

HARIJAN

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TWO ANNAS

AN INDIAN GOVERNOR

(By M. K. Gandhi)

In construing the word India here it includes both Hindostan and Pakistan. Hindustan may mean the country of the Hindus strictly so-called, Pakistan may mean the country of the Muslims. Both the uses are, in my opinion, irregular. Hence, I have purposely used the word Hindostan.

The Khilafat-Swaraj-Non-co-operation Resolution of 1920 passed in Calcutta at the Special Session of the Congress, which has brought freedom from the British yoke, was for both the Hindus and the Muslims, designed to induce self-purification so as to bring about non-co-operation between forces of evil and those of good. Hence,

1. An Indian Governor should, in his own person and in his surroundings, be a teetotaller. Without this, prohibition of the fiery liquid is well-nigh inconceivable.

2. He and his surroundings should represent hand-spinning as a visible token of identification with the dumb millions of India, a token of the necessity of 'bread labour' and organized non-violence as against organized violence on which the society of today seems to be based.

3. He must dwell in a cottage accessible to all, though easily shielded from gaze, if he is to do efficient work. The British Governor naturally represented British might. For him and his was erected a fortified residence—a palace to be occupied by him and his numerous vassals who sustained his Empire. The Indian prototype may keep somewhat pretentious buildings for receiving princes and ambassadors of the world. For these, being guests of the Governor should constitute an education in what "Even Unto This Last"—equality of all—should mean in concrete terms. For him no expensive furniture, foreign or indigenous. Plain living and high thinking must be his motto, not to adorn his entrance but to be exemplified in daily life.

4. For him there can be no untouchability in any form whatsoever, no caste or creed or colour distinction. He must represent the best of all religions and all things Eastern or Western. Being a citizen of India, he must be a citizen of the world. Thus simply, one reads, did the Khalif Omar, with millions of treasure at his feet, live; thus lived Janaka of ancient times; thus lived, as I saw him, the Master of Eton in his residence in the midst of, and sur-

rounded by, the sons of the Lords and Nabobs of the British Isles. Will the Governors of India of the famished millions do less?

5. He will speak the language of the province of which he is the Governor and Hindustani, the lingua franca of India written in the *Nagari* or *Urdu* script. This is neither Sanskritized Hindi nor Persianized Urdu. Hindustani is emphatically the language which is spoken by the millions north of the Vindhya Range.

This does not pretend to be an exhaustive list of the virtues that an Indian Governor should represent. It is merely illustrative.

One would expect that the Britishers who have been chosen by Indian representatives as Governors and who have taken the oath of fealty to India and her millions would endeavour as far as possible to live the life an Indian Governor is expected to live. They will represent the best that their country has to give to India and the world.

Calcutta, 17-8-'47

GOD IS GOOD

(By M. K. Gandhi)

Not in the same sense as *x* is good. *X* is comparatively good. He is more good than evil, but God is wholly good. There is no evil in Him. God made man in His own image. Unfortunately for us man has fashioned Him in his own. This arrogation has landed mankind in a sea of troubles. God is the Supreme Alchemist. In His presence all iron and dross turn into pure gold. Similarly does all evil turn into good.

Again God lives but not as we. His creatures live but to die. But God is Life. Therefore, goodness and all it connotes is not an attribute. Goodness is God. Goodness conceived as apart from Him is a lifeless thing and exists only whilst it is a paying policy. So are all morals. If they are to live in us they must be considered and cultivated in their relation to God. We try to become good because we want to reach and realize God. All the dry ethics of the world turn to dust because apart from God they are lifeless. Coming from God, they come with life in them. They become part of us and ennoble us.

Conversely, God conceived without Goodness is without life. We give him life in our vain imaginings.

Calcutta, 17-8-'47

KASHMIR AND REFUGEES

Addressing his post-prayer gathering at Wah on August 5, Gandhiji said that he was glad that he was able to visit the Refugee Camp at Wah and see the patients in the Camp hospital and other appointments in connection with it. He was glad too that he was able to pay what was his second visit to Panja Saheb. He had a talk with the representatives of the Camp.

Before, however, he dealt with matters arising out of these talks with the representatives of the refugees, he said that he would like to say a word about his visit to Kashmir. He had made up his mind not to hold any public meeting or address them but he was able to see the workers. Begum Saheba (wife of Sheikh Abdulla) was constantly with him throughout the three days he was in Shrinagar. He was able also to see the Maharaja Saheb, the Maharani Saheba and Prime Minister Kak Saheb. He was sorry that he was not able to see Sheikh Abdulla who was undoubtedly the leader of the Kashmiris. He had not gone there to see the Sheikh Saheb. He was able, however, to hold public prayers for two days in Kashmir and one day in Jammu. These were attended by thousands. He could say that on 15th August, all being well, legally the State of Kashmir and Jammu would be independent. But he was sure that the State would not remain in that condition for long after August 15. It had to join either the Union or Pakistan. It had a predominantly Muslim population. But he saw that Sheikh Sahib had fired Kashmiris with local patriotism. British paramountcy would terminate on the 15th instant. Real paramountcy would then commence. He referred to the paramountcy of the Kashmiris. They had one language, one culture and, so far as he could see, they were one people. He could not distinguish readily between a Kashmiri Hindu and a Kashmiri Mussalman. In the large deputation that he saw it was very difficult for him to know whether it was predominantly Muslim or Hindu. Whatever it was, he had no hesitation in saying that the will of the Kashmiris was the supreme law in Kashmir and Jammu. He was glad to say that the Maharaja Saheb and the Maharani Saheba readily acknowledged the fact. He had the good fortune to read what was euphemistically called the Treaty of Amritsar but which was in reality a deed of sale. He supposed that it would be dead on August 15. The seller was the then British Governor-General and Maharaja Gulab Singh was the buyer. The treaty going, would the State revert to the British and, therefore, to England? If to India, to which part? He held that without going into the intricacies of law which he had no right to dilate upon, commonsense dictated that the will of the Kashmiris should decide the fate of Kashmir and Jammu. The sooner it was done the better. How the will of the people would be determined was a fair question. He hoped that the question would be decided between the two Dominions, the Maharaja Saheb and the Kashmiris. If the four

could come to a joint decision, much trouble would be avoided. After all Kashmir was a big State; it had the greatest strategic value, perhaps in all India. So much for Kashmir.

He would now deal with the question of the refugees. Among them they were nearly 9000. The Hindus and the Sikhs who discussed the question with him said that they were afraid of the approach of August 15. He confessed that he did not in any way whatsoever share the fear. Nor could he appreciate it. The Muslims had got their Pakistan. They could now have no quarrel with the Hindus and the Sikhs of the Punjab. Jinnah Saheb and other Muslim Leaguers had given assurances that the non-Muslims were as safe in Pakistan as the Muslims. He invited the audience to accept the assurance. Supposing that the assurance proved untrue and the worst fears of the refugees proved true, it would be the beginning of the ruin of Islam. He refused to believe that Muslim leaders would be guilty of such a suicidal act. He asked the refugees, men and women, to dispel all fear. If he could put off his departure for Noakhali, he would gladly pass August 15 in the midst of the refugees at Wah. He proposed, however, to do the next best thing. The audience saw Dr. Sushila Nayyar taking notes of what he was saying. She herself belonged to the district of Gujarat in Western Pakistan. He had conferred with her before coming to the prayer meeting and though she was otherwise to accompany him to Noakhali, she had accepted his advice to stay with the refugees on his behalf, in order to help them to dispel all fear about August 15. He knew that she had no such fear. She was with him in Noakhali as was also her brother Pyarelalji. She was posted in one of the worst affected areas of Noakhali and through medical assistance she had become popular among the Muslims as she was undoubtedly among the Hindus. He had just heard from the District Commissioner, who was a Muslim, that the refugees in and about Rawalpindi had nothing to fear. They should feel as safe as the Muslim inhabitants.

Rawalpindi, 5-8-'47

S. N.

(Adapted from the original in Hindustani)

FOR AGENTS

Agents are requested to take note of the following :

1. Please remember that agents have to deposit with us an amount covering the price of their demand for two months. A month's deposit will be treated as fixed and the other as current. Every week the cost of the copies sent to them would be deducted from the current deposit.

2. The amounts for the deposits are usually sent by the agents by cheques. Please note that we do not accept cheques. The amount should be remitted either by M. O., Postal Order or by a bank draft.

MANAGER

"TO MUSLIMS"

"The non-Muslim population of the Pakistan is showing signs of nervousness. They are developing a sense of insecurity about themselves and their properties. In fairness to you, your God, and your history, they should not have felt like this. But the British domination during the last two hundred years kept them aloof from Islamic history, literature, jurisprudence and life; hence, they do not understand that they will have as much right and privileges in the Pakistan as any other Muslim.

"Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah has already reminded you of your duties towards the non-Muslim minorities, and has assured them on your behalf that they should have no worry about their future securities and prosperity. We, by way of reminder, quote the following records of your *Quran*, *Hadis* and *History*. We hope you will prove a true Muslim and will not falsify the orders of your God and your Prophet. The non-Muslims will judge Islam and Pakistan by your actions.

"I. The holy *Quran* says, 'God may very soon bind you and your non-Muslim enemies in a tie of friendship. God is capable of doing so. He is kind and merciful. Those who neither quarrelled with you nor turned you out of your house, should be treated with justice and courtesy. God loves those who are just' (*Quran*, Chapter XXVIII).

"II. Again the Book says, 'Do not use offensive language about the gods and goddesses of the non-Muslims lest they also retort with impertinent remarks about your Allah' (*Quran*, Chapter VII).

"III. The Prophet has said, 'If any Muslim will oppress a non-Muslim, cause him a loss, or burden him with duties beyond his capacity, or take away anything from him without his consent, then on the Day of Judgment I will be a supporter of the non-Muslim and lodge complaint before God against the Muslim' (Collection of Hadis known as *Jamairul Fawae* Volume II, Page 13; also *Mishkat*).

"IV. The Prophet says, 'I am committed to the non-Muslims that they will do whatever they like in their places of worship. I will not charge them with duties beyond their capacity, and I will protect them against their foreign enemies, and that they should have full liberty and freedom in matters of their religion' (*Ibid*, page 14).

"V. 'The blood of a non-Muslim is as good as that of mine,' says that Prophet. 'Any Muslim, guilty of shedding the blood of an innocent non-Muslim, will be guilty of shedding my blood' (*Hayaul Qulub*).

"VI. Abbas Surwani, a historian of Muslim rule in India, records that in Agra, during the reign of Sher Shah, the heir-apparent passed by the side of a non-Muslim grocer's house on an elephant. He overlooked the grocer's wife and threw a *pan* towards her. She reported the incident to her husband. The husband on enquiry ascertained the identity of the offender, but hesitated to lodge complaint against the future king. The Muslim neighbours encouraged the grocer to complain before the king himself. Sher

Shah, when he heard of this incident, issued a warrant against the prince, sent for the prince's wife i.e., his own daughter-in-law, and handed over a *pan* to the grocer and said, 'Throw this *pan* towards the wife of the prince, vindicate your honour, and make this idiot prince feel what it means to insult a poor man's wife' (*Tarikhi Afghane*).

"VII. Ali, the Caliph, lost his armour coat and detected a non-Muslim (Jew) carrying it. He produced the thief before his own subordinate *Qazi*. The *Qazi* demanded evidence. The only witnesses available were his wife Fatema, and his sons — Hasan and Hossain. The *Qazi* gave the Jew benefit of doubt and Ali lost the coat for all time. The witnesses, however eminent, were, according to the *Qazi*, relations, hence interested. The maxim of Islamic Jurisprudence is that the justice should not only be done but shown to the people that it is being done (*History of Islam*).

"VIII. At Damascus a palatial mosque was being built by a Muslim king. Its platform encroached upon the compound of a church. The Christian priest refused to sell the compound land of the church for the completion of the mosque. The reigning king was bad and ignorant of Muslim law and he ordered the forcible construction of the platform over the compound land of the church. Soon after Omar Ibni Abdul Aziz succeeded to the throne, and his first action was to demolish the mosque and restore the land to the Christian church (*History of Islam*).

"IX. When Muslims occupied Egypt, a soldier from Muslim Army aimed his arrow at a statue of Jesus. The arrow destroyed the left eye of the statue. The Christian custodian lodged a complaint before the army commander and demanded redress. The commander proclaimed that the Christians had a right to aim an arrow and shoot at the left eye of the Muslim Army Commander as penance for his incompetency. He admitted that he should not have neglected to control a soldier under him (*History of Islam*).

1. BEGUM FIRDAUS RIZVI
(S. D. O.'s Bungalow, Kishorganj)

2. EMAD UDDIN AHMED
(Secretary, Subdivisional Muslim League)

1. MD. ATHAR ALI
Imam of Shahidi Mosque, Kishorganj

2. MD. MUSLEM UDDIN
Superintendent, Hybatnagar Senior Madrasah

[The foregoing is reproduced just as it was received. Let us hope that the wise precepts would be followed up in action. An ounce of practice is worth tons of speeches and writings.

Sodepur, 13-8-'47

—M. K. G.]

NOTICE

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MANAGER

HARIJAN

August 24

1947

MIRACLE OR ACCIDENT ?

(By M. K. Gandhi)

Shaheed Saheb Suhrawardy and I are living together in a Muslim *manzil* in Beliaghata where Muslims have been reported to be sufferers. We occupied the house on Wednesday the 13th instant and on the 14th it seemed as if there never had been bad blood between the Hindus and the Muslims. In their thousands they began to embrace one another and they began to pass freely through places which were considered to be points of danger by one party or the other. Indeed, Hindus were taken to their *masjids* by their Muslim brethren and the latter were taken by their Hindu brethren to the *mandirs*. Both with one voice shouted 'Jai Hind' or 'Hindu-Muslims ! Be One'. As I have said above, we are living in a Muslim's house and Muslim volunteers are attending to our comforts with the greatest attention. Muslim volunteers do the cooking. Many were eager to come from the Khadi Pratishthan for attendance, but I prevented them. I was determined that we should be fully satisfied with whatever the Muslim brothers and sisters were able to give for our creature comforts and I must say that the determination has resulted in unmixed good. Here in the compound numberless Hindus and Muslims continue to stream in shouting the favourite slogans. One might almost say that the joy of fraternization is leaping up from hour to hour.

Is this to be called a miracle or an accident ? By whatever name it may be described, it is quite clear that all the credit that is being given to me from all sides is quite undeserved; nor can it be said to be deserved by Shaheed Saheb. This sudden upheaval is not the work of one or two men. We are toys in the hands of God. He makes us dance to His tune. The utmost, therefore, that man can do is to refrain from interfering with the dance and that he should tender full obedience to his Maker's will. Thus considered, it can be said that in this miracle He has used us two as His instruments and as for myself I only ask whether the dream of my youth is to be realized in the evening of my life.

For those who have full faith in God, this is neither a miracle nor an accident. A chain of events can be clearly seen to show that the two were being prepared, unconsciously to themselves, for fraternization. In this process our advent on the scene enabled the onlooker to give us credit for the consummation of the happy event.

Be that as it may, the delirious happenings remind me of the early days of the Khilafat Movement. The fraternization then burst on the

public as a new experience. Moreover, we had then the Khilafat and Swaraj as our twin goals. Today we have nothing of the kind. We have drunk the poison of mutual hatred and so this nectar of fraternization tastes all the sweeter and the sweetness should never wear out.

In the present exuberance one hears also the cry of 'Long Live Hindustan and Pakistan' from the joint throats of the Hindus and the Muslims. I think it is quite proper. Whatever was the cause for the agreement, three parties accepted Pakistan. If then the two are not enemies one of the other, and here evidently they are not, surely there is nothing wrong in the above cry. Indeed, if the two have become friends, not to wish long life to both the States would probably be an act of disloyalty.

Beliaghata, 16-8-'47

(Adapted from the original in Gujarati)

SECULAR

Reverend Kellas, Principal of the Scottish Church College, came to see Gandhiji yesterday with some members of his staff. The principal question discussed was in connection with the relation between education, religion and the State. Gandhiji expressed the opinion that the State should undoubtedly be secular. Everyone living in it should be entitled to profess his religion without let or hindrance, so long as the citizen obeyed the common law of the land. There should be no interference with missionary effort, but no mission could enjoy the patronage of the State as it did during the foreign regime.

While discussing these matters with Principal Kellas, Gandhiji incidentally remarked that although we had thrown overboard British political supremacy, we had not yet been able to throw overboard the cultural one. In his characteristic style, he said, "We have discarded foreign power, not the unseen foreign influence." What he would like the new India of his dream to do was to lay the foundation of a new life in keeping with its natural surroundings. In every State in the world today, violence, even if it were for so-called defensive purposes only, enjoyed a status which was in conflict with the better elements of life. "The organization of the best in society", was the aim to which new India should dedicate herself; and this could be done only if we succeeded in demolishing the status which had been given to *goondaism* today.

One of the scientist members of the staff then asked Gandhiji what scientific men should do if they were now asked by the free Indian Government to engage in researches in furtherance of war and the atom bomb? Gandhiji promptly replied, "Scientists to be worth the name should resist such a State unto death."

Calcutta, 17-8-'47

N. K. BOSE

THE PINDI SPEECH

The prayer meeting of the 31st of July was held in the compound of Lala Devraj Anand. But it proved too small for it. The consequent overcrowding and noise made Gandhiji cut short the prayer to *Ramadhun* only. Speaking after the *Ramadhuna* he said that he had received two letters which he would like to answer. The first was in English. The handwriting was good, but that was little consolation for him. The British were quitting India but the people had become so used to slavery that they still could not shake off the lure of the English language which few could ever hope to master. This linguistic conquest constituted a worse type of slavery than the conquest by the British sword. Every language was good in its own place. He would not ask the Zulus or the Dutch in South Africa to learn Gujarati for instance. Similarly, he would not ask all the sisters assembled there to learn English. That was neither possible nor desirable. His mother tongue was Gujarati. He loved it. But he would not think of making it the lingua franca of India. There were hardly a crore of Indians who spoke Gujarati but there were nearly 21 crores who talked in Hindustani; whether they could read or write was a different matter. Hindustani was written in the *Urdu* or *Nagari* script.

The second letter was written in beautiful Urdu handwriting. He encouraged all those who came in contact with him to learn the two scripts and he was proud of the fact. He would rather teach Urdu to his boys and girls than teach them English.

In the letter written in English, the writer had asked him to spend at least a week in Rawalpindi and see with his own eyes what the Hindus had suffered. Why should he wish to go to Kashmir? His reply was that ever since he had gone to Delhi he had wanted to come to the Punjab. He wanted to visit Lahore, Amritsar and Rawalpindi. But he believed that he was in God's hands. God was the Master of all the universe and He could upset the plans of men. The original plan was that he would spend a day at Lahore and Amritsar, two days at Rawalpindi and at least ten days in Kashmir. Now he had only two or three days for Kashmir. And that too was in fulfilment of a promise.

Though he could not stay in the Punjab, he had not forgotten them. He had to reach Noakhali before the 15th. That again was in fulfilment of a promise. He was a devotee of Rama and Rama had said that a promise must be kept at any cost. He referred to the black flag demonstration that Hindu youngmen had arranged at the Amritsar railway station. All the time the train stopped they kept shouting 'Gandhi, Go Back' in English. He had to close his ears as he could not stand the noise. He closed his eyes also and kept on repeating God's name. They were too noisy and too excited, else he would have liked to get down and ask them what harm he had done to them to deserve such noisy hostility. He knew however that

praise and blame must be received with equanimity. At the other stations people were extremely well-behaved and cordial. He had not been disturbed during the night and he was grateful for it.

In the second letter the writer had objected to the projected recitation from the *Quran*. If the people had been quiet, they would have heard the verse from the *Quran*. It was a fine verse and he saw no reason why he should avoid it, simply because it was from the *Quran* and written in Arabic. No one could object to the sentiments expressed therein. If they wished to live in peace as brave men and women, they must cultivate the virtue of tolerance. The only right way of fighting the misled Muslims was the way of love. But if they did not appreciate it, they had the crude way of retaliation open to them; but to insult the scriptures of either religion because of the misdeeds of its followers was a thing which he could never understand.

Rawalpindi, 6-8-'47

S. N.

GANDHIJI'S POST-PRAYER SPEECHES

Sodepur, 9-8-'47

MIGRATION TO CALCUTTA

Gandhiji devoted the whole of his address to the situation in Calcutta. His destination, he said, was Noakhali but he had been listening the whole day long to the woes of Calcutta. Some Muslim friends and also some Hindus complained that they (Hindus) seemed to have gone mad, not that the Muslims had become wiser. But now that the Muslim police and officials were almost withdrawn and replaced by Hindus, the Hindus had begun to believe that they were now free to do what they liked as the Muslims were reported to have done under the League Ministry. He was not going to examine what was done under the League Ministry. His purpose was undoubtedly to know what his co-worker Dr. Ghosh's Ministry was doing. Was it true that the Muslims were living in terror? If it was at all true, it was a severe reflection on the Congress Ministry. He was rightly asked before he went up to Noakhali to tarry in Calcutta to 'pour a pot of water over the raging fire' that was burning Calcutta. He would love to give his life if thereby he could contribute to the quenching of mob fury. He would never be able to subscribe to the theory that the doings in Calcutta were the result of *goondaism*. He held that the crude open *goondaism* was a reflection of the subtle *goondaism* they were harbouring within. Hence, it was the duty of the Governments to hold themselves responsible for the acts of the *goondas* so-called. He hoped that Calcutta would not present the disgraceful spectacle of hot *goondaism* when they were entering upon full responsibility.

Sodepur, 10-8-'47

There was an enormous crowd to listen to Gandhiji. Their acclamation was piercing. Gandhiji had to speak to them for a few minutes to establish complete quiet if they wanted the prayer and his speech. The audience responded splendidly and

listened in perfect silence. He said that he had thought that he was to go to Noakhali the next day (Monday). Owing to the pressure from many Muslim friends who had seen him, he had decided to stay to see if he could contribute his share in the return of sanity in the premier city of India. The argument of the Muslim friends went home. He had at the same time said that if he did not go to Noakhali and any mishap took place, his life would become forfeit as he had said already about Bihar. He had seen the Ministers and others too during the day. He would like to see the places where destruction was said to have been wrought by the Hindus. He had also learnt that there were parts of Calcutta which were inaccessible to the Hindus, though many premises therein used to be occupied by them. Similar was the case with the Hindu localities. His head hung in shame to listen to this recital of man's barbarism. He would love to go to these places and see for himself how much truth there was in these recitals. He was told that there were not more than 23% Muslims in Calcutta. It was unthinkable that such a minority could coerce the majority without countenance from or incompetence of authority. Similarly it was unthinkable that in the midst of a government which knew the art of government, the majority could for one moment be permitted to coerce the minority. He was also told that what the Muslim police and officers were alleged to be doing before, now that the Congress Ministry was in power, the Hindu police and officers had become partial in the administration of justice. If this wretched spirit of communalism had entered the police force, the prospect was black indeed. He hoped that the police would realize the dignity of their profession.

Sodepur, 11-8-'47

This evening I must devote to answering some questions addressed to me. One of them complains that prominent men were admitted but comparatively unknown persons were insulted. There was an inordinate rush throughout the day, it being Sunday. I agree that when there is such a rush, there should be no distinction made between known and unknown persons. But I had given previous appointments to some who had to be admitted. Then there were many who were specially working for the day. I would, therefore, plead with those who may feel disappointed on such occasions to have forbearance and patience as I would plead with the volunteers to be uniformly courteous and gentle with the public.

I read something about the Chittagong flood the day before yesterday, when I came to Calcutta. This is the third day and I see that the angry waters have not subsided, and the extent of loss to life and property no one can yet assess with any degree of accuracy. It is hardly necessary to remind ourselves in the face of such catastrophe that we may not think of East or West or Pakistan and Hindustan. Adversity makes strange bed-fellows.

Surely then those who were bed-fellows till yesterday must not cease to be at least on such occasions, whatever their political or religious differences might be or might have done. It is a calamity to cope with not merely for East Bengal but for the whole of Bengal, and not for Bengal only but certainly for the whole of India. There must be a strong reliable committee to collect and distribute funds. Local men come first. Round them can arise an All-Bengal Relief Committee, and if need be an All-India one. No trouble need be given to all India if Bengal alone can cope with the situation. My whole heart goes out to Chittagong in its dire calamity. May the survivors bear it with fortitude.

Correspondents continue to ask all sorts of questions about appointments of Governors, Ministers and the like, as if I was a member of the Congress Working Committee or could affect its decisions. I know and admit that I have and shall always retain by right of service a place in the hearts of Congressmen. I know too that I shall forfeit that place immediately I begin to overstep my limits. Legal status I have none, moral status can be retained only so long as the moral platform is firmly held.

Do you agree that the leaders of both the communities should go to East and West Bengal and show that they have no differences now to quarrel over?

My answer is emphatically 'yes', if the leaders are one at heart. If the word belies the thought, the going about will be worse than useless. The newspaper war still continues. I would always prefer an open war to the war of hearts. Are we sure that the leaders trust one another? My fear is that neither at the top nor at the bottom are we cleansed of hypocrisy. I can, therefore but repeat my old argument that we must unlearn the habit of retaliation in every shape and form. Blow for blow is a crude form and probably more excusable than the subtle one of evil thought for its kind. Thought is the root of speech and deed. I am sorry that I am unable to return a more comfortable answer. There is none that I know. This is said to hearten ourselves, not to dishearten us. For, I have said the naked truth. Within my experience it ever heartens. Is it not heartening to know the true remedy for a disease? Any other is a palliative and in the end aggravates the disease.

Sodepur, 12-8-'47

Gandhiji said that the 15th instant was to be a landmark in India's history. It was a day when India would be declared free of the foreign yoke. It was to be an independent nation. He had said how the day was to be observed, but he was probably alone in the view. Already there was an announcement that the Muslims of Calcutta were to observe it as a day of mourning. He hoped that it was not true. No man could be compelled to observe the day in a particular manner. It was to be a perfectly voluntary act. He would ask his Muslim countrymen not to mourn over the freedom.

The present distemper was to go. What were the Hindus in Pakistan to do? They should salute the Pakistan flag if it meant the freedom and equality of all in every respect, irrespective of caste, colour or creed. He had heard further that on that day the Indians in the French and Portuguese possessions were to declare their freedom of France and Portugal respectively. That, he said, would be a thoughtless act. It would be a sign perhaps of arrogance. The British were retiring, not the French and the Portuguese. He, undoubtedly, held the view that the Indians in these possessions were bound to merge in Independent India in good time. Only the Indians in those territories should not take the law in their own hands. They had constitutional means open to them and then there was their Chief Minister who had vindicated the freedom of Indonesia. Surely, he was not going to neglect his own kith and kin in the two possessions. If they had any doubt about the validity of his advice, they should act on Panditji's advice.

He then came to another important subject. They knew that he prolonged his stay in Calcutta by two days at the instance of Muslim friends. Last night Shaheed Saheb Suhrawardy came to see him. He suggested that it would be contrary to his (Gandhiji's) practice to leave Calcutta while it was going through the horrors of communal strife. Shaheed Saheb suggested that Gandhiji should prolong his stay in the city and work until real peace was restored. Gandhiji replied that Suhrawardy Saheb and he should live under the same roof in the disturbed parts. It would be best to live unprotected by the police or the military. In brotherly fashion, they would approach the people, argue with them and tell them that now that partition had taken place by agreement, there was no longer any reason why the parties should quarrel. The decision of the Boundary Commission was going to be announced in a day or two, and it was in the fitness of things that all the parties should abide by the decision in a becoming manner. After all, the parties had appointed an arbitration tribunal. They were in honour bound to abide by the award whatever it was.

Gandhiji's proposal to Suhrawardy Saheb was of such an important nature that the latter could not afford to give a hasty reply. Gandhiji had, therefore, asked Shaheed Saheb to consult his aged father as well as his daughter before coming to a decision.

During the afternoon, Mr. Usman, the ex-Mayor of Calcutta, had arrived with Shaheed Saheb's message stating that the latter had accepted Gandhiji's proposal without reservation. It was now time, therefore, for the two friends to choose quarters in the midst of the worst affected areas and see what could be done by joint effort.

Gandhiji said that he was warned that Shaheed Saheb was not to be relied upon. The same thing was said about him (Gandhiji) also. He was described as the worst enemy of Islam. He was supposed to

be a consummate hypocrite. God alone knew men's hearts. He asserted that he spoke and acted as he believed. He had known Shaheed Saheb since the days of the Faridpore Conference, to which the late Deshbandhu had taken him. Nobody had any right to prejudge anybody. He would trust as he expected to be trusted. Both would live under the same roof, and have no secrets from each other. They would together see all the visitors. People should have the courage to speak out the truth under all circumstances and in the presence of those against whom it had to be said.

Gandhiji finally referred to what the common citizen could do in order to help the cause. They were to bless them on the mission on which they were embarking.

Beliaghata, 14-8-'47

Gandhiji was able to adjust a packed audience which listened to him without the slightest disturbance. He first said that the next day was the fixed day of deliverance from the foreign yoke. It was, therefore, a great day. They were bound to celebrate it. In his opinion it was a day when both the Dominions were to shoulder a heavy burden. He invited everyone to have twentyfour hours' fast and prayer during the day, for the well-being of India as a whole and pass it in spinning as much as possible. For, it was hand-spinning that had knit the poor and the rich together and that had given occupation to countless men and women who were without occupation.

He then returned to the reason for his postponing the visit to Noakhali and coming to stay in the present place. He said that Shaheed Saheb had come to see him and induce him to do his bit in bringing about peace in Calcutta which was burning. The appeal had its effect upon him. He agreed provided Shaheed Saheb went with him to the affected areas and stayed there under the same roof with him, till the fury had abated and till complete friendship between the two communities was restored. Therefore, they were to work with one mind without mental reservation and without any secrets in the matter from one another. Shaheed Saheb took one night to confer with his aged father and his daughter and sent over his decision the next day. And he sent one message which brought them to the present place yesterday. He had many warnings also against Shaheed Saheb. He was unaffected by the warnings. He was bound to believe his word as he expected him to accept his (Gandhiji's) word. Let them not think that they were to neglect the parts of Calcutta which were deserted by their Hindu inhabitants and were occupied by Muslims. They were working for the peace of the whole of Calcutta and he invited his audience to believe with them that if Calcutta returns to sanity and real friendship, then Noakhali and the rest of India would be safe. He mentioned that Shaheed Saheb was in the building, but he had, with his consent, kept himself away from the meeting as he wanted to avoid being the slightest

cause of irritation to the meeting. But he was glad that the audience had exhibited becoming tolerance and gave him the courage to bring Shaheed Saheb to the meeting. After all they should live and work together in the open and perfect co-operation if their difficult mission was to succeed.

Calcutta, 15-8-'47

Gandhiji insisted on walking to the meeting which was held at Rash Bagan Maidan, Beliaghata, Calcutta. A very large congregation attended. The crowd through which he was to pass was so tense that what was five minutes' walk took twenty minutes to cover. Gandhiji congratulated Calcutta on Hindus and Muslims meeting together in perfect friendliness. Muslims shouted the same slogans of joy as the Hindus. They flew the tricolour without the slightest hesitation. What was more, the Hindus were admitted to mosques and Muslims were admitted to the Hindu *mandirs*. This news reminded him of the Khilafat days when Hindus and Muslims fraternized with one another. If this exhibition was from the heart and was not a momentary impulse, it was better than the Khilafat days. The simple reason was that they had both drunk the poison cup of disturbances. The nectar of friendliness should, therefore, taste sweeter than before. He was however sorry to hear that in a certain part the poor Muslims experienced molestation. He hoped that Calcutta including Howrah will be entirely free from the communal virus for ever. Then indeed they need have no fear about East Bengal and the rest of India. He was sorry, therefore, to hear that madness still raged in Lahore. He could hope and feel sure that the noble example of Calcutta, if it was sincere, would affect the Punjab and the other parts of India. He then referred to Chittagong. Rain was no respecter of persons. It engulfed both Muslims and Hindus. It was the duty of the whole of Bengal to feel one with the sufferers of Chittagong.

He then referred to the fact that the people realizing that India was free, took possession of the Government House and in affection besieged their new Governor Rajaji. He would be glad if it meant only a token of the people's power. But he would be sick and sorry if the people thought that they could do what they liked with the Government and other property. That would be criminal lawlessness. He hoped, therefore, that they had of their own accord vacated the Governor's palace as readily as they had occupied it. He would warn the people that now that they were free, they would use the freedom with wise restraint. They should know that they were to treat the Europeans who stayed in India with the same regard as they would expect for themselves. They must know that they were masters of no one but of themselves. They must not compel anyone to do any thing against his will.

Calcutta, 16-8-'47

There was a greater rush than yesterday. Consequently, there was noise where the pressure was felt. Gandhiji therefore stopped the usual *bhajan* and refused to speak if the noise did not subside. He asked Shaheed Saheb to speak with his powerful voice. He, complying with the request, spoke and the vast audience listened to him in silence and punctuated his remarks with applause when he lustily shouted *Jai Hind* and said he was proud to be a loyal inhabitant of West Bengal. He was then followed by Gandhiji. He expressed his pleasure that at the Chittaranjan Seva Sadan the tricolour was hoisted by an elderly Harijan *mehtarani* who was faithfully serving the institution. Similarly, for a District Congress Committee (of which he had forgotten the name for the moment), a Harijan girl performed the hoisting ceremony. This was along right lines and in keeping with the present fraternal spirit of Calcutta. He hoped that the spirit was permanent and that there would be no trace of untouchability or inequality in Hinduism and that Hindus and Muslims being from the same God, would never quarrel among one another. If this spirit persisted, it would spread throughout the length and breadth of India. Then there would be no fear of disturbance in Noakhali or the Punjab.

He then proceeded to refer to the crowd taking possession of the Government House. It was a matter of shame that there was a show of the military to induce the crowd to vacate the Government House. He was also grieved to learn that some plate in the Government House was pilfered. He would be glad to find that the plate was returned to the Government House. He then mentioned that an American friend who was with the Qaid-e-Azam told him the day before that the Qaid-e-Azam said that India would show to the world that there was no longer any quarrel between the two and that there was no majority and minority community. Rajaji, their Governor, confirmed the same information.

WOMEN AND SOCIAL INJUSTICE

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