



FACULTY OF JURIDICAL SCIENCES

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Vinoba Bhave the exponent of Sarvodaya movement

To continue the ideology and mission of Gandhi, 'Sarvodaya Plan' was drafted in 1950. Which intended to achieve a non-violent, non-exploitative, cooperating society with equal opportunity for all without distinction based on caste or class. It set forth the policy of "tiller to be the owner of land", redistribution of excessive land, and formation of cooperative farms by accumulating uneconomic holdings. It contemplated protection of minimum wages and formation of multipurpose village cooperatives. It divided industries into centralised and decentralised ones. The former was to be owned by autonomous corporations or cooperatives with workers' participation in management and the latter by individuals or corporations. Banking and insurance ought to organise mass saving and control of investment. 50 per cent of the public revenue might be spent by the village Panchayat.

Vinobaji's Bhoodan and Gramdan movements are to be understood as specific schemes of Sarvodaya movement. Bhoodan, according to him, was not charity, but a realisation of right, a method of equitable distribution and an introduction of new values to the society. Eminent Gandhian puts it as; it was an experiment in non-violent economic revolution, a trusteeship theory put into action. And in words of Vinoba, "through the medium of land donation campaign, thoughts of the religion of humanity are taking roots in the country." Donation had the dimension of equal division and distribution and attitude of non-accumulation. He said, "Distribution of land is not our ultimate goal, but means to the goal. The goal is social revolution. The government is a servant. The people are the

masters. I am trying to convince the masters. If they are convinced, they will get their servants do the needful.." for him the government was a bucket and people were the well. If there would be water in the well, then only then could the bucket be filled.

Acharya Vinoba well known as the Walking Saint of India, conducted series of pilgrimages convincing the landowners with cultural reasons to donate one sixth of their land to the landless. Jayaprakash Narayan in his book Total Revolution (Vol.-II) notes that, in Telangana area, where communists claimed to have distributed 30,000 acres of land after two and a half years' of violence resulting in 3000 murders and destruction of huge public property, Vinoba Bhave activated Bhoodan movement and could collect 1.5 million acres of land. In U.P. he collected five lakh acres. Bhoodan movement made moral appeal to the landed class to donate land, and provoked the landless not to cooperate with those landlords who did not donate. According to one source, donation of land under bhoodan was 3.46 million acres up to 1954, which made a slow progress reaching 4.26 million acres in 1967. The land distributed was 1.19 million acres because of unfitness of 44 per cent of land for cultivation and withdrawals by donors. The bhoodan figure in states ranged between 21 lakh acres in

Bihar and 211 acres in Jammu and Kashmir. The contribution of Bihar, M.P., U.P., and Rajasthan aggregated to 85 per cent of donated land.

Jayaprakash Narayan writes, about the role of law in the process of change contemplated in bhoodan movement, "Vinoba is not against legislation. But he is impatient and does not want to wait till there is legislation. He says he is clearing the road for legislation. There must be public opinion created before a law can be made. It would come sooner if his message spreads to every village." The legal procedure for bhoodan included owner's declaration before Revenue Officer, registration of gift deed under the Indian Registration Act, distribution of donated land to the landless families by the Sarvodaya Mandal with title subject to a condition not to sell, lease or mortgage. In order to help the poor donees to cultivate the land, sampatti dan and sadhan dan (donation of money and equipments) were also popularized by Vinoba.

In addition to resolving the problem of inequality in possession of land, bhoodan was aspired to release and bring into play the moral and social forces for the regeneration of society. Gramdan abolishes private proprietorship of land, and recognises community ownership and cooperative farming. The revival of the concept of common property resource by community's participation rather than by imposition from the top is part of the process building the rural economy by sharing of ownership, work and benefits. Socialism of Sarvodaya was unique through voluntary efforts.

