

# HARIJAN

12 Pages

Editor: PYARELAL

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TWO ANNAS

## HOW GANDHIJI VIEWS HIS PEACE MISSION

[In the *Searchlight* of Patna of the 30th March 1947 appears a report of the proceedings of a meeting Gandhiji held at a refugees' camp in Bihar. The answers that he gave to the various demands of the refugees strikingly reveal his approach to the question of the restoration of peace and friendliness between the two communities.

These answers deserve the careful attention of all those who seek the restoration of peace and friendliness in place of the madness that is stalking this hapless land at the moment. —Ed.]

"As far as possible I have refrained from discussing the affairs in Noakhali in my speeches. But whenever I have had occasion to speak about Noakhali, I admit that I have spoken with great restraint. Do the Muslims want that I should not speak about the sins committed by them in Noakhali and that I should only speak about the sins of the Hindus in Bihar? If I do that, I will be a coward. To me the sins of the Noakhali Muslims and the Bihar Hindus are of the same magnitude and equally condemnable," observed Gandhiji while replying to a series of grievances set forth in written memoranda which were submitted to him this morning by the local Muslim refugees at a camp here.

One memorandum suggested that Gandhiji's reference to the Noakhali incidents in his speeches instead of suppressing the Hindu feeling here would aggravate it. Gandhiji said that as the Muslims today generally considered him as their enemy, he was sometimes obliged to speak with restraint. In the Punjab worse things were happening and at first he did not believe the newspaper stories, but his subsequent enquiries made him believe that far more excesses than the newspapers reported were being committed in the Punjab. Because it was the doing of a particular community, should he not speak about it? His mission could not be successful by such suppression, he said.

Gandhiji thereafter replying to another memorandum, which stated that the signatories had no confidence in the present ministry, said: "I told the Hindus of Noakhali, who also expressed such no confidence in Mr. Saheed Suhrawardy, that they could not remove Saheed Saheb from the ministry as he was returned by the separate electorate system. So long as Saheed Saheb enjoys the confidence of the community he represents, no one can remove him. Similarly, how can you remove the ministers when they have been sent by the Hindu

electorate? This unfortunate situation has been created by the communal electorate system which, you know, I have always condemned. Dr. Khan Saheb also said the same thing the other day that so long as he enjoyed the confidence of the Pathans there was no question of resignation. Moreover, what will happen if the ministry goes out? There will again be the rule of the bureaucratic government. That apart, I can take good work from these ministers as my relationship with them is most friendly."

Referring to the demand that fifty per cent of the officers and constables put in charge of new *thanas* should be Muslims, Gandhiji replied: "I disapproved of the very same demand of the Noakhali Hindus. This demand cuts across my peace mission. If conceded, this will mean so many small Pakistans and a division of Bihar. After all, wherever you live, you have to live by creating mutual goodwill and friendly relations with your neighbours. Even the Qaid-e-Azam once said that in the Pakistan areas the majority must so behave as to win the confidence of the minority. In the same manner, I am urging upon the Hindus here to win your confidence. Either Pakistan or Hindustan, whichever is established, it must be based on justice and fairplay."

Referring to another demand that the Muslims may be allowed to resettle in certain exclusive areas, Gandhiji said: "You cannot force the Government to keep you in certain exclusive areas. Could I tell that to Saheed Saheb for the Noakhali Hindus? I never gave any encouragement to the Noakhali Hindus for such a move. I told the Hindus of Noakhali that if they were afraid, they could go anywhere if they got compensation. And why should the Government not pay compensation when they got the properties? Similarly, I will tell you to go anywhere provided you get adequate compensation. But I must tell you that it is not my heart's desire. Leaving your homestead in such a manner is nothing but cowardice. If Government is not prepared to pay compensation, I should say it is unworthy of them and Government cannot refuse it. Moreover, if the ministers who have been returned by the Hindu votes say that the Hindus here have gone beyond control, it is better for them to consume themselves in the flames of the Hindu rage than continue in office. Government has to do justice and cannot afford injustice in any manner."

Gandhiji thereafter referred to the Muslim grievances as put forward in the memorandum regarding the reported appointment of Mr. Justice Rueben to conduct the Bihar Riots Enquiry. Gandhiji



said: "The memorandum suggested that the Muslims had no faith in Mr. Rueben. But they never suggested whom they wanted. We must have faith in some non-Muslim as Mr. Justice Rueben was. There is no harm in the One Man Commission. If the Muslims want, they can submit a panel of names from which the committee should be appointed. Then I can inform the authorities."

With regard to the demand of restoration and finding out of abducted women, Gandhiji said: "Since my arrival in Bihar I have been telling all those Muslims who told me about the abducted girls to give me the names and the family connections of such girls in order to help finding them out if they were still alive. But upto now not one name has been submitted to me. I again ask you to submit the names of the unfortunate girls."

In the meeting place within the refugee camp, Mahant Bhagwat Das, M. L. A., was also present against whom Muslims brought forward charges that he infuriated the Hindu mob during the riots. Bhagwat Das then stood up and told Gandhiji that he was innocent and asked the Muslims to bring forward specific instances to prove the charge. To the greatest satisfaction of Gandhiji, Mr. Bhagwat Das said: "Gandhiji, I am prepared to face any enquiry and I suggest that the Muslims themselves form an enquiry committee and judge me and my conduct during the riots. I have full confidence in those persons who are accusing me and let them judge my conduct."

### BIGGER YIELDS, LESS NUTRITIVE VALUE

[The following appears as an editorial note in the *Vegetarian Messenger* of December 1946. V. G. D.]

Some investigations concerning the nutritional value of New Zealand spinach and the relation between bigger yields and nutritive value were recently carried out by the Department of Agriculture, Missouri. As in the case of ordinary spinach the comparatively large proportion of oxalic acid which it contains does not permit of its calcium being utilized. The results of the investigation showed that New Zealand spinach contains from 21 to 30 milligrammes of Vitamin C per 100 grammes of fresh material, ordinary spinach from 40 to 100 milligrammes, and Kale, turnip greens and broccoli 75 to 200 milligrammes. The degrees of greenness in a vegetable, it was suggested, does not indicate any standard by which its vitamin or mineral content may be judged.

An interesting item in the investigation was that when New Zealand spinach was encouraged to grow in profusion by the addition of nitrogenous fertilizers, its vitamin C content was reduced. Comments upon this, made in an Australian medical journal, suggest that "the ever-continuing search for bigger yields may be a matter of regret from the point of view of nutrition." In this country there is probably not sufficient evidence available at the present time to confirm this fact, but one thing is quite evident: where greens have been heavily fed with artificial fertilizers their size has

been extraordinary, but their flavour has deteriorated very considerably. The 'forced' greens which we get early in the season also suffer from the same lack of flavour. As in the case of so many other food stuffs, the more we interfere (beyond a certain minimum) with their natural growth or "make up" as in the case of whole grains, the less of their nutritive elements will we obtain.

### AMERICAN DRUGS RACKET

In the *Readers' Digest* of October last there is an article by Mr. W. La Varre with the caption 'Quarantine for Dr. Quack' introduced by the editor with this sentence:

"Our Latin-American neighbours want us to stop selling them dangerous and fraudulent drugs."

Now that instead of a British be-knighted Indian we have a man of the people as our representative in the United States, we hope he will lose no time in inducing the Government of the United States to lay an embargo on the export to India of every quack remedy against which it protects the people of the United States. Meanwhile as these nostrums are being advertised and sold in India, it is necessary that our people should be asked to be on their guard against their tempting claims.

One of the drugs on this black list is MENDACO which in the United States is labelled with the warning that it must not be given to children under ten or to tuberculosis sufferers, as it contains potassium iodide. No such label, we are told, warns the millions of simple Latin-Americans. That being so, we are not likely to go wrong, if we presume that the bottles sold in India also carry no such warning. Then there are CYSTEX, FORMODE, VI-TABS, HYNEX, ROGENA and CEREGEN claiming to cure one complaint or another, but United States drug inspectors say that these drugs are spurious, and the advertising claims fraudulent. This list is only illustrative, not exhaustive.

Some of the facts disclosed by Mr. La Varre are startling and throw a flood of light on the methods of unscrupulous manufacturers.

A major drug factory produced penicillin under contract for U.S. Army and Navy use. Federal inspectors rejected a large batch; it was faulty, might be lethal. However the dangerous stuff labelled 'For export only' was shipped to South America where it was bought up at premium prices by hospitals and physicians. South America similarly became the unfortunate recipient of a batch of thousands of packages of gauze bandage, which, not having been properly sterilized and being found to be contaminated, were returned to the manufacturer by Government inspectors. A Chicago manufacturer concocts a dangerous abortifacient, capable of producing serious or even fatal consequences. Prevented from selling his dope in the United States, he swapped English labels for Spanish and is making his fortune in Latin America.



Let the Indian buyer beware of course, but the Government of India must prohibit the import of these fraudulent drugs, and Provincial Governments should take a leaf out of Denmark's book and forbid all patent medicine advertising in the public press.

V. G. D.

## STORY HOUR

(Continued from page 507. No. 51-52, Vol. X.)  
[XI is taken from *World Digest* of January 1947.

—V. G. D.]

### XI

There was a *fakir* who was silent most of the time and spared his words when a nod or sign would do.

A gentleman once went up to him and said with mock humility: "May I trouble you, holy father, with three questions?"

The *fakir* nodded assent.

"The first question, father, is about God. People say He is, but I cannot see Him and no one will show Him to me, and therefore I cannot believe in Him. Will you explain?"

The *fakir* gave a nod.

"My second question is about the devil. The Koran says he is made of fire. But if so, how can hell fire hurt him?"

A nod.

"The third question concerns myself. The Koran says every action of man is decreed. But if I must do a certain thing, how can God judge me for it, having Himself decreed it? Please answer me."

The *fakir* nodded once again, seized a clod of earth and flung it with all his might in the face of the questioner.

The gentleman was angry and caused the *fakir* to be arrested and brought before the judge to whom he complained, adding that his pain was so great he could hardly bear it. The judge asked the *fakir* if the story was true.

"This man came to me," replied the *fakir*, "and asked me three questions which I carefully answered. He told me that people said that there is God but that he could not see Him, nor could anyone show him God and so he could not believe in Him. Now he says he has that pain in his face from the clod of earth I threw at him, but I cannot see it. Will your Honour ask him to show us his pain, for how can I believe in it if I cannot see it?"

The judge looked at the complainant and both smiled.

"Again this man asked how if Satan were made of fire, hell fire could hurt him? Now he will admit that Adam was created of earth and that he himself also is earth. But if he is of earth, how could earth hurt him?"

"As to the third question," continued the *fakir*, "if it was decreed that I should throw a clod in this man's face, how dare he bring me here for so doing?"

The judge allowed that the *fakir* had answered the three questions with his clod, and advised him, however, to reply to future questions in a non-violent manner.

## NOTES

### The Title

[Explaining the title of his recently published brochure\*, Prof. Kumarappa has sent the following short note which will surely interest the readers. —Ed.]

*Lord Clive* is generally known as the founder of the British Empire in India.

Robert Clive (1725-1774) as a child was the despair of his teachers. He was sent out to India as a "writer" with the East India Company at 18 years of age. When he returned to England at the age of 35 he had acquired a fortune of £300,000 and a quit rent of £27,000 a year. The principles of public finance and honesty laid down by this marauder statesman have held sway with the Government of India to this day.

*Lord Keynes* has overshadowed British finance, both International and Home, since the beginning of this century.

John Maynard Keynes (1884-1946) has been the genius behind British treaties, claims for reparations, settlement of war debts, monetary policy of deflation in Great Britain, and the guiding spirit behind the Bretton Woods Conference. His influence on British Indian finance has been no less important. It started with his "Indian Currency and Finance" about 34 years ago.

As Lord Clive was the first of the dynasty let us hope Lord Keynes was the last of the line.

\* *Clive to Keynes* (A brief survey of our Public Debts and Credits) by J. C. Kumarappa, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, Price Annas Twelve, Postage Anna One.

### Hindustani Examinations Results

Gujarat Hindustani Prachar Samiti, Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad, holds four Examinations — First, Second, Third and Fourth — in Hindustani, twice in a year, in February and September. The summary of the results of the Examinations held on 2-2-'47 is given below:—

Examination	Applications received	Candidates appeared	Successful	Unsuccessful	P. C.*
First	2952	2186	1458	726	66.75
Second	902	746	533	205	71.5
Third	249	213	128	85	60.0
Fourth	60	48	29	19	62.5

I take this opportunity to inform all the Hindustani Centres in Gujarat and Kathiawad that the Examinations held by the Hindustani Prachar Sabha, Wardha, are meant for the provinces where there is no organization to hold the examinations in Hindustani. "Hindustani Kabil" is an all India Examination to be held by the Hindustani Prachar Sabha, Wardha. Till the time of writing no information has been received as to when this examination will be held, what are its rules and regulations, and what are the text-books prescribed for this examination.

GIRIRAJ KISHORE  
Examinations Secretary

\* Results withheld 8.



# HARIJAN

April 13

1947

## WHAT IS PROGRESS?

The idea of spreading large scale industries seems to be associated with being up-to-date, scientific and progressive. Correspondents often harp on this and enquire if the discouragement of textile mills and banning of rice mills are not putting the clock back. Hence it is profitable to spend a few moments to ponder over what is progress and what is scientific.

Today, the public may be made to believe anything provided they are told often enough what to believe. Propaganda has become a science and is ousting all individual thought. Even education in our colleges and schools is taking the form of promulgation of undigested half truths. When rightly understood, science is the basis of all village industries, and village industries afford the fullest scope for scientific research and application.

### WHAT IS SCIENCE?

Science is not the creation of man. Nature works in well-defined grooves according to immutable laws. When man understands these laws and reduces them to a system of knowledge, we call it science. It follows, therefore, that any course of action to be termed scientific should conform to nature in all its bearings and where we deviate from nature, to that extent we are unscientific. Man may understand vaguely the lines on which nature works, and make use of that partial knowledge for his own purpose, deviating by so doing from the course ordained by nature. Such deviation will lead ultimately to his own destruction because he himself is a product of nature. Destruction so caused may be at his own hands or through mal-application of a partial understanding.

### PROGRESS

Progress signifies both the search after knowledge and truth as found in nature and its application to satisfy human needs. In the measure in which we are able to pull alongside nature's dictates, we shall be progressing in the right direction. But in so far as we are pulling against the course of nature, we shall be creating violence and destruction which may take the form of social conflicts, personal ill-health and the spread of anti-social feelings, such as, hatred, suspicion and fear. From these symptoms we shall know whether we are progressing scientifically or not. If our course of action leads to goodwill, peace and contentment, we shall be on the side of progress, however little the material attainments may be and if it ends in dissatisfaction and conflict, we shall be retrogressing, however much in abundance we may possess material things.

## ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

The activity of man to satisfy his elementary needs must, therefore, not merely produce the material goods but should also be conducive towards the growth and development of his own personality. When a man eats food it does not only satisfy his palate but replenishes the waste products of his body, maintains it in good condition and allows for growth and further development. If the food that he ate only satisfied the palate without contributing to the two other aspects of his needs, it will be of no use. If a person drank water sweetened by saccharin all the time, however much he may like the sweet taste, he cannot enjoy good health and strength as all the elements necessary for his body building, maintenance, replacement of wastage are not present in proper proportions. Taste is a good thing but it is not all. The main function that food plays is performed after it has left our palate. It is the manner in which the food gets assimilated in the body that is going to tell ultimately. Similarly, work also must not be judged by its outward appearance,—nor by the quantity of things produced. Work should develop the human personality and be as food to all the human faculties. When we, through greed or false notions or a wrong sense of proportion, interfere with nature hoping to obtain short-cuts, we generally end up by being wasteful. Nature does not believe in short-cuts. The mills of God grind slowly. Hence in our hurry, we often bring destruction on our heads and we imagine such quick results to be a sign of progress.

### FOOD

For instance, nature packs up all nutritious articles, e. g. foodgrains, fruits, eggs, etc. carefully in such a way that the ingredients are kept intact and in proper proportion as will be necessary for the users. But when we destroy nature's packing we create counter influences which also destroy the value of food.

Rice, to cite one example, is packed up well in the husk, coated with bran and equipped with pericarp and the grain. When this is to be eaten all that we have to do is to dehusk the rice. Such dehusked rice, because of its nutritive nature, will be attacked by weevils, vermins, rats, etc. Therefore, when we require rice we should dehusk what is needed at the moment and keep the rest as paddy. Then alone we get the whole benefit from eating the cereal. But man in his hurry uses a rice mill and as he cannot store rice when dehusked he proceeds to polish it and takes away all its nutritious elements. By so doing he no doubt increases the storage properties of rice but at the cost of its food value. This is an instance in which human interference with nature is thoroughly unscientific and injures man. Hence, rice mills are against progress and however skilfully the mechanism may have been devised, it is unscientific in the true sense.



## HUSBANDING OF RESOURCES

A scientific use of resources should mean that we get the fullest benefit out of what we find around us. Man in his eagerness to use mechanical devices is often irrational in the utilization of resources. For instance, if paper is to be made out of bamboo by the simple hand process, we do not use bamboos cut fresh from the forest. The bamboos in the forest when they are first cut are used in various ways for roofing, for being made into mats, sieves, baskets and other household articles and then, when they have served their term as such, the broken and used-up bamboo pieces are converted into pulp, and paper is made from it.

But the so-called scientific industrialist cannot afford to work on this basis as his machines are to be kept going all the time, so in his hurry he has to get the tender bamboos from the forest and feed them into his mills to be converted into paper. For this purpose, he has to cultivate forests of bamboos, directing human energy into lines which were totally unnecessary in the former case. Hence, the mill process of making paper as we have shown, is thoroughly unscientific and wasteful in the utilization of natural resources.

Similarly, if we have to utilize as food the nutritious elements found in nature, we may get *gur* from palm trees that grow wild on uncultivable lands and obtain the whole benefit of the sap, minus the water which it contains, along with sugar in a digestible form, and various minerals and salts.

But man in his anxiety to use his knowledge puts up sugar mills, converts good lands which may be used for cultivation of cereals into sugar-cane growing lands and then the sugar-cane is converted into sugar, wasting bulk of the minerals and salts in the molasses which are thrown out as unfit for human consumption and from which he prepares rum and gin to poison the people and to acquire for himself the money they possess.

Even if sugar be required to be produced by hand, the *rab* prepared from palm juice can be centrifuged, and having obtained the sugar, the molasses left can now be converted into edible *gur* rich in minerals and salts. Molasses produced from the sugar mills, as they are affected by the use of sulphur compounds in the processes, are not fit for human consumption and have to be wasted or converted into intoxicating drinks as stated above.

Here again we see that sugar mills are thoroughly unscientific and wasteful of human resources. They, like the rice mills, are only to satisfy the greed for accumulation of wealth by individuals at the cost of nutritious food products found in nature.

## UTILIZATION OF RESOURCES

In our quest for ways and means of satisfying our needs we have to take into consideration the resources available to us and make the best use of them possible. It will be unscientific to use coal for fuel where it is not available and where crude oil can be easily obtained. Similarly, where coal is available and where no firewood is available, it would be senseless to bring firewood from distant

places for purposes of fuel. In the same manner, where human energy is available cheaply and in abundance it will be irrational to obtain other motive forces from distant places. In India, where people are suffering from unemployment and lack of occupation, to produce our needs to resort to mill production, which ultimately spreads unemployment, is unthinkable. From this point of view, hand spinning, however slow it may be, is scientific and in line with human progress while textile mills are irrational and spell ruin to the people.

## PERVERSION OF TASTE

Through propaganda people's natural taste is perverted. They are made to believe smell and colour are to be avoided. They may be taught soon to hold that paper roses are better than natural ones as the latter do not "stink". The best example of this type of perversion for business purposes is the present drive to popularize *vanaspati ghee*. Here the mill prostitutes scientific knowledge to deodorize and decolourize the natural oil, to substitute nutritionally inferior oils for the traditionally used ones, to solidify vegetable oils while lowering or destroying their digestibility. They render all this disservice at an enhanced price. Is this not taking liberties with nature, science and progress? Do we not deserve it if in return nature visits us with blindness, loss of powers of growth and reproduction? This is industrialization in all its nakedness. Such is what passes for science and progress today, heralding their advent by highly paid advertisements, exploiting the ignorance of the people.

## MACHINES AND TOOLS

This does not mean that there is no room for machines. Where standardization and regimentation of labour are called for, the use of large scale machines is indicated. Where precision tools are to be made and standardized articles are essential, then production of these through machines will be necessary. But in consumption goods duplication and standardization are not of the very essence of their being. A comb may be made of horn by hand; but no two combs so made will be precisely alike. There is no purpose in standardizing such articles. Hence making combs from plastics is not called for. Similarly there are many articles in common use which do not call for standardization. On the other hand, most consumption goods call for the catering of individual need and taste. In such cases, only cottage and village industries can answer the purpose. When a man has to be fitted with a pair of shoes, the shoes have to be made for his feet, even so as to conform to any deformities that he may possess. Such making of shoes for a particular person's feet is scientific and will help the shoe-maker to use his resourcefulness and ingenuity to meet the need and thus help him to develop his capacity; while standardized shoes, though they may produce the articles in abundance, cannot be said to be thoroughly scientific in so far as they are not calculated to fit any particular foot exactly. So large scale production of shoes as compared with the work of the *mochi* is again unscientific and so against progress.



## VIOLENCE AND DESTRUCTION

In the last two generations we have known the results of mechanical production of standardized goods. The raw materials are needed in large quantities and they have to be collected from the four corners of the world and the finished products have to be assured of a definite market and for these the ocean routes have to be kept clear and safe. These conditions have brought about the two catastrophic global wars. In the course of these wars much of the human production and skill has gone into destruction. Any war is definitely against progress, it turns men back to the jungle and so can be termed unscientific. Since our activities to satisfy our human needs have culminated in these global wars, they are unscientific and retrogressive.

## CONCLUSION

Therefore, when we attempt to plan production in our country to satisfy our needs, we have to be careful to choose the most scientific method and the most progressive ways. We must remember that production of a multiplicity of goods is not synonymous with progress, nor is destruction a sign of science. Attainment of quick results are not conducive to the production of culture. Nature works in mysterious ways and demands its own time. No man in a hurry can be either progressive or scientific. We need patience and we need a ballast to our lives. This we can find only through satisfying our needs by village industries and decentralized production.

Large scale industries may be used as a necessary evil as has already been referred to above in the production of tools and machines needed for cottage and village industries and provision of basic raw materials such as sulphuric acid, steel, etc. It can also provide natural monopolies such as, communications, means of transport, public utilities like water and power. Anything more than this will spell ruin and destruction to humanity. It calls for great care and forethought to be able to judge. However, we cannot resort to centralized methods of production in the satisfaction of our daily needs. Wherever there is a doubt it is safer to fall back on the decentralized methods of production. Hence, we hold that the proper application of science and the way to real progress lies in resorting to village and cottage industries to satisfy our daily needs.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

## BOOKS

By J. C. Kumarappa

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## GANDHIJI'S BIHAR TOUR DIARY

26-3-'47

Gandhiji began his post-prayer speech by referring to the common weakness of misunderstanding opponents attributing to them motives which could not be proved. Such behaviour often led to untoward results which prudent people would avoid. Such misunderstanding was responsible for differences between the Congress and the League. Both the organizations had a large following. The responsibility resting on them was all the greater for their popularity. Their conduct towards each other had to be above suspicion.

Gandhiji next referred to his visit to Kako Relief Camp and the village of Saistabad. Men and women burst into tears as they saw him. He told them that to break under one's sorrow did not become brave people. All religions taught that sorrow should be bravely borne.

As he watched crowds of sturdy men pursuing him, catching hold of his car and shouting vociferously *Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai* etc., he could well imagine the havoc they must have wrought when they attacked a handful of Musalmans. The Hindus should be ashamed of the act. They should take a vow never to slip into the madness again. Nor should they think of taking revenge for the incidents of the Punjab or the like. Would they themselves become beasts simply because others happened to sink to that level? If ever they became mad again, they should destroy him first. His prayer in that case would be that God may give him the strength to pray to Him to forgive his murderers, that is to purify their hearts. He prayed that God may enable him to show by example what true bravery was. No one could mistake arson and murder of innocent women and children as a brave act. It was cowardice of the meanest type.

Gandhiji next referred to a complaint that he had received from the Hindus of Kako enumerating their sufferings at the hands of Muslim *zamindars*. He interpreted it as intended to minimize their own offence against the Musalmans. It was not manliness to attempt to do so.

Again Gandhiji referred to a report that he had heard of the Hindus threatening the Musalmans that they would wreak vengeance on them when he (Gandhiji) was gone. It ill-became the votaries of the *Ramayana* to try to suppress the fourteen or fifteen per cent of the Muslims in their midst. Men aspiring to be free could hardly think of enslaving others. If they tried to do so, they would only be binding their own chains of slavery tighter. It became their duty to go and beg forgiveness of the Musalmans, and by their true repentance they should try to persuade them to go back to their homes. They should rebuild their houses. They should make their sorrow their own.

27-3-'47

In his post-prayer speech at Okri village this evening, Gandhiji uttered the warning that Indians might lose the golden apple of independence which was almost within their grasp, out of insanity,



which had caused scenes of desolation and destruction and stated that the peace that reigned in the land was only on the surface. He said this while referring to his visit during the morning and afternoon to some riot-affected villages.

Gandhiji added that they knew the very first pronouncement that the Viceroy had made when he assumed office stated that he was sent as the last Viceroy to wind up British rule in India. They must have noticed that the pronouncement was deliberate, unconditional and unequivocal. He knew that it had become a fashion, though not without cause, to distrust every British declaration. He for one would advise the acceptance of every declaration at its face value without qualifying it in the light of past experience to the contrary. His experience was that it was the deceiver who always lost and never the dupe if he was honest and brave. But he very much feared on account of what had happened in the country that by their folly or, what was worse than that, insanity, they might let slip out of their hands their hard-won prize before it was strongly locked in their unbreakable fist.

Gandhiji referred to Bihar and the Punjab and said that he had wisdom enough to see that they themselves might tempt the Viceroy to eat his own words, uttered solemnly on a solemn occasion. Heaven forbid that such an occasion should arise, but, if it did, even though his might be a voice in the wilderness, he would declare that the Viceroy should firmly and truly carry out his declaration and complete the British withdrawal.

Gandhiji referred to the police strike, and said that the police, like the scavengers, should never go on strike. Theirs was an essential service and they should render that service irrespective of pay.

There were many other effective and honourable means of getting grievances redressed. If he was a Cabinet Minister, he would offer the strikers nothing whatever under the threat of a strike, which implied force. He would give them the choice of an impartial arbitration, without any condition.

"It will be a bad day for India if the military, including the police, rule India," Gandhiji said. He hoped the police would call off their strike unconditionally, and request the Ministry to appoint an impartial arbitrator to investigate their case.

Gandhiji also appealed to the policemen not to behave in the manner in which they were behaving then. Every policeman, he said, was a servant of the people and his duty was to behave like the *Khudai Khidmatgars*. Policemen were the custodians of law.

Continuing, Gandhiji said that if every man, woman and child tried to understand his or her duty and if there was no theft or dacoity, then there would be no need for policemen. Everyone could then be a policeman and help each other.

Gandhiji expressed regret that the Bihar Government had employed British soldiers to deal with the strikers. No matter what the cause was, and wherever it was, the Indian Governments must never requisition the services of British soldiers to

deal with civil disturbances. Otherwise it would mean that the Indian Governments were helpless without British arms.

28-3-'47

At the prayer meeting Gandhiji began by saying that he had passed a very full and heavy day. The day was begun with a long meeting with the members of the local Muslim League at the bungalow of Mr. Azharul Haq, local League leader. He was with them for over an hour and had a hearty chat with them answering all kinds of questions. Then he had a meeting at his residential quarters with Hindus and Muslims belonging to Jehanabad and the surrounding villages. He had then a meeting with the Congressmen which included members of the various Congress Committees. Later he met the members of the local Hindu Mahasabha. Finally he had a heart-to-heart talk with over 25 members of the police force on strike. Then at half past three again he visited the villages of Malathi, Gangasagar, Bola and Allahganj, in which Muslims had suffered badly.

Referring to his visit to the villages, Gandhiji said that naturally he was full of topics on which he wanted to speak and bespeak their attention. He was sorry to tell that Hindu repentance was not open and sincere enough to inspire confidence among the Muslims. He had told the afternoon meeting that it was open to representative Hindus who were present at the meeting to disabuse the Muslims of their suspicion. He was sorry to say that not one Hindu got up to give the needed assurance. He had not the heart, therefore, to ask his Muslim hearers whether they (the Hindus) had cleansed their hearts. They were the injured party in Bihar and it was not open to anyone to expect a satisfactory answer from them unless the guilty Hindu party had led the way by repentance. There were yet ring leaders like Mathura Singh roaming about and successfully evading arrest. There was, therefore, little cause for wonder if the Muslims were afraid to return to their respective villages. Gandhiji said that he could not help feeling that the culprit could not long remain at large if the Hindu population did not give him shelter. He asked Mathura Singh's friends and sympathizers to advise him to discover himself and face the consequences of his action. He would also like to tell him that it was no act of bravery for him to evade arrest. He was thus rendering a disservice to himself, his religion and his country. He suggested to the Congressmen, in whose midst the inhumanities were enacted, that they could not free themselves, unless they made every effort to induce all the culprits to come out into the open to wash their guilt as publicly as they had committed the crimes.

Continuing, Gandhiji said that he had visited a mosque in the village Bola which was damaged during the disturbances. He was told that on the *Holi* day the mosque was again desecrated by some villagers who played *Holi* inside the mosque premises on the *Holi* day. If it was true, Gandhiji said, it was undoubtedly a notice given by them to the Muslims



not to enter their homes even when they were rebuilt nor dare to visit the mosque. If this reported desecration on the *Holi* day was a fact, it was a bad omen for the Hindus, for Bihar and for the whole country.

Gandhiji went on to say that he had heard at the Muslim League meeting in the morning and at the meeting of the Hindus and the Muslims in the afternoon that Mahant Bhagwat Das who was a member of the Bihar Legislative Assembly was himself a participator in the crime and was himself present at both the meetings. The speaker advised him whilst he was under suspicion to give up his membership. He was glad to say that Mahant Bhagwat Das, without a moment's hesitation, welcomed the advice and promised at once to act up to it. He also added that he was in no way a participator directly or indirectly in the crime and that he was quite ready to face an open, impartial enquiry to be made by the Muslim League itself. If it was a sincere declaration, Gandhiji said, it was certainly a refreshing thing at a time when there was no real sign of sincere sorrow and repentance on the part of the Hindus in the affected areas. This he was obliged to say in spite of welcome letters of repentance to which he had made reference at the previous evening's meeting.

29-3-'47

At the outset Gandhiji told the audience that he would be leaving for Delhi the next day and hoped to return in about four or five days.

Gandhiji then feelingly referred to the death on the previous evening of Prof. Abdul Bari, President of the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee, under tragic circumstances. Prof. Bari was a disciple and co-worker of Dr. Rajendra Prasad. Dr. Rajendra Prasad has built for himself a unique and undisputed position and influence in that province by his service and sacrifice. Prof. Bari also has by his service in the cause of the workers in Jamshedpur and other places endeared himself to the people and rose to occupy the position of the President of the Provincial Congress Committee. A fearless fighter, Prof. Bari was with the Congress during the different phases of its struggle for freedom.

Gandhiji referred to his visit earlier in the day to Prof. Bari's house to console the members of the bereaved family and wean them from weeping and hearten them for the work that specially descended upon the weak shoulders of his children. Gandhiji said that as he entered the house he was struck with its simplicity and the simple life Prof. Bari had led. The house was located in an ordinary narrow lane and what he saw inside the house fully bore out what everyone had said about Prof. Bari that he was a poor man and that though he had opportunities he scrupulously maintained his integrity as far as public finances were concerned. At a time when the administration of the country was in Congress hands and crores of rupees had to be administered, men of Prof. Bari's honesty would

have been of invaluable help. He had hoped on his return from the third tour just finished, Gandhiji said, to be more and more associated with him and make an effective appeal to him to modify, if not altogether get rid of, his short temper which went ill with the very high office, in fact the highest in the province of Bihar, especially when there was a nationalist ministry at the head of affairs which naturally had to be influenced by the premier provincial Congress organization. Gandhiji said that he had full faith in Prof. Bari and knew that his word carried great weight with him. But God had willed otherwise and He had deprived Bihar of the great service of a very brave man with the heart of a *fakir*. But men like Bari never died, Gandhiji said, and it was for those who remained to carry on the noble work he had left behind.

Gandhiji then referred to the circumstances of Prof. Bari's death and said that in an unfortunate altercation that ensued between him and one Gurkha member of the anti-smuggling force and former member of the Indian National Army the latter shot him. He warned the audience that there was no politics of any kind in the death and that it would be wrong and unjustified to associate the whole I. N. A. organization with the death of Prof. Bari because of what one single individual did.

### RACE : HUMAN

[The following is taken from *American Unity* (November 1944), a monthly issued by the Council against Intolerance in America. —V. G. D.]

Before Jan Masaryk, the Deputy Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia, was admitted to the U. S. A., he had to go through the usual immigration procedure in New York, filling out a form listing his name, birthplace, age etc.

When Masaryk came to the item 'race' on the form, he thought for a moment and then wrote simply: 'Human'.

"But, Mr. Masaryk," protested the immigration officer, "that isn't what it means. You come from Czechoslovakia; why don't you write 'Czechoslovakian'?"

"The Czechoslovakians aren't a race," Masaryk replied. "They are just a nationality, made up of Czechs, Slovaks and many other peoples. I am a Czechoslovakian by nationality, but I belong to the human race."

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