WHITHER INDIA?

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(SOCIO-POLITICO ANALYSES)

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INTRODUCTION

Why yet another anthology? The question is legitimate and compels an answer. For one owes an explanation not only to the long-suffering reading public, but even more to oneself. In a country where literary parasitism of one kind or other has been perversely elevated to the status of a lucrative national industry, one has to be very sure of one's reasons before deciding to publish yet another selection from other men's writings. If one makes bold to claim that the present volume possesses some measure of justification and rationale, it is not necessarily out of lack of modesty: rather it is because of the realisation that the book has a logic and purpose which is objectively demonstrable.

That logic and purpose is ultimately determined by the urgencies of the present condition of India. We are to-day passing through a phase of extreme intellectual confusion and disorder. Such confusion is inevitable after a prolonged period of political struggle; but while there is no need to take it too tragically, it would be the height of complacency to refuse to acknowledge that it exists. Symptoms of acute disorientation are discernable even at the highest level of leadership—and that at a time when the critical situation in the country demands the greatest lucidity of thought and purpose.

There is, of course, no short cut to intellectual clarity. It can be achieved only through a long process of systematic and discriminative analysis of the dominant conceptions which have moulded our outlook and whose validity we have come to take for granted, as it were, through a peculiar mental automatism. As a pre-condition of a dispassionate scrutiny of this kind, it is obviously essential to know what these ideas are and what choice of direction they offer. This anthology should be judged as a tentative attempt to apprehend the various ideological trends operative in India at points of their most crystallised articulation.

Its preparation itself has been a kind of education, a negative education, but still an education. Negative, because it has brought home to one an extremely disquieting fact, namely, that contemporary Indian polity suffers from an extraordinary deficiency of ideas and lacks any solid philosophic foundations. As a people we have a reputation for being somewhat excessively preoccupied with theoretical and abstract problems; yet in the sphere of politics we have tended to neglect all theoretical discussion and have failed to define general principles. This explains the distressingly ambiguous anatomy of most of our political movements and it leads in practice to some strange paradoxes. It is often difficult, for instance, to find a nationalist who can give a precise definition of his nationalism, a liberal who can explain his credo in terms which are not an insipid paraphrase of Mill and Bentham, a supporter of the Muslim League who can provide a coherent idea of the doctrinal implications of Pakistan, or even a revolutionary who can propound the dynamic logic of the Communist Manifesto except in borrowed phrases. Indian political movements appear for the most part to live on emotions rather than thought, heart rather than the head. The result is a general intellectual mendicancy, an inanition of political thought. If this tendency continues unchecked there is some danger that, far from being a nation of philosophers, we may well become a nation of insufferable philistines.

This is not to suggest that sentiment can have no place in politics. On the contrary, emotions provide the necessary impetus to all political movements. Only it has to be emphasised that movements which are dominated by emotions alone lack stability and that inner coherence of purpose without which enduring achievement is impossible. If emotion is the life-blood of political dynamism, ideas are the sustaining factors; and if it is true that ideas by themselves cannot be effective vehicles of change and progression, it is equally true that action motivated by emotion alone often proves to be nugatory and self-stultifying. Creative political endeavour presupposes an organic relation between these two elements. In India, however, the problem of establishing such an inter-

relation has hardly been faced except at the most rudimentary level. This is the impression which one get from a retrospective study of the political writings of the past twenty years.

In so far as Indian politics has evolved an ideological basis, it can be claimed that this has resulted in the emergence of two major trends. These are Gandhism and Marxism. There are, no doubt, several other tendencies, but they either represent variants of the two main ideological complexes or are merely intellectual aberrations, possessing no valid body of doctrine, and therefore are not worthy of being considered as serious alternatives. Only Gandhism and Marxism have the requisite philosophic consistency. This bifurcation of Indian political thought is fundamental and significant.

Gandhism is, in a quantitative sense at any rate, the dominant trend and has the added attraction and prestige derived from association with a personal legend. In fact, however, it is a complex and synthetic philosophy which has its roots in the tradition of moral humanism of the Indian thought, but at same time draws liberally from European Utopian Reformism ranging from Rosseau through Proudhon and Kroptkin to Ruskin and Tolstoy. Marxism, on the other hand, is a relatively new development and claims to be nothing more than strictly a philosophy of science. It sets out to apply to historical developments the method of scientific analysis and affirms that these developments are not arbitrary phenomena, but are governed by uniform and ascertainable laws. From this premise regarding the intelligible and conditional character of social developments it goes on to postulate the possibility of conscious and systematic control and direction of the process of social change through an understanding of the laws determining this change.

There are points which seem to be common to Gandhism and Marxism: both, for example, are activist in their implications. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to infer from this the possibility of their eventual reconciliation. They are two divergent world-views and as such do not admit of reconciliation. Ultimately, the choice for India in field of political

philosophy reduces itself to a choice between those two categorical alternatives. What would be her choice? It would be hazardous to enter the province of prophecy, but it may be pointed out that the assumption usually made by so many political writers in India, that the present dominance enjoyed by the Gandhian ideology is a constant of the Indian political situation, is not warranted by any rational considerations. Indeed, the lesson of history would be just the reverse.

During the past two decades another development of considerable importance has taken place in India. The process of industrialisation has, as it were, attained a certain level of self-consciousness. This is the reflex of the accentuated growth of industrialism in the country in a horizontal, if not yet vertical, sense. The impact of this development on our thinking can no longer be ignored. For the first time purely political and constitutional questions no longer monopolise our interest. Technological problems, both in their theoretical and practical aspects, are beginning increasingly to exercise our attention in their own right. In fact, awareness of these problems to-day affects discussions of all other problems which had hitherto been regarded as having an independent urgency. For it is impossible to envisage any pattern of the future polity of India which does not embody a solution of these vast technological tasks. A clear statement of what these tasks are and how they should be approached is, therefore, necessary for an accurate appreciation of the Indian political scene in its concrete setting. Hence two essays dealing both with the actual problems of economic planning and the principles involved in their adequate resolution are included in this anthology.

Briefly, then, the aim of this collection is to give a perspective of the various political trends in India. The task is not easy. Indian writers on political as on other subjects have a certain disarming genius for irrelevant prolixity; and it is often necessary to wade through tons of verbiage to get an ounce of sense. As such, relevance has been the chief criterion in the choice of matter for this anthology. Nehru, for instance, is represented here by an essay he wrote some

fourteen years ago rather than by some of his more recent pronouncements because it seems to be more lucid and coherent in argument. Similarly, Mr. Nirmal Kumar Bose's exegesis of Gandhian ideas has been given preference over the writings of many of Gandhiji's more illustrious interpreters as it is demonstrably more serious in intent. Eminent liberals are too prone to date on the virtues of the Middle Way to find time to profound the way itself, and the late Srinivasa Sastri's address to the students of Annamalai University is probably one of the most eloquent statements on the liberal view of democracy. The statement of the Marxist point of view is taken from K. S. Shelvankar's *Ends are Means*, which, apart from Mr. S. A. Dange's statement at the Meerut Trial (included in the **New Directions in India**) is the most cogent exposition of the Marxian approach to the problems and necessity of revolution. Indian Social Democracy, one feels, could not better represented than by Mr. Jaya Prakash Narayan. Of all the writers on Indian Women's Movement, Mrs. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya is unquestionably the best qualified to set the problems of Women's Emancipation in a correct historical focus. On the question of Pakistan, Mr. Jinnah alone can speak with authority and the two articles included in this volume are, as far as one can trace, the most explicit documents on this issue. Finally, at a time when the Constituent Assembly is engaging so much attention, it is relevant to know the genesis and development of this idea in India; and in this sphere one could not hope for a mere reliable guide than Dr. Gangulee who has given profound thought to India's constitutional problems.

The limitations of this anthology are obvious. Some of its faults are clearly attributable to editorial incompetence. But it is consoling to think that not all its defects are due to the editors. For some of the limitations are the limitations of the material available from which the selection had to be made. In that sense, perhaps, it may be claimed that these limitations have the quality of a certain paradoxical excellence; by accurately reflecting the level of Indian political thought they make this book representative of our time.

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WHITHER INDIA?

—*Jawaharlal Nehru*

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NEVER in the long range of history has the world been in such a state of flux as it is to-day. Ever has there been so much anxious questioning, so much doubt and bewilderment, so much examining of old institutions, existing ills, and suggested remedies. There is a continuous process of change and revolution going on all over the world, and everywhere anxious statesmen are almost at their wits' end and grope about in the dark. It is obvious that we are a part of this great world problem, and must be affected by world events. And yet, judging from the attention paid to these events in India, one would not think so. Major events are recorded in the news columns of papers, but little attempt is made to see behind and beneath them, to understand the forces that are shaking and reforming the world before our eyes, to comprehend the essential nature of social, economic, and political reality. History, whether past or present, becomes just a magic show with little rhyme or reason, and with no lesson for us which might guide our future path. On the gaily-decked official stage of India or England phantom figures come and go, posing for a while as great statesmen; Round Tables flit about like pale shadows of those who created them, engaged in pitiful and interminable talk which interests few and affects an even smaller number. Their main concern is how to save the vested interests of various classes or groups; their main diversion, apart from feasting, is self-praise. Others, blissfully ignorant of all that has happened in the last half-century, still talk the jargon of the Victorian Age and are surprised and resentful that nobody listens to them. Even the Nasmyth hammer of war and revolution and world change has failed to produce the slightest dent on their remarkably hard heads. Yet others hide vested interests under cover of communalism or even nationalism. And then there is the vague but passionate nationalism of many who find present conditions intolerable and hunger for national freedom without clearly

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realizing what form that freedom will take. And there are also here, as in many other countries, the usual accompaniments of a growing nationalism—an idealism, a mysticism, a feeling of exaltation, a belief in the mission of one's country, and something of the nature of religious revivalism. Essentially all these are middle-class phenomena.

Our politics must either be those of magic or of science. The former of course requires no argument or logic; the latter is in theory at least entirely based on clarity of thought and reasoning, and has no room for vague idealistic or religious or sentimental process which confuse and befog the mind. Personally I have no faith in or use for the ways of magic and religion, and I can only consider the question on scientific grounds.

What, then, are we driving at? Freedom? Swaraj? Independence? Dominion Status? Words which may mean much or little or nothing at all. Egypt is "independent", and yet, as everybody knows, it is at present little better than an Indian State, an autocracy imposed upon an unwilling people and propped up by the British. Economically, Egypt is a colony of some of the European imperialist Powers, notably the British. Ever since the World War there has been continuous conflict between Egyptian nationalism and the ruling authorities, and this continues to-day. So in spite of a so-called "independence", Egypt is very far from even national freedom.

Again, whose freedom are we particularly striving for, for nationalism covers many sins and includes many conflicting elements? There is the feudal India of the princes, the India of the big zamindars, of small zamindars, of the professional classes, of the agriculturists, of the industrialists, of the bankers, of the lower middle class, of the workers. There are the interests of foreign capital and those of home capital, of foreign services and home services. The nationalist answer is to prefer home interests to foreign interests, but beyond that it does not go. It tries to avoid disturbing the class divisions or the social *status quo*. It imagines that the various interests will somehow be accommodated when the country is free. Being essentially a middle-class movement, nationalism works

chiefly in the interests of that class. It is obvious that there are serious conflicts between various interests in the country, and every law, every policy which is good for one interest may be harmful for another. What is good for the Indian prince may be thoroughly bad for the people of his State, what is profitable for the zamindar may ruin many of his tenants, what is demanded by foreign capital may crush the rising industries of the country.

Nothing is more absurd than to imagine that all the interests in the nation can be fitted in without injury to any. At every step some have to be sacrificed for others. A currency policy may be good for creditors or debtors, not for both at the same time. Inflation, resulting in a reduction or even wiping off of debts will be welcomed by all debtors and by industry as a rule, but cursed by bankers and those who have fixed incomes. Early in the nineteenth century England deliberately sacrificed her agriculture for her rising industry. A few years ago, in 1925, by insisting on keeping the value of the pound sterling at par she sacrificed, to some extent, her industry to her banking and financial system, and faced industrial troubles and a huge general strike.

Any number of such instances can be given; they deal with the rival claims of different groups of the possessing classes. A more vital conflict of interests arises between these possessing classes as a whole and the others; between the Haves and Have-Nots. All this is obvious enough, but every effort is made to confuse the real issue by the holders of power, whether political or economic. The British Government is continually declaring before high heaven that they are trustees for our masses and India and England have common interests and can march hand in hand to a common destiny. Few people are taken in by this because nationalism makes us realize the inherent conflict between the two national interests. But nationalism does not make us realize the equally inherent and fundamental conflict between economic interests within the nation. There is an attempt to cover this up and avoid it on the ground that the national issue must be settled first. Appeals are issued for unity between different classes and groups to face the common national foe, and those who point

out the inherent conflict between landlord and tenant, or capitalist and wage labourer, are criticized.

We may take it that the average person does not like conflict and continuous tension; he prefers peace and quiet, and is even prepared to sacrifice much for it. But the ostrich-like policy of refusing to see a conflict and a disorder which not only exist but are eating into society's vitals, to blind oneself to reality, will not end the conflict and the disorder, or suddenly change reality into unreality; for a politician or a man of action such a policy can only end in disaster. It is therefore essential that we keep this in mind and fashion our idea of freedom accordingly. We cannot escape having to answer the question, now or later, for the freedom of which class or classes in India are we especially striving? Do we place the masses, the peasantry and workers, first, or some other small class at the head of our list? Let us give the benefits of freedom to as many groups and classes as possible, but essentially whom do we stand for, and when a conflict arises whose side must we take? To say that we shall not answer that question now is itself an answer and taking of sides, for it means that we stand by the existing order, the *status quo*.

The form of government is after all a means to an end; even freedom itself is a means, the end being human well-being, human growth, and the ending of poverty and disease and suffering, the opportunity for every one to live the "good life", physically and mentally. What the "good life" is is a matter we cannot go into here, but most people will agree that freedom is essential to it—national freedom so far as the nation is concerned, personal freedom so far as the individual is concerned. For every restriction and inhibition stops growth and development, and produces, apart from economic disorders, complexes and perversions in the nation and individual. So freedom is necessary. Equally necessary is the will and the capacity for co-operation. Modern life grows so complex, there is so much interdependence, that co-operation is the very breath that keeps it functioning.

The long course of history shows us a succession of different forms of government and changing economic forms of production and organization. The two fit in and shape and

influence each other. When economic change goes ahead too fast and the forms of government remain more or less static, a hiatus occurs, which is usually bridged over by a sudden change called revolution. The tremendous importance of economic events in shaping history and forms of government is now almost universally admitted.

We are often told that there is a world of difference between the East and the West. The West is said to be materialistic, the East spiritual, religious, etc. What exactly the East signifies is seldom indicated, for the East includes the Bedouins of the Arabian deserts, the Hindus of India, the nomads of the Siberian steppes, the pastoral tribes of Mongolia, the typically irreligious Confucians of China, and the Samurai of Japan. There are tremendous national and cultural differences between the different countries of Asia as well as of Europe; but there is no such thing as East and West except in the minds of those who wish to make this an excuse for imperialist domination, or those who have inherited such myths and fictions from a confused metaphysical past. Differences there are, but they are chiefly due to different stages of economic growth.

We see, in north-western Europe, autocracy and feudalism giving place to the present capitalist order involving competition and large-scale production. The old small holdings disappear; the feudal checks on the serfs and cultivators go, and these agriculturists are also deprived of the little land they had. Large numbers of landless people are thrown out of employment and they have no land to fall back upon. A landless, propertyless proletariat is thus created. At the same time the checks and the controlled prices of the limited markets of feudal times disappear and the open market appears. Ultimately this leads to the world market, the characteristic feature of capitalism.

Capitalism builds up on the basis of the landless proletariat, which could be employed as wage labourers in the factories, and open market, where the machine-made goods could be sold. It grows rapidly and spreads all over the world. In the producing countries it was an active and living capitalism; in the colonial and consuming countries it was just a passive consumption of the goods made by machine industry

in the West. North-western Europe, and a little later North America, exploit the resources of the world; they exploit Asia, Africa, East Europe, and South America. They add vastly to wealth of the world, but this wealth is largely concentrated in a few nations and a few hands.

In this growth of capitalism, dominion over India was of vital importance to England. India's gold, in the early stages, helped in the further industrialization of England. And then India became a great producer of raw material to feed the factories of England and a huge market to consume the goods made in these factories. England, in her passionate desire to accumulate wealth sacrificed her agriculture to her industry. England became almost a kind of vast city, and India the rural area attached to her.

The concentration of wealth in fewer hands went on. But the exploitation of India and other countries brought so much wealth to England that some of it trickled down to the working class and their standards of living rose. Working-class agitations were controlled and soothed by concessions from the capitalist owners, which they could well afford from the profits of imperialist exploitation. Wages rose; hours of work went down; there were insurance and other welfare schemes for the workers. A general prosperity in England took the edge off working-class discontent.

In India, passive industrialization meant an ever-growing burden on land. She became just a consumer of foreign machine-made goods. Her own cottage industries were partly destroyed forcibly, and partly by economic forces, and nothing took their place. All the ingredients and conditions for industrialization were present, but England did not encourage this, and indeed tried to prevent it by taxing machinery. And so the burden on the land grew and with it unemployment and poverty, and there was a progressive ruralization of India.

But the processes of history and economics cannot be stopped for long. Although general poverty was increasing, small groups accumulated some capital and wanted fields for investment. And so machine industry grew in India, partly with Indian capital, very much so with foreign capital. Indian capital was largely dependent on

foreign capital, and, in particular, could be controlled by the foreign banking system. It is well known that the World War gave a great push to Indian industry and afterwards, for reasons of imperial policy, England changed her policy towards Indian industry and began to encourage it, but mostly with foreign capital. The growth of so-called swadeshi industries in India thus represented to a very great extent the increasing hold of British capital on India.

The growth of industries and nationalist movements in all the countries of the East checked Western exploitation, and the profits of Western capitalism began to go down. War debts and other consequences of the war were tremendous burden for all the countries concerned. There was not so much money or profits of industry to be distributed to the working class in the West, and the discontent and pressure of the workers grew. There was also the living incentive and inspiration of the Russian Revolution for the workers.

Meanwhile two other processes were working silently but with great rapidity. One was the concentration of wealth and industrial power in fewer hands by the formation of huge trusts, cartels and combines. The other was a continuous improvement in technique in the methods of production, leading to greater mechanization, far greater production, and more unemployment as workers were replaced by machinery. And this led to a curious result. Just when industry was producing goods on the biggest mass scale in history, there were few people to buy them, as the great majority were too poor to be able to afford them. The armies of the unemployed were not earning anything so how could they spend? and even the majority of those earning had little to spare. A new truth suddenly dawned on the perplexed minds of the great captains of industry (this dawning process has not yet taken place among the leaders of industry in India), and the truth was this: that mass production necessitates mass consumption. But if the masses have no money how are they to buy or consume? And what of production then? So production is stopped or restricted and the wheels of industry slow down till they barely move. Unemployment grows all the more, and this again makes consumption diminish.

This is the crisis of capitalism which has had the world by the throat for over four years. Essentially it is due to the illdistribution of the world's wealth; to its concentration in a few hands. And the disease seems to be of the essence of capitalism and grows with it till it eats and destroys the very system which created it. There is no lack of money in the world, no lack of foodstuffs, or the many other things that man requires. The world is richer today than it has ever been, and holds promise of untold advance in the near future. And yet the system breaks down, and while millions starve and endure privation, huge quantities of foodstuffs and other articles are destroyed, insect pests are let loose on the fields to destroy crops, harvests are not gathered, and nations meet together to confer how to restrict future crops of wheat and cotton and tea and coffee and many other articles. From the beginning of history man has fought with nature to get the barest necessities of life, and now that nature's wealth is poured out before him, enough to remove poverty for ever from the world, his only way of dealing with it is to burn and destroy it, and become poorer and more destitute in the process.

History has never offered a more amazing paradox. It seems clear enough that the capitalist system of industry, whatever its services in the past may have been, is no longer suited to the present methods of production. Technical advance has gone far ahead of the existing social structure, and, as in the past, this hiatus causes most of our present-day disorders. Till that lag is made up and a new system in keeping with the new technique is adopted, the disorders are likely to continue. The change over to the new system is of course opposed by those who have vested interests in the old system, and though this old system is dying before their eyes they prefer to hold on to their little rather than share a lot with others.

It is not, fundamentally, a moral issue, as some people imagine, although there is a moral side to it. It is not a question of blaming capitalism or cursing capitalists and the like. Capitalism has been of the greatest service to the world, and individual capitalists are but tiny wheels in the big machine.

The question now is whether the capitalist system has not outlived its day and must now give place to a better and a saner ordering of human affairs, which is more in keeping with the progress of science and human knowledge.

In India, during this period, the tremendous burden on land continued and even increased, despite the growth of industry in certain areas. Economic discontent increased. The middle class grew up and, finding no sufficient scope for self-development, demanded political changes and took to agitation. More or less similar causes worked all over the colonial and dependent East. Especially after the war, national movements grew rapidly in Egypt and most of the countries of Asia. These movements were essentially due to the distress of the masses and the lower middle classes. There was a strange similiarity even in the methods employed by these movements —non-co-operation, boycotts of legislatures, boycotts of goods, *hartals,* strikes, etc. Occasionally there were violent outbreaks, as in Egypt and Syria, but stress was laid far more on peaceful methods. In India, of course, non-violence was made a basic principle by the Congress at the suggestion of Gandhiji. All these national struggles for freedom have continued till now, and they are bound to continue till a solution of the basic problem is found. Fundamentally, this solution is not merely a question of satisfying the natural desire for self-rule, but one of filling hungry stomachs.

The great revolutionary nationalist urge in Asia of the after-war years gradually exhausted itself for the time being and conditions stabilized themselves. In India this took the form of the Swarajist entry into the Assembly and the Councils. In Europe also the middle nineteen-twenties was a period of settling down and adaptation to the new conditions created by the World War. The revolution that had hovered all over Europe in 1919 and 1920 failed to come off and receded into the background. American gold poured into Europe and revived to some extent the war-weary and disillusioned peoples of that continent, and created a false appearance of prosperity. But this prosperity had no real basis and the crash came in 1929, when the United States of America stopped lending money to Europe and South America. Many factors, and es-

pecially the inherent conflicts of a declining capitalism, contributed to this crash, and the house of cards of after-war capitalist prosperity began to tumble down. That process of tumbling down has been going on at tremendous pace for four years, and there is no end to it yet. It is called the slump, trade depression, the crisis, etc., but it is really the evening of the capitalist system, and the world is being compelled by circumstances to recognize this. International trade is reaching vanishing point, international co-operation has failed, the world-market which was the essential basis of capitalism is disappearing, and each nation is trying frantically to shift for itself at the cost of others. Whatever the future may bring, one thing is certain: that the old order has gone and all the king's horses and all the king's men will not set it up again.

As the old capitalist order has tottered, the challenge to it by the growing froces of labour has grown more intense. This challenge, when it has become dangerous, has induced the possessing classes to sink their petty differences and band themselves together to fight the common foe. This has led to Fascism and in its milder forms, to the formation of so-called national governments. Essentially, these are the last ditch efforts of the possessing classes, or the "kept classes" as they have been called by an American economist, to hold on to what they have. The struggle becomes more intense and the forms of nineteenth-century democracy are discarded. But Fascism or national governments offer no solution of the fundamental economic inconsistencies of the present-day capitalist system, and so long as they do not remove the inequalities of wealth and solve the problem of distribution they are doomed to fail. Of the major capitalist countries the United States of America is the only place where some attempt is being made to-day towards lessening to a slight extent inequalities in wealth by State action. Carried to a logical conclusion, President Roosevelt's programme will lead to a form of State Socialism; it is far more likely that the effort will fail and result in Fascism. England, as is her habit, is grimly muddling through and waiting for something to happen. Meanwhile she has derived considerable help from India's gold and resources. But all this is temporary relief only and the nations slide

downhill and approach the brink.

Thus, if we survey the world to-day, we find that capitalism having solved the problem of production, helplessly faces the allied problem of distribution and is unable to solve it. It was not in the nature of the capitalist system to deal satisfactorily with distribution, and production alone makes the world top-heavy and unbalanced. To find a solution for distributing wealth and purchasing power evenly is to put an end to the basic inequalities of the capitalist system and to replace capitalism itself by a more scientific system.

Capitalism has led to imperialism and to the conflicts of imperialist powers in search for colonial areas for exploitation, for areas of raw produce and for markets for manufactured goods. It has led to ever-increasing conflicts with the rising nationalism of colonial countries and to social conflicts with powerful movements of the exploited working class. It has resulted in recurrent crises, political and economic, leading to economic and tariff wars as well as political wars on an enormous scale. Every subsequent crisis is on a bigger scale than the previous one, and now we live in a perpetual state of crisis and slump and the shadow of war darkens the horizon.

And yet it is well to remember that the world to-day has a surfeit of food and the other good things of life. Terrible want exists because the present system does not know how to distribute them. Repeated international conferences have failed to find a way out because they represented the claims of vested interests and dared not touch the system itself. They grope blindly in the dark in their stuffy rooms while the foundations of the house they built are being sapped by the advance of science and economic events. Everywhere thinkers have recognized the utter inadequacy of the existing system, though they have differed as to the remedies. Communists and Socialists point with confidence to the way of Socialism and they are an ever-growing power for they have science and logic on their side. In America a great stir was caused recently by the Technocrafts, a group of engineers who wanted to do away with money itself and to substitute for it a unit of energy, an erg. In England the social credit theories of Major Douglas, according to which the whole production of the

nation will be evenly distributed to the whole population—a kind of "dividends for all"—find increasing acceptance. Barter takes the place of trade both in the domestic and the international market. The growth of these revolutionary theories even among the well-to-do classes, and especially the intellectuals, is in itself an indication of the tremendous change in mentality that is taking place in the world. How many of us can conceive a world without money and with the invisible erg as its measure of value? And yet this is soberly and earnestly advocated not by wild agitators but by well-known economists and engineers.

This is the world background.

The Asiatic background is intimately related to this and yet it has its peculiar features. Asia is the main field of conflict between nationalism and imperialism. Asia is still undeveloped as compared to Europe and North-America. It has a vast population which can consume goods if they had the necessary purchasing power to do so. To the hard-pressed imperialist powers seeking frantically for areas of economic expansion, Asia still offers a field, though nationalism offers many obstructions. Hence the talk of a "push to Asia" to find an outlet for the surplus goods of the West and thus stabilize Western capitalism for another period. Capitalism is a young and growing force in the East; it has not, as in India, wholly overthrown feudalism yet. But even before capitalism had established itself other forces, inimical to it, have risen to challenge it. And it is obvious that if capitalism collapses in Europe and America it cannot survive in Asia.

Nationalism is still the strongest force in Asia (we can ignore for our present purpose the Soviet territories of Asia). This is natural as a country under alien domination must inevitably think first in terms of nationalism. But the powerful economic forces working for change in the world to-day have influenced this nationalism to an ever-increasing extent, and everywhere it is appearing in Socialistic garb. Gradually the nationalist struggle for political freedom is becoming a social struggle also for economic freedom. Independence and the Socialist State become the objectives, with varying degrees of stress being laid on the two aspects of the problem. As

political freedom is delayed, the other aspect assumes greater importance, and it now seems probable, especially because of world conditions, that political and social emancipation will come together to some at least of the countries of Asia.

That is the Asiatic background.

In India, as in other Asiatic colonial countries, we find a struggle to-day between the old nationalist ideology and the new economic ideology. Most of us have grown up under the nationalist tradition, and it is hard to give up the mental habits of a lifetime. And yet we realize that this outlook is inadequate; it does not fit in with existing conditions in our country or in the world; there is a hiatus, a lag. We try to bridge this hiatus, but the process of crossing over to a new ideology is always a painful one. Many of us are confused and perplexed to-day because of this. But the crossing has to be made, unless we are to remain in a stagnant backwater, overwhelmed from time to time by the wash of the boats that move down the river of progress. We must realize that the nineteenth century cannot solve the problems of the twentieth, much less can the seventh century or earlier ages do so.

Having glanced at the general background of Asia and the world we can have a clearer view of our own national problem. India's freedom affects each one of us intimately, and we are apt to look upon it as a thing apart and unconnected with world events. But the Indian problem is a part of the Asiatic problem and is tied up with the problems of the world. We cannot, even if we will it, separate it from the rest. What happens in India will affect the world and world events will change India's future. Indeed it may be said that the three great world problems to-day are: the fate of capitalism, which means the fate of Europe and America, the future of India, and the future of China, and all these are interrelated.

India's struggle to-day is part of the great struggle which is going on all over the world for the emancipation of the oppressed. Essentially, this is an economic struggle, with hunger and want as its driving forces, although it puts on nationalist and other dresses.

Indian freedom is necessary because the burden on the Indian masses as well as the middle classes is too heavy to be

borne, and must be lightened or done away with. The measure of freedom is the extent to which this burden is removed. This burden is due to the vested interests of a foreign government as well as those of certain groups and classes in India and abroad. The achievement of freedom thus becomes a question, as Gandhiji said recently, of divesting vested interests. If an indigenous government took the place of the foreign government and kept all the vested interests intact, this would not even be the shadow of freedom.

We have got into an extraordinary habit of thinking of freedom in terms of paper constitutions. Nothing could be more absurd than this lawyer's mentality which ignores life and the vital economic issues and can only proceed on the basis of the *status quo* and precedents. Too much reliance on past practice has somehow succeeded in twisting the lawyer's head backwards and he seems to be incapable of looking ahead. Even the halt and the lame go slowly forward; not so the lawyer who is convinced, like the fanatic in religion, that truth can only lie in the past.

Even a child in politics can point out the folly of this procedure. The whole basis and urge of the national movement came from a desire for economic betterment, to throw off the burdens that crushed the masses, and to end the exploitation of the Indian people. If these burdens continue and are actually added to, it does not require a powerful mind to realize that the fight must not only continue but grow more intense. Leaders and individuals may come and go; they may get tired and slacken off; they may compromise or betray; but the exploited and suffering masses must carry on the struggle, for their drill-sergeant is hunger. Swaraj or freedom from exploitation for them is not a fine paper constitution or a problem of the hereafter. It is a question of the here and now, of immediate relief. Roast lamb and mint sauce may be a tasty dish for those who eat it, but the poor lamb is not likely to appreciate the force of the best of arguments which point out the beauty of sacrifice for the good of the elect and the joys of close communion, even though dead, with mint sauce.

India's immediate goal can therefore only be considered in terms of the ending of the exploitation of her people. Politi-

cally, it must mean independence and the severance of the British connection, which means imperialist dominion; economically and socially it must mean the ending of all special class privileges and vested interests. The whole world is struggling to this end; India can do no less, and in this way the Indian struggle for freedom lines up with the world struggle. Is our aim human welfare or the preservation of class privileges and the vested interests of pampered groups? The question must be answered clearly and unequivocally by each one of us. There is no room for quibbling when the fate of nations and millions of human beings is at stake. The day for palace intrigues and parlour politics and pacts and compromises passes when the masses enter politics. Their manners are not those of drawing-room; we never took the trouble to teach them any manners. Their school is the school of events and suffering is their teacher. They learn their politics from great movements which bring out the true nature of individuals and classes, the civil disobedience movement has taught the Indian masses many a lesson which they will never forget.

Independence is a much-abused word and it hardly connotes what we are driving at. And yet there is no other suitable word and, for want of a better, we must use it. National isolation is neither a desirable nor a possible ideal in a world which is daily becoming more of a unit. International and intranational activities dominate the world and nations are growing more and more interdependent. Our ideal and objective cannot go against this historical tendency, and we must be prepared to discard a narrow nationalism in favour of world co-operation and real internationalism. Independence therefore cannot mean for us isolation but freedom from all imperialist control, and because Britain to-day represents imperialism, our freedom can only come after the British connection is severed. We have no quarrel with the British people, but between British imperialism and Indian freedom there is no meeting ground and there can be no peace. If imperialism goes from Britain we shall gladly co-operate with her in the wider international field; not otherwise.

British statesmen of the Liberal and Labour variety often point out to us the ills of a narrow nationalism and dwell on

the virtues of what used to be known as the British Empire and is now euphemistically called the British Commonwealth of Nations. Under cover of fine and radical words and phrases they seek to hide the ugly and brutal face of imperialism and try to keep us in its embrace of death. Some Indian public men, who ought to know better, also praise the virtues of internationalism, meaning thereby the British Empire, and tell us in sorrow how narrow-minded we are in demanding independence, in place of that wonderful thing (which nobody offers us) Dominion Status. The British, it is well known, have a remarkable capacity for combining their moral instincts with their self-interest. That is perhaps not unnatural, but it is remarkable how some of our own countrymen are taken in by this unctuous and hypocritical attitude. Even the light of day is wasted on those who keep their eyes shut. It is worth noting, however, that the foreign policy of England has been the greatest stumbling-block to international co-operation through the League of Nations or otherwise. All the European and American world knows this, but most of us, who look at foreign politics through English spectacles, have not grasped this fact yet. Disarmament, air-bombing, the attitude to the Manchurian question, are some of the recent witnesses to England's attitude. Even the Kellogg-Briand Pact of Paris, which was to have outlawed war, was only accepted by England subject to certain qualifications and reservations regarding her empire, which effectively nullified the Pact. The British Empire and real internationalism are as poles apart, and it is not through that empire that we can march to internationalism.

The real question before us, and before the whole world, is one of fundamental change of regime politically, economically, socially. Only thus can we put India on the road to progress and stop the progressive deterioration of our country. In a revolutionary period, such as exists in the world to-day, it is foolish waste of energy to think and act in terms of carrying on the existing regime and trying to reform it and improve it. To do so is to waste the opportunity which history offers once in a long while. "The whole world is in revolution" says Mussolini. "Events themselves are a tremendous force push-

ing us on like some implacable will". Individuals, however eminent, play but a minor role when the world is on the move. They may divert the main current here and there to some slight extent; they may not and cannot stop the rushing torrent. And therefore the only peace that can endure is with circumstances, not merely with men.

Whither India? Surely to the great human goal of social and economic equality, to the ending of all exploitation of of to-day and the near future. We may not have it within the framework of an international co-operative Socialist world federation. This is not such an empty idealist dream as some people imagine. It is within the range of the practical politics of to-day and the near future. We may not have it within our grasp, but those with vision can see it emerging on the horizon. And even if there be delay in the realization of our goal, what does it matter if our steps march in right direction and our eyes look steadily in front? For in the pursuit itself of a mighty purpose there is joy and happiness and a measure of achievement. As Bernard Shaw has said: "This is the true joy in life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one; the being thoroughly worn out before you are thrown on the scrapheap; the being a force of nature, instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances, complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy".

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GANDHISM: AN ANALYSIS

—*Nirmal Kumar Bose*

GANDHISM: AN ANALYSIS

PART I

THE PHILOSOPHY AND TECHNIQUE OF SATYAGRAHA

> I am essentially a non-violent man, and I believe in war bereft of every trace of violence (Harijan 14.5.1938).

THE PHILOSOPHY: Satyagraha, a form of war.

WILLIAM James was not only a great psychologist but was also a great man. He loved mankind and hated war. But he also knew that war has certain merits; it developed the sense of responsibility and discipline, comradeship and courage as hardly anything else could. But he recognized that the advantages of war were more than offset by the suffering and degradation which came inevitably in its train. So he tried to find some "moral equipment of war" which would influence human character beneficially in the same way as war, but for which we would not have to pay as dearly as in the case of a bloody conflict. The phrase quoted above was probably of William James' coinage, and in an essay written many years ago, he suggested that instead of making war itself tabu, we should rather change its direction. Instead of allowing men to waste their lives in fighting against one another, we should train them to battle with the forces of nature so that human life may be made richer and happier in the end.

William James died four years before the great European War, in which America later on joined to take her due share. It was proof that the lesson of the great psychologist had fallen upon stony ground even in his own country. It would certainly have been good if all human beings had taken his lesson to heart, but unfortunately they did not do so. And one of the

principal reasons for the failure was that the proposed equivalent did not, in any way, help to solve the quarrels and antagonisms of mankind where they actually existed. If all men had already possessed the sense of human brotherhood, if they had realized from the start that it was in the welfare of the whole that the welfare of each part also lay, then they might have turned their energy to a better purpose than wasting it in war. But when that sense itself was lacking, when groups of men rather hoped to hold for themselves all the good things of the earth with the aid of the sword, when selfishness was burning fiercely within, the highly moral lesson of William James sounded more like a utopian's dream than any ideal capable of practical realization.

It is just here that the method of non-violent non-cooperation steps in as a really effective substitute for war. It does not propose to do away with war, it does not beguile men away from the reality of worldly conflicts, but it raises the quality of those very conflicts by bringing into operation a spirit of love and a sense of human brotherhood. Satyagraha is not a substitute for war; it is war itself shorn of many of its ugly features and guided by a purpose far nobler than what we generally associate with destruction. It is itself an intensely heroic and chivalrous form of war.

LOVE AND UNITY

The first article of faith with the Satyagrahi is the need of recognizing and of loving all mankind as one. The Satyagrahi also holds that love is never consistent with exploitation in any shape or form. Exclusive possession can never go together with love. If we have love in us, we can only possess when everyone else can also possess the same thing if he needs it. In accordance with this fundamental belief, the Satyagrahi holds that whenever there is a conflict of interests in human society, there must be something wrong somewhere. And if we can look into the situation with patience and wisdom enough, a way can surely be found to restore the sense of human unity, and, at the same time, to serve the best interests

of humanity taken as a whole. It will be a way illumined by love, and one in which there will be no room for exploitation of any human being.

JOINT ACTION

The Satyagrahi also believes that such a solution can be best arrived at if he himself and his adversary can somehow put their heads together. But the adversary can hardly be made to realize the injustice of his position by mere talking and argumentation. If we shoot him dead or cow him down by violence, it does not help the cause very much. Fear demoralizes and raises fresh barriers to better understanding in the hearts of men in authority today. Pride and self-defence stiffen their back, and make them less amenable to reason, justice and fair play. The Satyagrahi has therefore to devise some means of dealing with them effectively, and it is through self-suffering that he proposes to do so.

APPEAL TO THE HEAD THROUGH THE HEART

Let us explain what the Satyagrahi exactly understands by self-suffering. It has already been said that the first law of the Satyagrahi is the law of love. The second law, which follows from love, is that the way to the adversary's head is not through the head but through the heart. He believes that it is only through suffering, voluntarily and cheerfully endured, that the way can be opened to better understanding and a due recognition on the part of the adversary, of the injustice of his own position.

Gandhi once wrote: "I have come to this fundamental conclusion that if you want something really important to be done, you must not merely satisfy reason, you must move the heart also. The appeal of reason is more to the head, but the penetration of the heart comes from suffering. It opens up the inner understanding in man".

The Satyagrahi knows that all systems of exploitation thrive in the world because both the exploiter and the exploited cooperate in their maintenance. The exploited do so

through fear, but they cooperate with the exploiters all the same. It is just here that the Satyagrahi sees his opportunity of voluntary suffering. He tries to wreck the system of exploitation by refusing to cooperate with it, and thus draws upon his devoted head all the repression his adversary is capable of administering. If he stands unmoved through the shower of repression, his sufferings, heroically endured, are likely to touch the heart of the oppressor and thus pave the way for mutual discussion and a joint effort to build up a social system without the injustices of the present. It may also happen that the Satyagrahi fails to touch the heart of the exploiter with all his suffering. But even then his endeavours need not go in vain. For, continued non-cooperation will bring about the downfall of any system, whether the Satyagrahi eventually succeeds in gaining the goodwill and cooperation of the exploiter or not. No system can endure with non-cooperation all the while cutting away the ground from under it.

Thus, this is the most important distinction between Satyagraha and war. In war, the conquered is subjected to the will of the conqueror through punishment; in Satyagraha it is the ideal to create an atmosphere in which both cooperate to replace an unjust social and economic system by one based upon justice. The latter condition is brought about, not by the infliction of punishment upon the exploiter, but by the persuasion of non-violent non-cooperation. In the joint action which follows, the Satyagrahi's conception of justice prevails. His will is thus not enforced, but becomes the joint will of the persecuted and the erstwhile persecutor. This is the way of love in contrast to the way of fear. "The end of non-violent 'war' is always an agreement, never dictation, much less humiliation of the opponent."

THE SENSE OF UNITY

The suffering which the Satyagrahi voluntarily endures must not be endured mechanically, not even stoically. All through the struggle of non-cooperation, it must be illumined by a sense of human love. If that love does not remain steady

but grows dim, then there is surely something wrong with the Satyagrahi on his intellectual side. Only when love grows, and the conviction also grows, that all mankind is after all one, can one be sure that one is on the right path. For the faith in the essential unity of man is not merely the starting point of Satyagraha, but its complete intellectual and emotional realization is also the ultimate end of the process. It is only when the realisation is complete, can the Satyagrahi claim that he had done his utmost for the increase of human happiness. Resistence shorn of love merely degrades, and love shorn of understanding never succeeds in elevating mankind.

NON-VIOLENCE, SUPERIOR TO VIOLENCE

One may, however, object that Gandhi's path of labour and of resistance for bringing about the social revolution is an endless one; it requires superhuman patience for its due fulfilment. Why should we waste our energy in trying to redeem those who exploit mankind, those who have very little of the better stuff of humanity left in them? May we not use the minimum of violence, just enough to capture the State and maintain it, and then build up a better humanity through better education? Once we have the State under our control, we can train up men in unselfishness and also place legal and constitutional barriers upon the exercise of selfishness.

Gandhi agrees partly with his communist critics when they argue in this manner. He would say, yes, we have to capture the State, and that is why we are fighting for the attainment of Swaraj in India; even though, I believe, as an anarchist that all organisations based on the coercive method should disappear from the face of the earth. But that apart, the process by which we can wrest authority from those in power need not be one of violence. Non-violence is enough for our purpose. And, in that process of non-violent non-cooperation, we start to educate ourselves, as well as our opponents, in unselfishness from the very beginning. We do not have to wait until the battle is won on our behalf. Satyagraha blesses him who uses self-purification for the Satyagrahi, while it also stimulates

it, as well as him against whom it is used. It is a process of the latent human qualities within his opponent's breast. The non-cooperating warrior thus gains one march over his friend, the communist, who uses violence, by being able to employ the educative process from the very beginning of his fight for power.

But this is not the only argument in favour of love or non-violence. Mahatma Gandhi also believes that one who uses the sword also perishes by the sword. If we have to depend, not upon our ability of self-sacrifice, but upon external violence for the vindication of our cause, then one who can wield greater violence may claim that justice lies on his side. Success through violence blinds us to our own faults; and this spirit of self-righteousness, devoid of the spirit of self-examination, is the greatest condemnation that Gandhi can think of against the school of violence. Success through violence is no proof of Truth and ultimately leads to untruth. So Gandhi holds it as a fundamental proposition, that it is only by non-violence that we should combat violence, and it is only by love that we can overcome hatred. It is only a full sense of human unity which can combat and ultimately overwhelm the selfish and sectional spirit of mankind.

And for this purpose, he has devised an organized method of mass action, which we shall now proceed to describe in some detail.

BREAD LABOUR AND VOLUNTARY EFFORT

Satyagraha should begin by an immediate change in the daily life of the Satyagrahi. He must examine every detail of his life and his relation to other human beings, and see if he is living upon the labour of other people. If he finds that he belongs to the band of exploiters, he must immediately set about correcting that state of affairs. For love and unity demand that no man should live upon the involuntary toils of another.

It is Gandhi's idea that unless *all* men produce their daily bread by manual labour, there will be inequality on earth

and exploitation in some form or another. Every man should preferably produce corn from the soil by dint of his own labour. If he cannot, then he must turn to some occupation like carpentry, blacksmithery or spinning and weaving, by means of which he can produce the equivalent of what he consumes for his own maintenance. No amount of intellectual labour can be substituted for even an ounce of manual labour; and thus, in the ideal state, no one, other than an old or sick person or a child, should be absolved from the duty and obligation of bread labour. Every man is worthy only of his hire; and that hire consists of his daily bread and nothing more.

This is the reason why, in Gandhi's scheme, non-violent non-cooperation or Satyagraha and the philosophy of the spinning wheel go side by side. They are like two faces of the same coin. The spinning wheel is, for him, the symbol of voluntary bread labour.

When the satyagrahi thus tries to recognize his own life in accordance with the principles of non-violence, he soon finds himself pitted against the existing social and economic order. He also discovers that the voluntary effort of people like him does not carry the world very far on the road to equality and happiness; and so, he has to join in a mass-attack against existing organizations.

The following instructions show how Gandhi has elaborated a method of personal resistance into one of mass-action on a large scale.

PROGRESSIVE NON-COOPERATON AND CAUTION

It has already been said that the road of the Satyagrahi lies through suffering voluntarily endured. But the most important thing about it is that the suffering should come in a progressive manner, just as our non-cooperation should also be progressive in character. "The secret of non-violence and non-cooperation lies in our realising that it is through suffering that we are to attain our goal. What is the renunciation of titles, councils, law-courts and schools but a measure (very slight indeed) of suffering? That preliminary renunciation is a prelude to the larger suffering, the hardships of gaol life

and even the final consummation on the gallows, if need be. The more we suffer, the more of us suffer, the nearer we are to our cherished goal". A Congress worker once asked Gandhiji how long he was to continue on starvation allowance. Gandhi promptly replied: "Till death even as a soldier fights till he is victorious or, which is the same thing, drops down dead". For the Satyagrahi personally, there is no time limit nor is there any limit to his capacity of suffering.

But Gandhi never prescribed the same dose for the masses as he does for the professional Satyagrahi. As a practical leader of men, he recognizes that "suffering has its well-defined limits. Suffering can be both wise and unwise, and, when the limit is reached, to prolong it would be not unwise, but the height of folly". He never engages the masses in an enterprise which is likely to bring about defeat and demoralization. He prescribes for them a step which is just beyond their capacity. And in order to attain that immediate objective, the masses have to exercise their limbs, not to the breaking point, but sufficiently to create in them a sense of self-confidence and leave them stronger to carry on their further struggle. In aiming beyond their capacity, they are likely to lose all.

Whenever there is a chance of demoralization, Gandhi orders a retreat; and he has never been ashamed of doing so as often as the situation has demanded. When, in Rajkot, he discovered that the masses were not prepared to pay the price of freedom, although a certain measure of awakening had taken place among them, he advised them to lower the pitch of their demand and even to suspend civil disobedience. He has said "I had the sense and humility to retrace my steps whenever I discovered blunders. Hence the nation has gone forward step by step". Even as early as 1920, he used to say that he was not going to take a single step in non-cooperation unless he was satisfied that the country was ready for it.

But behind the moderation of a great leader, there is always the intention to lead the whole nation until it is ready to die like one man, if necessary, for the benefit of humanity. "Just as the cult of patriotism teaches us that the individual has to die for the village, the village for the district, the district for the province and the province for the country, even so a

country has to be free in order that it may die, if necessary, for the benefit of the world. My love therefore of nationalism or my idea of nationalism is that my country may die so that the human races may live". Only, the path to that supreme sacrifice lies through successive stages.

Many have complained that Gandhi is no revolutionary but a reformist. Perhaps they are wrong. For a reformist marches from one advantage to another, from one morsel of food gained anyhow from the enemy power to a second one. He relies upon an appeal to the sense of justice of the opponent. But when that fails, he does not really know what to do; for conflict is eschewed from his path altogether.

But Gandhi is a born fighter; and he leads men, not from one small gain to another, but from one danger to a still greater one, from one sacrifice to yet another which calls forth greater courage, greater forbearance and greater faith in the brotherhood of man. There is, of course, a gain; but the gain is more often subjective than objective in quality. Gandhi is prepared to rest on his oars, but he is never prepared to lay them down until he is satisfied that the nation now rests with death as its pillow. For that is the final test of whether the nation has become worthy of enjoying the good things of life or not. What more can a revolutionary demand, for he also leads men through the portals of death to final victory? Gandhi once said in this connection: "Some have called me the greatest revolutionary of my time. It may be false but I believe myself to be a revolutionary, a non-violent revolutionary. My means are non-cooperation". "I have concerned myself principally with the conservation of the means and their progressive use".

This then is the second law of the practice of Satyagraha. Non-cooperation must start with little things calculated to force the masses to brave dangers of a mild type and to develop in them a certain measure of courage, discipline and self-sacrifice. But the Satyagrahi must so advance that ultimately the masses face the fear of death without losing courage and without bitterness in their hearts. It is then only that the good things for which they are fighting will come within their grasp.

It is because progressive non-cooperation frees the mind,

step by step, from laziness, fear and hatred and all forms of selfishness, that Gandhi has called Satyagraha a process of self-purification. When men are thus purified, no power on earth can exploit them or build up an unjust economic or social system either through their voluntary or involuntary cooperation.

The path of voluntary suffering for the sake of principle has been practised by men of idealism ever since the beginning of human history. Gandhi's special contribution lies in the fact that he has converted a technique of individual resistance into one of mass-action. He once wrote: "Self-government depends entirely upon our own internal strength, upon our ability to fight against the heaviest odds. Indeed, self-government which does not require that continuous striving to attain it and to sustain it is not worth the name. I have therefore endeavoured to show both in word and deed, that political self-government—that is self-government for a large number of men and women,—is no better than individual self-government, and therefore it is to be attained by precisely the same means that are required for individual self-government or self-rule."

KEEP THE DEMANDS LOW

Another important feature of the Satyagrahi's code is that in putting forward any legitimate demand, he always tries to make it the irreducible minimum. The Satyagrahi personally must be entirely satisfied about the justice of his claims; but even after that, he must keep it as small as possible. Perhaps, if the Satyagrahi held forth a larger demand, his adversary might be frightened into yielding smaller concessions. But this is not his way, he refuses to stampede his opponents into surrender. "His actions never create panic in the breast of his 'enemy'." "It should never produce enduring violent reaction upon the opponent". He expects even them to recognize the justice of his claims, and thus incidentally enlists world-opinion in his own favour.

There is also an additional advantage. When the demands are high, even when they are just, partial concessions by the adversary are likely to create divisions within his own rank.

But if the demands are low, and consistent with justice, the chances of rift in the rank of Satyagrahis are very much reduced. In connection with the history of Satyagraha in South Africa, Gandhi wrote: "In a pure fight, the fighters would never go beyond the objective when the fight began, even if they received an accession to their strength in course of the fighting and, on the other hand, they could not give up their objective, if they found their strength dwindling away".

It must be pointed out here, that during the retreat at Rajkot, when he discovered that the masses were not ready to pay adequate price for freedom, he said: "Our aim must remain what it is, but we must be prepared to negotiate for less than the whole, so long as it is unmistakably of the same kind and has in it inherent possibility of expansion". This was, however, under special circumstances, for the demands had originally been pitched too high, without reference to the existing fighting capacity of the masses within the State.

NO HURRY

In connection with Satyagraha, Gandhiji always advises us to avoid hurry, i.e. not lose patience in any way. In 1922, when everyone anxiously expected him to launch the campaign of non-payment of taxes, he wrote: "We must not resort to non-payment because of the possibility of a ready response. This readiness is a fatal temptation. Such non-payment will not be civil or non-violent, but it will be criminal and fraught with the greatest possibility of violence. Not until the peasantry is trained to understand the reason and the virtue of civil non-payment and is prepared to look with calm resignation upon the confiscation of their holdings and the forced sale of their cattle and other belongings, may they be advised to withhold payment of taxes". "There need be no mistake about our goal. The masses are our sheet-anchor. We shall continue patiently to educate them politically till they are ready for safe action. As soon as we feel reasonably confident of non-violence continuing among them in spite of provoking executions, we shall certainly call upon the sepoy to lay down his arms and the peasantry to suspend payment of taxes".

SEEK AVENUE OF COOPERATION WITH ADVERSARY ON HONOURABLE TERMS

The Satyagrahi should always be prepared to come to terms with his adversary. "The first and the last work of a Satyagrahi is ever to seek an opportunity for an honourable approach". "He does not let slip a single opportunity for settlement, and he does not mind if any one therefore looks upon him as timid. The man who has faith in him and the strength which follows from faith, does not care if he is looked down upon by others. He relies solely upon his internal strength. He is therefore courteous to all, and thus cultivates and enlists world opinion in favour of his own cause". "A Satyagrahi bids good-bye to fear. He is therefore never afraid of trusting his opponent. Even if the opponent plays him false twenty times, the Satyagrahi is ready to trust him the twenty-first time, for an implicit trust in human nature is the very essence of his creed".

Behind his non-cooperation there is always the desire to cooperate on the slightest pretext even with the worst of enemies. But this does not mean that he ever contemplates any surrender in matters of fundamental importance. Gandhi laid down as a general principle, the rule that: "Having fixed one's minimum, from which one may not recede, one may stoop to conquer the whole world".

Commenting on the British Government's attitude towards the claim of India's independence, Gandhi has lately written: "All compromise is give and take, but there can be no give and take on fundamentals. Any compromise on fundamentals is a surrender. For it is all give and no take. The time for compromise can only come when both are of one mind on fundamentals, i.e. when the British Government have made up their mind that not they but Indians will determine the constitution under which the latter will be governed".

WHO SHALL FIGHT

The next rule in a Satyagraha compaign is that the people who are suffering under an unjust burden should themselves

carry on the fight; they should not count upon outside aid for that purpose. "It is the essence of Satyagraha that those who are suffering should alone offer it. Cases can be conceived when what may be termed sympathetic Satyagraha may be legitimately applied. The idea underlying Satyagraha is to convert the wrong-doer, to awaken the sense of justice in him, to show him also that without the co-operation, direct or indirect, of the wronged the wrongdoer cannot do the wrong intended by him. If the people in either case are not ready to suffer for their causes, no outside help in the shape of Satyagraha can possibly bring true deliverance".

In connection with Rajkot, Gandhi wrote: "I think the initial mistake was made when all Kathiawadis were permitted to join Rajkot Satyagraha. That step introduced an element of weakness in the fight. Thereby we put our reliance on numbers, whereas a Satyagrahi relies solely upon God who is the help of the helpless. A Satyagrahi always says to himself, 'He in whose name Satyagraha was launched, will also see it through'. If the People of Rajkot had thought in these terms, there would have been no temptation to organise big processions or mass demonstrations and probably there would have been no atrocities such as Rajkot has had to experience. A genuine Satyagrahi proceeds by setting the opponent at his ease. His action never creates panic in the breast of the 'enemy'. Supposing as a result of rigid enforcement of the rules of Satyagrahis Rajkot Satyagraha had been confined to a few hundred or even a few score true Satyagrahis and they had carried on their Satyagraha in the right spirit till their last breath, theirs would have served as a heroic example".

This does not, however, mean that people have, first of all, to be perfect men and then be in a position to practise the active resistance of Satyagraha. Satyagraha is itself an educative process, and soldiers are expected to be better and better men as they progress in the art. In the Harijan of 21-7-40, Gandhi has written: "Let no one understand that a non-violent army is open only to those who strictly enforce in their lives all the implications of non-violence. It is open to all those who accept the implications and make an ever-increasing endeavour to observe them. There never will be an army of per-

fectly non-violent people. It will be formed of those who will honestly endeavour to observe non-violence."

CONSTRUCTIVE WORK AND SATYAGRAHA

We have already stated that Satyagraha is a moral substitute for war. That also implies that, like war, Satyagraha cannot be maintained at a high pitch for an indefinite length of time. It has to be alternated with peace-time activities calculated to develop those particular qualities which are useful in periods of intensive non-cooperation. For this, according to Gandhi, there can hardly be anything better than constructive work, intelligently carried out, along lines often suggested by him after the compaigns of 1921 and 1932. It is better than the method of training the masses through small battles on local economic issues; for, according to Gandhi, that does not help to build up the unity and non-violence necessary for Swaraj.

The question was put to him whether we could not start small battles on local and specific issues against capitalism in the villages and use them as a means of strengthening the people or bringing into being a sense of cooperation among them, in preference to the Khadi method. To this he replied: "We are fighting for Swaraj in the non-violent way. If many workers in different parts of India engage in local battles of the sort you describe, then in times of necessity, the people all over India will not be able to make a common cause in a fight for Swaraj. Before a civil disobedience can be practised on a vast scale, people must learn the art of civil or voluntary obedience. Our obedience to the government is through fear; and the reaction against it is either violence itself or that species of it, which is cowardice. But through Khadi we teach people the art of civil obedience to an institution which they have built up for themselves. Only when they have learnt that art, can they successfully disobey something which they want to destroy in the non-violent way. That is why I should advise all workers not to fritter their fighting strength in many-sided battles, but to concentrate on peaceful Khadi-work in order to educate the masses into a condition necessary for a

successful practice of non-violent non-cooperation. With their own exploitation, boycott of foreign cloth through picketting may easily be violent; through the use of Khadi it is most natural and absolutely non-violent."

In Gandhi's opinion, constructive work serves to consolidate the masses, generate trust between them and their leaders, train them into habits of self-reliance, patience and into the ability to run big institutions by themselves. So, he once compared the effect of these works with what drilling etc. does for an army designed for war in the ordinary sense. A short while before the Salt Movement of 1930, he wrote: "I know that many have refused to see any connection between the constructive programme and civil disobedience. Constructive programme is not essential for local civil disobedience for specific relief as in the case of Bardoli. Tangible common grievance restricted to a particular locality is enough. But for such an indefinable thing as Swaraj people must have previous training in doing things of all-India interest. Such work must throw together the people and their leaders whom they would trust implicitly. Trust begotten in the pursuit of continuous constructive work becomes a tremendous asset at the critical moment. Constructive work therefore is for a non-violent army what drilling etc. is for an army designed for bloody warfare. Individual civil disobedience among an unprepared people and by leaders not known to or trusted by them is of no avail, and mass civil disobedience is an impossibility. The more therefore the progress of the constructive programme, the greater is the chance for civil disobedience".

Recently, he has written: "There is no non-violent disobedience without sustained constructive effort. A living continuous mass contact is impossible without some constructive programme requiring almost daily contact of the workers with the masses".

SELF-HELP AMONG LABOURERS

But this is not Gandhi's only argument in favour of constructive endeavours. With regard to the organisation of mill-hands into labour unions, he suggested that these unions should

teach the labourers some form of supplementary industry, with the help of which they would be able to tide over difficult periods during prolonged strikes. The occupations would also have a heartening influence upon the labourers themselves; for they would feel that they are not absolutely helpless and dependent upon the mercy of their employers.

Gandhi wrote in the *Harijan:* "The Ahmedabad Labour Union has of late started a great experiment. Mill-hands are being taught to select occupations which they can practise in their leisure hours at home and which would give them substantial relief in time of unemployment. These are ginning, cleaning, carding and spinning of cotton, weaving, tailoring, soap and paper making, type-setting etc.

"The essence of the experiment consists in training its members to a supplementary occupation in addition to their principal occupation in the mills so that in the event of a lock-out, strike or loss of employment otherwise, they would always have something to fall back upon instead of being faced with the prospect of starvation. A mill-hand's life is full of vicissitudes. Thrift and economy no doubt provide a sort of remedy and it would be criminal to neglect them. But the savings thus made can not carry one far, seeing that the vast bulk of our mill labourers are always struggling on the margin of bare subsistance. Moreover it would never do for a working man during strike or unemployment to rest idly at home. There is nothing more injurious to his morale and self-respect than enforced idleness. The working class will never feel secure or develop a sense of self-assurance and strength unless its members are armed with an unfailing subsidary means of subsistence to serve as second string to their bow in a crisis.

"It is the greatest of superstitions for the working man to believe that he is helpless before the employers. The effort of the Labour Union in Ahmedabad is to dispel this superstition in a concrete manner. Its experiments, therefore, ought to be welcomed by all concerned. Success will depend on inflexible determination on the part of the Labour Union to follow up the good beginning that has been made, with unflagging perseverance. It must have the right sort of instructors who can arouse among the workers an intelligent interest in their work.

A handicraft plied merely mechanically can be as cramping to the mind and soul as any other pursuit taken up mechanically. An unintelligent effort is like a corpse from which the spirit has departed."

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE LEADERS

It has already been pointed out that it is essential to generate trust between the masses and their leaders for successful non-cooperation. This is doubly necessary if we are to maintain successfully the non-violent character of the struggle. Non-violence is something which must start with the mind, and the will must be so developed that the habits and instincts of violence are kept in check. This however requires a degree of mental development which is not generally present among the masses. But if the leaders are intelligently non-violent, and if the masses trust them implicitly, then non-cooperation can be kept within the limits of non-violence. For this it is necessary that those who lead should themselves have an intelligent faith in non-violence; and should, consequently try to live up to all its implications in life.

Gandhiji was asked: "How do you think that the masses can practise non-violence, when we know that they are prone to anger, hate, ill-will? They are known to fight for most trivial things."

He answered: "They are, and yet I think they can practise non-violence for the common good. Do you think the thousands of women that collected contraband salt had ill-will against any one? They knew that the Congress of Gandhi had asked them to do certain things, and they did those things in faith and hope. To my mind the most perfect demonstration of non-violence was in Champaran. Did the thousands of ryots who rose up in revolt against the agrarian evils harbour the least ill will against the Government or the planters? Their belief in non-violence was unintelligent, even as the belief in the earth being round with many is unintelligent. But their belief in their leaders was genuine, and that was enough. With those who lead it is another matter. Their belief has got to be intelligent, and they have to live up to all the implications of

the belief."

MAINTAIN YOUR OWN INITIATIVE

The Satyagrahi should never allow the initiative to pass from his hands into those of his adversary. "An able general always gives battle in his own time on the ground of his own choice. He always retains the initiative in these respects and never allows it to pass into the hands of the enemy.

"In a Satyagraha campaign the mode of fight and the choice of tactics, e.g., whether to advance or retreat, offer civil resistance or organize non-violent strength through constructive work and purely humanitarian service are determined according to the exigencies of the situation. A Satyagrahi must carry out whatever plan is laid for him with a cool determination giving way to neither excitement nor depression".

Gandhiji further say: "Discipline has a place in non-violent strategy, but much more is required. In a Satyagraha army everybody is a soldier and a servant. But at a pinch every Satyagrahi Soldier has also to be his own general and leader. Mere discipline cannot make for leadership. The latter calls for faith and vision".

PUBLICITY

In the *History of Satyagraha in South Africa,* Gandhi wrote something with regard to the connection between newspapers and Satyagraha to which we must pay careful attention. He said: "I believe that a struggle which chiefly relies upon internal strength cannot be wholly carried on without a newspaper, and it is also my experience that we could not perhaps have educated the local Indian community, nor kept Indians all over the world in touch with the course of events in South Africa in any other way, with same ease and success as through *Indian Opinion,* which therefore was certainly a most useful and potent weapon in our struggle.

"As the community was transformed in course of and as a result of the struggle, so was *Indian Opinion.*"

FINAL INSTRUCTION

In spite of having given so much detailed instruction with regard to Satyagraha at different times, Gandhi always advises us not to precipitate a compaign where it can be avoided. "It is an essential part of non-violence to go along the line of least resistance".

His final instruction to all Satyagrahis is as follows: "Since Satyagraha is one of the most powerful methods of direct action, a Satyagrahi exhausts all other means before he resorts to Satyagraha. He will therefore constantly and continually approach the constituted authority, he will appeal to public opinion, educate public opinion, state his case calmly and coolly before everybody who wants to listen to him, and only after he has exhausted all these avenues will he resort to Satyagraha. But when he has found the impelling call of the inner voice within him and launches out upon Satyagraha he has burnt his boats and there is no receding".

"It will be contrary to every canon of Satyagraha to launch upon the extreme step till every other is exhausted. Such haste will itself constitute violence".

TO SUM UP

A. In war, we compel obedience to our will by punishing the adversary. In Satyagraha, it is the ideal to create an atmosphere of joint action, not by punishing the adversary, but by courageous non-violent resistance.

War compels through punishment, Satyagraha compels through the resistance of love. In it punishment is invited by the Satyagrahi upon himself. In the course of resistance, the Satyagrahi tries to keep his mind full of love for his adversary. If he cannot, he, at least, tries to keep it free from hatred.

This is calculated to touch the heart of the adversary, open the way to his head, with a view to enlisting his cooperation in building up of a new social and economic system without injustice and without exploitation.

B. An iniquitous system prevails in the world because the exploited directly or indirectly cooperate with the exploiters.

In withdrawing cooperation, i.e., in carrying out Satyagraha, the exploited gradually shed their laziness, selfishness and their divisive mentality, for iniquity thrives upon these foundations.

Satyagraha is thus process of self-purification. Purified men, in this sense of the term, cannot be subjected to exploitation, nor can they be party to the exploitation of others.

PART II

GANDHI'S CONTRIBUTION TO INDIAN SOCIAL IDEALS

The ideal of ancient Hindu social organisation, as of all other organisations, was to make men happy. Happiness depends partly upon the satisfaction of the human desires of hunger and sex, and partly upon other things. At no point of time can we envisage a condition when every wish of all men will be satisfied. Disease and death are inevitable. So nature herself sets certain limitations on the satisfaction of all desires. Full happiness cannot come that way. It may come in part if we satisfy our needs by depending upon our own labours and upon the free and willing co-operation of others, if such dependence does not involve any injury to other human beings. But as for the rest of our unsatisfied desires, we have to fortify ourselves in such a manner that we shall not be upset if they are not satisfied; and should be able to preserve our equanimity without, at the same time, degenerating into apathy and mental indolence. We should train our mind in such a way that we shall be able to derive joy from the fullness of knowledge and love and not from the satisfaction of desires. In other words, we have to build up an ideal philosophical attitude on the foundation of a basic minimum satisfaction of human needs.

An economic and social system was built up in ancient India on the basis of hereditary guilds. Equality of income or of opportunity was not envisaged as a necessary ideal; but in

order to counteract the possibility of an extreme accentuation of differences in wealth, a certain ideal was both extensively and intensively propagated. Those who spent their wealth in social welfare intead of personal enjoyment were praised, and those who gave up all their wealth were praised very much. More honour was thus shown to those who renounced than to those who possessed. Men of knowledge were respected more than men of wealth, and thus a scheme was set up to minimize the evils of differences in wealth. The system of production also was such that it did not allow extremes of wealth to grow.

The State was not a very powerful organization. It did not try to smooth down differences in wealth through legal coercion. That was done, as stated above, by setting up a particular set of values and by the creation of a strong and active public opinion in support of it. It might be argued that it is better to bring about equality through law than by depending upon voluntary effort for that purpose, law being much more efficient in that respect. But then law acts through violence, and the Satyagrahi may argue that there is little merit in equality brought about by violence. It does not stay, and requires a permanent violent structure, to maintain equalization. He might therefore say in defence of the voluntary method that it is intrinsically more moral and therefore a truer and surer means than the other one. If inequalities grow, as they always tend to do, there must of course, be some means of checking their growth. But such means should be of non-violent non-cooperation exercised by those who wish to challenge such inequalities, rather than of the violent arm of the State.

In any case, in ancient India, a plan was thus devised for minimizing the evils of inequality of wealth.

Hindu society was formed of many tribes and many castes. They had a variety of religions and ceremonies and of social customs. The Vedanta philosophy teaches that all things, all social facts and processes, are conditional. If we take our stand upon that philosophy and try to order our lives accordingly, a completely human way of life can be built up in which we shall not be attached to any particular form or code which has been created under the stress of a particular

set of circumstances. This is cultural freedom. And that philosophy also gives us an inward freedom by breaking our attachment to time and place, and self which is an embodiment of time and place.

Ancient Hindu idealists believed that every cultural path, if properly directed, ultimately leads to the Vedantic position. They did not, therefore, uproot the social and cultural forms of the subjugated tribes but tried to raise them to this final philosophical position. Thus a perfectly democratic attitude was held with respect to different types of human culture.

We find something like this among the Russians today in relation to the cultures of the Tatars and Uzbegs. The place of the Vedanta is taken there by Science and the scientific way of life.*

There is, however, a little difference. A Vedantist thinks that all cultures are on the road to Vendanta, and therefore tribal cultures have to be elevated until they attain the completeness and large-heartedness of the Vedanta. The social scientist in Russia does not, however, exercise this attitude with respect to the cultures of the Tatars or the Uzbegs. He does no violence to those cultures, but he has no respect for them either. He wishes to replace tribal cultures by the scientific one. He believe that a time will come when all men will outgrow the necessity of less-developed cultures. The Vedantist, on the other hand, believes in the permanent necessity of a variety of human cultures in accordance with varying human needs. He would refrain from saying one is better than the other, for both satisfy human needs under different conditions. This is a pantheistic form of social idealism.

These then were the ideals; and let us now see how those ideals actually worked themselves in practice.

* Ancient India, did not allow men any freedom in the choice of occupations while assuring them perfect security through monopoly guaranteed by customs and the State's authority which protected their customs. Russia too offers protection from unemployment to its subjects. But there is a big difference in the fact that in Russia all economic planning is done by the State, while in ancient India there was no such conscious planning. People were supposed to follow the trade of their fathers, a trade into which they had drifted through local necessity in the past. Moreover, in Russia membership of trade-guilds is by choice while in ancient India it was by birth.

At its inception, and during its formative period, the ideal was applied to a population which was composed of warring peoples; the Brahminical peoples, some of whom had originated the ideals, and the more ancient tribes and peoples of India. The existence of the hostility was a historical fact, and that was the reason why the ideal of Varnadharma was degraded, in actual practice, into the caste-system. Caste is a mean struck between *Varnadharma* on the one hand, and dominant human nature on the other. In that system, the conquerors tried to shift all the burden of labour upon the subjugated people, and also did not accord to some of the newly absorbed tribes absolute equality of status even when they were admitted into the scheme of Varnas. The case of the Maga Brahmanas and of some Kshatriyas and of different grades of Sudras is a case in point.

At a later stage in history, we see India rolling in wealth. This was another historical situation; and the ideal initiated formerly, though in an incomplete manner, now suffered from a further hindrance in the way of its complete realisation. Those who renounced and did not enjoy were now looked upon as cranks, to be pitied. Men of intellect sold their soul to the rich, temples became storehouses of wealth instead of storehouses of learning and character.

This period of history led to a weakening of the ideal of **Dharma.** Pride led to exclusiveness, and the conquered tribes were now bundled bag and baggage into the last *Varna,* and none of them admitted into the higher ones.

Then came a period of conquest by Mussulman tribes of Afghanistan and Central Asia. Hindu Society was now on the defensive, and the ideal of *Varna* suffered still more; while the caste system grew, more and more hide-bound and rigidly, though formally, puritanic. Instead of uniting all the peoples of the world into a brotherhood of *Varnas,* it now made them more and more exclusive, even when they were living side by side.

These are historical facts. At all stages of its history, the ideal had to be applied to human material, and the human material was under different conditions at different periods of time. The ideal was therefore never capable of being fully

embodied in social form. Perhaps that has been the fate of all ideals where large masses of mankind have been concerned. Today democracy tries to establish itself by denying democracy, by shooting down those who differ.

Thus the Indian ideal became tarnished. It was also poor in one respect from the very beginning. There was some idea of economy equitability, but none of equality of income or of opportunity. Here Gandhi has added his contribution to the ancient ideal *Varnadharma*. As a faithful disciple of Tolstoy and Ruskin, he believes that no man should live upon the toils of another. Therefore all should live by manual labour. He has accepted the ideal of *Varna*, which says that the most desirable organization is that which functions in such a manner that every man can find in it the opportunity to serve the cause of humanity best by exercising the special talents with which he is endowed by nature.* But he has added to it the law that no man shall be free from the duty of bread labour. It is a law "common to all the vernas".

"If all laboured for their bread and no more, then there would be enough food and enough leisure for all. Then there would be no cry of over-population, no disease, and no such misery as we see around. Men will no doubt do many other things either through their bodies or through their minds, but all this will be labour of love, for the common good. There will be no rich and no poor, none high and none low, no touchable and no untouchable.

"May not men earn their bread by intellectual labour? No. The need of the body must be supplied by the body. *Render* unto *Caesar* that which is *Caesar's* perhaps applies here well.

"Mere mental, that is, intellectual labour, is for the soul and is its own satisfaction, it should never demand payment. In the ideal state, doctors, lawyers, and the like will work solely for the benefit of society, not for self. Obedience to the law of bread labour will bring about a silent revolution in the structure of society. Man's triumph will consist in substitut-

* He has also rejected, though not fully, the belief in the hereditary transmissibility of character which formed a part of the law of Varna in ancient times. Of this Gandhi is not very sure.

ing the struggle for existence by the struggle for mutual service.

"This may be an unattainable ideal. But we need not, therefore, cease to strive for it. Even if without fulfilling the whole law of sacrifice, that is, the law of our being, we performed physical labour enough for our daily bread, we should go a long way towards the ideal".

This will, according to him, bring about a state of economic and social equality which is as much necessary for human progress as freedom is.

Equality of income is only another way in which love can find expression. Love does not merely express itself by allowing all men to develop along their specific personal channels of life—which is *Svadharma,* the foundation of *Varnadharma*—but also by offering to each an equality of opportunity through equality of income.

And this idea, Gandhi has brought to India from the West.

PART III

THE NATURE OF GANDHI'S IDEALISM

In order to understand the nature of Gandhiji's idealism, it is necessary to contrast it with that of Socialists; and for this purpose we cannot do better than state the latter in the words of Lenin himself. In his book *The State and Revolution,* there occur the following passage:

1. "The substitution of a proletarian for the capitalist State is impossible without a violent revolution, while abolition of the proletarian State, that is, of all States, is only possible through 'withering away' (Ch. 1).

2. "We are not utopians, we do not indulge in "dreams" of how best to do away *immediately* with all management, with all subordination; these are anarchist dreams based upon a want of understanding of the task of a proletarian dictatorship. They are foreign in their essence to Marxism, and, as a matter of fact, they serve but to put off the Socialist revolution

'until human nature is different.' 'No, we want the Socialist revolution with human nature as it is now; human nature itself cannot do without subordination, without control, without managers and clerks" (Ch. III).

3. 'But this 'factory' discipline, which the proletariate will extend to the whole of society on the defeat of capitalism and the overthrow of the exploiters, is by no means our ideal, and is far from our final aim. It is but a foothold as we press on to the radical cleansing of society from all the brutality and foulness of capitalist exploitation; we leave it behind as we move on.....When all have learnt to manage, and really do manage, Socialised production, when all really do keep account and control of the idlers, gentlefolk, swindlers and such like 'guardians of capitalist traditions', the escape from such general registration and control will inevitably become so increasingly difficult, so much the exception, and will probably be accompanied by such swift and severe punishment (for the armed workers are very practical people, not sentimental intellectuals, and they will scarcely allow any one to trifle with them), that very soon the *necessity* of observing the simple fundamental rules of any kind of social life will become a habit. The door will then be wide open for a transition from the first phase of communal society to its second higher phase, and along with it to the complete withering away of the State" (Ch. V).

4. "People will *grow accustomed to* observing the elementary conditions of social existence *without force and without subjection.*

"In order to emphasise this element of habit, Engels speaks of a new generation, 'brought up under new and free social conditions which will prove capable of throwing on the dust heap all the useless old rubbish of State organisation". (Ch. IV).

Summarising the principles involved in the above statements, we find:

(a) The Socialist ideal is a condition when men work for one another, i.e., for human society, not under compulsion of State laws but of their own accord. The State is unnecessary in the last resort.

(b) Men live more by habit than by will. So to bring

about that change, it is necessary to alter present *habits,* and that has to be done by force.

(c) In order to have the power to do so, the proletariate has to capture the present State authority by violence, and then use the same violence in order to shape habits anew.

(d) After the habits have been altered, the State will have to disappear through a process of 'withering away', not by any violent revolution.

This is the Socialist method stated in the simplest terms possible, and, we hope, we have done no injustice to it.

This means that Lenin, at least, took human nature *as it is,* and tried to build his plans of revolution as well as of future reconstruction with that as its foundation. But Gandhi builds upon a different foundation. It is not in the existing passive character of man that his hope lies but in the *possibility of evoking the latent active character* of every human being that he rests his hopes of revolution and of social reconstruction. That man changes and can change for the better, not individually alone, but also in masses, is as much true of him as the fact that he is selfish and blind today, and loves more to be ordered about than to take the responsibility of self-direction.

This seems to me to be the fundamental difference between the way Lenin and Gandhi have approached and also handled human nature. But Gandhi is no utopian dreamer. There are specific reasons why he has rejected the Socialist means of revolution and sticks to the non-violent methods instead. His idealism bears a different character; and this is what we shall try to explain in the present paper.

He himself has stated his fundamental difference with the Socialists in the following report of an interview published in *The Modern Review,* October 1935.

Question. "Shall we take it that the fundamental difference between you and the socialists is that you believe that men live more by self-direction or will than by habit and they believe that men live more by habit than by will; that being the reason why you strive for self-correction while they try to build up a system under which men will find it impossible to exercise their desire for exploiting others?"

Answer. "While admitting that man actually lives by habits, I hold that it is better for him to live by the exercise of will. I also believe that men are capable of developing their will to an extent that will reduce exploitation to a minimum. I look upon an increase in the power of the State with the greatest fear, because, although while apparently doing good by minimizing exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality, which lies at the root of all progress".

This is a most important statement and marks off clearly the parting of ways between Gandhi and the Socialists, although both agree in their ultimate aim of liberating mankind from all forms of exploitation. Thus Gandhi is an idealist in spite of recognizing the fact that most men live by habit today. Why does he stick to the idealist position and not try to create a Swaraj in India based upon habit and not will as Lenin did in Russia? Hostile critics say that he is afraid of revolution; less informed people say that he does not want the eradication of exploitation. Both these charges are not correct. What appears, however, to be the real reason is that Gandhi does not attach much importance to the form which society will outwardly take, provided there is love for humanity burning brighter and brighter within our heart. The outward social form will take its own course, we must take care of the central thing. If we set one corner of the square right, the others will right themselves as a matter of course. His chief concern, therefore, seems to be how to keep the flame of human love burning, how to keep the sense of human unity unbroken even in the midst of the revolution. Non-violent non-cooperation or Satyagraha is for him a way of revolution based upon the sense of human brotherhood. Like a knight of olden days, he jealously guards that treasure and is prepared never to betray the sacred charge even in the darkest hour.

Let us now explain in Gandhi's own terms the character of his idealism in the religious, political and economic spheres one by one.

"The virtue of an ideal consists in its boundlessness. But although religious ideals must thus from their nature remain unattainable by imperfect human beings, although by virtue

of their boundlessness, they may seem ever to recede farther and farther away from us, the nearer we go to them, still they are closer to us than our very hands and feet because we are more certain of their reality and truth than even our own physical being. This faith in one's ideals constitutes true life, in fact it is man's all in all".

"The goal ever recedes from us. The greater the progress, the greater the recognition of our unworthiness. Satisfaction lies in the effort, not in the attainment. Full effort is full victory".

"It seems that the attempt made to win Swaraj is Swaraj itself. The faster we run towards it the longer seems to be the distance to be traversed. The same is the case with all ideals."

This is true not only of his idealism in the religious sphere but in the political and economic spheres as well. Gandhi knows that in actual practice, we attain the mean set between the ideal on the one hand, and the limitation set by existing human nature on the other. The former is fixed in character (as for example, the desire to free the world from all exploitation of the Socialists), while the latter is a variable factor; so the mean struck today cannot be the same as the mean struck tomorrow. Tomorrow our capacity to suffer, our perseverance, our courage, may increase and we may approach nearer our ideal than today. So instead of putting too much emphasis upon the *attainable middle-ideal*. Gandhi rather believes that we should always keep before our mind's eye, the *highest* goal, and, at the same time, concentrate upon the means of giving it a shape under existing conditions. The attainable ideal will vary from time to time; but if we always concentrate on the means and not on the fruits thereof, we shall succeed in bringing heaven down to earth in a much better fashion than by any other means.

This appears to be the chief distinction between Gandhi and, say, Jawaharlal, who believes in a clear statement of the attainable middle-ideal as a necessary condition in the fight for freedom. It is necessary, according to Jawaharlal, in order to bring hope to the people, to inspire them to fight. An unattainable ideal, he would say, leaves people in a sick frame

of mind when they go on distressing over their own weakness. But Gandhi thinks otherwise. Therefore he wrote to Jawaharlal in 1933:

"Though you have emphasised the necessity of a clear statement of the goal, having once determined it, I have never attached importance to its repetition. The clearest possible definition of the goal and its appreciation would fail to take us there, if we do not know and utilize the means of achieving it. I have, therefore, concerned myself principally with the conservation of the means and their progressive use. I know if we can take care of them the attainment of the goal is assured. I feel too that our progress towards the goal will be in exact proportion to the purity of our means.

"The method may appear to be long, perhaps too long, but I am convinced that it is the shortest."

"I have not dealt with the questions of the ideal constitution as you alone can be its fashioners. My duty lies in discovering and employing means by which the nation may evolve the strength to enforce its will. When once the nation is conscious of its strength it will find its own way or make it."

"Political power means capacity to regulate national life through national representatives. If national life becomes so perfect as to become self-regulated, no representation becomes necessary. There is then a state of enlightened anarchy. In such a state everyone is his own ruler. He rules himself in such a manner that he is never a hindrance to his neighbour. In the ideal state therefore there is no political power because there is no state. But the ideal is never fully realised in life. Hence the classical statement of Thoreau that that government is best which governs the least."

This with regard to political affairs. In the economic sphere, too, he bears the same character in his ideals. His realism is not blind to the failings of human nature; but he sticks to it because he believes that this is the way of highest attainment. "If all laboured for their bread and no more, then there would be enough food and enough leisure for all....

"This may be an unattainable ideal. But we need not, therefore, cease to strive for it. Even if without fulfilling the whole law of sacrifice, that is the law of our being, we perform-

ed physical labour enough for our daily bread, we should go a long way towards the ideal.

"If we did so, our wants would be minimized, our food would be simple. We should then eat to live, not live to eat. Let any one who doubts the accuracy of this proposition try to sweat for his bread, he will derive the greatest relief from the production of his labour, improve his health and discover that many things he took were superfluous.

"May not men earn their bread by intellectual labour? No. The need of the body must be supplied by the body. *Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's* perhaps applies here well."

In an interview given in 1934, Gandhiji perhaps made the position of his economic and political idealism clearer than anywhere else.

Question. "Is love or non-violence compatible with possession or exploitation in any shape or form? If possession and non-violence cannot go together then do you advocate the maintenance of private ownership of land and factories as an unavoidable evil which will continue so long as individuals are not ripe or educated enough to do without it? If it be such a step, would it not be better to own all the land through the State and place the State under the control of the masses?"

Answer. "Love and exclusive possession can never go together. Theoretically, when there is perfect love, there must be perfect non-possession.

"Those who own money now, are asked to behave like trustees holding their riches on behalf of the poor. You may say that trusteeship is a legal fiction. But if people meditate over it constantly and try to act up to it, then life on earth would be governed far more by love than it is at present. Absolute trusteeship is an abstraction like Euclid's definition of a point, and is equally unattainable. But if we strive for it, we shall be able to go further in realizing a state of equality on earth than by any other method" (The Modern Review, October 1935).

He has clearly stated: "To degrade or cheapen an ideal for our convenience is to practise untruth and to lower ourselves. To understand an ideal and then to make a Herculean effort

to reach it, no matter how difficult it is, that is *purushartha,* manly endeavour."

"Having ascertained the law of our being, we must set about reducing it to practice to the extent of our capacity, and no further. That is the middle way."

"No man is expected to do more than he can" (H., 24-9-38).

This does not however mean that he fondly cherishes any false hopes regarding human nature:

"It is true that I have often been let down. Many have deceived me and many have been found wanting. But I do not repent of my association with them. For I know how to non-co-operate, as I know how to co-operate. The most practical, the most dignified way of going on in the world is to take people at their word, when you have no positive reason to the contrary."

This shows why he clings to the highest ideal even when he recognises fully the limitation of human nature. His idealism is like the determined idealism of one who was like a cynic in his estimation of human nature, but who has succeeded in conquering back his faith in humanity. It is not the faith of an ideal dreamer who knows nothing of the world; he holds on to the highest ideal because he believes this is the way of highest attainment. That is why we agree with his remarkable statement made as early as 1920:

"I am not a visionary. I claim to be practical idealist."

PART IV

THE QUINTESSENCE OF GANDHISM

The foundation of Mahatma Gandhi's life is formed by his firm faith in God. God is the Universal Being which encompasses everything and of which humanity is one small part. He is the law working behind the universe, for the Law and the Lawmaker are finally one and the same. Human life has been given to us so that we may realize the working of that Law and then set our lives in accordance with it. From personal experience Gandhi has come to the conclusion that it is the law of love, and not struggle and competition, which

holds together the universe; and so he tries to set every act of his life in conformity with love and sense of human unity.

But blind love, either of God or of man, is of no avail. It is only when love gives us a fuller understanding of the universe that it becomes precious and worth striving for. In Gandhi's own case, this realization comes best through loving struggle to free mankind from all forms of oppression and not chiefly through meditation or contemplation. But he readily admits that for others, the path may be different. There are many paths to the same Universal Truth, and he feels happy if every one of us follows his own light and never lays down the burden which he has been appointed to carry.

But whatever may be the particular path which one chooses, one thing is certain, namely, that the chief obstacle to realization comes ultimately from our own personal selves. Laziness, selfishness and the pride that we have known the whole truth are the three greatest obstacles in our path. Our lives should therefore be an unceasing effort for self-purification; our activity should be as uninterrupted as that of the "drop of water in the ocean". And if such be the will of God, this tireless pursuit of Truth and consequent self-purification, may eventually bring about a happier state of life for mankind on earth. It is in the realization of Truth alone that we can find the source of abiding happiness.

This forms the core of Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy and whatever he does or preaches springs ultimately from this fundamental attitude towards life. The use of Satyagraha as a political weapon is only the above law of individual spiritual life projected into the sphere of mass-action. Satyagraha is, for Mahatma Gandhi, the same discipline for realizing the truth of human unity as the individual's personal life might be; while Swaraj is synonymous with the undefined, yet limitless, term *moksha* or emancipation.

The above ideas of Mahatma Gandhi do not, however, constitute the whole of his philosophical equipment. He has certain personal likes and dislikes or *samskaras*, derived either from his life's experiences or from the masters whom he reveres, and it is through th emedium of these *samskaras* that his universal ideas express themselves, and some-

times even suffer a little distortion. Of such ideas we can readily think of two, one of which he has apparently derived from Hinduism and other from Christianity. His predilection for forms or institutions which have endured through ages, in other words, the recognition of permanency as a quality of Truth, has obviously been derived from his traditional Hindu environment. This has led him into a form of conservatism, which has, however, the redeeming feature that it is subjected to the final tests of reason and morality. In spite of that, Gandhi has a strain of conservatism at the back of his mind, which under certain circumstances, obscures from his view a further character of truth, namely, its everchanging and conditional quality, through whose manifestations it is difficult to trace any feature of permanency except perhaps that of being or of continuity. In any case, it makes Gandhi constitutionally more receptive of old ideas than of new ones. Perhaps his vision in this direction is further limited by the exigencies of Action. The other *samskara* which has probably been due to his intimate Christian association, is his concept of sin and a special attitude with respect to purity and sexual morality, which has been compared by several observers with that of the mediaeval Christian saints. Such *samskaras*, whether we like them or not, should all be allowed for or ruled out when we try to estimate Gandhi's real greatness which lies in the magnitude of his *realized* universal truths.

A further study of Mahatma Gandhi's ideas also reveals the strong influence exerted upon him by Ruskin and Tolstoy. That gives a meaning to his hatred of industrialism and all forms of centralized control. In essence, it means a final reliance upon freedom as the prime condition of human growth. With Tolstoy and Ruskin, Gandhi also believes that the root of the present distress lies in man's selfishness and in his predatory habit of living upon the toils of others. Most men are apt to forget that all mankind is ultimately one, and that all must either rise or fall together. They usurp power for their own sake or for the sake of their class, and thus bring into being much misery which could otherwise have been avoided. It is in the diagnosis of present day ills he agrees most closely with the authors named above. And he

also agrees with them in holding that selfishness can only be overcome by unselfishness, hatred by love and immorality by morality and by nothing else. Gandhi also considers with Tolstoy that the "law of bread-labour" is the first moral law of life. According to this law, every man should earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, in some labour connected with agriculture or its allied industries. Machines have their place in human economy, but they should only be employed to lighten human labour and for no other purpose.

This leads us on to a comparison of Mahatma Gandhi's ideas with Socialism and Communism. Gandhi believes with Socialists and Communists that the ideal is equal distribution; but finding that impossible of attainment, he strives for equitability rather than for mathematical equality. Here we must, however, remember that Gandhi's activities are directed not towards the establishment of any particular social or economic order, but towards the purification of the means of revolution in conformity with the spirit of love and of human unity. He has only one thing to say with regard to the final state. In it every individual must find the freedom and opportunity of exercising his special talents and abilities in the best interests of humanity and according to his own light. On his own side, too, the individual must be prepared to be neglected and to suffer if his views do not agree with those of society, i.e. he must pay the price for the freedom he enjoys. With that solitary reservation on behalf of human freedom, Gandhi is prepared to leave the actual task of social or constitutional re-organization to future generations of men, while he would prefer to reserve for himself the duty of attaining the means of revolution through the supreme law of love and truth.

Consistent with that law, there can be only one form of revolution; and it is here that he departs farthest from the established schools of Socialism and Communism. According to Gandhi, the only moral form of revolution is non-violent non-cooperation. The institutions of the present world, based on exploitation as they are, continue to exist because both the exploiters and exploited cooperate in their maintenance. If both could be inspired to dissociate themselves from the existing system—the one by shedding selfishness and the other

fear—then the present order would go to pieces in a moment. But human nature refuses to yield so easily. It yields only to constant effort and only when that effort is inspired by an abiding trust in the potential goodness of human nature. The appeal to man works best through the heart and not the head. If a band of non-cooperators suffers in the process of non-co-operation, but does not retaliate, then the heart of the exploiters is bound to be touched by the suffering, and a way is sure to be opened for human reconciliation and a new social synthesis. But during the whole of that non-cooperation, the heart of the resisters must ever remain bright with the spirit of love and of human unity, and their hand must be held back by an infinitude of patience. It is only such love that can work miracles.

This means that Gandhi relies more upon Will than on Habit in the correction of human wrongs. While conceding that man actually lives more by habit than by will, he maintains that it is better that it should be otherwise. This process may seem a long and arduous one, but Gandhi is sure that it is the shortest, because it is also the surest. It is only on the foundation of intelligent and ceaseless endeavour that the edifice of social equality and of human happiness can be securely reared. Happiness which comes through habit, through the enforcement of a particular social order from above, however perfect in architectural form it may be, is bound to fail in the long run. For it does not eradicate the root of the evil which lies within. That evil cannot be overcome by violence, but by ceaseless efforts of self-purification.

In the last analysis, therefore, Gandhi hardly holds out any hope for mankind, none whatsoever in a historical destiny. He asks us to rely upon God and exercise our energy and our love to the utmost. He shows us a supremely moral way of revolution, which may through the grace of God, bring about a condition of equality and of happiness on earth. It is in the perfection of this means of revolution that Gandhi's chief contribution to humanity lies. Perhaps, the means are old, as he himself would prefer to say; but it is he who has first of all rescued it from the world's private armoury and fashioned out of it a first class instrument of wide political application.

3

DEMOCRACY: A LIBERAL VIEW

—*V. S. Srinivasa Sastri*

DEMOCRACY: A LIBERAL VIEW

WE live under democratic institutions of the British type, which are now discredited in various parts of the civilized world. Even among us, who belong to the British Commonwealth, large sections of the people, perhaps growing steadily in number, are of the opinion that democracy is played out, and that in clinging to it we run the risk of being left behind in the international race. This may or may not be true. I am inclined to think that the day of democracy is not yet done, and that, if its champions would only take pains to remove its weaknesses and reinforce its strong points, it might still maintain its ground as the most beneficent form of human government yet evolved. Unfortunately, democracy's friends do not stop to discriminate; they take always the easy path to success and forget that, in certain high aspects of political action, the means are as important as the ends. It thus happens that in this country, with every widening of the franchise and of the sphere of popular control, the corruptions of western democracy obtain a foothold sooner than its virtues. Criticism of the methods adopted by our leaders is not necessarily to be suspected as proceeding from a believer in autocracy, but ought rather to be welcomed as the attempt of a patriot who cherishes with affection the political institutions of his country and would fain see them cleansed of imperfections and brought to a higher pitch of purity and public serviceableness. In this spirit and not in that of cavil on the one hand or of fervid other-worldliness on the other, I propose to point out one of the dangers which threaten to strangle our public life.

The malady I shall deal with is the hypertrophy of the party system. It is established beyond question that parliamentary government postulates the existence of well-organized and coherent parties. The conditions for their proper functioning must be secured beyond all hazard. Politicians who wish to do their bit for the community must submit to a certain amount of control and restriction of the free exercise of

their judgement. This being premised, I am concerned here to dwell at some length on the other side of the picture. There are great evils attendant on the system; some of them apparent, but others insidious in their nature and demanding the utmost vigilance on the part of leaders lest they should choke the atmosphere of purity and regard for the welfare of the whole which is so essential to the success of popular institutions. Writers on political subjects usually point out that the great antinomy is between the freedom of the individual and the exaltation of the State, whether the individual exists only as an instrument of the welfare of the State, or the State is in the last resort to be judged by the degree in which it secures the freedom and the welfare of the individual. It is by no means easy to decide between these alternatives, but as one who is always on the quest of the golden mean, I should like to believe that except in very rare situations it is possible for the State and the individual to sustain and subserve each other. The actual antinomy, however, that faces us is, the party or the individual citizen? One can understand the nation demanding the entire surrender of the citizen, his prospect, his freedom and his life. Can a party push its claims against its members quite so far? Perhaps the claim is not made in set formulae or stated nakedly in any treatise on public institutions; but in actual practice, the tendency of party executives is to aggrandize themselves and make continual inroads on the freedom of action and of speech of their members. As in other cases, the evil example of one party spreads among all. The reins of party discipline tend to be held with increasing rigour, and men and women are told that non-compliance with the fiats of party leaders will be noted in black ink in their records. In the hurry of life we do not remember that by merely joining a party we give up a considerable slice of liberty. With the vast range of activity now assumed by Government and semi-governmental organizations, there is little in the normal life of a citizen which may not at one time or another become the subject of regulation; and a political party therefore, in the search for means of extending its power and prestige, is almost omnivorous. It soon acquires a body of crystallized views

upon all subjects under the sun, and a member may be called upon at any time to support them by advocacy and by vote. It is inconceivable that the party views on all or most of these subjects could be his own personal views. Such genuine conformity is not possible in more than a few subjects. The theoretical distinction between fundamentals and details, between principles and their particular applications, is apt to be lost sight of; and in the fervour of propaganda and the excitement of combat the word of the party leader must be obeyed, and the tyranny of military discipline tends to be established. In a system of ins and outs the whole power and authority of Government are the stake for which the parties contend with one another, and the prospect of such a prize magnifies all trifling details in the campaign and makes the maintenance of discipline in all ranks a paramount consideration. The Opposition, whose business ought to be to expose the flaws of Government measures, but, when that task is done, to examine the measures on their merits and support them where they are worthy of support, opposes for the sake of opposition and gets into the habit of seeing nothing right in the operations of Government and never saying a good word of its adversaries. This may be good "strategy", but it affords no exercise in the art of political judgement, which after all consists in the ability to sift public issues, separate the good and bad in them and advance the one while checking the other. How can a tyro in political science educate himself by a study of the speeches and actions of those who have hopelessly narrowed their vision and made up their minds to view all matters only as they affect themselves? Speaking to the alumni of a University, I may not forget the needs of beginners and the duty of elders so to conduct themselves in the political sphere as well as in other spheres that their thought, speech and deed may accord with one another and teach the lesson that all life is one and must be lived in close conformity with one's nature and inmost convictions. It is impossible to be a bondsman in politics and a free man in other departments of life.

It is amazing how the men who sit at the headquarters of political organizations claim the right to control and guide our private friendships and social relations. The barriers that

divide parties one from another are held inviolable as though they were ordained of heaven and could only be crossed under penalty of excommunication. You are admonished which socials you may attend with impunity and which you must avoid. Deep differences of views on public affairs and the habit of meeting on different platforms naturally part people into groups, and each person may be trusted to avoid contacts which may expose him to misunderstanding or impair his reputation for fidelity. Why need we add to these natural restraints, special prohibitions directed against individuals or classes? It is no good reminding us that, in periods of abnormal excitement like that which saw the Irish Home Rule Bills of Gladstone, social intercourse between members of the opposed parties is apt to be a minimum and even friendships may suffer suspension as during a civil war. This is an aberration not to be cited as a precedent for normal times. I have never been able to perceive sufficient justification in India for the boycott of social functions at which officials are present, whether as hosts or as guests. It arises from morbid political animosity, to which I have ever been a stranger. One would think, on the contrary, that men and women were meant to mix easily and naturally with one another and that, where differing political tendencies might keep them apart, special occasions of social intercourse should be created for the purpose of bringing them together and thus bearing witness to their common nature.

How true it is that the appetite for power grows by that it feeds on! Put a man at a table with some stationery and call him the secretary of a bureau. He will start by making enquiries which will soon become inquisitions, by making suggestions which will rapidly assume the character of orders, and by formulating principles which will steadily harden into a creed. He sends out whips on all occasions and sundry, and you have to make a speech or hold your tongue, to attend or stay away, and to walk to the right or to the left as you may be bidden. One may readily grant that members of a party must submit to certain regulations in order that concerted action may be calculable. What is objectionable and must be resisted is the ceaseless encroachment of the executive upon the freedom of the individual until he becomes a mere unit

in a well-drilled regiment. Not long ago official members in a legislative house nominated to represent departments or provincial governments were the object of derision amongst non-officials as automata whose votes could as well be taken into the reckoning without requiring their bodily presence,—thus saving them many hours of ennui and Government some sorely needed rupees. If it be contended that, while the outward freedom to speak and to vote is reduced within narrow limits, the truest form of freedom, namely, the freedom of the mind, is not curtailed, even this proposition is only partially true, for thought can flourish and produce its full effect only when it can find an outlet in speech and action. Long disuse of the latter cannot but lead to enfeeblement and paralysis of the former. Professor Graham Wallace quotes in one of his books from a speech made in the House of Commons in 1911, when the question of women's franchise was under discussion. It was agreed that the party whips should be called off and members could speak and vote in accordance with their personal views. One member complained that, as he and his colleagues had not enjoyed such freedom for many years, they found their mental faculties benumbed and did not know how to form an opinion. An exaggerated statement without doubt; but it contains a certain measure of truth; it is against human nature to exercise independent thought *in vacuo*. We are grown callous; otherwise we should feel the mockery of a system which draws scores of members from various committee rooms at the sound of the division bell and compels them to ask "Which lobby is mine?" The unreality of proceedings in which men and women do not care to form their own opinions or, when they have them, do not care to express them, is so great that one hesitates to accept the decisions arrived at in such conditions as expressions of the national will entitled to respect and obedience. T. H. Huxley was once asked why he did not care to enter the House of Commons: his answer was that he had dedicated his life to the discovery and elucidation of truth and not to its obscuration, and therefore he avoided the pursuit of politics. I do not think that Huxley overstated his case. Party politics, which forbids independent judgment and compels one to speak and vote at another's

bidding, is systematized violence done to truth. This confession must sound strange, coming from one who a few moments ago granted the proposition that the party system and therefore party discipline are essential to the success of democratic institutions, and who is himself a lifelong practitioner of the game. Knowing how commonly one is misunderstood, let me at this point repeat my faith in democracy. However bad a legislative chamber may be, as Cavour said, it can never be so bad as the ante-chamber of an autocrat or, one may add, of a modern dictator. But does it follow that I should join in the apotheosis of party and kneel down before a caucus which regards its slogans as mantras at a ritual and shouts hosannas at every paltry success as though the hosts of heaven had routed the hordes of hell?

It has been pointed out that the function of political parties is akin to that of lawyers who argue a case before the jury from opposite sides, the general public being the final deciding authority. Avowedly then, a party is only one of two or more similar agencies meant to check and complement one another for the discovery of the line of best advantage to the community. For any one of these to claim the monopoly of power or influence and to demand the entire allegiance of the people is in the nature of an usurpation. It ought to be clearly understood that in a legislature, for instance, the party in power will only then be doing its duty when it pays due regard to the views of the other elements that compose the House, appropriates the best thoughts and suggestions put forward by them and enacts into law the combined wisdom of the people's representatives. If it were possible to rid our minds of the competitive aspect of the labours of the various parties, they would seem to be co-ordinate and co-operating agencies employed on the common task of ascertaining and promoting the good of the whole community. A party is subordinate to the nation, must be ready to sacrifice its interests for those of the nation, and ought not to claim of the citizen that complete abnegation that only the nation can claim in sore need. On this view how grievously at fault we are in carrying on a ceaseless mutual warfare, on the look-out for ambushes, feints and fights to the finish! If the great religions are to practise the

virtues of charity, tolerance and even appreciation towards one another, if races and nations are bidden, in the name of mankind, to pull down all tariff and political barriers, how paltry and childlike seem the squabbles and truceless hostilities of our parties, often with no intelligible distinction and revolving round personalities!

I am under command to exhort you, the graduates of the year, to conduct yourselves suitably unto the position to which, by the degrees conferred upon you today, you have attained. Your position is that of those who are entering on the rights and duties of citizenship. I advise you to be faithful to party, but always to put the nation above it. I advise you, when you become leaders, to circumscribe within well-defined limits the jurisdiction of your party, to demand of your followers due respect for this jurisdiction, but scrupulously to allow them full discretion outside that jurisdiction. I advise you not to look upon members of other parties as enemies to be avoided, denounced and injured, but as fellow-travellers choosing different routes to reach the same goal, viz., the common good. I advise you, above all, to cherish your personal freedom as a birthright and guard it jealously except in a limited sphere, so that in your public activities you may be true to yourselves. The ideal to be aimed at is the one enunciated in our ancient saying: "One and the same in thought, word and act." To propagate others' opinions as your own, to make speeches against your convictions and to vote habitually at the bidding of a whip, is to do violence to truth. In this land men have been bidden from ancient days to speak the truth and to perform the *dharma*. Truth has been declared to be the foundation and the support of all things. In an immortal legend Harischandra sold his wife and son to slavery and himself watched corpses burning on Ganga's bank, to avoid framing a falsehood between his lips. To keep the plighted word of his father Rama gave up a kingdom and dwelt in the forest for many years with his wife. The empire of Truth has no limits and knows no relaxations. Modern life, however, has made numerous and extensive inroads upon it. In the dealings of nations, whether in war or peace of ordinary diplomatic intercourse; in the flattery that pervades palaces; in the large

sphere allotted to propaganda and advertisement; in the region of sex; in commerce and business; in testimonials; in post-prandial utterances; in obituary orations and epitaphs; in dealings with invalids, and children; in the promises made by lovers and by candidates at election time; in the writings of the partisan press; in the one-sided pleadings before judges; in the chronicles of courts and kings and queens; in the defence of superstition and error as a necessary basis for ethical conduct; in these and several other departments we recognize and allow for a large measure of concealment and distortion of the truth. Shall we knowingly and deliberately add the enormous domain of politics to this formidable list?

Happily we are not left without some shining examples for our guidance. One that will be universally admitted is Mahatma Gandhi. It is not for nothing that he observes silence on one day of each week, for all speech involves a certain impairment of the truth. He employes the fewest words and the simplest to express his thoughts, for does not the poet say that those must be frugal in their words who wish to be truthful? I know of none who is so preternaturally careful to avoid situations that might compromise or weaken his adherence to the truth. With a will that no bribe can buy and no threat can bend, he upholds the supremacy of his conscience. Dedicated body and soul to the service of minkind, he will seek no good, however great or glittering, except by methods wholly consonant with his own conception of right or truth. *Daridranarayana,* as he proclaims himself, four annas is not beyond his means; if still he stands outside the Congress organization, it is because its atmosphere irks his extremely sensitive and truthful soul. He protests against people following him blindly and accepting his decisions without endeavouring to make them their own. Yet, so weak is human nature that in the wide circle of his influence people too readily surrender their individual freedom and so palter with truth. If one of the phases of truth be non-violence, another is the integrity of the human soul. The Mahatma's supreme merit is his unflinching devotion to the goddess of Truth in her various phases. Let us be his co-worshippers, not his worshippers.

4

SOCIALISM IN INDIA

—Jayaprakash Narayan

SOCIALISM: A SYSTEM OF SOCIAL ORGANISATION

THE first thing to remember about Socialism is that it is a system of social reconstruction. It is not a code of personal conduct; it is not something which you and I can practise. Nor is it a hot-house growth. When we speak of applying Socialism to India, we mean the reorganisation of the whole economic and social life of the country; its farms, factories, schools, theatres. No doubt, it is possible to run the life of a single village or the business of a single factory on socialist lines. But, that would not be Socialism. The picture cast by a prism on the laboratory wall has seven colours, but it is not the rainbow of the skies.

It follows, therefore, that those who desire to construct a socialist society should have the power and the requisite sanction behind them to do so. No group of idealists can build up Socialism unless it has power in its hands.

What is meant by power? If one looks at the world of today, one finds that the instrument through which groups, parties, individuals attempt to enforce their plans, their schemes, over the Community, the Nation, is the *State*. When the State is in your hands, you can legislate, you can use the whole magnificent apparatus of propaganda and education that modern science has made available; you can enforce your will. And, if there is resistance you can use the coercive arm of the State—the police and the army—to crush it. Behind every piece of legislation lies the State's power to persuade and, ultimately, to coerce.

No party in the world of today can build up Socialism unless it has the machinery of the State in its hands; whether it has come to acquire it through the will of the electorate or by a *coup d'etat* is irrelevant to our discussion just now.

As a corrollary to this, we can state another proposition: A party in power, i.e., in possession of the State, may reasonably hope to establish Socialism, provided it has either of two things: sufficient power of coercion to put down resistance or sufficient popular support to be able to deal with opposition.

Both in the end mean the same thing. The coercive powers of a Socialist State, if they exist at all, are bound to be derived from popular support—the "unpopular" support, that is, the support of the classes of property, being rather thrown on the opposite side.

I have said that a party in possession of the State and with the means to keep itself there, can, if it so desired, create a socialist heaven on the earth. What must it exactly do to begin doing this? Must it haul up all the "exploiters" and pot-bellied capitalists and have them shot? Must Pandit Jawaharlal, supposing he became the Premier or President of Socialist India, line up Taluqdars of the U.P. and have them blown up to bits? Must he seize the treasures of the *rajas* and the *mahajans* and distribute them to the people—equally, of course? Must he turn over the Tata Iron Works, for instance, to the workers employed there, and leave them to make as good or bad a business of it as they please? Must he split up all the land in the country, divide the total acreage by the total population, and hand over a little plot to each individual? Will that be Socialism?

No. Socialism is something more sensible, more scientific, more civilized than all that.

What, then, must Pandit Jawaharlal do?

We can find the answer to this question, if we take a look at the society we live in—here and abroad.

INEQUALITY: THE CENTRAL PROBLEM OF SOCIETY

The first thing that strikes us is the strange and painful fact of inequalities—inequality of rank, of culture, of opportunity; a most disconcertingly unequal distribution of the good things of life. Poverty, hunger, filth, disease, ignorance —for the overwhelming many. Comfort, luxury, culture, position, power—for the select few. In *our* country as much as anywhere else; perhaps more here than elsewhere. Where, indeed, will you find such contrasts of wealth and poverty, of despotism and degradation as in unhappy India?

This fact of inequalities, with all its brood of social consequences, is the central problem of our society. It is to the

solution of this problem that have been directed the best efforts of the best men in all ages, in our age more than in any other. Charity, philanthropy, utopias, appeals to the more fortunate to be kind to the less fortunate, denunciation of the rich and exaltation of poverty, curtailment of wants—these have been the common reactions to this evil of inequalities.

The socialist's reaction is very different from these. His approach to this problem is like that of the physician to disease. He does not take the fact of inequalities for granted and then proceed to level them up. He endeavours rather to tackle the problem at the source so as to check the very growth of inequalities.

BIOLOGICAL INEQUALITY

In tracing the source of this evil, the socialist first of all encounters the biologist. He is told that human beings are not born equal, as the democrat loves to repeat, but very much unequal. From birth we are said to differ in innate capacity—both in quantity and quality. This of course is true and undeniable. Even a behaviourist will have no difficulty in admitting the biologist's claim.

But let us see how this fact of biological inequalities affects the socialist's examination of social inequalities. He admits that the normal bell-shaped curve of probabilities applies as much to human abilities as to any other phenomenon. In society there is at one end a small group of geniuses and at the other an equally small group of half-wits and idiots, while in the centre is the vast majority of humanity with more or less equal capabilities.

These biological differences appear in numerous social forms. We get, for example, inequalities in learning and achievements in the arts and Sciences. Then, we have inequalities of rank, of wealth and power of opportunity. Now the Socialist's protest never was against the fact that Tagores and Ramans exist in society. If anything, he is glad that they do exist. He regrets, however, that hundreds of potential Tagores and Ramans go unknown to the grave owing to the fact that

they are denied opportunities for self-development. The evil of inequalities was never said to lie, either by socialists or others, in the fact that only a few are gifted by Nature to become great poets and scientists. The socialists' plea is that the evil lies in the inequalities of the second set enumerated above, viz., inequalities of rank, wealth, etc. In our modern world, where property has become a universal social sanction, it is the unequal distribution of property that is the core of the social problem.

INEQUALITY OF WEALTH NOT DUE TO BIOLOGICAL INEQUALITY

Wherefore then, this unequal distribution of wealth? It may be suggested that here too biology does the trick. The clever ones among us make better businessmen and therefore grow richer than the others. Supposing we grant this for the moment; does it explain the wealth of those who come to acquire it by inheritance? In the case of inherited wealth, it is obvious, of course, that biological qualities play no part at all. The idiotic heir of a millionaire would just as well inherit the millions of his ancestors as he would if he were a genius. Here it is obvious that it is merely the existence of a social standard, custom, that is responsible for the fortunes of heirs. Change that custom, and millions of people who are wealthy today would suddenly grow poor.

But let us take the case of those who have made their own fortunes. Have they not done so because of their superior ability?

That to be a successful businessman a certain type and degree of ability is required, cannot be denied. But, would it not be rather strange that divine dispensation should have ordained that only one type of human ability should be productive of wealth, while all others should acquire wealth only at the will of the wealthy? A great mathematician may be the greatest of his time but his researches, while they bring him immortality perhaps, do not in themselves mean wealth for him. Has not his genius even as much value as that of an ordinary businessman who makes money by following certain

set rules of the game? A scientist, no matter how clever, does not make any money from his laboratory, unless, of course, he turns a businessman. The businessman's laboratory alone seems to be productive of wealth.

Let us see what this laboratory is and how wealth is created and accumulated.

PRODUCTION AND ACCUMULATION OF WEALTH

In the world we have men on one side and Nature on the other. All wealth is in the womb of Nature. Man must work upon Nature in order to appropriate from it what he wants. All things of use which he does appropriate constitute his wealth. Thus, the source of wealth is Nature and the agency which creates it, is human labour. This is the rock bottom of all economics.

How does wealth accumulate? It is obvious that if men appropriate from Nature just as much as was required for their bare existence, nothing would be left for accumulation. The amount of wealth that man can extract from Nature depends upon his productive power, i.e., the nature of his tools and his methods of work. *For accumulation to be physically possible, therefore, the productive powers of man should be so advanced that he may be able to produce more than he needs for his subsistence.* This is the fundamental basis of accumulation. When the arts of hunting, fishing, planting have advanced enough to yield more than is necessary for the lowest existence, accumulation becomes possible.

Now in a society in which the arts of production have advanced beyond the subsistence level, each member would be *able* to accumulate a certain amount of wealth, *provided* he was free to work for himself, owned his own tools, had free access to Nature and was able to keep all he produced for himself. The maximum rate of accumulation would depend upon the difference between maximum individual production and minimum individual consumption. It might very well happen that some families instead of consuming the minimum used up all they produced. These will not be able to accumulate anything. They, however, will not starve, because we

have assumed that the stage of production has not only reached but passed the subsistence level.

In this society there may also be some others who are exceptionally intelligent. They may naturally produce a little more than the rest and, if they are thrifty too, they might save comparatively more. On the other hand, people of inferior intelligence might save very little or nothing at all. But, in every case, in such a society, every able-bodied person would be able to accumulate wealth or at least, support himself, if, to repeat the provisos stated above, he is free to work for himself, owns his tools, has free access to Nature and is the master of all that he produces.

Let us turn from this hypothetical society to our own. We find that the methods of production—both agricultural and industrial—are so advanced that a man can easily produce much more than he can consume, even at the present standard of living, which is naturally higher than the primitive stage of our hypothetical society. The Indian cultivator, in spite of his comparatively old-fashioned methods and tools, can produce much more than is necessary for him to live on. Yet we find that millions of our people do not get even a square meal a day. At the same time we also find that there are many people who have not only their wants satisfied, but who are also enjoying a high degree of comfort. How have these conditions of dire want on one side and ease and luxury on the other been created?

Let us take the case of the poor first. Considering the advanced productive powers of our present society, it should have been possible for every Indian not only to support himself but also to accumulate something. But, as a matter of fact, most Indians are not supporting themselves. Why? Because, the provisos which were mentioned above have nearly all disappeared. *The people do not all work for themselves; they have no longer free access to Nature: in many cases they are not the masters of their tools they are not able to keep all they produce for themselves.* How all this has come about would be too long a story to tell. That the fact is true, all of us can see.

The poverty of our people, then, is due to the fact that

the means of production, i.e., tools, materials, land, etc., are no longer in their hands. They have to pay for most of them, and the more they pay for them the lesser their own shares of the produce and the greater their poverty. A larger proportion of them has not even the means to pay for them; there is nothing that they can do except to sell their labour to others. If the means of production were freely available to each individual, there would be no poverty, unless the population rose to such an extent that at the present stage of the productive powers of means of production were unable to produce sufficient wealth to meet the needs of the people. This certainly is not the case in India yet, in spite of its large population.

Now, let us take the case of the rich. How is it that some have come to acquire thousands and lakhs of times as much wealth as the poor? An individual, no matter how clever cannot possibly produce, at any stage of productivity, thousands of times more than others who are using the same means of production. The great riches of the rich are not obviously of their own production. It is impossible for such disproportion in the productivity of men, living in the same society, to exist. We have pointed out above that there is no other way of creating wealth except by working upon Nature, and that the only way of accumulating wealth is by producing more than one consumes. The limits to production are set by the stage of development the arts of production have reached in society. This is true even in the complicated societies of the West, where production is so mechanized. There we find, as we do here too, though not to the same extent, that the means of production, particularly of industrial production, have developed so much that they cannot be used any more by individuals working independently. But, this in no way invalidates my argument. If all the people participating in production took their share of what they produced, the situation would still be the same as in our hypothetical socity. Each member of society would accumulate a fair amount of wealth and there would be no poverty nor concentration of too much wealth in a few hands.

How then, have the great fortunes of present society been made? It may be urged that they are the result of patient

saving by industrious people. The answer is that thrift and industry have not been known to travel for generations in the same family line, nor in themselves have they been found to result in excessive wealth. None of the fortunes of today, especially those founded on industry, has a hoary ancestry. The secret of wealth does not lie in the peculiar talents or blood of the wealthy.

WEALTH AND EXPLOITATION

Our analysis of the process of accumulation furnishes the secret. Suppose that in a society in which production has passed the subsistence level, an individual manages to employ, say, ten other individuals to work for him and pays them only what they require for their subsistence and keeps the surplus for himself. That individual would be accumulating wealth ten times as fast as others who are working for themselves; and he would soon become a very wealthy man. It should be obvious that the volume of his private wealth would increase with the number of individuals he employs.

Suppose again that in the same society another individual came somehow to establish a monopoly over Nature, say, land. By virtue of that monopoly he does not allow anyone to work upon that land, i.e., to cultivate it, unless a share of the produce is vouchsafed him. He too will begin to grow richer than the rest, and his riches will grow in proportion to the land he "owns" and the tribute he exacts from those who till his land. Likewise with other natural resources.

This is the true secret of the inequality of wealth and the true meaning of *exploitation.*

The question may be asked here, why should any individual work for any one else and be thus cheated out of part of his produce when he could easily work for himself and keep the whole of it to himself? A full treatment of this question will involve a survey of the entire social and political history of mankind. Briefly, the answer is that there is no reason why any one should do it and that, as a matter of fact, in history no one has done it except under compulsion.

In all human societies where the open frontier existed so

that any one could clear the jungle and cultivate his own plot, no one worked for another except for mutual benefit. The gifts of Nature, however, were the first to become the monopoly of the few. This monopoly in the earliest days was based on sheer and naked force. A group of people arose practically everywhere who established an exclusive ownership over Nature, particularly over land, and subjugated others to slavery, serfdom, or to the status of just "free" rent-payers.

In industry, as long as the latter remained at a level where independent individual production was possible, industrial exploitation and, therefore, differences in industrial incomes were slow to arise. As, however, production advanced and cities grew, slaves or even individual craftsmen were made to work together for a master, thus creating inequalities in industrial incomes also. The real and rapid growth of industrial fortunes dates, however, from the time steam power, (the Industrial Revolution) came into being, making possible a much larger employment, i.e., *exploitation,* of workers.

It may be urged that there are in society classes of men who neither employ labour nor receive rent or any other tribute, but who nevertheless are quite rich—richer in some cases than the men of the other two classes. For instance, there are traders, speculators, bankers, etc. These neither produce wealth themselves nor do they directly exploit the labour of others engaged in producing wealth. Whatever may be the immediate source of the wealth of these classes, this much at least should be clear that it too must come somehow from the total wealth created in the Community.

Wealth, as we showed, is created by labour and except that portion of it which goes to the producers, it becomes the property of the employing and exploiting classes. But these classes naturally cannot use themselves all the things that their workers have created. These must be sold and other things bought. Thus, traders and speculators come into being and because goods must be sold in order to enable the manufacturers to buy materials for further manufacture and sale, the latter yield, both as buyers and sellers, some part of the surplus wealth that has fallen into their hands to the traders and speculators. Likewise with bankers. They are said to earn interest

on the money they lend. But the interest is created in the process of manufacture and is paid out of the same fund of surplus wealth. Profits, interests, middlemen's commissions,—all these come from the same common fund; the fund created by the surplus wealth appropriated by manufacturers and those who possess a monopoly in the means of production. Money in itself cannot make money, nor can any sort of financial and commercial manipulation do so. The whole game of capitalist business consists in the attempt of the various parts of it to appropriate as large a share of the surplus wealth as possible. Herein lies the secret of all capitalist competition and all the subtle and complicated business practices that are so laboriously taught in the universities.

To repeat, for it will bear repetition, it is the wealth that accumulates in the hands of those who own the means of production, by virtue of their exploitation of others' labour, that constitutes the general fund from which, as a result of the working of the economic organisation, other groups draw their share. It is wrong to believe that these "middlemen" in any manner "create" wealth. Their "money-making" merely means diverting as great a share of the total accumulated wealth as possible in their own direction. Even the professors, lawyers, physicians, etc., fill their ladles from this same common bowl, though in their case, part of their share comes from that portion of the total wealth also that goes to the actual producers—the workers, peasants, etc.

To sum up. The root cause of inequalities of wealth lies in the fact that the gifts of Nature, which yield wealth to men, and the instruments of production, have come to be privately owned by people for their own benefit. This leads to economic exploitation, i.e., the withholding from the workers of all that they produce except what they need to live on at a given standard of living. This takes place either directly, as when labourers are employed to produce goods for the manufacturer, or indirectly, as when men rent land, or any other natural resource, for their livelihood.

The earliest manner in which these sources and instruments (collectively termed "means" in socialist writings) of production passed into private hands was through force. This

is termed "primitive accumulation". The surplus wealth thus accumulated in the hands of those who were able to use force went on multiplying through the ages through the institution of slavery and indentured labour, till the loot from India and the inventions of certain German-Englishmen combined to usher in the Industrial Revolution. This became *par excellence* the age of exploitation, because it made the employment of unheard of masses of labourers in single manufactures possible.

Such being the causes of the present inequalities of wealth, it should not be difficult to imagine what form the socialist solution of this problem would take.

THE CURE OF INEQUALITIES

Theoretically speaking, two solutions are possible, each if practicable resulting in a just, equitable and happy society. The first solution is so to reconstitute society that every individual may be free to work for himself—he may either cultivate his own land (without the payment of any tribute to anyone) or work with his own tools in his workshop. No one may be allowed to possess larger means of production than he can possibly make use of with his own hands.

It should be clear that in order to change the existing order into the one described above, very drastic changes will have to be imposed. For such a society to work smoothly, a degree of social control and discipline would be required which one does not associate with societies whose economic organisation is so primitive. Such a society, moreover, cannot have railways and telegrams—in fact, nothing but the most primitive forms of transport and communication. From a military standpoint such a society, exposed to the rapacity of highly industrialized countries, would be extremely weak and an easy prey to them. From the point of view of standard of living, the people, especially in India where there is such a large population, would have to live on an extremely low level, for *per capita* productivity would be very low.

In short, even if it were possible to adopt this solution as an escape from our present ills, it would be extremely inadvis-

able to do so for innumerable reasons.

It is not, however, possible to adopt this solution. Nothing short of a dictatorship would be required to carry it through. Such drastic transformation of society, involving the destruction of all vested interests, would not be otherwise possible. For such a dictatorship of the small producer there is no social basis in society.

THE SOCIALIST SOLUTION

The socialist solution, as it ought to be clear from our analysis of the process of accumulation of wealth, is to *abolish private ownership of the means of production* and to *establish over them the ownership of the whole community.*

The abolition of private and establishment of social ownership over the means of production mean the eradication of economic exploitation, the ending of economic inequalities; in other words, the removal of the basic curse of present society. The source of accumulation of wealth in private hands is the exploitation of labour, as we saw above. With social ownership established, people no longer work for others. They work for themselves, not individually but collectively; and what they produce is not for the profit of the manufacturer, but for their own consumption. Social ownership means that all wealth is held in common and shared equitably, the basis of distribution being, initially, the amount and character of work done and, finally, the needs of the individual: only that part of the produce being withheld from distribution which is necessary for defence and administration, for schools and hospitals, for economic development, and for other common purposes.

Here, then, is the basic principle of Socialism—socialization of the means of production. Any attempt at socialist reconstruction of society must start with the abolition of the private ownership of the means of production.

For a young State launching upon Socialism, it may not be possible to accomplish this at one stroke. However, if it is to succeed in its purpose, it must effect this change immediately in all those spheres of large-scale production which dominate the economic life of the country and hold the key position.

In developed communities, side by side with the means of

production, rise also means of exchange and distribution—banks, commercial institutions, transport, etc. The latter issue out of and support the former. Their purpose is to keep the wheels of production turning. Socialization of the former therefore must also be accompanied by socialization of the latter.

We are now perhaps in a position to say what Pandit Jawaharlal would do, if he came to power.

SOCIALISM AND INDIA

We have been accused of attempting to import a foreign system into India, which has its own peculiar problems and solutions thereof.

I wish to make it clear that we have no desire to disregard either the peculiar problems of India or its historic-cultural background. It would indeed be utterly un-Marxian to do so. We have, in fact, examined to the best of our ability the so-called "Indian" solutions; and we are satisfied that *under present conditions* they cannot take the place of Socialism. This is no reflection on the genius of the social philosophers of ancient India. Unfortunately for them Indian Society has changed so drastically, its problems have been transformed so radically, that their ideas hardly bear any relation to present facts. There are certain broad principles which hold good in all ages and climes. But broad principles are of little value when concrete means are sought for the removal of concrete evils. And it is here—not in their conception of general, social and individual good—that the old systems and the new reflections break down completely.

The old principles were laid down when civilization was much simpler than at present. Neither industry nor agriculture had developed far enough to make it possible for men to exploit the labour of others to any considerable extent. All production was on small individual scale. Population was low and Nature kind and bountiful. It was possible for any able-bodied man to clear the jungle and settle down with his family on the reclaimed land.

From this it is a far cry to our present agrarian and industrial problems. Landlordism is an un-Indian institution, mills and factories are also new to the country. New likewise are all the problems that have been created by the imperialist domination. The basic economic problem of our society—the problem of exploitation of the many by the few—which arises, from the monopoly of land and other instruments of production—did not exist in its present universal form at the time of *Manu*.

SOCIALISM NOT BOUND BY NATIONAL FRONTIERS

This problem, which we find has no relation with India's ancient past, has, on the other hand, a basic unity with the problems of the modern world. In China, Japan, England, France, Germany, the United States of America vast majority of the people has to face essentially the same problem. The development of the powers of production, in other words the invention of steam and electrical power, has given birth to, and reared, the most extensive, and thorough system of human exploitation ever known—the system of capitalist production and distribution.

Socialism, which is an inevitable reaction to this system, is, therefore, not bound by national frontiers. Its home is as much in England as in Japan, as much in Germany as in China, in the United States of America as in India. Wherever conditions of capitalist exploitation exist, Socialism too will spread to the four corners of the globe. India can be, and, events are showing, *is* no exception.

The existence of feudalistic relics in India modifies its problems to some extent, but it does not change its essential nature. The balance of power between the various sections of the exploited masses would be somewhat different here, and their transition to Socialism slower—otherwise their *goal* as well as their initial task of overthrowing the system of capitalist-cum-feudal exploitation and rule, would remain essentially the same as in the developed capitalist countries.

INDIAN RECIPES

It is for those who accuse us of imitating the West, to produce a truly "Indian" solution of the problems that face us. But though there has been a good deal of talk about India's peculiarities and its unique recipes for its ills, no one seems to have taken the trouble of formulating them in intelligible language—with perhaps only one honourable exception.

As far as I am aware, Dr. Bhagwan Das is the only one among the leaders of the country, who has given serious thought to this problem, and laid before the public what he considers are Indian solutions of Indian problems. To us what is of greater value and importance than the solutions that the learned Doctor advocates. is his bold insistance on the view that the nature of Swaraj is a subject of paramount importance and calls for urgent and earnest inquiry and discussion. But apart from the socialists, the Doctor stands almost alone in holding this view.

As far as most other lovers of Indian culture are concerned, their task is finished after they have tarred us with the brush of "Foreignism" and prated some nonsense about the folly of troubling about matters that concern the remote future. "Let us win Swaraj first" they say. One wonders if they see the inconsistency of their position when they attack and oppose Socialism. By that action they make it clear that whatever "ism" they might accept after they have won Swaraj, they would, at least, be opposed to Socialism. Apart from being a breach of the neutrality they assume, this gives a clear indication of their sympathies.

Before proceeding to consider some of the alternatives, I should like to point out the curious fact that these Indian culture enthusiasts, when they are faced with Socialism, fail to show the least interest in the *Manu*-ite solution presented to them by Dr. Bhagwan Das. The fate of his Swaraj Scheme is well-known. And now his *Ancient vs. Modern Scientific Socialism* has fallen again, it seems, on deaf ears.

To take a concrete instance. It will be recalled that at the time of the Assembly elections of 1934 the learned Doctor had pointed out that according to Indian traditions it

was for the people to seek out their leader and ask him to legislate for them and not for "candidates" for leadership to go running about begging the people for their "votes". At that time it was not noticed that the lovers of Indian tradition welcomed Dr. Das' suggestion with any visible enthusiasm. I suspect, on the other hand, that he was looked upon by most of these gentlemen as a mere *Manu*-crank.

The greater part of this talk of "Indianism" is, to my mind a mere cloak for reaction and conservatism. If the leaders of the country (with one or two exceptions) sit down today to forge out a Constitution for India, I have not the least doubt that, in spite of all this condemnation of Socialism as un-Indian, that Constitution would be an utter imitation of the democratic constitutions of the West.

IS SOCIALISM OPPOSED TO INDIAN CULTURE?

It is often said that India's conditions are peculiar; that India's traditions are different; that India is industrially a backward country; and that, therefore, Socialism has no applicability here.

If by this it is meant that the basic principles of Socialism have no validity in India, it would be difficult to imgine a greater fallacy.

The laws by which wealth accumulates hold as true in India as elsewhere and the manner in which the accumulation can be stopped is the same here as anywhere else. The peculiarity of Indian conditions may influence and determine the manner and the stages in which the principles of Socialism may be applied here, but never alter those principles. If social ownership of the means of production is essential for stopping exploitation and unequal distribution of wealth in other parts of the world, it is equally essential in India.

As for Indian traditions, as far as I know them, they are not averse to the sharing of life and its privileges. It is said that individualism has always been the dominant feature of Indian civilization and therefore the latter is opposed to Socialism. To put the problem in this manner is not to understand either of the ideals and to get lost in words. Individualism has been the prominent *motif* in our culture only in the sense that

perfection of the individual has been its ideal; never in the sense of narrow, self-seeking individualism, which is the *motif* of capitalist society. And, if individidual perfection is the goal, the socialist has not the least difficulty in showing that such perfection can come about only by aiming at the utmost common good. Does not Trotsky say somewhere that only in a socialist society can the average of humanity rise to the level of a Plato or a Marx?

Finally, India's industrial backwardness need not discourage us. If anything, this backwardness would be helpful to us because it means a much weaker opposition. As for the practicability of applying Socialism to a region of industrial backwardness, it is enough to remind the reader of what the Russians are doing in some of the most backward parts of the globe.

It is for these reasons that the Party has set for itself the object of establishing a socialist society in India after independence has been won.

THE PROBLEM OF THE VILLAGE

Among Congressmen there is a large section which is devoutly attached to the village and all it stands for. This section, owing to a misunderstanding, feels called upon to take the offensive against the socialists who, it is known, stand for machinery; and therefore, so it is thought, for the exploitation of the village, for the disruption of its beautiful self-sufficient economy (which is non-existent now) and for the growth of parasitic cities.

Let me first of all freely admit all that these friends have to say against the modern cities. These monsters of human habitation—their crowding, their nerve-racking traffic, their insanitation, their ugliness, their slums—rightly make us revolt against them and compel us to look upon them as a menace, as a danger, as enemies of good and sensible living. The city for most of its dwellers is a terrible place of habitation. It has its theatres and resorts of amusements; but these are more like anodynes for tired nerves and fatigued bodies than things of joy and beauty, from which the soul may draw sustenance, or, if you prefer a modern phrase, which may develop and recreate

men's personality.

Further, the modern cities have grown on the exploitation of the people—not however, of the village people alone, but also of the city workers. The conditions of this exploitation bring about an unnatural hostility between city and village, in which the latter invariably gets the worst deal. While art, knowledge, luxury, comfort, are concentrated in the cities, the villages remain neglected, undeveloped—terrible contrasts to the cities which they help to create.

While all this is true, it is wrong to imagine that under Socialism this abnormal growth of the social body would be retained or encouraged. Socialism, if anything, is a technic of social engineering which has as its aim the harmonious and well-balanced growth of the whole of society. Neither the socialist village, nor the socialist city, will bear any resemblance to its present prototype. The contrasts, the inner conflicts, would not only not be perpetuated but systematically fought and eradicated.

It is true that the socialist hugs machinery. But to him machinery is not an instrument of exploitation, not stakes and stocks to which to tie the human body and torture it. Machines to us mean friends of labour—things that relieve human toil; increase its productivity; conquer the wind and the sea for us.

The assumption that machinery will inevitably create monstrosities of cities and rural unemployment by disrupting village economy, is wrong. Machines if used for private benefit by a handful of people who own them, will undoubtedly produce these and worse results. But that society as a whole making use of these efficient and powerful instruments of production for the good of the entire population, will also encounter these same results, is too absurd a proposition to be accepted.

Under Socialism the cities will be planned and concentration avoided, because industry will be diffused. There will be geographical planning as well as statistical. On the other hand the villages will be transformed from little cluster of houses—cut off from the world, tucked away into the recesses of the Earth—to progressive communities, connected with the rest

of the world with electric railways, telephones, radios, roads, buses. The village too will become an industrial unit of production like the city. It will have its self-government, its schools, its recreation, its museum.

CO-OPERATIVE AND COLLECTIVE FAMING IN INDIA

[The problem of encouragement and promotion of Co-operative and Collective Farming by the State in India is all-important. Jayaprakash's views are set forth here. Side by side he cautions us about the next step—peasant proprietorship.—Editor.]

["Common ownership being our goal, it would appear rather strange that we should think of redistributing land to peasants. This necessity arises from the fact that common ownership and cultivation of land would be slow to develop and therefore we will have to begin with peasant proprietorship."

"At present there is grave inequality in the size of holdings. While some holdings are of hundreds of acres, others do not even approach an acre. We, therefore, propose to redistribute the land so as to remove these grave inequalities." —Jayaprakash.]

With this item we approach one of the most difficult and baffling problems that would face any socialist government, much more so the Indian socialist government. Let us carefully consider the matter.

India is a prominantly agricultural country. It is argued, therefore, that it can have little to do with Socialism. We have already shown above that under present world conditions and with the productive resources of society developed as they are today, it is possible to build up Socialism anywhere, no matter how backward the place may be. If there is a party in power in India, desirous of establishing Socialism in the country, the fact of its being predominantly agricultural will not be an impediment. It will lower the pace of socialist reconstruction, but nothing beyond that.

The real question is not the possibility of establishing Socialism; but, whether Indian agriculture, the Indian peasant,

the Indian nation will gain by Socialism. And to this question our answer is emphatic. There is not the least doubt in our minds that Socialism alone can save Indian agriculture from ruin and bankruptcy; can alone make the nation strong and powerful.

The malady of Indian agriculture has gone so far that nothing but a drastic transformation can save it. Briefly, it suffers from the following diseases: vested interests in land which not only exploit the actual tiller of the soil but also make him an indifferent and inefficient cultivator; disproportionately high taxation; an unbearable burden of debt that is fast approaching the breaking point; sub-division of land into utterly uneconomic holdings; low productivity; unsatisfactory methods of marketing; bad credit facilities; lack of balance between industry and agriculture; town and village.

Any one of these is a big enough problem to be tackled, but when all of them have to be faced, as they must be, in order to realise a synthetic and comprehensive solution, no possible measure of reform can cope with the situation.

The only solution is to clear away all the vested interests that lead in any manner whatever to the exploitation of the tiller of the soil; liquidate all agrarian debts; pool the holdings and establish co-operative and collective farming, State and co-operative credit and marketing system and co-operative subsidiary industries.

It should not be supposed that these are "destructive" ideas. They mean the destruction of nothing but that system of exploitation which is inherent in the relationship of tenant and landlord. For the rest, they are wholly constructive, requiring nothing except State guidance, encouragement and propaganda.

Professor Radhakamal Mukherji, in his Agra Extension Lecture, is reported to have admitted that no improvement was possible in Indian agriculture "unless the Indian village was converted from a collection of small isolated holdings to a single co-operative farm, and agriculture was treated as a collective service." An admission which fully bears out our plea.

Those who get frightened at the mere idea of co-operative

and collective enterprise, particularly when applied to the field of agriculture, might suggest that a better alternative would be to create solvent and efficient peasant proprietors, each with an indivisible economic holding, and cultivating his land independently.

Our answer is that, if this is actually done, it too will involve changes no less drastic than those required by us, and that at the same time the result will be infinitely inferior—from the point of view of both the peasants and the nation.

From the peasant's point of view, because an independent peasant runs greater risks and is at a greater disadvantage as producer, seller, buyer and borrower than the peasant who is a member of a co-operative farm. At the same time, he gets none of the facilities and amenities that a large co-operative enterprise must offer its members. Culturally and ethically he is bound to be a much less developed individual, speaking in terms of averages, that one who has shed his narrow individualism and identified himself with the Community.

Considered from the nation's point of view, our case is stronger still. And it should be remembered that the peasant too is a part—the greater part in India—of the nation.

While speaking of the necessity of Socialism in India, I pointed out above that we required Socialism here, as elsewhere, because life here has been so completely disorganised as a result of imperialistic exploitation.

But with individualistic agriculture, no planning would be possible. Consider the prospect of planning, production and distribution in a country where the raw material and the foodstuffs are all grown on little individual holdings. Is the thing possible? What crops must be raised and how much of each are questions which the Community must decide if it wants to decide what manufactured goods it must have; what factories it must build; what food it must consume; what materials it must export in order to import the goods it needs.

This is not possible unless agriculture is organised in larger units than an individual holding. With each village becoming a unit for agricultural production and with each unit working in unison with the others, working as a part of an organised economy, this could be made possible. Of course,

the State, by preferential taxation, may stimulate or curtail the production of given crops even under individualistic agriculture, and thus establish some control over agricultural production, as they did in the early days in Russia. But this would not take the State very far on the road to planning.

Then, again, consider long-time planning. Say, it is desired within a period of years to double the agricultural production of India. Could this be done if agriculture continued to be on an individualistic basis? Of course, one could educate the farmer in improved methods of cultivation and so on; but that alone would not be sufficient. There are limits to agricultural production when the land is subdivided into little plots individually cultivated.

Take again the problem of establishing a balance between agriculture and industry. There can be no solution of the agricultural problem, unless this balance has been established. But this, again, requires co-operative effort and planning, and here again individualistic farming would prove a stumbling block.

If we look at the problem from the point of view of psychology, we shall find that Socialism in agriculture, i.e., co-operative and collective farming is essential for the success of any attempt to recast Indian life on a socialist basis. I have often been asked: why can we not organise our industry on a socialist basis and leave agriculture on the present individualistic one? Our answer is that the existence of the two standards—individualism on one hand and Socialism on the other—would create such maladjustments and friction that the whole hybrid system would be paralysed. Socialism can never go with millions of peasants, owning their own patches of land, cultivating them for their own profit—narrow, selfish peasants. In the same community, a part, the smaller part in India and most other countries, cannot live and work in a corporate manner, while the remaining, and larger part, remains wedded to individualism—with all its waste product of social friction and frustration.

If Socialism has to be built up in a country, corporate life and standards must also grow up in the village along with their growth in the cities.

Thus, look at the problem from whichever side you please, the application of socialist principle to Indian agriculture is inescapable.

What exactly, then, is socialist agriculture, what is co-operative and collective farming?

We all know something about the old Indian village commune. It is true that this was neither the most ancient nor the most common form of agricultural organisation known in India. It finds no mention in the *Manusmriti*. However, it is indisputable that there were long periods of Indian history and long tracts of Indian territory in which a form of village existed —whatever its origin—in which common tenure of land and sometimes also common tillage, were organised and practised. In Madras such villages existed till the other day.

The socialist aim follows in spirit the lines of the old system—except that the socialist village instead of being a closed circle, a closed economic unit, would be an actively co-operating unit in a larger economic system.

In Russia, where alone in our day Socialism is being built up and where a serious attempt has been made, with remarkable success, to socialise agriculture—an agriculture, mind you, no less primitive, no less hidebound by tradition and dominated no less by an ignorant, indolent, narrowly-selfish peasantry—two types of socialised agriculture, rather three, have grown up.

The first form, that we witness, is simply co-operative farming. Under this system, individual holdings remain (though much equalised by the redistribution of the land of the landlords and the capitalist farmers); the old agricultural instruments, horses, etc., remain individual property; but for the purposes of cultivation, the holdings are pooled together and the crop is raised and harvested with joint labour. The produce is distributed according to the size of the holding and the amount of labour put in, after costs have been accounted for.

This is the first lesson in social living. It promotes a community of spirit and by materially increasing the output, it becomes an incentive to the individualistic peasant to take more kindly to community of life and work.

Next step from this is the collective farm. Here no individual holding remains and the basis of distribution is only the amount of labour put in and in some unusual cases, unusual needs. But even in the collective village, individual ownership of tools may yet remain, and pigs and cattle and horses may yet be the property of individuals. While an immense growth in communal living has taken place, yet much of life is lived apart.

So we see as the third stage, the "communes" rise, where there is the utmost possible common living.

Let us be slow instead of hasty as the Russians. Let us use no coercion. Nor does the Party advocate forcible socialization of agriculture, as it does with industry. *Encouragement and promotion* of co-operative and collective farming is the phrase used—encouragement and promotion through education, propaganda, demonstration, subsidy, preferential taxation.

We might use fewer labour-saving agricultural machines in view of our population and the shortage of land as compared with the virgin expanses of Russia's territory. This does not mean that we shall retain the present inefficient plough but perhaps we may not require, at least till industrial development absorbs the surplus rural population, many tractors and mechanical reapers and binders. We shall electrify the village and give it radio. We are criticised as being mere imitators of the West. But we are not out to inmitate. We only wish to learn.

There is a certain type of confused and often interested person who goes about the country saying that the socialists will take away the land from the peasants. We socialists do not have an island across the seas where we shall transport all the land we shall "confiscate" from the peasants. The lands will be where they are and the peasants will have them and cultivate them. The question only is *how* the peasants shall cultivate their land so that society may benefit most—the peasants themselves more than anyone else.

The only plea that we put forth is that social good rather than the good of a small number of individuals should be our goal. And I think, I have been able to show that if the land is tilled in common—better still, if it is owned in common too,

a great boon would be conferred on India's entire rural population. The village would be transformed from its present mean position to one of prosperity and culture, unknown in any age of Indian history.

5

WHY REVOLUTION?--A MARXIST VIEW

—K. S. Shelvankar

WHY REVOLUTION?—A MARXIST VIEW

THE manifold relations in society can all be said to fall broadly into two categories: "basis" and "superstructure". By "basis" we mean the economic system, those fundamental relations by which human beings maintain their existence. The "superstructure" denotes the activities and institutions which are administrative, and theoretical, psychological, spiritual in character. We argued, first, that this superstructure is determined by the basic economic system, and secondly, that the economic system is itself a function of the state of the productive forces.

But we have not yet asked how the productive forces themselves come into being, what they are conditioned by. This is easy to answer, for the productive forces are in their simplest or original and primary form things, material objects, tools. These cannot be produced, as it were, out of a man's head; they are a part of nature, appropriated from nature by man, the outcome of a necessity determined by conditions external to man. Hence the character of the productive forces is determined in the first instance by the peculiarities of the geographical environment. Stone axes clearly could not have been produced by men in an environment where stone was lacking. If, later, stone axes become obsolete and more advanced productive forces come into being, the development does not take place spontaneously or automatically. It is urged on, controlled, by men—and men have always belonged to a specific social formation, to a specific economic system, i.e., participated in a particular set of productive relations. The development of the productive forces is thus a function of the economic system. Coal, electricity, etc., are all to be found in nature but they are not appropriated and converted into productive forces until the economic structure, the production relations, have reached a certain degree of maturity.

We are therefore faced with a paradox: the production relations are conditioned by the productive forces, and the

latter again are conditioned by the production relations. The paradox, however, is only apparent. We are dealing not with abstract, metaphysical entities, but concrete, historical relationships. Man has power over nature, and likewise, nature has power over man. Both statements are equally true. But we accord priority to nature because man, society, is a product of nature; we accord priority again, to the productive forces because the inescapable condition of the existence of human societies is the maintenance of a relation with nature, a technological relation embodied in the productive forces. This does not, however, preclude us from recognising that society, having emerged from nature, subsequently modifies nature, that the economic system, created by the productive forces, subsequently shapes the movement of those very forces. This process of constant interaction between society and nature, between the economic system and the productive forces must, moreover, be regarded as inherently contradictory. A moment's reflection will show why. A certain state of the productive forces requires a particular economic system; the economic system drives the productive forces forward: whereupon a disequilibrium is created between the new stage that the productive forces have reached and the social formation within which they effected the advance. The two no longer accord with each other, there is a contradiction between them, a contradiction which calls for a modification of the production relations as the condition of its solution.

It is essential to remember that this process of interaction is not merely abstract, but takes place in and through human beings. The economic structure which changes and brings about changes is a living system or organization of numerous interdependent parts—it is not a homogeneous, non-human, monolithic quantity. A disturbance of the relations between society and nature as expressed in the movement of the productive forces denotes a dislocation and requires a readjustment of this system of human relations which cannot, evidently, occur without an alteration of human habits and anticipations, of mind and wills. It would be ridiculous to suggest that the material productive forces rise up and of their own power effect the reorganisation, these regroupings: they are

effected by men themselves, in accordance with the exigencies of the material productive forces. The harmony or disharmony between economic structure and productive forces is thus reflected in a corresponding harmony or disharmony between the constituent elements of the economic structure; and where the principal constituent elements are classes, distinguished from each other by their control over the means of production—in the harmony or disharmony between them. A class system, as production relations in general, is initially at all events in harmony with the prevailing productive forces. Hence, leaving aside the struggles involved in the very emergence of this system, we may say that in the early stages there is harmony, certainly no open conflict, between the classes belonging to the new order. In proportion, however, as the distance between economic structure and productive forces once more widens, the disparity of interest between the classes is accentuated.

But the growth of the productive forces is not an uninterrupted upward progression: nor is the sharpening clash between the classes without its final outcome. The productive forces are checked when the resiliency of the economic system is exhausted: that is to say, when they come up against a resistance built into the very fabric of class societies—the proprietary rights of a class over the means of production. Similarly, the class antagonism is brought to an end with the establishment of the ascendancy of the class which wields or embodies the developed productive forces. In the one case as in the other, the issue thus turns on property. For, in the last analysis, ownership gives men a reason for resisting change. It gives them power, privilege, and the opportunity of exploiting their fellow-men; more significantly, it schools them in the belief that the defence of the existing social and economic system is a question not only of self-preservation but of duty. Their ideals, values, religions, even their conceptions of what Mr. Huxley calls the "meaning of life" are intimately bound up with it. In very truth, they stand or fall with the "thing" they own. The given property relations therefore serve as the extreme limit beyond which gradual, evolutionary changes are impossible. They define the outlines of a society, distinguish-

ing it from those which went before and those which are to come after. Within society, circumscribed in this manner, the productive forces develop and lead to alterations, of more or less importance, in the production relations; but when their continued development requires the overthrow of the *fundamental* production relations, i.e., property relations, a decisive crisis is reached—one of the turning points in history. A long phrase of "evolutionary" advance, of minor contradictions successfully overcome, thus culminates in a major contradiction between the productive forces and the production relations, the solution of which depends on the revolutionary disruption of the framework within which society had evolved up till then.

2.

Property, however, is not simply an economic or social fact; or rather, because it is this, it is also a political fact. It is incorporated and enshrined in the central institution of all civilised peoples, the State. Metaphysicians, as is their habit, have seen in this institution too an embodiment of a supernatural principle constraining men to be Good and eschew Evil, but since we wish to refrain as far as possible from using words to which we cannot attach a precise meaning, we must be content with the evidence which associates the origin and functions of the State with the origin of private property and the interests of the possessing class. It is, in any case, undeniable that, throughout recorded history, the cleavage between those who owned and those who operated the means of production has roughly coincided with the cleavage between the ruling and the subject class. This is not to say that we are in a position invariably to find a direct link between property and political power. The connection has often been circuitous or obscure. Like other phases of the superstructure, the State too, once it has come into existence, develops a limited degree of autonomy, and may thus come to be looked upon, particularly in those intermediate evolutionary phases to which we have already referred, as an authority set over society and above its contending classes.

Similarly, some of the functions of the State—the safeguarding of public health, for example—cannot always be said to derive immediately out of the needs of the ruling class. But whether or not they are discharged effectively depends on the energy and the resources that the dominant minority thinks fit to divert from its main preoccupation. And the main preoccupation we may describe briefly as the effort to develop the existing mode of production and to supply its essential prerequisites—education, for instance, or railway and postal services in modern industrial states and facilities for irrigation in the agricultural communities of the East. Up to a point, the welfare of the subject class is also bound up with the preservation of the prevailing economy; hence such measures as are indispensable to that preservation acquire an air of beneficence, even apart from the interests of the State. However, in class societies the economic system is at the same time a system of exploitation. There is always an actual or latent clash of interest between the classes, and of divergent interests within each class. To subjugate, crush or deflect these antagonisms, or to reconcile them, is thus a necessary part of the general purpose of maintaining social stability, and when all other means, of bribery and deception, have been tried, violence remains the sole alternative. That is why we find the essence of the State, not as Mr. Huxley suggests, in the conveniently misty regions of ethics and psychology, but in the perfectly plain and unmistakable power of coercion that it wields.

These considerations about the nature of the State—accepted, if not "theoretically", at all events by implication and in practice by most contemporary historians and sociologists—must be recalled in order to complete our analysis of the dynamics of human evolution. Periodically, we said, the discrepancy between productive forces and the economic structure announces itself as a contradiction in the relations between men. In class societies, the contradiction takes the form of an irreconcilable antagonism between classes, and there is no way of rising above the antagonism or reconstructing society save by an act of destruction: the destruction of the property system which impedes the further development of the productive forces. We can now see why the whole

process is also political in character. It is through the State, and its laws and organs, "sanctioned" ultimately by violence, that the dominant class exerts its authority and asserts its will. It is within the limits permitted by this truly "steel frame" that the productive forces evolve and the accompanying social and political modifications are effected. When, therefore, the point is reached where the productive forces cannot advance save by breaking up the economic system, and the interests of the two classes are found to be antithetical, the struggle between them inevitably takes the form of a political struggle for power. The State, the organized violence of the State, is the chief instrument by which the ruling class protects the order to which it is wedded and resist the new which threatens to annihilate it. Hence the seizure of the State and its transformation have ineluctably to precede the inception of a new evolutionary cycle. These are the human acts, the revolutions, by which in class society the contradiction between productive forces and production relations is solved; and the dates on which they are accomplished mark, with as much precision as we can ever hope to attain, the dividing line between one society, one historical epoch and another.

It follows that a revolution is not to be regarded, as Mr. Huxley regards it, simply as a tussle between tyrants and would-be tyrants. On the contrary. Both in the process of its fruition and after, it penetrates and modifies every phase of social life. Subsidiary revolutions, minor crises and contradictions—in religion and philosophy, in art and science and the psychology of men—synchronise with and participate in what we are too prone to underestimate as a "merely political" event. We have already seen that, although the different departments of the superstructure acquire a certain measure of autonomy, their development is controlled by their constant interaction with one another and with the foundations of society—that is to say, among other things, with the class character of society. Hence the defence of a given economic system and of the State built upon it involves at the same time a defence of the "ideologies" shaped by the dominant class during the period of its growth and ascendancy. The need for such defence only arises because the revolutionary class, in

the course of its development, has brought into existence critical and dissident schools of thought which grow in influence and strength in proportion as that class becomes powerful in society—that is, in proportion as the basic social discord becomes aggravated. In view of the specific character of the superstructure, its involutions and counter involutions, it is no doubt impossible to draw a straight and sharp line of demarcation corresponding to the situation of the classes at any given time. But the link between the two, between the movement of ideas and the movement of events—which is but the concrete historical expression of the development of class antagonisms—could hardly be missed if we were to follow them over a period of years, and particularly in such aspects of philosophy and science as are most directly concerned with the problems of society. The struggle to subvert the State is thus not only a political struggle, waged with the appropriate weapons, but a "theoretical" struggle to break down the ideological armature of the ruling class; and the Revolution which dissolves a class society that has outlived its usefulness marks also the birth of a new cultural epoch in the history of mankind.

In any society, the state of the productive forces is of cardinal importance, for it determines in the first instance the character of the economic system. The development of these two is conditioned by their interaction with each other. The process is interrupted by the emergence of a revolutionary phase in which an element integral to the economic system proves resistant to the productive forces. In class societies, this phase is marked by the intensification of class antagonisms; and the obstructive property relations can only be eliminated by seizure of the political apparatus which is used by the owning class to defend itself and uphold the obsolete economic system.

Are these conclusions capable of throwing any light on the deepening chaos of the world today, and directing us in our search for the best course to pursue? An answer to the question requires, needless to say, that we should fix our attention on the prevailing economic system; consider its growth and its remaining potentialities; instead of adopting a number of arbitrary starting-points, education, the State, religion, war,

"planning", social reform, equality, etc. etc.—as though these were all independent categories, independent at any rate of the fundamental life processes of society.

It is a truism nowadays to say that, since capitalism arose out of the conditions of feudal society, there has been a gigantic growth of the productive forces. Science and technology have combined to subdue nature more effectively than in any past age. In so far as this development admits of precise computation, i.e., in terms of horse-power, the increase in the world total is estimated by experts to be over a thousandfold. The consequence of such an enormous expansion of productive power is that the resources of nature upon which the material existence of man is built are today available in greater abundance than ever; and although the world's population, too, has in the meatime risen to an unprecedented figure, there is no longer any *technical* reason why the lives of the vast majority of men should be "nasty and brutish", steeped in squalor and poverty, stultified and perverted to the extent that they are.

These facts are not in dispute. It is equally indisputable that the production relations, and the corresponding forms of social and political organisation have also undergone numerous changes since the disruption of the feudal order by the nascent bourgeoisie. The class composition of society, the structure of the State and the dominant features of the economic system were all, of course, very different in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—to go no farther back—from what they are in the twentieth. It would be unnecessary, even if we had the space, to attempt to trace the successive stages of their evolution. But there is a transition of quite exceptional significance which we must consider for a moment—the transition, as we may say, from the old to the new capitalism.

The formula succinctly epitomises a double change the consequences of which were not only far-reaching, but closely inter-related. In the first place, as a result of the new technology and the competitive principle inherent in capitalism the organisation of industry on a small scale and in small units was superseded by large-scale production. Giant firms began to dominate the market in which formerly a multitude of individual producers had struggled to outbid each other for the con-

sumer's favour. The very size of these new enterprises, however, involved the outlay of larger sums of capital than any single capitalist could supply. It involved, in other words, the concentration of funds drawn from many sources, and thus brought about an alliance between industry and finance in which the industrialist was usually the junior partner. The "small man" was not completely eliminated by the emergence of such monopolistic and semi-monopolistic concerns, but in all important spheres of economic life the reins of control thereby passed into the hands of finance capital, "a power that is peculiarly mobile and flexible, peculiarly intertwined at home and internationally, peculiarly devoid of individuality and divorced from the immediate processes of production."

This is, however, but one aspect of a development which appears from the other side as an extension of the capitalist system over all the pre-capitalist areas of the world. The need for markets and raw materials which had animated the capitalism of an earlier period was only felt the more keenly when industry, in its modern "trustified" form acquired the capacity to turn out goods in almost unlimited quantities. These requirements were now incorporated with and subordinated to an urgency that revealed itself little by little as the essential characteristic of this whole phase—the export of capital, of the surplus profits that monopoly industry was able to earn in the domestic market, to countries where it commanded a higher rate of profit, where labour was cheap, and the natural resources yielded a richer harvest. Again, while the merchant corporations of the earlier period had been concerned in the main to obtain and defend exclusive rights of trade, the new capitalism was driven to establish varying degrees of political control—often amounting to outright conquest and annexation—and to bring about a more or less rapid transformation of the economic structure of the country concerned, in order both to safeguard the capital that was being poured in and to create and monopolise opportunities for further development. Colonial expansion on these lines thus came to be the counterpart of the movement which produced the monopoly of finance capital out of the free, competitive capitalism which had prevailed during the greater part of the

nineteenth century. Since this movement occurred not in one country alone, but in several—more or less simultaneously—and since competition was by no means abolished, but rather intensified between them, the drive for colonies proceeding from these different centres resulted, not without friction and conflict and war, in a division of all the occupied and unoccupied areas of the world between a handful of the so-called Great Powers. Each of them either "owned" or exercised a predominant interest over large sections of the globe, which constituted their empires, and through their interaction they effected a greater degree of interdependence between the different parts of the world than was ever known.

We may say then—and there would surely be few to question the statement—that the development of capitalism has had two results of overriding significance. First, productive capacity has been heightened to a point which, in theory, makes it unnecessary for any of the earth's inhabitants to be hard-pressed for the means of existence. Second, the different parts of the world have been drawn together so as to expose every country to the influence of changes occurring in every other. But the interdependence is qualified by the presence of empires each controlled by an oligarchy of finance capital (which is only a more precise description of the "ruling class" which is in possession of the State today). At the same time, the basic feature of the economic system, its capitalist character, has endured as the innermost principle of the evolutionary course that mankind has followed during the last three centuries.

Are we, however, justified in holding that capitalism *is* the innermost principle of this evolution, that the changes to which we have referred were brought about "as a result" of the development of capitalism? To answer this question we must examine briefly what capitalism is and how it works. The distinguishing mark of capitalism as an economic system is that it places the means of production in the hands of a class which consents to utilise them—and thus to offer employment and a living to the other sections of society, including principally the working class—only to the extent that such use is calculated in the prevailing marked conditions to yield a profit.

To understand how capitalism works, it would be best perhaps to start with the obvious truth that capitalists complete for profit. Success depends on their ability to sell more cheaply than their competitors—that is, to reduce their costs of production. They are impelled, therefore, constantly to improve and to perfect technical process, to instal larger and more complex machinery, and in general to increase the productivity of labour. In the measure they thus advance the productive forces, their rivals are ruined, expropriated: "one capitalist always kills many"; capital is concentrated in fewer and more powerful hands, and capitalism acquires the corporate and monopolistic character to which we have already alluded. The effect and, indeed, the object of mechanisation is to render labour superfluous. "The demand for labour decreases to the extent to which capital makes the worker more productive and in proportion to such productivity." As once millions of handworkers were displaced by machinery, so the improvement and the extension of the use of machinery involve the displacement of large numbers of machine workers and, ultimately, the creation of an "industrial reserve army"—i.e. a mass of available wage workers in excess of the average requirements of industry. To say that more and more people are excluded from production is, however, only another way of saying that a gradually diminishing number of workers are actually employed in the productive process. Since under capitalism, by definition, the income of all classes other than the owners consist of the wages and salaries (and charity) that they receive, there must naturally take place a simultaneous contraction of the amount distributed in this form, and hence of the consuming power of society. That is to say, the development of the productive forces and the restriction of the market which alone can absorb the commodities produced are inseparably connected with each other.

We may now state the position in more abstract terms. The aggregate capital of society—the resources of production used for production—tends to grow as capitalism develops; but that part of the total which is expended in the form of wages—variable capital—diminishes in proportion to constant capital, embodied in machinery, tools, plant, etc. Variable

capital, however, not only pays wages, but creates new values; it alone breeds surplus value, or profit; and the rate of profit expresses the relation between the amount of profit and the total capital involved. The widening disproportion between variable and constant capital, the diminution of variable capital brought about by the development of the productive forces means, therefore, a decline in the rate of profit. This decline can be counteracted, or rather in spite of it the amount of profit can be increased, say doubled, by doubling the magnitude of variable capital. But if variable capital is to be doubled, constant capital must be more than doubled, for, with the growth of technology an ever greater amount of constant capital is required as compared with variable. To beat off the falling rate of profit and to increase the amount of profit, capitalists are therefore compelled unceasingly to accumulate more and more capital. Yet the ultimate effect of such accumulation is only to sharpen the disparity between productive power and consuming power that we have noticed above. For accumulation only signifies the heaping up of the means of production, a rise in the productivity of labour through the application of larger and improved machinery. The composition of capital is altered: there is a decrease in the proportion of variable to constant capital; hence also a decrease in the consuming power of society relative to productive power at its new and enhanced level. The disparity between the two cannot be bridged by "high" wages and an arbitrary distribution of purchasing power for the simple reason that the funds for this purpose can only be drawn from the profits which are needed for accumulation, the essential process by which the amount of profit is maintained and increased.

Capitalism, then, is a system which must continually expand as the condition of its survival; it *must*—regardless of the whims of any individual capitalist—seek to pile up capital, increase productive capacity and widen the market. These compulsions, however, inevitably conflict with the hard fact that the very measures which enable the capitalists to produce at a profit, the limitation of the consuming power of the masses, prevents them from selling the commodities produced. At each successive stage in the growth of capitalism, the dis-

harmony between the available forces of production and the "effective demand" of the masses—demand backed by purchasing power—is repeated and accentuated.

3.

Since capitalism must expand—and the need for expansion becomes the more acute when capitalism reaches the highly organised stage of monopoly that has been described as finance capital—it must, after a certain point, look outwards for the markets without which it cannot exist, the "colonies" which by very reason of their being undeveloped are still able to absorb its otherwise unsellable consumers' goods and its otherwise unusable capital. It was as a result of this quest for markets, inevitable in the circumstances of capitalist production, the world first came to be divided into a number of great empires. Notwithstanding the advantage of overwhelming strength that lay on the side of imperialism, this process was not carried through without abominable cruelty and the imposition of grave hardships on the subjugated peoples; and among its results was the "naturalisation" of the capitalist mode of production in the backward country. Once the partition of the world has been completed, capitalist societies do not of course cease to develop. But they develop unevenly, at varying tempos in varying countries. When in any particular country the development reaches the stage of monopolistic organisation, the need for foreign markets becomes imperative, but no foreign market can be broken into without disturbing the equilibrium represented by the existing division of the world. The acquisition of new markets and the defence of markets already "owned" or controlled thus form the core of the antagonism between rival monopolistic groups, the core of world politics. Their conflicting claims are enforced by legislative, economic and diplomatic means; they are adjusted and regulated by conferences and international agreements; but, inevitably, when all these measures fail and the necessity for expansion becomes irresistible, the capitalism of the country concerned must either resign itself to collapse and suffocation or seek to assert its demand by military force.

There is no third course open; and war, when war is decided upon, is but a continuance of the policy of expansion which monopoly capital had formerly pursued by other, "peaceful", methods. The opportunity for such expansion has, however, been severely curtailed, since 1917, mainly by the withdrawal of the vast territories of what used to be the Tzarist Empire from the range of capitalist exploitation, while at the same time the number of fully developed capitalist societies has increased. In a world that offers relatively less scope for imperialist expansion, the urgency to expand is shared by more imperialisms than ever. Clearly, there is no device compatible with capitalism by which that urgency can be satisfied save war, as the spectacle of the world around us abundantly testifies.

Inescapably, therefore, capitalism, if left alone, must plunge us into the horrors of war. Meanwhile, it surrounds us with the scarcely less fearful "horrors of peace"—with poverty and hunger and destitution, and the threat of insecurity which confronts all but the most fortunate amongst us. Such are, no doubt, the invariable accompaniments of capitalist crises; but so long as capitalism as a whole was expanding that is, so long as the growth of one capitalist group did not involve the crippling of another capitalist group—they served as a prelude to the resumption of production at a higher level, and hence also to an increase in wages and employment. But in the circumstances of today, when every capitalist society is desperate and hard pressed, crises are only mitigated by the development of the armaments industry to monstrous proportions, and they can be "resolved", if at all, only by the ultimate holocaust of war. For, as it must be patent to everyone, capitalism is no longer capable of organising the gigantic productive forces that it has brought into being, a failure of which the most glaring expression is the chronic unemployment of scores of millions of workers throughout the capitalist world. Far from expanding production, modern monopolies find it impossible, because unprofitable to use more than a fraction of the available resources of production; while the "economic reconstruction" demanded by publicists of Mr. Huxley's type, and carried out most thoroughly in Germany and Italy, leads

not so much to increased production and employment, but to a restriction of output and the State guarantee of profits at the expense of the "small man", the worker or the consumer.

We are now in a position to understand why there is in our time "a regression in charity, especially in politics", which Mr. Huxley notes with his characteristic "detachment", but without offering an explanation. Politics is the sphere in which the social atagonisms intensified by the manifest breakdown of the economic system acquire decisive significance. The opposition between the interests of the classes is latent in every class society, but it is smoothed over as often as it expresses itself so long as the society continues to develop. When, however, that development is checked, as is the case today, by the incompatibility of the productive forces with the property relations underlying the economic system, and a general decline sets in, the consequences bear most heavily upon the working class. Their interests are then irreconcilably opposed to those of the owners—for the only measure which can alleviate their condition is the destruction of the property system which binds and fetters the productive forces. In proportion as the working class becomes revolutionary, it must present a challenge to the State machine by means of which finance capital protects its monopoly. That such is in fact the purpose which the State largely serves today, no one who has followed the history of recent years can well doubt. Even in the democratic countries where the State is supposed to be "above classes"—more and more dictatorial powers have been assumed by the Government, not merely to facilitate the preparation and waging of war, but to combat the rising militancy of the workers. This tendency has only been brutally extended by fascism, the major achievement of which has been to break up the workers' standard of life, and the major preoccupation of which is to discipline the workers into passive instruments of imperialism, ready to work or to kill—for the greater glory of capital.

Hunger, war and fascism—these are the triple fruits of imperialism. They are the interdependent expression of the truth that capitalism is "played out", that it has deprived itself, by its very growth, of the capacity to effect any social

advance. It "has become disloyal to its mission", which is "the ruthless development in geometrical progression, of the productivity of human labour". Within its decaying structure, there can be nothing but recurrent instability, recurrent war and a steady relapse into the barbarism tempered with balderdash that the fascists preach and practise. On the other hand, the only basis of a "better society" that is not utterly utopian is provided by the "socialisation" of the productive process which has been carried to such an extent under capitalism that no man can say that a commodity is entirely of his own making. It is this "socialisation" which affords the opportunity for the development of the classless and hence also the Stateless society. Before that can happen, however, capitalist private property, already resting on "socialised" production, must be transformed into socialised property, and the working class which alone can engineer the Revolution must, as in Russia of 1917, seize the State apparatus which is being used to prevent the accomplishment of this change. From being a weapon of finance capital, the State must become a weapon of the common man.

6

WHAT IS ANARCHISM?

—*M. P. T. Acharya*

WHAT IS ANARCHISM?

ARCHY means Government, rule, state—ANARCHY means non-rule, non-government, non-state. The Anarchists want non-rule, non-government, non-state. They want a non-governed, non-ruled, non-state society. Here, anarchism is the antithesis, the opposite of all other-isms. It negates fundamentally the necessity of all states, whatever their form. While in other-isms they try to find a synthesis between State and Society, the anarchists believe, consider and think that the State is the enemy of Society, i.e. the state will suppress the society or the society will have to suppress the state. That means the two cannot be co-existent. They therefore negate the theory of the State being the collective will of the Governed, whether it is the liberal or democratic state, or the absolutist and dictatorial state, whatever the extreme form, i.e. whether the Fascist or Marxian state. All states are dictatorial—preliminarily or ultimately. No constitution can be established except by violence. The most democratic constitutions had a violent rebellion before them to eliminate the previous rulers and states, and under that violence, new constitutions were formulated and established. Therefore the claim that constitutions are established by the free will of the people is incorrect.

If the states—or any states—were non-violent, where is the necessity for armies, police and jails? The last arguments of all states are the army, police and jails. Every constitution is protected by army, police and jails. As much as autocracies! No state can exist without these.

There is no constitution which says that no army, police and jails should be used. In fact, the emergency of danger to state can be proclaimed by all constitutions. What is emergency is a matter of interpretation by states and parliaments. When, as is generally done under constitutions of the freest kind, the emergency is proclaimed to exist, all constitutions are suspended, and the army, police, and jails come to defend the state and constitution. Peter Kropotkin, once a prince

and later an anarchist, declared in his "Appeal to the Young", what is the use of constitutions when martial law can be declared in defence of the State? When the rebels make trouble, the constitutions are shelved and the state is managed and defended by violence in the name of the will of the people." States thus create civil wars, even constitutional states. When the different parties and interests agree to rule together, there is constitution, when they fall out, there is civil war and suspension of constitution. The states born of violence cannot defend themselves without violence. Thus a non-violent state does not, cannot exist. All states in essence are violence, concentrated violence over society—whatever their forms and shades, just as much as autocratic absolutist kings are. To speak of non-violent society and state in the same breath is mutually contradictory. Non-violent society can therefore come into being only with the abolition or "withering away" of states of every kind. Therefore to produce a non-violent society, the anarchists work consciously, instead of leaving it (as Marxians do under the excuse of "transition stage") to time and chance. All states refuse to wither away and try to perpetuate themselves as long as possible. The anarchists are therefore the only ones who want to abolish violence over and within society. They want that to be done deliberately. There will be eternal war between state and society and finally the state will not wither away but will be suppressed—that is the anarchist thesis. The object of evolution is for the society to get on without state and rule from without. The anarchists want everyone to help evolution to that end consciously and deliberately.

The anarchists maintain all governments are established and maintained only by a minority. Even under constitutions, States are violence by a minority over the vast majority, whether the states and constitutions are accepted voluntarily or enforced with the help of violence. No state can be conducted by all. Only a minority will be allowed to bear arms, even if the majority are allowed to vote. Only a minority will be allowed to manage the state. It cannot be done by a majority by, or after, delegating powers voluntarily, or after deception and compulsion. The anarchists want all to be

rulers in their own right. They do not believe that there can be identity of interests between the representatives and represented. The representatives will serve their own interests even at the expense of the represented. Thus deception and force will prevail. The represented will be finally suppressed by their representatives. The representatives cannot be identical with the represented. Hence proxy-Government is not self-government by the people. In order to have self-government by the people, each has to represent himself directly. That can be done through no state, however radical. *The anarchists mean by non-state (anarchy), government of society by society, by all members of the society.* That cannot be done by a representative government which can only be centralist. Government is always centralism—finally despotism of the centre. Even the most "federalist" or "decentralised" Government like the Swiss, is in the last resort centralist and therefore despotic and cannot be of the people and by the people, therefore for the people. Centralist democracy is a contradiction in terms. Either centralism or democracy is possible; mixing both ideas which are as poles apart is nonsense. No Government can afford to be decentralist and federalist: The autonomy of the parts is an illusion. In most essential matters, even the most "decentralist" government like the Swiss is centralist, it decides as it suits the state best even if it means the curtailment of the liberties and violating, overriding the interests of the autonomous parts. On any essential question, the central state is for itself. Decentralisation and federalism means absence of government which means centralism. So non-government is both decentralisation and federalism—the essential condition of both these. Decentralism and federalism will destroy centralism or centralism will destroy both. There can be no compromise between the two principles which are antitheses. The anarchists go to the logical limit. The anarchists not only want decentralism of regions into local units but also distribution of power, decentralism of power, the making of every one in each locality his own master and representative. The power finally is vested into each individual. Of course, they recognise the necessity for delegation of power, but conditionally and *in the locality*—

where alone the representatives can be under the watchful eyes of all.

Every government can be only by a section of the society against all the rest. There can be no people's government possible, except under anarchy. People (society) or Government but not people's (or social and socialist) government. The anarchists, when they insist on non-governed society, mean government of the people, by the people, for the people,—directly by the people themselves without any intermediary. Society ruling itself, not ruled by a part over itself, which can only be done with violence.

Every governmental "society" is divided into the rulers and the ruled. There are classes among such a society, the largest classes being those who are for the government or against the government. The Government can only be in defence of itself in spite of a class supporting it. The class represented by a government is not all defended equally by that Government. The nearest and most satisfied by the Government is its bureaucracy: Government is bureaucracy, can only be bureaucratic. In the Marxian so-called class-state, the Bureaucracy and Party come before all workers, for they are the mainstay of the State and Government. There cannot be even a class state, for all the class cannot conduct the state after delegation of its powers. Especially as every state is centralist, i.e. despotic. There are gradations of class as there is gradation of income in every class. With such gradations, there is and can be no solidarity and identity of interests, even in one class. The so-called neutrality and justice of the state is but the neutrality of the monkey towards the quarrelling cats. There will be no cheese left for the quarrellers who go before the state for justice. The state will manage its own affairs first and foremost at the expense of the "class brothers". The state is above those whose interests it is supposed to protect and defend, it is outside the pale of its own class. Thus the dictatorship of the proletariat through the state of the advance guard (communist) party becomes inevitably the dictatorship over all the proletariat. The party state cannot represent even the interests of the members of the party which supports it. The state is independent and over the party.

The state of whatever form and name cannot be otherwise, since it can only be run by a bureaucratic, microscopic minority and must rule. The state is the part, but society means whole. Even a class means whole—all members of the class. The theory of state metaphysicians is that the part which is made to represent the whole is identical in interests with the whole, is even the whole. But a part can never be equal to or identical with the whole. It can only be separate from the whole, independent of the whole in the name and under pretext of being delegates of the whole. The whole will go under the part whether this is erected or not, whether it assumes its role of a delegate by force or fraud. No Government can be identical in interests with the people, even with that of the class it pretends to champion, even if these accept and elect it. People or state, class or state—not both together. The people or the class must serve their own interests without the intermediary of anybody, *all representation is illusion.* But that cannot be done through elections and constitutions which delegate authority to a distant body. Hence the anarchists want only local elections where the delegates will be under the electors' control and direction. Distant delegates cannot be controlled. Hence they want no state and no centralism which can only be distant. So far they are realists. All others hallucinationists.

The anarchists want freedom, democracy and socialism. But they consider—nay are convinced, these cannot be obtained or maintained under state protection or direction. The states are therefore the enemies of freedom, democracy and socialism, for in the last resort they are despotic and only for the bureaucracy. There can be no Government which is not bureaucratic, i.e. bureaucracy and Government are interchangeable terms. To fight bureaucracies and keep governments is hopeless, since governments breed bureaucracies, red-tapism, red tape itself. People alone, if decentralised administration under local control and management is established, can conduct affairs without bureaucratism, because all things will be above board and under the eyes of the local people at all times. What is in their interests and what is not can be detected, corrected and decided at once.

The theory of capitalist and Marxian states is that a state adjusts and distributes freedom to all equally and justly. But freedom cannot be rationed except by killing it. Sitting in different cells under the distribution of freedom is killing of freedom. *Freedom consists in free association,* if it has to be living. Association does not mean that the cell inmates are ordered by the state to group together in the courtyard under its rules. Alone no man is free. The state freedom is but freedom as in jails. There can be no liberty with state. State is enemy of liberty, except for its bureaucracy. No matter what state it is. State and freedom are incompatible, especially when the state has to be maintained with the help of the army, police and jails. A free state has never existed and will never exist. Hence democracy is illusion under states, in spite of all voting rights conferred. There can be uniformity of slavery in the name of democracy under states. The minority will dictate to the majority at the point of bayonets in the name of democracy and freedom. (In some countries, not going to polls is a cognisable offence!)

Socialism is social ownership and management, i.e. ownership and management by society and people. Since states cannot be identical with i.e. be the same as the people, the state being an organ of the bureaucracy—a minority, social ownership is negation of state ownership and vice versa. We can have either state ownership or social ownership and management. But it is supposed that state ownership is in fact social ownership and management. It is Gandhiji's Trusteeship theory in another form, the part which is government represents the whole and therefore is the same as the whole, hence is identical with the whole society! Pure logical nonsense. The socialist anarchists who form the majority of the anarchist movement are therefore both against private and state ownership and management. There are individualist and associationist and group anarchists who do not believe in socialism, i.e. ownership by the society as a whole. We have also anarchists who are individualist capitalists and they are even for one man or group Bolshevism. They want their own or their group interests above all others' interests, even if it is against others' interests. But the vast majority of anarchists

are for socialism, either as pure anarchists, as anarcho-communists or as anarcho-syndicalists (trade unionists' ownership and management). They are all at one about states and state ownership and management—against them as negation and suppression of socialism, i.e. of social ownership. The states being run by minorities and infinitesimal minorities, state ownership is no improvement but even worsening of private monopoly, for in private monopoly or ownership, there will be still competition between individuals and groups, whose rivalry to ruin each other may give to others some loopholes of liberty from time to time, but under a monopolistic economic system, all will be crushed into a uniform mass of slaves for the service and benefit of the bureaucracy which is independent and armed with all means to suppress all. The anarchists claim that state ownership cannot lead to socialism, since the so-called socialist state will prevent the society from owning anything. (Whether it will benefit the slaves materially is another question and on this point, the anarchists think it can only reduce the standard of living of all in order to maintain the state, as the state reaps by its monopoly the surplus value or profits as much as it can.) Anyway the combination of political (i.e. state, army, police and jailing) power with economic monopoly will end in absolute despotism of a clique. It will be absolute centralism. The anarchists are more dead against State ownership than even the capitalists. They are more inimical to Bolshevism than the capitalists are. The capitalists have at least a common platform with the Bolsheviks on the state issue—and therefore both the capitalists and Bolsheviks are the deadly enemies of anarchists. *The capitalists are individual or group Bolsheviks while the Marxians are collective capitalists.* The anarchists are against both forms of capitalism. Only the capitalists and Bolsheviks agree that Bolshevism is socialism, which the anarchists deny. They call Bolshevism the worst form of capitalism. Bolshevism is monolithic capitalism managed by a few monopolists. All the rest are their slaves who can be killed outright if they are useless for the state and its monopolistic parasitic economics. No elections and Soviets change this fact.

Every liberal and democrat is a bit of anarchist, for he

does not want the complete mastery of his life by the state machine. The anarchists agree with Jefferson that the best government is one which governs least. But they claim that the logic of it is that non-government is the best form of "government": *Society itself as government,* Government of society by society.

As regards laws, on the necessity of which both Bolsheviks and anti-Bolshevik capitalists agree, the anarchists believe like Lenin: Laws without force or violence to apply them are no laws, are ridiculous. Only Lenin said that *to create a force or violence to maintain laws and enforce them,* exactly like Capitalists. But the anarchists say that because laws have to be enforced with violence, laws are not instruments of non-violence, are not non-violent and if force has to be applied to maintain laws, what is the use of all laws? Force alone is enough to maintain the state. In fact, all constitutions and laws are but veils over force and violence behind them. And force consists in army, police and jails, the last line of defence of the states, their constitutions and laws. But these are necessary for a divided society, to maintain it divided. Lenin observed that just as there are class laws in capitalist countries, there must be class laws in Russia: Just as they suppress workers in capitalist countries, the Bolshevik state must suppress capitalists. He was logical from the state-mania standpoint which he maintained. Only that is not calculated to abolish the class structure of society even under the proletarian state: In Russia, there are two classes, the ruling party which employs proletarians and the ruled who have to work for wages. In Russia also, owing to the state monopoly of all things, in spite of the claim for social ownership, there are laws against theft (of course, of state-property!) The state is the owner, the rest are wage slaves. Where is social ownership, except as proxy-ownership? Political power is proxy-power and state ownership is proxy ownership. In both cases, the proxies are the real ones in power and the real owners. That is where a "representative system" leads to. *There can be no social ownership with political state, hence there can be no social state, as socialist states are supposed to be.* All states are parasitic and anti-social: Only the ownership changes for

worse. Hence the anarchists refuse both states and state-ownership. They want ownership *by all the society*. A part cannot own anything for the whole society, politically or economically. It will own all things for its own benefit to the neglect of others, suppressing them to keep the benefits to itself. The means will become the object to the part called state.

The anarchists do not want confiscation, which means taking over by the state. They stand for expropriation which means in their view collectively taking over the land, soil and means of production. They do not want that only a class should expropriate, for that would mean making another class the master: They want all the society to expropriate all things. The anarchists want the immediate abolition of all classes while the so-called socialists and Marxians believe in gradual abolition of classes during a transition period. There can be no transition between capitalism and socialism, for these are opposites without a bridge between them. The one or the other is the only possibility. Once the owners are expropriated by the society, none is a capitalist or monopolist. The class distinctions are thus at once abolished. The Marxians are reformist capitalists compared to the anarchists.

Anarchists are pacifists, not necessarily socially but internationally. The anarchists refuse both wars and civil wars. If necessary, the anarchists prefer civil wars to external wars. But their ideal and object is to make both wars and civil wars impossible. They believe that states are causes of wars and civil wars and the armies are meant to suppress people at home and make wars abroad. Hence they are against armies, however radical or red. There can be no social armies since armies are always part of the people trained against the rest. Arms can only be monopolies of a small, microscopic section of the people. Moreover, armies and arms are a burden upon the people, and therefore parasitic. They recognise that no states can be maintained without armies, police and prisons and therefore they are against all these, and the states. To abolish armies and violence all states must be abolished and made impossible, however red and "socialist" they may call themselves. To talk of peace and at the same time to main-

tain states—even Bolshevik states, is to do incompatible things. Even to abolish civil wars, states must be abolished. For states are inevitably the instruments of rule by one group of persons against and over the rest. So long as states remain, they must continue parasitism and therefore exploit and impoverish people and they thus create the necessity for rebellions and civil wars. As consistent and logical pacifists, the anarchists refuse to serve in wars. But if civil war is forced upon them and they can get arms, they are not averse to using them, in defence of their lives and ideals, i.e. to eliminate the causes of civil wars and wars. They would rather use arms to abolish states than give up their struggle for pacifism and against wars and civil wars. The anarchists, unlike the Bolsheviks, are averse to establishing another state in place of the old. They had believed before 1917 that the Marxians had the same object as they, but after the experience and experiment of the Marxian revolution in Russia, which they thought would lead to the suppression of the new state, they have abandoned all hope of Marxians abolishing states. Like Lenin before the last war, the anarchists were also against both sides in wars, since both sides were capitalists, but now they are against all wars, between one or more capitalist states and between socialist and capitalist states. The anarchists refuse to recognise territorial frontiers and therefore they have no fatherland which they should defend. Frontiers means states and since they want no states, frontiers do not exist for them. Only undivided mankind exists for them, undivided as a whole and also as classes.

Somehow the idea of anarchy or anarchism is associated with chaos and violence—so that the two words are interchanged: Anarchy means chaos. But to the anarchists, anarchy means only order without violence, unenforced order. All state orders are enforced orders, order enforced over chaos. Lift the state and its order, there will be chaos which was kept hidden. The anarchists are as much against chaos as those who pretend to be against chaos and therefore justify and maintain the states, any kind of state. They say that chaos cannot be abolished by states, but only *kept suppressed,* hence they require armies, police and prisons with or

without constitutions. Keeping chaos suppressed means not preventing chaos—the order that is imposed has only suppressed open chaos. The anarchists try to prepare the minds of people how they can live without chaos and without states. For there is no question of imposing anarchy upon the people as the Bolsheviks, capitalists and Fascists try to do "in order to prevent chaos," as they think. For the anarchists do not try to impose any state nor to establish any armies, prisons and police at the expense of the people. The minds of people being addicted to states, the people are likely, nay bound to welcome a new state in place of the old or hated one. The anarchists tell all that a new state can only make the conditions worse. But the old states cannot also be maintained, hence chaos. The anarchists want to tell that if people wanted no violence from above, they should organise themselves without violence, to prevent a new violence being imposed by others. The only way to prevent a new violence being imposed is to organise themselves without any state! That is anarchy. But the minds of men are predilected to slavery and therefore they accept or help in the imposition of a new state after the old one is destroyed. That is why they suffer more and more after every revolution. Anarchists are not responsible for chaos if it comes, but states are responsible. The anarchists are against killing or imprisoning even one man or woman. They want no killing in the name of any idea including their own and no prison for anyone. Hence they neither want wars nor civil wars and take part in the latter only as a defence measure. Or because they could not remain neutral owing to both sections in civil wars treating them as their enemies, which of course they are. They refuse to take part in any so-called "revolutionary or society Government"—for them, there can be no revolutionary government or socialist government even if it calls itself "communist"! There is either revolution or government, not both—since both cannot be combined. We have already pointed out that a socialist or communist government is a contradiction in terms, and therefore the anarchists refuse even socialist and communist governments as false and illusory. They are as much against the socialist and communist governments as against the capitalist

ones. They consider that every government that takes the place of an older one will do worse. Will be more dictatorial or more lying and cunning and cruel and deceptive. The remedy for one state is not for another but the abolition of all states.

The anarchists argue that all states must necessarily be static, i.e. must prevent progress. All states are therefore reactionary apart from being dictatorial. The society alone can be dynamic and the states want to prevent social dynamism. Otherwise, there would be no justification for the states. It is claimed by all states that they have furthered progress. Either it is a lie, or it is true, that is in spite of their statism and reaction, because they could not prevent it. The society is continually marching forward, but the states in order to keep their power are acting as breaks upon society, till at last a new revolution becomes necessary or a break-down of the state is inevitable. There is no virtue in any state in the sense that it helps social dynamism. In proof of this, every constitution says: Thus far and no further! When a state is established, every action or development calculated to upset it becomes revolution and "treason to the people", i.e. to itself, however inevitable, justified and necessary such actions or developments may be and are. That is because the state which means "standing" cannot afford to be dynamic with society. It is generally supposed that laws create changes! But laws are but seals put upon facts. No law comes till the people have taken the law as it were into their own hands—for the arguments of governments is that the people are not ready for it and will consider it too radical. If laws create changes in progressive direction, monarchies must have been abolished by their own laws and republics must have made socialist laws and socialist governments so called must make laws abolishing their own states. No. They prevent and if necessary bloodily suppress every change in the direction of progress, for if progress came their states will become unnecessary. Monarchies and republics were first established by force and bloody fights and they can be abolished only by force, unless they die of inanition i.e. economic break-down. They will never make republican, Socialist or Bolshevik and anarchist progress but

each will prevent the next step whatever the consequence may be. Somebody or something must pull them down before progress is possible, for progress means losing the power and means of existence for statesmen. After every so-called revolution leading to the establishment of a state, there was a reaction. Revolutionaries were "purged" by revolutions, because the purged wanted what the states could not have or give. That is the consequence of revolutions for new states, which means new reactions. The anarchists want a social revolution, not a revolution for state formation: They want the society to own all things instead of giving them to a state however radical or revolutionary it may call itself. They believe that salvation and solution are only in social ownership of all things. They not only refuse to take part in state power, but want to prevent the rise of any "political power" for any or all the groups who want to capture the state and its force. Therefore they are against all political parties which want to capture power together or separately and therefore against all parties and partisanship. Political and state power can only be at the expense of the people, to deceive and exploit and suppress the people. For politics is parasitism. Even so-called revolutionary and communist politics. They do not claim that one state is better than another and therefore must be supported against its enemies. So far as anarchy i.e. non-violent order is concerned, all states are equally united against it. There can be no better and worse among them so far as anarchy is concerned.

It is true that the anarchsits had been requested towards the end of the Spanish civil war to send a representative into the Catalonian government and they sent one. But the representative was not willing to join in collective responsibility, for it would be against anarchist objection to all states. The anarchists were placed in the same position as the democratic and left wing parties of Spain by the civil war made by Franco, and the anarchists were as much in danger as the democrats and left wing politicians. As Franco could not be fought except with weapons, the anarchists had to take up arms and help the republican armies composed of democrats, socialists and communists who wanted to maintain states. Otherwise,

the anarchists had to give up fight against armed Franco! Of course, the anarchist troops tried to fight as separate units of the army which the other parties did not like and under the name of unified command they coerced the anarchists to submit to non-anarchist command. The anarchists submitted to it owing to the common danger to all. The communists who had most influence with the republican government and finally became masters decimated the anarchist troops and members as they were unwilling to submit to total centralism. In this act, they did as Franco would have liked. The anarchists practised what is called (in India) responsive co-operation with fatal results to themselves and with the defeat of the left wing politicians also. The anarchists were decimated both by Franco in front and communists from behind. Next time they hope to be more careful and prepared.

The charge of violence against anarchists is due to several attempts made before the last war against the lives of ruling presidents and kings by those claiming to be anarchists. Nobody denies this. But terrorism is not peculiar to anarchists. It was practised by nationalists of various countries, by the social revolutionaries of Russia and even by Nazis and monarchists who all wanted states of their own and therefore could not be expected to take lives of statesmen. In a desperate state, all parties and many groups are likely to resort to terrorism, for no other activity is allowed to them. If people are prevented from making open propaganda, they will make propaganda by action, by terrorism. But since the last war, the anarchists had opportunity to propagate their views, even though at great risk, and therefore they abandoned terrorism. Most of the terrorists were not even anarchists although called by the vile press such, and some may have mistakenly taken themselves to be anarchists. All that does not prove that anarchism thrives by terrorism and terrorism is its only propaganda method. Many bandits and robbers were called by the vile press terrorists and anarchists who wanted chaos or only thought that their actions were "anarchist". The Bolsheviks who wanted a strong state also practised bank-robberies to fill party coffers. Some bank robbers might have had accidentally some anarchist acquaintances but that

does not make them anarchists or all anarchists (or their bandit acquaintances) alike and the same. Moreover some individualists who claim to be anarchists because they do not want any state may feel justified if they resorted to terrorism. But anarchists do not want terrorism either by the state or by individuals and parties which are usually organised, and even justified by states against their opponents. Anarchism and terrorism are two different things, terrorism is prevalent among non-and anti-anarchists. States consider "the ends justify the means"—the anarchists don't. But some anarchists may be mistaken some time, which is no proof against all anarchists or against anarchism.

In fact, I have met one terrorist nationalist who called himself "anarchist" taking cue from the denunciation of the police and papers. When I asked him, if he did not want any state, he protested: No, we must have a strong national state! If that is anarchism, the anarchists are not for it.

Since the object of the anarchists is the overthrow of all states, armies, police and jails which are possible only with the help of arms, their object is destruction of all arms and refusal to bear arms. They are absolute pacifists and humanists. Arms corrupt and blunt the mind—that is anarchist standpoint. Hence they refuse to have any chance to use or make arms. Anarchism is the only way in which arms can be made and will be made superfluous. All other conditions of society will necessitate and facilitate making arms, and using them, for they are rulerships of a part of society over the whole made to suppress revolt. The states are with the Bolsheviks and Fascists in justifying use of arms.

The anarchists want to see anarchist society established not with the help of arms and soldiers but by social solidarity. As they do not want to see a state established by themselves or others over and against the society, they cannot and do not require the use of arms. They know that those who use arms against all others will establish their rule, state and dictatorship over all others which they want to prevent being done in order to make anarchist society possible.

The anarchists appeal to social solidarity and social strike against all states and armies. The anarchist society can be

established only by direct action on the economic field by all, or by most people. They call for strikes, boycott, civil disobedience social strike or general strike to make states impossible. The trouble is that others want only partial strikes and boycotts for partial objects or political strikes and against some state in favour of another. So long as there is no social solidarity, therefore no social strike, there will be no society and any set of armed men will be able to rule all. So long as people believe in governments, they will be victims of all governments, the people's will being paralysed by the idea of governments. Only they will change one government after another and will be prey to all of them. The anarchists say to make a strike, even a general strike or social strike, only to change governments is suicidal. Of course, a general or even a partial strike and boycott may weaken to some extent some of the governments. They are in sympathy with all strikes, because it demonstrates the will to resist, but that is not enough to abolish tyranny or exploitation. Finally the strike will subside. A total strike to abolish all states must be the final object of mankind. Otherwise, life will become worse and worse for all.

Every armed revolution will fail to emancipate mankind from thraldom, economic or political, for a worse government will take the place of a bad one, just with help of armed men. Only society can emancipate itself from all governments and miseries. What is the use of government if there was social solidarity? The society can do all the functions which governments have arrogated to themselves. In fact the anarchists' object is to take away the functions of governments-especially the useful functions by the society, not by themselves. If the society has to protect itself, why establish a government and ask it to protect it against malefactors? It can do it itself by delegating some to do it. Once Gandhiji said: Why appeal to municipalities or governments to have the lamps lighted? A few persons can walk along and light the lamps. That is social self-help. Similarly every service can be organised by the society itself and organised under its own control. That is what anarchism and anarchists mean. The anarchists do not want rights of society surrendered to

any set of rulers. That is crime against all states and state-makers. Naturally that cannot be done except in a decentralised and localised manner. States are the enemies of decentralism and local self-organisation, no matter what state. That is why the anarchists are against all states, whatever the form.

The anarchists argue, since all production is based on raw materials and work, where does the state come in production or services? The society can organise itself to do all these without parasitism by the state. It can do better than the parasitic state. It can organise all social services and employ everyone. Why not? The anarchists are not against centralised planning of production but against centralised methods of distribution by delegating "authorities". The anarchists while they are against "rule" (rulership), believe only in agreement as the solution. Localities agree what is the best method or plan of production and distribution and how best the products and services should be distributed. That will be quite enough to set about working and distribution of work, goods and services. No complicated contracts like constitutions and its paraphernalia like oaths and elections are necessary for the essential social services to be performed. All have to see what is the best for oneself under the circumstances. Contracts like constitutions can only be enforced, taking advantage of and even creating bad conditions. *Free men will never make contracts.* For the circumstances may change and one of the parties in the contract will get no benefit by improved work. Moreover contract presupposes master and slave, so that the party in need may be coerced into a disadvantageous contract. The idea of social contract leads to rulers and ruled. For there must be a third party to enforce the contract, whatever the disadvantages to one and advantages to the other party. Hence the states arise as arbiters as of necessity. If something is in one's interest, all will agree if the same advantage accrues to all. People must learn by doing, i.e., serve themselves in combination with all instead of leaving it to some delegate as "authority" and abide by his decisions, whether it will be advantageous or not to all. *Anarchist society is an education itself to all,* for all act and serve themselves instead of leaving responsibility to some and

taking orders. It instils responsibility in everyone—for he may suffer if he is not careful and intelligent in the choice. State makes people irresponsible to themselves and others. What does it matter if others suffer provided, I am safe and the state protects me better than others? That is slave mentality. People can be bought to do anything, however odious and nefarious. Under anarchy, such things will become impossible, for each is master of his own destiny and has equal rights with all. The motto of anarchism is each for all and all for each, and an injury to one is injury to all! That is at least what they strive for. Beyond this, there is no object.

Of course anarchists, like Marxians and capitalists, differ as to the method of achieving their objects of social welfare. In fact, economic theories of anarchism have been different and not fully developed. That is why most people could not be convinced that anarchism "would work". But that is not proof that other systems will work, although they have been maintained by force and fraud till they broke down or were over-thrown. There is every certainty of other systems breaking down on account of state and parasitism. Hence anarchism can be worked economically.

Proudhon elaborated a theory of Mutualism and People's Bank to make people independent of the State. Later, Peter Kropotkin gave an economic basis for anarchism in his "Fields, Factories and Workshops," "Mutual Aid," and "Conquest of Bread". Kropotkin was the founder of anarcho-syndicalist (trade union) economics. The anarchists believe in a liberal kind of communism, instead of the rigid Marxian state kind. The liberal communism starts with local councils which are linked together to supply all the needs of all local communes mutually. The idea of anarchist communism is that all things wherever found and produced are common property of all local councils, although they may be locally held and managed. The local councils themselves are just the administrators of the local electors. These councils agree and arrange production and distribution of all things produced everywhere for the greatest benefit of everyone everywhere. Of course a central statistical office is required and a central technical planning council to advise how best and where to produce what is

required by all as of necessity and as desired. The highest possible benefit and production should be achieved for and by all. The local councils will take the proportionate share according to populations who contribute work, i.e. go to work and distribute as the local electors determine. It is all done as a matter of agreement, not by decree or laws. Such an agreement can be achieved locally according to the technical possibilities of production and distribution. Of course all this has not been attempted anywhere and not even definitely discussed and settled. That is the drawback of anarchist thought till now. But one thing is certain, that when all other systems are wrong and therefore not workable, the opposite of them all must be right and possible to work, that is anarchism, especially anarchic (social) communism. State communism is not socialism, even according to Marx, Lenin and Stalin. It is claimed only as "transition stage". Communism is possible only when the State of the Bolsheviks "withers away". That is Lenin's theory. *That means communism is beyond state, not earlier.* That is, after the state withers away or is abolished. All the socialism claimed by states is but capitalism. State and capitalism cannot be separated. If capitalism is bad and unworkable, then anarchism and communism alone can be right and workable, and good. That is the logic, not saying that it is both capitalist and socialist and communist. Shutting eyes to logic will not straighten things, will not make the impossible work.

Not that anarchism is not workable but that men do not want anarchism since they want states. If capitalism and Bolshevism are bad, then the enemy of both—anarchism must be workable, good and desirable. Then they say shutting their eyes and mind, Bolshevism is only a passing stage and some day communism will come. That is shutting one's eyes and mind against "solution"! Either we wait for solution or we make the solution! The one is fatalism and the other free will. Anarchists believe in conscious acting in favour of what is inevitable. They have no transition stage—except social strike and social solidarity against states—as offered by capitalists and Bolsheviks. But people seem to want a state as a transition or bridge and wait, and suffer! That is not the

fault of the anarchists. They do not intend to rule by violence and therefore do not want to capture but smash political power and power seekers. They want power only to the total society. The anarchist ethics is: Instead of ruling men, men should administer things. But that cannot be done with the help of any state, for all states are bound to be parasitic. People want to help parasitism, submit to it instead of overthrowing it, only they want change of parasitism called revolutions. But no revolution will succeed till all acquire bread, room and raiment. The revolutionary governments only supply these to those who serve them to maintain their power, taking advantage of the necessities of life. That will produce parasitic states. If the people took hold of the necessaries of life (expropriated) and made use of them for all, instead of letting the revolutionaries take and monopolise them (confiscate) and distribute them according to their desire to get supporters for their state, then production without parasitism can proceed. Until that is done there can be no emancipation of man from the tyranny of states. Hence the anarchists call upon workers to expropriate the works and use them for the benefit of all. The bread problem is the first revolutionary problem, both for anarchists and state-makers. Without this—i.e. without social solidarity to prevent bread from going into the hands of state-makers, there will be either chaos or states. There can be no political action—*either* politics *or* action ! Action is only in economics.

Consistently with their anti-state and anti-authoritarian attitude, the anarchists (who call themselves also libertarian or free socialists) stand against politics and politcial parties, making propaganda against parliaments and elections to that centralist authoritarian body. Their theory is, according to Michel Bakunin, once a noble of Russia who formulated the anarchist principles, that "Politics is the theology of the State" (in his "God and the State"). Politics and political parties dissipate and divert the mental and other activities away from the main issue which is economic well-being. They want to set up and capture "political power" in the State as an essential condition of economic well-being of the people. But the means become the objects so that the state well-being becomes the first and last consideration of politicians and statesmen

to the neglect of economic well-being. Therefore the anarchists warn the people against becoming involved in politics, state form and political parties against their own interests. Economic betterment can only be brought about by direct action on the economic field by the people themselves, not by voting for any or all parties who want to have a say or power in the state. The general or social strike must pave the way for social (economic) revolution with the object of an anarchist society being established. Only then there will be freedom, democracy and socialism. All the rest is illusion and dissipation of energies in trying to realise a chimera. There is going to be *either a state or socialism* and not both. A socialist state is a myth! The people alone can emancipate themselves, not through any politicians, state or statesmen. *Office corrupts men.* Especially under centralism and authoritarianism. The problem of abolishing tyranny, corruption and deception is not so simple as authoritarian statesmen and politicians suggest. *"State is source of crime and corruption,"* Aristide Briand said in the Chamber of Deputies, of course before he became a statesman, premier and patriot. It is no use establishing a state, any state, and then complaining against evils, tyranny, corruption and deception: The anarchists are realists, matter-of-fact, and therefore refuse to have anything to do with political parties and states and their machinations—except of course to combat them. They refuse military service and propagate against bearing arms. (A broken rifle is their symbol). They are unconditionally for every rebellion against states, whatever state it may be. But they do not support the objects of a revolution if it is to establish a new state in place of old. States make people irresponsible, for they take away the rights of people (freedom) to manage their own affairs. They become mercenaries of the state, doing whatever is ordered and paid for. To make the people responsible to themselves for their own well-being, they must be made to act for themselves. Nobody can serve the interests of another as oneself. But he must have an opportunity for serving himself and that can only be done in an anarchist society: Where he can create his own well-being with the well-being of all. Society must become dynamic. Hence no states.

The organs of the Anarchists are their Anarcho-Syndicalist (Free, libertarian or anti-authoritarian) Trade Unions which are also organised on a decentralised plan—for the overthrow and prevention of States. They are organised for eventual social or general strike which should lead to the anarchist social revolution. These anarcho-syndicalist unions are stronger in Central and South American countries than in more advanced ones, except perhaps in Sweden and U.S.A., and especially among Seamen's organisations. In England there never was and is not any anarcho-syndicalist organisation, although there were anarchist propagandist centres. In France, once all trade unions were more or less anarcho-syndicalist in fact it was the mother of syndicalist trade unions. In Italy, before Mussolini's accession to power, the most powerful trade unions were the anarcho-syndicalist unions with their large co-operative societies. In Germany, there was a growing syndicalist movement and intellectually anarchism was preached by Germans even in Kaiser's time (they called themselves appropriately Localists); till Hitler came to power, Anarcho-Syndicalist Trade Union International Headquarters was in Berlin, the first World Congress of that organisation having founded it there in Dec. 1922 as against the Third International. Later on it was transferred to Barcelona, as the biggest anarcho-syndicalist trade unions (with over 2 million members) were in Spain and the Catalonian Republic was more favourable to the Anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists. As in Russia so in Spain, Marxism was a super-imposed organisation, i.e., not native to those countries.

The First International founded by Karl Marx and later joined by M. Bakunin till its end in 1872 (with Bakunin's death) *defined socialism as the abolition of the wage system.* For wage system is the means of exploitation upon which all states, however radical or communist, are based. The wage system is the cause of division in society as classes: the employing class and the employed. State as employers is also a wage-system and an exploiting and oppressive system. It is authoritarian and corrupt. Hence the anarchists stick to the definition of socialism given by the First International which

was called the "International Workingmen's Association", which is also the name of the Anarcho-Syndicalist International. The anarchist principle of distribution is: To each according to his necessities and from each according to his abilities. Equality does not mean equal wages or comforts for all, but equality of treatment for people under the same conditions: As for example when one is ill or invalid. For example when milk is scarce, equality does not mean equal distribution of milk for all, able, invalid or ill or infant, but supply first to the invalid, ill and infant.

The anarchists do not believe that one is mentally proletarian by birth or one is mentally capitalist by birth. For there are many capitalists who are and will be for social revolution even in the anarchist sense, while many proletarians are and will be capitalist or petty-bourgeois and Marxian by mentality. If therefore the capitalists are expropriated by society, it would be wrong to ill-treat them for their being formerly capitalists: Once expropriated, they are practically proletarians and must be treated as such, till they become dangerous to social order. The anarchists do not believe in punishment but only watchfulness and moulding social surroundings. Mind cannot work outside social surroundings.

There are religious anarchists and communists like the Tolstoyans and Dukhobors (both Russian) who also stand against private ownership, state and arms-bearing and want to return to primitive Christianity. The anarchists who are atheists have nothing against them, provided in secular matters they do not bring in religion. Religion is a private affair as much as atheism. If sometimes, as in Spain, anarchists converted convents into anarchist universities where atheism is taught, it is not because they were against religion or Christianity but against the Church which was corrupt, tyrannical and fanatical against all else, especially in Spain. The Church stood on the side of Franco!

It may be mentioned that Anarchist books by Kropotkin were translated into Japanese and Chinese long before the last war and some of the Japanese scientists were anarchist propagandists and were executed by the Imperial Government as early as 1908. Only in other Asiatic countries, anarchism

was not known till now. Some of Kropotkin's works were translated into Gujerati and published by the Navjivan Press about 20 years ago but nobody seems to have studied them as anarchist texts. It appears Kropotkin's "Fields, Factories and Workshops" was published in Hindi by B. S. Pathik some time after the last war.

An Encyclopaedia of Anarchism was published in four volumes in France in Paris before the last war, edited by Sebastian Faure. The works of Bakunin in 6 volumes in French have not been translated into English till now, except his "God and the State". The first anarchist publications in India will be "Socialism and the State" and "Anarcho-Syndicalism" by R. Rocker in English first, then in other languages of India, published by the Indian Institute of Sociology, Bombay. A Marathi and a Gujerati edition of "What is Mutualism?" by Swartz have appeared from the same Institute.

7

THE BASIS OF PAKISTAN

—*M. A. Jinnah*

THE BASIS OF PAKISTAN

I. Why Pakistan?

THE problem in India is not of an inter-communal character, but manifestly of an international one, and it must be treated as such. So long as this basic and fundamental truth is not realised any constitution that may be built will result in disaster and will prove destructive and harmful not only to the Mussalmans, but to the British and Hindus also. If the British Government are really in earnest and sincere to secure peace and happiness of the people of this sub-continent, the only course open to us all is to allow the major nations separate homelands by dividing India into "Autonomous National States."

There is no reason why these States should be antagonistic to each other. On the other hand, the rivalry and the natural desire and efforts on the part of one to dominate the social order and establish political supremacy over the other in the Government of the country will disappear. It will lead more towards natural goodwill by international pacts between them and they can live in complete harmony with their neighbours. This will lead further to a friendly settlement all the more easily with regard to minorities by reciprocal arrangements and adjustments between Muslim India and Hindu India, which will far more adequately and effectively safeguard the rights and interests of Muslims and various other minorities.

The British Government and Parliament, and more so the British nation have been for many decades past brought up and nurtured with settled notions about India's future, based on developments in their own country, which has built the British constitution, functioning now through the House of Parliament and the system of Cabinet. Their concept of Party Government functioning on political planes has become the ideal with them as the best form of Government for every country. And the one-sided and powerful propaganda, which naturally appeals to the British, has led them into a serious

blunder in producing a constitution envisaged in the Government of India Act 1935. We find that the most leading statesmen of Great Britain, saturated with these notions, have in their pronouncements seriously asserted and expressed a hope that the passage of time will harmonise the inconsistent elements in India.

A leading journal like the London "Times", commenting on the Government of India Act of 1935 wrote that "undoubtedly the difference between the Hindus and Muslims is not of religion in the strict sense of the word but also of law and culture, that they may be said indeed to represent two entirely distinct and separate civilizations. However, in the course of time the superstitions will die out and India will be moulded into a single nation."

These fundamental and deep rooted differences, spiritual, economic, cultural, social and political have been euphemised as mere "superstitions". Notwithstanding thousand years of close contact, nationalities which are divergent today as ever, cannot at any time be expected to transform themselves into one nation merely by means of subjecting them to a democratic constitution and holding them forcibly together by unnatural and artificial methods of British Parliamentary Statutes.

It is extremely difficult to appreciate why our Hindu friends fail to understand the real nature of Islam and Hinduism. They are not religions in the strict sense of the word, but are in fact different and distinct social orders, and it is a dream that the Hindus and Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality. This misconception of one Indian nation has gone far beyond the limits and is the cause of most of our troubles and will lead India to destruction if we fail to revise our notions in time. The Hindus and Muslims have two different religions, philosophies, social customs, literature. They neither inter-marry, nor inter-dine together, and indeed, they belong to two different civilizations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. Their aspects on life and of life are different. It is quite clear that Hindus and Mussalmans derive their inspiration from different sources of history. They have different epics, their heroes are different

and they have different episodes. Very often the hero of one is a foe of the other and, likewise, their victories and defeats overlap. To yoke together two such nations under a single state, one as a numerical minority and the other as majority, must lead to growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be so built for the Government of such a state.

History has presented to us many examples such as union of Great Britain and Ireland, Czechoslovakia and Poland. History has also shown to us many geographical tracts, much smaller than the sub-continent of India, which otherwise might have been called one country, but which have been divided into as many states as there are nations inhabiting them. Balkan Peninsula comprises of as many as seven or eight sovereign states. Likewise, the Portuguese and the Spanish stand divided in the Iberian Peninsula. Whereas under the plea of unity of India and one nation, which does not exist, it is sought to pursue here the line of one Central Government when we know that the history of the last twelve hundred years has failed to achieve unity, India was always divided into Hindu India and Muslim India.

The recent artificial unity of India dates back only to the British conquest and is maintained by the British bayonets, but the termination of the British regime, which is implicit in the recent declaration of His Majesty's Government will be the herald of the entire break up with the worst disaster that has ever taken place during the last one thousand years under Muslims. Surely that is not the legacy which the British would bequeath to India after 150 years of rule, nor would Hindu and Muslim India risk such a sure catastrophe.

Muslim India cannot accept any constitution which must necessarily result in a Hindu majority government. Hindus and Muslims brought together under a democratic system forced upon the minorities can only mean Hindu Raj. Democracy of the kind with which the Congress High Command is enamoured would mean the complete destruction of what is most precious in Islam.

We have had ample experience of the working of the provincial constitution during the last two and a half years, and any repetition of such a government must lead to civil war and

raising of private armies as recommended by Mr. Gandhi to the Hindus of Sukkur, when he said that they must defend themselves violently or non-violently, blow for blow; if they cannot, then they must emigrate.

Mussalmans are not a minority as it is commonly known and understood. One has only got to look round. Even to-day, according to the British map of India, out of 11 provinces, four provinces, where the Muslims dominate more or less, are functioning notwithstanding the decision of the Hindu Congress High Command to non-co-operate and prepare for civil-disobedience. Mussalmans are a nation according to any definition of a nation, and they must have their homelands, their territory and their state. We wish to live in peace and harmony with our neighbours as a free and independent people.

We wish our people to develop to the fullest our spiritual, cultural, economic, social and political life in a way that we think best and in consonance with our own ideals and according to the genius of our people. Honesty demands and vital interests of millions of our people impose a sacred duty upon us to find an honourable and peaceful solution, which would be just and fair to all.

But at the same time we cannot be moved or diverted from our purpose and objective by threats or intimidations. We must be prepared to face all difficulties and consequences, make all the sacrifices that may be required of us to acheive the goal we have set in front of us.

During the last fifteen months we had to face many difficulties, for instance, the Vidya Mandir scheme in Nagpur and the Wardha scheme all over India. We had also to face repression of Muslims in the Congress-governed provinces and the way in which the Muslims were treated in some of the Indian States. We had to face a vital issue in Rajkot State. Rajkot was the acid test for the revolutionisation of one-third of India. Thus the Muslim League had to face various issues from January 1939 up to the time the war was declared. Before the war was declared, the greatest danger that the Mussalmans of India faced was the possible inauguration of the Federal Scheme in this country. But the Muslim League

was stoutly resisting in every direction and we shall never accept the Federal Scheme as embodied in the Government of India Act of 1935.

SHOCK TO CONGRESS

But after the war was declared, the Viceroy naturally wanted help from the League. Suddenly there came a change in the attitude of the Viceroy towards me. I was treated on the same basis as Mr. Gandhi. This was the severest blow to the Congress High Command. I was wonderstruck why all of a sudden I was promoted and given a place side by side with Mr. Gandhi. The answer was the All-India Muslim League. I believe, that was the first shock that the Congress High Command got and they have not recovered from it yet.

The Muslims of India are now conscious and awake. This institution is not going to be destroyed by anybody. Men may come and men may go, but the Muslim League will live.

After the declaration of the war, the position of the Muslim League was a delicate one because we were between the devil and the deep sea. We stand unequivocally for the freedom of India. But this is not the freedom which is the goal of the Congress. We have had enough experience during the last two and a half years of the Congress attitude towards Mussalmans in the Congress-governed provinces and we have learnt many lessons and we are not going to trust anybody. At any rate, we do not trust anybody, who has once betrayed us. I never dreamt that the Congress would ever come so low as they did in the Congress-governed provinces but facts are more important than belief. I never could believe that there could ever be a gentleman's agreement between the British Government and the Congress.

We cried hoarse day in and day out against what was happening in the Congress-governed provinces but the Governors remained supine and the Governor-General expressed his helplessness because of that gentleman's agreement. We reminded them of the special responsibilities it devolved upon them for giving protection to the minorities, but these responsibilities have become a dead letter. Providence came to our

help and the gentleman's agreement was broken and the Congress went out of office. They are now sorry that they did it. They want now to come back but how can they do it now?

After the outbreak of war the Congress asked the British Government to make a declaration. The Viceroy says that he has made a declaration but the Congress wants another kind of declaration. The Congress says "We want that you must declare that India is free at once and independent and we will frame our own constitution by means of a constituent assembly to be elected on the basis of adult franchise or the lowest franchise which will satisfy the legitimate minorities." And Mr. Gandhi says if the minorities are not satisfied with this a high tribunal will decide the dispute. Besides the proposal of a Constituent Assembly being of an impracticable and nebulous character, historically and constitutionally it is an absurd thing to ask the ruling power to agree to a Constituent Assembly.

Supposing we do not agree with the majority, then we are allowed to disagree only on points which deal strictly with safeguards. The presumption is that when the Constituent Assembly comes into operation the British Government will disappear. It follows that substantial power must be transferred to the Assembly. How is this to be implemented and practised and who is the authority.

Mr. Gandhi has been saying for the last 20 years that there cannot be any Swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity. Mr. Gandhi is fighting for a Constituent Assembly. May I point out to Mr. Gandhi and the Congress, that they are fighting for a Constituent Assembly which we cannot accept. Therefore, the idea of a Constituent Assembly was impracticable and unacceptable. Mr. Gandhi wants Constituent Assembly for purposes of ascertaining the views of Muslims and if they don't agree, he would then give up all hopes and then will agree with us.

If there exists the will to come to a settlement with the Muslim League then why does not Mr. Gandhi, as I have said more than once, honestly agree that the Congress is a Hindu organisation and that it represents but a solid body of Hindus. Why should Mr. Gandhi not be proud to say, "I am a Hindu

and that the Congress is a Hindu body." I am not ashamed of saying that I am a Muslim and that the Muslim League is the representative of Muslims. Why all this camouflage, why this threat of civil disobedience and why this fight for a Constituent Assembly? Why should not Mr. Gandhi come as a Hindu leader and let me meet him proudly representing the Mussalmans.

After the outbreak of war they asked the British Government to give assurances on several points. They had made an advance with regard to one point. Their demand was that the constitutional problem of India be examined *de novo*. The British Government had conceded this demand of the Muslim League. As regards other matters they were still negotiating. We have asked the British Government to make a declaration that no constitution will be thrust upon us without our approval and consent, that no Indian settlement will be made with any party behind our back and without our approval and consent. I trust that it is a fair and just demand. We do not want that a constitution be thrust upon us which the Mussalmans do not want.

I hope the British Government will give this assurance.

Whether they give or not, we depend on our inherent strength. I declare here that if any declaration is made by His Majesty without our approval and our consent, Muslim India will resist it and no mistake should be made on that score.

II.—Two Nations*

The constitutional maladies from which India at present suffers may best be described as symptoms of a disease inherent in the body-politic. Without diagnosing the disease, no undersanding of the symptoms is possible and no remedy can suggest itself. Let us, therefore, first diagnose the disease, then consider the symptoms and finally arrive at the remedy.

What is the political future of India? The declared aim of the British Government is that India should enjoy Dominion Status in accordance with the Statute of Westminster in the

*An article written for "Time and Tide" dated the 19th January, 1940.

shortest practicable time. In order that this end should be brought about, the British Government, very naturally, would like to see in India the form of democratic constitution it knows best and thinks best, under which the Government of the country is entrusted to one or other political party in accordance with the turn of the elections.

Such, however, is the ignorance about Indian conditions among even the members of the British Parliament that, in spite of all the experience of the past, it is even yet not realized that this form of Government is totally unsuited to India. Democratic systems based on the concept of a homogeneous nation such as England are very definitely not applicable to heterogeneous countries such as India, and this simple fact is the root cause of all of India's constitutional ills.

Even the Under-Secretary of State of India, the late Lt.-Col. Muirhead failed to appreciate this fact. For, deploring the present communal tension, he expressed the opinion that the tendency on the part of both, those in power and those in opposition, was to consider that what the position now was would be the position always. He deplored the failure of Indians to appreciate an essential feature of democratic Government—namely, the majority and the minority are never permanent, and he therefore, felt that the minorities' opposition to Federation on the assumption that from the outset power would be in the hands of an irremovable majority was untenable. But he forgot that the whole concept of democracy postulates a single people, divided however much economically, and he might well have started his study of Indian problems by consulting the report of the Joint Select Committee on Indian Constitutional Reforms (Sessions 1933-34 Vol. 1 para 1):

"India is inhabited by many races....often as distinct from one another in origin, tradition and manner of life as are the nations of Europe. Two thirds of its inhabitants profess Hinduism in one form or another as their religion, over 77 millions are followers of Islam; and the difference between the two is not only of religion in the stricter sense but also of law and culture. They may be said, instead, to represent two distinct

and separate civilizations. Hinduism is distinguished by the phenomenon of its caste, which is the basis of the religious and social system, and, save in a very restricted field, remains unaffected by contact with the philosophies of the West; the religion of Islam, on the other hand, is based upon the conception of equality of man."

Perhaps no truer description of India has been compressed into a paragraph, and, without this background, no understanding of Indian problems is possible. The British people must realize that Hinduism and Islam "represent two distinct and separate civilizations" and moreover, are "as distinct from one another in origin, tradition and manner of life as are the nations of Europe".

They are in fact two different nations, and if this fact is accepted by no less an authority than the Joint Select Committee, the Muslim people have cause to question the wisdom of the British Government in forcing on India the Western system of democracy without the qualifications and limitations to which the system must be subject to make it at all suitable for Indian conditions.

If, therefore, it is accepted that there is in India a major and a minor nation, it follows that a parliamentary system based on the majority principle must inevitably mean the rule of the major nation. Experience has proved that, whatever the economic and political programme of any political party, the Hindu, as a general rule will vote for his caste-fellow and the Muslim for his co-religionist.

The British people, being Christians, sometimes forget the religious wars of their own history and today consider religion as a private and personal matter between man and God. This can never be the case in Hinduism and Islam, for both these religions are definite social codes which govern, not so much man's relation with God, as man's relation with his neighbour. They govern not only his law and culture, but every aspect of his social life, and such religions, essentially exclusive, completely preclude that merging of identity and unity of thought, on which Western democracy is based, and inevitably bring about vertical rather than the horizontal divisions that democracy envisages.

Western democracy is totally unsuited ror India and its imposition on India is the disease in the body politic. Let us now consider the inevitable symptoms.

Led by an astute Hindu politician of the first rank, Mahatma Gandhi, the Congress (which is mainly a Hindu body) had long foreseen that in the Western form of democracy lay the fulfilment of their hopes of permanent All-India dominance. All their efforts and energies had, therefore, been bent towards securing for India a completely democratic form of Government, and they realized that the new constitution would bring their goal immeasurably nearer if it could be worked on lines chalked out by their leader and the Working Committee.

Therefore, while crying that new constitution was thoroughly unsatisfactory and totally unacceptable, the Congress decided to contest the elections held before its inauguration and as was inevitable, secured complete majorities in the six Hindu provinces of India, namely, Bombay, Madras, U.P., Bihar and Orissa. The Congress however, was as completely defeated in the five Muslim provinces namely Bengal, the Punjab, Sind, the North-West-Frontier Province and Assam, and even in the Hindu provinces failed to capture any appreciable number of seats in non-Hindu constituencies particularly Muslim electorates.

This, undoubtedly, was an unsatisfactory situation for a self-styled "national" party, and the exposure of its communal character seemed imminent. Rushing to Wardha for guidance, the Working Committee took stock. What was the position? In five provinces they had been defeated, and while they held a complete majority in six, the Oppositions, weak in numbers though they were, were led by the small but solid blocks of Muslim League members.

This situation had two very unsatisfactory aspects. First, it brought out the completely Hindu composition of the Congress and secondly, it would be difficult to ignore and override Muslim-led Oppositions as long as the Governors of provinces were in possession of special powers granted to safeguard minority interests.

Realizing at once that such a circumstance would consider-

ably hinder their plans, the Congress played its trump card. It refused to accept office. To the consternation of the Muslims and other minorities, overnight, the Viceroy and the Governors, became suppliant. What would the Congress have them do? What assurances did the Congress need? The answer was ready "Give us the undertaking that you will not exercise your special powers, and we will accept office". Hastily, the constitutional guardians of minority and other rights jettisoned their trust, and amidst much mutual appreciation of each other's "statesmanship", the Congress and the British Government came into political alliance.

But there was still that troublesome first point. The whole game would be up if a purely Hindu Government took office, and in at least three of the six provinces not a single Muslim had been returned on the Congress ticket, and not more than one or two in the others. But what of it? Surely there must be at least one amongst the Muslim Members who would be unable to resist the bait of a ministership. They would offer the Ministership provided he signed the Congress pledge.

But would the Governor agree to this "camouflage"? What did his instrument of instructions advise? "In making appointments to his Council of Ministers our Governor shall use his best endeavour to select his Ministers in the following manner, that is to say, in consultation with the person who in his judgment is likely to command a stable majority in the legislature to appoint those persons (including, so far as practicable, members of important minority communities) who will best be in a position collectively to command the confidence of the legislature. But in so acting he shall bear constantly in mind the need of fostering a sense of joint responsibility among his Ministers".

Anxiously the Working Committee analysed the implications. The instructions seemed to be in two parts. In the first the Governors were instructed to use "his best endeavours to select" as Ministers "persons (including, as far as practicable, members of important minority communities)...." The spirit underlying these words was clear. It was to secure

for important minorities a Minister who commanded their confidence, and since there was no difference in the political programmes of the Congress and Muslim League Parties in the legislatures, there was no reason why it was not "practicable" for a Muslim League member to be appointed a Minister.

But what about the last line. "But in so acting he shall bear in mind the need for forstering a sense of joint responsibility among his Ministers?" This, fortunately, could be turned to suit their purpose if the Governor was prepared to allow this second part, advisory and subsidiary to the main instruction, to overrule the first.

They had but to claim that joint responsibility was impossible unless the Muslim Minister was prepared to abide by the decisions of the Working Committee, and their point was won. Meekly the Governors acquiesced and in order to allow the Congress to deceive the public by making it appear that it was "national", and looking after the interests of the minorities by including a "representative" of them in the Council of Ministers, accepted as Muslim Ministers individuals who by no stretch of imagination could be regarded as "representatives" of the Muslim community and who by signing the Congress pledge, were responsible to the Working Committee alone.

Surprised by such easy victories, the Congress became intoxicated with power. The Working Committee arrogated to itself the position of a parallel Central Government to whom the Provincial Governments were responsible. Regional dictators were appointed and the ministers were entirely subject to their orders generally and no provincial legislation could be enacted without their approval. They then proceeded to stifle even the little opposition that existed. Having dealt with the British, they now dealt with the Muslims.

An India-wide attack on the Muslims was launched. In the five Muslim provinces every attempt was made to defeat the Muslim-led coalition Ministries, and by offering local political inducements, Congress Ministries came into power in at least two more provinces, the N.W.F.P. and Assam.

In the six Hindu provinces a "Kulturkampf", was inaugu-

rated. Attempts were made to have *Bande Mataram,* the Congress Party song, recognised as the national anthem; the party flag, recognised as National flag and the real national language, Urdu, supplanted by Hindi. Everywhere oppression commenced and complaints poured in such force into the Muslim League's Central Office that the Pirpur Committee, whose report is available, was appointed to investigate these grievances. Such overwhelming evidence was collected that the Muslims, despairing of the Viceroy and the Governors ever taking action to protect them, have lately been forced to ask for a Royal Commission to investigate their grievances.

Such was the position on the eve of the resignation of the Congress Ministries, a position over which the British people might well ponder. Is it their desire that India should become a totalitarian Hindu State, with the Central and the Provincial Governments responsible, not to their legislatures or to the electorate but to a caucus unknown to the constitution, the Working Committee of the Congress? They may be rest assured that such will be the inevitable result if the Congress demand for the right of framing India's constitution through a Constituent Assembly is conceded.

Let us consider briefly the implications of this nebulous and impracticable Constituent Assembly. To commence with, the question arises, why is this demand made at this particular time? The answer is obvious. The war is to the Working Committee a heaven sent means of increasing its rule from over eight provinces to over the whole of India, State and Province. If the British Government are stampeded and fall into the trap under stress of the critical situation created by the war, India will face a crisis the result of which no man could prophesy, and I feel certain that Muslim India will never submit to such a position and will be forced to resist it with every means in their power.

And of what type of constitutionalists will this Constituent Assembly consist? There are in India roughly 400 million souls who, through no fault of their own, are hopelessly illiterate and consequently, priest and caste ridden. They have no real conception of how they are being governed even today, and it is proposed that to the elected representatives of such,

should India's future constitution be entrusted. Is it too much to say that since the vast majority of the elected representatives will be illiterate Hindus, the Constituent Assembly will be under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress leaders, and the constitution that will emerge will be as the Working Committee directs?

Thus, through the Constituent Assembly will the Working Committee attain its ends. British control and commerce will disappear; the Indian States will be abolished! Minority opposition will be stifled and a great Hindu nation will emerge, governed by its beloved leader, Mahatma Gandhi, and the Congress Working Committee.

We have now considered the disease and the symptoms. What is the remedy?

(1) The British people must realize that unqualified Western democracy is totally unsuited for India and attempts to impose it must cease.

(2) In India, it must be accepted that "party" Government is not suitable and all Governments, Central or Provincial, must be Governments that represent all sections of the people.

In this connection the All-India Muslim League has laid down the following broad principles:

(1) That the British Government should review and revise the entire problem of India's future constitution *de novo* in the light of the experience gained by the working of the present provincial constitution, and developments that have taken place since 1939 or which may take place hereafter.

(2) While the Muslim League stands for a Free India, it is irrevocably opposed to any Federal objective which must necessarily result in a majority community rule, under the guise of Democracy and a Parliamentary system of Government.

(3) No declaration regarding the question of constitutional advance for India should be made without the consent and approval of the All-India Muslim League, nor any constitution be framed and finally adopted by His Majesty's Government and the British Parliament without such consent and approval.

To conclude, a constitution must be evolved that recognizes that there are in India, two nations who both must share the governance of their common motherland.

In evolving such a constitution, the Muslims are ready to co-operate with the British Government, the Congress or any party so that the present enmities may cease and India may take its place amongst the great countries of the world.

8

FUTURE OF INDIAN WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

—Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya

FUTURE OF INDIAN WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

THE future is a nebulous thing full of possibilities and coloured by romance. We hold it in the palms of our hands, we press it to our hearts with secret wonder and joy for it is our very own, a creation of our dreams, a realization of our hopes, a fulfilment of our age-long aspirations. It is a reality and yet an unreality. It is bound by the past as the tree is by the earth. It can only burgeon into blossom and fruit. It is held a prisoner in the coils of the present as a child in the womb of the mother who, with the fire of her mother hunger, shapes it that she may live her treasured hopes through it. Man is what he is because he has created a future. Even as nature has carved out the seasons to drink fuller at the founts of life and seek perpetuation man has carved out a past, present and future out of a chaotic nothingness. The future is his strength in failure, his beacon light in the darkest gloom. Without a future, life would cease to have a meaning. The past is a dead thing; the present a chain that seeks to bind us; but the future—it is the free untrammelled wonder-life where sorrows and cares cease and man becomes a lovelier and nobler thing. Religions have created other worlds of beauty beyond the pale shadow of the earth to colour many visions with the lure of life to come. Seers have painted Utopias with man and life transformed to fill man's mind with courageous hope and romantic solace. To write of the future is an exciting task. The very boldness has unique exuberance which like the magician's wand changes the dull dross of bitter yesterdays and the sorrowful todays to the quivering opalescent hues of tomorrow.

As the future is but a part of the past we need to trace the historical background before we take a leap into the future. But before we proceed to paint the role woman has played or will play, we must first of all disabuse our minds of that ridiculous myth of a "female", biologically and physiologically weak and inferior and consigned her to oblivion. To deal rationally with the Women's question one needs not only

a chronological historical knowledge but biological facts as well. Sex existed even before man was and life can continue to exist without sex in the simple unicellular creatures. Why then did sex happen? Because "it seems a rule of living matter that it cannot go on for ever growing and splitting up without becoming vitally exhausted and this exhaustion is counteracted by the physical mingling of two individuals." Sex is not merely for reproduction, but also for an "increased ability for variation whereby the offspring has a greater reservoir of characteristics upon which to draw and in consequence an exalted chance of success in the struggle for existence." The division of the biological function and an attempt to enrich it led to the formation of the sex—male and female, the two aspects of one life force. But man in his ignorance built up crooked, unhygienic superstition and dark irrational theories which are now being fast battered down by scientific facts.

The history of woman is not always a well ordered process following our traditional conception of evolution from the dark winter of primitivism to the exuberant spring time of Americanism. It is rather like the moods of nature from gentle idle dawn to burning noon and pastel tinted twilight, and then out of the travail of a star-spangled night a golden morn. Though we may take it that the more cultured a society, the more natural the position of woman, we cannot take the word 'culture' to mean modernism or material advancement. We are often deluded into thinking that women in primitive and tribal society are degraded and their lot harder. On the contrary very often their position is more advantageous than that of women in so-called civilized society, though the standards may vary. Savages rarely verge so much on the brink of starvation as we do. Even today women in Polynesia or Madagascar or other similar tribal tracts enjoy more equality with men and wield more influence in their society than women in most countries. The economic structure of primitive society is simple. Men and women shared their labours and gains. It is the rise and accumulation of private property and the incidental complications that come in its wake that changed the position of women.

The history of India must be viewed against the huge

shadows of a lost eastern world, of Egypt, Babylon and Asia Minor. The history of their women is the same as ours. On the threshold of human history stand kingdoms based on agriculture each of them developing a religion where feminine power as the supreme goddess of fertility is worshipped. In India the incarnation of power and strength is "Shakti", the giver and preserver of life. Women enjoy equal status with men. We have the rise of matriarchy in some parts where woman becomes not only the head of the family but the owner of real property and only through her is inheritance transmitted. But these simple natural states are changed and modified under the rising pressure of new complicated economic forms and the growing cultures conditioned by these reactions. Then arise vast empires out of the lust of man for military glory, thirst for adventure, desire for conquests and in any society where warfare is regarded as the highest form of male activity woman gets degraded, for the degradation of woman is but the enslavement of the forces of life by the forces of death.

The division between the classes sharpen, vast masses of humanity are oppressed and exploited by the few rich. Manual labour becomes the hallmark of degradation and the lot of the majority, on whose sweated labour the minority who develop a parasitical existence begin to live and thrive. Idleness clasps its manacles tight on the hands of the women of this upper leisured class and they become its saddest victims. They are deprived henceforth of their legitimate practical sphere of activities and while the millions of toiling women are being sealed up in darkness and hunger, the rich are being sealed up in luxurious prisons of marble and precious stone equally doomed only to pompous idleness. Over-work and under-work henceforth go hand in hand in the process of degrading women and shaping their history. Sex is no more so binding as class.

In the meanwhile men seek new pastures to fill their idle lives but deny entrance to the women folk. Thus while man's sphere expands, in direct proportion to it the woman's contracts. In the lustrous empires of Greece and Rome men regaled themselves in intellectual pursuits, isolating the women for reproductive purposes, to produce soldiers for im-

perial conquests and statesmen to shine as rulers, little dreaming that within this vicious system are hidden the seeds of decay and destruction. New social codes and epics are now made, new customs and usages, fortifications behind which men entrench themselves to safeguard their undue privileges. Thus arises the double standard of morality, a high severe code for the woman who is to be henceforth the preserver of the home, of society's morals, while man in his romantic garb of fickleness and vagaries goes gallivanting about. Religions gradually fall into line with this frame work. Shastraic injunctions, Biblical epistles and Quranic sayings are all interpreted to serve one purpose—fasten the door of seclusion more firmly on women. The history of man is re-written to initiate it with his fall by a woman in the garden of Eden and woman for ever branded as a temptress and sex an unclean thing. Faithfulness to husband becomes the supreme virtue when all else can be forgiven. The greater the submission to man and his tyranny, the surer the road to heaven. Woman is of the man, but man is not of the woman. The taboos appear making of sex an ugly dark blotch on the fair face of man. Woman ceases to be an individual. She is the mysterious "female" veiled and desired an object of sensuality, a weak helpless piece of human flesh denied a soul. The richer and necessarily "Respectable" the class the sterner the code, the greater the seclusion for women, the more helpless and pitiable their condition.

The more complex the civilization and sharper the division of classes, the greater the economic and social struggle and the greater the trade in women. The need of exploitation bears many evil fruits but few so vicious as prostitution. In primitive society the good of one woman was the good of all, the good of all the good of one. But in civilized society the growth of individualism and the assuming of personality tends to emphasise individual needs and desires as apart from common group life. But these new desires and rights man jealously regards as his own preserve and in order to avoid conflict and ultimately surrender and compromise with woman, denies her the right to self-expression and individual development. He is content to keep his wife a "Domestic Matron" which

signifies not so much capacity to run a home successfully as being devoid of intellectual alertness, wider interests and of all those qualities which make for a pronounced character. Women who develop these characteristics become "shady" and "doubtful" characters to whom the respectable doors are shut. A class of women is henceforth created to satisfy man's need for vivacious and intelligent companions. This usage of some women selling themselves that others may remain dull sheep and virtuous becomes a recognised and regulated feature of social life in every civilized country, a thing unknown in the primitive World. While the upper few were building up high philosophies and abstruse religions, the toilers below were little tarnished by their ethics and codes, though at times they did attempt to borrow bourgeois morals. But before their grim struggle for bread all else pales into insignificance. They are bound not so much by the pale shadows of the past as the stern realities of today. India is still in the grip of a decaying semi-feudalistic order. Industrialisation which made such severe onslaughts on it in the countries of the West, hammering in a new social order and new changes for women, has barely scratched the surface of Indian life. Our society, has lost its ancient contours. It is today a jangled mass of heterogeneous elements with a medley of reactions which are gradually becoming perceptible as a conflict between the old dominating forces of reaction and exploitation and the new scientific and rational urge towards emancipation from all forms of slavery.

The feminist movement in the accepted sense is a symptom of Capitalist society and has no place or reality in a mass class struggle such as one visualises India to be heading for. And that is why it has never assumed the significance it did in the countries of Europe. Social customs and the position of women are conditioned not merely by the prevailing economic framework of society, but by the whole economic history of the race. This then gives us the key-note to the future of the Women's movement in India.

Before we proceed let us first glance cursorily at the demands the feminist movement in India puts forward and see how far it touches the deeper problem and what relation it has to reality. Equal citizenship rights is already a recognised

principle. Next come economic independence for women and property rights. Let us examine these. The right to work is essential to human happiness, but the need of the mass of Indian women today is not the "right to work" but the "right to the legitimate fruit of their labour." To the millions today, economic independence only means the right to slave and starve, while their uncared for, underfed children drag through an existence which is nothing short of a living death. Thus those who clamour for the right to work think only in terms of the few who are bound by the chain of idle respectability. As for property rights, India is essentially an agricultural country and 75% of her population is engaged in rural occupation. Over 53%, of these are landless labourers and are unaffected by the property rights. Of the total cultivable land, nearly one-third is under semi-feudalistic condition, being under Maharajas and Zamindars, a confirmed parasitical class under whose regime the cultivators fare little better than slaves. Then for those who own land—their plight is no better. The average holding per family is 2 to 4 acres, which makes it more of a burden under the prevailing burden of high taxation. The lot of the women in industries is no better.

Therefore to demand property rights and economic freedom by the few bourgeois women within the present economic framework is not only misleading, but distinctly dangerous for it means trying to secure privileges to one class at the expense of another and condemning the latter to perpetual exploitation. Economic freedom in its truest sense can become a reality only when there is a more scientific and rational system of production and distribution and the forces of economic progress which they set into motion are consciously guided.

On the social side the demand is for more rational and equitable laws relating to social relationship such as marriage, custody of children, etc. Now history proves that in a society where woman is an economic factor and she produces wealth side by side with man, she enjoys fuller freedom and suffers far less from restraints and taboos. Social disabilities are more a feature of bourgeois society than the working class who even today give more rights to the women such as divorce. Hence any advantageous economic adujstment for women is

bound to secure for them social freedom as well, just as loss of economic freedom necessarily means the loss of social rights as well. The conditions of women in Russia and the contrasting conditions in Germany and Italy proved this as an unchallenged fact.

Now we come to the question of general culture, physical well-being and social purity—education, health, and social morals,—they are inextricably bound up. Education and health are just as much governed by economic factors. Making education compulsory or promulgating sanitary codes cannot touch even the fringe of this immense problem. It is nothing short of cruelty to compel starving and half-fed children to study; nor can poverty make for cleanliness much less to fit women up to become mothers. "The fact that a woman has no work and no one to care for her is the fundamental social cause of prostitution," declared Ssyemashka, People's Commissar for public health in Russia. The cause and spread of prostitution has already been explained. The feminist movement tends to deal with it more from the ethical point of view and is more ready to offer merciless police vigilance and a cold religion than food to those hungry mouths. None of the half-measures tried in Capitalist countries will ever succeed for they do not reach the heart of the problem which is primarily rooted in economic necessity. Statistics prove that 90% of the prostitutes seek that profession from economic pressure and 4/5ths are drawn from classes in extreme poverty. The only country which has so far successfully tackled this problem is Russia for there alone the very root of this evil is sought to be eradicated not only through legislation, but by providing work, homes and more human conditions for these sad victims. When economic wants and the social degradation which goes hand in hand with it is removed and woman along with man becomes a conscious living factor, she will resist against her being made to serve merely man's physical and social needs and live the helpless characterless life of a "Female" to be a housekeeper and breeder of children. She will become an economic as well as a social unit, equal wages for equal work being recognised and she will discard her position of inferiority. In such a society child-marriage and

purdah have no place, for these vicious customs only prevail where women need protection and exist only as appendages to man, with no individual life of their own. Human life is one indivisible unit. No one aspect of it can be separated from another, the solution of one has a vital bearing on the solution of the others.

Then we finally come to their political demands. They ask for adult franchise and equal rights with men to enter legislatures, to share the right to legislate. In a country where the majority is denied franchise, the vote has a glamour beyond its rightful proportion. So long as a government is run within a capitalist framework as in India—that is, finance, big business and private property control the administration, the vote counts for little. The sad plight of millions of peasants and workers in all capitalist countries where adult franchise has been in vogue for years, proves its impotency. The right to exercise vote or enter legislatures counts for little so long as power is entrenched safely in the hands of vested interests which draw its wealth out of the sweated labour of the masses. Even the few concessions the manual workers had been able to win through years of struggle count for little today in a world lost in catastrophic economic chaos. The sad disillusioned workers today look with hope not to adult franchise, but direct action for their salvation.

Women easily show fervour for the political cause once the message is carried to them. In the political struggle of every country women have played a noble part. "It is impossible to win the masses for politics unless we include the women," said a great revolutionary. But the politics of the future are not the bourgeois politics of the past, where women along with men are exploited and used to win the cause of the bourgeoisie and tighten stronger the coils of oppression round them. Revolution after revolution has come in every country, millions have heroically shed their blood in the proud hope of inheriting a freer world and a brighter life, but have emerged out of the columns of smoke and risen from the rivers of blood to sink yet lower. It it only in the new State built on the solid foundation of mass will and mass power that politics in terms of the larger human life will have any meaning. In

the old capitalist countries women's share in politics has been very negligible even in the most advanced areas, for politics has never had the same reality for her as her home, and social drudgery has denied the full opportunity to those who did feel the call. Political rights even when won have remained an impotent and dead factor. In England where the feminists fought and won a bitter battle for political rights, the lot of the poor, the working class women and their millions of children, is in no way better than the lot of their poor sisters in France where until recently women enjoyed no political rights. Hence we aim at a State in which the hand of woman is felt, where her influence makes for beauty and sunshine in life. That is only possible when power is wrested from the hands of vested interests and passes into the hands of the creators of wealth. As Lenin says: "It is our task to make politics accessible to every working woman.....from the moment private property and private ownership of land and factories is abolished and the power of the land-owners and capitalists broken, political duties will become perfectly simple to the working masses and within the reach of all." They will cease to be a hobby of the leisured few as now and become a dynamic weapon for the good of all.

The fundamental problem which faces India today is the human problem—the problem of creating a free, healthy, clean race. It is not this or that aspect of it which is at stake but the national life as a whole. The solution lies in radically reconstructing society, bringing about a fundamental change in its economic basis and its social character. Then alone can women hope to gain the freedom they thirst for and hand it on as a proud legacy to their progeny. To illustrate the truth of this let us take Russia where the future of the womanhood the world over is vividly foreshadowed.

"Every cook must learn to rule the State," said Lenin and his country is endeavouring to realise it. "Once the Russian woman was roused to defend down-trodden rights, she surpassed the men in energy," writes Amfiteatrov, one of the authorities on Russian women. "Proletarian women have stood the test magnificently in the revolution. Without them we should not have won," said Lenin. Today they are reaping

the fruits of their revolutionary fervour and their sacrifices in the cause of the exploited and the oppressed. They enjoy not the economic freedom of the bourgeois State, but economic security which is the right of every citizen—not merely the right to work, but the right to their legitimate earnings. They enjoy real political power, for the Soviet is based on the foundation of mass will and mass power. The number of women working in the various Soviet Departments is over 50,00000 and 89 in the Central Executive of the U.S.S.R.. Their power is felt in the judiciary and the Executive throughout the U.S.S.R. They figure no whit less in the cultural renaissance as is evident from the rising women writers who make their mark and the increasing number of women's journals and their growing percentage in the scientific and technical fields. Their economic and social freedom necessarily reflects itself in their national laws. The new form of marriage is rational and humane, based upon the equal rights of the sexes which are made practicable in every detail and may be roughly defined as legal marriage with legalised birth-control, right to divorce by mutual consent, protection and security for children. The stigma on the unmarried mother is removed and the obnoxious term "illegitimate child" wiped out, for the "factual" non-registered marriage is put on an equal footing with a registered marriage.

Assuredly laws are not everything. Yet in the legislative field everything possible that is required to make women's position equal to man's has to be done. All relations between the sexes are a private concern, but provisions are necessary to safeguard the offsprings of their union and to guard against sexual crimes which involve a menace to society. Feeble-minded, mentally unsound or diseased persons should be prevented from breeding—hence the need for medical examination and health certificates and easy access to knowledge of birth control.

Divorce has to be as simple and as private a concern of the parties as marriage, no principle of guilt being involved, a factor so obnoxious in most countries today. In a State which recognises and shoulders its responsibility towards the children, this becomes a much simpler affair. Children will

no more be used by husbands as a means of enslaving and keeping under subjection their wives as is so often the case now. A forced marital relationship is more degrading and harmful to children than guardianship of a single parent, however imperfect that may be. The economic independence of women will considerably simplify the problem of children, though law must recognise and insist on the fundamental principle that man is under obligation to provide for all his offspring, whether born within wedlock or not. Custody of children, where no private agreement is achieved, should be decided by the court solely in the interests of the children and not on the old worn out theory of Patriarchal rights, a relic of the old feudalistic days which sought to protect the possessing class. For this, motherhood has to be recognised as a social function, honoured, tended and loved, and children as potential seeds of future achievements and greatness.

One visualises the future social relationships not as laws existing on paper, but rather as living forms, crystallising anew, breaking through dead old rigid frameworks,—forms which outlive their living meaning. But real comradeship of the sort which the Russian woman is in a position to enjoy is possible only where the wife is able not merely to maintain herself without the help of man but is able to secure liberation through scientific means from the grinding cares and deadening drudgery of house-keeping as it prevails today in our country and also better facilities for the care of children through State and public institutions. If equal opportunities for work and intellectual pursuits are to be provided with any measure of success, then more socialistic economic forms are needed in the way of public institutions taking over so much of the dull routine work that burdens our women so needlessly today.

To enable emotional growth and free and satisfactory play to emotional life, sufficient leisure and freedom from petty cares is absolutely essential. "Women's domestic life is a daily sacrifice amidst a thousand insignificant trifles," said Lenin on one occasion. A housewife's working day is at least 5 hours longer than that of any working woman engaged in labour outside. Mechanisation and socialisation of much of the work alone will give her time and energy for more fruitful

pursuits. Public kitchens, canteens, communes have to be set up and easily made available for those who would take advantage of them and gradually learn of their advantages. A sufficiently long period of freedom from work at maternity is indispensable together with homes for mothers and children, infants' nurseries, children's creches not only in industrial but rural areas as well, nursery and kinder-garten schools, holiday homes and advisory centres which would give not only hygienic and medical information, but also advice on social and judicial laws and rights governing women; all these are necessary items in a society which wishes women to live a larger and a fuller life. Freed from outside compulsion the bond between man and woman gets an untrammelled chance to express its harmonious relationship and create real sex equality when woman shall cease to be either a drudge or an ornament and marriage will become a technique of living, not a means of livelihood.

This no doubt will lead to the disintegration of the old patriarchal conception of family. That is inevitable in the face of the great changes, critical thought, startling scientific revelations, conscious study and revaluation of family relations and the forms of life. When economic institutions change emotional relationships change also. Matriarchy, polygamy, polyandry have existed and still exist. It is therefore idle to talk of social institutions and social laws in terms of ethics and standardised concepts of morality. The family or the social codes of today are not the same as of a century ago. No social institution is permanent. However much we may cling to our own snug little faiths and beliefs and pet desires, the future we know will respect them but little, for all human ideas are but passing phases in the ever changing kaleidoscope of human life and the forms of emotional expression are conditioned by social necessity.

There is one other very vital factor that one sees revolutionising the position of the woman of tomorrow—the right to motherhood. Indivisibly linked up with her economic independence is her sexual independence. One without the other would be innocuous and it alone will make sex equality a true reality for her. Man's fight against woman's struggle to free

herself from the penalty of undesired motherhood, is one of the bitterest wars waged by him, for he knows that her victory will deal a death blow to his vested interest and devastate for ever that atrocious structure of a "female character." In savage life as well as in civilized, woman's irrepressible urge to freedom and desire for a larger life has ever led her to seek escape from the sentence nature decreed upon her, and man has ever sought by law, religious canons, public opinion and penalties to thwart her. The highest form of blessing bestowed on a married woman in India is that she may be blest with eight sons, a usage which no doubt has its origin in the old days of imperialistic world, for the more the ambition for Imperial glory, the keener the encouragement given to breeding and greater the consequent enslavement of women. No woman can call herself free who cannot own and control her body and who can be subdued and enslaved through that very quality of fertility which once raised her to the altar as a deity in the dawn of early civilization.

The first argument against birth control is that it will lead to abuse and immorality. But let us look at morality as it prevails today. "Woman is today condemned to a system under which the lawful rapes exceed the unlawful ones, a million to one," says Margaret Sanger. "Fear and shame have stood as grim guardians against the gate of knowledge and constructive idealism. The sex life of women has been clouded in darkness, restrictive, repressive and morbid. Women have not had the opportunity to know themselves or to give play to their inner natures, that they might create a morality, practical, idealistic and high for their own needs.... ....She must not only know the power of the sex force, its use, its abuse as well as how to direct it for the benefit of the race. Thus she can transmit to her children an equipment that will enable them to break the bonds that have held a low order of humanity." A free nation cannot be born of humanity enslaved for ages.....Abused soil brings forth stunted growths. An abused motherhood has brought forth of slave mothers. Few have stressed the immorality of the "Property Rights" of man over the body of woman, though religious and social codes and legal laws have been loud over

the preservation of the chastity and purity of the unmarried. The crusaders in the cause of freedom must destroy that dead hand of the past which seeks to reach out to the present in its attempt to extinguish the flame of new idealism and crush the fingers who would carve out the new woman, new society and a new world.

Motherhood is one of the most sacred and unique functions of womanhood and should not be left to the mercy of exigencies of accidental circumstances or allowed to be determined by ignorance. It must be a conscious task undertaken with joy and a full sense of its responsibilities, controlled and regulated according to the emotional urge and physical capacity of the woman. For this reason sound knowledge on sex, birth control and use of contraceptives will have to be made easily accessible to every woman. From the point of national benefit birth control is necessary for reasons of health, eugenics, social and economic considerations. To put forth the plea that a useful and necessary weapon should not be brought into public use simply because it may be abused is utterly absurd and meaningless. One may as well advocate the stopping of manufacture of matches simply because we can set anything on fire with a match-stick.

The other argument against it is that it will lead to a drastic fall in population. This is a most misleading statement. Mere breeding adds neither to the quality nor the greatness of a nation, it merely lowers vitality, spreads disease and brings unsound citizens into the world. Those who would have a healthy and clean nation must submit to scientific regulation and stop indiscriminate reproductions. The deadly scourge of venereal disease today is eating into the vitals of 47% of our people and if we would prevent its spreading, birth control is indispensable. That birth control does not necessarily cut down the population too drastically is proved by Russia, a country where birth control is legalised, but where the annual increase of population is something like 3 millions.

The future of women in India lies with those 90% who toil and labour in the fields and dark factories and the amount of consciousness that can be roused in them to the rights of their class, for it is with them that the rights of their sex are

bound up and the measure of the power and influence they wield will be determined by the strength of the class they belong to. They who would win freedom for women, vindicate their rights and give them perfect equality, must work for the larger freedom of the exploited and the oppressed and wipe out the society, which keeps the few in luxury at the expense of the many. The women's problem is the human problem and not merely the sex problem. It is not literacy or franchise which will fundamentally change their position to their advantage and satisfaction but the root-basis and entire construction of society. We have the two striking examples of Russia on the one hand and Italy and Germany on the other. Whereas in the former the women are establishing complete equality in the physical, material and human relationship, in the latter they are fast losing even their hard-won concessions and rights, for while in Russia vested interest has been overthrown, in Germany and Italy it is making its last desperate bid for an existence which is threatened. India must, therefore, look to a revolutionised future, when class shall have become a memory of the past, poverty shall have been wiped out and man and woman will have obtained not only their sex rights but their human rights as well and live as noble dignified human individuals and build the new race of equality.

9

THE MEANING OF CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

—N. Gangulee

THE MEANING OF CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

I

THE concrete demand for a Constituent Assembly for determining India's political destiny was first made in the Election Manifesto of the Congress on July 29, 1934; but its concept was implicit in India's opposition to the Government of India Act, 1919. In the preamble to that Act, it was declared that "the time and manner of each advance (towards the progressive realization of responsible government in British India) can be determined only by Parliament upon whom responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples". In other words, the responsibility for the successive stages of development of self-government in India must rest on Parliament and on Parliament alone. As we have seen the Preamble of the Government of India Act, 1919, which denies the Indian people the right to frame their own Constitution without external interference, is retained in the Act of 1935.

Indians of all political persuasions and creeds realized that the so-called Reforms of 1919 did not contain a vestige of freedom, that the system of the constitutional structure known as "Dyarchy" designed by the Act would be unworkable, and that the promise of responsible government was unreal. In 1922, soon after the inauguration of the Reforms, Gandhi observed:

"Let us see clearly what Swaraj (independence) together with the British connection means. It means undoubtedly India's ability to declare her independence if she wishes. Swaraj, therefore, will not be a free gift of the British Parliament. It will be a declaration of India's full self-expression. That it will be expressed through an Act of Parliament is true. But it will be merely a courteous ratification of the declared wish of the people of India even as it was in the case of the Union of South Africa. Not an unnecessary adverb in the Union Scheme could be altered by the House of Commons.

The ratification in our case will be of a Treaty of which Britain will be a party. Such Swaraj may not come this year, may not come within our generation. But I have contemplated nothing less. The British Parliament, when the settlement comes, will ratify the wishes of the people of India as expressed not through bureaucracy, but through her freely chosen representatives". Here the *modus operandi* of a Constituent Assembly is stated in clear terms.

In 1924, as the leader of the Swaraj Party in the Legislative Assembly—the then Parliamentary wing of the Congress —the late Pandit Motilal Nehru demanded a representative convention for the revision of the Act and for the establishment of a genuine responsible government in India. He argued that a representative convention alone should have the responsibility of framing a Constitution, and it was this constitution that would safeguard the rights of the people. His proposal was accepted by a large majority in the Assembly, 76 members voting for and 43 against.

The official response to this demand was true to the traditions of British Imperialism in India. Sir Malcolm Hailey (now Lord Hailey), then the Home Member of the Government of India, opposed the demand, and displayed much dialectical skill in drawing a distinction between "responsible government" and "Dominion Status". After expressing much concern about the problem of the minorities, he ridiculed the political judgment of the Indian Nationalist, who thought that "when the day of independence dawned, communal difficulties would disappear in the bright sunshine of the new freedom".

But the struggle for this "new freedom" continued, and a year later the Legislative Assembly again voted for the acceptance of the national demand of a representative convention to frame the Constitution of India. The procedure suggested was similar to that adopted by the Dominions: a Convention of accredited representatives would draft a Constitution; it would then be approved by the Legislative Assembly, and finally it would be submitted to the Imperial Parliament to be embodied in the Statute. The Government could not accede to the demand.

The exigencies of circumstances, however, led the Imperial

Government to appoint an Indian Statutory Commission with British personnel chosen by Parliament. Its appointment was a challenge to India's right of self-determination, and her protest could find expression only in an organized boycott successfully carried out by the Indian nationalists against the Commission. It became increasingly clear to them that the Imperial Government had no intention of respecting the inherent right of the Indian people to decide their own Constitution in accordance with their own needs, and that the Statutory Commission was just another attempt to create confusion between contending political parties. It was indeed designed, to use Lord Birkenhead's own words, as "a useful bargain-counter or for further disintegrating the Swarajist Party." "We have always relied," writes the late Lord Birkenhead (the then Secretary of State for India) to the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, "on the non-boycotting Moslems, on the depressed community, on the business interests, and on many others to break down the attitude of boycott. You and Simon must be the judges whether or not it is expedient in these directions to try to make a breach in the wall of antagonism, even in the course of the present visit".

The boycott of the Statutory Commission was, however, embarrassing to the Government, for as a natural result the labours of the Commission were entirely divorced from the realities of the political situation. In 1927 the National Congress authorized the Working Committee, in consultation with other political organizations, "to draft a Swaraj Constitution for India on the basis of a Declaration of Rights" and to place the same before an All-Parties' National Convention.

The Convention produced a Report (known as the Nehru Report) outlining the framework of a Constitution for India somewhat on the model of the Canadian Constitution. The Congress, in its plenary session in December 1928, decided to adopt the Report *provided* the British Parliament accepted the proposal in its entirety within a definite period not exceeding one year. Neither Parliamentary Indian debates nor Viceregal pronouncements on the Congress demand held out any hope of its acceptance, and after a futile interview with the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, on December 23, 1929, the leaders of

the National Congress knew exactly where they stood in regard to a peaceful settlement of the constitutional issue.

And so the Congress met in Lahore and passed a Declaration of Independence. The scheme outlined in the Nehru Report was now abandoned, and the policy of His Majesty's Government clearly demonstrated that it did not propose to take any steps whatsoever which might even imply recognition of India's right to determine her political destiny. The content and nature of her political status must be dictated and finally determined by the Imperial Government. Therefore the *modus operandi* proposed by the All-Parties National Convention, which was similar to that which had operated in the Dominions, and which did not mean a surrender of Parliamentary sovereignty, was unacceptable to them.

But the demand for a Constituent Assembly for India has been insistent, constituting the major political issue between India and Britain. It is not a demand that has merely arisen from the opposition to the Government of India Act, 1935. It dates, as we have seen, from the introduction of the Reforms of 1919. The Congress has consistently maintained that the responsibility of framing a Constitution for India must rest with the accredited representatives of the people themselves, and that "any alternative will lack finality." The persistent refusal of the Imperial Government to respond to the Indian political demand has, however, helped to clarify the concept of a real Constituent Assembly for India.

II

The convocation of Constituent Assemblies in different countries, in most cases, was preceded by revolutionary circumstances arising from the conflict between the old and the new regime. Excepting in the case of North America and of Eire, the struggle for freedom had no relation to those peculiar problems that arise as a consequence of a *foreign* rule. None of the other countries was faced with the aggregation of forces that had been assembled by a foreign Power for the purpose of retaining and consolidating its interests. The Constituent Assemblies in

these countries were concerned with the issues thrust upon the nation by the inner dynamics of democratic forces. They aimed at the control of the substance of their *own* government.

India's struggle falls under a different category. She is a colony—"the pivot of the British Empire and the brightest jewel in the British Crown". The fundamental issue in her struggle is therefore independence, and the national demand for a Constituent Assembly implies the surrender of the political sovereignty of the Imperial Government to the people's representatives.

But what lessons can we derive from the experiences of those Constituent Assemblies to which reference has been made? The function of a Constituent Assembly is concerned with the struggle for power, and therefore, historically speaking, it comes into existence by force, charged with the problem of legalizing the essentially illegal fact of revolution. But owing to the fact that the earliest Constitutional Assemblies arose to deal with the new problems consequent on the rise of nascent capitalism, the classic models on which subsequent Constitutional Assemblies were to be based were of a bourgeois or middle-class nature. They represented the new class that had come to supersede the old feudal order, a class of merchant traders and bankers, with a sprinkling of intellectuals to whom the old order could offer but a limited appeal.

At the time of first emergence of bourgeois strength, during the century between 1688 and 1789, the issue was simple and clear enough. On the one side a dying feudalism, an unlimited autocracy, on the other, the rise of a new economic force, bringing with it a new social order. In the English, American and French Revolutions of this period, therefore, the new, strong and unrivalled ideology of bourgeois democracy was able to evolve, unfettered, and with great rapidity, the new mechanism which was to legalize the passing of political power from a dying to a growing class.

In Britain, the Whig settlement of 1688 endured, with hardly a break, right up to the accession of George III in 1760. In North America the victory of progressive capitalism over the reactionary feudal slavery of the South remained secure until the outbreak of the Civil War of 1860, consequent

on the despairing struggle of the obsolète economy of the Confederate States against a more highly developed system in the North, constantly reinforced by the steady stream of new States created in the Middle West. Even in France, despite the local and temporary social revolution of the Jacobins in Paris and a few other great cities of the Republic, the new order secured a permanent hold on the machinery of the State with the triumph of the Directory, a triumph which steadily moved from strength to strength, despite the advent of the First Consul and Emperor, of Bourbon and Orieanist.

In all cases the basic formula was identical. An electorate, restricted to the upper class, was to produce a temporary body charged with the drafting of a scheme of government in which political power was to remain in the hands of the same type of people.

A change occurs with the evolution of bourgeois democracy in the British Dominions. The first British Empire had been lost because the Mother Country had attempted to exploit her white colonies as purely subject territories, unrepresented and unconsulted. From the time of the Durham Report on Canada a new technique was slowly evolved. The Colonies were still to play the role of producers of raw materials and consumers of British manufactures, but the lessons of past experience were drawn upon. Limited self-government was allowed, although the existence of such a statute as the Colonial Laws Validity Act shows how niggardly was the spirit in which the concession was made.

Britain at this period could still afford to be generous to her white colonials, both because of the vast disparity in wealth and population between the Mother Country and her overseas dependents, and also because of the virtual world monopoly enjoyed at this time by British manufacturers. With the emergence of the Imperialist phase of Capitalism, however, the entire basis of the position was changed. The rise of Germany and of the United States as world Powers coincided with a growth in economic power of the white Colonies, now fast approaching the stage of adult Dominion Status. The governing class in the Dominions, however, still remained the bourgeoisie, whose industrial development was still finan-

cially tied to the City of London. The First Imperialist War of 1914-18 led to an intensified growth of independent capitalist structures within the political boundaries of the four main Dominions of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, due in great part to the restrictions on overseas trade inherent in large-scale naval warfare. The Imperial Conference became a sort of Constitutional Assembly of the British Empire, and was the parent of that loosely-drafted Statute, the Statute of Westminster. The Dominions became politically autonomous, but still remained economically dependent. The amicable relations existing between two governing classes of similar type quickly came to an end, however, with the election of a Socialist Government in New Zealand in 1936. The first clash had occurred between the forces of democracy, and though the outbreak of the Second Imperialist War in 1939 postponed the struggle on terms exclusively favourable to the old order, the fact remains on record that the first clash had occurred between the new rising power of Socialism and now moribund and reactionary force of Imperialism.

It, therefore, appears that the era of "peaceful, typically British" evolutionary reform has now passed, never to return. It was solely the product of exceptional historical circumstances that no longer exist. In the future we must look, in these days of imperialist crisis, when the old order of increasing capitalist exploitation is breaking down, to the birth of a new and solid economic basis, superseding the now obsolete forms of bourgeois democracy just as bourgeois democracy, progressive in its origin, superseded a decaying and obsolete feudalism in Europe.

It follows that the old machinery of bourgeois democracy, the Constitutional Assembly as we have hitherto known it, is also obsolete, and incapable of dealing with a situation radically different from the past. The period of flux of the last twenty years provides the key to the question why the old form of Constitutional Assembly has in general failed in Europe as a whole. The Constitution of Weimar paid no attention to economic realities, and its apparent perfection collapsed before the first onslaught of reactionary forces; the Irish Free State of the 1922 Treaty is rapidly disintegrating

into the all-Ireland Eire of de Valera; the Spanish Republic fell before the blows of foreign and domestic reaction because it refused to attempt a serious solution of the agrarian problem; while the comparatively successful record of the Turkish Republic was due to the ruthless laicization of a theocratic feudalism by Mustapha Kemal.

The epoch of imperialist hegemony is passing rapidly away, and a new force is coming to the surface of the modern world—the force of Socialism. The Constituent Assembly, as the emergency device of the capitalist bourgeoisie, is obsolete. It must represent the will of the people, and its aim must be the acquisition of political sovereignty for the benefit of the people. In the form which it has taken in the Russia of today, that of government by a representative Congress elected by the Soviets of workers, democracy shows signs of life. There the co-operation of all races and creeds in the interest of their own freedom has become a reality. The sources from which lack of unity and resistance to a National State arise and create confusion have been overcome by democratic alliance between the workers and peasants.

The function of the Constituent Assembly is, in the main, to frame a Constitution for India; but any attempt to produce a *perfect* Constitution, or to elaborate its form with all legal niceties, is to be deprecated. During a transitional stage, when the affairs of a nation are inevitably in a state of flux, it is both inopportune and unwise to attempt anything more than a declaration of the form of government aimed at and a brief definition of functions which would pave the way for the ultimate construction of that government. It is enough if the members of the Constituent Assembly realize that a pseudo-democratic Constitution can never solve our basic problems; for it is designed only to protect and foster the power of vested interests. While the main purpose of the Assembly would be the framing of a Constitution, it would lay down a number of Organic Laws relating to political, social and economic problems. It would be empowered to issue an irrevocable Declaration of Fundamental Rights and would register its decision to protect the interest of all recognized minorities. It would formulate the principles governing India's relations

to other countries of the world, and finally it would take steps towards adjusting certain interests which the British Government has acquired in India.

Our goal is to create a State which can be *organically* related to the community; it must derive its power from the will of the people, and it must, in brief, be a national State. The Constitution of such a State should include all the elements that are essential for the development of Statehood. It should therefore be obvious that we cannot have a national Government in an alien State; or a national State under an alien Government. As regards the general mechanism of that State, the Constituent Assembly is likely to be confronted with divergent views and plausible theories. Here the essential principle of guidance should be, in my judgment, that nothing is to be allowed to undermine the growth of national unity. The advice which Mazzini gave to the leader of Italian independence might well be chosen as a motto for the Indian Constituent Assembly. Denouncing the Machiavellian designs concealed beneath the Federal scheme, he bade his countrymen: "Never to rise in any other name than that of Italy, and all Italy." The argument that the homogeneous character of the population is essential for a national State is not valid; for it is possible to create a multi-national State with a heterogeneous population on a broad foundation of democratic Socialism. That the diversity of peoples is no handicap to the evolution of a unified State is shown by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

We will now consider some of the basic problems that must be faced in India in order to secure a *peaceful* course for the convocation of a Constituent Assembly.

III

In response to almost every argument relating to the Indian demand for independence, our rulers remind us of grave communal differences, which, they declare, would break out into open revolt as soon as the control of an "impartial" Imperial Government was relaxed. We may, therefore, give some

consideration to this problem of safeguarding the interest of our national minorities.

In its present aspects the problem is the creation of the imperial strategists. Since the Morley-Minto Reforms (1909) there has been a great accentuation of religious asperities between the two great Indian communities, the Hindus and the Moslems owing to the practice of making "a religious belief the cause of advantage in the political field." On the introduction of separate Moslem electorates, an official expressed his jubilation in a letter to Lady Minto. He wrote: "I must send Your Excellency a line to say that a very very big thing has happened today. A work of statesmanship that will affect India and Indian history for many a long year. It is nothing less than the pulling back of sixty-two millions of people from joining the ranks of the seditious opposition."

The policy of using separate electorates as an effective counterpoise to the Indian national demand was pursued with zeal in the Reform Bill of 1919, which resulted in the creation of further fissures among the Indian communities. On that occasion the bureaucracy in India declared with one voice: "If we must have reforms, let us divide the voters as much as possible: *divide et impera.*" This advice was followed with Machiavellian ingenuity during those years of commissions, committees and conferences, and finally during the framing of the Constitution itself.

Lord Birkenhead once wrote to the Viceroy (Lord Reading): "To me it is frankly inconceivable that India will ever be fit for Dominion self-government." In another letter to Lord Reading's successor, with reference to the successful boycott of the Statutory Commission, he says: "I should advise Simon to see at all stages important people who are not boycotting the Commission, particularly Moslems and the depressed classes. I should widely advertise all his interviews with representative Moslems. The whole policy now is obvious: it is to terrify the immense Hindu population by the apprehension that the Commission is being got hold of by the Moslems, and may present a report altogether destructive of the Hindu position, thereby securing a solid Moslem support, and leaving Jinnah high and dry."

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald writes in his *Awakening of India:* "Sinister influences have been, and are, at work on the part of the Government; that Mohammedan leaders have been, and are, inspired by certain British officials, and that these officials have pulled, and continue to pull, wires at Simla and in London, and of malice aforethought sow discord between the Mohammedan and Hindu communities, by showing to the Mohammedans special favours."

Writing in 1927, in *The Times,* Lord Oliver (Secretary of State for India in the first Labour Government) observed: "No one with a close acquaintance with Indian affairs will be prepared to deny that on the whole there is a predominant bias in British officialdom in favour of the Moslem community, partly on the ground of closer sympathy, but more largely as a makeweight against Hindu nationalism."

In his book *Must England Lose India?* Lieutenant-Colonel Arthur Osburn asks: "Would the chief of the Indian secret service or political service be able truthfully to deny that his department has never used or condoned the use of *agents-provocateurs* and that he had never followed Lord Curzon's example and 'kept others quarrelling'?" To a very large section of Indians this is a pertinent question.

With remarkable frankness, Sir John Maynard, a retired member of the Executive Council of the Punjab, writes: "It is, of course, true that British authority could not have established and could not now maintain itself but for the fissiparous tendency, of which the Hindu-Moslem antagonism is one manifestation. It is also true that the mass rivalry of the two communities began under British rule. Persecuting rulers made their appearance from time to time in the pre-British era, levying tribute on unbelievers or punishing with fanatical zeal the slaying of kind. But the Hindu and Moslem masses, before they had eaten of the tree of knowledge and had become religion-conscious, worshipped peacefully side by side at the same shrine."

But all this is easily understandable. From the point of view of an alien Government, any symptoms of unity between the two dominant Indian communities may be regarded as ominious. Not long ago in Peshawar—Moslem city—when the

Garhwali highcaste Hindu mercenaries refused to fire on the turbulent Moslems the incident created a stir among our rulers. Mr. Winston Churchill once told the House of Commons the policy which the Government should adopt in regard to the Indian Communal question. He said: "There is a Roman motto, 'Divide and rule'. We have unanimously decided that that is an improper motto for us to follow, but let us not fall into the opposite system—combine and abdicate. That indeed would be a great danger and a very great error into which we might very easily fall." Is not there then some truth in the assertion that the lack of understanding between the two great Indian communities has been fostered by British administrators?

In this connexion, it may be profitable for us to turn to another part of the British Empire, where the maintenance of conflicting religious groups has been encouraged under a cloak of hypocrisy. An Irish author observes: "One thing experience has proved, and that is, that written guarantees and safeguards for minorities are useless, and even injure the minorities they profess to protect. By emphasizing the racial or religious foundation of the minority, by emphasizing the antipathy of that religious or racial foundation to the main body, these guarantees help to sharpen the differences rather than to assuage them."

The total lack of understanding of British policy in India deludes a section of Indian public opinion into believing that the British Government may "play the part of composers" in communal antagonism. But it is not clear why they should be regarded as the harbingers of communal and political harmony in India when such a development would further strengthen the demand for independence.

Now, it would serve no purpose to dilate further upon the policy of the Imperial Power, which is designed as an effective safeguard against Indian national integration. In any case, as Gandhi puts it, "the burden of solving the tangle rests not on Britain but on the Constituent Assembly." The problem of minorities exists in most organized Governments, but it does not preclude them from attaining an independent political status. Our task now is to remove such irritants as may have

been lodged in the national life through the system of communal electorates. This inherited obstacle must be removed from our political life. The mischief is not irreparable; for there is a significant change in the outlook of the young members of all communities. They are beginning to realize the grave danger of strengthening the hold of an alien rule over them if the path of achieving harmony amongst themselves is to be obstructed by Communal Representation in the political system of India. The old intrigue of bureaucracy can no longer delude the majority of the Moslems.

As a matter of fact, the official creed of the Moslem League is Independence. In one of its sessions, it declared as follows:

> "....We want India to be free and want that freedom enjoyed by every community. Our quarrel with the Congress has been with regard to the correct use of political power which is coming into Indian hands. But it (the quarrel) must not be interpreted to mean, as is sometimes done, that we can ever oppose political progress. Moslem public opinion is solidly in favour of full freedom as will be apparent when the time comes. Their quarrel with the Congress is a domestic matter and must not be used as an argument by British imperialists to block political advance. If this is done, disillusionment must follow..... Throughout the Moslem world Islam stands for liberty and freedom. Love of freedom is ingrained in a Mussalman and he could neither be intimidated nor be manoeuvred into saying: 'Let me and my countrymen remain slaves. I would prefer slavery to freedom.' "

And yet we must recognize the fact that a conflict of communal interests exists, and that it threatens to destroy the ideals of equal and common citizenship in a State. But when we probe into its root cause, it becomes apparent that the basic trouble lies in the maladjustments of economic relations. Communal ferments are usually produced by the oppression of a host of parasites living in rural and industrial areas among the 90 per cent majority of our population. This majority is not as yet fully organized for the purpose of defending its interests and demanding its rights. Most of its members are in a static phase of civilization, utterly remote from any effect-

ive movement through which social justice may be secured. They are not aware of the fact that communal cliques spring from the social, economic and political systems which constitute the machinery of coercion and exploitation.

But it is well to remember that the circumstances of poverty and misery have awakened a considerable section of the illiterate masses to a consciousness of the need of asserting their rights. Indeed, one of the most encouraging manifestations of Indian national life today is the growing spirit of revolt among the peasants and workers. They are rapidly overcoming the inertia of centuries and are anxious to seize opportunities for improving their mode of living. Once the process of drawing the masses into the orbit of the national movement is further accelerated, the minority problem will have dwindled into insignificance. Once we gain their active support in the national struggle, the opposition of the bureaucracy, with its legions of indigenous reactionary forces, can be faced with courage and confidence. We have seen how the problem of minorities has been solved in the U.S.S.R., by uprooting the economic sources of antagonism between national groups and by safeguarding their rights to cultural autonomy.

In the declaration of Fundamental Rights, emphasis must be laid upon the basic interest of the masses. The Indian National Congress has enumerated these Rights as follows:

1. Right of free expression of opinion, free association and combination and peaceful assembly.
2. Freedom of conscience and religion.
3. Neutrality of the State in regard to all religions.
4. Culture, language and script of minorities to be protected.
5. Universal adult suffrage.
6. No discrimination in regard to public employment or any trade or calling.
7. All citizens to have equal rights and duties in regard to State institutions and others dedicated by private persons for the use of the general public.
8. Equality before the law.

While it is true that Congress has repeatedly assured the minority communities that their rights will be securely pro-

tected in drawing up the Constitution of India, it has not as yet succeeded in allaying the fear of these communities. An intensive educative campaign is therefore necessary to convince them that it is to the interest of the nation that every possible fissiparous tendency be rectified if we are to become the arbiters of our own destinies. The protection they now enjoy, owing to the perpetuation of separate communal electorates, stands discredited because it perpetuates India's bondage and does not serve their *ultimate interest.* It should be driven home to all communities that "the objective of the Congress is an independent and united India where no class or group or majority or minority may exploit another to its own advantage, and where all the elements in the nation may co-operate together for the common good and the advancement of the people of India. This objective of unity and mutual co-operation in a common freedom does not mean the suppression in any way of the rich variety and cultural diversity of Indian life, which have to be preserved in order to give freedom and opportunity to the individual as well as to each group to develop unhindered according to its capacity and inclination."

I believe *definite* proposals for agrarian reform and for the control of usury should be placed before the nation. After all, social systems rest on economic systems. The multiplicity of vested interests in land has brought about the inexpressible confusion in the Indian economy, and so long as the Indian bourgeoisie are allowed to create a social and economic incubus the enfranchised electors in rural areas cannot be persuaded to believe either in the Declaration of Rights or in the power of the vote. "Why carry men to the top of a mountain, thence to show them the domain that belongs to them, when afterwards one must take them down and place them in the political order, where they will find themselves limited at every turn?" cried Victor Malouet, a member of the States-General. Unless and until the fundamental basis of the economic life of all communities is transformed in a manner appropriate to our democratic aspirations, the problem of minorities will remain unsolved with us. It is not merely a question of the proper regimentation of economic life, but our task is to *integrate* the diverse and even conflicting aspects of civilization and culture

that have sprung up within our borders. We must be ready for a plain and unequivocal answer to the problems of social solidarity, bearing in mind that our demand for freedom always evokes prophetic declarations of the danger of racial antagonism and the disaster of social upheaval, not only from our Imperial rulers, but also from the comity of nations. It is now our responsibility to show that racial diversity can never be a handicap to political independence.

IV.

Perhaps the most formidable bulwark of British rule in India is to be found in the feudal autocracies maintained by what Lee Warner calls "the protected Princes of India." We have seen how the high priests of British Imperialism sought to consummate the marriage of British India with these States under the new Constitution, assuring the world that they were creating an organic federation of India as a whole. While every possible concession was made to accommodate the rulers of States within the so-called Federal sphere, both the rulers themselves and their Imperial masters totally ignored the people of the States as an entity with a *status quo*. The result is that the peculiar characteristic of this new-fangled form of federation was based upon the States to be federated and *not* upon the peoples of the federation.

Although the feudatory Princes are apprehensive of what may happen to their secured position if the principles of democracy become operative in British India, I believe they would eventually come to submit to the will of the people, once it was realized that their destiny could no longer be fulfilled by remaining under the tutelage of a foreign Power. Most of them realize now that it is not to their credit to have to ask an alien Government to assure their power and prestige within their own territories. This dependence is fraught with incalculable peril both to the Princes and to the peoples of the States. When an English admiral offered to defend Victor Emanuel I from French invasion, he answered: "Do you take me for one of your Indian Nabobs?" The King was well aware of the price which the weak have to pay for protection by the strong.

Now, the Indian States distributed throughout the sub-continent occupy collectively an area of 690 thousand square miles as against 886 thousand square miles of British India. While the total population of British India is about 285 millions, the figure for the Indian States approaches 90 millions. But their classification in accordance with size, population and revenue shows that the majority of them fall under the category of estates. Over 450 of these are each less than 1,000 square miles in area, and only eight States have a revenue of over a crore of rupees. Those States with areas as large as England or France would come within the framework of the Constitution as autonomous units on the same basis as the provincial units in the future government of the country.

As an illustration of the forces that are operating within the States, we reproduce here a resolution passed by the All-India States Peoples' Conference at its annual session in February, 1939. It says: "It is the considered opinion of the Conference that only those States which have a population exceeding 20 lakhs souls or revenue exceeding 50 lakhs rupees can maintain the standard of administration necessary and suitable for being workable units for the purpose of uniting with the Provinces in a scheme of a Free and Federated India and therefore all States not coming within the above category should be amalgamated, either singly or by groups, with the neighbouring Provinces for the purpose of administration, with suitable provisions for the reasonable rights and privileges of the rulers concerned."

The administration of the States is autocratic, although in some States attempts have been made to introduce a semblance of representative government. Even here political rights are conceded more as a concession than as a just and legitimate right. In the language of a distinguished Indian Liberal, we may say: "Many of the rulers have not yet begun to realize that the Princes are for the people and not the people for the Princes." It is to be deplored that some of the Princes and their councils of ministers have resorted to repressive measures almost identical with those that are adopted in British India in order to suppress the voice of the people. Those who still look to our princely houses for leadership in the making of

New India ask themselves if this creation of internal scission can serve the interest of the States even when they are assured of protection by the "paramount power." The policy of thwarting the natural expression of political consciousness is unwise, and will certainly injure the relationship, not only between the Princes and their peoples, but between the two Indias.

V.

One of the essential conditions for the practical realization of a truly representative Constituent Assembly is Adult Franchise. Hostile critics of the Indian national demand repudiate the conception of a Constituent Assembly on the ground of illiteracy alone, and declare that it would be impossible in India to adopt a reasonable scheme for adult franchise. Others raise the question of the heavy cost of setting up electoral machinery, and one also hears the parrot cry that social circumstances obtaining in the continent of India are wholly unfavourable for the election of a Constituent Assembly by a system of adult franchise.

But all these criticisms betray a lack of comprehension of the growing strength of the Indian mass movement. Indeed, slowly but surely, it is the masses who are driving the National Movement onward, impelling it to adopt a line of action which has already prepared, to some extent, the conditions of success for democratic methods in approaching Indian problems; it is they who are making a considerable section of the Indian bourgeoisie increasingly aware of the snares and delusions of British imperialism; and it is their accumulated strength that constitutes the real force behind India's struggle for freedom. Universal Adult Franchise is one of the means of mobilizing that force, and of making democracy healthy. "A healthy democracy," to quote an epigram by a French savant (Romain Rolland), "is never better protected than by itself."

Those of us who have had intimate contact with the Indian masses must admit that illiteracy itself is no handicap to their perception of political realities, and that they are usually endowed with a fund of common sense. Illiteracy does not

mean ignorance, and the Indian masses are intelligent enough to be able to exercise judgement in affairs that concern them. "Illiteracy by all means does not imply," observes the Indian Franchise Committee, "that the individual is not capable of casting an intelligent vote in elections within the range of his own knowledge and experience. An Indian villager, like a peasant all over the world, is a fairly enlightened person."

Moreover, the Indian rural population is not entirely unfamiliar with electoral procedures; for in the villages throughout the greater part of India the village council and its headman are elected by ballot. These councils, we should remember, represent an indigenous system of local government. Villagers are usually tolerant of one another's caste and creed. Among them, unless it is deliberately fostered from outside, communal antagonism seldom arises, and therefore they would welcome a system of franchise which is devoid of communal bias.

But one must admit that the use of the franchise in a modern Constitution is something with which they are unfamiliar, and the suffrage cannot be properly exercised if they are unable to read or write. Illiteracy undoubtedly fosters electoral corruption, and gives rise to certain technical difficulties in the management of polling booths or the recording of votes. It is undoubtedly a serious handicap.

Yet it should be realized that the restricted suffrage is more susceptible of electoral corruption than the universal suffrage. Aristotle was of opinion that in the majority of cases the crowd is a better judge than any individual whatever, and that it may be conceded the right of deliberating upon public affairs with admirable discernment. He wrote: "A large quantity is always less corruptible, as is for example a large volume of water; and in the same way a majority is less easily corrupted than a minority."

We must further remember that it is for the rectification of illiteracy, communalism, economic servitude and social backwardness that India demands her freedom. The real health of her national being depends upon her sovereign rights to be the mistress of her own destiny.

In support of the proposal for the election of a Constituent

Assembly on a very broad franchise, Gandhi made an observation which deserves our attention. He writes: "There is a risk always in every big experiment, but in my opinion it is the least in the proposed method. Underlying the proposal is the faith that the majority of candidates will be enlightened and selfless workers, in that the elections will be concentrated on political education on a stupendous scale. There is no question of tyranny of numbers. There is undoubtedly the risk of ignorant voters being betrayed into a wrong choice. Nevertheless, the decision will be the verdict of the people. Discussion in the press and on the platform cannot replace the elective method.... What is wanted is not necessarily a wise but a representative decision."

I may now venture to offer a few suggestions regarding certain preparatory measures for summoning a Constituent Assembly.

In the first place, a strong representative Executive Committee, consisting of members elected from all recognized political parties and Peoples' Associations, should be formed in each province, and it should be empowered to take such steps as are necessary for preparing the ground for calling a National Constituent Assembly into being. While the Committee must be representative, care should be taken not to make it unwieldy. It is with these representative provincial Committees that would lie the responsibility of settling the preludes and preliminary details. They would draw up plans for the electoral campaign on the issue of summoning a National Assembly, and would set up the necessary organizations for election. The actual conduct of the elections should be in the hands of these Committees.

Secondly, it is of the utmost importance that a nation-wide and intensive propaganda should be carried on with a view to explaining the meaning and purpose of the Constituent Assembly. The Village Councils (panchayats), the Trade Unions, The Peasant Leagues (Kisan Sabhas), the Indian States Peoples' Congress, the Spinners' Organizations, and all other recognized national institutions, have to be mobilized for this single purpose of making the masses aware of the issues involved in the struggle for freedom to achieve consti-

tutional freedom. Selected workers from these organizations should be specially recruited and trained for the work of propaganda under the direction of provincial Committees. It should be made clear to the peoples that the real conception of a National Assembly for securing the independence of the country, to quote Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, "is a dynamic one. It does not mean a body of people, or a gathering of able lawyers, who are intent on drawing up a Constitution. It means a nation on the move, throwing away the shell of its past political and possibly social structure, and fashioning for itself a new garment of its own making. It means the masses of a country in action through their elected representatives." What is essential is that the people should be made to realize that the authority of the Assembly proceeds from them, and that no sectional interests should be allowed to rob the Assembly of its value and significance in India's struggle for freedom.

Thirdly, simultaneously with the formation of provincial Committees, a National Preparatory Commission, consisting of members elected on the basis of a quota system from each provincial Committee should be set up with a view to carrying on such negotiations as are necessary for the convocation of a Constituent Assembly. This central body would undertake to appoint, if necessary, any person or persons of international repute whose advice on certain specific problems might be of assistance to the deliberations of the Assembly. It would, in consultation with provincial Committees, draw up a Constitution, together with Fundamental Laws, and determine the time and place for summoning the Constituent Assembly.

Lastly, after the approval of the Draft Constitution by the plenary sessions of the Constituent Assembly, it should be made available in the principal Indian languages, and be given the widest possible publicity through the press and the platform. The Constitution should contain a Declaration not only of the *rights* of every citizen, but also of his duties towards India's struggle for freedom. For a period not exceeding six months, the Draft should be open to nation-wide discussion, and all recognized national institutions, affiliated to Peoples' Movements (e.g. The Trade Unions, the Kisan Sabhas, etc.), are to be invited to submit amendments and addenda to the

Draft Constitution.

After scrutinizing these proposals, the Constituent Assembly would proceed with the revision of the Draft. The Constitution as framed and passed by an absolute majority of the members composing the Assembly would then be the subject of a Treaty between India and Britain.

VI.

After having agreed upon the fundamental principles of the Constitution of India, the Constituent Assembly should continue to remain in full session for a period during which it would direct such measures as are necessary to prepare the essential conditions of success for setting up the new Constitution. Special tribunals may be appointed in order to ascertain the terms of an equitable settlement with the imperial Government in regard to defence, finance, Indo-British trade, and other matters concerning the future relations between India and Britain. Admittedly these represent many difficult problems, but they are by no means peculiar to India, and they have had to be solved by all nations in their march towards freedom and democracy.

Meanwhile the leaders of the national movement for India's liberation must increasingly guard themselves against the intrusion of disruptive forces within each of its component parts. The circumstances of political servitude are liable to give rise to internecine strife, and it is against this danger that we must rouse the sense of our individual and common responsibility. "When everything is at stake," wrote Hazlitt, "dear and valuable to man, as man; when there is but the one dreadful alternative of entire loss, or final recovery of truth and freedom, it is not time to stand up on trifles and moot points; the great object is to be secured first, and at all hazards." The longer we tolerate India's subjection to a foreign yoke, the greater will be the complexities of our struggle for freedom. Without freedom we shall not succeed in arresting some of the potent causes of national deterioration. But Indian nationalists are fully conscious of the dimensions of the struggle, and the clarity of purpose with which the Indian

National Congress had steered its course in recent years should encourage us to sink all our minor differences in order to reach the goal. The criticism that the predominance of the Congress High Command would lead to Party dictatorship is not valid; for it is necessary to overcome that corrosive individualism which militates against the formation of a united front in our present struggle. Nothing but confusion can result from unco-ordinated struggle against imperialism. Only a unitary authority can assess and adjust the competing claims of all national groups and only a unitary authority can assert the right to throw off foreign yoke. Above all, we must always bear in mind the immeasurable suffering of the masses under the organized exploitation of the all-powerful alien bureaucracy in alliance with the Indian bourgeoisie. When the malignant disease of poverty is destroying the soul of the people, and when we realize that the task of leading the masses of the people forward to the goal of social justice can be performed only by the acquisition of political sovereignty, it would be criminal folly on the part of those who have any claim to leadership if the struggle for a freely elected Constituent Assembly were to be frustrated by the failure to subordinate both personal and sectional interests to those of the people. All other issues must fade into insignificance before the central objective of political power and its consolidation. Indeed, political liberty is the only basis of national unity.

Harrington's appeal to the people of England in the seventeenth century may be aptly addressed to the leaders of the Indian national movement in the Constituent Assembly.

"Excellent Patriots, if the people be sovereign, here is that which establishes their prerogative; if we be sincere, here is that which disburdens our souls, and makes good all our engagements; if we be charitable, here is that which embraces all parties; if we would be settled, here is that which will stand and last for ever. If our religion be anything else but a vain boast, scratching and defacing human nature or reason, which, being the image of God makes it a kind of murder, here is that empire whence justice shall run down like a river, and judgment like a mighty stream."

It is a happy omen for India that her struggle for freedom

should have approached a decisive stage at the threshold of a new epoch. It has already released such forces that can effectively challenge the obsolete *status quo* and at the same time offer great possibilities for renewing the structure of civilization. Vast changes are taking place within the continent of Asia, and India cannot be left in bondage, with the largest conglomeration of subject people on earth. Her contribution as an independent sovereign power would be of great significance in the making of a New Order in Asia. The task of reconciling the principles of nationalism with those of internationalism must rest on independent India. She would willingly allow such circumscription of national sovereignty as may be required of her in setting up any new International Order.

But if the leaders of the Indian struggle fail *now*, through infirmity of will, in realizing the goal of independence; if they fail to merge all the minor issues in this fundamental objective; if they break down under the stress of the Machiavellian designs of a powerful alien bureaucracy, so deeply entrenched in the country; if the conspiracy of all the reactionary forces in India—the Princes, the communalists and the bourgeoisie—is designed to prolong India's subjection to foreign domination, even then, the struggle will continue. After all, as an Irish poet (AE) observed, "The mighty British Empire is not outside the pale of the Government of the Cosmos, and the mills of God did come to the Roman Empire, to the Chaldean and other Kingdoms."

Finally, a word to the critics of the Indian national movement. A correct appraisal of this struggle against the present social and political systems is possible only from the point of view of the masses who are beginning to be conscious of the limitations and inconsistencies of bourgeois democracy. They realize that the task of changing the fundamental conditions of their life and labour must rest with them. It is from them comes the democratic impetus to the Indian struggle, and once they are determined to endow the nation with the life-giving power of freedom, nothing could deflect their minds from the paramount issue confronting a revolutionary epoch. And the suppression of the Will of the People can but liberate

a spiritual energy, and the eternal dispensation of the Time-spirit cannot be frustrated by violence. In the words of Tagore:

"Pilgrims pass from age to age on the road of Time uneven
With the rise and fall of races.
It resounds with the thunder-roar of Thy wheels, Thou
Eternal Charioteer.
Through thē wrecks and ruins of kingdoms
Thy conchshell sounds breathing life into death.
Victory to Thee who guidest people to their purposes,
Victory to Thee, Builder of India's destiny."

10

PRINCIPLES OF NATIONAL PLANNING

—*K. T. Shah*

PRINCIPLES OF NATIONAL PLANNING

Definition, Scope and Objectives of National Planning

PLANNING has been defined by the National Planning Committee as follows:

"Planning, under a democratic system, may be defined as the technical co-ordination, by disinterested experts, of consumption, production, investment, trade, and income distribution, in accordance with social objectives set by bodies representative of the nation. Such planning is not only to be considered from the point of view of economics, and the raising of the standard of living; but must include cultural and spiritual values, and the human side of life".*

The essence of planning is a simultaneous advance on all fronts, and in all sectors. The several sectors of the Plan must be carefully co-ordinated. The advance in each must be kept apace, as much as possible, to avoid lop-sided development in any sector at the expense of any other.

To provide the necessary measure of control over its own progress, and to facilitate judging how far the Plan is being realised, a definite period must be laid down in advance, within which the specified goal of planning is reached. For this country, the National Planning Committee has suggested for this first Plan, a time limit of ten years to attain the objectives defined above.

Because there is incessant development in the science and art of life, no plan, however comprehensive, can or should be a cast-iron frame. The Plan must be elastic, capable of rapid adjustment to advances in science and technique.

The Aims, likewise, of planning have been defined by the Committee to be:—

"(a) The attainment of National Self-Sufficiency for the country as a whole, without being involved, as the

* Note for the Guidance of Sub-Committees, Handbook 1. p.77.

result of such efforts in the whirlpool of Economic Imperialism;

(b) The doubling of the present standard of living amongst the people of India, within a prescribed time limit, say, ten years.

The 'Standard of living' herein considered, will not only include the provision of adequate food, shelter, and clothing; but also of such social services and civilised amenities as are indispensable and integral part of modern civilised life and work".[1]

For working purposes, the "standard of life" for the country as a whole, for any given set of individuals, or for a region, will have to be determined by an expert committee, including medical men, economists and sociologists. It is possible the "standard" may admit of variation, within a stated margin, from region to region, or group to group. It is wholly undesirable, however, for the variation to be solidified, so as to perpetuate existing class differences, or create new ones.[2]

A basic minimum standard of living, common for the country as a whole, must be guaranteed by the community collectively. It must be evolved out of expert recommendation in every department of life, and realised progressively by the Planning Authority. The basis should be open to variation upward from time to time, if the Planning Authority finds the plan of development adequate for the purpose.

In the term "Social Services" are comprised:[3]

(a) Education, in all stages and departments, from pre-school to post-graduate;

(b) Health, including medical and nursing attendance and treatment during illness and convalescence;

(c) Sanitation, including properly equipped dwellings, places of work and training, with light, water, and

1. Ibid. pp. 79-80.

2. "The ideal of the Congress is the establishment of a free and democratic state in India. Such a full democratic State involves an egalitarian society, in which equal opportunities are provided for every member for self-expression and self-fulfilment, and an adequate minimum of a civilised standard of life is assured to each member, so as to make the attainment of this equal opportunity a reality." (Chairman's Memorandum, dated 4th June, 1939, p. 74).

3. Page 80, Handbook 1.

other such primary necessities of a healthful life and efficient work;

(d) Purveyance of food and drink, including hotels, restaurants, cafes, canteens, etc. Transport and communications are social, economic, as well as cultural services.

Insurance and Banking, including Credit, may be added to the list as indispensable concomitants of planned economy. Insurance, in a wide, comprehensive sense, will provide an adequate measure of social security against all the known contingencies of modern working life. Banking and Credit are important adjuncts for the proper functioning of the mechanism of production, exchange, and distribution, or consumption within the community, as well as its commerce outside the country.

In the term "amenities of civilised life" are included opportunities and facilities for travel, amusement, including clubs, concerts, theatres or cinemas, museums and picture galleries; recreation, or cultural development of the mind of the citizens. Without these, life, even if easy on the material plane, would be indistinguishable from mere brute existence.

For a proper formulation and working of the Plan, definite norms must be laid down, for the achievement and realization of such a standard of living. For example:

(i) Improvement of nutrition, from the present subnormal level to a standard of an irreducible minimum of proteins, carbohydrates, and minerals, as well as the necessary protective foods, having a caloric figure of 2400 units for an adult worker.

(ii) Improvement in clothing, from the present consumption of about 15 yards on an average to at least 30 yards, per capita per annum.

(iii) Minimum of housing accommodation—100 sq. ft. for every individual in town as well as country. This must be furnished with water supply, calculated at a standard per capita consumption of 25 gallons per diem; sanitary facilities of corresponding measure; and light,—natural or artificial—of a standard unit strength.

(iv) A basic minimum of education, and training of the mind as well as the body, provided freely, compulsorily, and universally, to every child of school-going age, born or living in the community. This must be available to every child for the whole of a prescribed period assumed to be necessary for imbibing a basic minimum of enlightenment to the future citizens of India.

(v) Organization and establishment of food supplying stores, restaurants, cafetarias, canteens, or clubs, either by each factory, workshop, or school, on a scale of one such establishment for every thousand of population, including shopping service, distributive agencies for common necessaries, or personal services.

(vi) Postal and allied facilities for communication should be such that every individual should, on an average, receive or send out ten letters a year; telephone facilities at the rate of 1 call per day per person, at prices within the means of the increased public catered for this purpose. For this there should be a telephone exchange for every 100 sq. miles of territory, or every 100,000 population, whichever gives the larger number of such facilities. The same, or even a more liberal, standard may be prescribed for Radio facilities, as norm of a civilised life under planned economy.

(vii) Insurance, provided as a Public Utility Service, for all the normal contingencies of a working life. In a properly functioning planned economy, individual life insurance may become wholly unnecessary.

(viii) Banking facilities should be provided on similar lines, as a national or public utility service, i.e. a bank office, or agent per every 25,000 of population, or every 500 sq. miles of territory, whichever gives the larger volume of this service.

(ix) Places providing food and lodging—hotels and restaurants—as well as work, similarly organized,

and distributed all over the land; i.e. 1 for every 1000 people.

(x) Similar norms should be laid down for medical and nursing attendance and treatment in sickness or during convalescence.

LOCAL AND VILLAGE SELF-SUFFICIENCY

The Plan must be framed on a national basis. The ideal of village self-sufficiency has broken down. Mass production, by power-driven machinery, of all articles of daily use has ousted the local product from the local market. It would, therefore, be utterly uneconomic, now, to attempt in any way to revive the ideal of local self-sufficiency. It has little room in modern economy, and none in the future.

The introduction of Money Economy, likewise, involving cash payment of all dues from the cultivator, e.g. rent, interest, or land revenue, has made the rehabilitation of the village as a self-sufficient unit impossible to restore, and unprofitable to maintain.

On a national basis, even under planned economy, however, production should, primarily, be for use, not for exchange. It was this perversion of regional economy—making production more and more for exchange only that has bred economic imperialism, leading to the most destructive warfare in human history. We must avoid this fundamental offence of classical economics, when planning *de novo* our national economy.

The production and distribution of food-supply, and other articles of daily necessity for the village, may, however, be so planned, and rationalised, as to minimise the necessity of import or export from or to neighbouring areas, or outside. This is intended to economise human energy engaged in transport service, and any other accessory of working an economic plan. Imports must, accordingly, be confined ordinarily to goods not possible to produce within the locality; and exports to goods ordinarily produced in excess of local wants. or as a speciality of the areas.

PROVINCIAL SELF-SUFFICIENCY

The problem of organizing self-sufficiency in an ascending degree from the village up to the nation—will assume its most difficult aspect when applied to the existing units of the Indian Federation, whether Provinces or States.

On the national scale, it is relatively easier as well as desirable to achieve self-sufficiency. In the village scale, it is neither desirable nor feasible to insist upon the ideal of self-sufficiency. In the intermediate scale of a District, Division, Province, or State, it may be desirable and practicable, in varying degrees. It must be the task of the Planning Authority—national as well as local—to achieve the correct degree most conducive to the success of the Plan.

In the case of a province, however, self-sufficiency will be sought by each unit, so long as the ideals of competitive economy persist. Planned economy would be most successful if conceived and devised in terms of this country as a single entity. In a constituent unit, productive effort can proceed satisfactorily as integral part of the Plan, only on co-operative, not competitive lines. In co-operative society, life will not be modelled on the jungle practice; nor the survival of the fittest reckoned in terms of brute force or material value.

The productive resources of each Province, as now constituted, vary considerably *inter se*. Each unit would like to make the most of its existing resources, whether explored or unknown.

Given the largest measure of local autonomy, this attitude may involve needless competition, and cause jealousies, as between provinces or States. Those provinces, already more developed, would naturally have an initial advantage, irrespective of their wealth of basic resources; and those less developed would be lagging.

From the national standpoint, the fullest development of all available resources of every unit must be the *sine qua non* of real, effective planning.

The National Planning Authority must, accordingly, scientifically distribute industries, and systematically organize all the different productive resources, in every component unit of the country. No tangible resources of any unit must remain

undeveloped.

At the same time, internecine competition must be minimised, if not avoided altogether. Organizing co-operative enterprise in every field, under co-ordinated supervision, motived by the common impulse of collective good, resulting in individual happiness, is the only solution.

For the proper development of all local resources, the Planning Authority must also attend to the organization of *mandies* and markets in every unit; and local exchanges in each convenient area. It must facilitate the largest possible consumption of locally-made goods within the same area, and thereby minimise the need for transport, insurance, and financial facilities, or middle-men's services.

By such organization in each convenient unit, adequate employment will also be found for local labour. The working population in each unit has a primary claim for employment in the development of local resources. This claim, duly met, would help in improving the standard of living, as aimed at by the Planning Committee.

By carefully planning the effective organization and intensive exploitation of local resources, local requirements, and local opportunities, the Planning Authority will be able clearly to ascertain, which province, State or regional unity, should be considered to be "deficit" units and which "surplus" ones.

After such ascertainment, ways and means must be devised to make good the deficit from the common fund; or to bring about the most profitable disposal of the surplus, for the common good in each case. This will effectively promote the progressive realisation of the Plan, by developing inter-provincial, or foreign, trade in regard to such requirements.

For the effective compilation and efficient execution of the Plan complete co-ordination between the Central Government of India and those of the several units is indispensable. Similar co-ordination between all organisations or establishments, engaged in working out the Plan, or any part of it is presupposed.

For this purpose, the National Planning Committee has postulated a federal democratic organisation of the country with the ultimate sovereignty vesting in the people collectively. The units making up the federation may have the largest

measures of local autonomy, consistent with the preservation of the national integrity, and the execution of the Plan.

No distinction need be made, under this conception, in the rights and powers of the several component units, whether States or Provinces, if they are all brought under the ultimate sovereignty of the Federal authority, representing the people of India.

Subject to the foregoing, provision may be incorporated in the national constitution for the reconstruction of existing units, whether by amalgamation, or by separation. Opportunity must also be allowed for temporary agreements, or combinations, between units for the more effective prosecution of the Plan, or any part of it.

11

PROBLEMS OF PLANNNIG

—Bimal C. Ghose

PROBLEMS OF PLANNING

NO one will deny that certain contradictions exist between the 'proletariat and the peasantry', observes Stalin.[1] These contradictions are at their acutest in the initial stages of economic planning involving large-scale and rapid industrialization in a country predominantly agricultural. A policy of rapid industrialization in an agricultural country entails heavy sacrifices and sufferings on its peasant population. The problem poses itself in the form of securing sufficient quantities of food and of agricultural raw materials as much for feeding a rapidly growing number of urban workers as for export with a view to pay for the importation of necessary capital equipment. In fact, this is the most difficult problem that planners have to tackle. In the early stages of planned development, there will inevitably be a shortage, more or less acute, of consumer goods, as by far a major portion of the resources will be diverted towards the development of heavy industries. In the absence of an adequate quantity of consumer goods, the incentive to the agriculturist for larger production as well as for exchanging his produce would be lacking, while such exchange as would take place between finished commodities and agricultural produce under these conditions would be disadvantageous to him. Another difficulty is the substitution of small-scale peasant economy by large-scale co-operative or collective farming[2] with modern equipment and machinery. The characteristic feature of fragmentary and small farms, observed Stalin—and his comments apply with equal force to Indian conditions—is that they are unable in the required degree to

1. "Stalin's Kampf" edited by M. R. Werner, p. 144.

2. The difference between co-operative and collective farming is not always clear. According to Sir John Maynard, the difference may be stated as follows: 'Co-operators choose their own associates and presumably exclude the less promising of the applicants for admission, whereas every local peasant who is ready to pool his rights has a legal claim to membership of the collective farm unless he is an impenitent enemy of the Soviet Government.' It would appear, however, that when the authors of the Bombay Plan speak of co-operative farming, they mean collective farming as understood by Sir John Maynard.

utilize machines, technique and the results of agricultural research. The consequences are an insufficient output of marketable agricultural products and the consequent danger of a rupture between town and country, between industry and agriculture. Hence the necessity of speeding up agricultural development in order to bring it up to that of industry. But the greatest handicap here is provided by the fact that the peasant is conservative and individualistic in outlook. It is necessary, therefore, to break down his conservatism by demonstrating to him that it is only by a wide-spread organization of the peasantry in co-operative societies that he can be saved from poverty and ruin while assuring, at the same time, a progressive development of the community as a whole.

Economic planning in India cannot escape these problems in very acute form. Its success will naturally depend upon how satisfactorily and quickly they will be attacked and solved. In fact, they constituted the most serious problems in the execution of the Five-Year Plans in Russia. A careful study of the Russian experience should, therefore, provide us with valuable lessons and guide in tackling similar problems in India.

Agricultural development in Soviet Russia has taken a tortuous course. Although the objective of all-embracing collectivization has never changed, practical policy has undergone many changes dictated by objective facts. The original policy of war communism had to be abandoned in favour of the New Economic Policy in 1921 which again was reversed in 1927 by the decision to adopt collective farms as the basis of agrarian policy. Even during the Five-Year Plans minor modifications have been introduced in the policy of collectivization without, however, impairing its essential characteristics. As in almost all human affairs, what is evolving is the result of a process of trial and error which is still proceeding, the object being the attainment of complete collectivization.

During the period of 'War Communism', peasants reduced their cultivation, and, owing to the lack of consumable goods, there was no incentive to produce a surplus. The acuteness of food shortage and the tendency on the part of the peasants to withhold grain from the market led the government in 1918

to adopt a policy of grain requisitioning. The result was that the peasant produced only enough food for his immediate consumption and was not anxious either to produce a marketable surplus, as there were no manufactured goods to be had in exchange, or a reserve, as it would have been requisitioned by the government. The shortage of agricultural produce was adversely affecting industrial development as well. The policy of 'War Communism' was, therefore, replaced by the New Economic Policy announced in March, 1921. The main features of the N.E.P. in agriculture were the reduction of the peasant's compulsory delivery of grain from the whole of his surplus to a fixed quantity and the freedom allowed him to dispose of the rest of his crops as he wished. To the economy as a whole of the N.E.P. period, Lenin had given the name of 'State Capitalism' as it consisted of socialist industry and peasant agriculture, the link between the two being provided by the market. The N.E.P. period in agriculture witnessed two noteworthy developments, the 'sales crisis' of 1922 and the 'scissors crisis' of 1923. The 'sales crisis' presented a singular phenomenon of the interchange between industry and agriculture being to the former's disadvantage, and is just the opposite of that of the 'scissors crisis'. 'The "sales crisis",' writes Dobb,[1] 'was an expression of a disproportion between agriculture and industry, under which the marketed surplus of the village was insufficient to supply the requisites of expanded production in the towns.' By 1923, the 'sales crisis' was over, but the 'scissors crisis' developed. It meant that the rate of interchange between town and village turned heavily in favour of industry, namely, at a ratio in September, 1923, of over 3:1. The government met this crisis by reducing industrial prices, by stabilizing the currency, and by efforts directed towards raising agricultural prices by such measures as an altered price-policy in agriculture, liberal credits to organizations purchasing grains, and a development of the export of grain. In 1925 the land code affecting peasant holding and production was modified in favour of the private agriculturist. The period for which land could be leased was extended and the

1. "Russian Economic Development since the Revolution," p. 214.

employment of a certain amount of wage-labour was also permitted. All these measures produced heated controversy and the opposition parties spoke of the danger of the extension of *Kulak* influence. The official point of view was that this was a necessary temporary phase, and that, even during this period of transition, *Kulak* influence could be effectively held in check by the application of such economic methods as taxation and credit. By 1927, the government felt strong enough to reverse its policy again and adopted in 1928 a policy of collectivization in agriculture. The policy was not carried through without serious difficulties. At the beginning of the Five-Year Plan, which introduced collectivization, there was in many parts a form of organized passive resistance of the peasantry. There was, for example, a large-scale slaughter of cattle. However, the government steadfastly pursued its policy, and as a result of compulsion varied by encouragement, collectivization proceeded apace. In 1928, less than one per cent of the peasantry had joined collective farms. By 1937, the area covered by individual peasant farm was under 1 per cent. A collective farmer is, however, 'allowed to retain in his possession and for his own use a certain number of dairy cattle, sheep and goats, pigs and fowls; and he is permitted to have a garden or allotment for his own use and private cultivation of between half an acre and two acres in extent; these plots being chiefly intended for market gardening'.[1] A collective farmer receives both in kind and in cash his share of the collective farm income calculated according to the number of work-day units based upon work performed on the basis of a standard quota fixed for each type of work. After making deliveries of grain to the State of a certain quota at a fixed price and to the machine and tractor stations towards payment of services rendered, and providing for seed and fodder, a collective farm or *Kolkhoz* sells a portion of the remainder in the market and distributes the balance still left to its members. Thus in a particular *Kolkhoz* in 1938, members received 11 lb. of grain and 5 rubles 10 kopecks in cash for every work-day unit.

1. Dobb: "Soviet Economy and the War", p. 60.

This brief outline of agricultural development in Soviet Russia demonstrates its great importance and complexity in a scheme of planned economic development. When the authors of the Bombay Plan recommend that some measure of compulsion is desirable in order that co-operative farming may come into vogue without delay, it may be questioned whether the full implications of the proposal have been realized. We must aim at the development of co-operative or, rather, collective farming. But the Russian experience should teach us to proceed slowly and cautiously. In the initial stages of economic planning when the problems of industrial development will occupy most attention, private farming, even though inefficient, should be tolerated, while all efforts should be made to induce the peasant not only to improve his method of cultivation as much as may be possible but also to develop collective farming. Simultaneously, a close watch must be maintained on the trading between the town and the country so that the agriculturist may not be forced to pay unconscionably high prices for such manufactured goods as may be available for sale. It is necessary to this end that industrial costs must be kept as low as possible, unnecessary middlemen eliminated, and all exploiting tendencies on the part of agencies purchasing raw produce or selling manufactured goods effectively curbed. During this early period, the only way out, as Stalin said, in his Report to the 15th Communist Party Congress, 'is to unite the small and dwarf peasant farms gradually but surely, not by pressure, but by example and persuasion, into large farms based on common, co-operative, collective cultivation of the soil, with the use of agricultural machines and tractors and scientific methods of intensive agriculture'. Only when conditions are more favourable, that is when industrialization has developed to some extent and co-operative farming has made some progress, can a frontal and determined attack be made upon private farming.

But collectivization will not be achieved without tears, for the simple reason that the peasantry, by its very position, is not socialistic. But all sacrifices and privations will be worth while when the process will have been completed, for it will not only ensure a fuller and more prosperous life but also will

strengthen immeasurably national economy. As Maurice Hindus[1] observes in reference to agricultural development in Russia, "the transformation of Russian agriculture from individual ownership to collectivized holdings and tillage, because of the very speed of the process, was accompanied by inordinate sacrifice of comfort, substance and life. . . . Yet without the collective farm Russia could never have fought as she has been fighting. She would not have had the mechanical-mindedness, the organization, the discipline, above all the food. In the writer's judgment she would have lost the War."

The financial proposals of the Bombay Plan have roused the most acute controversy, and have been held to demonstrate its great weakness and vulnerability. Yet the fundamental problem in economic planning, as in the case of a war economy, is not financial. It is essentially a question of diverting the desired amount of resources in men and materials into pre-determined channels. In a socialist economy, the financial problem is of secondary importance; under capitalism, it is usually of crucial significance which explains why in discussions on planning it is invested with exceptional importance. This distinction is due to the fact that in a capitalist economy, the operations of the pricing process determine the flow of resources into particular directions, while under socialism it is the production plan which determines the inter-relationship between different parts of economy. The production plan itself, of which the plan of capital construction is the backbone, is determined by the amount of real resources in men and materials that may be available for building plant, equipment and factories. Once the production plan has been settled, the necessary financial arrangements for giving effect to it will naturally follow.

That finance plays a subsidiary role in socialist planning is demonstrated by Soviet experience. As Dobb observes,[1] 'The Soviet economic plan includes a financial plan as a constituent part of it. This financial plan can be regarded simply as the production plan translated into terms of prices'. The

1. "Mother Russia", p. 193.

essential constituent of the Five-Year Plan is the production plan which embodies the output programmes for the important products of the economic system. These output programmes are then translated into money costs. And the purpose of the financial plan is to evolve a credit plan, on the one hand, and a system of prices, on the other, as will be appropriate for the successful execution of the production plan. The financial plan estimates the amount of credit that will be required by industrial units to finance the purchase of raw materials as also the amount of cash they will need to pay wages. This is the credit plan. On the basis of such cost plus overhead and a small margin of profit, it fixes the prices at which industries will be credited for goods produced. Finally, and this is of utmost importance, it fixes the retail prices at such levels as will 'equate the planned output of consumable goods with the spendable funds of the population'. The agency through which this adjustment is effected is the Turnover tax. This brief exposition will show that what really matters under socialist planning are decisions about the amounts of real resources of men and materials that may be diverted for purposes of capital construction—decisions which, in their turn, will be influenced by considerations of the extent of sufferings and privations that the community may be expected to bear for the present in the interest of future development. Once these decisions are taken it becomes a question of translating them into appropriate financial arrangements.

Some features of the Soviet financial system are noteworthy. On the revenue side, by far the most important constituent is the Turnover tax, while on the side of expenditure, new investment and defence are the major items. The Turnover tax has the leading role in the Soviet financial system. Not only does it provide the main source of revenue, but it also functions as the central regulator of Soviet economy. In this latter capacity, it bridges the gap between cost-price and retail-price, and does it in such a way that the bulk of the price rise is concentrated on luxuries and non-essentials, thereby modifying to some extent in actual practice wage differentials arising from piece-rates, bonuses, higher earnings for skilled workers, etc., which are considered necessary for sti-

mulating increased effort.[1] As an indication of the importance of the Turnover tax in the Soviet financial system, it may be mentioned that by 1932 it contributed 17½ billions out of a total revenue of 30 billion rubles, by 1935, 50 billions out of a total revenue of 67 billions, and by 1940 nearly 106 billions out of a revenue total of 178 billion rubles. It is significant that the combined total of expenditure for capital investment and defence and the revenue from the Turnover tax were respectively in billion rubles 25 and 17 in 1932, 37 and 37 in 1934, 100 and 92 in 1939 and 113 and 106 in 1940. These items are responsible for between two-thirds and three-quarts of the whole Soviet budget. The relative unimportance of the two other sources of revenue, loans and direct taxation, which play so important a role in capitalist countries, is due to the absence of any large inequality in income in Russia. The result is that the yield of direct taxation and the contribution of voluntary saving are small. They account for less than a fifth of the capital investment financed out of the Budget. The reason why income-tax was not more severely utilized to collect the increased flow of income is that it would have adversely affected the incentive to increased work that was being provided by wage differentials. Although the increased spending power was being drawn into the State coffer, this was done indirectly through the agency of the Turnover tax, which, while it allowed people with some surplus income to spend it as they wished on the supply of goods available in the market, succeeded in diverting this income into the Treasury by a suitable adjustment of prices of different categories of consumers' goods.

The financing of an economic plan under capitalism is an entirely different proposition from what it is under socialism. The former raises many difficult issues. Under capitalism, it is necessary first to have command over necessary finance in

1. Incidentally in respect of the contention that such wage differences and consequent inequality of income, such as it exists, show that the 'profit-motive' and therefore capitalism still flourishes in Russia, it has to be observed that the Soviets have made no concession to private enterprise. Land and capital, the means of production, are in social ownership. No income differences due to ownership of property can exist; and 'there are not two sources of income, with social or class differences contingent on them, but only one.'

order that the resources of men and materials required for the production plan may be obtained. But the way in which finance is raised has repercussions on the plan itself. If taxation is raised so high as to impair seriously the profit-motive or if recourse is taken to large-scale inflation, not only will the production plan be dislocated but future accumulation will also be endangered. The bitter experiences during the present war have demonstrated what inflationary finance entails, while very heavy taxation will sap the incentive to expand production. If these crippling consequences are to be avoided, the question arises whether the financing of an economic plan can be effected primarily by saving supplemented by reasonable taxation and, if at all, a modest inflation. The crucial problem is the potentialities of saving. Thus, in expounding the financial implications of the Bombay Plan, Mr G. D. Birla, one of the signatories to the memorandum embodying the Plan, admits that of the total planned investment of Rs. 10,000 crores in 15 years, hoarded wealth, foreign borrowing and sterling balances are expected to yield only Rs. 2,000 crores so that the balance of Rs. 8,000 crores 'whether you call it favourable balance of trade or savings or created money, ultimately it comes out of our own saving and thus the whole sum may as well be called saving'. This works out at a saving of Rs. 533 crores a year, or about 16 per cent of an average annual income of Rs. 3,300 crores. In the Plan itself, the proportion of annual income to be saved was estimated at 6 per cent. A 16 per cent annual saving of national income is much larger than the rate of saving in even highly developed Western countries, and is extremely unlikely to be attained in a free and backward capitalist economy as it obtains in India. Mr Birla is also conscious of the improbability of this assumption, but argues in its support that 'after all, this so-called economics of a country is no more than the economics of a family in a much magnified form'. He further adds that instead of speaking in terms of money, one might convert the sum of Rs 8,000 crores in terms of human labour, and estimates that, on the basis of an average wage of Rs 300 per year, the services of less than 1.80 crores human labour which is about 4½ per cent of the population would be required to implement a plan involving an

annual expenditure of Rs 533 crores. But in arguing in this fashion, Mr Birla is, albeit unconsciously, postulating for the success of the plan conditions under which the individual will have to submerge his interest completely into that of the collective, or, in other words, he is assuming in effect the existence of a socialist economy. It should probably cause no surprise that the sponsors of a plan of such magnitude as the Bombay Plan should be forced, in spite of their personal predilections to the contrary, to assume conditions which run directly counter to the fundamental bases of a capitalist economy in order to demonstrate the feasibility of the Plan. Just as a capitalist economy is afflicted by contradictions, so also do contradictions underlie the Bombay Plan.

The problem of personnel, especially technical personnel, is one of exceptional difficulty which a plan of economic development in a backward country will have to face and overcome. Basic industry is the central point in an economic plan, and its development calls for enormous financial expenditure and the availability of a certain minimum of experienced technical force without which, speaking generally, the building up of basic industry is impossible. It is a consideration of the lack of technical personnel in this country that has led the authors of the Bombay Plan to keep the pace of capital construction low in the initial stages. But the question arises: how slow shall we go? Must the Plans at each stage be conditioned by the availability of an adequate number of technical personnel? Or should not the Plans themselves function as a school for the training of cadres? Russia, where the question of personnel in 1928 was not dissimilar to, if not more acute than, what it is in India now, adopted the second alternative. 'The Russians,' writes Maurice Hindus,[1] 'were seeking not only to cover the country with a network of modern factories within the briefest possible time but to train millions of men and women, many of whom had never seen anything more advanced than a village blacksmith shop, in the successful operation of blast furnaces, rolling mills, and all other modern and highly complicated machinery, also

1. "Mother Russia", p. 152.

within the briefest time. They had no time for individual instruction. They literally flung masses of people, millions of them, into the task with the purely businesslike calculation that the immediate losses would be more than compensated in the long run by the competence which these masses would acquire by being obliged to perform tasks they had never before known.' When Hindus says that Russians had no time for individual instruction, he does not mean that they were not making strenuous efforts for training up cadres. Thus the percentage of workers among the students in technical and other universities rose from 25 per cent in 1928 to 50 per cent in 1933, and the number of specialists with higher education in all branches increased from 179,000 in 1928 to 303,000 in 1933. What Hindus does mean is that Russians did not hold up their Plans on the ground that sufficient technical cadres were not immediately available. In the initial stages, foreign experts had to be imported on a large scale. But by 1938, it was recognized that 'the plans themselves had been a great school; Russia had now almost enough technicians of her own, and would ordinarily henceforth call in the foreigner only as a consultant for a special task with a time-limit,'.[1]

The war has provided a salutary impetus to the growth of technical cadres in India. Not only has work in defence industries requiring technical skill greatly increased, but the growing number of Indian soldiers, who come mostly from rural areas, will also have gained some knowledge of an experience in handling intricate machines in actual fighting and thereby become somewhat mechanically-minded. The problem of technical personnel is likely to be somewhat easier in India than what it was in Russia in 1928. Yet, considered in relation to the magnitude of the task involved in the Bombay Plan, it is likely to present serious difficulties, and will have to be tackled in much the same fashion as it was in Russia. It may be mentioned that the speed with which the Russians had decided to pursue their Plans was dictated largely by the danger of foreign agression. The importance to be attached to this factor will have a large say in decisions about the tempo

1. Bernard Pares: "Russia", p. 157.

of our economic plans.

A large population, which should normally be considered a valuable asset, has been a source of grave anxiety to many in India. Instead of being regarded as a valuable aid to the prosecution of a plan of economic development, the large labour force available in this country is sometimes represented as a great handicap. Dr Gyan Chand, for example, asserts[1] that the increase in our population 'is our liability, it has to be put on the debit side of our national account'. He suggests that 'we have to reduce our birth-rate in India if we are to succeed in solving the problem of want and misery'.[2] This, however, is an approach to the problem and an attempt at a solution from an entirely wrong angle. On the possibilities of increasing our national wealth by a rapid industrialization of the country and thereby solving the problem of poverty, Dr Gyan Chand observes that we have been caught in a vicious circle. 'Agriculture cannot thrive and become progressive unless the surplus population on the land is taken off it. Industry, which alone could provide the alternative means of livelihood, cannot be developed because the products of industry cannot be purchased by the agriculturist owing to his extreme poverty.'[3] But why cannot this vicious circle be broken, and what would happen if it could? Even Dr Gyan Chand concedes that the vicious circle will be broken, but adds that this will be attended by such far-reaching political, economic and social changes that 'their course is unpredictable and, therefore, the whole position quite inscrutable'. While, thus leaving the question of over-population undecided, even after the deadlock between agriculture and industry is resolved, he goes on to conclude that the increase in our population is a liability.

So weighed down is Dr Gyan Chand by this phenomenon of our growing population that he argues that even socialist reconstruction will fail to solve the problem set by it, and that there is no escape from the conclusion that 'restriction of num-

1. "The Problem of Population" (Oxford Pamphlets on Indian Affairs), p. 22.

2. Ibid., p. 28.

3. Ibid, p. 20.

bers is essential for the remaking of the nation'. He admits that socialism has succeeded in Russia, but adds that conditions in India are in many respects significantly different. But he mentions only one point of difference of utmost significance, namely, that unlike Russia, 'India is already densely populated and has no open spaces to fill'. It is open to question whether there is any necessary inverse causal connexion between density of population and material well-being. France and Australia, which are not highly industrialized countries, have a density of population of 184 and 199 respectively as against 195 in India, yet the standard of living is much higher in the former countries, the per capita income in France, for example, being £41 in 1928 as against £5 in India in 1931. An interesting fact bearing on the question of over-population is the increase in our per capita income in spite of the increase in our population from year to year. Thus, Dr Rao has estimated that per capita income in 1941-42 would be about Rs. 70 in 1931-32 prices as against Rs. 65 in 1931-32. Dr P. J. Thomas has also estimated that both our agricultural and industrial production has been increasing at a faster rate than our population. But the neo-Malthusians would still argue that the improvement in the condition of the people would have been much greater if only the rate of population growth had been slower. The reply to this is that it is yet another instance of an approach to the problem from a wrong angle.

The crucial problem in this question of over-population is the potentialities of Indian agriculture. On this issue, there is no justification for assuming that our agriculture will be unable to support a much larger population. The total area cultivated in British India is 267 million acres, while 154 million acres or over 57 per cent of the area actually brought under the plough, are classified as 'cultivable' waste. Much of this must be land of inferior quality, but there is no reason why science will not succeed in making these lands fairly productive. Further, there is still a wide scope for increasing the yield of crops from land already under cultivation by better methods of farming and the application of technology and science. In Russia, for example, the yield per hectare of all grains increased in 1937 by 33 per cent over the average yield during 1928-32. The

following comparative figures quoted in the Bombay Plan of yield for different countries demonstrate the great scope that still exists in India for improvement:

Yield per Acre (in Tons)—1939-40

	Rice	Wheat	Sugarcane	Cotton
U.S.A.	1.01	0.37	20.06	0.11
Canada	—	0.52	—	—
Australia	—	0.42	—	—
Japan	1.61	—	—	—
Egypt	—	—	—	0.23
Java	—	—	54.91	—
India	0.35	0.32	12.66	0.04

It was estimated that an optimum diet would require about 65 million tons of cereals for a population of four hundred millions. Our present output has been calculated at 53 million tons. A little over 20 per cent increase in yield will produce 65 million tons. But the possibilities of increasing the yield with the help of science and technology are much greater. Our present cultivated land, without for the moment taking into consideration the 'cultivable' waste that can be brought under the plough, should be able to support a much larger population than 400 millions. The forces of progress which socialism would unleash should bring about a revolution in our agricultural methods and output. In the course of a discussion by British doctors on India's health problems, Dr Forrester observed that it was on the goal of expansion rather than of restriction, whether of production or population, that we must fix our gaze, and quoted in support the following comment of the Hot-Strings Conference Report: 'Given the will, we have the power to build in every nation a people more fit, more vigorous, more competent, a people with longer, more productive lives and with more physical and mental stamina than the world has ever known.'

There is yet another consideration. Even if we assume, although it is not really true, that agriculture in India would be unable to support our growing population, the question remains why we should not be able to develop our industries sufficiently and obtain in exchange for our industrial products food from abroad. Such a position may entail considerable danger during war. Great Britain is however in this predica-

ment. She imports large portion of her food and agricultural raw materials from abroad, yet nobody argues that she is over-populated. Unless, therefore, we assume that we shall continue to remain a subject colonial country with appaling illiteracy, backward agriculture and little industrialization, it becomes difficult to sustain the hypothesis that we must always be haunted by the Malthusian spectre.

It has been urged here that an economic plan of the magnitude of the Bombay Plan can be attended with success only under conditions of socialism. But whether we desire to carry through a plan of this dimension or be satisfied with a more modest plan to be implemented under existing conditions with certain modifications, the need for setting up an appropriate machinery for a careful examination of the hundred and one problems that the building up of such an extremely complex structure as an economic plan entails, cannot be too strongly emphasized. Although the first Five-Year Plan was initiated in Russia in 1928, the origin of the planning machinery is usually dated from 1920, when, even before the civil war was completely over, the State Commission for Electrification (Goelro) was set up for preparing an electrification plan for the whole country within fifteen years. It should be added that even prior to 1920, there was in Russia a number of planning commissions charged with the task of drawing up sectional plans. It was with the setting up of the Goelro that an attempt was being made for a co-ordinated development. In 1921, the Goelro was replaced by the Gosplan or the State Planning Commission. It was to be an advisory, not an executive body, the Council of Labour and Defence exercising the supreme executive authority in the economic sphere. In conjunction with this Council, the Gosplan was 'to work out a unified economic plan for the whole of the State on the basis of the electrification plan approved by the Eighth Soviet Congress and to exercise a general supervision over the execution of this plan'. About the Gosplan, Dobb says,[1] 'The total personnel of the Planning Commission at first numbered forty, chiefly economists and engineers. By 1923, after further

1. "Soviet Planning and Labour in Peace & War", p. 17.

reorganization, its staff had been enlarged to three hundred. In 1925, subordinate branches of Gosplan were set up in the republics, regions and provinces, linked with, and subordinated to, the parent body.'

It is essential that an organization similar to the Gosplan should be set up immediately in India to work out some economic plan for the whole country. Politicians *per se* should be eschewed from the planning organization. Planning is the task of experts. Their judgment should not be influenced or deflected by extraneous considerations projected by politicians into scientific discussions. When experts have once evolved plans or made their observations, politicians will have an opportunity of expressing their opinion on them from their standpoint before any particular plan may be finally adopted for execution.