

HARIJAN

12 pages

Editor: MAHADEV DESAI

VOL. IX, No. 15]

AHMEDABAD — SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 1942

[TWO ANNAS

TEN QUESTIONS RE: THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE

(By M. K. Gandhi)

1. Q. The Persian script did not originate in India. It came during the Moghul period just as the Roman script has with the advent of the British. But you do not advocate the Roman script for the national language. Why then the Persian?

A. If the Roman script had made a home for itself in India in the same way as the Persian, I would agree with you. But the knowledge of the former is confined to a mere handful of English-knowing persons, while crores of Hindus and Muslims are conversant with the latter. You should try to find out the exact number of persons knowing the Roman and Persian scripts respectively.

2. Q. If you advocate the learning of Urdu for the sake of Hindu-Muslim unity, then please remember that a large number of Mussalmans in India do not know Urdu. They are conversant only with their own provincial languages. These people would far more easily understand a national language comprising of words familiar to the provincial languages. The Northern India languages are all derived from Sanskrit and therefore resemble each other a good deal. Sanskrit words have even crept to a large extent into the Southern languages. Then why advocate for these people the learning of an unfamiliar Urdu tongue full of Arabic and Persian words?

A. There is force in your argument. But I would like you to delve a little deeper into the question. I admit that in asking people to learn the Persian script I have at the back of my mind a contribution to Hindu-Muslim unity. There has been a long-standing conflict between the Hindi and Urdu tongues as between the two scripts. Today it has assumed a virulent form. In 1935 in Indore the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, while defining Hindi, gave a definite place to the Persian script. In 1925 the Congress gave the national language the name of Hindustani. Both scripts were made permissible. Thus Hindi plus Urdu was recognised as the national language. The question of Hindu-Muslim unity was definitely in the forefront in all these decisions. I have not raised this issue today. I have only given it a concrete form. It is a logical outcome of events. If we want to develop the national language to the fullest extent, it behoves us to give the two scripts an equal status. In the end whichever is appreciated more by the people will be the more wide-spread.

The provincial languages are closely allied to Sanskrit, and it is true that lacs of Muslims are conversant only with their provincial languages, and

that Hindi and the Devnagri script will, therefore, be easier for them to learn than Urdu and the Persian characters. My scheme will not interfere with this. In fact the people will benefit more than ever by learning the Persian script. Your trouble arises because you look upon this as a burden. Whether it is a gain or a burden depends on the outlook of the learner. He who is filled with a love of country will never consider such learning a burden. There will be no compulsion by my scheme. Only those who consider it a gain will learn the Persian script or the Devnagri as the case may be.

3. Q. A very large proportion of persons in India know the Devnagri script. Surely Punjabis, Sindhis and the Frontier folk can easily learn it too.

A. The reply to this is really embodied in the preceding answer. Frontier people and others will have to learn the Devnagri script.

4. Q. A national language is really more for speech than literary purposes. Its script is, therefore, not so essential or is, at any rate, of secondary importance. Moreover is it not easier to learn the national language through one's mother-tongue? And where would be the harm in so doing?

A. You are right. It is easier to learn the national language through one's mother-tongue. As far as I know this is being done in Southern India though perhaps not systematically. Unlike you I do not look upon the learning of two scripts as a burden. It is not so hard as you fear. I can never be opposed to the learning of the national language through the mother-tongue. Given the keenness to learn it, all systems will be employed.

5. Q. If it is not possible to make real contacts with the non-Hindi-knowing provinces until some of us have learnt the national language, why not limit the acquiring of this knowledge to workers only? Why make it obligatory for the whole of India?

A. The question of everyone learning Hindustani does not arise. Indeed everyone will never do so. The necessity is for those who have to travel and those who want to serve. The latter's ability for service will be greatly increased by a knowledge of both languages and scripts. If you agree, your opposition and suspicion should subside.

6. Q. Today the national language is written in both scripts. Whoever wants to learn can choose the one he prefers. Why the insistence on both?

A. In spite of my so-called insistence, only those will learn it who find real gain in so doing. In my eyes he who knows only one of the languages and one script will be half-equipped. If he desires a full certificate from me, he must be conversant with

both. I am sure you will have no objection to the desirability of there being many such persons in the country. And unless this number goes on increasing there will never be a proper blending of Hindi and Urdu. The Congress ideal of Hindustani will never be fulfilled. That Hindus and Mussalmans in the Hindi-knowing provinces should have a common speech is a consummation devoutly to be wished. Many of us cling to this hope, and some day it will certainly come to pass.

7. Q. Will it not be a terrible burden and a futile endeavour for people of the non-Hindi-speaking provinces to learn the national language through both scripts at the same time? To learn first one and then the other would surely be simple.

A. The answer to this will best come from experience. He who does not know either script will not learn both at the same time. He will master one before commencing on the other. So far as the vocabulary is concerned the words used in the textbooks in the early stages will more or less be the same. I look upon my scheme as a most important and useful experiment. If it is properly worked, it will be found to have energised the nation and made a big contribution towards giving practical shape to the Congress resolution. I hope lacs of patriotic men and women will take to it.

8. Q. Certain changes must inevitably take place in any language, as for example, the ingress of foreign words which become part of the language and cannot be evicted. But Devnagri has been the traditional script all through the ages. During the period of the Moghul dynasty the Persian script came in. But Gujarati, Marathi, etc., while assimilating Persian, Arabic and English words, have not abandoned the script. Why should the Devnagri script then not be maintained?

A. There is no question of giving up anything that is ours by tradition. It is a question of adding to or improving what already exists. If I know Sanskrit, what harm if I learn Arabic too, or *vice versa*? The result will probably be an enrichment of my knowledge of either language. And my contacts with the Arabs or Hindus, as the case may be, will increase. Surely there can be no opposition to the acquiring of right knowledge in any sphere.

9. Q. From the point of view of easy mastery over the pronunciation of the national language, is not the Devnagri script the best? The Persian script is surely defective for the purpose.

A. You are right, but your opposition to the Persian script has no place here. Devnagri is not to be displaced. It is a question of adding to the existing knowledge.

10. Q. Where is the need for a national language? Will not the mother-tongue and an international language suffice? And then why not the Roman script for both?

A. Your question surprises me. English no doubt is the international language. But can it ever be our national language? The latter must be the common property of millions of our people. How can they sustain the burden of learning the

English tongue? Hindustani is the natural national language, for it is already understood by 21 crores. The remainder of the population can also easily understand it. But English may be said to be the mother-tongue of a mere handful—say, a lac at the most. If India is a nation, it must have a national language. English will appropriately remain the international language with the Roman script. But the latter can never be the script of the national language.

Sevagram, 19-4-42

(From *Harijanbandhu*)

HANDICRAFT AND EDUCATION

(By E. W. Aryanayakam)

In discussing the fundamental principle underlying the system of Basic National Education, that education should centre round some form of manual and productive work, and all other activities to be developed or training to be given should, as far as possible, be integrally related to the central handicraft chosen with due regard to the environment of the child, we have often been confronted with the question: "Can you tell us of any other countries where this system is being practised?" In answer to this question the following extracts from the *Bulletin of the International Bureau of Education* (Geneva) will be found interesting. What is going on in the countries mentioned has been here reduced to a science.

Switzerland

The Swiss Society of Handwork and School Reform has launched an appeal to all the Swiss communes to allot a piece of land for cultivation by the upper classes in the school. It asks that the scholars should carry through the whole process of working the land, sowing seed, tending the young plants, observing and studying the growth of the plants, keeping records of their observations, harvesting the crops and calculating the turnover, and preparing the soil for the next year. By planting vegetables the pupils will be helping the commune to increase the area of land under cultivation. The Department of Public Instruction of the Canton of Vaud publishes this appeal in its official Bulletin of Feb-March 1941, and asks the Vaudois municipal and school authorities to carry it into effect.

A report published by the Education Commission of the National Alliance of Women's Societies shows that in 1939 and in 1940 the majority of cantons encouraged schoolchildren to help with agriculture. Several of them opened labour exchanges so that the young helpers could be sent to the peasants most needing their help. Apart from this, many teachers and youth leaders organised agricultural work days for their classes or groups. The "relief" troops, for example, helped with the potato harvest or with weeding.

U. S. S. R.

The ten-year education plan introduced in 1932 makes it compulsory for children to attend school for ten years. There are three classes of schools for general education: (1) pre-school; (2) single labour school; (3) institutions for protection and education of homeless and ill-treated children and

defectives. The pre-school group, for children between the ages of 3 and 7, includes children's homes, day nurseries, kindergarten, supervised playgrounds and evening recreation rooms. The single labour schools correspond to the elementary and secondary schools. They are divided into interrelated standards allowing the pupil to pass from lower to higher grades. Essential features of the system are practical training in the use of the simplest tools of all industries and the close connection between teaching and the economic needs and developments of the country. There are three main types in this group of schools: (1) elementary for ages 8 to 11, consisting of four classes; secondary for ages 8 to 14 with seven classes; (3) secondary for ages 8 to 17 with ten classes. All the three types are co-educational and free of charge. The attendance growth at these schools has been remarkable, altogether out of proportion with the increase in the number of schools, resulting in serious overcrowding and the necessity of arranging for the children to attend school in three shifts. From the lower schools the pupils pass into the technical schools, which are of five types: (1) elementary technical schools which are the trade schools, workshop schools and training workshops; (2) secondary technical schools or institutes; (3) workers' faculties; (4) higher educational institutes and special technical schools; (5) non-school technical courses.

Sevagram, 6-4-42

BEGGING FOR HARIJANS

"This practice of charging a price for an autograph is peculiar to Mr. Gandhi," said a foreigner. "No other leader in India and none in other countries charges anything for his autographs. The request for an autograph is itself an honour and should not be charged for like this. Besides one may like to pay Rs. 5 for some object other than the one that is dear to Mr. Gandhi." Well, Gandhiji knows that it is a practice peculiar to himself, but he also knows that it is he alone who has invested a useless, if a harmless, hobby with value and purpose. (I remember, though, that Gurudev once in London fixed a price of one pound for his autograph and used the collections for Visvabharati.)

Without a price attached it adds perhaps to the sense of possession of the owner of the album, and often becomes a nuisance to the giver of the autograph who at all hours of the day and on all occasions is pursued by the autograph-hunters. With the price attached it blesseth him that gives and him that takes, and also the poor Harijan. Thus it is not twice but thrice blessed. As for those to whom the cause does not appeal or who do not want to pay, the best thing is not to covet the autograph.

But I began this note not to give a reply to the foreign critic, but in order to tell those who do not know that Gandhiji tries to serve the Harijan brethren in a variety of ways, and this is one of the many. I have not got the exact figures, but I am not far wrong when I say that every year Gandhiji gets a few thousand rupees for the Harijans

by signing autographs. If he did the continual travelling that he used to do when he was much stronger, he would earn very much more.

The other practice is begging for Harijans during travel and after the evening prayers. It is amazing how at small wayside stations poor people come in to put a few coppers into his outstretched palm for the benefit of the Harijans. Often he is too preoccupied to go to the carriage door. I have seen people coming unasked to pay their mite for the Harijans. They 'know that it is usual for him, whenever he travels, to beg for the Harijans, and if preoccupation or silence makes him omit the task, they remind him of it.

The readers may be interested to know that during his recent stay in Delhi, over and above the autographs, he collected quite a fair amount at the evening prayers. For the first day the prayer was noisy and disturbed by sight-seers, but from the next day only those who cared to join in a devout spirit came. (It may be remembered that Birla House is a long distance from Old Delhi.) One day a young man asked for Gandhiji's autograph as this collection was being made. He signed it, as usual, in Hindi. The young man happened to be a Tamilian. But he did not ask Gandhiji to sign his name in English. Instead he said: "Please also sign in Tamil." "I shall try," said Gandhiji, "but you will have to pay another five rupees." "I have paid ten, Mahatmaji," said the young man laughing, and he watched Gandhiji scratching his head to remember his Tamil alphabet and sign his name in Tamil, letter after letter. But the autograph was perfect without a mistake, so much so that the young man exclaimed: "It is flawless. Mahatmaji, your memory is wonderful." With these words, he gave another ten for the autograph. "But nothing for my memory feat? I have passed creditably and you must give me a prize." A third ten rupee note came immediately out of his pocket, and Gandhiji said in great delight: "Thirty rupees for the Harijans within a few seconds. They will bless you."

The figures of the evening collections at Delhi will be of interest (note the pice and even half-pice):

30-3-42	123-0-0
31-3-42	179-3-7½
1-4-42	227-11-6
2-4-42	166-13-9
3-4-42	102-9-9

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M. D

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HARIJAN

Apr. 26

1942

FOREIGN SOLDIERS IN INDIA

(By M. K. Gandhi)

Among the multitude of questions contained in my correspondence is the one referring to the advent of foreign soldiers in India. We have foreign prisoners enough. Now we have promise of a never-ending stream of soldiers from America and possibly China. I must confess that I do not look upon this event with equanimity. Cannot a limitless number of soldiers be trained out of India's millions? Would they not make as good fighting material as any in the world? Then why foreigners? We know what American aid means. It amounts in the end to American influence, if not American rule added to British. It is a tremendous price to pay for the possible success of Allied arms. I see no Indian freedom peeping through all this preparation for the so-called defence of India. It is a preparation pure and simple for the defence of the British Empire, whatever may be asserted to the contrary. If the British left India to her fate as they had to leave Singapore, non-violent India would not lose anything. Probably the Japanese would leave India alone. Perhaps India, if the main parties composed their differences as they probably would, would be able effectively to help China in the way of peace and in the long run may even play a decisive part in the promotion of world peace. But all these happy things may not happen, if the British will leave India only when they must. How much more creditable, how much braver it would be for Britain to offer battle in the West and leave the East to adjust her own position! There is no guarantee that she will be able to protect, during this war, all her vast possessions. They have become a dead weight round her. If she wisely loosens herself from this weight, and the Nazis, the Fascists or the Japanese instead of leaving India alone choose to subjugate her, they will find that they have to hold more than they can in their iron hoop. They will find it much more difficult than Britain has. Their very rigidity will strangle them. The British system had an elasticity which served so long as it had no powerful rivals. British elasticity is of no help today. I have said more than once in these columns that the Nazi power had risen as a nemesis to punish Britain for her sins of exploitation and enslavement of the Asiatic and African races.

Whatever the consequences, therefore, to India, her real safety and Britain's too lie in orderly and timely British withdrawal from India. All talk of treaties with the Princes and obligations towards minorities are a British creation designed for the preservation of British rule and British interests. It must melt before the stern reality that faces all of us. Princes, in so far as they rely upon their armed strength, are more than able to defend themselves

against unarmed India. The fiction of majority and minority will vanish like the mist before the morning sun of liberty. Truth to tell there will be neither majority nor minority in the absence of the paralyzing British arms. The millions of India would then be an undefined but one mass of humanity. I have no doubt that at that time the natural leaders will have wisdom enough to evolve an honourable solution of their difficulties. This presupposes Japan and other powers leaving India alone. If they do not, I should hope even then for wisdom to guide the principal parties to devise a scheme whereby they can act with one mind to face the new menace.

Holding the views I do, it is clear why I look upon the introduction of foreign soldiers as a positive danger thoroughly to be deplored and distrusted. The present state of things and the attempt to uphold it are a distinct sign of corroding consumption of the body politic in India.

Sevagram, 19-4-42

Deenbandhu Andrews Memorial

Deenbandhu Andrews Memorial and Gurudev Memorial are convertible terms. Gurudev had initiated the Deenbandhu Memorial, but before it had fully materialised Gurudev followed Deenbandhu. Therefore Deenbandhu Memorial has become also Gurudev Memorial. The purpose is worthy of the two great souls — the improvement and upkeep of Santiniketan, Visvabharati and Sriniketan. These are all in reality one. It is a matter of great shame and sorrow that the paltry sum of five lacs of rupees has still not come whether from the rich or the students or the labour world. Everybody admits that Gurudev and his institution have brought a name and prestige to India which no one and nothing else have done. It was Santiniketan which stirred Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-shek who gave very handsome contributions. For the work done at Santiniketan, the expense is ridiculously small. The reason is the comparatively low salaries paid where the work done is not purely honorary. The donations so far collected amount to nearly one lac. I hope that the balance will be forthcoming without delay and absolve me from having to venture out on a collection tour. I am in honour bound to finish the collection. When Gurudev was dying the last letter I wrote to him was that, if it was God's will, I would finish the Deenbandhu collection. It was also a trust handed by Andrews in that Santiniketan's financial condition was his daily concern. It is a call from these two servants of India and humanity which I dare not neglect. Let those who revere their memory and who value Gurudev's living creation help me to discharge the self-imposed trust.

Sevagram, 20-4-42

M. K. G.

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PRICE CONTROL MUDDLE

The contribution in *Harijan* of the 12th inst. by an "experienced friend" on the price control muddle is to be greatly welcomed. A substantial reason why the present price control should be abandoned is that it has benefited no one, least of all the consumer. The whole question has to be considered afresh from the point of view not only of the manufacturers and distributors but also of the consumers. One very grave result of the price control policy was not only the driving away of the foodstuffs from the market, but of hitting the poor man hard where these stuffs were available. The Government announced the controlled price—without much forethought or consultation with the business community—but failed to make the commodity available at that price. If control had to be applied, it should have been applied to all "articles of daily need". It was applied to prices of articles of food but not to the prices of cloth, kerosene, matches, paper, iron and other articles which have gone up by 100 to 300 per cent—hitting the poor agriculturist hardest, who has profited little by the increase in the price of grains. From his point of view, the control of the price of grain is a terrible disadvantage inasmuch as the only commodity he has to deal with is controlled, while he has to pay through the nose for all other articles of daily need.

In this matter as elsewhere the main trouble is an irresponsible Government. An article in *The Economic Journal of the Royal Economic Society* on German price control during the last war throws a flood of light on the whole question, and shows a way out, if the Government will only care to benefit by it. The writer, Leon Zeitlin, says that conclusions from German experience may be drawn "for the benefit of the British efforts to strengthen the economic Home Front, and at the same time to try not unduly to disturb the equilibrium of equality of sacrifice."

The very first thing he has pointed out is the determination of the cost of replacement which has a twofold meaning: (1) For the manufacturer it means the cost of production; (2) For distributors (wholesale and retail) it means the price they have to pay for the repurchasing of the same qualities and quantities as they have sold from their stocks. But these costs should be determined by "an elastic system of averaging costs of old and new stock over a period of, say, three months."

The second point mentioned is about the number of goods coming under price control. "An efficient price control demands that the smallest possible number of goods should be exempted from its regulations." That would mitigate the hardship that the poor agriculturist has had to bear in our country.

But the most important of all points, and in our country one of primary importance, is enlisting the services of various trade associations. In independent countries like Britain or Germany, this was a natural course. Such a course would not occur, and even if it did, it would be repugnant to an alien bureaucracy. But the point is that

the whole price control would be the woeful muddle it has been, unless the services of the trade associations are utilised for the purpose. This, the writer points out, "played a more important part in German economic life than similar organisations in other countries. A kind of 'closed-shop' system was developed, and the associations obtained the right to decide whom they might or might not be prepared to admit as a member. . . . The officers of the associations become trustees of the Government by being appointed 'Deputy Commissioners of the Reich'. A special department of the War Office established immediately after the outbreak of the War, which by sequestering all available stocks of raw materials, controlled not only war requirements but also civil demands, was the centre of this organisation. In order to decentralise its manifold and far-reaching economic activities, this department had set up a considerable number of bodies with special tasks concerning the various industries and trades, and it was these bodies which directed and supervised the semi-official activities of the trade associations."

The writer adds:

"The Government policy concerning trade associations coincided with their desire to obtain a predominant position in German economic life. The formation of Central Federations of manufacturers, wholesalers, export merchants, retailers and craftsmen was, therefore, encouraged by Government. These Central Federations embraced all associations, corporations and guilds of the respective professions and proved a great help to the Government, because it had then no longer to face the almost unsolvable task of settling the incessant and tedious complaints of individuals or discontented groups. Furthermore, these Central Federations very soon developed into competent and responsible bodies which had to advise the Government in all matters concerning war production and distribution."

This system of enlisting the services of trade associations by changing them into self-governing bodies was "preferable from the point of view of efficiency . . . to the setting up of Committees the members of which are, it is true, most distinguished individuals but not elected representatives of their trades." If this is true in self-governing countries, it is truer still in a dependent country like India where the Government have no relation or responsibility to the people.

The last point is the enactment of legislation against the abuse of economic power. By an Emergency Decree in post-war Germany, "a special Supreme Court was set up with competence to declare null and void agreements detrimental to the common weal, to release members of associations from their obligations, to dissolve associations, to fine associations as well as individuals trying to influence the policy of production, distribution, and prices, etc."

Until steps in this direction are taken, the reasonless, pointless, ineffective and ruinous price control policy must be abandoned.

As to what should be done in the interval, the suggestions made by the businessman-correspondent cannot be bettered.

M. D.

WITH JAMNALALJI

(By Rammanohar Lohia)

"Whom have you come here for," asked Jamnalalji, and my reply needed no thinking. "For Gandhiji and 'you.'" I had arrived in Wardha the night before and was preparing to go to Sevagram. Jamnalalji would not let me go, and when I threatened to board the earliest train to anywhere, he brandished his stick, and there was nothing left for me but to submit to this affectionate tyranny. "The British have tyrannised over me for nearly two years," I added, "it is now your turn!"

We went to his old house. On the way Jamnalalji wanted me to tell him all the stories and scraps I had collected and, when he felt there was a really good one, he wanted me to reserve it for lunch. He was in a glorious listening mood. I rattled off about the British Governors who ruled over him and over me and about whom few Indians are ever interested to know anything except during the boredom of prison when a railway time-table and a sales-catalogue are adventuring fiction. Two of the tallest of these Governors receive half-a-dozen lines each in a British-written *Who's Who*, and one of them, it is said, was the parliamentary private secretary to the parliamentary secretary to the secretary to the navy before being appointed Governor, while the other had a mother who was the daughter of the daughter of the nephew of the 10th earl of somewhere. Jamnalalji had a hearty laugh. The smarting insult to an Indian's nationhood is no doubt there, but the ridiculous pomposity of the British mind overweighs it. Only once did I notice a vacancy in Jamnalalji's looks, while I was relating one of my stories, and I stopped. He assured me that my stories were dissipating the heaviness in his mind, but I was satisfied only after he had repeated what I had related. How could anybody have known that Jamnalalji was using up his last ounces of energy to cheer himself up deliberately? Death was not to come to him in sombre and gloomy clothes, casting grief all around.

As we arrived at the house, I was introduced to two persons, a graceful young woman and a young man. The presentation was incomplete, and they knew who I was but I did not know who they were. That was Jamnalalji's way of doing things. He wanted to extract a joke out of everything. I was, he said, on test and, if I had some commonsense and a little knowledge of physiognomy and psychology, I should be able to tell who these two were. Innocent irrelevance is laughter, and it is surely irrelevant to connect physiology and commonsense with reading an unknown name on an unknown shape. And yet I ventured, and I was right in guessing his daughter-in-law, and the young man, I had to be told, was his third son-in-law.

I was a little disagreeably surprised when Jamnalalji told me that his son-in-law was the son of a Raibahadur-so-and-so in the United Provinces. Jamnalalji had himself kicked away lustily at his Raibahaduri at a very young age and, although he could have risen to the top rung in the ladder of British titles earlier than most others, his own

path had lain in an opposite direction. I must confess I have seen numerous Congressmen showing deference to wealth and titles and taking for granted all such as have not permitted themselves an interval of money-making between their playful and studious days and their political pursuits. Jamnalalji had, like Jawaharlalji, a redeeming feature; if he was a bit deferential to worldly goods, he was affectionate to the tramps and vagabonds. I am perhaps reading a bit too much into what was after all a mechanical nothing, an unthinking habit of rolling out a name along with its accustomed, though spurious, titles.

The mirth and satire during lunch continued afterwards. There were two little periods of serious talking on the part of Jamnalalji, one with me and another with his son-in-law, and some of the points raised with me were later swallowed up in the general talk. He wanted me to take up the work of the States' peoples. Apart from the vagabond's disinclination to be pinned down to anything specific, there are solid reasons for my refusal to accept such offers. I cannot tell them here. But one of these, not very convincing by itself, I told Jamnalalji, and his answer was significant. There was, I said, a good deal of difference between my way of looking at States' problems and that of the States' People's Conference. The Princes are, in my eyes, a useless lot who have lost every claim to govern, and I stand for their entire removal, while the States' People's Conference, undoubtedly for good reasons, cannot take up this position. I tried to make my language as aggressive as possible, but Jamnalalji was not put off. He suggested a variation. He said that the Conference could take up the line that most Princes were bad and, unless the Princely order reformed itself, it would have to be removed altogether. He reminded me that this was Gandhiji's language. Before I proceed further with the conversation, let me here pay a tribute to Jamnalalji's catholicity of outlook and his effort to accommodate what should be called extremist views. I do not deny that a part of this effort was due to a little trust that he otherwise placed in me. I have often noticed that, given an amount of trust in each other, two persons of different views may find it easier to talk and work together than if they were in the same group but had no trust between them.

I said that I could not talk Gandhiji's language, for, apart from its uniqueness, there were almost two generations between him and me. Moreover, Gandhiji was probably more cautious in certain spheres than he need be. Was it not time, I said, that Gandhiji should give up his theory of trusteeship or, at least, mix it up with the abolition of private ownership of capital? The war has caused a great deal of fear among property-owners, and could not Gandhiji turn it into disgust at capitalism and longing for a socialised economy in which there would be at least mental peace? Jamnalalji listened, and the talk ended up in general hilarity as to what I would do if I had a crore of rupees.

Was Jamnalalji a trustee? In his personal life, yes. It escaped me for a long while that a man

of his income should have led a comparatively lower middle class life; I, as many others, just took him for granted. There is something extremely difficult in this voluntary abnegation; and it is no wonder that, despite thirty years' labour, Gandhiji has not been able to produce many Jamnalals.

Jamnalalji was undoubtedly a trustee in the sphere of personal expenditure and employment of profits towards social purposes. In the sphere of production, he was not and could not have been a trustee. His factories and business were conducted on the present basis, as any other basis within the existing economy would have meant their total disappearance. Men must submit to the law of money relations, hierarchy of incomes and injustice, if they wish to remain in capitalistic trade and industry. Again, there is the problem of inheritance, and it was the extreme sacrifice of his wife and the good sense of his sons that enabled Jamnalalji to achieve fifty per cent* trusteeship in this sphere.

Full trustee in personal expenditure, full capitalist in the sphere of production, and half-trustee as a bequeather would not be an inappropriate description of Jamnalalji in the management of wealth.

We had a few hands of bridge, and contract bridge at that, when Jamnalalji felt drowsy and we retired to another part of the room. After some time he got up, went in for a wash, came back, and started to lie down again. I was eager to go to Sevagram and, as everything had been normal, I shouted at him for trying to sleep so much during the day. How could I have known that I was speaking to a dying man? Jamnalalji tried to sit up, looked at us mutely and made restless movements. The blood-vessel in the head had apparently already burst. There was just a quarter hour of conscious pain, and the rest was a vast sea of unconsciousness for him. The candle was snuffed out inside of an hour. It had only known to burn brightly or not at all. To flicker and dim away by slow degrees was not its way.

Gandhiji came and, within a few seconds of his arrival, gripped the widowed wife by the shoulder and said, "Look at me. Laugh, I am laughing." I have often thought of Gandhiji's heart as of a sieve with numberless big and little holes. Does it not change every personal grief into a state of restful sorrow? The conversation between Gandhiji and Jankidevi reminded one of Buddha and other spiritual teachers who consoled mourners. There was one difference. The ancients consoled on the spiritual plane, while Gandhiji appears to transmute his own spiritual experience into active morality before communicating it to the mourner. His morality is service of the people.

It is customary to honour a dead leader by saying that his place cannot be filled. There is not much in this custom. A leader who leaves behind him a vacancy was lacking in something, somewhere. It is true that Jamnalalji's place may not be taken up by any one man, and that is only proper, but the numerous workers in the constructive cause who worked under him and whom he trained will, I hope, replace their dead teacher.

11-2-42

IMPERIALISM WITHIN US

(By J. C. Kumarappa)

We usually understand by imperialism a state where one nation holds down another in bondage so as to obtain some benefit to itself at the cost of the subjection of the other. We may have the spirit of such imperialism without having to cross national, political or geographical boundaries. The essence of imperialism is often found in even a single individual. When reduced to its lowest terms it arises out of the desire to gain something for oneself at the cost of another. Wherever we find this we have the elements of imperialism.

In centralised industries under private ownership we find this spirit in a virulent form. Therefore every country that takes to this form of economic organisation will in the end produce imperialism and not freedom. It is a double-edged sword. It injures both him who uses it and the victim. It flourishes only with outside compulsion and external discipline.

Naturally, to such an evil the antidote is one's own initiative and self-discipline. The promotion of decentralised industries helps us to develop both. No country can then enslave us without our active cooperation. If we can generate sufficient internal discipline to resist any external enticement, we shall be able to attain and retain freedom; but until then we are doomed to be slaves. Hence Gandhiji's insistence on the constructive programme as the surest way to obtain Swaraj.

Imperialism governs from outside, and is based on violence and fear. But true freedom is an outcome of self-discipline, non-violence and love. Where the latter condition exists there can be no high or low, rich or poor, but all men will be brethren.

We are witnessing with our own eyes the ultimate outcome of the spirit of imperialism. Germany, Japan, Great Britain and U. S. A. are all fighting so that each may control the world's resources for its own benefit. We shall find this true, if we probe deep enough behind the ostensible causes set forth by each combatant. Imperialism amongst nations or within nations or between individuals leads to destruction, enmity and violence. Do we want this state of affairs to condition our lives?

As long as the selfish desire to benefit from another's toil is present amongst us neither Premier Churchill nor Sir Stafford Cripps can help us.

We are held in bondage so that we may supply the raw materials to the mills of Great Britain and afford a well-controlled market for their products. Therefore, the moment we begin to utilise our raw materials ourselves and supply all our needs, the foundation of imperialism is blasted. This then is the message of khadi that has been dinned into our ears in season and out of season by Gandhiji.

Though the prescription appears simple enough, the medicine is hard to take as it demands a considerable degree of self-control and presupposes self-discipline. As things are, village-made articles appear expensive as there is a greater degree of distribution of wealth included in the price, while the apparent cheapness of imported mill-made articles is due to a small share in the booty of the manufacturer

and his Government. Are we to be led away by this small share in the loot? Village-made articles are sometimes crude, largely due to our neglect of the villagers. Shall we abandon these for the small satisfaction we may get from the use of standardised products? These are the small crosses we have to bear in the initial stages to attain Swaraj ultimately. Do these loom too large on our horizon, dull our distant vision, and distort our judgment to such an extent that we prefer the foreign yoke with fineries to Swaraj. Better is a dry morsel and freedom therewith, than a house full of so-called good things with bondage.

To the extent to which rural India supplies the major and primary needs of the people, to that extent we shall attain Swaraj. Both producers and consumers can help in this programme. Every man, woman and child can take part in this fight against imperialism.

QUESTION BOX

(By M. K. Gandhi)

If They Really Mean?

Q. If the Japanese really mean what they say and are willing to help to free India from the British yoke, why should we not willingly accept their help?

A. It is folly to suppose that aggressors can ever be benefactors. The Japanese may free India from the British yoke, but only to put in their own instead. I have always maintained that we should not seek any other Power's help to free India from the British yoke. That would not be a non-violent approach. We should have to pay a heavy price, if we ever consented to take foreign aid as against the British. By our non-violent action we were within an ace of reaching our goal. I cling to my faith in non-violence. I have no enmity against the Japanese, but I cannot contemplate with equanimity their designs upon India. Why do they not realise that we as free men have no quarrel with them? Let them leave India alone. And if they are well-intentioned, what has China done to deserve the devastation they have wrought there?

Guerilla War

Q. You declared the other day at Wardha that Jawaharlal Nehru was your 'legal heir'. How do you like the idea of your legal heir advocating guerilla warfare against the Japanese? What will happen to your ahimsa when Jawaharlal openly advocates violence and Rajaji wants arms and military training for the whole nation?

A. As you have put it the situation does appear awful. But it really is not so awful as it appears to you. In the first instance 'legal heir' is not my phrase. I had spoken in Hindi. I had said that he was not my 'legal heir' but that he was virtually my heir. That means that he will take my place when I am gone. He has never accepted my method in its entirety. He has frankly criticised it, and yet he has faithfully carried out the Congress policy largely influenced, when it was not solely directed, by me. Those like Sardar Vallabhbhai who have followed me without question cannot be

called heirs. And everybody admits that Jawaharlal has the drive that no one else has in the same measure. And have I not said also that when I am gone he will shed the differences he often declares he has with me? I am sorry he has developed a fancy for guerilla warfare. But I have no doubt that it will be a nine days' wonder. It will take no effect. It is foreign to the Indian soil. Twentytwo years' incessant preaching and practice of non-violence, however imperfect it has been, could not be suddenly obliterated by the mere wish of Jawaharlal and Rajaji, powerful though their influence is. I am, therefore, not perturbed by the 'apostacy' either of Jawaharlal or Rajaji. They will return to non-violence with renewed zest, strengthened by the failure of their effort. Neither goes to violence for his belief in it. They do so because they think probably that India must have a course of violence before coming to non-violence. No one can say beyond doubt how events will shape themselves. It may be that their instinct is correct and mine, backed though it is by experience, is not. I know this, however, that my line is cut out for me. Even though I may be alone in my faith, I must follow it unfalteringly, believing that the masses will never take to the violent method. They will either remain inert or take to non-violent action. Guerilla warfare can take us nowhere. If it is practised on any large scale, it must lead to disastrous consequences. Non-violent non-cooperation is the most effective substitute for every kind of violent warfare. If the whole nation takes to non-violent action, it can be wholly successful. It could not be quite so against the British because their roots have gone deep into the soil. The Japanese have not even got a foothold. I hope that the forthcoming A. I. C. C. will revert to the non-violent method and give the clearest possible instructions about non-violent non-cooperation. To aid the British effort in the violent way without any official connection and after the failure of the recent negotiations appears to me to court national disgrace.

Sevagram, 19-4-42

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