

HARIJAN

Editor: PYARELAL

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TWO ANNAS

GIVE AND TAKE

(By M. K. Gandhi)

A Sindhi sufferer writes:

"At this critical time when thousands of our countrymen are leaving their ancestral homes and are pouring in from Sind, the Punjab and the N. W. F. P., I find that there is, in some sections of the Hindus, a provincial spirit. Those who are coming here suffered terribly and deserve all the warmth that the Hindus of the Indian Union can reasonably give. You have rightly called them *Dukkhi*, though they are commonly called *sharanarthis*. The problem is so great that no government can cope with it unless the people back the efforts with all their might. I am sorry to confess that some of the landlords have increased the rents of houses enormously and some are demanding *pagri*. May I request you to raise your voice against the provincial spirit and the *pagri* system specially at this time of terrible suffering?"

Though I sympathize with the writer, I cannot endorse his analysis. Nevertheless I am able to testify that there are rapacious landlords who are not ashamed to fatten themselves at the expense of the sufferers. But I know personally that there are others who, though they may not be able or willing to go as far as the writer or I may wish, do put themselves to inconvenience in order to lessen the suffering of the victims. The best way to lighten the burden is for the sufferers to learn how to profit by this unexpected blow. They should learn the art of humility which demands a rigorous self-searching rather than a search of others and consequent criticism, often harsh, oftener undeserved and sometimes only deserved. Searching of self ennobles, searching of others debases. The sufferers should learn the art and virtue of corporate life, in which the circumference of co-operation is ever widening till at last it encircles the whole human race. If they did this, no sufferer will live in isolation. All of them, no matter to which province they belong, will hold together and would be considering not the welfare of self but that of all. This does not mean that all of them will live or insist on living at one place, an impossible feat at any time, more so today, when lakhs upon lakhs of people have been torn from their homes, not knowing where to lay their heads

upon. But this humble spirit of co-operation does mean that wherever they are placed, they will feel one with all the sufferers, no matter from what strata of society they are drawn or to which province they belong. Insistence on being accommodated in a particular place of one's choice there will be none. The sufferers will never grumble. They will disdain to occupy houses belonging to Muslim owners or tenants, whether these places are physically occupied or evacuated. It is for the Government to decide what they will do with property evacuated under abnormal conditions that are prevalent in India today. The sufferers' one and only care would be to hold together and act as one man. It would be seen that if the idea thus presented takes shape and spreads, the problem of accommodating sufferers, otherwise styled refugees, will become incredibly simple and they will cease to be a menace.

Moreover, every sufferer who is not a cripple will do his or her full share of work against bread, clothing and shelter in a becoming manner. Thus they will realize the dignity of labour and feel dependent upon no one. All will be equal to one another irrespective of sex. Some labour will be shared by all, e. g. sanitary work including latrine-cleaning and scavenging. No labour will be considered too low or too high. In this society there will be no room for drones, idlers or loafers. This camp life is any day superior to the city life of dirt and squalor side by side with palaces—difficult to decide which is a greater eyesore between the two.

New Delhi, 6-12-'47

Cigars to the Fore

Priorities are in fashion. Government policy, though not laid down in black and white, can be gauged from the way they lend their support to various industries. The latest is a research station to be established at Vedasandur near Dindigul for carrying on research on tobacco leaf required for wrapping cigars.

We understand that the scheme will cost three lakhs. Though this cost may be met by the Indian Central Tobacco Committee, we should like to know where the human talents come from. Should they not be channelized into finding ways and means of producing more food?

J. C. K.

GANDHIJI'S POST-PRAYER SPEECHES

Birla House, New Delhi, 1-12-'47

WHY USE 'IF' ?

Many friends upbraid me for often using 'if' in making many statements. I have made use of the little conjunction with much benefit to the cause I am espousing for the time. The controversy now rages round the Kathiawad imbroglio. My friends feel hurt by the publicity gained by the reported atrocities which they hold to be groundless and which, to the small extent they are true, the authorities and the Congressmen have battled against bravely and successfully. Surely, truth has gained by making conditional use of the information given by the parties concerned. The Kathiawad authorities and the Congress will gain to the exact extent that they have stood for the truth. But the friends hold that by the time untruth is overtaken, mischief is done by unscrupulous parties making unlawful use of my giving currency to a particular untruth by omitting the conjunction and quoting me in support of it. I am not unaware of the danger. Each time it has been tried it has failed miserably and the unscrupulous party has been discredited. My friends need not be perturbed by my speeches in which I make conditional use of compromising statements provided, of course always, the parties attacked are above reproach.

Let us examine the converse case. Suppose in the instance in point I had ignored the charges made in influential Pakistan journals, especially when they were in the main backed by the Prime Minister of Pakistan. My indifference would have resulted in the Muslim world giving credence to the reports as if they were gospel truth. Now the best Muslim mind is already sceptical about the truth of the reports.

BE TRUE

The lesson I would have my friends of Kathiawad, and incidentally others, to draw from incidents such as this is that they should have their own house in perfect order, should always welcome criticism even when it is bitter and profit by it by becoming more exact (if possible) and correcting their errors whenever detected. We should never make the mistake of thinking that we can never make any mistakes. The bitterest critic is bitter because he has some grudge, fancied or real, against us. We shall set him right, if we are patient with him and whenever the occasion arises, show him his error or correct our own when we are to be found in error. So doing, we shall never go wrong. Undoubtedly, the balance is to be preserved. Discrimination is ever necessary. Deliberately mischievous statements have to be ignored. I believe that by constant practice I have somewhat learnt the art of discrimination.

In the present disturbed atmosphere, when charges are hurled against one another, it would be folly to be in a fool's paradise and feel that we can do no wrong. That blissful state it is no longer possible for us to claim. It will be creditable if by strenuous effort we succeed in isolating the mischief and then eradicating it. We shall do so only if we keep our eyes and ears open for seeing and hearing our own shortcomings. Nature has so made us that we do not see our backs,

it is reserved for others to see them. Hence, it is wise to profit by what they see.

SEARCHING FOR TRUTH

I have not done with the long telegram I received from Junagadh last evening as I was about to come to the prayer meeting. I was able only to glance at it. I have since read it carefully. The signatories repeat all the charges made in the reports alluded to by me. If the charges are true, they damage the Kathiawadi Hindus; if they go baselessly beyond the admissions made and published by me, they have damaged the Pakistan cause. They invite me to go to Kathiawad and study things for myself. I presume that the senders know that I cannot do so. They ask for a commission. Surely before they can do so, they have to make out a *prima facie* case, I must assume that their purpose is not to discredit the Hindus of Kathiawad or Junagadh as the case may be, but to elucidate the truth and protect Muslim life, honour and property. They know as well as anybody else that newspaper propaganda, especially when it is unscrupulous, will protect neither honour nor life, nor property. All the three can be preserved and now by the strictest adherence to truth and going to the many Hindu friends that the signatories know they have. They should know too that though I am far away from Kathiawad, I am not idle. Deliberately I opened the chapter myself and I am gathering all the information I can. I have met the Sardar and he assures me that so far as in him lies, he will prevent all communal strife and see that all misconduct is severely dealt with. The workers in Kathiawad who have no communal prejudice are striving to reach the truth and seek redress of every wrong done to the Muslims who are as dear to them as themselves. Will they help in the process?

Birla House, New Delhi, 2-12-'47

A VISIT TO PANIPAT

Gandhiji returned from Panipat a little after 5-30 p. m. and arrived on the prayer ground as the *Ramadhun* was being sung. He apologized for being late and then gave a brief account of his visit. He had gone there in order to see whether he could persuade the Muslims of Panipat not to leave Panipat for Pakistan. If they could have the courage to remain in their own homes, it would not only be good for them but also for the whole of India, including Pakistan. He had met the Hindu and the Sikh refugees too. They called themselves refugees and not sufferers. They were unhappy and were bound to remain so till they too went back to their homes. The same was true of a great many Muslims who had been forced by circumstances to leave the Union and go to Pakistan. The Muslims of Panipat mentioned why they felt that they could not stay there.

TWO MINISTERS

Dr. Gopichand and Sardar Swaran Singh were also in Panipat. The Maulanas of Delhi and Deshbandhu Gupta whose home was in Panipat also met Gandhiji there. The Muslim friends of Panipat told him that though on his last visit they had told him that they would not go, the situation had since then deteriorated. Neither their life, honour, nor property was safe. How then could they stay? Gandhiji told them that those whose refuge was God and who had nothing but love in their hearts for all mankind would fear for nothing.

They would suffer death or loss of property, but they would protect their honour. He had left Delhi at 10-30 a. m. and reached Panipat at 11-30 a. m. He was talking to the Muslims till 3 p. m. After that he met the Hindu and the Sikh refugees. The audience was over 20,000. Dr. Gopichand also addressed them and so did Sardar Swaran Singh. When the Sardarsaheb stood up, the patience of the refugees gave way. Gandhiji did not think that they meant any disrespect to the Sardar. They merely wanted to give expression to their feeling that they had had enough of speeches. It was time for them to put forward their grievances. They were angry and loudly asserted that the Muslims must go. Their representatives tried to calm them. One of their leaders then sang a Punjabi song, after which there was quiet. The leader then spoke to them in Punjabi and rebuked them for creating disorder in the meeting. Sardar Swaran Singh then spoke and did likewise. He spoke of two things that they must do and the Government would also do, whatever Pakistan did or did not. The first was to rescue abducted Muslim girls and restore them to their families. The second was to consider null and void all forcible conversions. The Muslims who had been made Hindus and Sikhs must be assured that they could remain in India as Muslims without any hindrance. The Sardarsaheb also declared that mosques would be protected and those that had been converted into temples would be restored. Gandhiji was glad to hear this from both the Ministers. As for protection of life and property, the Government would do all that it could. But the Government could only succeed if the people co-operated with them.

GRIEVANCES OF THE REFUGEES

The refugees had a number of grievances. They said that the food was bad and insufficient. The East Punjab Governor was, however, looking into the matter. Out of the clothes that were sent for the refugees, good blankets often disappeared. They were given old and torn ones. One boy came and took off his clothes in front of him and told him to restore his father who had been killed. How could anyone do that? But he could understand the boy's grief and sympathized with him.

Gandhiji took the leader of the refugees in his car on the return journey. He said that the management should be given to representative refugees instead of to the local Hindus as at present. At present there was favouritism. He advised the representative to talk to the fellow sufferers and if they felt that it was their duty to keep the Muslims in Panipat free from fear and molestation, he should assure them on their behalf and induce them not to leave their homes. That would be a real victory in Panipat, which was famous for battles.

Gandhiji said that he was relating all this to the audience so that they might know how low they had sunk. They had their own Government, but they were not prepared to obey them. Pandit Jawaharlalji had said that he would rather be called the first servant of the nation than the Prime Minister. Were all Government officials really servants of the people? If so, there would be no scope for luxuries. They would then all be for ever thinking of the people and their needs. That would mean *Rama Raj* or the Kingdom of God on earth. That would be real and complete independence. The independence of today stifled him. It was unreal and unstable.

Birla House, New Delhi, 3-12-'47

IMPORTANCE OF PROMISES

Speaking after prayers Gandhiji said that some friends who had been too him during the day had complained that the leaders made promises when they took power on the 15th of August last but now they were breaking them. He did not know what promises the leaders had broken. He was not the Government, but if he had some concrete proof of the allegations made, he would speak to the leaders concerned. Such charges, when carefully examined, often boiled down to misunderstanding on the part of the hearer. He himself had many a time been the victim of such misunderstanding. He had never deliberately deceived anybody. Yet his words had sometimes produced a different impression on the other person, than what he had meant to say, and he had been accused of breach of promise. He believed that most of the suffering in the world was the result of misunderstandings. One should think before speaking and never waste a single word. One's speech should be a true reflection of one's thoughts, and actions should reflect the spoken word.

India had come into her own. The leaders had the reins of Government and the disposal of millions of rupees was in their hands. They had to be most vigilant. They must be humble. People often thought nothing of not keeping their word. They should never promise what they could not do. Once a promise was made it must be kept at all cost. This rule applied to every individual and not to the members of the Government only.

THE HARIJANS IN SIND

A medical friend from Sind had written to Gandhiji of the sad plight of the Harijans there. He said that if the Caste Hindus went away and the Harijans alone were left in Sind, nothing but annihilation awaited them. The only condition for life there would be complete slavery and ultimate acceptance of Islam. The Pakistan Government said many things, but the Pakistan officials did not implement them. Gandhiji said that this was a sad state of affairs. In the Union also Pandit Jawaharlalji and the Sardar had said that they would give protection to the Muslims and they did not want a single Muslim to leave the Union out of fear. What he had told them about Panipat yesterday showed that they could not have that assurance implemented to the full. If that was the state of affairs in the Union, what could he say to Pakistan? The Harijans of Sind, he was told, wanted to come away, but were not allowed to do so. They were forced to do *bhangi's* work, even when they were not used to such work. If true, it was wholly wrong. The Pakistan Government should not act in a way that might leave a permanent sore spot on the Sikh and the Hindu mind. Those Harijans, who wanted to leave Sind, should be given facilities to do so. No one could be forced to do *bhangi's* work. Today a Harijan could choose any profession for himself. Shri Jagjivanramji had said that the Harijans should come away from Pakistan. But while they remained there, they should be allowed to live honourably. All conversions, even when they were said to be voluntary, should be considered null and void in both the Dominions.

(Continued on p. 470)

HARIJAN

December 14

1947

NO LIMITATIONS

(By M. K. Gandhi)

A correspondent says in substance :

"Individual *ahimsa* I can understand. Corporate *ahimsa* between friends is also intelligible. But you talk of *ahimsa* towards avowed enemies. This is like a mirage. It will be a mercy if you give up this obstinacy of yours. If you do not, you will forfeit the esteem you enjoy. What is worse, you, being considered a *Mahatma*, mislead many credulous persons to their own and society's harm."

That non-violence which only an individual can use is not of much use in terms of society. Man is a social being. His accomplishments to be of use must be such as any person with sufficient diligence can attain. That which can be exercised only among friends is of value only as a spark of non-violence. It cannot merit the appellation of *ahimsa*. 'Enmity vanishes before *ahimsa*', is a great aphorism. It means that the greatest enmity requires an equal measure of *ahimsa* for its abatement. Cultivation of this virtue may need long practice, even extending to several births. It does not become useless on that account. Travelling along the route, the pilgrim will meet richer experiences from day to day so that he may have a glimpse of the beauty he is destined to see at the top. This will add to his zest. No one is entitled to infer from this that the path will be a continuous carpet of roses without thorns. A poet has sung that the way to reach God accrues only to the very brave, never to the faint-hearted. The atmosphere today is so much saturated with poison that one refuses to recollect the wisdom of the ancients and to perceive the varied little experiences of *ahimsa* in action. 'A bad turn is neutralized by a good', is a wise saying of daily experience in practice. Why can we not see that if the sum total of the world's activities was destructive, it would have come to an end long ago? Love, otherwise *ahimsa*, sustains this planet of ours.

This much must be admitted. The precious grace of life has to be strenuously cultivated, naturally so because it is uplifting. Descent is easy not so ascent. A large majority of us being undisciplined, our daily experience is that of fighting or swearing at one another on the slightest pretext.

This, the richest grace of *ahimsa* will descend easily upon the owner of hard discipline.

New Delhi, 8-12-'47

REPLY TO RICHARD GREGG

A correspondent writes :

"In his letter to Mahatmaji, Mr. Richard B. Gregg explains that much of the recent violence is an expression not so much of inter-communal suspicion and hatred, but rather and more deeply and originally, of the long pent up resentments of the masses because of their oppression. He seeks to give the present violence an economic explanation. He proceeds that frustration suffered in childhood generates resentments which are suppressed and remain long after the person who caused the original frustration is dead and awaits a suitable opportunity for explosion. His explanation cannot be accepted. What he says would be true if the killing had been confined to the classes by the masses. That it is not so disproves his thesis. The killing and the injury inflicted are on the community to which the killer and inflicter of injury do not belong. If one is to accept Mr. Gregg's explanation of frustration, there must have been a struggle in which the classes had won and the masses had been ruthlessly put down. In that case, experience of the struggle leaves, no doubt, naked hatred behind. The Bengal famine with its heavy toll in human lives did not provoke a revolt.

"The home has an influence on a person. If neither the family nor the contemporaries show a person affection, he would become anti-social. Parental tenderness is expected from others, but when it is discovered with indignation that there is no reciprocation, the disappointed desire for tenderness turns into hatred and violence. It is now when children are torn out of their families and see violence and hatred that kindness is required if the anarchic and anti-social tendencies are to be curbed and they are to grow up as respectable and law-abiding citizens. The ethics of fatalism has been responsible for making the majority of our countrymen accept their social conditions as their unalterable destiny and believe riches, property and position as rewards of previous birth. The break in this fatalistic outlook has been due to the development of conflicting ideologies due to the advent of industrialism and technique and also due to the Congress propaganda. There is another reason for rejecting what Mr. Gregg says. Each community has developed rules of behaviour for which there is nothing to be said except that they are traditional. Religion has succeeded to a considerable extent in curbing the anti-social activities."

"The absence of tension has been undermined by the insidious propaganda inculcating hatred to gain political ends. When once the checks have been removed, the step has been taken on the road towards madness. It has produced the present cataclysm and may do so in future. Its first fruits in practice were the massacres. What the future has to offer to its ghost, I do not venture to predict. To frame a philosophy capable of coping with men nurtured in hatred and suddenly found in the intoxication of power is the most pressing task of our time. Those who are in power or have influence must be conscious of the greater ends that redeem

man from the life of brutes. Action to be of any value must be inspired by vision of love, knowledge and delight in beauty. These are not negations. These are enough to fill the 'lives of the greatest that have ever lived.'"

[I wonder if the correspondent has fully grasped the deeper meaning of Mr. Gregg's presentation. The latter will answer if he chooses. —M. K. G.]

A RUDDERLESS SHIPPING PROGRAMME

Indian Shipping had been blasted out of existence by British interest in the last century or so. In the past few decades, thanks to private enterprise, a few boats have been picked up from the junk of leading shipping nations and salvaged into a "Mercantile Marine" for India. When we look at the needs of India's foreign trade if it needed an ocean-going liner, we are at present, the proud possessors of only a single-man canoe! At this stage when India needs millions of tonnage, the Commerce Minister brings forward a scheme for three corporations of 100,000 tons! Instead of a charger fit for a well-armoured knight he presents a knock-kneed donkey!

Even this scheme displays a lack of thought or appreciation of organization needed. Basically, one may say, it displays no well-conceived idea of the future of Indian Shipping. The plan is Government participation in the share-holding of the corporations. The public as well as shipping companies can hold shares. The management is by agencies, but how the policies will be controlled, if at all, is not clear. Even the method of working envisaged is foggy. The six-point outline given is delightfully vague and confused leaving the reader no wiser than he was. We feel all this beating about the bush is due to not having a single-minded national policy and trying to combine and compromise all types of incompatible interests.

The Government has to settle its economic policy first and foremost — then in relation to its foreign trade policy will become well-defined. After that the policy in regard to shipping will naturally fall into its own sphere. When we have a clearly laid out programme for all key industries, we shall know how this shipping will be conducted — under monopolies, competition, nationalization or State control. This will open the way also to the methods of finding the needed finance.

At this stage this question needs to be handled with care, deep thought and tact, as we are up against powerful foreign combines. No haphazard schemes will meet the situation. Shipping being one of the life lines of a nation's economic activity, we hope the Government will bestow careful thought and attention on the building up of this vital service to the nation. Even in drafting a workable scheme the Government will be well advised to take into confidence the various interests affected by this industry and in consultations with them attempt to solve this problem.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

RECONSTITUTE FILM CENSOR BOARDS

The cinema is a ubiquitous curse which has descended upon our people from the West, and it is only to be expected that the ideals of the film world should create a great impression upon our minds. And what are these ideals? As Roger Maxwell writes in *Film* (M. Alderton Pink: The Challenge to Democracy, Faber and Faber, p. 64),

'Certain themes are implicit in most pictures (American and British alike, but more vividly in American) and might be listed as follows:

- (a) Wealth in the abstract is a good thing.
- (b) Luxury, especially associated with women is normal.
- (c) The full time pursuit of women by unoccupied businessmen and rich young rulers is normal.
- (d) The desks of high-power executives are always clear.
- (e) Fathers spoil their daughters with money gifts.
- (f) Men are the source of money for women.
- (g) The desirability of the night-club-with-cabaret life.
- (h) A sock in the jaw is an honest man's answer.
- (i) Men should appraise women by externals, with close-ups of essentials.
- (j) Women should be judged satisfactory on the basis of desirability.
- (k) Sex is the most important sensation in life.
- (l) Women can be come-hither till you don't know where.
- (m) Women may appraise men by externals and invite intimate attention at speed.
- (n) Things of the spirit are either funny, eccentric, charlatan or ever so wonderful. (Art is defunked as artiness, religion as mania, mysticism as a yearn in soft focus).
- (o) Reformers are either harmless saints or agitators.
- (p) Brainless patriotism is preferable to national self-criticism.
- (q) To be foreign is to be under suspicion. To be eastern is to be horrific.
- (r) Life is a lark if you have the facilities, poverty is an act of star-slumming, boy gets girl is the end of life's difficulties, divorce is as easy as knife, and riches are the reward of virtue.'

In the U. S. A. the Motion Picture Research Council reported after extensive study that four out of five picture programmes are rated as unsuitable for children, while nearly 37% contain definitely injurious material. (Sings of the Times., 19, August, 1947, p. 4)

Careful scientific investigation resulted in the following verdict published in the *Parents' Magazine*:

- (a) Very young children suffer from disturbed sleep and nervous shock as a result of frequent attendance;
- (b) Children and adolescents learn at the movies attitudes and conduct which are in conflict with the morals of the community;
- (c) Sex and gangster pictures definitely influence a considerable number of children towards careers of delinquency and crime;

(d) The great majority of movies are devoid of either artistic or genuine social content.

Dr. Max G. Schlaff, speaking of thrillers said:

"These blood-and-thunder affairs so shock the delicate nerve centres of the young that trouble is bound to result."

It is a far cry from America to Poona. But on an advertisement hoarding in Poona on a single day, I read three picture titles as follows:

'Murder in the Music Hall', 'Wanted for Murder', and '(Brave) Detective'.

How to deal with this gigantic evil involving crores of capital out to earn dividends at any cost, is the question. If we cannot allow unscrupulous dealers to practise adulteration of food, can we allow commercial groups to degrade national life and character? As the answer is in the negative, Mr. Pink proposes the establishment of an independent Film Corporation similar to the B. B. C. But that may take time. Meanwhile the Central and Provincial Governments should reconstitute the Film Censor Boards without delay. And the public should organize a Motion Picture Research Council on the lines of the U. S. A.

V. G. D.

GANDHIJI'S POST-PRAYER SPEECHES

(Continued from p. 467)

KATHIAWAD AGAIN

Gandhiji then went on to speak of Kathiawad. He was receiving contradictory telegrams from there. One said that the allegations mentioned by him on the first day were all true; another group said that they were wrong. The Congressmen had had no hand in the disturbances. Whatever loot and arson had taken place was the work of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Rashtriya Sevak Sangh. Today he had a telegram on behalf of the Hindu Mahasabha and the R. S. S. It said that they had no hand whatsoever in the arson and loot. Surely, someone out of the three was wrong. He was convinced that if the Hindus had lost their balance and harassed the Muslims, they should make no attempt to hide it. If, on the other hand, the Muslims had exaggerated things in the first instance, they should say so openly. If it was proved that the Hindu Mahasabha and the R. S. S. had had no hand in the disturbances, he would congratulate them. He was trying to find out the truth. But as an individual, he had no authority.

INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Referring to South Africa Gandhiji said that India had not carried her point at U. N. O. Shrimati Vijayalakshmi Pandit had told the Indians in South Africa that though they had lost, it was not a defeat, for, India had a majority of votes, though not the 2/3 majority which was required to get the motion through. She asked the Indians in South Africa not to lose heart. She, as a representative of the Union, could not go further. He went a step further and said that there was no question of a defeat for those who believed in the golden law of *satyagraha*. That weapon he had discovered in South Africa. Supposing India had won at U. N. O. and General Smuts had agreed to concede the demands of the Indians in South Africa, but the White population of South Africa refused to submit,

what could India do? Such things were happening in India today. The Hindus from Pakistan and the Muslims from the Union were being driven out. Each Government declared its impotence to protect the minorities. There was a large number of Hindus in Bannu. They could not go out of their houses except at the risk of losing their lives. If they remained indoors, starvation stared them in the face. What were they to do? He would repeat the same advice to them as he had given to the Muslims here. They should say clearly and openly that they would not leave their homes. They would live where they were born and brought up but with honour.

South Africa was the country of the Negroes. Outsiders like the Boers had no greater rights than the Indians who had gone there. But the Europeans suppressed the Negroes and deprived the Indian settlers of elementary rights. It was quite proper to place India's case before U. N. O. But if the U. N. O. would not or could not secure justice for the Indians of South Africa, should not the latter fight for their rights? In his opinion, they should, but not with the force of arms. The true and only weapon was *satyagraha* or soul force. The soul was immortal, the body was perishable.

If the Indians in South Africa had courage and self-respect, they would fight for their fundamental rights with the force of the soul.

Birla House, New Delhi, 4-12-47

WHY FOREIGN PROPAGANDA?

Gandhiji again referred to Kathiawad in his after-prayer speech this evening. He said that he had received a telegram from Shri Shamaldas Gandhi that day and had received one from Shri Dhebarbhai the night before, both contradicting the reports of a Muslim harassment in Kathiawad. The former had felt hurt by Gandhiji's remarks about Kathiawad and had gone from Bombay to Kathiawad to investigate things for himself. He had wired to Gandhiji that the reports about abductions of Muslim women were entirely false, and as far as he knew reports about murders were also untrue. There had been no disturbance of any kind after Sardar Patel's visit. Before that some looting and rioting had taken place. He was making further enquiries and would submit the report to Gandhiji. In the meantime, said Gandhiji, telegrams came from Iran, America and London saying that the Muslims in Kathiawad were being subjected to terrible atrocities. These foreign wires hurt him. He said this as a friend of the Muslims. It was well with them only so long as they adhered to truth. What would be the meaning of sending alarming news to foreign countries except to discredit the Union? It was wrong for them to exaggerate things out of all proportion, and to carry on propaganda in foreign countries based on exaggerations. He must warn his friends against such practice.

GOOD NEWS

Gandhiji was then glad to turn to a pleasing news. He had received a nice letter from the Muslims from Hoshangabad. There the Sikhs had invited the Muslims on Guru Nanak's birthday and assured them that they were friends and brothers. How he wished that the Sikhs and the Hindus in general would follow the lead! Then they could wash out the ugly stains that tarnished the fair name of India today.

COMMUNAL CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

Referring to the communal Chambers of Commerce, Gandhiji had a letter from the Marwadi Chamber of Commerce, saying that though it had a communal name, its membership was open to all. He had asked them how many non-Marwadis they had on the rolls. The European and Muslim Chambers also might make the same claim. The claim could not be sustained by having a few other members for the sake of form. Why should there be separate Chambers if there was no communal spirit behind. There was much to learn from the Europeans if they would stay as Indians and work for the good of India. Some of them were expert businessmen. They could give their talents to India in the spirit of service. There was no use for exploiters.

The letter and the report from the Marwadi Chamber of Commerce were in English. English was all right in its own place. But it hurt him to see it usurp the place that did not belong to it. As an Indian he felt ashamed that anybody should think that he knew more English than his own language. It was utterly useless to send him a letter in English when the writer knew Hindustani. The English report could be justified only on the assumption that the Marwadi Chamber had an overwhelming number of members who were either English or English knowing. He hoped such was not the case if the Chamber was representative of Indian interests, be they even exclusively Marwadi. He hoped the Marwadi Chamber would take his remarks in the spirit in which he had made them. He used the incident to drive home a general truth.

BURMA PREMIER

The Prime Minister of Burma had been to see him. He was full of humility. Gandhiji told him that though India was a great country geographically and its culture was ancient, today there was nothing for Burma to learn from India although India had given birth to Guru Nanak who taught love and tolerance for all. The Sikhs were to be friends with the Hindus, the Muslims and everybody. It was wrong to make a difference between the Sikhs and the Hindus. Master Tarasingh had compared the Hindus and the Sikhs to the nail and the nailbed. No one, he said, could separate the two. Gandhiji was glad to hear it. Who was Guru Nanak, if not a Hindu? The *Guru Granth* was full of the teachings of the *Vedas*. Hinduism was like a mighty ocean which received and absorbed all religious truths. It was a tragedy that India and the Hindus seemed to have forgotten their heritage. They seemed to be engaged in fratricidal strife today. He did not want Burma to learn strife from India. They should forget the ugly present, which he hoped was temporary, and remember that India had won her freedom without bloodshed. He had admitted that it was not non-violence of the brave that India had practised. But, whatever it was, it had enabled a mighty nation of forty crores to shake off the foreign yoke without bloodshed. It was the freedom of India that had brought freedom to Burma and Ceylon. A nation that had won freedom without the force of arms should be able to keep it too without the force of arms. This he said in spite of the fact that India had an army, a navy

in the making and an air force and these were being developed still further. He was convinced that unless India developed her non-violent strength, she had gained nothing either for herself or for the world. Militarization of India would mean her own destruction as well as of the whole world. He reminded the Burmese friends that they had got their Buddhism too from India. He had come in touch with their monks. Let Burma take the best of Buddhism from India. In his opinion the quality of the original had suffered from migration. He wanted Burma and Ceylon to rise to their highest heights. This they could do only by copying its best from India and omitting its obvious shortcomings.

Birla House, New Delhi, 5-12-'47

MUSLIM WITHDRAWAL

Gandhiji remarked in his post-prayer speech this evening that he could not read and give a reply to the letters which were given to him as he came to the prayer ground, there and then. He could only do so the following day if a reply was necessary. In one of the letters the writer had referred to Gandhiji's conversation with Liaquatsaheb and said that what Liaquatsaheb had told Gandhiji about Kathiawad was found to be untrue. The friend had obviously not followed his subsequent speeches. He had spoken of Shri Shamaldas Gandhi's telegram wherein he had admitted what had happened and contradicted the very gross exaggerations. That very day Gandhiji had received a telegram from the Muslims who had wired to him earlier. They admitted that there had been much exaggeration in their earlier telegram, and what had appeared about Kathiawad in Pakistan papers was incorrect. He warned the Muslim friends against exaggeration which would damage their case. What was the good of carrying on false propaganda in foreign countries? They could not save the victims in question. The utmost that they could do was to punish the guilty Dominion after the fact. The proper thing was to trust truth to conquer untruth, which evil was.

Gandhiji told the audience that he was making no appointments from the 6th to 13th December. The reason was that the Kasturba Trust, the Talimi Sangh, the Charkha Sangh and the A. I. V. I. A. were all holding meetings in Delhi during those days and Gandhiji wanted to be free for them as far as possible.

CONTROLS

Control on cloth and food would soon go, he hoped. What was their duty after that? He expected the *kisans* to bring forth all the grain that they had stored, and he expected the merchants not to indulge in profiteering, so that the Government and the people and the permanent service might cease to feel uneasy. Today there was apprehension in their mind. He hoped these fears would be falsified and that the blackmarket nuisance would abate, if it did not disappear altogether. If there was some shortage, the people would automatically exercise self-control, so that no one need starve. The people's government could not shoot all profiteers. In democracy the people's will must rule and if the people of India had fallen so low that they would not do the right thing, he did not know that the present Government should hold office. But his hope was that

with the removal of the control, the situation would improve all round. It would be a negation of democracy if the Government did everything and the people did nothing or thwarted the former. There was no reason why the *kisans* could not grow more food with proper guidance. If the Food Department would concentrate on ways and means of increasing production, he was sure there would be no food shortage.

As for cloth control, Gandhiji had no misgivings. No one had suggested that there was not enough cotton in India. In addition to the mills they had ample manpower in India to spin cotton and weave the hand-spun yarn. If the millions took to hand-spinning and the weavers wove hand-spun yarn, there need be no cloth shortage even if all the mills, somehow or other, had to close down.

Birla House, New Delhi, 6-12-'47

CONDITION OF NEIGHBOURLINESS

The *bhajan* and the *Ramadhun* in the prayers this evening were sung by Shrimati Subbalakshmi, the famous singer from South India. Gandhiji commended her for the sweetness of her voice. He said that during prayers one must lose oneself in Rama.

He then apologized for taking more than fifteen minutes over his speech the previous evening. He hoped to be stricter thenceforth.

Gandhiji then referred to a letter received by him the day before in which the writer had warned him against the treachery of Pakistan. It was Pakistan that had started the mischief. The Hindus and the Sikhs had merely retaliated. Even if they stopped retaliating, Pakistan was not going to mend its ways. The property left behind by the Hindus and the Sikhs was lost by them for good. Gandhiji did not agree with this view. He had said that he would not rest until every Hindu and Sikh had returned to his home with safety and honour. Similarly, he wanted to see every Muslim return to his home in the Union. The dead could not be brought back to life nor could the palatial buildings that had been burnt be restored by any Government. He would be content if what was left was returned with the land to the rightful owners. The Hindu and the Sikh houses and lands occupied by the Muslims in Lahore, Lyallpur and other places in Pakistan had to be vacated. And that was bound to happen soon if the Hindus and the Sikhs in the Union behaved correctly. Man was made in the image of God, but he was capable of making mistakes. If, however, he corrected his mistakes, the divine in him could restore him. That was what he hoped and longed for. The majority community in both the Dominions had to repent for their evil deeds and ask the forgiveness of the minority community. They would then become good neighbours instead of being enemies they had become. They had won their independence through means that were above board. The world had complemented them for so doing. Let them maintain their independence in the same way. If they said goodbye to goodness, they would not be able to keep their independence. People told him that the A. I. C. C. resolution about the return of the Hindus, the Sikhs and

the Muslims to their respective homes was idle talk. He did not believe that this was so. If the people of India had lost their sanity for a while, it did not mean that they would remain insane for ever. He had made Delhi the test case. If he failed here, he could not hope for success elsewhere.

Birla House, New Delhi, 7-12-'47.

ABDUCTED WOMEN

Speaking after prayers, Gandhiji referred to the subject of abducted women. Some Hindu women workers from the Union had gone to Lahore to attend a conference with Muslim women. Raja Gaznafarali and some others were present. It was said that 25,000 Hindu and Sikh women had been abducted in Pakistan and 12,000 Muslim women were abducted in the Eastern Punjab. Some said that the figures were not quite so high. For him, Gandhiji said, even a single abduction was bad enough. How could man stoop so low? The lowest figure, i. e. 12,000 for either province was high enough. The conference agreed that all these women must be rescued and restored to their families. Raja Gaznafarali had said that both the Dominions had been disgraced by this episode. Who did more evil and who started it, were irrelevant questions when both the parties were agreed that these women should be returned. The important thing was how the evil was to be undone.

Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru and Shrimati Mridula Sarabhai had given him a brief account of the work of the conference. They suggested that some women were to go to Pakistan and some to the East Punjab and do the rescue work with the help of the police and the military. In his (Gandhiji's) opinion this method would not succeed. It was said that in some places some of the abducted women did not wish to return. They had changed their religion and were married. He did not believe it. Such marriages and such conversions must be considered null and void. It was the duty of the two Governments to see that each one of these women was restored to her family. The families should receive them with open arms. To ostracize them for having fallen into evil hands was inexcusable cruelty.

25,000 women must have been abducted by at least an equal number of men. Were they all *goondas*? Gandhiji discredited the hypothesis. They were men passing as good who had disgraced themselves. They had lost their balance and all sense of propriety. Public opinion had to be created in favour of restoration. The two Governments should stake their all on the rescue of these women. They could ask for the help of other individuals or organizations. But the task was so big that none but the Governments could tackle it.

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