

# HARIJAN

Editor : MAHADEV DESAI

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[ FIVE PICE

## QUESTION BOX

(By M. K. Gandhi)

### Are You Not Inviting Japanese ?

Q. It is all very well for you to invite bravery, but are you not inviting the Japanese to attack India, by asking the British rulers to withdraw ?

A. I am not. I feel convinced that the British presence is the incentive for the Japanese attack. If the British wisely decided to withdraw and leave India to manage her own affairs in the best way she could, the Japanese would be bound to reconsider their plans. The very novelty of the British stroke will confound the Japanese, dissolve the subdued hatred against the British, and the atmosphere will be set up for the ending of an unnatural state of things that has dominated and choked Indian life. As far as I can see the Japanese seem to have made their plans independently of Indian opinion. They are not to be affected by any writing of mine. But they will be confounded by the action I have advised the British to take.

### Evacuation

Q. You have advised evacuation from the cities of those who are not wanted for service or other reasons. But what are those poor people to do who have no homes to go to and who would be unwelcome wherever they go ?

A. This is a real difficulty. They must be provided for by the people of the provinces to which they belong. If we are one nation, we should have no difficulty in providing for every contingency that may arise. If we are to establish a new order of society, we can act from now. I can only speak from the non-violent angle and no other. If the national mind is working in that direction, consciously or unconsciously individuals and institutions will, without fuss, be absorbing all such persons as you mention. I know that the process is going on, but not on a scale large enough to be impressive. No able-bodied person should be put on charity; he should be given work enough to feed him properly. This shifting of the population, if it is wisely done, must result in a silent reorganisation of villages.

Sevagram, 26-4-42

### No Narrow Provincialism

Q. There are, in certain places, some people who have come from other provinces but who have practically settled in those places. There is already a feeling in certain provinces that when times were good these people came from outside, earned, and enjoyed themselves, but that when danger is drawing near and when their help and assistance would be needed by the residents of the province, they are

thinking of fleeing to their 'homes'. Should you not advise such people to stay where they are and not to give vent to any narrow provincialism ?

A. This question has come to me in various forms. It comes from Bengal and Assam. Merchants from other provinces have settled there for generations. Though they went to the respective provinces for their own sakes, they supplied a want, often useful. There is no doubt that their sudden withdrawal must hit hard those who have been hitherto used to make their daily purchases from these merchants. They cannot be easily and suddenly replaced, especially at a critical time like this. Therefore for these merchants to wind up their businesses would certainly amount to desertion of duty, if they do not, before leaving, ensure the continuance of their shops by proper substitute. It would be a different thing, if the customers themselves evacuated and the merchants had to follow. The situation that faces the country is so novel that no opinion or solution can claim infallibility, nor can judgment be pronounced without carefully weighing all the facts. But it seems to me to be the duty of mercantile organisations to examine the situation and give guidance to the merchants affected.

### Not an Incitement

Q. You have written :

"If the vast majority of Muslims regard themselves as a separate nation . . . no power on earth can compel them to think otherwise. And if they want to partition India on that basis, they must have the partition, unless Hindus want to fight against such a division. So far as I can see such a preparation is silently going on on behalf of both parties."

As far as the Muslims are concerned I can say with better knowledge than you that there is no such preparation. It would be foolish in the midst of the present armageddon. But since you are apparently aware of the preparation to fight on the part of Hindus, is it not criminal for you not to prevent your co-religionists from this suicidal activity ? Your article is both cowardly and mischievous; indeed it is an incitement to the Hindus.

A. This is the mildest indictment I have picked up from many I have received. Even from this much poison has been removed. It is perhaps wise to notice some of the criticism to which I am exposed. I must not mind it. It has been my lot throughout my public career. I suppose it is that of every public servant. But when the criticism is ignorant, as this is, it harms the critic and the cause he espouses. I take notice of it in the hope that sober men will use their influence to restrain



ignorant criticism. I have no special knowledge of the preparation on behalf of the Hindus. All the knowledge I have is derived from the speeches of the leaders of both the parties and from the cuttings I receive from correspondents. They are proof positive of the preparations to which I have referred. But if what you say is right, in spite of the writings in the Muslim press, no preparation on one side alone can possibly provoke strife. It takes two to make a quarrel. You would be right, if I did not do so, in saying that it would be criminal on my part not to prevent my "co-religionists from this suicidal activity". You write about my co-religionists. I recognise none in such matters. Nor do they recognise me. For I claim Indians of all religions as my equal brothers, whether they believe me or not. I would, therefore, love to prevent everyone from quarrelling. All I write in these columns is designed to make reason rather than the sword the arbiter between rival parties. Hence the sentence you quote from my writing. I invite you to help me in my mission of peace. You can begin by understanding me and my writings.

Sevagram, 27-4-42

#### A GLIMPSE OF RIKHIKESH

From Delhi I went to Rikhikesh—that is the name in Government records and the Post Office—for a few days' change and rest. But I could not somehow make up my mind to stay there more than three or four days. The Ganges offered all that was expected of that holy river, and I met a few sannyasins, very kind and hospitable, but I felt that I could not bear to stay on there even for rest. The rest I would get, but it would not be worth much without peace. And peace it was difficult to get, with so many factors challenging it wherever one went—flies and filth, stray cows and swarms of beggars, and not much better than these the swarms of sadhus.

The Congress committee people somehow found me out. They wanted me to address a meeting there. A meeting of whom, I asked. And they smiled. There are a couple of thousand sadhus who are fed by the *chhatras*, about a thousand sannyasins, the same number of itinerant pilgrims, about five hundred beggars, and a few shopkeepers. There is a large number of students—Sanskrit students—they said, and some hill people, who might listen to the message of the constructive programme, but "the sadhus," they said, "abhor us." "But have you seriously tried to do the work?" I asked. One of the friends said: "Attempt had been made. There is enough land at our disposal. But we have not been able to do anything. Can't you lay the foundation of a constructive work centre? Tell us exactly what we can do." I said to them that, if they were so minded, two or three workers might be sent out to learn all the processes of spinning and weaving, of paper-making and bee-keeping. Those who knew spinning might make the start with collecting cotton and a few spinning wheels, but I who had gone there on a flying visit could not make the start. Later I met a sadhu with matted locks and a long

beard, who hailed me from a distance. For a moment I could not place him. But it was a familiar face, and I found that we had been jail mates years ago. He had chosen this kind of life and implored me to go to his *kuti*. He has two charkhas regularly working, he had two or three cows, and had laid out a nice little garden. "I have sat down here performing penance for Swaraj," he said, "and I am sure we will attain our goal." "But how? Have you been able to persuade any of the sadhus to take to the charkha? Will they go out to do constructive work?" I asked. He smiled and said he would work in the direction.

I had been drawn to Rikhikesh by Swami Shivanand who has settled there for some years and is conducting a monthly called *Divine Life*, and his Divine Life Society has numerous branches in the country and outside. The members pledge themselves to work daily for their moral and spiritual uplift, and meet together four times in the year. I met other sannyasins too—some of them very learned indeed—and all, it is curious to observe, interested in the happenings in the country and asking for the latest news. These were so keen on the latest news, why would they not work for the country, I wondered. "You know the definition of a sannyasin given in the Bhagavadgita," I said to them. "He who does the appointed task or the duty to be done without attachment to the fruit is a sannyasin and a yogi, but not he who ignites not the fire or does no action. (6: 1) But here it is exactly those who ignite not the fire and do nothing who are regarded as sannyasins. How shall we make the country free?" Swami Shivanandji frankly agreed with me. He said the Gita definition was the right definition, but so long as thousands were sure of a square meal without working for it, it was not possible to do anything. He was good enough to promise to introduce the spinning wheel in his own ashram and do whatever he can to spread the gospel of the charkha.

But very much more work is needed. We need a number of sannyasins who will go about amongst these sadhus with the message of active work, and we have to disabuse people of their ideas of misplaced charity.

Seth Jugal Kishore Birla, with whom I went to Rikhikesh, had organised a *yajna* on a grand scale. Brahmanas from all parts of India and learned in the Vedas had been invited for the purpose, and he invited me to look in. Goswami Ganeshduttji, who was in charge of the ceremonies, said to me that he had already announced to the vast number of spectators there that I was coming. "It is very good of you," I said. "But I have not come for the *yajna*, and I do not want anyone to know that I am here. I have come for a little bit of peace and rest." He was all kindness, but he introduced me to the people in a long speech, and blessed me on behalf of those engaged in the *yajna*. The *yajna* was obviously, as I learnt, for the welfare of the Hindu community, and for the coming of peace. But the words 'Hindu kingdom', and 'Hindu sovereignty' were also freely mentioned. I was in



a quandary when I was asked to say a few words to the people assembled there. But with God's name on my lips, I ventured to say only a few words to express what then possessed my breast.

I said: "I have come here seeking for mental and bodily rest, in order that I may be able to do my work more energetically. You have assembled here to perform and associate yourselves with a *yajna*. You are all Hindus, and so am I. Let me then tell you the Hindu prayer that has appealed to me most:

“सर्वेऽत्र सुखिनः सन्तु सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः ।

सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु न कश्चिद् दुःखभाग् भवेत् ॥

“(May all here be happy; may all be free from disease; may all see things that are good; and may none have misery.)

“When after a hard day's work I lay my tired limbs to rest I humbly utter this prayer every day, and I do so now. Let us pray for the good and welfare of *all*. That is the glory of Hinduism, and that is its strength.

“Now to offer prayers is easy enough. But they are not heard unless they are offered from a pure and contrite heart. Let me tell you that *yajna* has a deeper meaning than the offering of ghee and other things in the sacrificial fire. *Yajna* is sacrifice of one's all for the good of humanity, and to me these offerings of *ahutis* have a symbolic meaning. We have to offer up our weaknesses, our passions, our narrownesses into the purifying Fire, so that we may be cleansed. Then and then only our prayers would be heard.

“Let me also place before you another aspect of prayer. You have assembled here for the fulfilment of your desires, and the *yajna* is performed to that purpose. Now desires may be good and bad, and not every one of us knows which of his desires is good and pure and which not. It is *He* who presides over our thoughts and acts who knows this, and so I always pray that God may grant only such of my desires as may be good and pure, and reject all my prayers if they partake of impurity or grossness. I invite you to join me in that kind of prayer today.

“One last thing. The prayer for peace is accepted on all hands as a pure prayer, and in these times of severe strife and cruel bloodshed it is well that we offer our prayers for peace. There is a great Vedic prayer which I should like to recite in this connection, and I am sure you will all join me when I do so:

यदिह चोरं यदिह क्रूरं यदिह पापं तच्छान्तं तच्छिवं सर्वमेव शमस्तु नः ।

“(Whatever there is heinous, and cruel and sinful — may all that be stilled, may everything be good and peaceful for us.)

“It is my prayer on this sacred ground where we should pray for the purification of Hinduism that Hinduism may be purged of all in it that may smack of heinousness; cruelty and sinfulness. Above all let cruelty and strife and bloodshed cease, and let Peace and Harmony reign everywhere. That should be the prayer of us all. Let us offer our sacrifices to that purpose, and I know that God grants all

pure resolves — for Lord Krishna has said that ‘He who does good never comes to grief.’ I thank you.”

It is in that spirit that I associated myself with that *yajna*, and I am thankful to say that the organisers appreciated the spirit.

But as I look at the thing in the retrospect, I cannot excuse myself for having associated myself with that *yajna*, no matter in what spirit I did it. Whilst I indirectly criticised the motive and purpose of the *yajna*, I ought to have had the courage to dissociate myself from the *yajna* itself, even if it was for the most unexceptionable purpose on earth. For whatever may have been the conception of *yajna* in the past, I have no doubt that as it is performed today it is a wasteful anachronism. All the waste of precious cow's ghee and other materials, and the feeding of over two thousand people for over a month was a huge national waste and cannot conceivably be conducive to the welfare of the Hindus. Surely *yajna* of the Gita was not this. Selfless service of humanity was all it meant. Seth Jugal Kishore Birla has a heart of gold, but his charity and his lavish expenditure for the welfare of Hinduism and the Hindus need better direction. If he organised all the sadhus there for constructive work, if he assured them all a square meal and what little clothing they need for a few hours of daily constructive work, if he could persuade them to go out into the country to spread the gospel of liberal religion and to work for communal harmony, his money would be very well spent. But it is likely that he regards my views as grossly erroneous. Whatever, therefore, may be his duty, I am clear that it was my duty to speak out firmly and unequivocally that the organisers and the spectators were deceiving themselves under the cloak of religion. I failed in that duty.

Sevagram, 26-4-42

M. D.

#### ‘Harijan’ in Urdu

Dr. Gopichand Bhargav is bringing out *Harijan* weekly in Urdu from Lahore. Articles from *Harijan* have for long been published in *Hindustan* of Lucknow. Arrangements are being made to publish an authentic edition at the Navajivan Press. The latter will be possible only when I can get an Urdu scholar who can throw in his lot with me. The two have their own individuality. And if the Navajivan Press succeeds in the venture, there will be a third with its own individuality. With the impetus that is being given to Urdu learning through the proposed Hindustani Prachar Sabha such a venture has become a possibility.

Sevagram, 28-4-42

M. K. G.

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# HARIJAN

May 3

1942

## SCORCHED EARTH POLICY AGAIN

( By M. K. Gandhi )

Thus writes a correspondent :

"The controversy on the scorched earth policy has had reference to what the people have to do when their fields are touched by the 'enemy'. That may or may not happen. But what about the destruction that is going on of crops, wells, tanks, houses, boats, cycles, etc., in the name of preparation for war? The people are summarily driven out of their villages and houses in cities. If you will suffer this destruction, then how can you oppose destruction to prevent destruction?"

This is a very difficult question. The destruction that is going on is certain. The destruction that the enemy may work or which the receding portion of the population affected may have to do is problematical. And, in any case, such destruction will be nothing, even if it overtook us, compared to the crores already drained from the country for warding off a threatened danger. Money taken through taxation has not been felt so keenly as is the direct deprivation of thousands of homesteads as in Feni. No promise of compensation can be any comfort for the dispossession of the present tenements. To the poor people it is like taking away their bodies. The dispossession of the country boats is almost like that of the tenements. To deprive the people in East Bengal of their boats is like cutting off a vital limb. I wrote almost in defence of the procedure adopted by the authorities in Feni. I have polite but angry protests against my endorsement. The correspondents tell me that I know nothing of the conditions of life in East Bengal. I cannot plead guilty to the charge. Only I felt that people must be asked to resign themselves to the inevitable. Later information from Feni compels a revision of the attitude I had adopted. I had assumed considerate action by the authorities in the face of the impending danger. But I must defer final judgment. The authorities are reported to be carrying on an investigation. I hope it will be comprehensive.

Certain risks have to be taken even when danger overtakes us. Thus people cannot be asked or advised to starve or die of thirst for fear of the Japanese helping themselves to the people's provision or water. They may fight them to prevent their use, but they must risk their loss and not die before their death in order to prevent their use by the Japanese forces.

It is time I came to the last and the most vital part of the question. As an out and out war resister, is it my duty to ask the affected people to resist, non-violently of course, the deprivation of their holdings including boats? But my very non-violence has deterred me from offering opposition to the point of embarrassment. Whether

embarrassment through opposition in Feni would have been avoidable or not is a question of fact on which I cannot yet pronounce opinion. I would hesitate up to the last moment. I can only hope that the authorities will find a way whereby they can avoid distress such as has been caused in Feni. Sevagram, 27-4-42

## DRACONIAN ORDERS

The Central Press Advisory Committee has promptly and rightly passed a resolution viewing "with grave concern the action of the three Provincial Governments, namely those of Bombay, Bengal and the Punjab, against three daily papers, the *Bombay Sentinel*, the *Yugantar* and the *Pratap* respectively which has resulted in their suspension," and has described the action as "a violation of the spirit of the agreement" between the Government and the Press, and asked the President of the Standing Committee to summon an emergency meeting of the Committee.

It will be remembered that the action against the *Bombay Sentinel* arose out of the publication in the paper of a report of the firing by police on dock workers. The paper was ordered to suspend publication for a month. Mr. Horniman, to whom it was suggested that an expression of regret might influence the Government in reducing the period of suspension, rightly declined to express regret and thus vindicated the liberty of the press to publish, within its discretion, all news of public importance which was not directly or indirectly of assistance to the enemy. The action against the *Yugantar* arises out of a report published by it issued by no less a person than Dr. Prafulla Ghose, a responsible member of the Working Committee, who is known for his sobriety and restraint. The order directs the paper "to suspend further publication". The *Pratap* has had to suspend publication for no particular offence but because the Punjab authorities will not let it publish anything, "including headlines connected with the war, the internal situation, internal security or civil defence measures in India", without approval.

These Draconian orders were issued without previous reference to the provincial Press Advisory Committees and thus constitute a flagrant violation of the Press Agreement. But this violation has not happened for the first time. It has happened often enough in the past, and Government have taken no notice of the protests of the Standing Committee.

The situation will continue to be the same unless effective action is taken by the newspapers themselves.

The Press Regulations are of such a sweeping character that anything and everything can be brought under their operation. For to decide whether an item of news or comment is directly or indirectly of assistance to the enemy or calculated to undermine public confidence in the capacity or credit of Government depends on several factors including, among other things, the mentality of the Chief Press Advisers in various districts. And then there are panic-mongers among the press people also.



To give but one example. The *Hindustan Standard* commented very mildly, I should imagine, on the orders regarding the immobilisation of boats issued by the Government of Bengal. All it said was: "It will cause great hardship to the people. It is well known that in East Bengal country boats are the principal means of communication between one house and another in certain parts of these districts. The people's hardship will know no bounds if these boats are immobilised. We urge them to think out in time a modification of this order so that life in East Bengal may not entirely be paralysed for want of country boats." The *Statesman* in commenting upon this note went the length of attributing a base motive to the paper saying: "The motive is plain. It is to assist the enemy." It is worthy of note in this connection that the Orissa Government in a recent communique referred to an exactly similar public comment on an exactly similar immobilisation order and has even modified the order: "It has been represented to Government that the complete removal of all boats in certain parts of the deltaic areas will dislocate the life of the people residing in these localities and cause great hardship. It has therefore been decided that District Magistrates should allow the minimum number of boats, considered to be absolutely necessary for the life of the community, to remain in these areas." Thank God, there was no cry of "assisting the enemy".

Then there is the question of news of grave public importance. It is inconceivable how a paper can be silent over an incident involving the death of 2 persons and the wounding of 45 people in Bombay. We have before us reports of much more serious incidents which recently happened in the Feni Sub-Division of the Noakhali District in Bengal. The Additional Sub-Divisional Officer, Feni, himself says in a public notice about these happenings: "Our countymen have been upset over the death of two persons who were killed by the military's firing in the village Chanua. The highest military officer, the Brigadier and the S. D. O. are giving the assurance that an inquiry into this matter of firing by soldiers will be started at a very early date." Now this cryptic report is sure to alarm the public and to lead to all sorts of conjectures. Private reports about the same incident are indeed of a most alarming and revolting nature. Why should such news be banned? It is for Government promptly to issue notices correcting details of information, but to ban all reports of these happenings is an added outrage on the public.

The Standing Committee, when it meets — and it should meet without the slightest delay — should consider all these circumstances, and not rest content with registering protests and sending recommendations. It must take some strong action. Strong action was discussed in the past over certain happenings but was never taken. Cannot they refuse to publish all war news and decline to participate in all war propaganda unless redress is granted in cases like the ones I have noticed?

I have other remedies I can think of, but it is

not that the Standing Committee cannot think of proper action. They have to make up their minds to take it.

Sevagram, 26-4-42

M. D.

[Since writing the above, the news has come that the orders against the *Bombay Sentinel* and *Yugantar* have been cancelled. The order against the *Pratap* should also go. But what I have said has reference to the larger question of publication of news, and the Standing Committee should take up a strong stand on the liberty of the press to disseminate news in a sober and as far as possible accurate manner.

Sevagram, 28-4-42

M. D.]

## TWO AUSTRALIAN VISITORS

Sir Bertram Stevens is a member of the Eastern Group Conference and was some time ago Prime Minister of the Province of New South Wales in Australia. During Gandhiji's stay in Delhi Sir Bertram took the opportunity of having a few minutes with Gandhiji. Sir Bertram agreed to have a brief chat as Gandhiji was having his morning stroll. He had no particular business but wanted to make Gandhiji's acquaintance. "I have heard a lot about you from Mr. Birla. You have been to England, to Europe, and you stayed long in South Africa. But you have never been to Australia?" said Sir Bertram.

"No, thanks to you," said Gandhiji smiling.

In a perfectly sporting spirit Sir Bertram said: "You have made a very good reply, Mr. Gandhi."

"Haven't I?" said Gandhiji. "You have vast living spaces, you can absorb millions and millions of human beings. But I know what you are doing. I have followed the history of your country for over 35 years. White Australia is your policy, and as a result you are without the wonderful accession of strength that would have been yours if you had followed a policy of brothering all."

"I agree," said Sir Bertram. "But our country is only 150 years old. Prejudices die hard, but they are dying."

"You might very well have absorbed our people. Wherever they have gone they have been able to show that they are businesslike, able, and quite competent to take care of themselves. Your country with its infinite resources would have been a different country with these Indian settlers."

"Yes, Australia is half as big again as India. But it is not quite so fertile as India. But I agree with what you say. There is nothing like developing vital contacts between the peoples of different countries. During my sojourn in India I have met many people. I have found them quite capable and industrious, and the more our business people could know and come together with your business people the better for both Australia and India. And, Sir, we must not forget that the old world is already passing, old ideas are fast changing, and we are getting ready for the coming of a new world."

"I am sure," said Gandhiji.

The other visitor from Australia was a war correspondent. What can a war correspondent have to do with one who is proclaiming his faith



against all wars? But Gandhiji received him kindly. There was little talk between the two. Gandhiji simply unburdened himself for a little while as the young man walked with him during his evening stroll: "What I cannot understand is man hating brother man and thirsting for his blood. I can see no justification for the war that is going on and fast enveloping the earth. It is based on hate and vengeance and will leave a crop of hate and vengeance behind. The waste of human life and material that might be useful otherwise for the world is appalling and sickening. Why should your country and mine have to be involved in this war? You are a fine resourceful people. Rather than build up your country and make it useful to the rest of the world, why should you be asked to sacrifice your manhood? And what is more painful is that it is all to no purpose. I do not know why all this fighting is going on, for whose benefit, with what great end in view."

"I doubt if anyone knows," whispered the young man.

"There is this thing," added Gandhiji, "perhaps God wills peace to come as a lesson of this carnage."

For a few seconds they walked silently. Then the young man ventured to ask: "Could you possibly say something about what is going on at present?"

"For that," said Gandhiji, "you must go to the men in office. I can say nothing."

"But, Sir, you are with them."

"And, yet, it will surprise you when I tell you that those things do not interest me. I relinquished my membership of the Congress eight years ago. I go to the Congress, attend meetings of the Working Committee, even advise in a detached way when my advice is sought. You will be surprised to hear that I have never listened in to a radio, nor have I ever been to a cinema."

The young correspondent was really amazed. "Do you think," he asked, "these things are bad?"

"I will not say so. I may say that cinema films are often bad. About the radio I do not know. I can certainly say this that I do not care to have news from all quarters of the globe within the space of half an hour. It leaves one little time to think. And why must one have news from all quarters of the globe every half an hour or so? I should be content to react to my nearest surroundings and happenings therein."

But the youth whispered some question about the Working Committee. "I do not mind telling you," replied Gandhiji, "that there are differences between me and the Working Committee. The whole nation is not with me on the non-violence question. If the nation as a whole was absolutely peaceful, I am sure we should not be in the war, I am sure we should not have this foreign domination here. The alien rulers would not be dictating to us. We should have people here from foreign lands on terms of friendship, and we should gladly make use of their talents at our

will. But I am not worrying over the nation not being with me. When I have failed to convert my nearest associates, the members of the Working Committee, I have no business to be impatient with my people. It must be my fault. It means that there is not sufficient non-violence in me to enable me to carry everyone with me. But my faith in non-violence is undimmed and unshaken. In fact it is growing every day."

"Yours is a wonderful nation," said the Australian friend and departed.

Delhi, 5-4-42

M. D.

#### Yarn Currency in Action

The annual 'Khadi Yatra' was arranged this year at Nalwadi on 11th April. The central function was an inspiring address by Vinoba. There was too a *tunai* competition in which about forty persons took part. The special pandal was packed to overflowing. The novel feature was the opening of the Swaraj Bhandar where yarn currency will be used. Gandhiji was invited to open it. As against yarn of specified measure a customer will get from the bhandar either cash up to a point or provisions and other necessities stored in the bhandar, or chits for one pice, one anna, one rupee or five rupees. The latter will enable the holder, on presentation at the bhandar, to get what goods he or she may need. All the chits that were kept ready were taken up by the eager visitors. Many had to be disappointed as no more chits were available. In declaring the bhandar open Gandhiji said that up till now they had been using Government coinage for all business transactions. He had conceived the idea of using yarn as a measure of value. This should result in preventing the tremendous waste of yarn that goes on among the thousands of spinners who spin for the A. I. S. A. Most of his ideas, Gandhiji said, were given practical shape and scientifically carried out at Nalwadi under the inspiration and direction of Vinoba. The latter had decided that the scheme should be put into practice from that day. The bhandar was the result of his labours. The success of the scheme, however, would depend upon the cooperation of the people. At the bhandars conducted under the scheme there would be reliable articles sold at fixed rates. Even a child would be able to buy without fear of being deceived. The output and quality of yarn in the neighbourhood should show a marked increase. The bhandar was designedly called Swaraj Bhandar. The originators believed that Swaraj could not be had through negotiations with the British. It could only be had by hard labour and hard thinking. Hence the constructive programme.

Gandhiji concluded by saying that India should be a land of plenty though there might, for various reasons, be shortage of grain. But if all of them laboured, even grain could be grown for the people's requirements. If each one were to spin, there would be no dearth of cloth or even of money.

Sevagram, 12-4-42

A. K.



## EXCHANGE and HUMAN VALUES

( By J. C. Kumarappa )

Money exchange is indispensable mainly for the extension of markets. Money in itself satisfies no want except that of a miser who delights in counting his coins. It is a temporary storage of purchasing power and a convenient standard of value. When a person wants to sell his cow and get a wireless set it may not be possible for him to find one and the same person who wants to buy a cow and sell his wireless set in exchange. Therefore money intervenes and enables the seller to dispose of his cow first to anyone who wants a cow, and store the purchasing power represented by the value of the cow in the form of money till he meets one who has wireless sets to sell, and then he exchanges that purchasing power for the radio set. This medium becomes all the more essential when great distances separate the market for the cow from the market for the radio sets. Under modern imperialism where one country is kept down to produce raw materials for another distant country which produces manufactured articles, money economy has become the life breath of commerce. Although international settlements may be in goods, customers cannot buy an American motor car against the delivery of stacks of straw.

Extension of markets in their turn call for the army, navy and the air force to control them in the interests of particular nations. Money and credit have their place in commerce and trade. Though theirs is an important role, yet they have to be reined in and bridled if their functioning is to bring the people nothing but good in their wake. A properly balanced exchange economy calculated to curb these tendencies must provide for an element of barter. Inflation of currency during war time by the use of postage stamps, matches and playing cards as money must not be mistaken for barter which alone can help to retard the evil effects of money.

Where the standard of living of a people is near the subsistence level their purchasing power is spent mostly on food and other necessities. At such a stage, if money is largely used, then it would divert that purchasing power to some extent into luxuries, which often come from distant countries, and thus lower the true wealth computed in terms of human values. When money is taken by Government from a petty farmer, to whom it may mean so many days' food, and is paid to a high-salaried official, to whom the same amount may mean the price of a cigar, money exchange is the means of obliterating human values in wealth, and causing an avoidable loss in national wealth. This is especially noticeable in governmental transactions, which under such circumstances become the means of impoverishing the people. A barter system would have helped to make it impossible for Government to perpetrate the injustice of using India's reserves to the tune of crores in the London money market while our industries were starving for funds.

On the other hand, the use of barter in collecting taxes from the poor and disbursing it in kind lessens

the chances of national waste and to a large extent acts as a check on governmental waste. Such a system of tax collection and disbursement, of course, involves a great deal of administrative and organisational difficulties but none that is insurmountable. To avoid inconveniences modern centralised Governments have thrown overboard admirable financial systems like the ones advocated by the Islamic and Jewish Codes of payment of taxes in kind by way of tithes, i. e. one-tenth of whatever is produced.

Though these systems are rare today, we see them still functioning with great efficiency in some Islamic States as in the Pathan States of Swat, Dir and Chitral on the Frontier. The State employs contractors to collect the State share of the actual produce—not estimated values in terms of money prices as in British India. The State share is generally one-tenth of all produce. In the case of sheep etc. the due is one animal for every completed 40 in the flock, with the option of payment of an equivalent in ghee or other animal produce. For cattle the owner has to give one seer of ghee per annum for keeping the herd, and grazing fees are paid by contract to the landlords.

There are Government contractors who act as bankers for these payments in kind. They receive the share of produce due to the State, store them and disburse them as directed by the State. They carry on external trade in the surplus of the produce and pay into the treasury the cash realised. They also control a great proportion of the internal trade. This readily places at the disposal of the Government an effective instrument to control prices at definite and convenient points of focus. Government employees—military and civil—below the rank of gazetted officers are paid once every six months partly in kind and partly in cash, while the higher officers draw their pay in cash from the treasury.

This system will enable us to get over many a handicap from which the farmer in British India suffers. Under the present system of collecting taxes in money the farmer is forced to sell his crops, sometimes even before harvesting, to find the wherewithal to satisfy the Revenue Department. Apart from the evils already dealt with in the earlier paragraphs, the effect on the market of such forced premature sales is to depress prices and burden the farmers with further losses.

If the periodical payments in kind to Government servants were so scheduled as to synchronise with the harvesting of wheat, rice, jowar, bajri, maize, cotton, etc., the difficulties of storage would be minimised, and such payments, though they may affect the import of manufactured goods adversely which will be unpalatable to foreign interests, would ensure an adequate distribution of food grains within the country and save the middlemen's charges to some extent.

An efficient exchange should facilitate proper distribution among the people. The modern problem is not one of production but of distribution. People are in dire need. The producers can produce large supplies, but the people are not able to make



their wants effective for lack of purchasing power. A boy stands before a sweetmeat shop with his mouth watering for the goods displayed in the window, but his pocket is empty. His demand for the sweets is ineffective. Under the money economy he should have a mint at his disposal to enable him to obtain what he wants, or he will have to beg, borrow or steal purchasing power.

The way to non-violent control of the market, to a distribution of wealth with the minimum of friction, and to a mint under the control of the people is pointed out by Gandhiji in his proposal that a warp length of a single thread of yarn be taken as the lowest measure of value by khadi lovers. If this mint comes into vogue, the boy standing in front of the sweetmeat shop need only go home, take up his takli and spin the required length of yarn to get his coveted sweetmeat. The people will have a mint at their disposal. This mint will neither debase the coin nor will it inflate the currency. It will neither need the army, navy and the air force for its control, nor will call in the police for its protection.

In our country which abounds in labour wealth and suffers from a lack of opportunities for profitable employment but has an unlimited internal market for necessities, this device is calculated to give a hallmark to things that are running waste today and bring them into the market as coveted commodities.

Metallic money is humanly speaking imperishable while most consumption goods lose their value by keeping. This disparity places the holder of money at an advantage in bargaining. He can afford to bide his time, while the vendor of fruits, for instance, has to sell out before his goods perish naturally. To some measure this is alleviated in an exchange system which combines money and barter. Thus a well-regulated system of exchange of goods must provide for a certain amount of barter in the exchange of consumption goods, as well as for the payment of taxes in kind, if we are anxious to preserve distributive justice and human value in exchange.

### TRAVANCORE

(By M. K. Gandhi)

In spite of the high percentage of education among men and women in Travancore, there is no such thing as real liberty in that unhappy land. Shri Thanu Pillai, the President of the State Congress, and Shri Ramachandran, a member of the Executive of the Travancore State Congress, have been sentenced to six months rigorous imprisonment for defying the ban on meetings of the Congress. If bans are imposed on public meetings because they are held under the auspices of certain organisations which ask for responsible government, they have to be defied. The leaders of such movements cannot stultify themselves by entirely gagging themselves. It is too great a price to pay for nominal liberty. Shri T. Pillai and Shri Ramachandran will serve the cause better through their imprisonment than they will by submitting to gagging orders. Here is Shri Ramachandran's statement before the Magistrate:

"There was first of all a communique issued by the Chief Secretary to the Government of Travancore, in which he had said that the celebration of the All India States' Peoples' Day would not be permitted. This was followed by an order of the District Magistrate, Trivandrum, served on some of us prohibiting the celebration of the States' Peoples' Day. My offence relates to this order of the District Magistrate. In that order it was made out that, if such a meeting was held and speeches made, there was the likelihood of a breach of the peace in Trivandrum. It further stated that, if the meeting was held and speeches made, there would come about an estrangement between the people and the Government. Immediately on receipt of this prohibitory order Shri Pattom Thanu Pillai and myself wrote a letter to the District Magistrate, in which we made it clear that this meeting was to be held not for the purpose of initiating an agitation but that it was just in response to an all-India observance. The meeting was to be held not in a public place but inside the Congress House premises. We made it clear also that the apprehension of a breach of the peace was absolutely unfounded. We had said that, if in spite of this clarification the meeting was prohibited, we would be violating the order. This explanatory letter did not elicit any reply from the District Magistrate. So the meeting was held. After Shri Thanu Pillai's arrest I took charge of the meeting and spoke for an hour. I must observe here that I had never seen a quieter meeting in my life. The position we took, therefore, viz. that there would be absolutely no breach of the peace, was confirmed by the meeting itself. The second point in the District Magistrate's order was that the meeting would bring about estrangement between the Government and the people. In my view this certainly was not one of the results of the meeting. It was, therefore, proved beyond any shadow of doubt that the District Magistrate's apprehensions were absolutely unfounded. Therefore, though I am technically guilty — because I certainly did violate the District Magistrate's order — the District Magistrate and not I was in the wrong. I am entitled, therefore, to an honourable acquittal. This technical guilt I had to take upon myself for the simple reason that I was not going to be persuaded not to do a thing which I considered wholly right and which my self-respect dictated that I should do."

Sevagram, 28-4-42

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## CREED v. POLICY OF NON-VIOLENCE

(By Kailas Nath Katju)

[More than a month ago Dr. Katju sent to Shri Kishorelal Mashruwala what may be called a short thesis on non-violence. The latter was to decide what to make of it and, if he liked, show it to me. Shri Mashruwala gave it to me some time ago. But I could get time to read it only during the journey. I read it carefully. It was too long for publication in *Harijan*; and yet I felt that it should be placed before the readers of *Harijan* in some form. The following is the result. I have spent considerable time in reducing the original without leaving out the essential argument. I wholly agree with Dr. Katju that non-violence cannot make further headway without the Congress making it a creed. He suggests that there should be a plan to show how it can be worked under given circumstances. He suggested a book or a series for the guidance of the votaries. Much literature has sprung up on the subject. Richard Gregg has spent years of labour in research. He has written text-books for the guidance of the votaries of the West. His books are very readable. Let Dr. Katju set apart time for producing a book which would be a guide for us in India at this critical hour.

On the train to Wardha, 5-4-42 M. K. G.]

The efficiency of non-violence with non-cooperation as a potent instrument of defence against external aggression has been very much discussed during the last three years. Gandhiji has emphasised that what can win us our freedom from British control must also prove equally useful to protect that freedom from violent attack. But the Working Committee were not prepared to go that length, and they said so in the well-known Wardha resolution last year. They thought that the country was not prepared to go that length. In this, I think, the Working Committee were quite right.

The shattering events of the last two years in the present war have influenced men in different ways. From many, with the growing realisation of India's utter defencelessness, there is an insistent demand for rapid 'militarisation' and industrialisation. On others, however, the reaction has been in a contrary direction, and they now realise vividly, as never before, the utter futility of resort to violence for purposes of defence. The collapse of strong, well-armed armies in Poland, Norway, France, Yugoslavia and Greece, and last of all the carnage in Russia, have shown to them — and I am one of those persons — that armed defence leads nowhere. If civilisation and human liberties are to be saved, we must seek and ensure peace by means of non-violence. It is obvious that non-violence can be of no use to nations imperialistically inclined to conquer and exploit others. That, I take it, is not the ambition of any Indian. So the question is only of the defence of a free India.

It must be conceded that, though the Congress has been working on non-violent lines for the last

twenty years, that has only been as a matter of policy. Leaving Gandhiji aside our leaders have not presented to the people the excellent doctrine of non-violence with all its possibilities and implications. Few, very few, have believed in it as a creed; and anyone who advocates its adoption as a mere matter of policy is likely to break down at the critical juncture. I think that on those of us who believe in the matchless efficacy of non-violence and non-cooperation as an instrument of defence and protection against external aggression now rests the duty of infusing into and inspiring our countrymen with that faith.

Previous preparation is essential. Just as you cannot turn an ordinary citizen into a trained and disciplined soldier overnight or manufacture guns and aeroplanes in a week, similarly you require time and patience to train a whole people in the art of non-violence and non-cooperation.

Violence has stolen a long march during thousands of years. There are so many misconceptions to be removed. Non-violence is unintelligible to so many. To some it is a counsel of perfection, fit for rishis only. To others it is stupid; there is seemingly such a childlike faith in violence. Non-violence ceases to be stupid when it is considered as non-cooperation. The present-day aggressor does not conquer in order to exterminate and settle down. He conquers or seeks to conquer in order to exploit, and it is at that stage that non-cooperation comes in.

We have to explain, to expound, to remove doubts, and to endeavour to make even the lame, the halt and the blind into heroes. All this requires time and devoted effort. And this can only be done with any reasonable prospect of success by those who themselves have a firm faith in the efficacy of the method of non-violence and whose personal lives are regulated by that faith. You cannot possibly divorce this doctrine from the purest and highest morals. And no distinction should be drawn between personal and public affairs. What is ethically bad in an individual is equally bad for a community and a nation. We must believe that it is feasible to conduct public affairs on that basis, and we must ourselves act accordingly to the best of our power and ability; and we must endeavour, by precept and example, to create a similar belief in our countrymen at large. Without this belief, I am convinced, non-violence cannot make any headway at all. Therefore those who advocate non-violence must live a life of non-violence, not resisting evil with evil but sterilising it with non-cooperation. The non-cooperation has to be above reproach.

I am by no means pessimistic of success, if only those of us who profess faith in non-violence are true to our creed. All philosophy seems to inculcate non-violence and chastity in thought and conduct and love of truth. The masses will follow, if properly educated in the doctrine. The doctrine of ahimsa has ever been there, and people have, all through the history of the race, regulated their private life by it. It is Gandhiji's contribution to



world welfare that he has taught us to apply non-violence and non-cooperation in the field of politics and public affairs also. This is a signal experiment and should succeed particularly in India if we proceed on right lines.

It is from this point of view that I suggest that, while we must endeavour by all truthful and non-violent methods to persuade our countrymen to cling to the path of non-violence to aim at conducting the government of the country by non-violent methods and to win our independence and retain and protect it by non-violence and non-cooperation, there should be no such thing as an effort to capture power in the vulgar sense of the word. The idea of 'capture' more often than not connotes use of Tammany Hall methods, political jugglery and cunning, and improper and corrupt practices. There is no place for these in our scheme of things. We can only succeed, if we have the people genuinely behind us. Political power, not resting on the willing and genuine consent of a vast majority of the people, can only function, in the last resort, by the use of force and violence; and that use we forbid to ourselves. So our whole programme of action must be directed to persuade the people to our ways of thinking by methods of public education, study circles, public meetings, private discussions and the Press, and above all by our exemplary lives.

Insistence on mere non-violence without concrete action is apt to be misleading. You have all sorts of conundrums put before you to show that non-violence is merely another name for cowardice and timidity. This false notion is partly due to the fact that equal insistence is not laid upon non-cooperation. Non-violence and non-cooperation are two wheels of the chariot. And taken together they require the greatest courage and sacrifice in their votaries. It is the weapon, as Gandhiji is never tired of saying, of the bravest; and what is more, it is the bravery of spirit that is the requisite thing. Thus it permits everyone, man, woman and child, the strong as well as the weak in body, to avail of it, provided one is stout-hearted and firm of faith and devoid of fear. It is non-cooperation which gives power and strength to non-violence, readiness to die, and a determined refusal to obey and cooperate with evil.

Just consider our present situation. We blame Gandhiji for lack of complete success in our political struggle for freedom, and we cavil at the method he advises. But have we really followed his advice? Is not British rule in its entirety based on our own cooperation? Do we not serve our masters and often even take pride and glory in such service? The army, the police and the Civil Services are manned by us, and our brightest young men labour strenuously to put on such shackles and consider them adornments. We are ourselves—I refer particularly to the English-educated middle classes—the greatest sinners; and yet we blame Gandhiji. And has the method really failed? In spite of our tragic shortcomings, in spite of our weakness of faith, in spite of our half-hearted and

apologetic pursuit of the method as a mere matter of policy, our success has been great indeed. The political awakening among the masses is marvellous.

The administration of a big country like India cannot be carried on by any foreigner, the Englishman or whoever he may be, without Indian cooperation. And if that cooperation is withheld, foreign domination is not possible. This is the lesson we have to burn into our minds, the minds of the masses as well as of the classes.

It is in this sense wholly true to say that non-cooperation is a powerful weapon for the defence of the country against an aggressor. As I have already said, extermination is a thing of the past. Aggressors aim at exploitation by making the subject people work for them and for their profit. And work is cooperation. Non-cooperation will make exploitation impossible and thus aggression itself unprofitable. The process of non-cooperation—we are aware of it—will put our non-violence through terrific tests. But if we can stand assaults, torture and shootings without any retaliation or even an attempt at retaliation from our side and persist in non-cooperation, the struggle must end in success. Examples of such heroic sufferings are not wanting. Guru-ka-Bagh morchas of the Sikhs, the Dharasana episodes, and the behaviour of processionists at innumerable places are shining examples of the practice of non-violence on a large scale. And the struggle of Bardoli peasants for relief against excessive land taxes is a valuable lesson in non-cooperation.

Much is said, in order to terrify people, of the results of the use of violence by the invaders and aggressors. But the thing is obviously overdone. I believe in the first place that human nature, though often bad and vile enough, will ultimately recoil from persistent cruelty and torture and slaughter of non-resisting non-cooperators. Suffering cheerfully borne will melt the heart of even a savage.

And after all does war—without non-cooperation—really sustain freedom? In the first place, national policies based on force and violence as instruments of defence lead to a race for armaments, and that race by itself indubitably leads to war. Moreover there is no finality in armaments. The machine masters and ultimately overwhelms mankind; and then what happens to the vanquished? Once the army is overthrown and defeated, people are forced to surrender.

What we have really to show is that people can act courageously and suffer hardship and even death without the temporary stimulus, and indeed intoxication, of war. A well-organised mass movement based on non-violence and non-cooperation for the noble purpose of winning or retaining national independence must raise people, not only young well-built soldiers but even the old and the infirm and men and women alike, to greater heights than a bloody war ever can. It is the hearts of the leaders that doubt and quail, but the heart of the common people is sound enough.

Non-cooperation with the aggressor and the foreigner is plain enough. That will obviously



involve the non-payment of taxes, a refusal to enter his service or do his bidding, a refusal to work in his mills and factories, and non-resort to his law courts. But it may become necessary even to non-cooperate with those of our countrymen, our own kith and kin, who flout the national will and cooperate with the aggressor. The thing to remember is that our non-cooperation has always to be non-violent and will, therefore, never do personal injury to the opponent. So there should be no interference with the supply of water to the thirsty or food to the hungry, medical assistance to the sick or burial to the dead. Within these broad limits a community is entitled to protect itself from its own backsliding brethren. And where public interests so demand, even filial and all family considerations must yield. National freedom is above everything. Human history teaches us that no nation has ever been able through violence to retain freedom and defend its independence against superior violence. Given the correct training, this is possible only through non-violent non-cooperation.

Non-violence is not a mere negative concept. It is essentially a constructive contribution to world politics. The present structure of society puts a definite premium on violence. Vast aggregates of private wealth in the hands of individuals who also constitute the ruling classes in the community naturally favour violence as a means of defence. It is now a commonplace that often so-called national interests are in substance nothing but the interests of private capitalists and investors in foreign lands. And even in local disturbances it is the moneyed man, the man of property, who shouts the loudest for the use of force for his protection. The adoption of non-violence as a national policy will inevitably involve a radical alteration in the social and economic spheres.

It is obvious that national wealth must be more widely and equitably diffused and social inequalities must disappear. Every citizen must have equal opportunities to grow. Much in socialism and communism will be found useful and admirable in a non-violent society, the basic difference being that a believer in non-violence holds that changes can be brought about by peaceful persuasion and non-violent methods, whereas those who profess the other doctrines do not share this faith and think that violent expropriation is the only course.

A believer in non-violence does not wish to abolish capitalism by violence. He wishes the community to avail itself of the results of individual enterprise, and he takes all sting out of capitalism when he converts a capitalist into a trustee for the benefit of the nation. If a capitalist were really to consider himself a trustee, he would never endeavour to swell his profits by sweating labour. If his wealth were ultimately to be applied for the benefit of the community, there would be no incentive left to enrich oneself by improper and Shylockean methods. He would, even in the process of earning his profits, genuinely endeavour to benefit his fellowmen as widely as possible.

The real considerations in a society founded upon non-violence may well be twofold. Firstly, we have no outside countries to exploit, no foreign markets to capture, with the aid of our armies; and secondly, there must be profitable employment for every fit person. I do not think that in a free India the adjustment of industries will be beyond the bounds of human ingenuity. The needs of the hand-spinning industry will have to be particularly borne in mind, capable as it is of giving employment to millions of people who would otherwise be wholly without work. In planning an economic programme suited to our needs we can draw with great profit on the great social experiment in Russia. I personally believe that working on cooperative lines is the true way to national salvation and to non-violence also.

For the propagation of non-violence on sound lines it is necessary that a picture — at least in broad outline, but distinct and well-defined, not vague and shadowy — of a well-planned non-violent society should be drawn and placed before the public. Such a scheme would serve many purposes. It would educate and make people think, and the plan itself would benefit by public discussion and criticism. As it is, people are left in doubt and do not know where non-violence will land them and India.

I realise that, like the experiment in Russia, the way to perfecting a plan of a non-violent society must be through trial and error. But basic principles must be settled and (as far as possible) precisely stated, and outlines well drawn. Shri Mashruwala has recently made attempts in that direction. His articles published in newspapers and magazines were both thoughtful and thought-provoking.

I dare say that adequate material for drawing up a preliminary outline as a basis of discussion for planned non-violence can be found in the writings of Gandhiji spread over a period of 40 years. Valuable hints can also be gained from Tolstoy and other eminent writers. But at present the material is all scattered, the picture much too hazy. Like the famous *Communist Manifesto*, we should have a manifesto of non-violence and non-cooperation.

The political and economic structure of a non-violent society must be broad-based on the conscious will of the people as a whole. If force as a dominating sanction is eliminated, then cheerful and willing obedience to the national laws is the prerequisite to any durable constitution. People will only offer non-violent resistance to an aggressor, if they are proud of their country and prize their national freedom. But if national freedom merely means for a vast majority of the people a slavish, care-worn existence with ever-present fear of want and hunger, then it will not be surprising if there is not too keen a readiness to offer non-violent resistance and to die for an order of things which has done so little for the individual.

In a non-violent State there should not be any communal questions or any minority problems.



When the highest rules of morality and ethics become the mainsprings of political policy and administrative action and non-violence actually becomes the foundation of national life, then there will not be the bickerings and rivalries and struggle for power with which we are nowadays so familiar.

The aim, it is said, of all good government is to cease to govern, for the State to fade away and for society to become classless. These aims can only be realised by genuine non-violence. Government will be truly the government by consent. Problems of poverty and social amelioration confront all communities and require similar treatment. It is the fear that majorities will resort to the use of force and violence which poisons the air. The moment non-violence becomes the instrument of national policy the majority will have no sanction at its back other than the willing consent of the minority, and if it wishes to rule (if rule it can be called at all), it can only do so by winning the confidence and disarming all suspicion of the minorities. Indeed in a fully non-violent society there are no minorities, for all are one people.

The conclusion, in my view, is that in our present environment non-violence can only succeed as a creed and nothing else. Just as Soviet Russia made a deliberate attempt to alter the whole structure of society and to modify all the current and accepted notions of human nature by conscious State effort, similarly those who believe in non-violence and non-cooperation as the future hope of humanity must acquire power in the body politic in non-violent ways, and then endeavour to make non-violence the only essential instrument of our national policy. I personally think that the ideal of non-violence is not unrealisable. On the contrary I think that it can be reached, and that humanity, after the experience of the horrors of two World Wars in the course of a quarter of a century, will willingly strive after it. But to attain that goal we shall have to educate public opinion in its favour, more particularly by radically planning the whole field of education on the basis of non-violence. We must begin with the child, and mould the mind of the coming generation accordingly.

So far non-violence (ahimsa) has been practised to regulate men's personal lives, and therefore one life, well lived according to the principles of ahimsa, has influenced many others. But the sphere of influence has been limited to the region of private and personal affairs. Unfortunately, during thousands of years, mankind has been taught that private life and national life are things apart, governed by totally different principles. Gandhiji teaches us that there is no such distinction. That lesson can only be learnt by the people as a whole, if those in charge of national affairs first learn it themselves and then endeavour to impart it to others. I fear we have not done our duty by the people. We have doubted and hesitated ourselves. How then can we blame the people? Let Congressmen first be firm believers themselves, give a little further time to the people in general, and then put them to the test.

## Notes

### Evacuees from Burma

Much has been written about the hardships of evacuees from Burma. Making allowance for all possible exaggerations, the remainder itself is a horrible tale of woes. Some of them must be inevitable in the circumstances that face us. What has to be dealt with is the avoidable hardships and blatant discrimination said to be in vogue in the treatment of Britishers and Indians. I understand that there are over eight lacs of Indians in Burma, yet to be evacuated. Life for them in Burma is impossible. The question is too big to be tackled by any existing organisation. It requires a special temporary committee of experienced men whose sole work would be to attend to the orderly and quick evacuation of the eight to nine lacs of men and their disposal after they are on Indian soil. Let us hope that there are enough public-spirited men who will make it their business to form themselves into a committee and see this very humanitarian work through.

Sevagram, 20-4-42

M. K. G.

### Simple Treatment for Cholera

Satish Babu recently spent 15 days in doctoring and educating the inhabitants of fourteen villages where an epidemic of cholera had broken out. He took with him one of his own workers and obtained the help of four village doctors. The following was the result:

Number of villages under treatment	14
" " cholera victims	114
" " recoveries	95
" " still under treatment	2
" " dead	17
" " those given saline injections —	
intravenous and subcutaneous	112

Out of the 17 that died 5 were beyond medical aid when Satish Babu got to them.

Only the following medicines were required for the treatment: 1. Calomel, 2. Bicarbonate of Soda. These were administered in the beginning and continued until such time as the bile began to flow freely. Subsequently 3. Castor oil and 4. Kaolin were given. 5. As constant diarrhoea causes great loss of blood serum in the patient, it is necessary every now and again to administer saline injections. The salt for the saline injection is prepared thus: Dissolve ordinary eating salt in water, and after filtering it bring it to boiling point. Continue to boil until the salt forms into crystals. Sometimes an alkaline saline is needed, in which case bicarbonate of soda can be added.

The villagers were terrified. Satish Babu and his helpers were soon able to gain their confidence and get complete cooperation from them. What might have been a severe outbreak was thus nipped in the bud.

Sevagram, 13-4-42

A. K.

By R. B. Gregg

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