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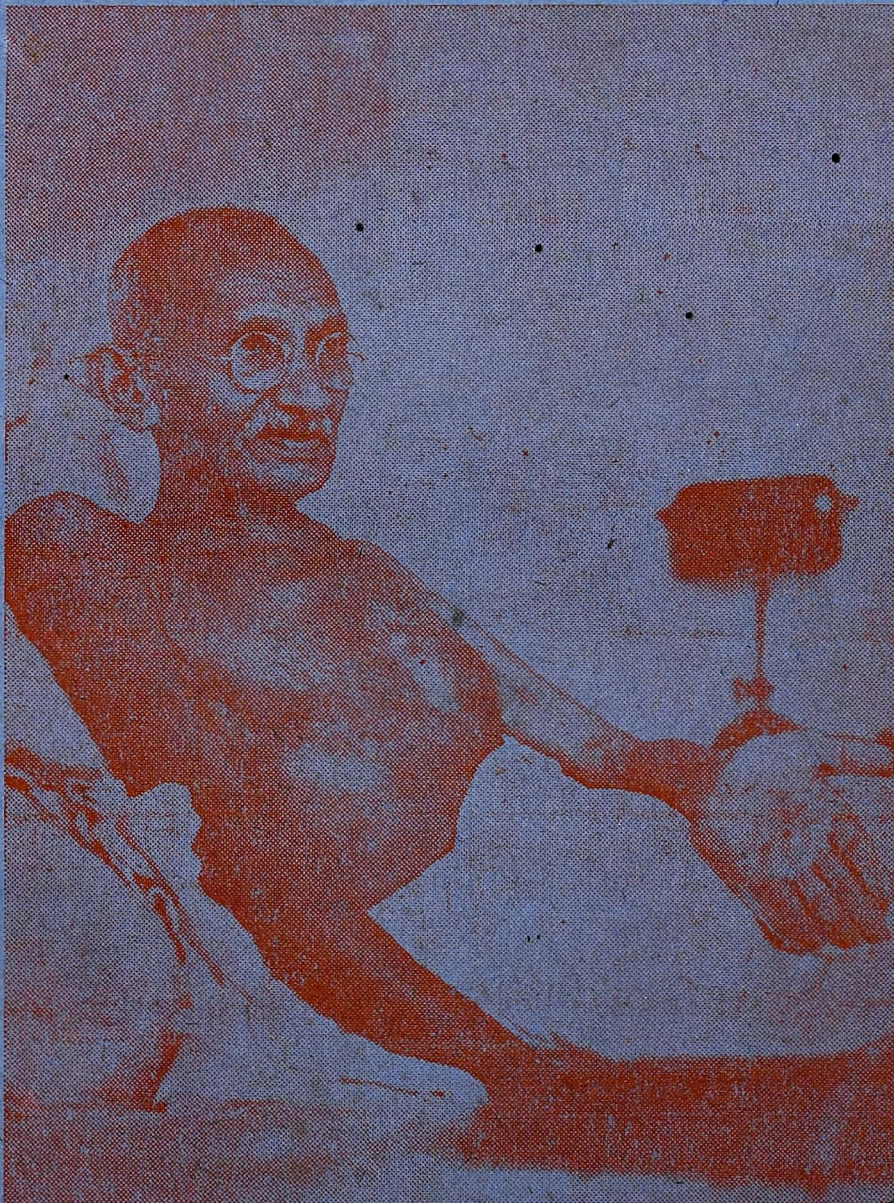


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# SOCIALISM & COMMUNISM

## IN ISHOPANISHAD

MAHATMA GANDHI

I see no inconsistency in my treatment of capitalism or imperialism. My correspondent has been led into a confusion of thought. I have not talked or thought of what Kings, Imperialists or Capitalists claim and have claimed. I have talked and written of how capital may be treated. And then it is one thing to make a claim and another to live up to it. Not every one like me (say) who claims to be a servant of the people becomes that by the mere assertion. And yet all would appreciate persons like me, if we were found to be living up to our claim. Similarly would all rejoice if a capitalist were to divest himself of exclusive ownership and declare himself to be in possession as a trustee for the people. It is highly probable that my advice will not be accepted and my dream will not be realised. But who can guarantee that the socialists' dream will be realised? Socialism was not born with the discovery of the misuse of capital by capital capitalists. As I have contended, socialism even communism, is explicit in the first verse of the *Ishopanishad*. What is true is that when some reformers lost faith in the method of conversion, the technique of what is known as scientific socialism was born. I am engaged in solving the same problem that faces scientific socialists. It is true however that my approach is always and <sup>Small</sup>only through unadulterated non-violence. It may fail. If it does, it will be because of my ignorance of the technique of non-violence. I may be a bad exponent of the doctrine in which my faith is daily increasing. The C.S.A., L.S.A. and the A.I. V.I. A. are organizations through which the technique of non-violence is being tested on an all-India scale. They are special autonomous bodies created by the Congress for the purpose of enabling me to conduct my experiments without being fettered by the vicissitudes of policy to which a wholly democratic body like the Congress is always liable. Trusteeship, as I conceive it, has yet to prove its worth. It is an attempt to secure the best use of property for the people by competent hands.

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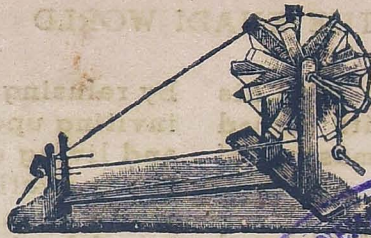
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**KHADI**



**WORLD**

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## Our Homage to the Father of the Nation

“Greater love hath no man than this”

SWAMI ANAND

Two thousand years ago the Prince of Peace atoned for the sins of his fellow-men on earth by mounting the Cross with words of forgiveness and love for his persecutors. And though man felt ashamed and humiliated he did not mend his ways.

The primitive man hunted for food; in the middle ages he killed for glory. The supermen of our age stalked the globe with a technique of slaughter and enslavement in the wake of greed and exploitation. The earth was rent with weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. Humanity lay prostrate under the agony of unnamable outrages.

In the midst of all this clash and conflict came, once more, a Wise Man from the East. Like the Good Shepherd he shouldered the ailing sheep, the insulted indentured Indian, toiling far away from home, and comforted him and his tribe. With words soothing and life-giving, he sayeth unto them: “Come ye that grieve and are heavily laden. I bring to you good tidings, — the Gospel of Resistance.”

And he shepherded his flock and ministered unto them in their afflictions with tenderness and affection. He taught the worm to turn. He taught little mothers to stand upright and resist racial arrogance and insult, marching with babes in their arms and courting prisons. He sat among overbearing foreigners and pleaded his people's cause, disarming them with his courtesy and his integrity. He evoked their sympathy with his gentle sufferings and earned a great renown.

And behold, he returns homeward to his own people and concludes with them,

once more, a new Covenant: “It has been said by those of old: ‘Ye resist not evil; or ‘resist evil with evil.’ But I say unto you resist evil within and without you, with the whole might of your soul; resist it with Non-violence, resist it with Truth resist it without malice. Repent ye, and do penance for your sins, collective as well as individual. Eschew all violence, eschew all hatred, shed all fear and forge yourselves into finest weapons of resistance. You are the salt of the earth. Ye are to establish once more, by testifying to it in and with your lives in this holy land of synthesis, the supremacy of soul over matter; of God over Mammon; of service over self-interest. And ye are to carry the Gospel of this non-violent resistance to the farthest ends of the earth. In this redeeming task, he who shall lose his life shall find it, and he who shall seek to save his life shall lose it.”

And he sayeth unto them again:

“Despise no man; but believe in his innate goodness. Harbour no ill-will against him; only resist the evil that has seized him. Resist and suffer cheerfully with no thought of returning evil for evil. Shun all fear. Be brave and wield the weapon of Truth and Non-violence, which is Love abounding. They are but the obverse and reverse of the same coin. To me there is no God other than this. It is my sole weapon and my refuge. And know ye, that it is not the weapon of the weak. It is for the bravest. Learn ye, therefore, to wield it against all your ills. It shall sustain you against the mightiest. For it is forged on the anvil of Love that exalteth and that abideth in God.”

And behold! Great multitudes followed him.

And he covered the entire land with his journeys, plying his wheel, and its thread linked men with men — whole masses of them.

The toilers came from their fields and spinners from their hovels; fishermen left their nets, tradesmen their counters. Rich men, encumbered with large possessions, came too, in search of solace, and he lightened their burdens. Women came resurrected and awakened to the true dignity of their state. The untouchables came with their limbs withered and their souls crushed under the weight of age-long inequities. And he ministered unto them with all the passion of his soul and made them whole. He made them God's chosen. Came also the publicans, the hated ones — servants of Government — who served the alien rulers and worked against their own country for a mess of pottage. And he called upon them to repent and turned many into humble servants of the dumb millions. Lepers came and he built them shelters and himself washed their wounds. Came also the pharisees, the learned ones, negotiators and peace-mongers. And he suffered them all and treated them with unfailing patience and tenderness.

They came from distant lands and from across the seven seas. They came from all parts of the earth. And he taught them all and made them good men and women. Even like one of his great predecessors, — The Guru (Gobind) — he would make the sparrow hunt down the hawk, but with a different weapon. With patient labours of a lifetime extending over half a century and spread over the entire land, he worked on his people to forge his weapon and to temper it.

Out of dross he made precious metal; out of earth clods he made material to challenge and defy the might of an insolent empire, to whose people he bore the greatest friendship, and yet whose end he ordained, even as Krishna had ordained the end of the arrogant Jadavas. He called upon the foreigner to quit the land which he had bled white and in which he had worked much inequity.

And behold! For the first time in human history the world witnessed an epic struggle of a whole nation locked for three decades in a non-violent combat with alien rulers so that her chains should break. A saga of peaceful peasantries challenging the might of established authority, armed to the teeth,

by refusing to submit to its unjust levies, inviting upon themselves untold sufferings and living under conditions of a siege till the privations turn them and their cattle white; of millions throughout the length and breadth of the country defying salt laws in the face of lathis, tear-gas, horse-hoofs; women refusing to part with their pinch of salt till their bones dislodge; men tying their own hands with iron wires to prevent slackening of their grip on raided salt; of gallant men who would be counted as among the very peak of any army, offering to be beaten or pounded to death, by official myrmidons, without so much as raising their eyelids in protest; of statesmen, savants, tribunes of their own people — objects of world adoration, leaders of men and of an age, who would adorn the halls of any international assembly — accepting cheerfully to surrender long indefinite years of their great lives to be wasted in cold, dark, solitary dungeons on a par with felons; of Nation's bards pouring forth the agony of an age before sobbing magistrates in crowded court-rooms; of apostles who walked the land bare-foot, broadcasting the New Gospel carrying neither purse nor shoes nor yet staves, pleading guilty against their accusers and urging the courts to inflict on them maximum penalties; of wandering monks offering to starve themselves to death in protest against outraged womanhood through long agonizing fasts without a trace of illwill towards the guilty; of frail little men offering to lay down their lives denying themselves in their prison cells all food and water till death do deliver them, and in the meanwhile coaxing their captors to administer without blame 'some suitable poison' when their sufferings annoyed them; of street urchins proudly mounting the gallows after being courtmartialled for bold pranks; of village peasants naively facing military reprisals, with no better armour than plywood planks hung in front of their chests, of whole masses of unarmed, undrilled men and women flinging themselves in blind abandon against bayonets, bullets, guns and bombs.

Righteousness the world over wailed in oblivion. Untruth was in excelsis. Naked Fascism masquerading in the garb of aggrieved innocence stalked the land. It maligned virtue with impunity. Truth was lynched. The stars in high heavens wept over the inequities and the vileness of man.

And against it all, in his indignation, the Father of the Nation lay crouched and twisted on his Bed of Fire for the tenth time,

challenging his accusers from behind the prison. And his protest rang through the world penetrating the Iron Curtain. His Great Disciple who was to him more than his own son, and 'with whom my Father is well pleased,' lay in a handful of ashes at the prison corner. And the gentle Mother of the Nation was to meet her millions no more. Outside the prison raged Revolution. The Empire shook, and his mighty accusers trembled. They fell flat. Their chagrin knew no bounds.

And behold! the Titan collapsed under the weight of his own inequities.

And he quitted; but not without upholding the disruptionist who clamoured for rending his own Mother's garments. Freedom came, but Her face was ghastly. Brother flew at the throat of brother, and women wept. Millions were uprooted and flung on the roadside. Men lost all their sense and shame, and they burned and killed and perpetrated unmentionable abominations. Cities swelled with fleeing men and wailing women. They cursed and called aloud for retribution.

Overwhelmed and humiliated, the anguished Father, bent under the infirmities of age, runs once more to their succour, even like the hen covering her brood under her wings against death. He takes his abode among the sorrowing. He faces the Fiery Ordeal again and again and works miracles. He repeats to them his lasting message: "Not through hatred and illwill ye shall seek to avenge yourselves. 'Vengeance is mine' sayeth the Lord. Grieve not; forsake your fear; work and strive for goodwill and unity. For know ye who are afflicted, that Love exalteth, Love alone triumphs."

And he gathered them around him evening after evening as was his wont, and prayed with them for the purification of their hearts, beseeching them and admonishing them and instructing them with his words of wisdom and cheer. They gathered in the ancient city under whose precincts mighty empires lay in dust and in whose neighbourhood his Great Predecessor taught Eternal Wisdom to Man from His chariot on the battlefield.

But so that the Scriptures may be fulfilled, and that the world's Martyrdom may attain its perfection, behold! there comes on the scene, once more, the infamous Ashvathama, the perverse Assassin of Ages, the vile Brahmarakshasa with the eternal wound on his mangled head and condemned to everlasting life of a roving ghost,— the embodiment of the accumulated evil of his race. He comes unrepentant and unrelenting, aye, even with a gusto within for his unholy design, and accomplishes his foul deed of calculated cold murder under the eyes of a staggered multitude, to the everlasting shame and humiliation of his nation.

To Thee, Father of our nation! we pay our grateful reverent homage. We salute Thee. We rejoice in the midst of our tears and our shame. We rejoice rather than sorrow and are grateful that the merciful Providence spared Thee to us to accomplish our deliverance, however shameful and agonizing the aftermath. We glory in Thy having walked our earth. For Thou hast given to mankind new values and compelled obeisance from a recalcitrant world by challenging it once again to measure its own stature against them. Thou art indeed in the line of Thy recurring Predecessors — the Great Saviours of mankind. Thou didst come to fulfil the Scriptures and to fulfil the pledge made in the Song Celestial:

"For the protection of the Good, for the destruction of the Wicked, and for the firm establishment of Righteousness on Earth, I am born again and again."

Even so through ages hast Thou lived and laboured again and again. All Thy life didst Thou wear Thy Crown of Thorns and didst bear Thy Cross, finding life's final fulfilment in surrendering it as a ransom for our own sins and shortcomings. Greater love, indeed, hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for goodwill among his fellowmen.

We salute Thee, Father of our Nation! None that hath received Thy Light shall walk in darkness.

"*Harijan*", dated the 29th Jan. '50

## Small Things I learnt from Gandhiji

KISHORLAL MASHRUWALA

I do not exactly remember the occasions on which I learnt several small things from Gandhiji. I shall just mention what they are.

1. This was perhaps when I met him for the first time in Champaran in 1917. He asked me to copy out a passage from the *Indian Year Book* on a sheet of foolscap paper. As the paper was larger than I needed I folded it up, made a crease by passing my fingers over it, and began to tear it along the crease. Gandhiji stopped me, and asked me to cut it with a knife. "When you tear along a crease with your hands," he said, "fibres appear along the edges. They jar upon the eye. You should make it a rule always to divide the paper with a paper-cutter, or an ordinary knife."

2. Once he showed me how to open up the flap of an envelope, the gum of which had got stuck. He introduced a fountain pen into a slight opening under the flap, and quickly rolled it round the edge. He said: "Do you see how it opens up without injuring the paper? This is a method which everyone should know."

3. He was displeased if he saw a letter placed in an envelope with irregular foldings. He said: "When you fold your letter you must see that the edges coincide properly and the fold is regular. An irregular

folding creates a bad impression upon the receiver about you. It looks slovenly."

4. One of my young nephews lived with me at Sabarmati. He once tore his clothing during play and then went straight to Bapu's room. Bapu saw the torn condition of the cloth, and when he saw my wife later he showed his displeasure at it. He said: "One need not be ashamed of clothes repaired with sewing or patches. Poverty in itself is not a matter for shame. But there is no excuse for a person to put on un-mended or dirty clothes. A cloth must be repaired as soon as it is torn, and washed if it has become dirty."

5. I may also mention a habit which I developed, under his influence, to a greater extent than commendable, as it verges on miserliness and disorderliness. It is that of preserving and using bits of paper written on one side, wrappers on book-post packets etc., and used envelopes. Perhaps the instinct of thrift was inherent in me, and it got encouragement by his example. I am not at all proud of it; I rather feel ashamed of the extent to which it has grown. But it seems to have got hardened in spite of my own mental protest against it.

*(From 'Reminiscences of Gandhiji' — Edited by Chandrashankar Shukla; published by Vora & Co. Publishers Ltd., 3, Round Building, Bombay-2)*

### DIRECT ACTION WITH GENTLENESS AND LOVE

Buddha fearlessly carried the war into the enemy's camp and brought down on its knees an arrogant priesthood. Christ drove out the money-changers from the Temple of Jerusalem and drew down curses from Heaven upon the hypocrites and the Pharisees. Both were for intensely direct action. But even as Buddha and Christ chastised, they showed unmistakable gentleness and love behind every act of theirs. They would not raise a finger against their enemies, but would gladly surrender themselves rather than the truth for which they lived.

MAHATMA GANDHI

# SARVODAYA YATRAS

DHIRENDRA MAZUMDAR

President, All India Spinners' Association

At several places Sarvodaya workers have been observing for the last two years, a Sarvodaya fortnight from the 30th January i. e. the day of Gandhiji's death anniversary to February 12, being the day on which *melas* are held throughout the country at various places sanctified by the immersion of Gandhiji's ashes. They devote the period generally to *safai* (sanitation) and other items of constructive work. Last year, in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Keral they organized Sarvodaya Yatras: They set out on foot from their villages to the place of the *mela* so as to reach there in time on the 12th February and make their offerings of yarn. These propaganda *yatras* were quite successful and might develop into a potent weapon for promoting the Sarvodaya way of life if they could be related to a well-thought-out plan and programme.

I suggest the following plan :

The workers in various places, whether they carry on their work individually or as members of institution, should invite their friends and acquaintances to participate in the *Yatra*. Those who agree should be asked to meet together, when they should form themselves into parties of four to five members each. It would be more convenient if the members of the party belong to neighbouring areas. Thereafter, they should be given detailed instructions about the programme.

Each party should decide for itself the trek that they would follow in their journey to the *mela* and the various villages where they would halt. The members of the party would do well to visit the villages, where they intend to halt, previously, and, if possible, organize in every village a small three-man committee to undertake and look after their lodging and to provide them with other facilities for their work in the village. This part of the programme should be over by the 26th January.

The members of the party should observe the anniversary on the 30th, each at his own place, and on the 31st they should collect together at a fixed place. They should set out on the journey, the same day,

after the mid-day meal, and reach their first destination by 3 p. m. A member of the party might reach the village even earlier to look into the arrangements made by the village committee and to make good the shortcomings. The village committee should have informed and invited those who are likely to take part in the sacrificial spinning, or who want to entrust their yarn-offerings to the party to be taken to *mela*. The committee should also provide the party next day in the morning with the implements for the *safai*-work or any other type of physical labour-work which the party might have decided to perform there. The young men and women enrolled to associate themselves in these items of work should be asked to keep ready so that there might be no loss of time.

After a short rest, following the arrival in the village, there should be congregational spinning; and then yarn-offerings by the villagers. Next, for the prayer, I would suggest that organizers of the *mela* in each part should get the prayer printed and arranged for its distribution among the members of the party.

The prayer should be followed by a short speech on some aspects of the Sarvodaya. This speech should be got written by some responsible worker of the province, and read out at this meeting by one of the party. However, after he has read it out, he may explain and elaborate it if he feels equal to it. I would suggest that this year it may be on the *Bhoodan-Yajna*. Vinoba might give a suitable message for the occasion. In that case the message should precede the speech.

After the meeting is over, each member of the party should retire to the house where he has been lodged and have a talk with the members of the family about the Sarvodaya ideology and programme.

Next day in the early hours of the morning, there should be *prabhat-pheris* with the singing of well-chosen songs, which might be got written earlier in the local dialect by capable song-writers. This year, the songs too may have for their theme the

# ★ TRUSTEESHIP ★

R. R. KEITHAHN, GANDHI GRAM

A trustee is "one entrusted with property for another." Gandhiji wrote often about trusteeship. In recent days others also have been doing some writing regarding this important subject. Perhaps Vinobaji more than any other is bringing home to us the meaning of trusteeship in relationship to the soil.

In earlier days it would seem that there was a much greater sharing of the natural resources. But as a result of the pressure of population, the temptation of money, or the bourgeois outlook people have squatted on the land and have become "squatters." That is, they claim the land for their own profit and often without any sense of responsibility to society. But trusteeship concerns all of life.

The constructive worker should begin with himself and his family. Perhaps our greatest resource is our time. It should be used thoughtfully and prayerfully. Our days and programmes should be planned. At Conferences I often see members linger about the well in the morning for an hour or more. Surely that is not the best use of our time. Or some of us are so busy with a programme that we become a slave to circumstances. That also is wrong. There should be time daily for the development of the spirit, mind and body. And at the same time we should *always* be ready to serve the needy.

Not only the day but also the week should be carefully planned. Muslims set aside at least a part of Friday for an intensive congregational prayer. The Christians make much of congregational worship on Sunday. Gandhiji kept a day of silence on Monday.

(Continued from previous page)

*Bhoodan-Yajna.* This should be followed by the last and the most important item, the physical labour-work for three strenuous hours. This should include according to the convenience one or more of the following: village-*safai* pits for compost manure; model latrines and urinals. Every effort should be made to get the maximum number of the villagers to associate themselves in this work.

There is need of regular fasting and purification, for special prayer and meditation, and for special study and thinking.

Most important of all, we need to plan our lives. Indian culture tells us that if we live in accordance with suggested *asramas* our lives will be more fruitful. Modern youth might well keep these old traditions in mind as they prepare for rich living. As we grow older all the more need for careful planning. Then our days are limited and our experiences to be shared are very rich. If we have lived richly many opportunities confront us and the problem of choice arises. One aspect of the meaning of the Cross is that of making a correct choice and leaving many good things undone.

Another great resource of man is his body and physical energy. One might well claim that man's best tool is the body. It is good to know our body well. To keep it in good order we should keep it very clean as we do the spade when we use it in the garden. We should feed it well. For example, it may be a small matter but *sprouted pulses* have much more vital food value than have the ordinary pulses. A constructive worker should always be conserving and improving food values not only for the sake of society but also for the sake of a strong and healthy body. He should also take proper and regular exercise. The *asanas* of India and the callisthenics of the West are rich sources to guide one in proper exercise. But normally most of such exercise will be secured in fruitful manual labour. At this point I would like to mention the importance of the inner duct glands. These glands play a far greater influence in man's

This would finish the programme in the village. By mid-day, after a short rest following the meal, the party would again set out on its journey for the next station. The programme would be repeated day after day until they reach the place of the *mela*. The yarn hanks received during the 11 or 12 days should be offered there according to the instructions of the Sarva-Seva-Sangh.

"*Harijan*", dated the 15th Dec. '51



life than most of us realize. They may be sources of disturbance or of great strength. A good "trustee" will do all he can to see that his glands function properly and that their potential powers are used in the most creative way possible. Thus India's culture has advocated the Brahmachari's life for students and a disciplined family life for the father and mother. The joint family makes it possible for the parents later to enter fully into the service of society and to have time to develop their own lives.

Then there are those great resources of the family and of society. The family gives us our security, our strength and home. Therefore it is for the father to have a deep sense of responsibility that each member of the family have his or her necessary freedom for the fullest development of character. No member of the family should feel frustrated because of a dogmatic position of the family head. On the other hand the younger members of the family should develop a real sense of responsibility and not unnecessarily be depended upon the "rich uncle." In other words, good trusteeship is necessary on the part of every member of the family.

Society gives to us its culture, its religion and such blessings as education. It is my conviction that those who have the greatest privileges should always have the greatest sense of responsibility. The most highly educated should have the spirit of the true "Brahmin", that is of selfless service without seeking any monetary reward. The tragedy of modern civilization is that education is used as a means for selfish material enrichment. This should never be. Most constructive workers have a good education. All the more reason why they should live and serve selflessly. Only then can they bring this spirit and way of living to others.

I have already spoken of our great natural resources. The soil should always belong to society and be used only for the benefit of all. If any land is entrusted to us it is our responsibility to see that not only is the fertility of the soil preserved but also developed. For example, every year we should plant trees. We should be constantly manuring the soil. Yearly we should be building bunds to prevent soil erosion, and to bring more water into the sub-soil. This attitude should prevail in regard to all natural resources.

When we think of trusteeship or stewardship normally money comes to our minds. This seems to me a perversion of real trusteeship. However, because money has come to have such a large place in modern living we have given it extra importance. The implications of trusteeship are those of simple living. There should be guarded spending on self and the family. The greater our financial or material resources the greater should be our obligation for selfless and co-operative service. Some years back a monied American gave large gifts for Mission Institutions. There was one condition: that they should all be named in honour of the family and today "P. M." Mission Institutions are to be found throughout the world. I can understand the faithful descendant or disciple wanting to make some substantial recognition on behalf of one he loves. A memorial plate would take care of that. The use of persons' names for institutions in recognition of gift money is not in the true spirit of trusteeship.

The constructive worker must always spend the money that is entrusted to him, wisely and carefully. I sometimes feel that we are not as careful in these matters as we ought to be. I often say to my co-workers that our actions would make a stranger believe that we are millionaires. Again there should be very strict accounting of all money that comes to and passes through our hands. This money, all too often, comes from exploited labour, I can understand how it may be used for their welfare. But it should be done with the greatest care possible. Even from the point of view of the individual worker such careful accounting is a good discipline and training. It is only when we are most careful in such small matters that we shall develop a greater sense of responsibility for larger tasks.

We need must think about these elementary matters and disciplines of our own lives before we can take up larger questions of trusteeship in society. If we start right in our individual and family living then we are more likely to come to the right conclusion as we confront the problems of society and in all these good habits of life we must grow daily, weekly, monthly and yearly. We may start at low or high levels of attainment. The fundamental requirement is that of steady improvement. No one should be satisfied he has ever attained perfection.

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# ★ GANDHI AND MARX ★

## Three Gandhian Principles

ACHARYA VINOBA BHAVE

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Kishorlalbai has tried to give shape to Gandhian thought consistently with elasticity and freedom. He has built up its frame-work on three principles: (i) *Varna-vyavastha* (principle about vocation for living), (ii) Trusteeship and (iii) Decentralization. Let us briefly consider each.

(i) Gandhiji has adopted the old traditional concept of *varna-vyavastha* (socio-economic order), but has put an entirely new meaning and spirit in it. The new idea is, nevertheless, derived from and based on the spirit of and purpose of the old. To my mind this is an experiment in applied *ahimsa*. Instead of rejecting old terms and ideas or concepts which have been accepted and respected by a community, the non-violent way is to retain them, give them broader meaning, evolve their forms and infuse new life into them. Synthesization, which is a fundamental characteristic of India's mind has arisen entirely from this non-violent technique. So gentle is this technique that there is not even the awareness of the word having been charged with a new meaning. It looks as if the old meaning had been just polished and brushed up a little. The *Gita* pointed out this way with its extended applications of words like *Yajna* etc. No doubt, there is considerable danger in this technique of the meaning of words getting distorted. When this happens it is then a practice of untruth, rather than that of *ahimsa*. It is *ahimsa* only if the word is not distorted, but a new meaning is — so to speak — gently and reverently drawn out of it, as when they milk a cow. Gandhiji was born and bred in Indian culture, and he spoke mostly to the people steeped in that same culture. I suppose that is the reason of his acceptance of the idea of *varna* (heredity of vocation). One cannot say with certainty that, had Gandhiji been born and bred elsewhere and addressing a different society, the word and the concept of *Varna* would have suggested itself to him independently and as an essential part of his idea of a non-violent social order. But this much might be still asserted with confidence that he would have been compelled to accept its underlying principle, though the language might have been different. What I mean to

say is that those who object to the words *varna* and *varna-vyavastha* need not be startled at Gandhiji's use of them. We are not concerned with words but with their content: (a) Equal wages for all work, (b) absence of competition, and (c) a system of education which takes the fullest advantage of the hereditary capacities of the people, — these three constitute the essence of *varna-vyavastha*. In our opinion, this is all that is needed in a non-violent social structure.

(ii) The word *trusteeship* also, like the foregoing *varna-vyavastha* is disliked by many. There is no doubt that the word *varna-vyavastha* in its origin conveys a right idea and a wiser order. Perhaps, the same cannot be said with certitude of the theory of trusteeship. The word and its abuse seem to have been born together. But it has a good connotation in law, and Gandhiji having been a student of law, the word seems to have clung to him. Also being a votary of truth, he associated with it only the higher side of its meaning and use. As I have not been a student of law, despite the use of this word by Gandhiji, it has failed to stick to or attract me. However, it does not come in the way of my understanding and appreciating the idea which Gandhiji sought to express through it. Some of the key words of the *Gita* such as *aparigraha* (non-possession), *samabhavana* (equalism, sense of equality or oneness with all) etc. had taken a strong hold on Gandhiji's mind and, it seems, when he began to meditate on how he could apply these attitudes of the mind to practical life, this legal term *trustee* came to his help and stood him in good stead. Gandhiji has stated in his autobiography that the study of the *Gita* illumined the meaning of the word *trustee*, and the word, in its turn solved for him the problem of non-possession. In short, Gandhiji held that not only in the present condition of society, but in every condition whatever the only practical way of practising non-possession is to use one's (tangible and intangible) powers as a trustee. Kishorlalbai has explained the concept so lucidly as to be understood by even a person of ordinary ability. I feel that it leaves no room for any misunderstanding of the idea:

Even if inequality of wealth is abolished as being the result of an unjust social order, the inequality of the intellectual and physical powers cannot be wholly done away with. Let us assume that with education and regulation even these inequalities will be greatly reduced. Still, even in an ideal state we cannot conceive of their total abolition. The conclusion is that whatever talents, physical strength, wealth, or other capacities a person might possess, he should take them as having been given to him as a trustee, for the benefit of the world. This is the noble idea of trusteeship. But selfish people have so debased the word that it seems nearly impossible to restore it to its pristine purity. I have, therefore, substituted for it another word, *Vishwastavritti*, i. e. the attitude of confidence, — a word which is free of any undesirable associations. The principle that none must depend on another, we might accept as sound being a counsel of self-reliance. But social life depends on mutual confidence. Certainly we cannot make it a principle that none must place confidence in another. A rule of conduct based on such a counsel would, indeed, be the erection of a hell on earth. Parents repose confidence in their children, children in their parents, and neighbours in one another. This is as it should be. Similarly there should be mutual confidence even among the various nations of the world. If we cannot work on the principle of mutual confidence, regarding it as risky, the inference is that we think and act at a sub-human level. The feeling of mutual confidence can be promoted by education. If instead of doing it, we attempt to reduce the whole society to a mechanical system in order to obviate this botheration of placing confidence, it will be, to say the least, intellectual indolence.

A social order based on confidence means a harmonious planning of the varied and peculiar capacity of every member of society. This idea is well expressed by the Sanskrit word *loka-sangraha* (accommodation and adjustment of every one or the total well-being of all). The use of one's capacities for the good of all from a feeling of confidence is implicit in individual non-possession. And this is a fundamental principle of *loka-sangraha*. We may reject the word trusteeship, if we like, but we must not reject this principle of mutual confidence.

(iii) It is different with *decentralization*, however. Since the word is a recent one, it has not yet gathered any good or bad

associations. Both the word and its meaning, or the idea behind it are new. But, one may ask, was it not all decentralized before the advent of the machine age? What is new in it then? Well, the fact is that prior to the machine age it was not a decentralized order. The fact that industries were carried on in villages in independent small units or plants does not constitute decentralization. Decentralization presupposes a comprehensive all-pervading idea behind the various village industries. In the absence of any such idea, small non-centralized industrial units mean merely scattered industries. There were plenty of them before the machine age. But they were easily swept off with the first impact of the machine age. Decentralization (that is intelligent non-centralization) will stand on a firm foundation. Not only will it not be blown off, but will disintegrate the machine age itself. The present machine age, inspite of its name, is wholly unlike a machine, being totally uncontrolled. The Communists want to replace it by a well-controlled machine age. But like all other weapons, the machines, too, though invented by man, are inherently non-human. Hence, they cannot be humanized beyond a certain limit. On the contrary, they establish their own mastery over man and make him their slave. Clearly, the term *weapons* here mean the weapons of war and not those helpful ones used, for instance, by the surgeon. In the same way, the machine in this context refers to the exploiting machines which create unemployment, idleness and intellectual dullness, and not those obliging ones, which having been, so to say, given a human touch fit into man's hands like a subsidiary limb, and rush to his aid to assist him in his work. We may take, for example, the wheel-barrow here. We are at present engaged in digging a well, and I see day after day how greatly it helps us in removing the mass of dug up earth. And I hum to myself Senapati Bapat's words, "Hail, my Tool!" The wheel-barrow is also a gift of the machine age. Therefore, when we affirm that decentralization will disintegrate the machine age, what I mean to convey is that we shall disintegrate it after we have drawn out all that is good in it. Indeed, it will not be disintegrated until then. The former non-centralized village industries lacked this power of digesting and assimilating the advantage of the machine age. This is the fundamental difference between purposeful decentralized industries and the old non-centralized village industries. Hence both the word

*decentralization* and the idea which it expresses are new. If this distinction is borne in mind, most of the objections which are brought against decentralization will become as blunt as a sword struck against a rock.

But decentralization is not to be confined merely to industries. The process of decentralization applies equally fruitfully to the authority of the State. Even thinkers who are avowedly intent on building up a non-violent social order at times lose sight of this fact. They support the demand for industrial decentralization; but at the same time they often plead for a strong central authority (at least for some period)—for the preservation of the former! Even the Communists do not want the State to exist for ever. They say it will wither away automatically, even as *ghee* (clarified butter)

melts away in the summer heat. But until that stage sets in, they want it to be solid,—not merely as solid as the frozen *ghee* in winter,—but as solid and strong as the iron hammer which smashed Trotsky's head. Almost all 'responsible' elders, of different political faiths right from the earliest times down to this day have performed this self-contradictory feat of pleading for a strong Central Government during the 'transition stage.' Gandhiji, however, conceives of the decentralization of political authority as being equally necessary at every stage and period, and for all time. It is necessary in the beginning, during the middle, and till the very end. But our friends say, "It may be put aside as either a story of the hoary past—the *Rama-rajya* of *Treta-Yuga*—or as a utopia of the future *Sarvodaya*. For the moment, we have no use for it."

The above is the continuation of Acharya Vinobaji's introduction to Shri. K. G. Mashruwala's recent book of Navajivan Trust, that appeared in the previous issue of the *Khadi World*.

## ★ VINOBAJI IN DELHI ★

SURESH RAMABHAI

Crossing on foot the hills and dales of Central India, Vinobaji reached Delhi on 13th November 1951, after covering a distance of 792 miles from his Paunar Ashram. As is well known he came here with a two-fold objective: firstly, to create an atmosphere for his *Bhoodan-Yajna* or Land-Gift-Mission, and secondly, to meet the members of the National Planning Commission and discuss with them their Draft Report of the Five-Year Plan which he had quite severely criticized at the very first sight. He halted for eleven days in the capital where he had nestled himself in a little thatched hut. Physically, these 11 days may have offered well-deserved respite particularly for his fellow-travellers after 62 days of continuous 'quick march.' But mentally the period was one of most anxious thought and concern. Vinobaji attracted all sorts of people, rich and poor, high and low, dignitaries and mere-nothings, leaders and led, who came to him for consultation or advice. The fact of the President of India or the Prime Minister calling upon him at his hut reminded one of the good old days when the biggest

or mightiest of the big or mighty used to call upon a naked fakir and run to him in moments of despair and crisis. The touching sight left a fair foreign correspondent aghast and remark that this could happen only in India. Surely, this can happen only in India which is destined to demonstrate and uphold the strength of soul-force as against all others combined.

### WHY BHOODAN-YAJNA ?

Stationed as Vinobaji was near Gandhiji's Samadhi, it proved for him a perennial source of inspiration. As he said on the very first day:

"I still feel that though his mortal remains are no more his spirit is with me and whenever I am about to err he tells me the right way."

Vinobaji introduced himself to Delhi's populace as the proverbial Vaman who covered the earth in three steps. So also his three steps are:

"What I want the people to do is, first, to give away some of their land. Secondly, they should engage themselves in the service of

others. Finally, in their service they should lose all and voluntarily sacrifice everything. This is the path into which I want to initiate the people."

And why was he asking for land? His reply is :

"We must make sacrifices for the poor. I am asking for land. It is just a symbol of that spirit of sacrifice. In every heart there should be a desire to serve *Daridranarayan*."

"I have reached Delhi which is the capital of India and where there is the *Samadhi* of a great seer. It is my hope and prayer that the people will donate land liberally and take a vow to serve *Daridranarayan*."

Unhappily the response at Delhi was rather poorer than elsewhere.

#### THE TRAGEDY OF MONEY

But one day a trader came and offered him a sum of one thousand rupees for building a well. Vinobaji spurned the offer and told him that he did not want any money. He referred to the matter in his post-prayer speech in the course of which he feelingly remarked :

"In my trek through parts of the country I have been given well over 35,000 acres of land. At the traders' meeting I showed them my hands and pointed out that they were still not sullied. They are as clean as when I began my trek months ago. I want to work without coming in contact with money. I do not want to waste my effort in dealing with the problems created by money."

He went on :

"Why do I not want money? It is because money has brought the country to its present state. It is at the root of the country's degradation.

"People should work rather than ask others for money. Money should be eliminated from the daily routine. Money tells lies and is like a loafing tramp. And yet it has been made the basis of trade and commerce."

How mischievous is the nature of money was also set forth :

"For the peasant the produce is very nearly the same year after year, but prices go up and down. Those prices are not of the produce but of money. It is the value of money which fluctuates. If money is so unstable, so uncertain, so unreliable, why should it be made the basis of all transactions? I tried to get an

answer, but found none. I have questioned economists if they are able to discover the secret, but it has always evaded them."

Not that Vinobaji does not know the vast hold of money. But he is determined to conquer it :

"I realize that money, like God, is present everywhere, and it is not easy to eliminate it from life. But that is my aim. I never cared to undertake an easy task. I became enthusiastic when the task was difficult. I have taken up the land question knowing it to be full of difficulties. Similarly, I have undertaken to free the worker and the peasant from the shackles of money fully aware of the difficulties involved. Freeing people from the dependence of money means saving them from all kinds of bad and evil influences. I have, therefore, been asking people to reduce their dependence on money by producing things they need."

Next day, Vinobaji put forward his picture of currency :

"Some people imagine that I want to go back to the old barter system. That is not my plan at all. I am not against currency. Actually, I prefer paper currency to coinage. But the currency that I want is of labour. It should not be printed at Nasik at the behest of some ruler. It should be a currency adopted by the villagers themselves for their use. In this currency there would be no question of any credit."

#### DECENTRALISATION AND CHARKHA

This led him to the question of decentralisation, unemployment, ruination of villages and village industries, and Khadi. He said :

"My plan envisages decentralisation which is a necessity. Even when God created the Universe He had to have a decentralised system. If He had not thought of decentralisation, He would have to leave all intelligence in some bank at Delhi and then would have required motor-cars and planes to go about distributing it! Naturally He would have been tired out by all this and would not have had the time to lie comfortably in mid-ocean." (A familiar picture of Lord Vishnu in ancient Indian mythology.)

Pointing out that village industries were ruined in the name of villages themselves and thus giving rise to the problem of unemployment, he remarked :

"Villagers can produce cloth wherever cotton is grown. But when khadi is mentioned all economists hesitated. I cannot say that they are in the hands of the capitalists, but the

idea of not letting villages produce khadi is a capitalist idea. In this both capitalists and communists agree. The two have the same ideas about production. They differ over the distribution of what is produced. In the case of khadi consciously or unconsciously the capitalist idea is being supported."

He continued :

"Agriculture goes on. Nobody ever regrets that there should be no agriculture or farming. But Charkha is being opposed, for the Charkha is the symbol of the new social structure we want to build up."

#### VINOBAJI'S TECHNIQUE

How does Vinobaji propose to build the new social structure? As Gandhiji selected, of all things, salt, poor man's salt as a symbol of his political revolution and mass upheaval Vinobaji has chosen land, the mother earth, as an emblem of his economic revolution and mass consciousness. Therefore, as a beggar he wants land for distribution among the landless. But he asks his share by virtue of his right, birth-right as it were. To every landholder he says :

"If you have four sons consider me as the fifth and accordingly give me my share."

He made it clear also in his appeal to the people of Delhi to donate liberally to *Bhoodan-Yajna*.

"People should remember that I am not asking for alms but want it as a matter of right and am initiating the people into the tenets of a new ideal."

Needless to state that the Zamindari Abolition measures, claimed to have been adopted by various State Governments, have failed to arouse any iota of enthusiasm in the people. In the Uttar Pradesh, not even a fifth of the available land has so far been acquired by tenants who have failed to raise the money to purchase *Bhoomidari* rights even on long term credit. The land continues to belong to the landlord who does everything on this earth except tilling his soil. The fate of the landless labourer continues to be as unenviable as it ever was. And the gulf between the haves and the have-nots knows no narrowing. Vinobaji's call for a voluntary donation of land by all for the service and use of landless millions seems to be the only effective instrument to tackle the age-old land problem which has corroded the entire fabric of our national existence. But he makes no claim to solve

this problem in toto or for all time. As he said one evening :

"I am not trying to solve the big land problem. I do want it solved peacefully, but nobody could settle all the world's affairs. Ram had been there and Krishna had been there. They had done what they could do for the world, but there is no end to problems. One can only do one's work."

Yet he has a very robust faith in the righteousness of his mission :

"I do not go by any economic calculations. My hope is that others would also be able to think as I do. They are men like me living in the same society. If I can have certain ideas, so can others. If people accepted my ideas soon, my work would be completed without much delay. But God willing, my work would be completed sooner or later."

#### NEED FOR FOOD SELF-SUFFICIENCY

On three successive days after Vinobaji reached Delhi, he met the members of the Planning Commission as also its Chairman, the Prime Minister. In the words of Vinobaji :

"During these three days of discussion I have placed my ideas before them. They have promised to consider my suggestions. I had several grounds for my criticism, but I would not go into them all. I would mention only one point.

"The main question is attainment of self-sufficiency in food. I was sure that the promise would be kept. Meanwhile, Mr. Munshi made some statements on food. He repeated the pledge, but added so many conditions and exceptions that hardly anything was left of it. The conditions and exceptions made the matter serious. I, therefore, commented on the subject. A reply was given, but I was not satisfied. I wrote again. I had by now begun to wonder whether experts had abandoned the principle that food imports should be stopped. I wondered whether commercial considerations had been brought in to decide that it was not necessary to have complete self-sufficiency in food even though the country was mainly agricultural.

"I suggested that such a course would weaken the national will. That was the trend of my criticism and I have tried to explain my views to the Planning Commission members."

Yes, 'commercial considerations' had been brought in and a lust for dollars marked every activity of the Government. But what the masses have got to do with these American dollars or British Sterlings nobody can say. But let the by-gone be by-gone :

"Whatever had happened could be forgotten. They could resolve again not to import food.....If a firm and definite resolve was made and an atmosphere is created in which no financial or other arguments can be offered against it, the goal can be achieved. But there should be no *ifs* and *buts* attached to the decision. If a promissory note said that it could fetch upto Rs. 100/- it would be useless. Similarly about this resolve there should be no reservations and no exceptions or conditions. If such a resolve is made with determination this time, the Planning Commission's time and the country's time spent in discussing the problem would be well-spent."

But alas, the Planning Commission does not intend to make such a resolve. Nor sees any possibility of cutting food-imports in the near future.

#### DIFFERENCES WITH PLANNING COMMISSION

The other vital difference of points between Vinobaji and the Planning Commission was with regard to the provision of work for one and all. To quote his own words :

"There were two major differences. The first was that I wanted no food imports, while according to the Planning Commission's Report there are to be imports for an indefinite period. Secondly, I wanted a policy of full employment for all. The Planning Commission have agreed it is their duty, but they say they cannot, under present circumstances, undertake it. In my opinion there can be no national planning without it. It is only when they accept this responsibility, that they can develop the villages and make them self-sufficient."

Vinobaji also stressed the need of sinking wells to make use of the water below. While the Government River-Valley projects aimed at utilisation of river waters, Vinobaji wanted to make use of underground waters by digging thousands of wells in all parts of the country. This too was only listened to

by the Commission. Thus practically Vinobaji and the Planning Commission parted as much apart as when they met. The basic differences between the two continue to be as thick as ever. The fact is, in Vinobaji's words :

"There is a difference between their approach and mine, though they have also the interests of the country at heart."

And the difference between the two approaches is greater than between the two poles.

#### THE SACRED TASK AHEAD

Vinobaji had come to Delhi to create a proper economic atmosphere. As he said :

"I have formed no organisation to propagate my views. People who accept my ideas themselves become preachers. Those who have land provided an example to others. The main thing is that one should do one's own duty. Fire merely burns, it does not worry whether anyone puts a pot on it, fill it with water and puts rice into it to make a meal. Fire burns and does its duty. It is for others to do theirs."

As becomes the first and foremost Satyagrahi, Vinobaji is but doing his duty. With unflagging perseverance and growing faith, he goes on and on, on his mission. In his own words :

"My work is a purifying work. Whether it has influenced others or not I am becoming purer of heart through this work and am nearing self-realization."

And verily, one pure heart, but one true Satyagrahi, a single indomitable soul can shake mountains and work wonders. As but one sun melts the snow on the highest tops, converts the water of the ocean into clouds, arouses man and animal and all from slumber, breathes life-air into the lungs of the human and animal and vegetable and also every other kingdom — all, by its sheer resolve to have no truck with darkness and be ever on the move and on — the sufferings and sacrifices of the beggar-saint of Paramdham (Paunar) can also well rowel the sides of Indian humanity into a furious spur and usher in the Ram-Rajya of our Babu's dreams.



# Indian Goodwill Mission to China

PANDIT SUNDARLAL, ALLAHABAD

In September last, we received through the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi a message from a number of Chinese people's organizations inviting us to witness the Second Anniversary of the People's Republic of China, held on 1st October 1951. This was the occasion for us to organise and send an Indian Goodwill Mission to China.

The time at our disposal was short. Yet effort was made to include in the Delegation persons from various Provinces and of various shades of opinion. Most members such as Dr. J. C. Kumarappa, President of the All-India Village Industries' Association of Wardha, Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao, Director of the Delhi School of Economics, Delhi, and Mrs. Hannath Sen, President of the All India Women's Conference belonged to independent schools of thought. The Delegation, however, included no member of the Communist Party of India. The idea was that a few open minded educated Indians may get an opportunity of seeing New China and forming their own independent judgment with regard to the conditions prevailing there.

The Delegation was very enthusiastically received by various public organizations as also by the people and the Government of China. Wherever they went, the members were overwhelmed by the sweet and kind hospitality of their Chinese hosts and the meticulous care they took of the comfort and convenience of their Indian guests.

We went to seven great cities of China viz., Canton, Peking, Mukden, Tientsin, Nanking, Shanghai and Hangchow. We visited New China's Universities, her Schools and Colleges, her factories, both state-owned and private, her villages and markets. We saw New China's people's Courts administering justice. We studied the organization of their public associations. We had long talks with their public men and their experts. We attended their cinemas, their operas, their agricultural and industrial exhibitions including the exhibition of their cottage industries. In short, we saw as much as we could during the short period of about forty days and had a very busy time. There were no restrictions on our

movements. We could go wherever we liked and see whatever we pleased. The Chinese people and the Chinese authorities too had no reservations. They gladly provided us with all information we asked for.

We were all greatly impressed by what New China has been able to achieve during the last two years. During the Japanese occupation and later under the Kuomintang Rule, practically the entire social and economic life of the country had been shattered to pieces. The leaders of New China had to build their country anew. During these two years, China has succeeded in re-establishing and even vastly expanding her shattered industries, in rehabilitating her entire economy, in eliminating all forms of corruption from the life of her officials who only two years back are said to have been some of the most corrupt in the world, in raising the moral standard of the people as a whole, in all but liquidating beggary and prostitution from such a vast country, *in giving land to the landless through their great Land Reform movement*, in raising the standard of the masses, in increasing her agricultural production to such an extent that a country which had to import millions of tons of food grains from other lands only a few years back can now export its millions of tons of surplus food to other countries, in increasing her industrial production in such a way that China is now self-supporting in all necessities of everyday life, in raising the status of their women chiefly through the New Marriage Law, in liquidating unemployment, in almost obliterating the distinction between the rich and the poor, the employers and the employed and between the master and the servant, in stabilizing prices and solving the problem of inflation mainly by increasing production, bringing down expenditure on administration, and regulating foreign trade, and what is most important in enthusing the whole population with a patriotic fervour and a spirit of sacrifice which alone could make this achievement possible.

We were told in India that China is a communist country. We wanted to understand what it meant. We found that throughout New China the right of private property



is fully recognized and respected and private industrial enterprise is encouraged. The People's Government even provides raw materials, guarantees sale of finished products and secures reasonable profits to private enterprise. Even foreign capital and foreign enterprise are allowed sufficient scope. We saw British firms doing lucrative business in Tientsin, Shanghai and in many other places. We made special enquiries and were definitely informed that there is yet not a single factory throughout China nor a single plot of land which is communistically owned.

The Government of New China is not a communist Government. It is not a party Government. It is a coalition Government. It includes representatives of all parties in the country. The Communist Party claims only one-third the total number of members of the Government. If New China is communist, her communism is Chinese communism in keeping with the genius and the best traditions of the people.

New China has made revolutionary changes in her system of law courts. She has now three grades of courts: (i) Country People's courts which are like our District Courts, (ii) Provincial People's courts which are like our High Courts, and (iii) the Supreme Court in Peking with branches in provinces. New China has abolished the western system of advocacy. In the city of Shanghai alone there were as many as twelve hundred legal practitioners when the new Government came into power. Today there is not one. Out of these twelve hundred, the Government has selected five honest and able persons whom they call "Defenders of People's Rights." In difficult or complicated cases, the Courts take their help. They are paid by the Government. No man in China today can be engaged on payment by any party to a suit to plead in a case. Litigation has greatly diminished in the country, and in the cases that come before courts, the administration of justice is much cheaper, much quicker and much surer than in China before liberation or than in our own country today.

The Government of New China tries to reform its criminals through training, through social pressure and through moral persuasion, rather than by punishing them. Even most of those who fought against the New Government with arms on the side of the Kuomintang regime have been forgiven and turned into loyal and enthusiastic supporters of the present regime.

Salaries in New China are paid not in terms of paper-currency but in terms of grain. In the factories we visited we found that the proportion between the salary of the unskilled labourer and that of the Manager or Director was generally three to eight. In a biscuit factory, while the unskilled girl labourer was getting 250 units per month the Director of the Factory was getting about 350. In Government Departments, while the lowest salary is generally 150 units per month the highest is about 350. Similar is the proportion between the salary of a peon and that of a Vice-Chancellor in the University. The salary of Chairman Mao Tse-tung is one sixteenth of the salary of the President of the Indian Republic. The result is that one can hardly distinguish a labourer from the Manager in a factory, or the peon from the Vice-Chancellor in a University merely by his dress.

Chinese authorities encourage and help their cottage industries in order to supplement the production of their Mills. In Peking, we saw a whole market where only hand-woven cloth is sold, part of which is hand-spun also. At Shanghai, when our Chinese hosts came to know that some of us were interested in hand-spun, hand-woven cloth, they presented to the members of our Delegation two pieces each of hand-spun, hand-woven cloth prepared in Chinese villages. In some villages we saw their handlooms working and their women spinning at the old style spinning wheels. We saw a grand exhibition of their handicrafts from which many of our constructive workers could learn.

There is complete religious freedom in New China. We saw mosques, where the Namaz is performed at regular hours. We saw Sikh Gurudwaras where the *Granth Saheb* is kept and read regularly as in India. We saw big Buddhist temples full of idols where worship is regularly performed. In one such ancient temple at Hangchow where the roof had come down, we saw that the new roof was being constructed at the cost of the Chinese Government.

I am also convinced that New China and her leaders want to live in peace with every other nation of the world. The economic organization of China as a whole is not focussed on war effort but towards production of every day consumer goods. China has no war-mongers.

I believe, New China is unconsciously much nearer to some of the ideals preached

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# STUDENTS AND BHOODAN-YAJNA

ACHARYA VINOBA BHAVE

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It will be seen that, when you get a chance to have a sincere and frank discussion with any city-dweller about the life in cities, you will find that the whole population there is not happy. Leaving aside the new things of show, everything else there, is dry, dull and unreal. Continuous attempts are being made to create artificial happiness through cinemas etc. From this it is evident that there is absence of real happiness. It has to be understood that there is absence of health also when it is found that lipsticks etc. are being used to brighten the face.

Yet there is one spot there wherein I have hope. They are the students. They are in great numbers there. They often live in cities only. In the course of their studies they get some leisure to think. Besides they also get chances to hear from all sides. Some among them emerge with full brilliance and sharpness of understanding. Yesterday the students asked me in what way they can play their part in this *Bhoodan-Yajna*. It is quite natural that this question comes from them, because this work is a revolutionary one. To those who reflect, it will be found that, a new way is being evolved by which the problems of the world can be solved. Till this date, many methods and means have been tried to solve these problems. Yet no effective and peaceful method has seen the light of the day. Whatever method we should try it should be an efficacious one; not only that, it should be a peaceful one also. The correct way will be that which is efficacious, and an efficacious method will be that which will be peaceful also.

I will consider the students to have taken part in this *Bhoodan-Yajna* if they will resolve to do some physical labour. Today everyone is talking of "produce more." All parties in India are now saying that every

one should do some work because the cost of living has gone up so high. How can it be carried on? Who are the instruments for it? Can production be increased if a few alone are given work and the rest left unemployed and poor? We have to make use of the full strength and initiative of the productive power God has given us. Look at the birds. They are incessantly working. If we give up that strength in us to do work and live by the efforts of others how can things prosper? (Our duty will not be done). "Everyone should do work," this is my decided view, whatever be the philosophy or ideology that India will have to accept in future. Everyone will find it possible to do work only when he or she will make use of that strength and power God has bestowed.

## ◦ WHY THIS CONTEMPT FOR PRODUCTIVE LABOUR ?

This morning I had been to a place to perform the opening ceremony of a prayer-mandir. There I saw a gymnasium also where there are every kind of arrangements for exercise. I felt pained about one thing. It looks as if our educated people have taken a vow that, whatever physical work they do should not result in any production, at all. I do not say that this is all purposefully done. It is because that their life is moulded in such a way that a contempt for productive labour has been developed and engendered. For instance, if a school teacher comes here we treat him with respect. But if a man who does carpentry work comes here we consider him only as a labourer. The carpenter does the construction work of our houses and earns his living by his own manual work. What? Is his greatness or respectability less than that of a teacher? Even a little child of the aristocratic family treats him as a menial. The reason for all this is this, — the system in society here is such that, he who does

(Continued from previous page)

by Mahatma Gandhi than we in India today. Most of the ills from which our country is suffering today are ills from which China suffered under the Kuomintang regime two

years ago. I have not the least doubt that if we in India only have the will to do so, we can learn much from New China for the improvement of our country and for the amelioration of the condition of our people.

more of physical labour will be treated with less of respect. Not doing any physical work has become a trait for the learned, the educated, the poets and philosophers. Those who do physical labour are pushed down to the lowest strata of society. The result is that all professions have become inefficient and backward. So if the students desire to take part in the *Bhoodan-Yujna*, then they will have to take a vow that they will not sit for meals unless and until they do some physical productive work everyday. If they resolve to do so for one hour everyday and then only eat, then the entire atmosphere of our land will change.

#### WHAT KIND OF PHYSICAL WORK CAN BE DONE IN TOWNSP

What kind of physical work can be done in towns? This has to be considered. If you desire, you can work at the *Chakki* and then you can have good flour for food, and health will improve and cottage industries will prosper. Even garden-work can be done. If every one cannot get such kinds of work, there is always the *charkha* that Gandhiji has given us for spinning. He had revolutionary insight. And he discovered this marvellous mechanism. Yet you see that yesterday was Gandhi Jayanti day and many people assembled here, but very few *charkhas* were found plying. Why? Because we did not realize the seriousness of life and discharge the duties we owe to our motherland. So those who are now doing physical work are burdened with more and more of it. And those who do less have

become weak and unhealthy. Gandhiji has given us this *charkha* as a panacea for all this weakness and disease.

#### NO ADVANCE WITHOUT SELF-SUFFICIENCY

You see that mill-cloth comes to the villages. Its price has gone up. When compared with previous years, the production of cloth has come down. Besides this, every day the demand for it goes on increasing. I am told that its price today in the white market (open market) is the same as its price once was, in the black-market. The production of mill-cloth has fallen down and it will go on falling day by day. Under such conditions if we spin and prepare by ourselves the cloth required for us, the production will certainly increase; the black-market will stop by itself and we will be on the 'advance' in this essential item which is absolutely necessary for our life. If we go on getting our cloth from outside and do not do anything by ourselves, it is wrong to believe that we are 'advancing forward.' No country can advance in this way. Gibbon has written in his 'History' that the fall of the Romans began when they gave up physical work. "The journey of life is impossible if we do not do some physical work", so says *Gita*. For this purpose I tell you, students, that you should take part in the *Bhoodan-Yajna*.

[Free rendering of Vinobaji's talk in Hindi at Sarvodaya Sammelan at Sagar on 30-10-'51;—"Sarvodaya", November, '51]



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#### DUNAYI MODIYA

But the sound produced is comparatively less.

We would urge on the workers interested in the progress of research to use the *kaker-bearing* alone. In the third type, *ball-bearing* has to be used as the speed is high. Lesser speed makes even the best cotton badly carded as the fibre gets knotted and curled. This defect appears also when the cotton gets stuck up to the side of axle arresting its movement. The feeding should be regular and uniform and there should never be over-feeding. Under-feeding of cotton will ensure good carding without being spoiled but the outturn is less.

All these three samples have been sent to two or three of our important implements' workshops which will manufacture them in due course. The following is a rough estimate of the price of each type. The price of the first type will be about Rs. 10, that of the second will be about Rs. 15 and that of the third about Rs. 20. The above price is of the *modiyas* only. This does not include the price of the spinning wheel on which they are to be attached. The price of the pedal stand of the ordinary type may come to Rs. 50. To manufacture these for sale it will take one or two months.

(Translated from Hindi)

## The National Importance of Composting

The following is an extract from the cyclostyled leaflet issued by the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, Sevagram, Wardha, under the title 'COMPOST LATRINES—Their Value—Construction and use.' (Price Annas 6; available at A. I. S. A. Sarvodaya Prachuralayam.)

India's main problem today is the shortage of food. Our food imports cost us, in 1949-50, 130 crores of rupees. In order to buy food, we have used up all our international assets. Five years ago, at the end of the war, we were a creditor nation, now we are debtors.

How is it that an agricultural country like India is short of food? The deficiency is serious, from 20% to 25% of our requirements. Many reasons can be given for the shortage, but one of the most important causes of deficiency is that our land is now giving a very small yield per acre compared with that in other countries. The position with regard to a few staple foods is shown in the following table:—

Country	Yield in lbs. per acre of	
	Rice	Wheat
India	988	811
China	2,448	989
Japan	3,070	1,350
U. S. A.	1,680	990
World average	1,440	840

The yield is small because the land is starved of manure. There may be other reasons, but this is the chief one. The soil is impoverished and its productive capacity is steadily diminishing. It has been demonstrated in many places, including Government experimental farms and Sevagram itself, that production can be doubled by adequate manuring. The land must be fed.

The ordinary farmer declares that he cannot afford to use enough manure. This is true, if he has to purchase it from outside. But in his own village, sufficient natural sources of manure lie ready to hand, neglected and unused, in the night-soil, urine and organic refuse which poison the village streets.

This is why knowledge of scientific composting is so important and urgent a part of adult and social education. It benefits the community simultaneously by increasing cleanliness, reducing disease, and providing the land and crops with the nourishment they now lack. It adds to the village wealth directly as well as indirectly, by increasing its production. If all the people of the village co-operate to use *all* its organic wastes as compost for their fields, they need spend nothing on manure from outside. This is not a mere hypothesis; it has been demonstrated in practice by the farming populations of China and Japan.

Compost made with human excreta is more productive than any other manure. Perhaps that is the reason why it is often called 'Sone-Khad' (golden manure). It matures very quickly. It contains no fibres such as are found in cowdung manure. It induces vigorous plant growth, and all the elements of plant food are present in it in the correct proportions; at the same time it contains no harmful ingredients. The following table shows its constituents:

Percentage of	Nightsoil	Urine	Both combined
Water	72.2	96.3	93.5
Organic Matter	19.8	2.4	5.1
Nitrogen	1.0	0.6	0.7
Phosphorus	1.1	0.17	0.26
Potash	0.25	0.2	0.21
Lime	0.62	0.02	0.09
Magnesium	0.36	0.02	0.06

In the light of the above facts, the most effective "Grow More Food Campaign" would be a nation-wide drive to save and use this wasted national wealth, by establishing compost latrines in every village and town.

# Dunayi Modiya or Carding Mechanism

NANDALAL PATEL

A resolution on "Dhunai Modiya" was passed in the Charkha Sangh meeting held on 4th and 5th September 1951 at Sevagram.

For about 3 years, some researches have been made on this implement. A few specimen types were made and distributed among some. But these were not satisfactorily working for the following reasons: (1) Due to the lack of technical knowledge of persons handling the machine, (2) due to some defects in the manufacture and fitting up of the parts. So the sale of the same had to be stopped and further researches were made by us resulting in some improvements. Now the improved ones are put for sale.

We need not repeat here the necessity and advantageous use of such Modiyas in preference to other types of carding machines. Even though sufficient discussions had taken place about this machine, in the Implements' Conference, here we desire to stress one important point. In places where cotton does not grow and has to be purchased in the form of pressed bales from outside, the use of this Modiya is found to be more advantageous as the quality of the slivers produced thereof is found to be superior. The cotton gets well carded and the dry leaves and dust particles in the lint get easily loosened and separated and even if anything remains behind, it falls away during the spinning process. At present we have got three types of these modiyas. There is not much difference in the construction of these three, though there is difference in the method of working and the outturn.

*The first type:* This Modiya is fixed on the spinning wheel by a mala and this mala makes the Modiya work when the main wheel of the charkha revolves. Cotton in pads is applied to the entrance channel of the modiya and slowly it is drawn inside and carded. When the sliver on hand is spun, small pads of cotton are fed at the entrance channel and they get carded. This Modiya can be fixed to all kinds of vertical charkhas. This is found to be specially advantageous for bamboo-charkhas, for the load of the modiya is least felt and the outturn is increased. Thus spinning and

carding can be simultaneously carried on. The quantity of slivers spun is replaced by the new slivers produced during spinning.

*Second type:* In this, 8 to 12 tolas of cotton can be carded per hour. This can be fixed to the ordinary vertical charkhas of big size as well as small size, which are fitted with speed-wheels. The two processes of spinning and carding can be done alternately and if necessary by different persons. For self-sufficient spinners this is more advantageous.

*Third type:* This is worked by legs and not by hands as in the previous two types. The pedal arrangement is the result of a combined application of the principle of circular motion in the pedalling of a cycle and the up and down movement of the pedal in the Singer sewing machine. This has resulted in increased efficiency and easier operation. A skilled worker can card upto 45 tolas per hour. The wheel set in motion by the pedal, moves with quicker speed and hence carding is done quicker. The modiya is fixed on the wheel which is attached to the pedal. The modiya of this and second type is just the same, only with this difference that this is worked with the pedal, while the former is worked by hand.

In all the three types separate bearings have been fixed and tested. Yet further researches in this direction are still being continued, to test whether home-made bearings can be substituted for the factory-made ball-bearings.

In the first type 'kaker-bearing' \* is found to be the best. The sound produced is the least, because the modiya moves lightly. It does not get heated all at once and stands for a longer time. Further the axle of the modiya is very thin and it is difficult to get suitable ball-bearings.

In the second type both kaker-bearing and ball-bearing can be fitted. In the one where ball-bearing is fitted there is no necessity to apply oil, for it does not get heated all at once. But it produces much noise. Kaker-bearing requires frequent lubrication to avoid friction, and while working on this the worker has to be very alert.

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\* Leather-bearing

# ★ THE SARVODAYA DAY ★

ACHARYA VINOBA

The 30th of this month is the day to Gandhiji's final *prayana* (departure). Every village throughout the country will observe some programme on that day and it is but right to do so. Memories of great men are a great sustaining power for ordinary people like us. The more such memories are collected the better. But I call it *Sarvodaya Day* instead of Gandhi Day. For, after all, it is more helpful to concentrate on an ideal than on the individual. A few days ago I attended a function of the Dadu Samaj. I told the friends there, "Let the Lord's name persist, that of Dadu perish!" I want to repeat it here. Gandhiji was extremely regardful about this. People tried to call his birthday Gandhi *Jayanti*. But Gandhiji advised them to call it *Charkha Jayanti*, for thereby they would preserve in a practical manner an idea which was more important than the memory of an individual. Very recently, I happened to see one of his letters written from South Africa in which he says: 'My cause will prosper only when my name has perished.' 'Keep not my fame, grant me this boon' prayed Inaneshwar. He wished for the disappearance of his name as well as his form. Let idea remain since man must die. If we keep alive memories of individuals, there is every risk that we shall be confused, develop narrow sects and society may be broken into pieces. Already there are in our country today more living *avatars* than one. Their devotees have started adoring them even during their life time. It is no good at all Gandhiji regarded himself as an ordinary human being. Let us regard him just a man. There is grace in it. If a holy name has to be uttered on that day why should we not choose the name which came on Gandhiji's lips, spontaneously and devotionally the moment the assassin's bullet touched him. So, I would have his anniversary day called the *Sarvodaya Day*. Much good can be wrought if the day is utilized for operative meditation. Inactive meditation, there is a plenty of it in our life. Worship through work, is the message of all religions, but we have forgotten it. Gandhiji, however, was that message personified. It must be reproduced in our lives. I, therefore, suggest public scavenging for one and all on that day. Let all of us become sweepers and clean the country clear of dirt and filth. We

have sinned horribly by treating the sweepers as untouchables, and have made the country so filthy that in no civilized country can its parallel be noticed. We have got to perform the penance. Let all young and old become modest. Let this act be performed with the feeling, "It is me who is the meanest creature in the world." Similarly, our country is in great need of production. Let every one, therefore, spin and let our hearts be united with the thread of affection. Spinning is a task, which, banning those who are very ill, can be performed by every one, young and old. It should therefore be included as a token of productive labour.

The above are the two operative programmes. Besides, collective prayers also should be held in which all should join and in the name of the Lord purify our minds and unite our hearts.

Meditation on the ideal of *Sarvodaya* should synchronize with this programme. There are more ways of meditation than one. So full of significance is the term *Sarvodaya* that you can go as deep as you will. For example we may remember that our aim is not to strive for the uplift of a particular class. We stand for the good of all. We may also remind ourselves that there is no conflict of interests, which are essentially true. It is only notions of happiness, which differ from individual to individual according to differences in the development of the mind. Third way of cogitation is to realize the unity of life, and so the duty of forgetting one's own self in the service of others. The irresistible conclusion from this is that the vow of truth and the duty of not encroaching upon others are essential for the attainment of this. Restraint has got to be practised. Let the day be thus spent in contemplation on the idea of *Sarvodaya*.

God has indeed been very kind to us. From ancient times to-date he has been sending saints to our country. Even at this moment of great depression he has, as it were, showered great men on us. If we keep our hearts open, their spirit shall enter our hearts, and transform our lives. God willing, what is there which is impossible?

## Yarn Offering for Sarvodaya Mela

It was decided to hold *melas* at all places where Gandhiji's ashes were immersed. Such *melas* were held throughout India on the 12th February 1949 and will continue to be held every year...What I wish to say is that the idea of offering hanks of yarn is commendable and it should be organised properly. In my opinion each one should offer only one hank. It is not wrong to give or accept more. But one hank each is enough for the occasion. If one spins more, he can use the yarn for himself or contribute it separately to the Charkha Sangh, which will utilize it for the poor. But if each one gives one hank, it will also be possible to find out how many brought the offering. I would like as many people as can go to attend the *mela*. Though personally pilgrimages do not interest me much, I make this suggestion in the hope that by innovations like this, it will be possible to place before the country a different and better conception of what pilgrimages ought to be like. This is also likely to give an impetus to the reform and revitalization of other pilgrimages which have become more or less like *tamashas*. The workers should go from village to village and explain to the people

the idea of offering hanks. If this succeeds, a good convention will take root and every child of India will be inspired to offer something or other for the sake of his country. In course of time it may happen that none will go there without a hank of yarn. I am not suggesting that none can go without a hank, but when it becomes a convention, people would like to observe it.

Through this offering of hanks, the idea of worship through work would be spread and people would develop a truly spiritual outlook. Just as I do not favour the offer of more than one hank, I should also discourage money-contributions. The idea in restricting the offerings to one hank is to give expression to the idea of equal regard and at the same time to encourage the idea that what we produce by our own labour is the best offering and this kind of sacrificial offerings would give dignity to physical labour instead of to money. Otherwise such places would become centres of greedy people and this would breed evil. We would be saved from all these evils if we do not accept money.

VINOBA

("Harijan", 8th Jan. 1950)

## SARVA SEVA SANGH'S APPEAL

The Sarva Seva Sangh in its meeting held on 23rd November 1950 passed the following resolutions of the *Bhoodan-Yajna*:—

"Whereas the Sarva Seva Sangh believes that the Bhoodan Yajna, inspired and advocated by Shri. Vinobaji, is an essential and inevitable step towards the building up of a non-violent society in India, it wholeheartedly supports the movement for Bhoodan.

"The Sarva Seva Sangh welcomes the enthusiastic response which the move is obtaining from all sides. The Sangh further appeals to all land-owners, small or big, to respond in this inspiring call of Shri. Vinobaji and to take their full share in this great sacrifice.

"The Sangh specially appeals to the Constructive Institutions, started by

Mahatma Gandhi and all those individuals or institutions who have been inspired by his philosophy to work for the speedy progress of this Yajna with all their strength and devotion, see that the moral conscience of our nation may be awakened and equality and peace established in this land through a peaceful and non-violent social revolution."

It also approved a syllabus of three years to train village workers for Samagra Grama Seva. During these three years the workers will receive training in the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, Charkha Sangh, Gramodyog Vibhag and Krishi-Go Seva Vibhag. For the first year 25 students will be admitted from all over the country on a preliminary test examination. The training will start from February next.

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## Satyagraha and Present Times

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Shri. Sailesh Kumar Bandopadhyaya, Khadi Vidyalaya, Sevagram, writes:—

I have gone through the article captioned 'Satyagraha and Present Times' by Shri. Hari Krishna Mohani, published in your issue of November '51. I feel that his conclusion — the present time is inopportune for launching Satyagraha is not correct and I have therefore to put forward my arguments, which are as follows:— He has summed up the logics in six points and I would place my comments on each of these points as per the serial order adopted by him.

1) There is a fundamental conflict of interest between the rulers and the ruled though the present form of Government in India is termed as democratic. The elected administrators and the permanent services (who are the real rulers) hail from the upper middle class and the bourgeois of Indian society and the education they received has been successful in wiping out the picture of the village with its problems from their minds. They think and work in terms of their class and the cities with their big industries. As Kishorlalji has rightly said that the villagers in their (this class) mule can at least expect some remains of their 'prasad.'

2) I agree with his argument in this matter.

3) In contradicting this point I would better quote Vinobaji from "Harijan" of 3rd November. In the article entitled 'Shri Vinoba's Northern India Tour' by Damodar-bhai Vinobaji is reported to have said, "...I am not prepared to accept that because thousands of men are involved in 'black-marketing' they have all become corrupt. It is the system that forces them to such evils, much against their will, and it is therefore the system that is to be blamed and eliminated. I have not the slightest doubt that there is nothing wrong within the heart of the nation....."

4) The motive might be questioned by many. But the true Satyagrahi has nothing to bother. Of course, he would always be humble and avail every opportunity to make his stand clear to everybody, but he cannot afford to postpone Satyagraha in the apprehension of others' comments. The fact that his old comrades are at the helm of the Government, would rather help him in successful operation of Satyagraha, than being a bar on the way of launching Satyagraha. It is but natural to expect that his ex-co-workers would appreciate his stand better than anybody else and if the issue is just, their change of heart would be quicker than anybody else.

5) This argument also cannot be called voted. What does a Satyagrahi care for such comments? Did not even Jawaharlalji oppose Bapu, when he first talked of "Quit India" movement? Did not many prominent personalities including and even his erst-while lieutenant Rajaji condemn the 'do or die' struggle? Was not the condition of India and the international situation more delicate at that time than it is today?

I feel that neither it is possible to lay down any hard and fast rule for starting Satyagraha in whole of India and nor is it possible to predict the time of its commencement. A man resorts to Satyagraha at the call of his conscience and the Satyagrahi should be left free to decide his course according to the local conditions. Hence I conclude that the time is certainly opportune in India for launching Satyagraha. In fact we have heard of Satyagrahas of late, and were operated on local and zonal issues and some of these struggles met with brilliant success. If the issue is right and there is proper leadership, there is no reason why Satyagraha should not be tried in India of today.

I hope you will please publish this letter in your columns for the consideration of your readers.

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# NOTES AND NEWS

## SHRI. KUMARAPPA'S 60TH BIRTHDAY

Shri. J. C. Kumarappa, D.V. I., (Doctor of Village Industries,) the Doctorate conferred by Gandhiji, enters his 60th birthday on 4th Jan. '52. Shri S. K. George and Shri. G. Ramachandran are editing a 400 page volume to be presented to Shri. J. C. Kumarappa as a birthday souvenir. It is printed on hand-made paper and will be ready for sale in the first week of January. Its price is Rs. 10/- (post free) and orders may be sent to the A. I. V. I. A., Wardha. The volume is divided into 5 parts as given below :

1. *Biographical Sketches*: This will be under six sections i. e. (i) Boyhood and Youth, (ii) First Meeting with Gandhiji, (iii) In the Footsteps of the Master, (iv) Constructive Worker, (v) Rebel Still and (vi) The Man.

2. *Extract from Speeches and Writings*: This will be under three sections i. e. (i) Religious, (ii) Economic and (iii) Political.

3. *Creative Revolution*: This will give the history of the growth and development of the Charkha Sangh, the Gram Udyog Sangh, the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, the Krishi and Go Seva Sangh, the Hindustani Prachar Sabha and the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust.

4. *Light on Problems*: This will contain a number of articles on vital economic problems confronting the country by well known constructive workers and writers.

5. *Anecdotes and Tributes*.

## A CORRECTION

We regret to have mentioned in our last issue of the *Khadi World* that Shri. J. C. Kumarappa had returned from China. After visiting China with the Indian delegation Shri. J. C. Kumarappa went to Japan for studying agriculture and cottage industries there. According to "Gram Udyog Patrika" of Dec. he has cabled that he would reach India on 27th Dec. 1951, a week before his 60th Birthday.

## VINOBAJI'S HEALTH

The following is taken from the 'Hindustan Times', dated 21st Dec. 51, giving details of the injury recently sustained by Vinobaji and the present condition of his health:—

It is learnt that on November 30, while on his way on foot from Sardhana to Khatauli, in Meerut district, Shri. Vinoba was knocked down by a cyclist coming from behind during the dark hours of the early morning. Two or three others of the party were also slightly injured. Shri. Vinoba sustained injuries on the right knee and the spine.

At Khatauli fomentation was tried, but he was still in pain when he commenced his tour the next day. Under the strong pressure of his companions he has since then submitted to being carried on a chair by members of his own party and those wishing to join him in the tour. About five or six people thus have been carrying him at a time, those tired being relieved by others. In spite of this handicap the daily schedule has been maintained.

For some days after the accident half of the daily journey has been done by chair and half on foot, because Shri. Vinoba has been insisting on walking as much as he can. His condition during the last few days has improved and the journey on December 9 from Bhauwala to Dehra Dun was done entirely on foot. Since then although the chair has been carried along with the party, he has made very little use of it.

## TIRUPUR-GANDHINAGAR WORKSHOP

The Sanchalak, A. I. S. A., Tirupur Vibhag writes:—

In pursuance of the policy of decentralisation and self-sufficiency of the Charkha Sangh, the Tamil Nad Branch of the All India Spinners' Association had been divided into 5 Vibhags from January last and each of these vibhags is starting independent units for Dyeing and Printing and Manufacture of spinning and weaving accessories sufficient for their own requirements.

As such the Shankerlal Charkha Works, Gandhinagar, Tirupur, which was working hitherto as a branch of the A. I. S. A., Tamil Nad Branch was closed on and from 30-11-'51.

The Tirupur Vibhag comprising the Districts of Coimbatore, South Arcot, North Arcot and Salem will be starting the above activities in the near future at convenient places.

The public are requested to note that, in future also, their needs will be met as in the past through the different units situated in the several Vibhags instead of from the centralised workshop at Gandhinagar.

#### THE BENGAL GOVT. KHADI BOARD

The following interesting portions of report of work by Bengal Khadi Board, an organ of the West Bengal Govt's constructive work, are extracted from "Modern Review", Nov. '51:-

**Social Activities:** The Introduction of the Charkha into the villages have evoked social consciousness among the villagers. They take active interest in village sanitation such as, cleansing of ponds, taking preventive measures in case of epidemics and setting up trench latrines here and there. The 'Grow More Food' campaign is being carried on by encouraging the people to prepare compost manure for better cultivation and to grow their own vegetables. The Board has also undertaken to change the outlook of the people in their behaviour towards the 'Harijans' by propaganda and also by opening a few Day and Night Schools in the 'Harijan' bustees.

The Khadi Board set up 116 Kathay Mandals during the year with a total of about 1,000 members of whom 580 were self-spinners and about 800 khadi wearers including self-spinners. These Mandals in the course of last 9 months produced 22,804 sqr. yards of cloth valued Rs. 35,000.

Village Welfare work has been undertaken by the members of the Mandal. During this period they cleansed 213 tanks and repaired 13 miles of village roads. About 1000 maunds of compost manure were prepared and 546 trench latrines were set up in village corners. 13 Night Schools were started for adults.

**Other activities:** During the year the Board organized a seven-day women's camp at one of its centres, Tajpur in Midnapur. 80 lady workers including 55 of the Board, participated in the programme of the camp. The Vana Mahotsab celebration was observed at all the centres of the Board. It has been estimated that about 11,000 plants were sown; the survival might not be more than 30%.

#### SARVODAYA AND POLITICS

The following extract taken from the article given by Shri. Sankarrao Deo, Secretary, Sarva Seva Sangh, appearing in "Vigil", 8th Dec. '51, will dispel the doubts regard-

ing the object of the Sarvodaya Samaj and its basic principles:—

Prominent constructive workers from all over the country and the principal co-workers and colleagues of Gandhiji in the political field attended the conference. After prolonged deliberations, the Conference unanimously decided that there should be an all-India organization, in which anyone who believed in the fundamentals of Gandhiji's faith, i. e. truth and non-violence, could enrol himself as a member. This organization was named the 'Sarvodaya Samaj.' But the Sarvodaya Samaj is not an 'organization' in the current sense of the word. It is neither a political nor a religious body. It is a loose 'organization', a Fellowship, a spiritual brotherhood or a 'bhai-chara.' Any person who agrees with its aim and earnestly believes in the twin ideals of Truth and Non-violence, can deem himself a sevak of the Samaj, whatever political, economic and religious opinions he might hold. There is no external authority over him. The only discipline that he has to observe is self-discipline. The Samaj is a conceptual association of people who think alike on the problems of life. The *raison d'etre* of such an organization is to foster the spirit of service and to strengthen faith in the moral laws that should govern human affairs.

#### SARVODAYA CONFERENCE, 1952

It is learnt that the next Sarvodaya Conference will be held in the first or second week of April near Banaras. The exact dates and the venue will be announced as early as possible.

#### STUDY OF ANTI-WAR FORCES

In a letter to the Editor of the "Harijan", portions of which are reproduced in the "Harijan" of 1st December, Shri Satish Chandra Das Gupta, draws the attention to a book *Reconstruction of Humanity* by Prof. Sorokin. The book is a good example of Sarvodaya Research. It tries to find out the forces that help the march of humanity towards a peaceful society. All the constructive workers should study the book, as books like these though written by non-Indians help their efforts to fight the pro-war forces. We are in a position to supply the book (Rs. 15 plus postage). We have also got for sale at present two other books of the same author: 'The Crisis of our Age' and 'Man-Society in an Age of Calamity'.

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Associate Editor:

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# THE CHALLENGE OF OUR TIMES

THE CHALLENGE OF OUR TIMES  
 AND THE ANNIHILATION OR CREATIVE  
 REVOLUTION? — By Wilfred Wellock.

A "Peace News" Pamphlet: Price 6d or 7 As.  
 A REVIEWS REVIEW

The troubles that beset the world today do not stem from the existence of Communism, urges Wilfred Wellock in his latest "Peace News" pamphlet. It follows that if the West can bring about a rapprochement with Russia, desirable as this may be, this will not create the conditions of peace in the world. The malady of society goes deeper; it is to be found in the materialist values that are of the basis of our network of economic and social relationships. The material, which knows no law, has become a law unto itself. If national and international peace is to reign our material and economic life must be brought under the control of moral and spiritual law, which alone is concerned with the quality of life, the evolution of every type of human experience.

Were Communism suddenly obliterated from the world by some miracle, Wilfred Wellock says, "the impasse of our civilisation would remain. Like his predecessors in the role of scapegoat, Stalin is a product of the social system whose leaders condemn him and rage against his philosophy."

The creative revolution that is required, he urges, has six major implications:-

1. A new presentation of Christian truth;
2. A new education system;
3. A new social, economic and political order;
4. The ending of Colonialism;
5. The offer of generous assistance to the under-developed countries to enable them to become reasonably self-sufficient, economically independent and free to develop after their own ideas a civilisation of high quality;
6. The reconstruction of personal life in accordance with the demands of the new culture.

In recent years we have become used to the more socially conscious sections of the Christian Church discussing the challenge of Marxism to Christianity. Wilfred Wellock would have the churches challenge Marxism, not in the arid sense in which they are so often ready to do this, by emphasising the antagonism that Marx and the Marxists have expressed

Christianity, but by challenging the debased moral values that the Communists share with Capitalism.

The pamphlet shows how quite apart from Communism, Western Capitalism must inevitably be confronted by crises that will shake it to its foundations. He remarks that despite the fact that "not 25 per cent. of the world's population could live at the American level, American politicians never tire of proclaiming that high standards of living are the one cure and preventive of Communism...."

Should the East embrace Western materialism, the outlook would be black indeed. In self-defence the West would erect an iron curtain to keep back the flow of cheap commodities, while a titanic struggle for control of world supplies would ensue. It would be the conflict of the Dinosaurs all over again. It is sheer hypocrisy to condemn the materialism of Communism when in fact it derives from that of Western capitalism, which is today under various capitalist-socialist combinations, carrying the entire West step by step towards nihilism.

Those who record the development of revolutions generally agree that these are only carried through successfully when the governing class that is displaced has already lost its sense of worth and its self-confidence.

This applied to the French revolution and it applied to the Russian. In the West today we are seeing a much more deeply rooted manifestation of loss of self-confidence. We are living in a civilisation that has come to doubt its worth.

It is evident that, in the face of the apparatus of destruction of today, civilisation cannot be saved by weapons, but even the most militaristic-minded among the people must have frequent doubts about whether our civilisation is really worth defending.

What is needed is the biggest adventure in mutual aid that the world has ever seen. The West should be helping to lift the standard of life of the economically under-developed countries of the East, and in return we could probably gain help to our sympathetic understanding of the ways of life and thought of the East, in a renewal of our sense of life's values.

"PEACE NEWS",  
 The International Pacific Weekly, Nov. 2, 1951

## BOOKS BY WILFRED WELLOCK

Mr. Wilfred Wellock, the author of the book 'The Challenge of our Times' which was reviewed in the "Peace News" and which we have reproduced in this issue is one of the oldest Pacifists. His books are very helpful in the understanding of the modern world crisis — the crisis of the spirit. We can supply a full set of his following Pamphlets :

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