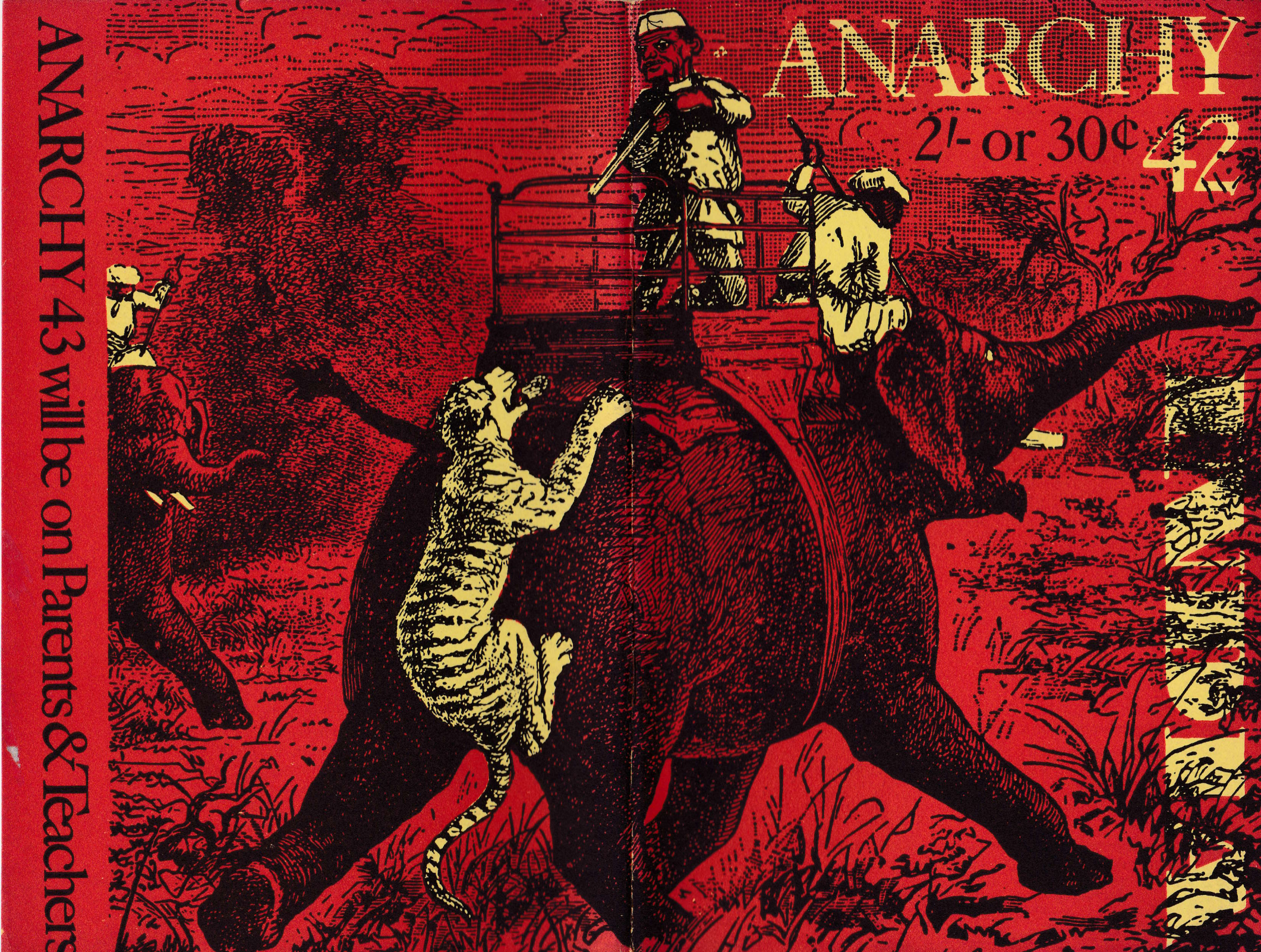
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Indian anarchism

GEOFFREY OSTERGAARD

TO A SUPERFICIAL OBSERVER OF THE INDIAN POLITICAL SCENE an article on Indian anarchism might promise to be as brief as the celebrated chapter on snakes in the natural history of Ireland: there are no anarchists in India. Other Western ideologies, such as liberalism, nationalism, communism, democratic socialism and even fascism, have clearly taken root in modern India but anarchism appears to be conspicuously absent. The recent publication of Adi Doctor's book, *Anarchist Thought in India* (Asia Publishing House, Bombay, Rs. 8.50), however, shows the error of this view and at the same time accounts for it. If there appear to be no anarchists in India, it is because they are ranged behind another banner imprinted with the word used by Gandhi to symbolise his social philosophy: Sarvodaya, the Welfare of All (1). The Indian anarchists whose theories Doctor expounds and criticises are, in fact, the Mahatma himself, his major contemporary disciple, Vinoba Bhave, and other leading figures in the Sarvodava movement such as Jayaprakash Narayan, Dada Dharmadhikari and Dhirenda Mazumdar.

To pin the anarchist label on these men may appear to be the provocative act of a critic before leading them to the slaughterhouse reserved for utopians. Few, if any, of them would use the label themselves and Jayaprakash Narayan, the most Westernised and sophisticated social theorist among them, would certainly prefer to be known as a "communitarian socialist." However, as Doctor is well aware, "a rose is a rose is a rose": when the Sarvodaya doctrine is analysed, it clearly emerges as a species of the anarchist genus. And, if Western anarchists wish to know why their Indian counterparts prefer another label, part of the answer may lie in the persistent and not wholly unwarranted association in the popular mind between anarchism and violence. Sarvodaya anarchism is, of course, an anarchism of non-violence and, like Tolstoy, its exponents prefer a label which bears no traces of dynamite.

It is not the whole answer, however, because it is doubtful whether more than a handful of Sarvodayites have found it necessary to define

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their philosophy in relation to the ideology of Western anarchism. To most of them the Sarvodaya doctrine appears to be very much an indigenous creed; universalistic, no doubt, in its implications but as distinctively Indian in its origins and colouring as the Mahatma himself. The Sarvodaya worker dressed in his home-spun, hand-woven *dhoti* and shirt and striving for the uplift of his country's 550,000 villages, feels himself to be working within the mainstream of the Indian tradition. If, under Vinoba's tutoring, he does not reject outright Western influences but seeks rather a synthesis of (Western) Science and (Indian) Spirituality, his object is to preserve and to revive what he sees as the Indian heritage that has been dangerously impaired by two centuries of Imperialist rule.

Of all the competing social ideologies in Indian today, there can be little doubt that Sarvodaya *is* the most distinctively Indian. The Marxism of the Communist Party and the free enterprise of the Swatantra Party are clearly exotic creeds. The socialism of Congress *claims* to be peculiarly Indian but is patently Fabian in character, except to the extent that it has been influenced by the Gandhians. It is rather surprising, therefore, to find Doctor devoting a chapter of his book to prove that Sarvodaya anarchism has no basis in ancient Indian political thought. Passing references to an ideal stateless society are to be found in Vedic, Buddhist and Jaina literature but these represent no more than allusions to a mythical "golden age" contrasted with man's present sinful lot. Hindu political theories, in fact, start from an assumption of the inherently wicked nature of man and paint a Hobbesian picture of the strong preying on the weak—"like the fishes in shallow water"—until men see the wisdom of placing themselves under the protection of the king. Kingship, tempered and moderated by *dharma* (the law of right conduct), was regarded as both natural and necessary if anarchy in the sense of chaos was to be avoided. Doctor concludes: "If one can single out any country in which the political philosophy of anarchsim was placed in a coffin, the coffin tightly packed and nailed, and then buried full six feet deep, then that country was ancient India."

Doctor is undoubtedly right in his main contention that a philosophy of anarchism is absent in ancient Indian political thought but his argument misses the central point about Sarvodaya: its emphasis on non-violence. The anarchism of Sarvodaya is, in fact, arrived at largely, if not wholly, by swelling out the social and political implications of the principle of non-violence. Once this is appreciated, the indigenous roots of the doctrine become manifest. Now, while non-violence has been preached and to some extent practised by many individuals in many countries and at every stage of culture, it cannot be denied that it has been a deep rooted and continuous element in the Indian cultural tradition. Some, indeed, would argue that non-violence or *ahimsa* is "India's greatest contribution to world-thought" (2). The apparent paradox of an emphasis on non-violence combined with an absence of a philosophy of anarchism in ancient Indian thought is explained by the fact that, until recent years, *ahimsa* was seen simply as an ethical principle for the self-realisation of the *individual*. It was

Gandhi's great contribution to make it a principle of *social* ethics and to insist on its application to all social relations. Just as he transformed the old principle of individual passive resistance into the new principle of *satyagraha* by showing how it could be used as a form of social protest and resistance against institutions defined as evil, so he transformed the old principle of *ahimsa* into the new social philosophy of non-violent revolution. Gandhi's autobiography, *My Experiments with Truth*, is essentially a record of the process of transformation of these two closely related ideas.

Gandhi's insistence that *ahimsa* is a principle of social as well as individual ethics undoubtedly involved a rejection of the ancient Hindu assumption of the inherent wickedness of mankind. This rejection, however, was not based on a simple-minded assertion of the contrary assumption that man is naturally good. "Every one of us," he asserted, "is a mixture of good and evil" (3). But he did believe, most firmly, that all men have a potentiality for goodness, that "no soul is beyond redemption," and that the nature of man is not static or could ever be made perfect but he did believe that they were *perfectible*. Indeed, he seems to have posited an inevitable evolutionary process by which men, as they gained increasing insight into spiritual "Truth," would become progressively less violent. In the era of Belsen and Auschwitz—to cite only the most glaring symbols of modern bestiality—it has become fashionable to deride this kind of belief and, not unexpectedly, Doctor's criticisms of Sarvodaya doctrine begin by challenging its assumptions about human nature. It is worth reminding ourselves, therefore, that the balance of good and evil is not permanently lop-sided and that the history of mankind does provide *some* evidence of what most of us would regard as moral progress. Moreover, while it must be admitted that presuppositions about the "goodness," "badness" or "perfectibility" of human nature are not susceptible to scientific proof, the Gandhian ones do at least possess the virtue of not inhibiting the quest for moral progress in the way that the contrary ones do. What it is possible for men to become, we do not fully know but the presupposition of perfectibility ensures that men will continue striving to prize open the limits of the possible. Anarchism is grounded on at least one indisputable fact. *Some* men (though not necessarily all those who have styled themselves anarchists) have found it possible to develop to a stage where they could live peacefully without the coercive apparatus of the state. The question then is: If some, why not all? If Gandhi or Vinoba (and many less saintly men), why not you or me?

Doctor's failure to bring out the essential relation between the principle of non-violence and the anarchism of Sarvodaya stems from his desire to relate the doctrine to the body of Western anarchist thought. No doubt, to an Indian political scientist the similarities between the ideas of Sarvodaya and those of the great classical anarchist thinkers is the most interesting question (4). To the Western anarchist, however, it is more interesting and illuminating to consider the *dissimilarities*.

The extent of the common ground between Sarvodaya and Western

anarchism is quite considerable. Both aim, in Woodcock's general definition of anarchism, " at fundamental changes in the structure of society and particularly . . . at the replacement of the authoritarian state by some form of non-governmental co-operation between free individuals " (5). Both see the modern state, with its claim to a monopoly of the legal instruments of coercion, as the great obstacle to a free co-operative order in which men will really practise *self*-government. Echoing the familiar anarchist critique of what now passes as self-government, Vinoba asks: " If I am under some other person's command, where is my self-government? Self-government means ruling your own self. It is one mark of *swaraj* not to allow any outside power in the world to exercise control over oneself. And the second mark of *swaraj* is not to exercise power over any other. These two things together make *swaraj*—no submission and no exploitation " (6). For both the anarchist and the Sarvodayite, the duty of the individual to obey his own conscience is the supreme norm, taking precedence over the state's claim to political obedience. Neither school, with the possible exception of the Stirnerite egoists, envisages a society without some restraints on the individual but both demand that the restraints necessary to maintain an ordered society be sumitted to voluntarily. Both emphasise the factor of moral authority in maintaining social control and cohesion and believe that, given the appropriate social institutions, it could entirely replace political and legal authority.

In their conceptions of the necessary conditions for the realisation and maintenance of a society of free, self-governing individuals, again, there is close agreement. First and foremost is the abolition of the institution of private property in the means of production. As in the family, so in society, property is to be held in common, each contributing according to his capacity and each receiving according to his needs. For the Sarvodayites in present India this implies the pooling of the ownership of the village land through *gramdan* and, for those outside the villages, a full acceptance of what Gandhi called the principle of trusteeship—the idea that any private property one may possess, including one's talents, is held on behalf of, and is to be used in the service of, society. With the abolition of private property goes the abolition of the inequalities it engenders. Both Sarvodayites and anarchists envisage a society in which individuals are at the same time free *and* equal. Absolute equality is, of course, not a feasible idea, but as Vinoba puts it, the inequality that may be permitted will be no more than that which exists between the five fingers of one's hand. The important point stressed by both Sarvodayites and anarchists is the need to recognise the equal value, moral, social and economic, of the various types of work performed by different individuals. Echoing Kropotkin's plea for integrated work, Gandhi and Vinoba call for the abolition of the distinction between intellectual and manual labour and for the recognition of the dignity of work done with the hands. Part, at least, of the Sarvodaya emphasis on the *charka* or spinning-wheel stems from its symbolisation of the kind of productive work that all men and women should rightly be expected to perform.

A further important condition of a free society stressed by Sarvodayites and anarchists alike is decentralisation: social power must be widely dispersed if tyranny is to be avoided. For the 19th century anarchist-communists this condition could be achieved if the local commune were recognised as the basic unit of social organisation. Enjoying complete autonomy with regard to its internal affairs, it would be linked on a federal basis with other communes at the regional, national and international levels for the administration of business involving relations with other communes. For the Sarvodayites the villages, in which 80 per cent of India's population still live, would be the basic units. Each village would constitute a miniature republic and be linked with other villages not, as Gandhi put it, in a pyramidal fashion " with the apex sustained by the bottom." Rather, the structure will be " an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals,never aggressive in ther arrogance but ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circle of which they are integral units. Therefore, the outermost circumference will not yield power to crush the inner circle but will give strength to all within and derive its own strength from it." (7) Such a decentralised polity implies a decentralised economy. Large-scale industry and its concentration in vast megapolitan centres is to be avoided or reduced to the absolute minimum. Industries are to be brought to the villages so that it will be possible for a village, or rather a group of villages, to constitute a practically self-sufficient agro-industrial community. The present generation of Sarvodayites do not see this scheme as an attempt to put back the clock. Less ambiguously than Gandhi, Vinoba does not reject modern technology. On the contrary, he welcomes it as a means of avoiding drudgery and increasing production: he insists only that technology be applied for the welfare of all instead of being used to bolster a system of human exploitation.

In working for their goal the Sarvodayites join with the classical anarchists in condemning political action. No good service can be rendered by the state and those who seek political power, even for beneficient ends, will inevitably be corrupted. The seat of power, argues Vinabo, casts a magic spell over those who occupy it. " If instead of those at present occupying it, we were to occupy it, we would do things very similar to what they are doing now. The seat of power is such. Whoever sits on it becomes narrow in outlook. He develops fear and desires to safeguard himself by keeping a large army "(8). Parliamentary democracy stands condemned for several reasons. Despite " the sham device of voting," it does not really result in state policy being guided by public opinion. It involves also the principle of majority rule which can only mean the tyranny of the majority over the minority, not the welfare of all. For the Sarvodayites, decisions consistent with the latter can be reached only through strict adherence to the principle of unanimity which compels the search for a consensus. Again, parliamentary democracy involves political parties which are divisive forces

and which seek power by hook or by crook, by vilification of their opponents and by bribes and threats. " Difference of views is a healthy sign," says Vinoba, " and I regard it as necessary and inevitable. But when parties are formed on the basis of different views, they are less concerned with ideology than with organisation, discipline and propaganda. The party is an instrument for attaining political power. And power predominates while ideas become mere convenient trade-marks used for power and political rivalry "(9).

In place of political action the Sarvodayites, like the anarchists, advocate direct action by the people themselves. The politics of the people must be substituted for the politics of the power-state. People must become aware of their own strength and learn to solve their own problems. The revolution can be made only from below, not from above. The Sarvodaya workers do not constitute a revolutionary party appealing to the people for support and promising to usher in the millennium. They exist only to give help and advice: the people themselves must take the initiative and work out their own salvation.

These and other parallels between Sarvodaya and Western anarchist thought are important aids to understanding what the movement initiated by Gandhi and taken further by Vinoba is all about. For an anarchist evaluation of the movement, however, the divergencies are more illuminating.

Compared with the mainstream of the Western anarchist tradition, the most obvious difference is the Sarvodaya attitude towards religion. Of the great anarchist thinkers discussed by Eltzbacher (10) and Woodcock, only one, Leo Tolstoy, based his anarchism on religion. Many, perhaps the majority, of Western anarchists have followed Bakunin in coupling God and the State and rejecting both for the same reason: their denial of the sovereignty of the individual. In the West, atheism and anarchism appear as natural bed-fellows, the twin off-spring of Protestantism when taken to its logical conclusion. Sarvodaya anarchism, however, is fundamentally religious. " At the back of every word that I have uttered since I have known what public life is, and of every act that I have done," declared Gandhi, " there has been a religious consciousness and a downright religious motive " (1). An unshakable faith in God and an insistence on the primacy of spirit constitute the core of the philosophy of most Sarvodayites. But, when this has been said, it is important to note the catholicity of their religious views. Gandhi and Vinoba are Hindus but they claim no special status for the Hindu religion: all religions are merely different ways of finding God. Moreover, according to the Gandhian conception of religion as that " which changes one's nature, which binds one to the truth within and which ever purifies," even the sincere atheist qualifies as a religious man. (13) If the atheist subscribes to a " belief in the ordered moral government of the universe " (14), then, despite his denials, he has the essence of religion in him. As if to make it easier for those who boggle at metaphysics, Gandhi reversed the familiar equation and asserted, " Truth is God "—adding that this was the most perfect definition of God as far as human speech could go. (15)

Clearly, for the Gandhians the importance of religion lies in its buttressing of the belief in an objective moral order. Belief in God rules out ethical relativism and moral injunctions, therefore, take on the character of absolutes. This ethical absolutism provides a further contrast with the main Western anarchist thinkers who, like Godwin and Kropotkin, have attempted to provide rational and naturalistic foundations for their ethical codes. The consequences of this different approach to ethics are vividly apparent when one considers the contral moral principle of Sarvodaya, non-violence. For the Sarvodayites, non-violence is not something one argues for or again: it is something one either accepts or rejects. It is most certainly not a subject for utilitarian considerations. In this connection, it is necessary to recall Gandhi's distinction between passive resistance and *satyagraha*. The former is a technique of non-violent resistance which may be, and often has been, adopted by those who do not rule out the use of violence in certain circumstances. The choice of this technique may be dictated by the fact that the resisters have no other effective means of resistance at their disposal. This kind of non-violence Gandhi regarded as the non-violence of the weak. *Satyagraha*, in contrast, is the non-violence of the strong, a method of resistance adopted because it is felt to be the only morally right course of action and which would be used even in those circumstances when the resisters had superior physical force on their side. As a result of the sorry history of the use of violence by anarchists in the past and under the impact of the current campaign for nuclear disarmmament, many Western anarchists would now be prepared to admit the futility of violence but few would accept non-violence as an absolute moral injunction. At the most, the new pacifist anarchists would argue that they can foresee no circumstances in which the use of violence would be justified. This is very different in theory, if not in practice, from accepting non-violence as a categorical imperative. The latter, though not the former, involves a willingness to suspend the rational mode of thinking in terms of cause and consequence, the mode which now dominates the Western mind.

To complicate the matter still further, the Sarvodayites combine an absolute commitment to non-violence with a flexibility which, on occasions, even to Western sympathisers, appears to be outrageously inconsistent. In part, this flexibility stems from Gandhi's insistence that absolute truth cannot be known to the as yet unfulfilled human mind. He claimed only to be a seeker after Truth, not to have found it. (16) A human being, however good, can arrive only at relative truth. Since non-violence is deemed to be *the* way to Truth, it follows that no human being can ever achieve perfect non-violence: a person is always more or less non-violent; the ideal is achieved only in death. The combination of this premise with the premise of an evolutionary tendency towards non-violence which is unevenly distributed among mankind leads to the conclusion that non-violence resistance, in the Gandhian sense, is not always possible as a practical policy. It was not possible, for example, in the Sino-Indian border war of 1962 because the Indian people, for all Gandhi's efforts, were not strong enough to adopt *ahimsa*.

And since genuine *ahimsa* is a doctrine of the strong and violence is preferable to non-violence adopted for cowardly reasons, armed resistance was justifiable, although of course the Sarvodayites themselves could not participate in it.

This kind of reasoning leads to a further difference between Sarvoday and mainstream Western anarchism. The latter is predicated on the assumption not only that it is possible for men to live an ordered existence without the state but that it is possible for them to do so *now*. In its extreme form, this assumption finds expression in the Bakuninite theory of spontaneous revolution according to which the masses, inspired by the heroic endeavours of dedicated revolutionaries, would shortly rise to throw off, once and for all, the artificial chains of the state. Today, some Western anarchists are prepared to countenance "gradualism" but only *faute de mieux*, in the absence of a revolutionary situation. The Sarvodaya anarchists, however, are convinced "gradualists": they see the anarchist goal in much the same way as Godwin did, as something to be reached only after men have become more perfect than they now are. This position, known in the West as "philosophical anarchism," partly explains the apparent inconsistencies of the Sarvodayites towards the institution of government. Until all men, or at least a large proportion of them, are fit for non-governmental society, government, as a matter of fact, will continue to exist. It seems reasonable, therefore, to try to ensure that society gets the best government it is presently capable of. For the Sarvodayites this means at least a democratic government, with all its faults. Vinoba's gradualism is quite apparent in his statement envisaging three distinct stages: first, a free central government; second, the decentralised self-governing state; and third, pure anarchy or freedom from all government. (17)

This kind of anarchism seems to come close to the anarchism of the Marxists with their idea of a transitional stage of socialism between capitalism and complete communism. Some of Vinoba's statements in which he compares his views with those of the Marxists but challenges their notion that the dictatorship of the proletariat is a step towards the stateless society, would seem to bear out this interpretation. This, however, would be a mistake, as can be clearly seen when we consider the celebrated Gandhian stance on the question of ends and means. Marxist theorising, like most Western theorising, is in terms of the dichotomy of ends and means: the end is pure anarchist communism, the means to it is the dictatorship of the proletariat. Moreover, if the end is good enough (as it is usually assumed to be), it seems reasonable to hold that "the end justifies the means." Gandhian thought, however, rejects the dichotomy: means and end are part of a continuous process; the means preceed the end temporally, but there is no question of one being morally superior to the other. Put in another way, means for the Gandhians are never merely instrumental; they are always end-creating. It follows, therefore, that the choice of means determines the end and that from immoral or even amoral means no moral end can result. It is essential to grasp this point since it provides

the key to Gandhi's philosophy of action and represents his most illuminating insight for social theory. (18)

Applied to the point under discussion—the ultimate goal of a stateless society—the fusion of means and end implies that there is no transition period or, what amounts to the same thing, every period is one of transition. With non-violence as both the means and the end, the Sarvodayite acts *now*, according to the principle and as far as he is able, and thereby achieves the goal he is striving for. For him, as for Bernstein and Sorel, "The movement is everything; the goal is nothing."

Commitment to this philosophy of action accounts for yet a further difference between Sarvodaya and Western anarchism. It would be incorrect to say that Western anarchists have shown no interest in constructive activity. The anarcho-syndicalists certainly believed that, in building up their trade unions, the workers were constructing the social organisation of the new society. But, in the main, Western anarchism has been satisfied to echo Bakunin's famous dictum: "Destruction is itself a form of creation!" In historical retrospect, classical anarchism —even syndicalism, now that the unions have proved broken reeds in their hands—appears essentially as a movement of protest: a protest against the whole social and political structure of modern industrial society. At the end of his highly critical evaluative chapter, Doctor comes to the same conclusion with regard to Sarvodaya. But this, surely, is an extremely myopic judgment. Protest, there certainly is but the Gandhians have never been satisfied with mere protest. "Be ye also do-ers of the word!" has always been their text. Bhoodan followed by gramdan and Santi Sena (Peace Army) are only the latest additions to the Constructive Programme initiated by Gandhi. This constructive programme includes such items as: communal unity, removal of untouchability, prohibition, khadi and other village industries, the emancipation of women, the promotion of provincial and national languages, the uplift of the peasantry, the establishment of economic equality, and service to the *adivasis* or tribal people. (19) Although Gandhi is best known in the West for his *satyagraha* campaigns, he himself attached more importance to constructive work. "If you make a real success of the constructive programme," he once told his followers, "you will win Swaraj for India without civil disobedience." (20) It is not possible here to evaluate the constructive work of the Sarvodaya movement but its importance cannot be denied. The public image of the Gandhian disciple in India is, in fact, very much that of a social worker. In reality he is more than that because the motive behind the work is not merely to relieve suffering but to remove its causes, i.e., it is social service with a radical objective.

The item of prohibition in the constructive programme suggests another difference between Sarvodaya and Western anarchism: its severely ascetic character. Western anarchism has had its puritans and "simple lifers": indeed, from one perspective, all anarchism may be seen as a plea for the radical simplification of life—a plea symbolised

in a bureaucratic world by the passionate slogan, " Incinerate the documents! " But the asceticism of Indian anarchism extends far beyond anything found in the West. The loin-clad figure, carrying all his worldly possessions in a small bundle and without a penny in his purse, is the Indian ideal. Among the ethical principles, besides *ahimsa*, enunciated by Gandhi as necessary for self-realisation are: *brahmacharya* which involves not merely sexual continence but complete control over the senses; *aparigraha* or non-possession; *aswad* or tastelessness which implies looking upon food and drink as a kind of medicine, to be taken only in the limited quantities necessary to maintain the body; and *asteya* or non-stealing which is related to non-possession since it involves not only not taking that which does not belong to us but also refraining from taking anything of which we have no real need. The free and easy relations that characterise anarchist circles in the West and especially, since Godwin and more particularly since Freud and Reich, the emphasis on sexual freedom find no echoes in Indian anarchism. And it is perhaps signifiicant that the only *satyagrapha* campaign of any importance sanctioned by Vinoba since Independence was directed against the use of " obscene " cinema posters in Indore.

Finally, in their theories of revolution there are significant differences between Sarvodaya and mainstream Western anarchism. The Sarvodayites see the revolution as in essence a revaluation of values. (21) The first step in the revolution is to convert individuals, if possible on a mass scale, to the new point of view by appealing to both their intellect and their emotions. The new values chosen for emphasis are those which have a direct bearing on some major problem such as the plight as the landless labourers, so that their acceptance is likely to lead to radical social change. As with Tolstoy, the revolution takes place as a result of individuals beginning here and now to live the values of the future society. Since the new values are difficult to practise, a phased programme is contrived so that ordinary men are able to advance by easy steps towards the new society. Gradually, through cooperative effort the people proceed to create new institutions and new forms of social life. The theory is a theory of social change and not merely a plea for individual regeneration (like Moral Rearmament for which Gandhi's grandson is now campaigning in India) because it does involve changing the social structure. But the Sarvodayites place greater emphasis on transforming individuals because they insist that it is individuals who start the process of revolution and because they believe that the desired social structure can be achieved and maintained only if individuals are adequately developed morally. In seeking individual conversion, they direct their efforts to all men and women, without discrimination by sex, caste, creed or class.

In comparison with classical anarchism (and, of course, with Marxism), it is the absence of any appeal to class which most distinguishes the Sarvodaya theory of revolution. In the West, anarchism as a social movement developed in part as a critique of the Marxist theory of revolution. From a narrow perspective, the anarchism of Bakunin, Kropotkin and the syndicalists may be seen as a form of deviation from

Marxism. Not surprisingly, therefore, classical anarchism has much in common with Marxism, especially in its analysis of capitalist society. Anarchists, other than the syndicalists, have not assigned to the industrial proletariat the central role assigned to it by Marxists but they have always directed their revolutionary appeal primarily to the oppressed and the dispossessed. They have not expected to enlist the oppressors, the powerful and the privileged in the cause of revolution.

This is not the place to argue the merits and demerits of either the Marxist or classical anarchist theory of revolution. But, to a Western social scientist, it appears a weakness in Sarvodaya theory that it has neglected the valuable insights into the mechanics of power structures provided by both Marxists and anarchists. In their absence, the actions of the Sarvodayites often seem to be somewhat remote from harsh realities. In defence of the Sarvodayites it may be said that they have enjoyed some spectacular successes in appealing to the wealthy and powerful classes. Sneering critics in India are always emphasising the large proportion of rocky, uncultivable and legally disputed land given in bhoodan. But what is truly remarkable is that land-gifts including much valuable land, should be given at all. It should also be remembered that the Sarvodaya movement is operating in a social context still very different from that of even 19th century Europe: the Marxist and anarchist models may not be all that relevant to rural India. (The industrial urban sector is another matter but, to date, Sarvodaya theory has failed to encompass this.)

After the defence of Sarvodaya has been made, however, this observer at least would still sympathise with that minority in the Indian movement which favours more militant action against the possessing classes. Such militancy, based on realistic social analysis, would not involve a rejection of the theory of non-violent revolution. It would mean, rather, a reversion from what Vinoba calls the " gentle " satyagraha of the gifts-movement to the " tough " satyagraha associated with Gandhi—but applied this time against India's newly emerging ruling class instead of the Imperialist masters. In the country of Gandhi it is odd that the first large scale satyagraha campaign since 1947 among the peasants—that now taking place in Andhra Pradesh—should be promoted by the Communist Party rather than by Gandhi's own followers.

In cataloguing some of the major resemblances and differences between Indian and Western anarchism, I have confined myself to the realm of ideology. Comparison and contrast in sociological terms would be essential for a deeper understanding of Sarvodaya. There is no space to consider this aspect here but one point at least may be made. Indian anarchism, unlike Western anarchism, is a movement bestowed with *legitimacy*. Founded by Gandhi, " the Father of the Nation," few political leaders are willing or prepared to deny it that legitimacy. In this connection, its firm commitment to non-violence and its present lack of militancy referred to above help to preserve this status. As I see it, its possession of legitimacy is both a strength and a weakness; but whether it gains more than it loses by it, is difficult to judge. There is no doubt, however, that its legitimate status involves it in postures

which the average Western anarchist, accustomed to thinking of himself as "outside" the dominant social ethos, would find puzzling, to say the least.

Sarvodaya is not yet a mass movement, despite the millions who have been touched by it at some point or other, and its future remains problematical. It is, however, the largest and most effective movement now working for anarchist goals in any country in the world. Its existence proves the continued vitality of anarchist ideas. Today, when there is in the West a revival of interest in these ideas, those anarchists who are alive to the need to find fresh inspiration for a renewal of their great tradition from Godwin to Malatesta would be well advised to study carefully the theory and practice of Sarvodaya. It may be that we require to call in the East to redress the balance of the West.

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1. The term "Sarvodaya" was first used by Gandhi as the title of his translation into Gujerati of Ruskin's *Unto This Last*—one of the important Western influences on his thought.
2. G. Dhawan, *The Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi*, (Navajivan: Ahmedabad), 3rd ed., 1957, p.8.
3. Quoted in Dhawan, *op. cit.*, p.104.
4. Even so, Doctor's first chapter on Western anarchism pays scant attention to the one great classical anarchist figure whose thought is closest to Gandhi's: Leo Tolstoy.
5. George Woodcock, *Anarchism*, (Penguin Books), 1962, p.11.
6. Vinoba Bhave, *Democratic Values*, (Sarva Seva Sangh: Kashi), 1962, pp.13-14.
7. M. K. Gandhi, *Sarvodaya*, (Navajivan: Ahmedabad), 1954, pp.70-1.
8. Quoted in Doctor, *op. cit.*, pp.57-8.
9. Quoted in Suresh Ram, *Vinoba and His Mission*, (Sarva Seva Sangh: Kashi), 3rd ed., 1962, pp.385. This is the fullest and best history of the movement for bhoodan and gramdan.
10. P. Eltzbacher, *Anarchism*, 1908.
11. Quoted in Dhawan, *op. cit.*, p.38.
12. *ibid.*
13. At least one prominent Gandhian is an avowed atheist—Gora (G. Ramchandra Rao). For an account of his discussions with Gandhi on this question, see his *An Atheist with Gandhi*, (Navajivan: Ahmedabad), 1951.
14. Quoted in Dhawan, *op. cit.*, p.38.
15. *ibid.*, p.42.
16. See Joan Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence*, (O.U.P.), 1959, pp.16-7.
17. Cited by Doctor, *op. cit.*, p.65.
18. Gandhi's views on the means-end question and its importance for social theory is admirably discussed in Bondurant, *op. cit.*, Ch.VI.
19. M. K. Gandhi, *Constructive Programme*, (Navajivan: Ahmedabad), 2nd, ed., 1945.
20. Pyarelal, *The Last Phase*, (Navajivan: Ahemabad), 1956, I, p.44.
21. For the substance of this paragraph, I am indebted to V. Tandon, *The Social and Political Philosophy of Sarvodaya after Gandhiji*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Agra University, 1963.
22. The campaign is directed primarily against the State government's increase in land tax. On Gandhi's definition, the campaign would, of course, be one of passive resistance rather than true satyagraha. The term "satyagraha" is now very loosely used in India to cover all forms of popular protest.

On government

VINOBA BHAVE

(*Extracts from* DEMOCRATIC VALUES, *selections from the addresses of Vinoba Bhave*, 1951-1960, *Sarva Seva Sangh Prakashan, Kashi*, 1962.)

SARVODAYA DOES NOT MEAN GOOD GOVERNMENT or majority rule, it means freedom from government, it means decentralisation of power. We want to do away with government by politicians and replace it by a government of the people, based on love, compassion and equality. Decisions should be taken, not by a majority, but by unanimous consent; and they should be carried out by the united strength of the ordinary peole of the village. (p.3)

My voice is raised in opposition to good government. Bad government has been condemned long ago by Vyasa in the Mahabharata. People know very well that bad government should not be allowed, and everywhere they protest against it. But what seems to me to be wrong is that we should allow ourselves to be governed at all, even by a good government. (pp.12-13)

If I am under some other person's command, where is my self-government? Self-government means ruling your own self . . . It is one mark of swaraj (self-government) not to allow any outside power in the world to exercise control over oneself. And the second mark of swaraj is not to exercise power over any other. These two things together make swaraj—no submission and no exploitation. This cannot be brought into being by government decree, but only by a revolution in the people's ways of thought. (pp.13-14)

There is a false notion abroad in the world that governments are our saviours and that without them we should be lost. People imagine that they cannot do without goverment. Now I can understand that people cannot do without agriculture, or industries; that they cannot do without love and religion. I can also understand that they cannot do without institutions like marriage and the family. But governments do not come into this category. The fact is that people do not really need a government at all. Governments grew up as a result of certain particular conditions in society. Men have not succeeded in creating a feeling of unity and avoiding divisions; we have not learned fully the art of working together without conflict, so we try to get things done by the power of the state instead; we try to do by punishment what can only be done by educating the community. (pp.15-16)

The authority of the government is incapable of bringing about any revolutionary change among the people, such as the reform of their social life. (p.18)

The ultimate goal of sarvodaya is freedom from government. Notice that I use the words *freedom from* government, and not *absence of* government. Absence of government can be seen in a number of societies whose affairs are all at sixes and sevens, where no order is maintained, and where anti-social elements do as they please. That kind of absence of government is not our ideal. Absence of government must be replaced by good government, and afterwards, good government must be replaced by freedom from government. A society free from government does not mean a society without order. It means an orderly society, but one in which administrative authority rests in the villages. (p.25)

We have before us three different theories of government.

The first is that the state will ultimately wither away and be transformed into a stateless system; but, in order to bring that about, we must in the present exercise the maximum of power. Those who accept this theory are totalitarians in the first stage and anarchists in the final stage.

The second theory is that some form of government has always existed in the past, exists now, and will continue to exist in the future; a society without a government is a sheer impossibility. Therefore society must be so ordered as to ensure the welfare of all. There may be a certain amount of decentralisation, but all important matters must be under the Centre. The supporters of this theory hold that government must always exist, and that a government elected by society must have an over-all control of affairs.

The third is our own theory. We too believe in a stateless society as our ultimate goal. We recognise that in the preliminary stages a certain measure of government is necessary, but we do not agree that it will continue to be necessary at a later stage. Neither do we agree that totalitarian dictatorship is necessary to ensure progress towards a stateless society. On the contrary we propose to proceed by decentralising administration and authority. In the final stage there would be no coercion but a purely moral authority. The establishment of such a self-directing society calls for a net-work of self-sufficient units. Production, distribution, defence, education—everything should be localised. The centre should have the least possible authority. We shall thus achieve decentralisation through regional self-sufficiency. (pp.29-30)

After " independence " people have become less independent, less self-reliant. We have to rely on the government for everything. Things have come to such a pass that we expect the government to do everything while we do nothing, not only in social and religious matters like untouchability, but even in our domestic affairs. How can a people become stronger so long as it depends so much on the government ? A law may solve our problems but it will not make us stronger. What people really need is to become aware of their own inner strength, and that they can only do if they solve some of their problems for themselves.

It is just this strengthening of society that is the object of the Bhoodan movement. It is therefore a political movement, but one that is opposed to current political methods. Our aim is to build up a new kind of politics, and in order to do so we keep ourselves aloof from the old kind. We call this new politics " lok-niti ", politics of the people, as opposed to " raj-niti ", politics of the power-state. (p.56)

My main idea is that the whole world ought to be set free from the burden of its governments. That cannot happen so long as we depend on government for help in everything. If there is one disease from which the whole world suffers, it is this disease called government. (p.64)

These expressions, " Shanti Sena " (Peace Army), " Sarvodaya ", and " gramdan "—what do they all mean ? In essence they all mean that you must yourselves take charge of your own affairs. By forming parties you are burdening yourselves with a government, but you are doing nothing for yourselves. We have to set ourselves free from the parties, and with that end in view a Sarvodaya Mandal (Society) has been formed here. But this Sarvodaya Mandal is not going to promise, after the fashion of the parties, to make a sarvodaya society for you. They will tell you to make it for yourselves. The Lord says in the Gita, " We must work out our own salvation." The Sarvodaya Mandal will tell you that you are capable of doing this, and that it is you who must do it. They will give you help and advice if you wish it, but you yourselves can and must take the initiative. (p.87)

So long as we do not get rid of these governments of ours, the world will never know peace. The Communists' ultimate aim is the withering away of the state, but for the present they want to strengthen it. In fact, the stateless society is only a promissory note, but state tyranny is cash down! In our modern conditions a powerful state can bring nothing but slavery. Therefore sarvodaya stands for an immediate reduction in the power of the state.

As far as individuals are concerned everyone should be taught to keep his impulses and senses under control. In our social structure we must accept the principle that the welfare of one group is not opposed to the welfare of another.

In such a social order the need to use force would be eliminated. Certain moral principles would be so universally accepted in society that they would be reflected in its practice and included in the children's education. These principles would be respected by the members of the community of their own free will. Such a society would be truly self-governing. (p.189)

The saints in session

GASTON GERARD

EVERY YEAR THE SARVA SEVA SANGH, the principal Gandhian organisation in India, holds a conference of Sarvodaya workers. The movement for Sarvodaya—a term coined by Gandhi meaning the welfare or uplift of all—works for the non-violent social revolution which is designed to establish a caste-less, class-less and, ultimately, state-less social order. It includes within its ranks prohibitionists, cow protectionists and khadi (handspun and handwoven cloth) workers as well as those concerned with the well-known bhoodan (landgift) and gramdan (gift of whole village) movement initiated by Vinoba Bhave. Not all of them may share the ultimate social ideal envisaged by Vinoba, an India of self-governing village republics, but here, if anywhere, are to be found the Indian anarchists.

The last conference, at the end of December, was held at Raipur in Madya Pradesh. Fresh from his gramdan pilgrimage in the neighbouring state of Orissa, the Saint came marching in. For the movement, it was an especially significant occasion because it is three years since Vinoba, who insists on travelling everywhere on foot, has attended the conference. Vinoba's presence undoubtedly swelled the number of delegate—some 5,000—who poured in from all parts of the sub-continent, from Assam in the north to Kerala in the south.

For a movement which has deliberately avoided a bureaucratic structure, the organisation of the conference was impressive by any standard let alone the Indian one which places a low premium on efficiency. To house the delegates a small town had been erected in the local college grounds, consisting of hundreds of huts built from panels of split bamboo tied to stakes and complete with electric lighting. Sanitation (a strong point among Gandhians) was taken care of by slit trenches, pits and an open drainage system and compared well with the provisions available in many Indian towns. The feeding of the five thousand took place in a vast covered arena. The seating accommodation in this "dining hall" consisted of long lines of split bamboo mats along which, at intervals of a few feet on either side, places were set: for each person a "plate" made of dried leaves sewn together and two clay pots. Removing one's sandals at the entrance, one found an empty place and squatted cross-legged to be served the

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GASTON GERARD attended the last Sarvodaya Conference at Raipur, and kindly sent us this account.

simple unspiced fare. The meal completed, one picked up the dirty 'plate' in one hand and the pots in the other, retrieved the sandals, and walked to the exit where the 'plates' were flung into one pit and the pots into another and where taps were available to wash one's sticky fingers. In this traditional but also revolutionary way the Sarvodavites demonstarted how at least part of the dirty work of society—the washing-up—could be eliminated! (British anarchist summer school organisers, please note that modern technology has advanced to the state of dispensable plates and cups!)

The conference itself was dominated by the presence of the frail, bearded and be-spectacled old man in Vedic dress who, like Gandhi before him, is not even a member of the organisation. It opened—at least for those like me who did not rise at 4 a.m. to attend the prayer meeting—with a "review of the troops": some thousand-odd members of the Shanti Sena or Peace Army who paraded with shovels and pick-axes and who, after a speech from Vinoba extolling the virtues of creative manual labour, marched off to do a day's shramdan (gift of labour), deepening a dry pond in a neighbouring village. In the afternoon and for two successive days came the speeches. Under a huge and gaily decorated shamiana or awning, providing welcome shade from the brilliant sun, the delegates squatted and listened patiently to the torrent of words from the succession of speakers on the platform. (The average Indian's capacity for listening to long speeches is equalled only by the capacity of the orators to make them.) For many of the audience, the occasion was used to perform the daily quota of spinning on their portable charkas or spinning wheels which is the hall mark of every good Gandhian worker.

Vinoba himself made two or three speeches daily, including invariably the last speech of the day in which he would express his opinions on the points raised by previous speakers. There was no touch of the histrionic about these speeches. The style is conversational and the manner that of a wise father explaining a difficult point to an intelligent and eager child. Like most natural leaders, Vinoba has the gift of simple exposition and his points are developed by homely and concrete illustrations, spiced by a gentle verbal wit—a product of his considerable linguistic ability. In the afternoons the conference attracted thousands of daily visitors from the neighbouring towns and villages. On the final day when, it is estimated, one hundred thousand were present for Vinoba's concluding speech, the clouds of dust raised by these visitors, all eager to experience darshan (vision or contact) of this latter-day saint, were well-nigh suffocating.

The religious character of the movement was underlined by the act of prayer and the few minutes of silent meditation with which Vinoba concluded each day's meeting. Its puritanical character, too, was evident not only in the stark simplicity of the general arrangements but also in the evening entertainments. There were no boisterous parties or drunken sing-songs for these ascetics: they were satisfied with a documentary film show of Vinoba on the march, a propaganda play about life in a gramdan village, and displays of classical Indian dancing.

The business of the conference included the adoption of a resolution drawn up by the Sarva Seva Sangh, a body which now embraces some 300 or so key workers. Theoretically, this could have presented difficulties since the Sarvodaya movement works on the unanimity principle and every Loka-Sevak or worker in the movement has the right of veto. When the resolution was moved, there were in fact some objections from the floor by those who wanted to include additional points. But the potential conflict between platform and floor which marks most conferences was readily dispelled. After a little persuasion, the objectors agreed either to have their points made in an additional, not the main, statement or to postpone consideration of them until a later conference.

The main statement emphasised three aspects of the movement's programme of action. One was the need to develop the work of the Shanti Sena. This Peace Army is composed of sarvodaya workers who have pledged themselves to the principles of truth, non-violence, non-possession, etc., have agreed not to take part in party politics or power politics, and are prepared to go anywhere, when so ordered by Vinoba, to perform Shanti Sena work, even at the expense of life itself. The idea of such an army was conceived by Gandhi a generation ago but little came of it until it was revived by Vinoba in 1958. It is now some 6,000 strong but its weakness was glaringly revealed at the time of the border war with China at the end of 1962. Apart from its participation in the symbolic Delhi-Peking Friendship March, Vinoba would not countenance its use in the area of hostilities. Disturbed by this failure, the younger and more militant elements have been pressing for greater recognition of the role of Shanti Sena in Sarvodaya work. This need has now been admitted by the leadership and in recent months several hundred Shanti Sainaks have been sent to do constructive work in the border areas. The limitations of the organisation, however, are recognised. For the present, the Peace Army is intended for use not in international conflicts but within India itself. It will be used in situations of communal conflict but its main object will be to combat narrow nationalistic propaganda and to try to develop in the people a consciousness of world citizenship. In view of the virulent nationalistic current in Indian political life which rose to hysterical proportions last year, this in itself is no small undertaking.

The second point emphasised in the Sarva Seva Sangh statement was the development of khadi. After protracted negotiations with the central Government which is officially committed to the promotion of khadi and other village industries as part of its programme of rural development, it has been agreed to revise the basis of the Government's subsidy to the industry. Instead of taking the form of a rebate on the price charged to the consumer, the subsidy henceforth will be made through the introduction of free weaving. By the Government paying the cost of weaving, roughly equal to the present rebate to consumers, the price of khadi in the shops will not be much affected but it is hoped that this form of subsidy will give a fillip to khadi work. The subsidy at the producer rather than the consumer stage should give an added

incentive to use khadi, especially to those villagers who grow and spin their own cotton. Rural unemployment and underemployment remains India's most pressing social and economic problem. In helping to solve this problem in an economy which, despite the industrialization of recent years remains and is likely to remain for a long time to come predominantly a rural economy, khadi could play a vital role. To emphasise this role and in an attempt to re-orientate the khadi industry towards the village rather than the commercial market, Vinoba's padayatra (pilgrimage on foot) in the coming months will be centred on the cotton-growing area around Nagpur and Wardha.

The third point concerned the future development of gramdan. In recent years the emphasis of the movement in the sphere of land reform has been on the pooling of ownership of land in whole villages rather than on gifts of land from individuals for redistribution to the landless. The advance from bhoodan to gramdan was a revolutionary step, since gramdan makes possible the *collective* development and, if desired, the *co-operative* farming of the village land. Gramdan is not open to the charge levelled against bhoodan that it merely involves the parcelling out, often of inferior and unworkable land, among individual cultivators most of whom are too poor to develop it, thus aggravating the problem of rural poverty. Given the peasant mentality which prizes ownership of a plot of land, however small and uneconomic, as the most valuable of all social acquisitions, it is remarkable that to date over 6,000 villages have declared for gramdan. But 6,000 is only a tiny proportion of India's 550,000 villages. For a variety of reasons, the pace of gramdan progress has slackened after the initial burst of enthusiasm for it a few years' back. To quicken the pace again the Sarvodaya leadership has been looking for a new approach. This has now been developed in the form of simplified gramdan.

Under this form of gramdan every landowner in the village makes over the ownership of his land to the village community personified in the Gram Sabha or Village Council which consists of all adults and which is responsible for administering the affairs of the village. The villagers as a whole further agree to give one-twentieth of their land to the landless (on the average about one-sixth of the population of the village) for the latter's cultivation and, in addition, each villager agrees to contribute one-twentieth of his net income to the Gram Sabha for use for development and community purposes. This done, the individual landowner retains possession of the remaining nineteen-twentieths of the land. By joining in gramdan he loses certain rights of ownership such as the right of transfer by sale or mortgage, but retains the right of cultivation which, moreover, he can pass on to his heirs.

First labelled " easy " gramdan—a term now repudiated by Vinoba in favour of " unique " gramdan—this new policy was criticised by some as a watering down of the original programme. It certainly represents a large concession to the principle of private ownership and its effects will be decidedly less egalitarian than the old-style gramdan. In addition, the neo-gramdan villages are unlikely to embrace the policy of co-operative farming. It should, however, be recognised that most of

the existing gramdans have settled for individual rather than collective cultivation: the impression, sometimes given in the West, that India's gramdan villages are the equivalent of the Israeli kibbutzim is wide of the mark.

At the conference the leadership successfully defended the new policy with the argument that the primary concern of the movement was not how much land could be got out of the big landowners but how it could change their attitude and induce them to develop a consciousness of concern for the village community as a whole. By spreading the gramdan spirit wider, if thinner, a new sense of direction, it was suggested, would be given to the increasingly frustrated movement for land reform.

In arguing thus the Sarvodaya leadership pinpointed one of the major problems of the non-violent approach: how far can the social revolution be carried by peaceful persuasion? A minority within the movement would argue that, if persuasion fails, the technique of satyagraha or non-violent resistance should be used against the recalcitrant landowners. So far, Vinoba has opposed this course. Changes brought about by coercion, even the non-violent coercion implicit in satvagraha, would not, he believes, achieve the desired results. It would not effect the change of spirit, among the landowners as well as the landless, which is an essential condition of the revolution he envisages. The big landowners, as well as the landless, are members of the village community: to build a community concerned with the welfare of all requires their willing participation, not hostility. The new gramdan policy represents therefore, a continuation of the policy of persuasion. Whether this policy will justify itself cannot be predicted but this much, at least, must be said for Vinoba's as against the more militant minority view. No one who has any knowledge of the encrusted conservatism of India's villagers can doubt that the real problem is a widespread change in personal attitudes and perspectives: without this, as some of the gramdan villages as well as the Government's land reforms bear witness, changes of institutional forms means next to nothing.

The call made at the conference for a vigorous nation-wide drive with an integrated programme of Shanti Sena, Khadi and Gramdan evoked high enthusiasm among the delegates. Vinoba's presence and inspiration clearly gave a much needed lift to the movement. The year 1969, the centenary of Gandhiji's birth, was set as the target year for the accomplishment of the basic structure of Gramswaraj (village self-government). It is a significant date and one which conveniently fits into the current myth among Sarvodaya workers. It is now twelve years since Vinoba publicly assumed the mantle of Gandhi by launching the bhoodan movement. The first six of these were fat years during which enthusiasm ran high and many new workers, including not a few disillusioned politicians, were swept into the movement in the wake of its initial successes. Then followed six lean years as it became evident that the movement would not achieve in the time set its declared objective of 50 million acres of bhoodan land. During this period the pace of the movement slackened, new recruits were slow in coming forward, and

some of the former enthusiasts found reasons for concentrating on other matters. On the assumption of some kind of natural rhythm in the life of social movements, it is anticipated that in the six years 1963-9 the Sarvodaya movement will wax fat once again.

Whether this view will prove to be anything more than a self-sustaining myth remains to be seen. In the present situation of looming crisis in India and with the floundering of the Third Five Year Plan, especially in its agricultural aspects, the Sarvodaya movement could well take on a new significance. A rational observer would, no doubt, be sceptical of this possibility. Most native Indian observers no longer show even an academic interest in the movement, while the more perceptive foreign ones, like W. H. Morris-Jones (see *Politics and Society in India* edited by C. H. Philips, Allen & Unwin, 1963) who recognise the distinctive idiom of "saintly politics" in the Indian tradition, assign to it only a marginal and diminishng sgnficance. The trend, at least from the perspectve of the cities where the intellectuals dwell, seems to be relentlessly towards a Western typ acquisitive society masked by the vague Congress ideology of democratic socialism. But India is a land of sharp contrasts and sudden surprises which continues to defy rational analysis. Gandhi may seem now to have been safely buried under a mountain of political rhetoric which hails him as the Father of the Nation while ignoring his real message. But the Raipur conference convinced at least this observer that his spirit is still alive in India and may yet provide through Vinoba the inspiration for the realisation of that apparently impossible dream—a non-violent social revolution.

Attitudes to India

TRISTRAM SHANDY

AMONG THE CRITICISMS OF THE IDEAS associated with Gandhi and Vinoba which Adi Doctor makes in his book *Anarchist Thought in India* (Asia Publishing House, Bombay Rs. 8.50, London 18s.) is the following:

> Gandhiji and Vinoba are also of the view that every man can develop non-violence and be a devotee of truth by restricting wants, by renunciation and by continuous *tapasya*. An increase in material comforts they argue does not in any way whatsoever conduce to moral growth. But this raises another problem. Is a man's material progress so incompatible with his moral progress that the more of one can only be had at the expense of the other? Strictly speaking there appears to be no logical relation between the two. How can, or rather why should, "the incessant crucifixion of the flesh" lead to the inculcation of the virtues of truth and non-violence? In actual life we can point to many characters who take a delight in living well, who eat to their full and make merry and yet are by temper mild and gentle as lambs. At the same time we can indicate several characters that eat little, wear plain clothes, regularly fast, but who yet possess a most vitriolic and violent temper. How then can it be claimed that the only path to truth and non-violence is the path of austerity? One is more prone to believe that a healthy mind, which here implies a mind devoted to truth and non-violence, lies in a healthy body. It will therefore be far better if instead of preaching austerity and 'the

voluntary limitation of wants', attempts were made to enable our masses to acquire 'healthy bodies' which they can hardly be said to possess today. In a poverty-striken country like India, where the masses live a sub-standard life, it is sheer cruelty to preach of "materialism, robbing man of the means to be truly human", as the Sarvodayites do.

This will probably strike Western anarchists at least as a valid observation, and even if the only movement in India today which could possibly be called anarchist is Sarvodaya, this aspect of its philosophy is likely to make us chary of association ourselves with its teachings. If it is not cruelty, it is certainly hypocrisy for *us* to preach renunciation to people with nothing to renounce. Maybe a dose of wicked materialism would be salutary in helping the Indian peasant to clamber out of half-starved apathy and resignation. As Welles Hangen remarks, "The problem in rural India is not rising expectations: it is static expectations or none at all. Kusam Nair had to plead with many south Indian peasants to persuade them even to imagine how much land they would need to support their families. The horizons of most were so narrow that they could not visualise anything substantially better than what they had. She talked to thousands of peasants who had refused to take up irrigation water flowing near their fields or to adopt improved seeds and better methods of cultivation offered by government extension workers." (Not because they were government workers: the villager does not distinguish between the worker for the government's Community Development Projects, for Bhoodan, or for projects sponsored by bodies like War on Want or the U.N. agencies.

If we draw a distinction between the religious or ascetic philosophy of Sarvodaya and its practical programme of village development, we can more readily gauge its relevance. Eighty-two per cent of India's people live in the 550,000 villages, and if you are ever going to change India you have to begin in the village. The most interesting and sympathetic of the Indian thinkers who follow this line of thought is Jayaprakash Narayan, who before joining Vinoba's original Bhoodan campaign had been through a large part of the Indian political spectrum—the Communists, Congress, and the Praja Socialist Party. (An account of the evolution of his thought can be found in *Selections from* FREEDOM Vol 8, 1958). Among his more recent writings is his *Plea for the Reconstruction of the Indian Polity*, in which he reiterates his views on political and industrial decentralisation, advocating "agro-industrial" communities which would process wheat, rice, fruit and vegetables as well as cotton or sugar-cane, and would also manufacture such consumer goods as radios, bicycle parts, small machines and electrical goods for local use. He envisages this economic activity on an owner-worker or co-operative pattern, and declares that such a "small-machine, labour-intensive" rural economy would be neither "bureaucracy-ridden nor exploitive."

To our eyes of course, this is precisely the kind of economy envisaged in Kropotkin's *Fields Factories and Workshops*, the present relevance of which was discussed in the last issue of ANARCHY. The standard economist's objection to it, on the "theory of comparative advantage" (the argument was used in the quotation from Gavin McCrone on p. 211 of ANARCHY 41) is raised by Adi Doctor in his book.

But in terms of the actual needs of the Indian villager and of alternative possibilities of satisfying them, Narayan's argument convinces.

Asoka Mehta, the present leader of the Praja Socialist Party put a somewhat similar view to George Woodcock (reported in his new book *Faces of India*, published this year by Faber): "As a result of Gandhi's influence, we have come to recognise the basic reality in India, the primacy of the peasant. Our socialism therefore is not proletariat-based, but peasant-based. Secondly we recognise that in a country where labour is perhaps the biggest single asset, we have got to adopt that technology which will utilise this wonderful asset in the most fruitful manner." And Woodcock comments:

> If Proudhon and Bakunin could have heard what he was saying, they would have smiled from their graves, for the present position of the Socialists in India really represents a kind of ironic triumph for the anarchists who were their opponents in so many European battles of the conference hall. For political and economic decentralisation and a reliance on the peasant as distinct from the urban proletariat were two of the main issues which the anarchists supported against the followers of Marx during the stormy ideological battles of the nineteenth century. Gandhi, whom the Indian Socialists have so thoroughly accepted in preference to Marx, was not in the full sense an anarchist, but he was certainly a libertarian, and his social ideas were largely shaped by what he had read in the works of European and American writers who stood close to and sometimes within the anarchist spectrum—writers like Tolstoy and Thoreau, Ruskin and Kropotkin.

Earlier in his journey Woodcock visited the writer Mulk Raj Anand who showed him villages in the Western Ghats where the average income per houshold was between 200 and 250 rupees a year. "'The peasants here are so poor that they cannot use what land they have,' Mulk explained. 'They cannot even afford the seed to sow it. You'll find peasants who own five acres, and manage to plant an acre or an acre and a half of it with rice. The people in those villages are so undernourished that by the time they are twenty-five the men are unfit for a day's digging with a spade. It isn't even that the land is bad. And the rainful is so heavy that they should be able to grow three or four crops a year instead of one. But the water runs away quickly into the valleys, and up to now nobody has seriously set about trapping it for the use of the peasants'."

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The fact that variations of this story could be told of a thousand districts all over India, explains why the emphasis on village development is a practical necessity, not merely an ideological one. Sir John Russell estimated that about 90 million acres of waste land in India could be reclaimed. India is a land full of cows, but milk yields are the lowest in the world. According to FAO, plant diseases and plant pests account for a loss of crops of about 30 per cent in India as opposed to 7 per cent in Japan. Yields of rice per acre planted in India are a quarter of those in Japan. If there were enough village level workers to patiently teach and demonstrate the "Japanny" method of rice cultivation, India's stagnant agriculture would be transformed. But, as the people who have tried it—whether Sarvodaya workers or government Community Development workers—have found, it is incredibly difficult to change anything. William Clark, in the Overseas Development Insti-

tute's new report *India at Midpassage,* says: " The immense difficulty of passing on new agricultural techniques to the mass of the peasantry is, I think, sometimes under-estimated by the central planners. The advanced work carried out on the Government farms is immensely impressive, but the dead weight of inertia stops the spread of their new methods. Concentration should now be far more on how to get ideas accepted than on finding new ideas."

In his chapter in the same report, Dr. E. F. Schumacher discusses the topic of rural industry. None of the developed countries, he says, " has ever had to face the problems which are posed in India today and which arise from the existence and partial infiltration of a foreign technology which is at once vastly superior and vastly expensive." Like Jayaprakash Narayan, he envisages a kind of technology which will provide both work and consumer goods in the village; a level of technology as he puts it, with a capital cost of about £75 per workplace, compared with the £2,000 a workplace in the advanced industries of the West. On the question of electricity supply, for example, he declares that " Urgent attention has therefore to be given to the utilisation of such minor or scattered sources of energy as cow-dung methane, solar heat, wind-power, peat, etc. Technical work on these subjects I suggest, is of greater relevance to India's problems than work on nuclear energy —the most capital-intensive and costly source of energy ever tackled."

Schumacher, exasperated by the muddle and confusion of existing efforts in the field of rural industry, concludes that, in this context, workers' control will not work, because he thinks it cannot cope with the problems of under-capitalisation, changing old habits, risk-taking and work-discipline which are involved in economically viable attempts. He therefore wants government control of local industry and a management hierarchy, instead of a system of the kind espoused by Jayaprakash and the Sarvodayites, in which the workers are " joint masters of their enterprise."

One can sympathise with his exasperation, but is there the slightest evidence that his remedy would be any more successful than a worker-controlled system ? Every Indian concerned with rural development who we have met in London, whether it be Asoka Mehta, Jayaprakash Narayan or the India House representative, Mr. T. Swaminathan, would take a less optimistic view than Dr. Schumacher. For instance, Mr. Swaminathan, in discussing the errors and shortcomings of the original Community Development Programme, mentioned that " sentimental optimism with which we in the East are apt to be afflicted " and described the criticam reports of the independent Programme Evaluation Organisation, which warned that " there is some risk of field staff again relapsing into a one-sided and excessive concentration on demonstrable results." In a bureaucratic form of government, says the report, " this distinction between *popular* and *official* is clear, and it is easy to see that anything which the people have not planned, have not directed and have not voluntarily carried out is not popular. The bureaucratic and semi-bureaucratic schemes of rural development had no elements of vitality, dynamism and creativeness in them for the basic reason that they were not *popular* in these respects . . . The programme *has* to be popular, with officials participating, not the other way round—an official programme in which the people are exhorted to participate and in a few cases are almost dragged in." Dr. Schumacher's short-cut to viable village industry would not be likely to have any greater success.

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When we discuss India of course, we tend to forget that we are talking not about a country but a continent. Even when we emphasise that India's basic problems are rural rather than urban, we are forgetting that the city population of India is infinitely greater than the total population of the British Isles, or of France or Germany. Professor Kingsley Davis in his report *Urbanisation in India: Past and Future* forecasts that Calcutta (present population 5.5 million) will contain between 12 million and 16 million people in 1970 and 36 million to 66 million in 2000. Delhi which at present has a population of 2.3 million will, he believes, have between 18 million and 35 million by the year 2000. These figures are too astronomical for us to grasp, but try to imagine what they mean in terms of urban services, housing, employment, transport, water supply, and provision for health and education.

The Indian urban working class is poorly organised. Charles Myers in his recent study of *Labour Problems in the Industrialisation of India* describes the four rival trade union federations, each with a different political allegiance. The workers' lack of education means that leadership comes normally from outside, usualy from politicians. Inter-union disputes are frequent; funds are always pitifully low. " There is, however, the Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association, founded by Mahatma Gandhi, to show how well a union can work in India."

Apart from this example, there is virtually no influence of the Sarvodaya movement in the manufacturing cities, and certainly no other urban movement with any discernible anarchist tinge. This certainly reflects no credit on the insular anarchists of the West, like ourselves. Ideologies may not be transplantable, but the fact remains that, as Geoffrey Ostergaard puts it, " Other Western idealogies, such as liberalism, nationalism, communism, democratic socialism and even fascism have clearly taken root in modern India, but anarchism appears to be conspicuously absent." (The only specifically anarchist literature published in India has been the series of reprints of works by Bakunin, Kropotkin, Rocker, and the American individualist writers, produced in the late nineteen-forties and early fifties by the Libertarian Book House (Arya Bhavan, Sandhurst Road, Bombay 4).

We anarchists have failed to present anarchism in a way which through its relevance or constructive character strikes a responsive chord in contemporary India. It is just possible, but not at all likely, that where we have failed, the Sarvodaya movement will succeed. Shouldn't we be asking what we can do to help make its chances greater ?

India, China and peace

JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

THERE WERE FOURTEEN YEARS in which to resolve peacefully the dispute between India and Portugal over Goa. Both countries are members of the United Nations. But there was no solution. Then India acted unilaterally and started military operations. At that time all of us—or most of us—became narrow-minded nationalists and forgot that no such nationalism can be tolerated today if it imperils the peace of the world. If there was any voice raised in India against the Goan action, it was that of the Sarvodaya movement.

I think it is the same in the case of the Sino-Indian conflict. As early as December 1960, at the conference of the War Resisters International at Gandhigram, it was left to me, speaking for the Sarvodaya movement, seriously to put forward the proposal that the border dispute between India and China was a fit case to be settled by arbitration. I was roundly denounced in the press and by political leaders in the country for my foolhardy suggestion. The Prime Minister was put a question in the Parliament about it. He just brushed it aside. I repeated my proposal, as President of the All-India Sarvodaya Conference at Ungututu, because it was not only my personal opinion but also the view of the Sarvodaya movement. This time I seem to have created some impression on the minds of our leaders. Some months later, when the Prime Minister was again asked in Parliament, he said he agreed in principle with the idea of arbitration, but did not see it anywhere on the horizon.

I regret that we did not pursue the idea of arbitration as persistently as perhaps we could have. We should not be satisfied merely to place a suggestion before the people. We could have pursued it in co-operation with peace movements in other parts of the world. We could have pursued it with our own government, perhaps discussed this question with the Prime Minister. Vinobaji could have taken it up with him, examined it and placed it before the Chinese leaders, perhaps in a form they could have considered if not accepted.

The idea of arbitration has been explicitly stated in the U.N. Charter. In the Bandung Declaration it says that when there is a dispute the first step toward its settlement should be bilateral talks, failing which there should be mediation, good offices, adjudication and finally arbitration. Are there other peaceful ways of settling disputes ?

Last December the suggestion was made for an international group of pacifists, votaries of non-violence, to undertake a friendship march from somewhere in India to somewhere in China, so that an effort should be made to stop the war that stands between the peoples of India and China. It was hoped that some kind of slender bridge be established, some sort of dialogue made possible between the peoples of India and China, a dialogue in which representatives of the Gandhian movement and non-violent movements all over the world could participate.

That suggestion was accepted by the Sarva Seva Sangh and Shanti Sena Mandal, and the Friendship March started from the Mahatma Gandhi memorial in New Delhi on March 1st. This is, of course, a small effort compared to the task that faces us. Many wise people made similar jokes about the Dand March. Manufacturing contraband salt and trying to overthrow the British government in India: these seemed such incongruous things. Yet history shows what happened.

People have raised the question of whether the message of peace and love has at all to be preached to the Indian people. It has been said that if the

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JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN's article is the text of his inaugural address to the Sixth Sarvodaya Conference for Madras State last year.

Marchers really wish to bring about friendship between India and China, they should go right away to Peking and start preaching to the Chinese people, because it is assumed that the Indian people are overflowing with the milk of friendship and love. I do not know how much has been appearing in the papers about black flag demonstrations, hostile slogans, debates in Assemblies or remarks of Ministers. Let me assure you of one thing: that wherever the Marchers have really met the people, talked to them, answered their questions, opened their hearts and shared their thoughts as friends and equals, they have made an impression which is difficult to describe. If this question between India and China is settled peacefully, this March will have made a contribution to the settlement beyond all proportion.

The trouble with all these professions and declarations about peaceful settlement of disputes which we hear today is that at the same time everybody prepares for a violent settlement also. Everywhere this is going on: armies are multiplying, weapons are being manufactured, more and more dangerous weapons every day—and yet everyone talks of peaceful settlement. It passes one's understanding how a peaceful settlement could come out of a situation such as this. If ever a peaceful settlement is possible, it will be possible only in an atmosphere such as is being created by this Friendship March.

I think one of the proofs of the success of the Friendship March, one indication that it is on the right track, is that it has been attacked not only in India but even more violently in China. Just as we are Indian nationalists here, they are also Chinese nationalists there. This lens of nationalism distorts reality. The world has become too interdependent for these nationalisms.

If India wishes to create a military power in this country equivalent to Chinese power, it will be a gigantic task. Last year we spent four hundred crores (four billion rupees, one U.S. dollar equals about 4.76 rupees) on our army and this year we are going to spend nearly 900 crores. We are trying to beg, borrow and buy whatever arms we can get from anywhere in the world.

Why are we doing all this ? Do we, after full consideration, really believe that by raising an army as big as that of the Chinese army we can settle this question with China ? We are setting ourselves against the lesson which history has taught us, the history of thousands of years. It is necessary for us to see this as clearly as the sun in the sky.

We should go to the people, as friends, and tell them as openly, as unhesitatingly as possible, the foolishness, the absurdity of what is being done. First of all, I think it is necessary for us to understand and make the people understand, the price that will have to be paid by us for the adequate militarization of this country. The price will be sacrifice not only in terms of hard work but in the values of our life, the foundation on which the Indian culture has stood all these years.

It is easy to see that this is going to set into motion between India and China perhaps one of the biggest armaments races the world has seen, the end of which is difficult to see, an endless waste of human resources. This race is confined not only to the so-called conventional weapons. We know that the Chinese are very actively trying to manufacture their own atom bomb. It will not take longer than two years, maybe less, to test their own bomb.

For the present the Prime Minister's policy is not to use atomic energy for destructive purposes. The Indian Atomic Energy Commission is working to develop that energy for peaceful uses. After China has publicly tested her bomb, I doubt very much if it will be possible for Mr. Nehru to persist in this policy. The logic of the armaments race, the very logic of not being left behind by our enemy, would force him or his successor to reverse this policy. India would also be launched on this path of a race not only in conventional arms but in nuclear weapons also.

The cost of that in material, cultural and spiritual terms can easily be imagined. I doubt very much whether this country would be able to bear that cost. I doubt very much whether we could do all that and preserve our democratic ways of life, our democratic institutions. I doubt very much whether we could do all that and preserve our essential humanity. The gigantic effort it would require—and it might end in complete disaster—would brutalize all of us.

There is much talk of offensive and defensive war. Every self-righteous Indian says he cannot imagine that his country would think of starting an offensive war against anybody. All these preparations are only for defense. Even a child today knows there is no difference left between an offensive and a defensive war. The histories of war teach that it is difficult to find out how a war starts, it is difficult to lay a finger exactly at the cause of war. This distinction between an offensive and a defensive war is merely an academic distinction.

Every Indian youth today talks about taking back every inch of Indian territory which the Chinese have now occupied by force. Now suppose the Chinese sit tight on what they have occupied and the flag of China flies over the Aksai-chin, what is Indian going to do about that? How is it going to fight a defensive war? India is committed to take back every inch of Indian territory. As India builds great military forces for herself, there will be this logical pressure behind it and sooner or later there will have to be a conflict. Then who shot the first bullet will mean nothing at all. The fact is there will be a situation in which a war becomes inevitable, and each side will blame the other.

We had one little war lasting an interval of a few weeks and we were exhausted in that war. Now every Indian wants to wash off the blot, the shame involved in it. Suppose that after India prepares for this second engagement with China, India wins and the Chinese flag is removed from the Aksia-chin and the Indian flag flies there. Is there anyone so foolish as to think that will settle the dispute with China forever? That one war will not lead to another?

Even if you could isolate China and India, it will be an unending process which will mean the ruination of both India and China. Every war cannot necessarily remain a localised war. If it becomes a global war, where is your security then? Where is your defense? Where is protection of the national interest?

Where leads, then, this question of settling the border dispute by military preparations, by military means? These are questions that face every one of us today. They are questions we the people must answer, and not only the government, What can the government do? What can Mr. Nehru do? He represents us, the people. If we want him to have the biggest army in the world, he will be forced to act.

It is therefore for us, the people, for us the Sarvodaya workers, to go to the people and explain to them. It is for them to decide whether they will commit suicide and fall into the ditch. But at least let us place before them all the facts we can, and let the people judge for themselves.

The people might ask: what is the alternative? Is Jayaprakash Narayan and the Sarvodaya movement preaching cowardice, submission to aggression, meek acceptance of injustice? No one should feel that those who believe in nonviolence would for a single moment be prepared to make any kind of compromise with cowardice. If cowardice, submission or moral degradation were the only alternative to military preparations, even to destruction, I would not, with full sense of responsibility, be preaching the renunciation of war.

It is because we could not have forgotten so soon what Mahatma Gandhi taught us and taught the whole world: that there is an alternative, not only *an* alternative but the *only* alternative. He has shown us that war leads us into more wars, and then into complete destruction. This alternative of nonviolence is the only answer to the situation the world is facing today.

Such means as peaceful settlement, negotiations across a table, good offices, adjudication, arbitration, friendship marches—they may succeed, they may fail. But there is no failure for a people who have accepted nonviolence and have prepared themselves to resist whatever evil might come. The alternative to armament is disarmament, the disarmament of violence and the taking up of the armour of nonviolence. If we were to completely and unilaterally disarm our selves, demobilise the Indian army and take up in place of violent arms and weapons of nonviolence—*that* would be a real alternative.

What would be the meaning of nonviolent armour? It would mean we have shed our fears. The Indian people should fear neither China nor Russia, nor America, nor all of them put together. We have determined not to bow our heads before any aggressor, before anyone who wants to impose his will over

us. We have resolved to resist all injustice, not to bow the knee to any conqueror. If we have done this fearlessly and understandingly, not all the nuclear weapons of Russia and America put together could equal the power of such a preparation.

Acceptance of nonviolence would not only mean giving up military preparation. It would also mean a radical transformation in our own lives, a transformation of our social and economic institutions. A nonviolent India which has disarmed herself would be a very different India from what we see today: an India of exploitation, of inequality, of all kinds of social injustices, untouchability, caste system, high and low, rich and poor and all these. It is not as if the acceptance of nonviolence is a mechanical thing, throwing away the gun from our hand and for the rest remaining as we are. An India which deliberately accepted nonviolence would go through a complete transformation of life and of society.

If the Indian people accepted nonviolence, how would they then face aggression?

First of all ,I do not think that a country which has adopted nonviolence will have many disputes with other countries. Even if it has disputes, perhaps it will be much easier to settle them than when that country has an army. It is because the parties concerned both try to negotiate on the basis of what they call strength, which ultimately means military strength, that settlement becomes difficult.

Second, if this dispute continues and is not settled even after India has disarmed, and the Chinese army marches into Indian territory, what will the people do?

We have all the experience under British rule when we fought for our freedom. We have forgotten that experience, or are inclined to brush it aside by saying the conditions are entirely different, etc., etc. Suppose the Chinese army marches, and the Indian people have no arms; there is no army, only Shanti Sainiks working amongst the people as their nonviolent guards, helping them—what then?

The people would say to the invader that if he come as a friend, he would be welcome; he would be given the place of honour in this country. But because he has come as an invader and aggressor, he may expect no co-operation, no Indian will help him in any way whatsoever, not a grain, not a pie (smallest Indian coin), not a word for the aggressor on the road, in the train, in the shop. No one will give him information. Complete non-violent non-co-operation will be offered the aggressor, and along with it complete preparedness to suffer the consequences that follow. The people would say they are prepared to die.

W must make the people understand that no matter what the degree and quality of their military preparedness might be, in modern war it is not only armies that fight and die. The people also die, and therefore they should never be misguided into thinking they will not be called upon to lay down their lives while they are working in their fields, factories, homes, hospitals and schools. Bombs will be dropped all over and the people will have to die in any case. But this death leads to further death, ultimately to complete annihilation. There is no end to it.

A people committed to non-violence will say: "Not a single shot will be fired on our side, you go on killing, we are prepared to die, we will not submit, but we will not accept your rule, we will not bow down before you, we will not co-operate with you." This is the best method for meeting Chinese aggression, or any other.

Then it is said in retort: "If a country does that, the Chinese will be quite happy because it will be like running a knife through butter. They will march from the Himalayas to the Kanyakumari. Nobody will stop them. Advocates of non-violence are merely preaching the complete decimation of the people of this country, and the complete conquest of India by China." What is the answer to that?

I do not think that any army, made up as it is of human beings, would be able to do this. When an army is faced with another army, and there is killing on both sides, then each army is concerned only with the question of how to kill the largest number of the enemy. No question of conscience arises. The Chinese want to kill as many Indians as possible and vice versa. And they glory

in that accomplishment.

If one side is killing but from the other side there is complete passive resistance, not a stone being thrown, not a word of abuse being uttered, then I do not think this invading army, which as I have said is made up of human beings, will go on killing people and killing people day after day after day. If an army were made up of animals (lions, tigers) which kill human beings, this could be possible. But the Chinese are human; the Indians are also human. From the very moment when the first Chinese fires the first bullet, the question will arise in his mind: "What kind of war am I fighting?" He will ask his officer, who in turn will ask his superior officer, and finally the question will go to Peking. It will go to Washington, to New York, to Paris and London and Moscow and Berlin. The whole world will be asking: what kind of war is this? No fighting from one side, killing from the other.

In all sincerity, I do not think such a war can last longer than a week. Bloody wars can last I don't know how many years. There have been wars in history which were never formally ended. But such a war cannot go on because we are human beings, and there is a God who created human beings; there is an element of godliness in every person. If you do not have faith in human nature, in humanity; or in this Creation, this all-pervading Consciousness, then all right. Then you may be cynical and may say that Jayaprakash Narayan is dreaming. Such a thing will never happen. The Chinese are not ordinary human beings, they are cruel. The whole of the Mongolian race, I have been told, is a cruel race. Well, I do not know. We are not in any way less cruel in our own country, with our murders and our riots.

Wisdom and good sense will dawn, the war will come to an end, and no party will be the vanquished party. That is the beauty of it. That war will not lead to another war and yet another. A new situation will arise in the relations between India and China.

This has never happened in history. It had also never happened before that when the viceroy of a ruling party was leaving he was greeted with the slogan "Lord Mountbatten Ki Jai" (Hail to Lord Mountbatten). When Lord Cornwallis left America, the thirteen united colonies which had fought British colonial power did not shout "Lord Cornwallis Ki Jai."

This is the way for India, if the people of India are brave enough, wise enough. All the sacrifices demanded for the military way, in terms of money and of spirit, will be unnecessary. All this energy can be used for the development of this country, for the eradication of poverty, injustice and inequality. As human beings we can all rise higher, in such a climate of non-violence, and become better.

Perhaps India can show a way to Russia and America, to East and West, which are today at each other's throats, in spite of the Geneva conference that goes on and on endlessly. Maybe India can show the way that peace can be established on this earth.

Buddhist anarchism

GARY SNYDER

BUDDHISM HOLDS THAT THE UNIVERSE and all creatures in it are intrinsically in a state of complete wisdom, love, and compassion, acting in natural response and mutual interdependence. The point of being a "Buddhist"—or a poet, or anything else for that matter—is to follow some way of life that will bring about personal realisation of this from-the-beginning state, which cannot be had alone and for one "self"—

because it cannot be fully realised unless one has given it up, and away, to all others.

In the Buddhist view, what obstructs the effortless manifestation of this natural state is ignorance, fed by fear and craving. Historically, Buddhist philosophers have failed to analyse-out the degree to which human ignorance and suffering is caused or encouraged by social factors, and have generally held that fear and craving are given facts of the human condition. Consequently the major concern of Buddhist philosophy is epistemology and "psychology" with no attention paid to historical or sociological problems. Although Mahayana Buddhism has a grand vision of universal salvation and boundless compassion, the actual achievement of Buddhism has been the development of practical systems of meditation toward the end of liberating individuals from their psychological hangups and cultural conditionings. Institutional Buddhism has been conspicuously ready to accept or support the inequalities and tyrannies of whatever political system it found itself under. This is death to Buddhism, because it is death to compassion. Wisdom without compassion feels no pain.

No one today can afford to be innocent, or indulge himself in ignorance about the nature of contemporary governments, politics, social orders. The national polities of the modern world exist by nothing but deliberately fostered craving and fear—the roots (both socially and psychologically, if you trace back far enough) of human suffering. Modern America has become economically dependent on a fantastic system of stimulation of greed which cannot be fulfilled, sexual desire which cannot be satiated, and hatred which has no outlet except against oneself or the persons one is supposed to love. The conditions of the cold war have turned all modern societies, Soviet included, into hopeless brain-stainers, creating populations of "preta"—hungry ghosts—with giant appetites and throats no bigger than needles. The soil, and forests, and all animal life are being wrecked to feed these cancerous mechanisms.

A human being is by definition a member of a culture. A culture need not be mindless and destructive; full of contradictions, frustration, and violence. This is borne out in a modest way by some of the findings of anthropology and psychology. One can prove it for himself through Buddhist practice. Have this much faith—or insight—and you are led to a deep concern with the need for radical social change and personal commitment to some form of essentially non-violent revolutionary action.

The disaffiliation and acceptance of poverty by practising Buddhists becomes a positive force. The traditional harmlessness and refusal to take life in any form has nation-shaking implications. The practise of meditation, for which one needs "only the ground beneath one's feet"

GARY SNYDER's article is reproduced from the "Journal for the Protection of All Beings" (City Lights, San Francisco) by kind permission of Lawrence Ferlinghetti. An appreciation by Jim Burns of Gary Snyder's work appeared in ANARCHY 32.

wipes out mountains of junk being pumped into the mind by " communications " and supermarket universities. The belief in a serene and generous fulfillment of natural desires (not the repression of them, a Hindu ascetic position which the Buddha rejected) destroys arbitrary frustration-creating customs and points the way to a kind of community that would amaze moralists and eliminates armies of men who are fighters because they cannot be lovers.

Avatamsaka (Kegon) Buddhist philosophy—which some believe to be the intellectual statement of Zen—sees the universe as a vast, inter-related network in which all objects and creatures are necessary and holy. From one standpoint, governments, wars, or all that we consider " evil " are uncompromisingly contained in this illuminated realm. The hawk, the swoop, and the hare are one. From the " human " standpoint, we cannot live in those terms unless all beings see with the same enlightened eye. The Bodhisattva lives by the sufferer's standard, and he must be effective in helping those who suffer.

The mercy of the west has been rebellion; the mercy of the east has been insight into the basic self. We need both. They are both containd, as I see it, in the traditional three aspects of Buddhist practise: wisdom (prajna), meditation (dhyana), and morality (sila). Wisdom is knowledge of the mind of love and clarity that lies beneath one's ego-driven anxieties and aggressions. Meditation is going into the psyche to see this for yourself—over and over again, until it becomes the mind you live in. Morality is bringing it out in the way you live, through personal example and responsible action, ultimately toward the true community (sangha) of " all beings."

This last aspect means, for me, supporting any cultural or economic revolution that moves clearly toward a free, international, classless society; " the sexual revolution ", " true communism ". The traditional cultures are in any case doomed, and rather than cling to their good aspects hopelessly it should be realised that whatever is or ever was worthwhile in any culture can be reconstructed through meditation, out of the unconscious. It means resisting the lies and violence of the governments and their irresponsible employees. Fighting back with civil disobedience, pacifism, poetry, poverty—and violence, if it comes to a matter of clobbering some rampaging redneck or shoving a scab off the pier. Defending the right to smoke pot, eat peyote, be polygamous, polyandrous, or queer—and learning from the hip fellaheen peoples of Asia and Africa attitudes and techniques banned by the Judaeo-Christian West. Respecting intelligence and learning, but not as greed or means to personal power. Working on one's own responsibility, no dualism of ends or means—never the agent of an ideology—but willing to join in group action. " Forming the new society within the shell of the old." Old stuff. So is Buddhism. I see it as a kind of committed disaffiliation: " Buddhist Anarchism."

ABC of ANARCHISM

ALEXANDER BERKMAN

Alexander Berkman believed that " Anarchist books, with few exceptions, are not accessible to the understanding of the average reader. It is the common failing of most works dealing with social questions that they are written in the assumption that the reader is already familiar to a considerable extent with the subject, which is generally not the case at all. As a result there are very few books treating of social problems in a sufficiently simple and intelligible manner."

He set out to remedy this deficiency by writing an " ABC of Anarchism " which now appears in a welcome new edition. The author begins:

" I consider anarchism the most rational and practical conception of a social life in freedom and harmony. I am convinced that its realisation is a certainty in the course of human development. The time of that realisation will depend on two factors: first, on how soon existing conditions will grow physically and spiritually unbearable to considerable portions of mankind, particularly to the labouring classes; and, secondly, on the degree in which anarchist views will become understood and accepted.

" Our social institutions are founded on certain ideas; as long as the latter are generally believed, the institutions built on them are safe. Government remains strong because people think political authority and legal compulsion necessary. Capitalism will continue as long as such an economic system is considered adequate and just. The weakening of the ideas which support the evil and oppressive present-day conditions means the ultimate breakdown of government and capitalism. Progress consists in abolishing what man has outlived and substituting in its place a more suitable environment."

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