists, the Jan Sanghwallas and others. The only snag causing them headache is that they get much less than what they had coveted. And for the self-same reason, the Biharis, on the other hand, feel themselves so utterly unhappy, defeated and lost because Manbhoon district would be gained by the Bengalis and be thus lost to them! Really, this depicts a regrettably pitiable condition of this country. After all Manbhoon is going to remain within the boundaries of India.

In fact, the aim and motive behind this reorganization of the States on linguistic basis is to ensure smooth, easy and practical administration of the provinces concerned. But what we see behind all this turmoil and tension are the (crabbed minds and) the illiberal hearts.

When I refer to Manbhoom, I do so as an instance in point. I can cite many more of such typical instances where the same heartburning is evident. In Orissa, some people, highly stung by the S.R.C. Report, burnt off a copy of it! What was wrong with the Report? The Commission had made certain recommendations and advanced some suggestions, to accept or reject which could have been settled better by putting the heads of all together of or by the Parliament and the Government. But, in their heat and frenzy, they reduced the Report instead to ashes! What was it that Orissa stood to lose any way? Their demand that Sadhika and Sarasua should be conceded to Orissa was not met with. The Report had disclosed that both of them would continue to remain under the Bihar State. Had the Report recommended just the contrary of it, an identical hue and cry would have been raised in Bihar also!

Look at this question of Bellary district also which, according to the Report, would remain a part of the Andhra State. The Andhriles are so enthused over it, as if a solid lump of gold is thrown in their lap! And the Kannarese over there are so unhappy about it and because of it! This but shows that the interests of one are sacrificed when and where those of the other are safeguarded.

It is a faulty and defective formation and organization, if the society is built on the basis of the clash of interests. We shall, therefore, have to rebuild and rejuvenate the society so that the interests of one shall be, because they are, compatible with the interests of all. Today, the larger provinces or States face and find between themselves mutual conflicts of their interests. This leads one to the logical conclusion that the prominent and leading men, who have been considered adept and responsible for the rebuilding of the society, have failed to submit the blue-print of a new society wherein the interests of none would be incompatible or in conflict with those of the rest.

Let us, at this juncture, realize that we are in the midst of grave dangers when we find that our hearts are sunk from their former excellence and are torn asunder. Consider again this case of Andhra. The Andhriles aspire and urge for Vishalandhra, a greater Andhra. But we say that our country would not reach any heights of greatness simply because one or the other province becomes vaster in area. It is only when the hearts of the people become munificent that the country achieves the glory of greatness. Yes, we do wish that the Andhra be 'Vishal' or great through the greatness and magnanimity of her people.

Here or there some people apprehend danger that they would be exploited and looted, if their part of the country would merge with the neighbouring States. The backward need not and should not be afraid of the advanced, nor should the ignorant feel shy of the learned. The weak and the feeble should not be frightened of the strong and the mighty, nor should the illiterate be likewise awed by and alarmed of the literate. On the contrary, they should be prepossessed with love and respect for them. Love and respect must be mutual. But what we see today is just a topsyturvy picture. Why? Only because those who are blessed by the Almighty with greater talents, abundant wealth, larger land holdings, more physical prowess, etc. are more given to their misuse and abuse. The bent and disposition of the human mind is towards both the attitudes of the divine and the devil. The dignity or degeneracy, therefore, of our strength and prowess and all other attributes lies in the use or the abuse which we make of them.

Therefore, we have to view this, as also any other, question of the reorganization of the States on linguistic

basis and the recommendations of the S.R.C. Report from a true perspective and broader outlook of national interests. We should ponder over this aspect of our country deeply and with all the seriousness accompanied by self-inspection and soul-searching. We should thrash out our differences by mutual, quiet consultations and settle and resolve them by persuasion and concord. We should not succumb to petty disputes and differences. Serious differences of opinion and outlook should surely be expressed. There is no harm in it. Everyone has a right to do so. But it should be done for the sake of, and be restricted to, merely the exchange and examination of the views and the view-points of each other, and not for any mutual bickerings, recriminations or hurling of innuendoes. If mutual trust and goodwill are lacking, we can by all means keep ourselves aloof and remain aloof, but even this should be done out of love and in an affectionate manner.

With regard to the instances of such magnitude and importance, we wish to state here categorically that there is no need at all for any excitement or dilemma and hesitation. Well, my countrymen, our intrinsic strength as Indians—as a nation—would not be enhanced a bit, if we would allow ourselves to be swayed by narrow-mindedness and promiscuity.

We admit that when and where the functions of the Government are carried on in the language which the people of the province understand, the latter find it easy, smooth and convenient for them. As long as the administration does not run in the language which the Kisan—the tiller of the soil—understands and comprehends, he would not and cannot feel or experience the advent of Swaraj. Therefore, we consider this reorganization of the States on linguistic basis essential and recognize its utility and importance. But we wish to stress at the same time that there is more of vanity and arrogance behind it also. But, then, why is one so vainglorious about it? The principal reason behind it is that, in the reorganization of the States, our country has copied the Western pattern.

We should, however, understand that this organization is contemplated and is to be implemented only from the practical point of view of efficient administration and smooth management of the affairs of the provinces. We should feel and realize once for all that we are the Citizens of the World, and it is simply as such that we are what more or less and howsoever great or small we happen to be.

Contrary to what we had aimed and aspired for, the results and repercussions of the Commission's Report have unfortunately so materialized and have been so shaped and taken such a turn that we, who had emerged as *Bharatiya* during our unique struggle for Independence, have wound up with and ended in becoming so stunted and, worst of all, so *Prantiya*,—'provincial' ultimately.* (From *Bhoo-dan* of 19-11-55)

* Compiled from the post-prayer speeches of Shri Vinobaji in Andhra at Utkal-Andhra Border on 1-10-55, at Chipurupallu on 16-10-55, at Vishakhapatnam on 27-10-55 and at Kattipudi on 7-11-55.

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