

VINOBA BHAVE Thoughts on CONCEPT

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The following thoughts expressed by Vinoba Bhave are from the book "Selections from Vinoba" (abbreviated in the text as S.V.), written by Vishwanath Tandon. The book has been published by Sarva Seva Sanghprakashan, Rajghat, Varanasi - 221001, India in 1981.

CONCEPT OF MODERN SOCIETY

Constructive Programme | Bhoodan (Land-Gift) Movement | Sampattidan (Wealth-Gift) | Gramdan (Village-Gift) | The Dual Objective of Gramdan | Sarvodaya-Patra | The Tripple Programme

CONCEPT OF MODERN SOCIETY

Constructive Programme

The whole of the constructive Programme is a Programme of love.
S. V.-828

It is by constructive work that the power of non-violence is generated. Just as destruction is

reckoned as a powerful means of violence, similarly reconstruction is a basic source of non-violence.

S. V.-829

Khadi, village industries and other such activities constitute branches of the Sarvodaya tree, while Bhoodan, Gramdan and other similar activities are its roots. If attempts will be made to make the branches grow by cutting them off from their tree, they would not succeed.

S. V.-832

We should do things first -bring about unity between men of different religions and languages, and remove the chasm between the rich and poor.

S. V.-833

Bhoodan (Land-Gift) Movement

Land-gifts have significance only so far as they are an index of a change in the outlook of the donors. A land-gift is not a religious act of charity. It is a conscious act of a person who desires to bring about a change in the social order. The old idea of charity assumes a revolutionary importance if its social context is understood properly.

S. V.-845

The Bhoodan movement is no one-sided affair confined to just one sector of our economic life. It includes all efforts aimed at building up a strong and noble life throughout our land. It certainly includes moral regeneration of our people. The redistribution of land and promotion of village industries will help in eradicating poverty and clear the way for moral uplift.

S. V.-846

My mission is not to stave off a revolution. I want to prevent a violent revolution and create a non-violent one. The future peace and prosperity of the country depend upon a peaceful solution of the land problem.

S. V.-847

Bhoodan wants and love to become the dominant values in society. All problems ought to be solved by negotiations in a spirit of friendliness.

S. V.-848

We seek to reconstruct society on a new basis. That is the purpose behind the Bhoodan work. It is not merely to collect land...What we want is to establish new values- to make morality the guiding principle of social life and to make economics, which enjoys undue importance at present, subservient to the former....The Bhoodan movement is for us an instrument for achieving a non-violent and peaceful change of values.

S. V.-849

The basic idea of Bhoodan Yajna is that wealth, intelligence and all such things which a man has, belongs to society and they should go to it.... If something remains with somebody, he is its trustee.

S. V.-850

Just as air, water and the sun are freely available to all, even so all must be allowed to have a claim on land, which is equally a gift to God.

S. V.-851

Some persons think that there are who have only to ask and not to give anything. But I say that there is none who has not got something to give. There is wealth, there is land, there is intelligence, there is labour, and, if nothing, then love at least is there. All have to give.

S. V.-852

The present national boundaries are bound to be demolished, and it is already happening. The whole world is sure to become one, and this cannot be prevented. ...The people of a country with less land are entitled to go to another which has more. This is the application of Bhoodan and its message in the world context of today.

S. V.-853

The movement I am carrying on is not, as some seem to imagine, a counter action against the

communists. It is based on positive ideology, which stands on its own right. The rays of the sun are not a counter-action against darkness.

S. V.-857

The little achievement we have had so far is not at all negligible. It is, in fact, inspiring. Till today no political party or organization in the country has been able to distribute one million acres; nay, not even half as much land to the poor. The Congress swears by the landless labourers the Communist party and the Jan Sangh all are for giving land to the tillers. The government also promises to provide the landless with the land. But the combined contribution of all these agencies is not to the extent of one million acres.

So, we see that the Bhoodan movement has surpassed the combined efforts of the government and the political parties. Never do I entertain pessimism in my heart. For, I have seen that his blessings are more in comparison to the quantum of labour put in the Bhoodan movement.

S. V.-859

Sampattidan (Wealth-Gift)

From Bhoodan to Sampattidan was a natural step, and the idea that along with Bhoodan I should also ask for Sampattidan, did occur to me and held my mind. But the land problem was a basic one and I saw that unless something was done to meet it, it might develop into a big danger detrimental to the security of the nation. I, therefore, thought it fit first to concentrate my energy only on that question.

But as the work of the Bhoodan progressed, it became increasingly clear that the idea behind the movement could not be fulfilled unless we went further and asked for a portion of wealth and property. Hence I made up my mind that I must also ask for a share of wealth and property from the people. I have now done it and placed my demand at one-sixth of it; but it is for the people to decide what they can and will give me. The idea behind the demand is that all wealth, even though we may acquire it with our individual effort and skill, is not for us alone, but has been granted to by God for all of us. The energy and initiative which went into the making of this wealth are themselves a gift of God.

S. V.-861

Gramdan (Village-Gift)

Gramdan is an expression of the spirit of the age. It asks people not only to break the narrow domestic walls and consider the whole village as one family, but goes further and asks all villagers to meet together to consider their common problems and to solve them with one mind.
S. V.-862

Gramdan symbolizes human compassion. It is an essay in collective living. It presupposes mutual sympathy. It is the beginning of culture. When we have learnt to experience the joy of forgetting ourselves and serving others around us, we may be said to have acquired some culture.

S. V.-863

The Dual Objective of Gramdan

Gramdan has a dual objective of before it, namely, to wipe out social disparities and to reduce economic inequalities.

S. V.-868

Sarvodaya-Patra

In Sarvodaya-patra, my rule is that only children should put in it a handful of grain. Had I allowed the elders to do it, I would have got double the quantity of grain. It is worth thinking why I myself reduced the amount I was to get. It is not that I have no use for its at all. It will be used for workers. But its main aim is to give a training to children and to obtain a pledge from every family that they would not take part in anything that disturbs peace.

S. V.-877

The Tripple Programme

Gramdan, Khadi (village-oriented Khadi), Shanti Sena - this is our triple Programme. To this trinity, these three seen as one, we must offer our service. If the three aspects are separated, they will all wither away.

S. V.-878

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