

HARIJAN

Editor : MAHADEV DESAI

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[FIVE PICE

Notice

The next issue, to be published on 12th July, will contain *twelve pages* and will be priced at *two annas* per copy. Agents will please notify changes in their requirements, if any, by Thursday next.

Manager

FOR THE SIKH FRIENDS

(By M. K. Gandhi)

Thus writes Sardar Mangal Singh:

"I wish to bring to your notice the objections raised against the Congress and against your personal attitude towards the Sikhs. I hope you will deal with them in a proper way in *Harijan*.

(1) The first and the great point made against the Congress is that the Congress does not care for the Sikhs. No Sikh has been taken on the Working Committee or even specially invited to attend the Working Committee meetings during the last 7 years. We tell them that Working Committee is not constituted on a communal basis, but this does not carry conviction with the general Sikh masses.

(2) Several years ago while discussing the thesis of non-violence in *Young India* you said that 'Guru Govind Singh was a misguided patriot' or words to that effect. When fiery speakers mention this it makes a great sentimental appeal to the Sikhs. I think you should explain your point of view.

(3) That you are against the bearing of *Kirpan* by the Sikhs.

(4) That you said to certain Sikhs that they should either follow Guru Govind Singh or yourself.

I personally know that the last two allegations have no foundations, but lies when repeated do acquire some importance. I hope you will agree with me that some elucidation is necessary from you. This will help the nationalist Sikhs and the Congress in the Punjab."

It is painful for me to have to write on this subject. Some of the points have been discussed thread-bare. When however suspicion usurps the place of reason, it becomes most difficult to remove it. But I cannot resist the inquiry of a fellow-worker especially when he makes it to smooth his way.

The first question is really for the Congress Secretary to answer. But I can say that for years Sardar Shardul Singh Caveesher was a member of the Working Committee. It is not always possible to provide for communal representation on the Working Committee. The policy should be and is to get the best men. The fact is that the Congress

has always given the greatest consideration to the Sikh sentiment. It was for them that a special committee was appointed on the question of the colour of the National Flag. It was for them that the famous Lahore resolution on the communal question was framed. They have therefore the least cause for complaint against the Congress.

As to what I am supposed to have said about Guru Govind Singh, I can only repeat what I have said about the charge that I have no recollection whatsoever of having made the remark attributed to me. Whoever brings the charge should at least refer me to the passage in question in my writings. I have searched in vain. What is however more to the point is to know what I think about Guru Govind Singh. I have the highest regard for him. The popular belief is that it was he who gave the sword to the Khalsa. I have believed that to the extent that he did so he departed from the non-violence of his predecessors. This is not the place to examine or question the justification for the great Guru's step. A learned Sikh friend tells me that he could show that Guru Govind Singh never departed from the teachings of the preceding Gurus on non-violence. But such proof may have an academic value. The common belief as I have understood it among the Sikhs is that Guru Govind Singh accepted resort to the sword in well-defined circumstances as quite valid. Be that as it may, there never was the slightest disrespect on my part for the great Guru or the Sikh *Panth*. Indeed among the *bhajans* sung at the the Ashram prayers there are several of Guru Nanak's.

As to *Kirpans* I am afraid I must say that I do not like the wearing of *Kirpan* or the like by human beings as part of their religion. But my likes or dislikes can produce no effect on the Sikh practice. If by the question is meant whether I should vote for legislation prohibiting the wearing of *Kirpans* by the Sikhs, I can unhesitatingly say 'no' for the simple reason that I do not believe in making people non-violent by legislation.

The suggestion made in the fourth question is ridiculous. I have never considered myself as a religious teacher. I have never asked anyone to disown his own faith, in order to accept non-violence or my teaching. I have not known any religion to make violence obligatory. Most religions have permitted it, where non-violence is not possible. But I have no right to judge other religions. I entertain equal respect for all religions. I must if I expect others to respect mine.

Sevagram, 26-6-42

QUESTION BOX

(By M. K. Gandhi)

A Fallacy

Q. You consider it a vital necessity in terms of non-violence to allow the Allied troops to remain in India. You also say that, as you cannot present a fool-proof non-violent method to prevent Japanese occupation of India, you cannot throw the Allies over-board. But, don't you consider that the non-violent force created by your action which will be sufficient to force the English to withdraw will be sufficiently strong to prevent Japanese occupation also? And is it not the duty of a non-violent resister to equally consider it a vital necessity to see that his country, his home and his all are not destroyed by allowing two foreign mad bulls to fight a deadly war on his soil?

A. There is an obvious fallacy in the question. I cannot all of a sudden produce in the minds of Britishers, who have been for centuries trained to rely upon their muscle for their protection, a belief which has not made a very visible impression even on the Indian mind. Non-violent force must not act in the same way as violence. The refusal to allow the Allied troops to operate on the Indian soil can only add to the irritation already caused by my proposal. The first is inevitable, the second would be wanton.

Again, if the withdrawal is to take place, it won't be due merely to the non-violent pressure. And in any case what may be enough to affect the old occupant would be wholly different from what would be required to keep off the invader. Thus we can disown the authority of the British rulers by refusing taxes and in a variety of ways. These would be inapplicable to withstand the Japanese onslaught. Therefore, whilst we may be ready to face the Japanese, we may not ask the Britishers to give up their position of vantage merely on the unwarranted supposition that we would succeed by mere non-violent effort in keeping off the Japanese.

Lastly, whilst we must guard ourselves in our own way, our non-violence must preclude us from imposing on the British a strain which must break them. That would be a denial of our whole history for the past twentytwo years.

Sevagram, 28-6-42

A Bengali Mother's Two Questions

Q. Bengal is threatened by the Japanese menace. It is time now the political workers in this province composed their differences. I believe they will readily forget their domestic squabble only if the right person mediates. Would you not exert yourself to that end and save Bengal from the impending disaster?

A. What you say is too true. But I doubt if I am the right person to mediate. A Bengali should tackle the question. I would go to Bengal today, if I had the confidence that I could perform the trick. When one comes to think of it, the differences are too trivial to need any mediation.

Q. My husband is a teacher employed in a school of Calcutta. His income is already alarm-

ingly diminished. It is apprehended in a month or so he will have no income at all. He has now seven dependants. Formerly he earned just enough to provide his family with the ordinary necessities of life. He has now nothing to fall back upon. I know my husband is patriotic and Congress-minded. But in order to be able to give us food he finds no alternative but to join war-service. What else can he do? What is your advice to those who are similarly stranded?

A. This is a very serious question. I know that joining the military is the shortest cut to bread-winning. If you and your husband are averse to all war like me, you will face starvation and prove your aversion. God will prevent you from dying of starvation. You might have to revise your way of living. Middle classes have to come down to the level of the peasantry. Then only shall we know real India and the way to deal with growing distress of the millions. But if you have no such aversion, I see no harm in your husband joining military service. He will do no worse than many are doing.

Sevagram, 29-6-42

WITH KHADI WORKERS

On the 26th of June Gandhiji gave a couple of hours to the khadi workers in India most of whom had come for the annual meeting of the All India Spinners Association. That was also the occasion of distribution of certificates to the students of the Khadi Vidyalaya who had passed their examinations this year. The Vidyalaya and the examinations are all organised by the A. I. S. A. The course is an intensive one in the theory and practice of all the processes involved in the manufacture of khadi from the selection of the cotton-seed to getting the finished product ready for market, including account-keeping in all its details. Thus the study of the theory and practice of spinning includes the detailed mechanics of the wheels and the spindle and the strings; the practice includes practice on all the varieties of wheels and taklis, and so on.

Gandhiji after distributing the certificates gave a brief benedictory speech, in which he blessed both those who had passed and those who had failed. "For," said he, "these examinations are unlike the orthodox university examinations which are at best a test of book-knowledge and depend on the whims of examiners. Here even if you do not pass in your examinations what you have learnt is not lost, it has profited the country, failure means inadequate practice or work, and the next year you will increase your knowledge and production. Then the orthodox examinations prepare the examinees at best for clerkships, and those who pass have no illusions about adding anything to the wealth of the country, while even the failures amongst you have added something to the wealth of the country, if not quite as much as those who have passed. Then there is another very vital difference. The boys in the schools and colleges pay heavy fees, but far heavier than their fees are the expenses incurred by Government on

their education. The country gets nothing by way of return for this enormous expenditure; if there is any little gain it belongs to an alien government. Then the system of examinations is most mechanical and tiring and calculated to add little to the examinees' intellectual calibre. Here the end in view is to qualify students to add more and more to the country's wealth, to stimulate originality and, apart from gaining them a living, render service of the country. One last point which if you have not grasped I want you to grasp today. Inasmuch as service of the country is the final aim, the failures have no cause for disappointment, the passes have no reason to look down upon the failures, and there is little scope for unhealthy rivalry. The students in the ordinary schools and colleges throw away their books after they have passed their examinations, for they think they are no longer going to be of use to them. Here you cannot afford to throw away your books or tools, for they are always of value, and once a khadi student is always a khadi student, he goes on adding to his knowledge and fitness as a khadi worker."

Gandhiji next addressed himself to a vital difference between spinning as practised in ancient times and as it is being taught and practised now. It is a thing which has to be borne in mind by both the taught and the teachers and the examiners, for the latter not only teach the students but teach themselves in the process. "The distinction I desire to invite your attention to is fundamental," said Gandhiji. "Our ancestors did spin and weave and produce their own cloth, but they were just spinners and weavers, toiling either for their bread or for their employers, e. g. the East India Company. There was little joy about their work, and no spirit of service or knowledge. They toiled because they could not help it, and often it was such irksome drudgery that it drove them to cut off their own fingers in order that the slave-drivers may drive them no more. Their toil was their slavery. They have left nothing for us to emulate. We have to do penance for and wipe out that slavery. Their toil would have been perfectly honourable, if there had been knowledge at the back of it, as also the desire for the country's freedom, the determination not to bend the knee to the slave-driver, and a sense of art. A revival of the industry means adoption of all these life-giving virtues, it means infusing new life into the dead bones of the old industry."

Questions and Answers

The first question discussed was about adding to the capital by making collections and raising loans. The collections could, it was explained, be made by every one of the branches, but they should be made on behalf of the A. I. S. A., which must determine the way of their disposal. Gandhiji had no objection to raising loans, but those who advanced loans must be told, in this uncertain time of war, they were taking obvious risks, though perhaps no more than deposits in banks. If we survive the war and the terrible struggle ahead, we should repay every pie, but if we don't survive, they stand every

risk of losing their money. It is likely that no one would care to advance loans. It was better therefore to concentrate on self and sacrificial spinning, and on getting gifts of yarn and cotton.

"But those who advance loans to us may have another fear," some one asked. Even as it is there is the obvious risk of war, but by advancing loans to us they may feel that they add to their risk." "Then," said Gandhiji, "let them know they will have earned the merit of having lost money in a good cause."

"Would the struggle involve the khadi workers?" was another question.

"I am not going to make a call to the khadi workers", said Gandhiji. "But if there is a general conflagration khadi workers cannot escape it, *should* not escape it. You must know the full implications of that beautiful phrase, 'livery of freedom' applied to khadi by Jawaharlal. Khadi must not fetter us. You must also understand that I am not thinking of civil disobedience or non-cooperation of old. But there may be quixotic and arbitrary orders given to the people in the midst of whom we are working. We would reason with the authorities, but if they do not listen, we might be involved in spite of ourselves. Therefore no hard and fast rules can be laid down this time. Let us go on as usual unmindful of risks. Our inflexible rule is not to take part in politics, not to meddle with them."

There were a number of administrative questions asked and discussed. Summing up Gandhiji said: "All these may well prove irrelevant before the crisis that faces us. You must make no mistake about it. A conflagration is imminent and let us not have the slightest thought of saving our skins. If we do, we shall have plied our wheels and worn khadi in vain. Let it never be said the A. I. S. A. was an institution which would run no risk."

And with this he invited the workers to vivisection him regarding his new move. "If you feel it is mid-summer madness you must unhesitatingly tell me so. If you think anything I am doing is prompted by anger or passion you must not spare me. I think all that I am doing is prompted by the highest sense of non-violence and therefore for universal good. My readiness to allow foreign armies to stay in India for their own self-protection and for saving China should be enough proof of this."

There were questions and answers on this crucial question of foreign troops, for it was the only plank in the new programme to which many could not reconcile themselves. I will not give here Gandhiji's reply, as he discusses the question in this week's leading article.

Sevagram, 29-6-42

M. D.

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HARIJAN

July 5

1942

OH! THE TROOPS

(By M. K. Gandhi)

I have to pay a heavy price for having drawn up an entrancing picture of a Free India without a single British soldier. Friends are confounded now to discover that my proposal admits of the presence of British and even American troops under any circumstance at all. In vain do I argue that the Allied troops, if they remain, will do so not to exercise authority over the people, or at India's expense, but they will remain under treaty with the Government of Free India at the United Nations' expense for the sole purpose of repelling Japanese attack and helping China.

It has been pointed out that not to consent to the Allied troops remaining in India during the period of the war is to hand over India and China to Japan, and to ensure the defeat of the Allied powers. This could never have been contemplated by me. The only answer, therefore, to give was to suffer the presence of the troops but under circumstance the reverse of the existing. They will remain under permission of Free India and not at all in the role of masters but of friends.

My proposal presupposes shedding of all fear and distrust. If we have confidence in ourselves, we need neither fear nor suspect the presence of Allied troops.

May I suggest also that it is altogether premature and wrong to pore over the weakest points of a very difficult project which may not be accepted even with the troops remaining in India. It will be most assuredly an event of the century and may be a turning point in the war if Britain can honestly perform the act of renouncing India with all that the renunciation would mean. The virtue and the value of the renunciation in my opinion will not be affected in the least, because the Allied troops will be operating in India with the sole object of preventing Japanese attack. After all India is as much interested as the Allies in warding off the attack and yet under my proposal India will not have to pay a single pie over the expenses of the troops.

As I have already said in the previous issue of *Harijan*, the British acceptance of my proposal may itself lead to a most honourable peace and hence automatic withdrawal of the troops. I would therefore ask the doubters to concentrate their attention upon the grandeur of the proposed renunciation and help to the utmost of their power the fruition of the great act. Let them not dread the presence of the troops in India for the purpose indicated but regard it as an inevitable part of the proposal so as to make it not only justifiable but fool-proof. So far as I can see, Free India will run no risk by their presence. Her freedom will certainly suffer no diminution thereby.

The implications of my proposal are:

- (1) India becomes free of all financial obligation to Britain;
- (2) The annual drain to Great Britain stops automatically;
- (3) All taxation ceases except what the replacing government imposes or retains;
- (4) The deadweight of an all-powerful authority keeping under subjection the tallest in the land is lifted at once;

(5) In short, India begins a new chapter in her national life, as I shall hope to affect the fortunes of the war with non-violence as her predominant sanction. This non-violence will no longer take the shape of non-cooperation and the like. It will express itself in her ambassadors going to the Axis powers not to beg for peace but to show them the futility of war for achieving an honourable end. This can only be done if and when Britain sheds the gains of perhaps the most organized and successful violence the world has seen.

All this may not come to pass. I do not mind. It is worth fighting for, it is worth staking all that the nation has.

Sevagram, 27-6-42

NOW IS THE MOMENT

Prof. Harold Laski's book *Where Do We Go from here?* is by far the most important "Penguin Special" published during the war. His main argument is that the way to victory lies through the revolt of the masses against their conquerors in the occupied countries, but that that revolt can come only by Britain setting the example by building a just and equal society. This again depends upon, what Prof. Laski calls, "the cleansing of our democracy" which has two aspects, viz., "our position as an empire", and secondly "our authority to persuade the peoples of the European continent that we genuinely seek a world-peace which definitely rules out the possibility of resuming war." Empire has, until now, meant life-trade, raw material, opening for successful career to thousands of young men, a standard of life for the local proletariat—but it is that Empire that has caused war and now is synonymous with death, as I showed in a previous article in these columns. Prof. Laski takes as an illustration of the Problem of Empire—the most pivotal of all—India. "India stands before us to-day," says Prof. Laski, "demanding freedom from our paramount power as unmistakably as Poland or Czechoslovakia demand freedom from the paramount power of Germany over them," and he describes vividly how that "paramount power" is being maintained. He says:

"Year by year, to maintain it, even in the revised form of 1936, we have to resort to special powers, the exercise of undemocratic authority, the wide use of the power to imprison and to flog. The few Indians of position we can produce to applaud our rule are men whom we have elevated for that purpose, who without the elevation, as both we and India know, would be against us and not for us. The main interest we support in India, apart from our own financial interest, is a

mass of feudal princes of whom, with not more than six exceptions, it can, so far as the last half century is concerned, be said with literal accuracy, that the character of their governance competes, in barbarism and squalor, with that of the outlaws in Europe.

"The character of our rule in India, maintained in defiance of Indian demands, has long stained our reputation for plain dealing all over the world; until the advent of Hitler and Mussolini, it was the classic example of imperialist exploitation. We are squarely faced from India with a demand, insistently maintained, for self-government; and we know, within ourselves, that sooner or later we must yield to it, even though the risk to our interests of so yielding is a formidable one. But we cling to the maintenance of that interest by every pretext and device we can discover. The very statesmen who manipulate these pretexts and devices are most prolific in the announcement of their yearning for the fulfilment of India's ambition; Sir Samuel Hoare was even shameless enough to represent the Act of 1935, which ingeniously multiplied every protective device discoverable of reaction, as a long step on the road to that fulfilment. We announce that we shall put no obstacle in the way of Indian freedom; we only ask that all Indians of every sort shall first agree upon its pattern. And since that agreement is not forthcoming, we continue to govern India for our own purposes. Meanwhile, in the name of the Indian people, we ourselves take this and that decision on its behalf; and then proudly thank India for its generosity to us; or accept this gift or that from one or other of the Indian princes — their method of insuring their further protection from us — which we know is a gift mostly wrung from the misery of their unhappy subjects, and then exhibit these gifts as the proof of Indian "loyalty". *I do not know how far we deceive ourselves by this technique; empire possesses a large capacity for self-deception. I do know that we deceive no people beyond the boundaries of our empire — least of all the Indian people themselves.*" (Italics ours.)

After stating the naked fact Prof. Laski proceeds to offer a solution which does credit to his sense of justice, but which now would seem out of keeping with the reality of the situation. He suggests a declaration that "self-government will begin to operate within a year of the conclusion of peace", the offer of a constituent assembly, the submitting of communal differences to independent arbitration, and so on. The book was published towards the end of the year 1940, and the solution, had it been applied then, might have been timely and might have worked admirably. But we have found that all solutions offered since then have been vitiated by the policy followed until now and described in the paragraph just quoted. In fact Prof. Laski is not unaware of this, for he says: "But as long as every vested interest in India is, like the Moslem interest, encouraged, openly or secretly, to believe that it will get better terms from dependence upon us than from a real attempt at accommodation with other Indian interests, of course agreement between them is not forthcoming. We patronize these dissidents from unity in the same way, though much

more subtly, as the Conservative Party has so long patronized the separation of Ulster; and with the same evil consequences."

Now that is exactly what the Cripps' proposals gave ample proof of. But it is interesting to note that even Prof. Laski had no idea of the mischief that these proposals were fraught with, for he supported the proposals in advance in an article written a week before Sir Stafford Cripps' departure.

The fact is, as Prof. Laski has himself said, the "empire possesses a large capacity for self-deception", and there is no greater enemy of man than self-deception. The deception lies in the belief that those who hold the empire can judge the interests of those they hold in subjection, and to say the least the Cripps' proposals are vitiated by that belief. In fact, as a proposition Prof. Laski himself expounds it most ably:—

"The point I am making is the simple one that *empire is a handicap to freedom whenever its subjects deny the validity of its maintenance*. At that stage, it must either become a partnership or it degenerates into a tyranny. And it is particularly dangerous to permit that degeneration when it offers to our enemies an opportunity of reproach to which we have no adequate response. The plea made by our enemies that the real nature of our dominion is shown by the way in which we maintain our rule in India, we cannot answer by reference to a single Indian representative able freely to secure the full support of his own people. We can answer that plea only by saying that we are satisfied with our achievement there. *But we have, in truth, no more right to constitute ourselves judges in our own cause than the Fascist leaders possess; less even, since we deny them that right so soon as its attempted application touches ourselves.* A nation can justly stand as trustee of another people when it can be shown that no vested interest of its own is safeguarded by that trusteeship, and when a detached observer would admit, first, that the people so ruled do not claim freedom from trusteeship, and second, when the objective results of its exercise are clearly and mainly for the benefit of that people. *Judged by these standards, it is, I think, clear that the sooner we end our paramountcy over India the better for Indians and for ourselves. And there is no moment more fitting to end it than in a war where we claim to be the world-defenders of democracy and freedom.*" (Italics ours.)

That is the barest truth. No promises to be carried out *after* peace, but while the war is going on, and there is no better way of ending the paramountcy than by an orderly withdrawal, for it has one saving virtue, viz., those who hold the Empire cease to be judges of the interests of those held in subjection.

Sevagram, 27-6-42

M. D.

Home and Village Doctor

By Satis Chandra Dasgupta

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FRIENDS' AMBULANCE UNIT IN INDIA

The Friends' Ambulance Unit is a voluntary body of workers who share Quaker views on peace and war. Conscientiously unable to help in the war directly or in organisations set up to achieve ends by violent means, they still would share the sorrows and sufferings of a war-torn world and are therefore pledged to relieve suffering and heal the wounds of war wherever their services may be acceptable. They number about 700, are all unpaid, receiving only board and lodging, and pledged to go wherever they may be required. They have all received training in first aid, stretcher work, and anti-gas, and also training in hospitals. The Unit has worked, during the present war, in London and many parts of England, in Finland, Norway and Greece, in Central China and on the Burma Road, in Libya and Syria, and in hospitals in Germany, Poland and Hongkong.

After Japan entered the war some of the members felt that their experience in the bombed areas in Britain might prove of value in India, and it was proposed to send a small band to work, if possible, in cooperation with the volunteer agencies here. Accordingly a band of eight (six men and two women), with Prof. Horace Alexander of Woodbrooke College (Birmingham) as the leader, were told off to go to India, and Prof. Alexander and Mr. Richard Symonds have already arrived. Prof. Alexander is an old friend, belonging as he does to the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and having been a sympathetic student of Indian affairs for several years. Mr. Symonds is much younger and is not long down from Oxford, but has had considerable experience of the work to which they have been called, having organised medical aid in London shelters and done active evacuation work. The others who have not yet arrived and are still on the high seas are Messrs. Alec Horsefield, Brian Croves, Kenneth Criffin, Glanmore Davies, and Miss Jeane Coffle and Miss Pamela Bankhart, who have all had experience of work in the bombed areas in England.

"We were wondering if it was auspicious for an English party to arrive in India, when you were asking the British to withdraw," said Prof. Alexander with a kindly smile. "Agatha suggested that we might have a party from India to work with us, and make of our party a mixed party."

"My first writing," said Gandhiji, "did, I am afraid, give rise to that kind of fear. That was because I had not given expression to the whole idea in my mind. It is not my nature to work out and produce a finished thing all at once. The moment a question was asked me, I made it clear that no physical withdrawal of every Englishman was meant, I meant the withdrawal of the British domination. And so every Englishman in India can convert himself into a friend—as you have come as Friends—and remain here. The condition is that every Englishman has to dismount from the horse he is riding and cease to be monarch of all he surveys and identify himself

with the humblest of us. The moment he does it, he will be recognised as a member of the family. His role as a member of the ruling caste must end for ever. And so when I said 'withdraw', I meant 'withdraw as masters'. The demand for withdrawal had another implication. You have to withdraw, irrespective of the wishes of anybody here. You do not need the consent of a slave to give him freedom. The slave often hugs the chains of slavery. They become part of his flesh. You have to tear them asunder and throw them away. You must withdraw because it is your duty to do so, and not wait for the unanimous consent of all the sections or groups in India.

"There is thus no question of the moment being inauspicious for you. On the contrary, if you can assimilate my proposal, it is the most auspicious moment for you to arrive in India. You will meet many Englishmen here. They may have entirely misunderstood what I have said, and you have to explain to them what exactly I want them to do.

"Really speaking, therefore, this should become the major part of your mission, and even the India Office who facilitated your coming here cannot possibly misunderstand you. You have, therefore, not only the humanitarian mission—there may not be any bombing here, and in this vast country even if there is bombing you may not be able to reach everywhere—but you have also this peculiar mission of interpretation and reconciliation. And it is well perhaps that your mission begins with me. Begin it with finding out what exactly is at the back of my mind by putting to me all the questions that may be agitating you."

That put both the friends at ease and prompted them to try to understand the whole of the background of Gandhiji's mind. And in this connection I may mention a curious but very significant fact. When Sir Stafford Cripps' mission was announced, Prof. Horace Alexander and Miss Agatha Harrison had sent Gandhiji a cable reminding him of the phrase Gandhiji himself had used, viz., "Andrews' legacy" meaning thereby that in memory of Andrews the best Englishmen and the best Indians should come together to bring about a permanent understanding between England and India. "Here," their cable seemed to say in effect, "is one of the best Englishmen coming to India. You had better settle with him, as there is a great opportunity."

It was in reply to this cable that Gandhiji wrote a long letter to Prof. Horace Alexander soon after the failure of the Cripps' mission,—a letter in which he gave expression for the first time to the demand for British withdrawal. He had not discussed it with any soul on earth, but as he was writing the letter the thing that was, so to say, cooking in his mind ever since his return from Delhi came to his pen. "Sir Stafford" he said in that letter, "has come and gone. How nice it would have been if he had not come with that dismal mission. . . How could the British Government at this critical hour have behaved as they did? Why should they have sent proposals without discussing them with the

principal parties ? Not one single party was satisfied. In trying to please all, the proposals pleased none.

"I talked to him frankly but as a friend, if for nothing else, for Andrews' sake. I told him that I was speaking to him with Andrews' spirit as my witness. I made suggestions, but all to no avail. As usual, they were not practical. I had not wanted to go. I had nothing to say being 'anti-all-wars'. I went because he was anxious to see me. All this I mention in order to give you the background. I was not present throughout the negotiations with the Working Committee. I came away. You know the result. It was inevitable. The whole thing has left a bad taste in the mouth."

And now comes the key paragraph: "My firm opinion is that the British should leave India now in an orderly manner and not run the risk that they did in Singapore, Malay and Burma. That act would mean courage of a high order, confession of human limitations, and right doing by India."

The letter was sent by air mail on the 22nd April, but Prof. Horace Alexander had left England before it could reach him. He was agreeably surprised when he found that he was the first person with whom Gandhiji had shared his great thought.

Gandhiji's talk was almost a commentary on the parts of the letter I have quoted. "You will see that I have used the words 'orderly withdrawal'. I had, when I used the phrase, Burma and Singapore in mind. It was a disorderly withdrawal from there. For they left Burma and Malay neither to God, nor to anarchy, but to the Japanese. Here I say: 'Don't repeat that story here. Don't leave India to Japan, but leave India to Indians in an orderly manner,'" said he, concluding a long talk. The whole talk, even as the letter I have reproduced, was inspired by the spirit of C. F. A., and the idea of asking the British to withdraw was conceived in the friendliest spirit, as it was done with a remembrance of C. F. A. and all his noble work. As Gandhiji said, "So you have now to do what Andrews did—understand me, pitilessly cross-examine me, and then if you are convinced be my messenger", Prof. Alexander felt overwhelmed and said: "We dare not assume his mantle. We can but try."

They propose to meet various people and see things for themselves before they decide where to start work. And they should take a little time, as their companions will not arrive until a week or more. Their work will be in cooperation both with the A. R. P. agencies and voluntary organizations, as the case may be.

Sevagram, 25-6-42

M. D.

Practical Non-violence

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BADSHAH KHAN'S POPULARITY

(By M. K. Gandhi)

The Associated Press has circulated the following note about Khan Saheb:

"The Frontier Provincial Congress Committee has released the following statement:

"We warn the public against the false propaganda that is being carried on against Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the undisputed leader of the Pathans, and the Khudai Khidmatgar movement, in certain sections of the press. It has been hinted that the differences have arisen among the workers and party-politics is raising its ugly head. Not a single Khudai Khidmatgar has so far resigned. They are all united like one man under Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's leadership. All talk about parties among them has no foundation whatsoever. All these so-called differences etc. exist only in the imagination of a few interested people who are craving for offices and think that by encouraging such talk they can gain their end. The Government is at the back of all such propaganda. But these people have no following among the Frontier masses. Every true nationalist in the Frontier clearly realises that we can have nothing to do with the British Government in India, much less with offices. Whatever attraction the parliamentary programme may have elsewhere in India, it has certainly no place in the Frontier.

"Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's peaceful constructive humanitarian work among the villages for the maintenance of internal security and self-sufficiency in matters of food and cloth has further endeared him to the people—especially the poor. He has been hoping to carry his message of peace and good-will even to the neighbouring tribes. He has been devoting all his energy to raise a non-violent and peaceful army who can render true service to the people under difficult days ahead. What the Government has failed to achieve at the cost of millions of rupees he is attempting to do with purely voluntary help. He deserves the sympathy and cooperation of every man, woman and child of the Frontier in this noble work. We hope that the Frontier masses will respond to his call and the Press and journalists of India who have the true interests of the country at heart will take a dispassionate interest in his work."

The Frontier Provincial Congress Committee has done well to pass the resolution and circulate the note. But Badshah Khan's reputation rests on much more solid ground than the resolution of the Frontier Provincial Congress Committee. It rests on the strength of selfless service rendered for nearly a quarter of a century and the affection of the people won through that service. In spite of traducers Khan Saheb has come triumphant through every ordeal so far. And I have little doubt that when the next test comes, he will show the same popularity as he has shown before.

Sevagram, 30-6-42

Constructive Programme

Some Suggestions

By Rajendra Prasad. Price As. 4. Postage 1 Anna.

Can be had at Navajivan Office, Post Box 105, Ahmedabad; 130 Princess St., Bombay; Surat and Rajkot.

Notes

Jodhpur

Shri Sriprakash who went to Jodhpur at my request to do whatever he could to ease the atmosphere, interview the authorities and know their version of the affair has returned and given me his report which leaves no doubt that free use has been made by the authorities of the lathi in order to repress the people. He nevertheless tells me that some members of the Lok Parishad have not always been discreet in their language. He was told by the authorities that they had no objection to the Lok Parishad holding meetings and asking for responsible government so long as the language kept within bounds. He also tells me that the Jodhpur Government are anxious to reduce to some kind of order the admitted irresponsibility of Jagirdars, but that the passage from feudalism to legalism must take some time. So far as the treatment of political prisoners is concerned, Shri Sriprakash has hope that it would be better, though he has also hope that, given some accommodation on the part of the local workers, there should be no political prisoners at all. If all his hopes are fulfilled, the visit although brought about accidentally, will have borne ample result and the hunger-strike of the prisoners and the sad death of Balmukund Bisa would not have gone in vain. Shri Sriprakash tells me too that though the death was due somewhat, no doubt, to bad prison accommodation, there was no callousness on the part of the prison authorities. Deaths will occur even in the best of circumstances. We may not therefore always blame authority whenever a death occurs in a prison. Every case has to be examined and judged on merits. I understand that Balmukund Bisa was a very fine worker. He leaves a large family to mourn him. It is hoped that the citizens of Jodhpur will provide for the widow and children to whom I send my condolences.

Shri Sriprakash has brought me a leaflet from Beawar, which contains language which a satyagrahi will not use. It is to be hoped that the workers will be careful in the choice of the language they use. I would ask them to keep themselves in touch with Shri (not Dr. as I had called him by mistake) Kachru who will be in Jodhpur till the whole trouble has subsided.

Sevagram, 29-6-42

Hooliganism

The report of hooliganism at Rajaji's meeting in Matunga makes painful reading. Has Rajaji lost every title to respect because he has taken what seems to be an unpopular view? He went to Matunga on invitation. He was entitled to a patient hearing. Those who did not share his views might have abstained from attending the meeting, but having gone there they should have given him a hearing. They might have cross-questioned him. Those who tarred him and created a disturbance have disgraced themselves and have harmed their cause. Their way is neither the way to Swaraj

nor 'Akhand Hindustan'. It is to be hoped that hooliganism of Matunga will be the last exhibition of barbarism. The calmness, good humour, presence of mind and determination that Rajaji showed that trying time were worthy of him. These must bring him many admirers, if not even followers. For people generally do not weigh the pros and cons of a problem. They follow their heroes. And Rajaji has never lacked the qualities that go to make a hero.

Sevagram, 28-6-42

M. K. G.

A Correction

A certain misunderstanding has been caused by the figures regarding hours of work given in the note on "Education through Handicrafts" in *Harijan* of 21-6-42. The total hours of work for each grade do not represent the hours devoted by all the children in that grade in the 27 basic schools; but the sum-total of hours actually devoted by one child of that grade in each of the 27 schools—in other words, the total hours devoted by 27 representative children of that grade in the 27 basic schools.

M. D.

Basic Training Centre at Sevagram

A training centre of basic education will be opened at Sevagram by the Hindustani Talimi Sangh on August 1, 1942, to prepare workers and teachers of basic education both men and women.

Candidates seeking admission in the training centre should have faith in Gandhiji's constructive programme, and enthusiasm to work for the same. They should also be healthy and capable of putting in eight hours of strenuous work per day during their period of training. Their standard of general knowledge should not be below that of the present matriculation or its equivalent, but candidates of higher academic qualification will be preferred. Knowledge of English, however, will not be considered essential. Every candidate must bring a written assurance, either individually or on behalf of an institution, of working in the field of basic education after the completion of his or her training.

Institutions and individuals seeking further information should write to the Secretary, Hindustani Talimi Sangh, Sevagram, Wardha, for the prospectus.

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