

# HARIJAN

12 Pages

Editor : PYARELAL

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TWO ANNAS

## MANY ROADS, ONE GOAL

Everyday, in one quarter of Calcutta or another, the same question has been cropping up: how can we trust the Mussalmans, how can we trust Subhwardy Saheb after the bitter things we have experienced for one whole year? Gandhiji has unfailingly tried to lift the audience from this emotional way of looking at things to political sanity.

Speaking the other day to a group of students, he said that they should remember that the Muslim League was fighting for a political objective viz., the establishment of Pakistan. The rest of India was against the vivisection; its aim was to preserve India undivided. Whatever the cause actuating the parties, they, the British Government, the Congress, the League and the Sikhs ultimately accepted partition of India. Having got Pakistan, Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah says that in Pakistan there is equality of treatment for all — Muslims and all minorities, the Congress claiming likewise.

The fact towards which Gandhiji has been drawing pointed reference at every meeting, or among every group where opportunity presents itself, is that now that the struggle for Pakistan and Akhand Hindustan is over, we must settle down to the reality, that in each State Hindus and Mussalmans have to live together as common citizens. If any of them still swore by the past, it would not help but hinder us in our forward march. We have to accept facts, and try to convert every citizen into a worthy member of either State. If we treated the Mussalmans in the Indian Union as aliens who had fought for Pakistan and tried to keep them in subjection, we would only succeed in proving our political bankruptcy. Today they were no less citizens of the Union than anyone else. The Mussalmans, he has been pointing out, had accepted the fact of their Indian citizenship; and as proof of that, everyone of them, from Mr. Subhwardy downwards, had been lustily shouting *Jai Hind*.

But in the speech in Narkeldanga, the other day, Gandhiji referred to a deeper matter. He said that there were indications that all was not well with the Mussalmans. Some Hindus were now beginning to feel that they had the upper hand, and some Mussalmans were afraid that they would have to play the underdog in the Union today. Gandhiji said that this would be shameful indeed. If a minority in India, minority on the score of its religious profession, was made to feel small on that account, Gandhiji could only say that this India was not the India of his dreams. In the India for whose fashioning he had worked all his life every

man enjoyed equality of status, whatever his religion was. The State was bound to be wholly secular. He went so far as to say that no denominational educational institution in it should enjoy State patronage.

All subjects would thus be equal in the eye of the law. But every single individual would be free to pursue his own religion without let or hindrance, so long as it did not transgress the common law. The question of the 'protection of minorities' was not good enough for him; it rested upon the recognition of religious grouping between citizens of the same State. What he wished India to do, was to assure liberty of religious profession to every single individual. Then only India could be great, for it was perhaps the one nation in the ancient world, which had recognized cultural democracy, whereby it was held that the roads to God were many, but the goal was one, because God was one and the same. In fact the roads were as many as there were individuals in the world.

Calcutta, 19-8-'47

N. K. BOSE

## GANDHIJI'S POST-PRAYER SPEECHES

Belaghata, 17-8-'47

### BOILS

Gandhiji said that it was well for Shaheed Saheb to speak sweet things. They were justified. There was no exaggeration in his speech. But he felt bound to draw attention to certain disturbing things. They should not be drowned in the pardonable exuberance they were witnessing. There were isolated spots in Calcutta where it was not all well. He had heard that in one spot the Hindu residents were not prepared to welcome back the Muslim residents who were obliged to leave their place. All this was bad. It was like a bad boil in an otherwise wholesome body. If the boils were not looked after in time, they might poison the body.

Then he mentioned a letter he had received from Mohammed Habibullah Bahar, Secretary of the Muslim League. He made a worthy suggestion about a joint influential committee going to the East and West of Bengal and consolidate the good work being done in Calcutta. He hoped the suggestion would be quickly acted upon. Another suggestion was that the havoc caused by the flood in the East Bengal should be a joint concern of the Hindus and the Mussalmans. He agreed and hoped that there would be a body of Hindu and Muslim workers who would tackle the subject efficiently. Both grain and workers were wanted more than money. The Mayor of Calcutta had sent him a cheque for Rs. 15,000 in aid of relief. He was thankful for the cheque. He would see to it that it was well employed.

## CHANDRANAGORE

Gandhiji then turned to Chandranagore from which the news was received that the Administrator's bungalow was surrounded by those who called themselves *satyagrahis* but were in fact *duragrahis*, if the statement received by him was true. It was suggested that he had approved of the step. He must say it was wholly untrue. Some persons had come to him and he had said that this was no time for *satyagraha*. There never could be any for *duragraha*. Pandit Nehru was there to look after such affairs. After all the French were a great people, lovers of liberty. They must not be subjected to any strain by India which had come in possession of liberty. India was bound to protect the French Possessions in India against any untoward action by the Indians. So he was glad that the Chief Minister had proceeded to Chandranagore to find out the truth and do what he could.

## THE POLICE

Continuing, Gandhiji dealt with the way in which the people were treating the police who were posted to protect Shaheed Saheb and him. It was most improper to disregard the police instructions. He had seen them undertaking their difficult task with exemplary patience and courtesy. It was wrong for crowds to take the law in their own hands. That way lay slavery, not freedom. He warned the public that he was thinking of approaching the authorities to withdraw their forces, for, he did not like them to be subjected to insult for doing a public duty. He, however, expected that the crowd would become perfectly orderly, so that the contemplated withdrawal might not be necessary. The police and the military today were after all servants of the public and not their masters.

## THE ID

Lastly, Gandhiji referred to the coming *Id* celebration. For twenty years in South Africa he had participated in the celebration with Muslim friends in *masjids*. Now that a flood of goodwill was sweeping over the city of Calcutta, he expected everyone to take such steps as would render the friendly feeling permanent. It was easy to share in a rising tide of emotion; but it was quite another matter to produce constructive workers who would toil from day to day in order to consolidate the feeling. Gandhiji would love to see such work in the city, for, he was sure that its effect would then be felt by the rest of the country. If they failed to do this, Gandhiji warned them, today's freedom would prove only a nine days' wonder.

*Beliaghata, 19-8-'47*

## NO SUBJECTION

Gandhiji apologized for being 1½ hours late. His party was not at fault. Because of the misdeeds of the majority, who were Hindus in Kanchrapara, the Chief Minister, Shaheed Saheb, he and others had to go to Kanchrapara. Then on return they were stopped by parties who wanted to acclaim their joy. This sort of acclamation, if it was not tempered with restraint, would kill their leaders and then they would deplore the embarrassing affection. He

then warned them against being unduly elated by all the fraternization that they were witnessing. Behind it there were pointers like Barrackpore, Kanchrapara and other places he could mention. He would not let them plead excuse or extenuation. There was neither excuse nor extenuation for the majority in Pakistan or Hindustan. If the Hindu majority treasured their religion and duty, they would be just at all cost. They would overlook the limitations or mistakes of the minority who had no one but the majority to look to for justice. He had to listen not without shame and sorrow to the statement that a Muslim friend made to him. He said with a sigh that there was nothing left but a kind of subjection to the Hindu majority and they might have to suffer in silence the playing of music before mosques whilst they were offering prayers. He would have no such despair on the part of Muslims. The friend, who made the remark, did not realize that he unconsciously implied that the Muslim majority would inflict revenge in Pakistan. He hoped it would never be so either in Hindustan or Pakistan. The proper thing was for each majority to do their duty in all humility, irrespective of what the other majority did in the other State. He suggested, therefore, that until the Prime Ministers of Pakistan and the Union agreed upon another course in both the States, the practice that was followed during the British regime often under compulsion, should be fully and voluntarily followed in both the States. Those who thought that they could haughtily impose their will on the minority were foolish and were vastly mistaken. If, therefore, they wanted to consolidate the prevailing goodwill, they would see to it that they acted on the square under all circumstances.

*Calcutta, 20-8-'47*

The prayer was held at Khengrapati, Barrackpore, which was a unique scene in fraternization. More than four lakhs of people of all classes and communities attended the meeting. People failing to go near the venue of the meeting thronged round on the roofs of the adjoining buildings. Hundreds of people were seen even climbing on all the available trees in the area.

## CHITTAGONG

Then Gandhiji drew attention to Chittagong and said that it was their duty to collect funds, distribute food and clothings and medical necessaries. Enough volunteers should be sent to afford relief. He was glad to find that the Marwadi Relief Society as also the Friends' Service under Mr. Muirhead had already sent workers to the scene.

## THE PUNJAB

Referring to the Punjab, Gandhiji said that he had received letters to the effect that now that there was peace in Calcutta, he should proceed to the Punjab. He said that when God called him, he would most certainly go there. But the two Prime Ministers of the two Dominions had announced that their major preoccupation would be to restore complete peace in the Punjab. They would use every resource, at their disposal to establish peace

and they would mobilize the public opinion of the Punjab. This should be enough for them to hope that things in the Punjab would be as good as in Calcutta. The two Prime Ministers of the Punjab and Master Tara Singh and Master Giani Kartar Singh have said likewise.

Mentioning about the Central Peace Committee, Gandhiji said that it should consolidate the results so far achieved. They had to see that poor Muslims were rehabilitated just as the Hindus had to be rehabilitated in the areas from which they had been evacuated. Local peace committees should be set up in each *mohalla*; and they must find at least one Hindu and one Muslim of clean heart to work together. These committees must tour the areas under their jurisdiction. They should work to create the feeling of friendliness wherever it was lacking. For the purpose of rehabilitation they would have to go into details. Food, shelter and clothings had to be found for the evacuees returning to their homes. It would be a great day indeed for Calcutta if its men and women co-operated in this manner to consolidate their good feelings, which had been so much in evidence during the last few days. In this task all the parties were to co-operate. For, now that all the parties concerned had come to an agreement with regard to the division of India into two dominions, there was no longer any reason to quarrel and they could join hands in the task of restoring peaceful conditions.

#### NATIONAL FLAGS

Gandhiji then referred to the question of flags. Personally he was of opinion that as the two States were on friendly terms with one another, there was no reason why they could not display each other's flag in the two dominions just as England and America could do.

#### THE COW

Gandhiji then referred to the proposal of stopping cow slaughter by means of legislation in the Indian Union. He said that he was of opinion that if they tried to do so through law, it would be a great mistake. He had been a devotee of the cow for over half a century. She had a permanent place in the economy of India. The cow can indeed be saved if they could steal into the hearts of the Muslims in such a way that they voluntarily undertook the responsibility out of deference to the feelings of their Hindu friends. This had been abundantly demonstrated during the Khilafat days. Now that India was free, the same old relation could be restored if they behaved towards one another correctly.

Hinduism, he lastly said, would be wrongly served if compelling legislation was resorted to in such matters. Hinduism could only be saved by doing unadulterated justice to man to whatever religion he might belong.

*Park Circus, Calcutta, 21-8-'47*

#### JOINT FLAGS

Gandhiji drew attention to the flying of the joint flags of Pakistan and the Indian Union that were being prominently flown in the audience and hoped that

that pleasing sight would be universal in India. He was glad too that Shaheed Sahab had suggested the revival of the slogan 'Hindu-Muslim *ki Jai*', for it was started during the palmy Khilafat days. He recalled the memory of the old days when a Muslim fellow prisoner used to sing Iqbal's *sare jahanse achchha*. He used to have it sung equally sweetly by the late Saraladevi Chowdharani. The third time was this evening when he heard it sung with equal sweetness and force. The words of the poem were as sweet as the tune. And among them what could be sweeter than that religion never taught mutual hatred? He hoped and prayed that the beginning thus auspiciously made would last for ever and that they would never appeal to the sword for the solution of their difficulties. If that was to be so, they would see that no untoward incidents were allowed to happen and flimsy things were not exaggerated so as to make them look like a communal disturbance as had come to his notice even that very day. He pleaded, too, that a strong rehabilitation committee would collect funds enough to give aid where it was required.

#### IMPARTIALITY

Absolute impartiality was needed to bring all the evacuees to their places. There was a complaint that certain Muslims, who used to supply carts for transfer of goods from place to place, were displaced during the direct-action days. They had not found any other occupation. He was clear that if the statement was true, they should be reinstated. What was then to be done with the substitutes who were imported from other provinces? It was a ticklish question. But it was not beyond the wit of merchants. Where there was a will, there was a way. In scrupulous attention to such matters lay the foundation for permanent unity. There was, too, the question of landlords taking an undue advantage of the evacuees who were eager to return. They must not expect payment for the days that the *busties* were unoccupied or think of charging higher rents. He added that if they were quite honest in all their dealings and both the communities were true to one another, he was sure that the union of hearts would act unfailingly on the Punjab and help the good work that was being done by the ministers of the two dominions.

#### THE BOUNDARY COMMISSION AWARD

He then came to the award of the Umpire in the Boundary Commission. The Umpire was chosen by all the parties to the dispute. It would be unjust and unworthy to impute motives to the Umpire. He was specially invited by the parties to the thankless task. The parties and the public they represented, were loyally to abide by the award. No award that he knew—and he had to do with many arbitrations—completely satisfied the parties. But having made the choice they were bound to carry out the terms of the award. No doubt the best way was for the parties to adjust differences themselves. This royal road was open to them any time as Khwaja Saheb Nazimuddin and Dr. Ghosh, the two Premiers had wisely pointed out.

(Continued on p. 303)

# HARIJAN

August 31

1947

## HOW TO SAVE THE COW ?

(By M. K. Gandhi)

There is serious ignorance about the place of the cow in Hinduism and in the economy of Indian life. At the same time that India has become independent of foreign rule, by common consent it has been cut into twain so as to induce the untenable belief that one part is popularly described as Hindu India and the other part as Muslim India. Like all superstitions, this of Hindu and Muslim India will die hard. The fact is that the Indian Union and Pakistan belong equally to all who call themselves and are, sons of the soil, irrespective of their creed or colour.

Nevertheless, a large number of vocal Hindus have begun to believe the superstition that the Union belongs to the Hindus and that, therefore, they should enforce their belief by law even among non-Hindus. Hence an emotional wave is sweeping the country, in order to secure legislation prohibiting the slaughter of cows within the Union.

In this state, which I hold, is based on ignorance, claiming to be a knowing lover and devotee, second to none in India of the cow, I must try in the best manner I can to dispel the ignorance.

Let us at the outset realize that cow worship in the religious sense is largely confined to Gujarat, Marwad, the United Provinces and Bihar. Marwadis and Gujaratis being enterprising merchants, have succeeded in making the greatest noise without at the same time devoting their business talent to the solution of the very difficult question of conserving the cattle wealth of India.

It is obviously wrong legally to enforce one's religious practice on those who do not share that religion.

In so far as the pure economic necessity of cow protection is concerned, it can be easily secured if the question was considered on that ground alone. In that event all the dry cattle, the cows who give less milk than their keep and the aged and unfit cattle would be slaughtered without a second thought. This soulless economy has no place in India, although the inhabitants of this land of paradoxes may be, indeed, are guilty of many soulless acts.

Then how can the cow be saved without having to kill her off when she ceases to give the economic quantity of milk or when she becomes otherwise an uneconomic burden? The answer to the question can be summed up as follows :

1. By the Hindus performing their duty towards the cow and her progeny. If they did so, our cattle would be the pride of India and the world. The contrary is the case today.

2. By learning the science of cattle breeding. Today there is perfect anarchy in this work.

3. By replacing the present cruel method of castration by the humane method practised in the West.

4. By thorough reform of the *pinjarapoles* of India which are today, as a rule, managed ignorantly and without any plan by men who do not know their work.

5. When these primary things are done, it will be found that the Muslims will, of their own accord, recognize the necessity, if only for the sake of their Hindu brethren, of not slaughtering cattle for beef or otherwise.

The reader will observe that behind the foregoing requirements lies one thing and that is *ahimsa*, otherwise known as universal compassion. If that supreme thing is realized, everything else becomes easy. Where there is *ahimsa*, there is infinite patience, inner calm, discrimination, self-sacrifice and true knowledge. Cow protection is not an easy thing. Much money is wasted in its name. Nevertheless, in the absence of *ahimsa* the Hindus have become destroyers instead of saviours of the cow. It is even more difficult than the removal of foreign rule from India.

Calcutta, 22-8-'47

[Note : The average quantity of milk that the cow in India yields is said to be roughly 2 lbs. per day, that of New Zealand 14 lbs., of England 15 lbs., of Holland 20 lbs. The index figure for health goes up in proportion to the increase in the yield of milk.

23-8-'47

—M. K. G.]

## IS HARIJAN WANTED ?

(By M. K. Gandhi)

It occurs to me that now that freedom from British rule has come, the *Harijan* papers are no longer wanted. My views remain as they are. In the scheme of reconstruction for Free India, its villages should no longer depend, as they are now doing, on its cities, but cities should exist only for and in the interest of the villages. Therefore, the spinning wheel should occupy the proud position of the centre, round which all the life-giving village industries would resolve. But this seems to be receding into the background. The same thing can be said of many other things of which I used to draw a tempting picture. I can no longer dare to do so. My life has become, if possible, more tempestuous than before. Nor can I at present claim any place as a permanent habitation. The columns are predominantly filled by my after-prayer speeches. In the original I contribute on an average, only one and a half columns per week. This is hardly satisfactory. I would like, therefore, the readers of the *Harijan* weeklies to give me their frank opinion as to whether they really need their *Harijan* weekly to satisfy their political or spiritual hunger. They should send their answers to the Editor of the *Harijan*, Ahmedabad, in any of the languages in which they get their weekly, telling me very briefly at the same time, why, if they need it. In the left hand upper corner of the envelope containing the answer, the writer should state: "About Harijan".

Calcutta, 24-8-'47

## ESTABLISHMENT OF PEACE

Since the miraculous 15th of August, when the sundered communities in Calcutta suddenly woke up to the fact that they were friends, everyone has been asking: "How can this great emotional change be consolidated? How can the peace, that has been established, be made permanent?"

Gandhiji has himself provided the first part of the answer. He did not bring peace to Calcutta merely by preaching peace to Hindus and Muslims. He set a great example. He took to his heart the man whom the Hindus most hated and distrusted. Whether Shaheed Saheb Suhrawardy deserved that hatred, that mistrust, is not the point. Perhaps the dreadful allegations made against him by the Hindu community were not justified. But Gandhiji did not stop to consider whether Suhrawardy Saheb was guilty or guiltless. In any case, he was the outstanding Muslim leader in Calcutta — and he had once been a young disciple of the Mahatma. So, taking him as he was, Gandhiji made the offer of heart unity, of complete political identification. Neither was to have any political secret from the other.

Cynics say that Suhrawardy Saheb responded only because this was a sudden and unexpected means to his political rehabilitation just when his party had rejected him. As to that, it may be said that most men's motives for their actions are mixed; often they themselves may not be quite sure which of several motives predominated. But the main point is that he did respond and that, after ten days, this startling partnership seems to be firmly established. Who knows where it may lead?

One of the first things that have been done to consolidate peace has been the establishment of a Central Peace Committee in Calcutta, and a number of local committees are being set up. Perhaps it is a pity that they are called "Peace Committees". For the previous peace committees in Calcutta, as also in Bihar and perhaps elsewhere, have been singularly futile and ineffective. Some people seem to think that where Hindus and Muslims have been killing each other, you can establish peace simply by preaching peace. You cannot. The man who has lost his home or his relatives is not comforted by being told that his cruel neighbours are now willing to live in peace with him. He wants some tangible proof of their will for peace. Are they trying to rebuild his home? Are they prepared even to invite him and his family to live under their roofs until his own is ready for him? Are they offering him seed for his crops, ploughs, cattle, implements for his trade, or whatever else he needs to re-establish himself? These are the things the peace committees must attend to. In Calcutta, rightly, they are beginning with house-building. But this is only the first step. Gandhiji, Suhrawardy Saheb, the West Bengal Ministers and the City Fathers are working out plans for re-establishing the refugees in their homes and their trades.

The help of social agencies, of political parties (especially those that have contact with Calcutta's

industrial population), of all people of goodwill, must be secured. In the end, the peace of Calcutta, of Bengal, of all India, must rest on a firm foundation of social security and economic justice. Here lies the first responsibility of freedom.

Calcutta, 23-8-'47

H. G. ALEXANDER

## NON-VIOLENCE AND FREE INDIA

There was a small gathering of local students the other day in Gandhiji's camp at Beliaghata. Gandhiji first asked them if any of them had taken part in the riots, to which they replied in the negative. Whatever they had done was in self-defence; hence it was no part of the riot.

This gave Gandhiji an opportunity of speaking on some of the vital problems connected with non-violence. He said that mankind had all along tried to justify violence and war in terms of unavoidable self-defence. It was a simple rule that the violence of the aggressor could only be defeated by superior violence of the defender. All over the world, men had thus been caught in a mad race for armaments, and no one yet knew at what point of time the world would be really safe enough for turning the sword into the plough. Mankind, he stated, had not yet mastered the true art of self-defence.

But great teachers, who had practised what they preached, had successfully shown that true defence lay along the path of non-retaliation. It might sound paradoxical; but this is what he meant. Violence always thrived on counter-violence. The aggressor had always a purpose behind his attack; he wanted something to be done, some object to be surrendered by the defender. Now, if the defender steeled his heart and was determined not to surrender even one inch, and at the same time to resist the temptation of matching the violence of the aggressor by violence, the latter could be made to realize in a short while that it would not be paying to punish the other party and his will could not be imposed in that way. This would involve suffering. It was this unalloyed self-suffering which was the truest form of self-defence which knew no surrender.

Someone might ask that if through such non-resistance the defender was likely to lose his life, how could it be called self-defence? Jesus lost his life on the Cross and the Roman Pilate won. Gandhiji did not agree. Jesus had won, as the world's history had abundantly shown. What did it matter if the body was dissolved in the process, so long as by the Christ's act of non-resistance, the forces of good were released in society?

This art of true self-defence by means of which man gained his life by losing it, had been mastered and exemplified in the history of individuals. The method had not been perfected for application by large masses of mankind. India's *satyagraha* was a very imperfect experiment in that direction. Hence, during the Hindu-Muslim quarrel it proved a failure on the whole.

Two or three days ago, before this meeting with the students, Gandhiji unburdened his heart in

this respect to Professor Stuart Nelson, who had come to see him before he left for his college in America. Professor Nelson asked him why it was that Indians who had more or less successfully gained Independence through peaceful means, were now unable to check the tide of civil war through the same means? Gandhiji replied that it was indeed a searching question which he must answer. He confessed that it had become clear to him that what he had mistaken for *satyagraha* was not *satyagraha* but passive resistance—a weapon of the weak. Indians harboured ill-will and anger against their erstwhile rulers, while they pretended to resist them non-violently. Their resistance was, therefore, inspired by violence and not by regard for the man in the British, whom they should convert through *satyagraha*.

Now that the British were voluntarily quitting India, apparent non-violence had gone to pieces in a moment. The attitude of violence which we had secretly harboured, in spite of the restraint imposed by the Indian National Congress, now recoiled upon us and made us fly at each other's throats when the question of the distribution of power came up. If India could now discover a way of sublimating the force of violence which had taken a communal turn, and turning it into constructive, peaceful ways, whereby differences of interests could be liquidated, it would be a great day indeed.

Gandhiji then proceeded to say that it was indeed true that many English friends had warned him that the so-called non-violent non-co-operation of India was not really non-violent. It was the passivity of the weak and not the non-violence of the stout in heart who would never surrender their sense of human unity and brotherhood even in the midst of conflict of interests, who would ever try to convert and not coerce their adversary.

Gandhiji proceeded to say that this was indeed true. He had all along laboured under an illusion. But he was never sorry for it. He realized that if his vision were not covered by that illusion, India would never have reached the point which it had today.

India was now free, and the reality was now clearly revealed to him. Now that the burden of subjection had been lifted, all the forces of good had to be marshalled in one great effort to build a country which forsook the accustomed method of violence in order to settle human conflicts whether it was between two States or between two sections of the same people. He had yet the faith that India would rise to the occasion and prove to the world that the birth of two new States would be, not a menace, but a blessing to the rest of mankind. It was the duty of Free India to perfect the instrument of non-violence for dissolving collective conflicts, if its freedom was going to be really worth while.

Calcutta, 20-8-'47

N. K. BOSE

## THE NATIONAL FLAG

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru replying to the criticisms of the design of India's National Flag says :

"I have read a number of letters that have appeared in the *Hindustan Times* in the feature 'Thanks for the Flag'. I am afraid I am unconvinced by any of the criticisms made of the design and I think that the Flag, as adopted, successfully represents both artistically and symbolically what it is meant to represent.

"The Flag is above all a symbol. This Flag of ours with the three colours and with the *charkha* has been a symbol to us, for many years, of freedom and unity as well as the labouring masses of India. It would have been quite impossible for us to vary the Flag essentially without doing violence to that sentiment and the symbolism that has grown around it. The Flag was originally adopted after very careful consideration and the choice and arrangement of the colours was and is, I think, very artistic and beautiful. The *charkha* added a certain beauty of conception to the Flag. Because the full *charkha* is not there now, it must not be imagined that we have given up the *charkha* or what it meant. In the resolution of the Constituent Assembly it was stated clearly that the wheel in the centre represented the *charkha*. This symbolic representation of the *charkha* retains in its entirety the conception behind the *charkha* and is, in fact, a continuation of that idea in a somewhat more feasible and artistic form more suited to the Flag.

"That form was not casually chosen but was taken from the wheel from Ashoka's Capital. That wheel, of course, was no invention of Ashoka; it was older than Ashoka. But the fact that it was connected with Ashoka and is to be seen on his columns was an additional incentive for us to adopt that particular form.

"The suggestion that the wheel should have been bigger and should have covered part of the saffron and green stripes shows a lack of appreciation of the artistry of the entire design. That would have spoiled the Flag.

"The Flag, thus, as adopted, fulfils all the requirements that we demand from it. It is beautiful and artistic, it is essentially the Flag of our struggle for freedom and our triumph, it is the Flag representing the common man and the masses of India, and at the same time, modern as it is, it takes us back to the great cultural traditions of ancient India which have continued in some measure throughout the ages. It is a Flag thus both of the permanence of Indian culture and the dynamic quality of India today, which, we hope and trust, will be directed towards the betterment and liberation of the masses of this country."

### NOTICE

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MANAGER

## GANDHIJI'S POST-PRAYER SPEECHES

(Continued from p. 299)

He knew that the Muslims of Murshidabad and Malda were severely disappointed as the Hindus in Khulna or Gopalganj and the Buddhists in the Chittagong Hill tracts. The latter had gone to East Bengal. He would say to all these parties that it was not only foolish but unbecoming to quarrel over the award. It should not matter that on the 15th, the day was celebrated according to the national division. If he had been consulted he would have advised non-celebration because of the state of uncertainty. But having by mistake flown in the respective places the wrong flag, there should be no hesitation whatsoever in replacing the wrong flag by the right one. But as he had already said, there was no flag wrong in their dominion for the simple reason that there was no quarrel left between the parties. Both the dominions had sincerely professed mutual friendship and mutual regard. Therefore, he would advise the parties to fly both the flags of both the dominions or be equally respectful whichever flag was flown for the time being.

He could not understand the misgivings of the Mussalmans in that Murshidabad and Malda went to West Bengal, nor could he understand the misgivings of the Hindus in Khulna and Gopalganj and of the Buddhists in the Chittagong Hill tracts. For, in view of the friendship professed by all the parties, there was not the slightest occasion for entertaining any fear. Surely, there would be no compulsion used against the minorities in either part of Bengal. The minorities will enjoy equal rights with the majorities.

*Desh Bandhu Park, Calcutta, 22-8-'47*

## THE MILITARY POWER

Though the meeting consisting of several lakhs was silent for a long time, when Gandhiji began to speak, the people became restive and began to disperse. Gandhiji, therefore, cut short his speech. He drew attention to the fact that while some men in the audience responded and kept time, the women hardly responded. He said that those who had some experience knew the power that the *Ramadhun*, meaning recital of God's name from the heart, meant. He knew the power that lakhs of soldiers marching in step to the tune of their band meant. The desolation that the military prowess had wrought in the world, he who ran could see. Though the war was said to have ended, the aftermath was worse than actual warfare. Such was the bankruptcy of military power.

## RAMADHUN

Without the slightest hesitation he was there to contend that the power exerted by the *Ramadhun* recited by millions of mankind with true beat of time, was different in kind from and infinitely superior to the display of military strength. And this recital of God's name from the heart, would produce lasting peace and happiness in the place of the present desolation, they witnessed. That brought him to what was going on in the Punjab. If there was lasting peace in Calcutta, it must have

its effect on the Punjab. But it was not so as yet. He felt sorrow and shame to learn that the Hindus were leaving Lahore and the Muslims were leaving Amritsar. It was deplorable that the Hindus and the Sikhs should distrust the Muslims and the Muslims should distrust the former. He hoped that the Muslim and the Hindu and the Sikh leaders would stop the reported exodus.

## KHARAGPUR

Gandhiji referred then to the visit he had from some Muslims from Kharagpur. Though now there was comparative quiet there, there was no assurance that it would last. They complained that the Hindu officer was partial. He hoped this was not so. He must warn all the officers and their men in the police force that in their work they were neither Muslims nor Hindus nor Sikhs. They were Indians bound by oath to give full protection to the afflicted without regard to their religion. Thereby they did not cease to be less Muslims, Hindus or Sikhs, but became better.

## RELIGION

Religion was a personal matter and if we succeeded in confining it to the personal plane, all would be well in our political life. The manifestation of brotherhood which was being witnessed today would prove a passing show if we did not consolidate it by suitable acts in the social and political spheres. If officers of the Government as well as members of the public undertook the responsibility and worked wholeheartedly for the creation of a secular State, then only could we build a new India that would be the glory of the world.

*Woodlands, Alipore, 23-8-'47*

## ALLAH-O-AKBAR

Gandhiji first referred to the cry of *Allah-o-Akbar* to which some Hindus had objected. He held that it was probably a cry than which a greater one had not been produced by the world. It was a soul-stirring religious cry which meant, God only was great. There was nobility in the meaning. Did it become objectionable because it was Arabic? He admitted that it had in India a questionable association. It often terrified the Hindus because sometimes the Muslims in anger come out of the mosques with that cry on their lips to belabour the Hindus. He confessed that the original had no such association. So far as he knew, the cry had no such association in other parts of the world. If, therefore, there was to be a lasting friendship between the two, the Hindus should have no hesitation in uttering the cry together with their Muslim friends. God was known by many names and had many attributes. Rama, Rahim, Krishna, Karim were all names of the one God. *Sat Shri Akal* was an equally potent cry. Should a single Muslim or Hindu hesitate to utter it? It meant that God was and nothing else was. The *Ramadhun* had the same virtue.

## VANDE MATARAM

He then came to *Vande Mataram*. That was no religious cry. It was a purely political cry. The Congress had to examine it. A reference was made to Gurudev about it. And both the Hindu and the Muslim members of the Congress Working Committee

had to come to the conclusion that its opening lines were free from any possible objection, and he pleaded that it should be sung together by all on due occasion. It should never be a chant to insult or offend the Muslims. It was to be remembered that it was the cry that had fired political Bengal. Many Bengalis had given up their lives for political freedom with that cry on their lips. Though, therefore, he felt strongly about *Vande Mataram* as an ode to Mother India, he advised his League friends to refer the matter to the League High Command. He would be surprised if in view of the growing friendliness between the Hindus and the Muslims, the League High Command objected to the prescribed lines of the *Vande Mataram*, the national song, and the national cry of Bengal which sustained her when the rest of India was almost asleep and which was, so far as he was aware, acclaimed by both the Hindus and the Muslims of Bengal. No doubt, every act, as he pointed out the previous evening, must be purely voluntary on the part of either partner. Nothing could be imposed in true friendship.

#### SHAHEED SAHEB

The third thing he referred to, was about his friend Shaheed Suhrawardy. He was receiving verbal complaints and complaints by letters that Shaheed Saheb was not to be trusted and that the Hindus had suffered a lot during the tenure of his ministry. The complaint was not new. He knew it before they embarked on the joint mission which seemed to be bearing unexpectedly good fruit. It was due to the givers of the warning that he should deal with it. He had not had the time even to discuss the matter with his friend. He was in no hurry. His was a trusting nature. He had never lost anything by trusting in good faith. Just as he would expect others to believe his word, unless he was proved untrue, he would likewise believe the word of another. That, he held, was the only honourable way of living among men. He held that man never lost by trusting and that the deceiver ever lost. He would have to answer for his crime before his Maker. He could say that during the few days they were together, he had found no occasion to regret the friendship. This he could tell them, that without his association in the work, he (the speaker) would have been able to do nothing.

#### THE PUNJAB

He referred next to a deputation he had from the Punjabi friends, who had drawn a terrible picture of what was said to be going on in the Punjab and who on the strength of the information asked him immediately to proceed to the Punjab. They had informed him that before the killing and arson in the Punjab, what had happened in Bengal was nothing. They added that Lahore was almost denuded of the Hindus and the Sikhs as was Amritsar of the Muslims. He hoped that the information was highly coloured. The Punjabis of Calcutta could not know the true situation in the Punjab. Be that as it may, he was sure that if the Hindus, the Sikhs

and the Muslims of Calcutta were sincere in their professions of friendship, they would all write to their fellows in the Punjab and ask them to desist from mutual slaughter. The declarations of the Dominion Premiers could not go in vain. He could not believe that the Punjab leaders would not like any non-Muslims in the Pakistan part and non-Hindus and non-Sikhs in the other part. The logical consequence would be that there would be no *gurudwaras* and *mandirs* in the West Punjab and no mosques in the East Punjab. The picture was too gruesome to be ever true.

#### NATIONALIST MUSLIMS

Lastly, he came to the Nationalist Muslims who were good enough to see him. They twitted him for giving importance and life to the Muslim League and neglecting the Nationalist Muslims. He could not plead guilty to either charge. The League had gained importance without his or the Congress aid. It became great because, rightly or wrongly, it caught Muslim fancy. The Congress and he had to deal with and recognize the fact that faced them. He was not sorry for having visited Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah eighteen times in Bombay. His friends should also know that he alone could have done nothing without Shaheed Saheb and Osman Saheb and the other League members. There was no question of neglect of the Nationalist Muslims. Nationalism of a man was its own merit. It demanded no recognition. He would advise his friends to remain what they were and exhibit in their every act courage, self-sacrifice and true knowledge born of study and he was certain that whether they were few or many, they would make their mark on India's future. He would even advise them to join the League and oppose it from within, whenever they found it to be reactionary. Whilst he said all this, he would advise his League friends to approach the Nationalist Muslims in a friendly spirit, whether they remained out or came in. True friendship did not admit of exclusion without the soundest reason.

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