

**Revival of Swadeshi Spirit
—An Answer to Smuggling**

S. R. Vakil

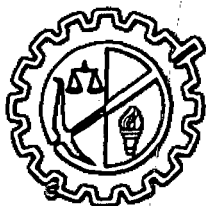


FORUM OF FREE ENTERPRISE

SOHRAB HOUSE, 235 DR. D. N. ROAD, BOMBAY-1

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CHHABRA HOUSE, 235 DR. D. N. ROAD, BOMBAY-1

**"Free Enterprise was born with man and
shall survive as long as man survives."**

—A. D. Shroff

1899-1965

**Founder-President
Forum of Free Enterprise**

“People must come to accept private enterprise not as a necessary evil, but as an affirmative good”.

—Eugene Black

INTRODUCTION

During the Salt Satyagraha (Dandi March of Mahatma Gandhi) I was a school-going lad studying in Sarvajanic High School, Surat, and the mottoes of my school were, "Learn and be humble" and "Be just and fear not" — the mottoes which I have tried to adhere to. Mahatma Gandhi's teachings had tremendous influence on my character and I believe, as a struggler against smugglers, that the only way to eradicate this "Parallel Government" is to revive the spirit of Swadeshi, and to boycott foreign luxury goods and avoid them to the maximum possible extent.

My second theory is that Religion and Economics are obverse and reverse of the same coin. In support of these theories I have quoted extracts from the "Life of Mahatma Gandhi" by Tendolkar. (See Appendix).

Equally instructive are the sayings of a great British thinker, Malcolm Muggeridge, which are published as an Epilogue to this pamphlet.

The National Association for the Blind has been one of my favourite institutions for which I have been giving my mite but there are people with eyes who are blind to what is going on in the country and yet cannot see. Arundale, the well-known Theosophist of India, once said: "Light is everywhere, but sometimes we are its friends and sometimes we are its foes."

Revival of Swadeshi Spirit —An Answer to Smuggling

By

S. R. Vakil *

Dubai is one of the seven Trucial States and is a free port. Its population is estimated 40,000 official residents and 80,000 "smuggled" having entered the place without passports consisting mainly of Indians, Pakistanis and Iranis. The three countries nearest to Dubai are Persia, Pakistan and India. The Customs duty payable is 4.625% in respect of goods which arrive by ship and 2% in respect of consignments which arrive by air. The duty on wrist watches which arrive by air is 1.25%.

There is no duty on gold and there are few banks functioning in this Sheikhdum. It is estimated that 75 million Dollars worth of gold was imported in Dubai in 1964 on which even if the profit was 10% it would come to 7.5 million Dollars.

The official figures of import into Dubai during the years 1962, 1963 and 1964 of goods other than gold are £8,152,943; £8,720,553 and £15,230,174 respectively. By 1969, the imports had climbed up to £ 80 million.

The figures are in sterling pounds. It will be noted that in the years 1962, 1963 and 1964 from Switzerland alone £14,95,342 worth of "goods" were imported. This amount obviously represents import of wrist watches from Switzerland. The sharp rise from the year 1962 to 1964 is worth

* The author is a well-known solicitor and authority on foreign exchange laws. This is based on public lectures delivered under the auspices of the Forum of Free Enterprise and other organisations in Bombay.

noting. While in 1962 the import was to the extent of £1,686, in 1964, it rose to the figure of £1,495,342.

The "trade" between India and Dubai is very brisk and only during the monsoon months the route is diverted via Pakistan and contraband goods are brought to India through the land routes. These contraband goods include **inter alia** gold, wrist watches, textiles, transistors, tape-recorders, playing cards, razor blades, fountainpens and pencils, cosmetics and other articles of luxury.

It is left to the Finance Ministry of the Government of India to ascertain, and for patriotic Indians to surmise, how much of the above quantities came to India, Pakistan and Iran and how much was left for the local population. Since authentic figures from Hong Kong, Singapore and other Free Trade Zones are not available, the said zones have not been touched.

Dubai had no oil until recently, but had shrewdly turned itself into a clearing house for mid-East smuggling operations. In 1965 Dubai imported huge quantities of gold and silver plus \$47 million worth of consumer goods of just about every conceivable description virtually all of which ended up in India, Pakistan or Iran. "We are a super-market," one Dubai official admitted. "We have no control on what happens to the goods once they leave here," he added pointedly.

India and Pakistan share the French passion for hoarding gold to a pathological degree. In India, it is not just a matter of nerves over the currency: it is a temperamental addiction from which few of several hundred million people are exempt. In both countries the import of gold is banned. For every one of the four million marriages a year, at least an ounce or two of gold is required in India by tradition. Indians love gold, from the ear-ring to the kilogramme. Gold courses through India's history and her craftsmen work on it like magicians. Where else would you go for gold filigree? Indian dealers will pay 25% to 40% above world prices for gold in almost any form, from the dust to

the ingot. Bombay has for some years been the world's greatest intake market for the smuggled bullion, and there are other great markets further East. Until fairly recently, according to smugglers' figures, a thousand ounces of gold bought in London or New York for £12,000 could be sold in Bombay for £20,000 to the right dealers. Allowing for the air fare and courier's fee, this still left an adequate profit per flight.

Britain had become a veritable paradise for India's silver which is smuggled from every conceivable seashore. As late as July 1968, it was reported from Britain that smuggled silver from India was being imported into Britain at the unbelievable rate of 5.2 million ounces a month. In the first five months of 1968, the imports totalled 26 million ounces worth £23 million. The official exports from India declared in the Customs return are insignificant in comparison and amounted to 3,00,000 ounces in May 1968.

The silver smuggled from India came openly into Britain as it was exported from Dubai in the Persian Gulf. Dubai which is the centre of smuggling silver out of India and gold into India became as a result of this trade one of the biggest silver exporters in the world.

The methods adopted by the Syndicates in Dubai to smuggle silver were widely known. Dhows fitted with powerful motors disguised as fishing boats lift the metal from unguarded points on India's long western coast and barter it for gold with the Indian end of the smuggling syndicates.

According to British estimates, silver hoards in India amounted to 5,000 million ounces which at prices in 1968 was about £4.8 billion or Rs. 9,000 crores.

On 17th May 1969, I wrote: "The crisis of the Rupee in India was basically a crisis of national confidence. Too many Indians were buying gold, bullion, diamonds and foreign currency and transferring their savings abroad in the hope of eluding an increase in taxes and side-stepping a decrease in the Rupee value. It is all too easy to condemn

this behaviour. Any person who has not seen his own fortunes dissipated by inflation or devaluation cannot fully understand the Silas Marner attitudes many Indians have towards their wealth. However, many Indians habitually distrust their own currency, put profit above patriotism and have as their motto 'IN GOLD WE TRUST'. As a consequence the Indian economy suffers on their account.

"In 1968, alone, according to the 'Economic Times' of London, 160 metric tonnes of gold (in terms of Indian market price, of the value of Rs. 280 crores) was imported into Dubai. Obviously Dubai's one lakh and odd inhabitants cannot take all this gold. Naturally no official figures are available of its re-export to India and Pakistan. As against the import of this gold, wrist watches (of value of £8,000,000) and other articles of luxury, a phenomenal amount of Indian silver, namely, 39,925,100 ounces was officially exported by Dubai to Britain in the first eleven months of 1968. In contrast to this figure, the official exports of silver from India into Britain accounts for less than 2 per cent of the total imports of 116.22 million ounces by Britain. The steady unofficial drain of Indian silver is made an attractive proposition to the underworld of smugglers, as the price of silver in India is lower than its price in any other country of the world. It was not an exaggeration to have described in the last edition of this (Foreign Exchange Law) book the activities of these smugglers, as constituting a parallel government functioning in this country. After a substantial portion of silver was 'exported' by smugglers from our country, measures have been introduced to control the possession and movement of silver."

I wrote, openly, as far back as 1964 that, all the gold that we are buying was paid for in the form of rice, and pulses and other essential commodities. Why are prices rising day in and day out? Where are our mutton and beef and eggs going, where are our goats going? Where are our vegetables going? Where is the edible oil going? Why are we not stopping all this? What has happened to our hard work? Better late than never — I still see silver lining. It is not yet too late. I wrote twenty years ago.

that smugglers were running a **parallel Government** and late Justice Tendolkar described a person who failed to repatriate foreign exchange as "**national robber**". They are the persons who were ruining the economy of our country. When MISA was amended, we had corrupted ourselves beyond measure.

If the British could rule us with a "Danda" from thousands of miles during the days when there was no aeroplane, let our Government rule over anti-social elements with this one "danda" — MISA. I have stated in the past that gold control has been to a great extent responsible for the present state of affairs, but in the events that have transpired in view of the unprecedented rise in the international price of gold, let us at least save our silver from going out of the country. The fact is that the faith of people in gold has **not** been shaken —**which can only be done by educating** people. In the year 1965, when the question arose of bringing foreign exchange from abroad I wrote to the Government then to allow people to bring in gold. Let the Government take 40% of gold and allow 60% to be kept by the people. I wrote as far back as 1968 that:—

The net effect of the Gold Control has been:

- (a) a steady increase in surreptitious smuggling of gold through the length and breadth of the country;
- (b) continuous unemployment of artisans and goldsmiths;
- (c) diversion of black market money which was invested in gold, in real properties with unprecedented rise of prices in lands throughout the country and unheard of black market in land and commodities particularly in cities like Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, Madras and other commercial centres;
- (d) steady fall of the Rupee and rise in value of foreign currency in black market;
- (e) flight of capital from India to other countries;
- (f) destruction of rural credit; and

(g) creation of a new bureaucracy, new forms of corruption and new expenditure, and loss to the public exchequer of lakhs of rupees by way of sales tax and income-tax which would have come to the country from the earnings of honest goldsmiths and gold dealers of this country.

All these evil effects could have been mitigated had my proposal been accepted.

There is another very sad and disgraceful aspect of this smuggling business. It is the smuggling out of our women — our sisters and children — from our motherland.

I am also a Notary. I have seen in my office teenaged girls coming to me for attestation of marriages and declarations for so-called services in Dubai and Mid-East. I tried to persuade and argue with these girls. I have sent some of these girls to orphanages and Ashrams and saved them. When false marriage declarations were made, I have telephoned to police and brought them back even from vessels. But there have been girls who have gone out of the country. This shows to what extent our morals have been debased. And for what purpose — to smuggle in materials for tight pants, nylon sarees, perfumes, cigarettes, transistors and television sets? Was that the vision of Swaraj?

When gold was not here, we took out silver from here. What did we get in return? Rise in prices. Why did the prices of rice, dal and oil and everything rise? Everything went out. When I was at Dubai, I asked for fresh milk, and was told: "You don't get good milk here". I asked the reason. Because cows are fed on dried fish, grass is not available there and the milk stinks. That is an oil-rich country, a country where money is there, where everything is bought and sold. Therefore, all essentials are smuggled out of India.

Smuggling has reached such proportions that even idols of Gods like Shankar and Vishnu were removed from temples and sent abroad clandestinely. Have we sold our religion and morality in our lust for earning material wealth

to lead a life of insatiable wants in a country renowned for its precept of plain living and high thinking? Where is our society where once there was the play of healthy hearts and virulent intellects? It is disgraceful that the quest for material goods of life has driven people in this country to indulge in smuggling, black marketing and other anti-social activities. This land has produced great people and we still have in our midst great souls who practise and preach the great spiritual heritage of the land, or has the music of the transistor replaced the music of life?

We as a nation cannot fulfil our manifest destiny of greatness unless the spiritual tradition is revived, but smuggling and other anti-social evils come in the way of their revival.

The Indian public has, therefore, to play an important role in stopping smuggling. Let us revive the "swadeshi" spirit which was taught to us by Mahatma Gandhi, J. N. Tata, A. B. Godrej and other stalwarts.

When there is a question of foreign medicines, sophisticated machinery and foreign techniques, which we need—yes. But unless compelled, we shall not touch foreign goods for five years. Let us take this vow and let us then see how smuggling takes place.

The salutary effect of steps against smugglers under MISA are already evident. Prices of iron, steel, cement and drugs have gone down by 40% and there is also remarkable drop in the price of other commodities. Share bazaars have already slumped. Black market dealings in foreign currency, once traded openly on the streets of Singapore, for instance, are at a standstill. Compensatory payments have stopped. If the public cooperates and the Government follows with wise economic policy changes, then the country will turn the corner. I see a silver lining. MISA is for criminals and not for law-abiding citizens—MISA is for smugglers and not for strugglers. MISA is for those who believe that foreigners alone can serve our country and not for those who believe in the precepts of Mahatma Gandhi, viz., Plain Living and High Thinking.

The Coastal Towns through which smuggling takes place: Veraval, Sutrapada, Dhamrej, Mordwarka, Otda, Madhoad, Div, Sil, Navi Bunder, Magrol, Porbander, Niyani, Okha, Jamnagar, Salaya, Sika, Gandhidham, Kandla, Mundra, Lund, Mandvi, Jakho, Dumas, Magdalla, Bulsar, Dholari, Kolak, Daman, Tarapore, Chichan, Verar, Bassein, Satpal, Janjira, Ratnagiri, Karwar, Mangalore, Kasargod, Cochin, Kanyakumari, Madras, Nagapattam, Kandler, (Pondicherry), Kakinda, Vizagapatnam.

Appendix I

A Note on gold Smuggling

(Prepared in May 1969)

Money is one of the reliable means of keeping score of the accomplishments of a person or a country. Money gives its possessor a range and freedom of choices, and the choice a nation makes sharply highlights its character. When a country gets enmeshed in the toils of a financial crisis, the crisis reflects the deeds and misdeeds of its Government and at least in part the aspirations of its people. Money reveals a great deal of a nation's character because it is so closely entwined with its history, psychology and destiny. In the very limited sense that money mirrors reality, money is truth. If money has not always bought happiness, it has often cured ignorance and illness, supported the arts and established fruitful cultures.

The crisis of the Rupee in India is basically a crisis of national confidence. Too many Indians have been buying gold, bullion, diamonds and foreign currency and transferring their savings abroad in the hope of eluding an increase in taxes and side-stepping a decrease in the Rupee value. It is all too easy to condemn this behaviour. Any person who has not seen his own fortunes dissipated by inflations and devaluations cannot fully understand the Silas Marnier attitude many Indians have towards their wealth. However, many Indians habitually distrust their own currency, put profit above patriotism and have as their motto

'IN GOLD WE TRUST'. As a consequence, the Indian economy suffers on their account.

The unreasoning aversion of the Government to entrust to the private sector any project of importance which would save the country's valuable foreign exchange, the hallucination that a Government can only rule by experimental legislation, the neurotic zeal of the Government in protecting agriculturists who only believe in investing their non-taxable income in gold and diamonds, the smugglers' syndicates operating from the border of Amritsar to Cape Comorin, the Government's shifting, inconsistent and sometimes inexplicable policy of handling the country's finances, are responsible for the sorry plight of the nation.

Notifications, bye-laws and directives continue to pour in and it is almost impossible for any lawyer (much less for a laymen) to have an up-to-date knowledge of the Exchange Control laws. Lord Coke once said that "the beauty of the law is the known certainty thereof". Considering what the Government of India has done to our Exchange Control Laws, one may say that their beauty is like unto a maiden with a glass eye, a wooden leg, three arms, an ill-fitting wig and the gait of a Frankenstein monster. The ugliness of these laws, in short, is the known uncertainty thereof.

Appendix II

SOME EXCERPTS FROM MISA AND AMENDING ORDINANCE, PRESIDENTIAL ORDER

(The following Act of Parliament received the assent of the President on the 2nd July, 1971)

THE MAINTENANCE OF INTERNAL SECURITY ACT, 1971 NO. 26 OF 1971.

As amended by the Defence of India Act — 1971
(42 of 1971)

(2nd July, 1971)

An Act to provide for detention in certain cases for the purpose of maintenance of internal security and matters connected therewith.

3. (1) The Central Government or the State Government may,—
 - (a) if satisfied with respect to any person (including a foreigner) that with a view to preventing him from acting in any manner prejudicial to—
 - (i) the defence of India, the relations of India with foreign powers, or the security of India, or
 - (ii) the security of the State or the maintenance of public order, or
 - (iii) the maintenance of supplies and services essential to the community, or
 - (b) if satisfied with respect to any foreigner that with a view to regulating his continued presence in India or with a view to making arrangements for his expulsion from India, it is necessary so to do, make an order directing that such person be detained.
- (2) Any of the following officers, namely:—
 - (a) district magistrates,

- (b) additional district magistrates specially empowered in this behalf by the State Government,
- (c) Commissioners of Police, wherever they have been appointed, may also if satisfied as provided in sub-section (1), exercise the power conferred by the said sub-section.

(3) When any order is made under this section by an officer mentioned in sub-section (2), he shall forthwith report the fact to the State Government to which he is subordinate together with the grounds on which the order has been made and such other particulars as in his opinion have bearing on the matter, and no such order shall remain in force for more than twelve days after the making thereof unless in the meantime it has been approved by the State Government.

Provided that where under section 8 the grounds of detention are communicated by the authority making the order after five days but not later than fifteen days from the date of detention, this sub-section shall apply subject to the modification that for the words "twelve days", the words "twenty-two days" shall be substituted.

(4) When any order is made or approved by the State Government under this section, the State Government shall within seven days, report the fact to the Central Government together with the grounds on which the order has been made and such other particular as in the opinion of the State Government have a bearing on the necessity for the order.

5. (1) If the Central Government or the State Government or an officer specified in sub-section (2) of Section 3 as the case may be, has reason to believe that a person in respect of whom a detention order has been made has absconded or is concealing himself so that the order cannot be executed, that Government or officer may —

(a) make a report in writing of the fact to a Presidency Magistrate or a Magistrate of the first class having

jurisdiction, in the place where the said person ordinarily resides; and thereupon the provisions of section 87, 88 and 89 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898, shall apply in respect of the said person and his property as if the order directing that he be detained were a warrant issued by the Magistrate.

(b) by order notified in the Official Gazette direct the said person to appear before such officer, at such place and within such period as may be specified in the order, and if the said person fails to comply with such direction he shall, unless he proves that it was not possible for him to comply therewith and that he had, within the period specified in the order, informed the officer mentioned in the order of the reason which rendered compliance therewith impossible and of his whereabouts, be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year or with fine or with both.

(2) Notwithstanding anything contained in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898, every offence under clause (b) of sub-section (1) shall be cognisable.

6. (1) When a person is detained in pursuance of a detention order, the authority making the order shall, as soon as may be, but ordinarily not later than five days and in exceptional circumstances and for reasons to be recorded in writing, communicate not later than fifteen days, from the date of detention, communicate to him the grounds on which the order has been made and shall afford him the earliest opportunity of making a representation against the order to the appropriate Government.

(2) Nothing in sub-section (1) shall require the authority to disclose facts which it considers to be against the public interest to disclose.

7. (1) Constitution of Advisory Boards. The Central Government and each State Government shall, whenever necessary, constitute one or more Advisory Boards, for the purposes of this Act.

(2) Every such Board shall consist of three persons who are, or have been, or are qualified to be appointed as, Judges of a High Court, and such persons shall be appointed by the Central Government or the State Government, as the case may be.

(3) The appropriate Government shall appoint one of the members of the Advisory Board who is, or has been, a judge of a High Court to be its Chairman, and in the case of a Union Territory the appointment to the Advisory Board, of any person who is a Judge of the High Court of a State shall be with the previous approval of the State Government concerned.

8. Save as otherwise expressly provided in this Act, in every case where a detention order has been made under this Act, the appropriate Government shall, within thirty days from the date of detention under the Order, place before the Advisory Board constituted by it under Section 7 the grounds on which the order has been made and the representation, if any, made by the person affected by the order, and in case where the order has been made by an officer, also the report by such officer under sub-section (3) of Section 3.

9. The maximum period for which any person may be detained in pursuance of any detention order which has been confirmed under section 12 shall be twelve months from the date of detention or the expiry of the Defence of India Act—1971 whichever is later.

Provided that nothing contained in this section shall affect the power of the appropriate Govt. to revoke or modify the detention order at any earlier time.

THE MAINTENANCE OF INTERNAL SECURITY (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE, 1974

4. In section 3 of the Principal Act, in sub-section (1) (a) in clause (b), the word "or" shall be inserted at the end; (b) after clause (b), the following clause shall be inserted, namely:—

“(C) if satisfied with respect to any person (including a foreigner) that with a view to preventing him from acting

in any manner prejudicial to the conservation of foreign exchange or with a view to preventing him from:—

- (i) smuggling goods, or
- (ii) abetting other persons to smuggle goods, or
- (iii) dealing in smuggled goods”.

5. After section 16 of the principal Act, the following section shall be inserted, namely:—

‘16A. (1) Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, any person (including a foreigner) in respect of whom an order of detention has been made under this Act may be detained without obtaining the opinion of the Advisory Board for a period longer than three months but not exceeding one year from the date of his detention, where the order of detention has been made against such person with a view to preventing him from smuggling goods or abetting other persons to smuggle goods, and the Central Government has reason to believe that such person—

- (i) smuggles or is likely to smuggle goods, or goods,

into, out of or through any specified area as defined in clause (c) of section III of the Customs Act, 1962 — (52 of 1962).

- (ii) abet or is likely to abet other persons to smuggle

(d) in section 13, for the words “twelve months”, the words “two years” shall be substituted’.

Presidential Order on MISA Detenus and Right to Move the Court

“In exercise of the powers conferred by clause (1) Art. 359 of the Constitution, the President hereby declares that:

“(A) The right to move any court with respect to orders of detention which have already been made or which may hereafter be made under Section 3(1)(C) of the Maintenance of Internal Security Act, 1971 as amended by Ordinance 11 of 1974, for the enforcement of the rights conferred by

Art. 14, Art. 21 and clauses (4), (5), (6), and (7) of Art. 22 of the Constitution, and

“(B) All proceedings pending in any court for the enforcement of the aforesaid rights with respect to orders of detention made under the said Section 3(1)(C), shall remain suspended for a period during which the proclamation of the emergency issued under clause (1) of Art. 352 of the Constitution on Dec. 3, 1971, is in force, whichever period expires earlier.

“2. This order shall extend to the whole of the territory of India.”

Appendix III

EXTRACTS FROM THE CUSTOMS ACT 1962

111. Confiscation of improperly imported goods, etc.—
The following goods brought from a place outside India shall be liable to confiscation:—

- (a) any goods imported by sea or air which are unloaded or attempted to be unloaded at any place other than a customs port or customs airport appointed under clause (a) of section 7 for the unloading of such goods;
- (b) any goods imported by land or inland water through any route other than a route specified in a notification issued under clause (c) of section 7 for the import of such goods;
- (c) any dutiable or prohibited goods brought into any bay, gulf, creek or tidal river for the purpose of being landed at a place other than a customs port;
- (d) any goods which are imported or attempted to be imported or are brought within the Indian customs waters for the purpose of being imported, contrary to any prohibition imposed by or under this Act or any other law for the time being in force;

- (e) any dutiable or prohibited goods found concealed in any manner in any conveyance;
- (f) any dutiable or prohibited goods required to be mentioned under the regulations in an import manifest or import report which are not so mentioned;
- (g) any dutiable or prohibited goods which are unloaded from a conveyance in contravention of the provisions of section 32, other than goods inadvertently unloaded but included in the record kept under sub-section (2) of section 45;
- (h) any dutiable or prohibited goods unloaded or attempted to be unloaded in contravention of the provisions of section 33 or section 34;
- (i) any dutiable or prohibited goods found concealed in any manner in any package either before or after the unloading thereof;
- (j) any dutiable or prohibited goods removed or attempted to be removed from a customs area or a warehouse without the permission of the proper officer or contrary to the terms of such permission;
- (k) any dutiable or prohibited goods imported by clearance of the goods required to be produced under section 109 is not produced or which do not correspond in any material particular with the specification contained therein;
- (l) any dutiable or prohibited goods which are not included or are in excess of those included in the entry made under this Act, or in the case of baggage in the declaration made under Section 77;
- (m) any dutiable or prohibited goods which do not correspond in any material particular with the entry made under this Act or in the case of baggage with the declaration made under section 77 in respect thereof;

- (n) any dutiable or prohibited goods transitted with or without transshipment or attempted to be so transitted in contravention of the provisions of Chapter VIII;
- (o) any goods exempted, subject to any condition, from duty or any prohibition in respect of the import thereof under this Act or any other law for the time being in force, in respect of which the condition is not observed unless the non-observance of the condition was sanctioned by the proper officer.

Appendix IV

MAHATMA GANDHI ON SWADESHI

“It is inconsistent with truth to use articles about which, or about whose makers, there is a possibility of deception. Therefore, for instance, a votary of truth will not use articles manufactured in the mills of Manchester, Germany or India, for he does not know that there is no deception about them. Moreover, labourers suffer much in the mills. Use of fire in the mills causes enormous destruction, of life besides killing labourers before their time. Foreign goods and goods made by means of complicated machinery are, therefore, tabooed to a votary of ahimsa. Further reflection will show that use of such goods will involve a breach of the vows of non-stealing and non-possession. We wear foreign goods in preference to simple goods made by our own handlooms, because custom attributes greater beauty to them. Artificial beautifying of the body is a hindrance to a **brahmachari**; he will, therefore, avoid the use of any but the simplest goods. Therefore, the vow of swadeshi requires the use of simple and simply-made clothing to the exclusion of even buttons, foreign cuts, etc., and so will swadeshi be applied to every department of life.

“I do not believe that religion has nothing to do with politics. The latter divorced from religion is like a corpse only fit to be buried. I feel, if the attempt to separate politics from religion had not been made as it is even now made, they would not have degenerated as they often appear to have done. No one considers that the political life of the country is in a happy state. Following out the swadeshi spirit, I observe, the indigenous institutions and the village panchayats hold me. India is really a republican country, and it is because it is that that it has survived every shock hitherto delivered. Princes and potentates, whether they were Indian-born or foreigners, have hardly touched the vast masses except for collecting revenue.

“Much of the deep poverty of the masses is due to the ruinous departure from swadeshi in the economic and industrial life. If not an article of commerce had been

brought from outside India, she would be today a land flowing with milk and honey. But that was not to be. We were greedy, and so was England. The connection between England and India was based clearly upon an error. But she does not remain in India in error. It is her declared policy that India is to be held in trust for her people. If this be true, Lancashire must stand aside. And if the swadeshi doctrine is a sound doctrine, Lancashire can stand aside without hurt, though it may sustain a shock for the time being.

“I think of swadeshi not as a boycott movement undertaken by way of revenge. I conceive it as a religious principle to be followed by all. I am no economist, but I have read some treatises which show that England could easily become a self-sustained country, growing all the produce she needs. This may be an utterly ridiculous proposition, and perhaps the best proof that it cannot be true is that England is one of the largest importers in the world. But India cannot live for Lancashire or any other country before she is able to live for herself. And she can live for herself only if she produces and is helped to produce everything for her requirements within her own borders.

“This may all sound nonsensical. Well, India is a country of nonsense. It is nonsensical to parch one’s throat with thirst when a kindly Musalman is ready to offer pure water to drink. And yet thousands of Hindus would rather die of thirst than drink water from a Muslim household. These nonsensical men can also, once they are convinced that their religion demands that they should wear garments manufactured in India only and eat food only grown in India, decline to wear any other clothing or eat any other food. Lord Curzon set the fashion for tea-drinking. And that pernicious drug now bids fair to overwhelm the nation. It has already undermined the digestive apparatus of hundreds of thousands of men and women and constitutes an additional tax upon their slender purses. Lord Hardinge can set the fashion for swadeshi, and almost the whole of India will forswear foreign goods. There is a verse in the Gita which, freely rendered, means: masses follow the

classes. It is easy to undo the evil if the thinking portion of the community were to take the swadeshi vow, even though it may for a time cause considerable inconvenience.

"It has often been urged that India cannot adopt swadeshi in the economic life at any rate. Those who advance this objection do not look upon swadeshi as a rule of life. With them it is a mere patriotic effort not to be made if it involved any self-denial. Swadeshi, as defined here, is a religious discipline to be undergone in utter disregard of the physical discomfort it may cause to individuals. Under its spell the deprivation of a pin or needle, because these are not manufactured in India, need cause no terror. A swadeshist will learn to do without hundreds of things which today he considers necessary. Moreover, those who dismiss swadeshi from their minds by arguing the impossible, forget that swadeshi, after all, is a goal to be reached by steady effort. Swadeshi is the only doctrine consistent with the law of humility and love."

EPILOGUE

Malcolm Muggeridge on Pursuit of Mere Material Happiness

"I disbelieve in progress, the pursuit of happiness, and all the concomitant notions and projects for creating a society in which human beings find ever greater contentment by being given in ever greater abundance the means to satisfy their material and bodily hopes and desires. In other words, I consider that the way of life in urbanized, rich countries as it exists today, and as it is likely to do on developing, is probably the most degraded and unilluminated ever to come to pass on earth. The half century in which I have been consciously alive seems to me to have been quite exceptionally destructive, murderous and brutal. More people have been killed and terrorized, more driven from their homes and native places; more of the past's heritage has been destroyed, more lies propagated and base persuasion engaged in, with less compensatory achievement in art,

literature and imaginative understanding, than in any comparable period of history.

“Ever since I can remember, the image of earthly power, whether in the guise of schoolmaster, mayor, judge, prime minister, monarch, or any other, has seemed to me derisory. I was enchanted when I first read in the ‘Pensees’ (Pascal being one of the small, sublime band of fellow-humans to whom one may turn and say in the deepest humility; ‘I agree’) about how magistrates and rulers had to be garbed in their ridiculous ceremonial robes, crowns and diadems. Otherwise, who would not see through their threadbare pretensions? I am conscious of having been ruled by buffoons, taught by idiots, preached at by hypocrites, and preyed upon by charlatans in the guise of advertisers and other professional persuaders, as well as verbose demagogues and ideologues of many opinions, all false.

“Nor, as far as I am concerned, is there any recompense in the so-called achievements of science. It is true that in my lifetime more progress has been made in unravelling the composition and mechanism of the material universe than previously in the whole of recorded time. This does not at all excite my mind, or even my curiosity. The atom has been split; the universe has been discovered, and will soon be explored. Neither achievement has any bearing on what alone interests me — which is why life exists, and what is the significance, if any, of my minute and so transitory part in it. All the world in a grain of sand; all the universe, too. If I could understand a grain of sand I should understand everything. Why, then, should going to the moon and Mars, or spending a holiday along the Milk Way, be expected to advance me further in my quest than going to Manchester and Liverpool, or spending a holiday in Brighton?

“Education, the great mumbo-jumbo and fraud of the age, purports to equip us to live, and is prescribed as a universal remedy for everything from juvenile delinquency to premature senility. For the most part, it only serves to enlarge stupidity, inflate conceit, enhance credulity, and put

those subjected to it at the mercy of brain-washers with printing presses, radio and television at their disposal. I have seen pictures of huge, ungainly prehistoric monsters who developed such a weight of protective shell that they sank under its burden and became extinct. Our civilization likewise is sinking under the burden of nuclear defence, and may well soon be extinct. As this fact sinks into the collective consciousness, the resort to drugs, dreams, fantasies, and other escapist devices, particularly sex, becomes ever more marked.

“Living thus in the twilight of a spent civilization, amidst its ludicrous and frightening shadows, what is there to believe?”

“The absurdities of the Kingdom of Heaven, as conceived in the minds of simple believers, are obvious enough — pearly gates, angelic choirs, golden crowns and shining raiment. But what are we to think of the sheer unresisting imbecility of the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth, as envisaged and recommended by the most authoritative and powerful voices of our time?”

*The views expressed in this booklet are
not necessarily the views of the Forum
of Free Enterprise*

INTRODUCTION

During the Salt Satyagraha (Dandi March of Mahatma Gandhi) I was a school-going lad studying in Sarvajanic High School, Surat, and the mottoes of my school were, "Learn and be humble" and "Be just and fear not" — the mottoes which I have tried to adhere to. Mahatma Gandhi's teachings had tremendous influence on my character and I believe, as a struggler against smugglers, that the only way to eradicate this "Parallel Government" is to revive the spirit of Swadeshi, and to boycott foreign luxury goods and avoid them to the maximum possible extent.

My second theory is that Religion and Economics are obverse and reverse of the same coin. In support of these theories I have quoted extracts from the "Life of Mahatma Gandhi" by Tendolkar. (See Appendix).

Equally instructive are the sayings of a great British thinker, Malcolm Muggeridge, which are published as an Epilogue to this pamphlet.

The National Association for the Blind has been one of my favourite institutions for which I have been giving my mite but there are people with eyes who are blind to what is going on in the country and yet cannot see. Arundale, the well-known Theosophist of India, once said: "Light is everywhere, but sometimes we are its friends and sometimes we are its foes."

28th November, 1974

S. R. VAKIL

"Free Enterprise was born with man and shall survive as long as man survives."

—A. D. Shroff

1899-1965

Founder-President

Forum of Free Enterprise

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