

HARIJAN

Editor: PYARELAL

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TWO ANNAS

A DIFFICULT QUESTION

Gandhiji has been trying to impress upon Indians the importance of maintaining their balance in spite of all provocation. Whatever might be the policy of Pakistan, India was and should remain equally the home of the Hindus, the Muslims, the Sikhs, the Parsis, the Christians and the others. All those who regarded India as their motherland were Indians with equal rights of citizenship. He could never approve of the doctrine of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, much less that of a hundred eyes for one eye. His insistence on this point annoys many Hindus. Some indulge in abuse. Others gently request him to retire to the Himalayas. But there are a good number who believe in what he says and wish to act up to it. One such friend came to Gandhiji the other day and placed his difficulties before him. The Congress governments were being warned not to trust the Muslims. The latter might act as saboteurs and fifth columnists. Jinnah Saheb had congratulated the Muslims of the non-Pakistan areas for their labours and sacrifices which had made Pakistan a reality. Some members of the Muslim League were openly saying that they would not be content with the truncated Pakistan that had been secured. Their eyes were on Delhi, Agra, Ajmer, Aligarh. Some even dreamt of dominating the whole of India. It was a vain dream; yet what guarantee was there that the Muslims in the Union of India would not use their energies and influence towards the realization of that dream? Was it right on the part of the Congress governments to take the risk of trusting them?

Gandhiji's reply was clear and decisive. The Congress governments could not discriminate against anyone on grounds of religion. "My eldest son has often come to me saying, 'I will be good in future. I will not touch wine.' I tell him, 'Though I do not trust you, I shall give you a chance.' He has not been able to keep to his word so far. Yet if he comes again, I will not turn him out and I shall hope that he will be as good as his word, until I know that he has come back only to deceive me. We must trust the Muslims in the same way and, at the same time, be vigilant."

"But if we have suspicion in our minds, will it not be reflected in our actions?" asked the friend.

"No," said Gandhiji. "You must not act on suspicion. Look at the British. How much harm they have done to India! I confess that I am not yet wholly free from suspicion. I wonder if they

can really change completely. I trust Lord Mountbatten. The world cannot go on without trust. The minorities must realize that they have to be loyal to the State under which they live. If they prove unworthy, the State can take necessary action. But you must not prejudge them. Why die before death?"

"We must, however, be prepared to fight the danger," persisted another friend.

"Yes," said Gandhiji. "The real preparation lies in purging ourselves of our inherent weaknesses—selfishness and disunity."

New Delhi, 18-7-'47

S. N.

THE REAL DANGER

Every student of history knows that India lost its independence because of disunity. Selfishness and ambition clouded the vision. The result was that India passed under foreign domination. Now that foreign domination is about to end, the old trait is again coming to the surface. The Congress itself has been weakened by all sorts of self-seekers having crept in it. Those who have been to jail feel that it is their right to occupy the highest posts in the land. They feel irritated if anyone who has not been to jail is appointed a minister. Criticizing this mentality Gandhiji said that if it was not checked, it would prove the undoing of the Congress. The Congress would lose its prestige as an organization primarily for the service of the masses. Was it imagined that they had conferred a favour on India by going to jail? They were completely wrong if they thought that Sardar Patel, Pandit Nehru and others were holding high offices today because they had been to jail. They were there because of their intrinsic worth. They were men who had spurned wealth and honours for the sake of the service of the country. They would be happier out of office. But they were bearing the burden as a matter of duty. Merit alone should be the criterion for holding office. If India was to be free in the real sense of the term, single-eyed devotion to service without any desire for reward or lust for power should be their keynote. They must think of their country rather than of themselves.

A friend told Gandhiji that he had produced many fighters but no administrators. Gandhiji pleaded guilty to the charge. That was why he was insisting that the services of able administrators whether Congressmen or not, should be inspanned to establish a stable and good government which could ameliorate the sufferings of the masses.

New Delhi, 18-7-'47

S. N.

STORY HOUR

(Continued from Vol. XI, No. 22, p. 211)

[This too is from Bukhari. — V. G. D.]

XXVI

The Prophet said, "Whom God intends to favour, He tries by placing difficulties in his way."

XXVII

The Prophet said, "If a person does not give up lying and committing other sins, it counts for nothing with God that he fasts and gives up food and drink."

XXVIII

The Prophet said, "Always fear to oppress people and give them ground for complaint; for nothing can stand between God and such complaint; it straightaway reaches the Great White Throne."

XXIX

The Prophet said, "It is better that a man should maintain himself by cutting wood in the forest, bringing it to the village upon his own back and selling it than that he should beg."

XXX

Some one asked Hazrat Ayisha, "At what time in the morning did the Prophet rise from bed?" She replied, "He awoke when he heard the cock crowing, and offered prayers."

XXXI

Omar found a costly robe offered for sale at the entrance to the mosque and suggested that the Prophet should buy it and use it when he received the agents of foreign powers. The Prophet said, "Only such a man will wear this robe as has no share at all in the rewards which God will distribute on the Day of Judgment."

XXXII

In one of his *jihads* the Prophet found that a woman had been killed; thereupon he prohibited the killing of women and children.

XXXIII

The Prophet said, "God reserves His mercy for such of his worshippers as have pity upon their fellowmen."

Errata

In *Harijan* of July 13, 1947, on page 231, in paragraph 5, line 2 of 'Namdev, the Gardener' for *medical* read *medicinal* and in paragraph 6 for *Brahmin* read *Brahman*.

FOR AGENTS

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MANAGER

FROM GANDHIJI'S SPEECHES

New Delhi, 13-7-'47

JINNAH SAHEB'S ASSURANCES

Gandhiji said that he had read a brief report of Jinnah Saheb's Press Conference in the course of which it had gladdened his heart to learn that Jinnah Saheb had assured complete freedom of faith and religious worship and full security of life and property to all the minorities living in Pakistan. But while any leader may say a thing and say it sincerely, it does not follow that the advice is straightaway acted upon. It was sad that in spite of the achievement of division, news of stabbings, murders, loot and arson came from everywhere. He had many Sindhi Hindu friends who were leaving their home because they felt they could not live there any longer. Now Karachi was going to be the capital of Pakistan. He would like to ask Jinnah Saheb whether he was going to wait till August 15th to offer protection to the Hindus in Sind. If he were in Jinnah Saheb's place, he would be sad beyond measure if any Hindu deserted his home in Pakistan through fear of injustice. While the Qaid-e-Azam was going to be the Governor-General of Pakistan it was true that he could do nothing without the advice of his ministers; yet that did not mean that he was going to lose his hold over the League. On the other hand his political power would be even greater. Therefore, it was his duty to forbid such happenings as are reported from Sind and elsewhere in the Dominion of which he was to be the Governor-General. A man or the government of a country could only be judged by its actions and this applied equally to India. Some Muslims of the U. P. had fears whether they could live there any more. It was the duty of the government there to give them every assurance that the U. P. would always be their home where they could as hitherto live without fear. The British had carried on their rule through the policy of divide and rule but their power was over and so should be the favouritism. What mattered it if a minority got a little more than its share of the spoils of service or office anywhere? Minorities were entitled to the fullest justice. Efficiency and merit alone should count and the spoils of office given to the minorities over a long period by the British to serve their own ends should no longer lure them. They must realize that all these were in the nature of bribes. After all the British could not remove untouchability. It was the Hindus themselves who had opened all the ancient temples in South India—a fact that gladdened his heart for it was by removing the stain of untouchability that Hinduism could live. No privileges should be given to anyone in the new India. It was the poor and neglected and down-trodden and weak that should be their special care and attention. A Brahmin should not grudge it if more money was spent on the uplift of the Harijans. At the same time a Brahmin may not be done down simply because he was a Brahmin. In fact the Brahmins were a very small minority. There

must be pure and undefiled justice for everyone in both Pakistan and Hindustan.

DIVISION OF THE ARMY

Gandhiji referred again with intense feeling to the division of the army. He could not understand why they could not remain united for the object of facing foreign aggression. The present mode of division might even lead to internal warfare between the two armies who might even look upon themselves as rivals. That would be a tragedy too deep for tears. As a matter of fact division of the army was a factor which would weaken the defence forces. It was up to them to ponder deeply over this. He hoped that even if they had not learnt the lesson of *ahimsa* during the last 30 years, they had at any rate learnt not to live as slaves of anyone—not only of the British. If they had, what need of armies anywhere? This was the lesson he was trying to teach the Hindus in Noakhali and the Muslims in Bihar. If they had the personal courage he would not mind if they resisted oppression even violently. Naturally, he would always plead for non-violent resistance because the latter meant that God was their sole Protector. Violent resistance invariably meant the aid of the sword which was at best a poor weapon of defence.

New Delhi, 14-7-'47

THE FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE

It is said that my speeches nowadays are depressing. Some even suggest that I should not speak at all. This multitude of advisers reminds me of a painter who had exposed his painting in a shop window without glass inviting critics to mark the parts they did not like. The result was a daub. The painter had simply tried to show that it was impossible to please all parties. He was, therefore, satisfied that he had painted a 'good picture. His business was to produce a work which satisfied his artistic taste. Mine is a similar case. I hope I never speak for the sake of speaking. I speak because I feel that I have something to say to the people. It is true that I do not agree with what many of my closest friends have done or are doing. Whilst I am in Delhi and I have an opinion about some current events, I cannot help giving that opinion. And what are the differences that matter? If you analyse them you would find only one fundamental difference to which all the others could be traced. Non-violence is my creed. It never was of the Congress. With the Congress it has always been a policy. A policy takes the shape of a creed whilst it lasts, no longer. The Congress had every right to change it when it found it necessary. A creed can never admit of any change. Now though according to the Congress constitution the policy abides, the practice has undoubtedly altered the policy. Technicians may quarrel with the fact. You and I cannot, must not. Why should not the makers of the present Congress change their policy in fact? The law will take care of itself. It should also be noted that in the constitution the word *peaceful* is used, not *non-violent*.

In Bombay when the Congress met in 1934 I tried hard to have the word *peaceful* replaced by *non-violent* and I failed. Therefore, it is open to give the word *peaceful* a meaning probably less than that of *non-violent*. I see none. But my opinion is irrelevant. It is for the *savants* to determine the difference, if any. All that you and I need to realize is that the Congress practice is not non-violent today in the accepted sense of the term. If the Congress was pledged to the policy of non-violence, there would be no army supported by it. But she sports an army which may eat up the civilians and establish military rule in India unless the people listen to me. Am I to give up all hope of their ever listening to me? I cannot do it whilst there is breath left in me. And if the people do not wish to listen to my non-violent dirge, there is no reason for critics to dissuade me from speaking to the public.

Let me make one thing clear. I have frankly and fully admitted that what we practised during the past thirty years was not non-violent resistance but passive resistance which only the weak offer because they are unable, not unwilling, to offer armed resistance. If we knew the use of non-violent resistance which only those with hearts of oak can offer, we would present to the world a totally different picture of free India instead of an India cut in twain, one part highly suspicious of the other and the two too much engaged in mutual strife to be able to think cogently of the food and clothing of the hungry and naked millions who know no religion but that of the one and only God who appears to them in the guise of the necessities of life. Not for them the sanguinary strife or the cinema pictures showing them how efficiently to cut one another's throats!

New Delhi, 15-7-'47

THE PROBLEM OF BENGAL

Gandhiji referred to some questions that had been put to him by Bengali friends. He was told that the Hindus in Eastern Bengal feared that now that the province was divided into two, the Hindus of Western Bengal would forget them and that the Hindus of East Bengal would be weakened. Gandhiji said that he could never understand such fears. All were Indians first and last, wherever they lived and to whatever creed or class or province they belonged. Religion was entirely a personal matter. Each one could approach his Creator as he liked. But the poison of separatism had gone deep into the soil. When he was in Noakhali he was just as much at home there as elsewhere. And were the Muslims of East Bengal and the Hindus of Bihar, for example, always going to behave as mad men? He was never going to subscribe to such a fear. He wanted to reiterate that while he did not like division, it was at the moment a *fait accompli* and they had to face up to it. But it was always possible by correct conduct to lessen an evil and eventually even to bring good out of evil. In spite of the division, the people of Eastern and Western Bengal

(Continued on p. 254)

HARIJAN

July 27

1947

IN DEFENCE

(By M. K. Gandhi)

The correspondent from whose letter I had quoted the other day writes:

"I entirely agree with the opinion you have expressed on the views set forth in a letter I wrote eleven years ago. Nevertheless, I lacked the courage to act up to them. I often say to myself, 'Why enter the black hole at all?' In spite of your presenting society with the ideal man of your imagination for its own good, it seems to me that that good would be better served by keeping intact the restraints handed down by men of experience. It is true that sex-consciousness should be removed. It is also true that the feeling of ownership of women should likewise go. But in propagating these fundamental rules, persons have been known to have damaged our society to a great extent. It seems to me to be dangerous. X objects even to sitting on the same mat with women. He may be an example of faith in our old wisdom. Nevertheless, the idea is not to be lightly set aside. The sage advice of the *Gita* that whatever the great in a society do, common people will follow, is unforgettable. Therefore, it seems to me that it is wisdom for those who have reached a higher state to act in accordance with the capacity of those many who belong to a lower state and this they will do in order to avoid the risk of the lower state people resorting to thoughtless imitation. I admit, however, one apt argument in defence of your position, viz., that if there was nobody to demonstrate the feasibility of the higher state, society would never develop faith in that state. Therefore, someone has got to demonstrate the feasibility of reaching the high state. I seem to reach the conclusion that every great person has got to model his behaviour after due appreciation of the *pros and cons*."

I like the above criticism. Everyone should learn how to measure his own weakness. He, who, knowing his own weakness, imitates the strong, is bound to fail. Hence have I contended that everyone should construct his own restraints.

I do not think that X goes so far as to object to squatting on the same mat as women. I should be surprised if your statement proved true. I could not appreciate such prohibition. I have never known him to defend it.

I can only detect ignorance in likening woman to the black hole. The very thought is insulting to both man and woman. May not her son sit side by side with his mother or the man share the same bench in a train with his sister? He who suffers excitement through such juxtaposition is surely worthy of pity.

Although I believe that for the sake of social good one should abandon many things, I feel that there is room for wise discretion even in the observance of such restraints. In Europe there is a society

of men which advocates stark nakedness. I was asked to join that society and I refused to do so. My objection was that the proposition was intolerable and that unless a measure of self-control had become an established fact, the exhibition of nakedness was not desirable. This I said although I believe that theoretically speaking there is nothing harmful in both the sexes going about in utter nakedness. It is said that in their state of innocence Adam and Eve had not even a fig leaf to cover their nakedness. But immediately they became aware of their nakedness, they began to cover themselves and were hurled from Paradise. Are we not in that inherited fallen state? If we were to forget that, we would surely harm ourselves. I consider this an instance of observing prohibition for the sake of social good.

Contrarywise, for the very sake of society it was just and proper to give up untouchability although it was fashionable among people of accepted merit. Marriage of nine-year-old girls used to be defended on the ground of social good. So was prohibition against crossing the seas. Such instances can be multiplied. Every custom has to be examined on its own merits.

Restraints must not be such as to perpetuate sex-consciousness. In most of our daily transactions such consciousness is absent. Such occasion, so far as I am aware, is only one. If the consciousness afflicted us the whole day long, we should be considered to have a corrupt mind and such a mind is not conducive to social welfare. If the villagers were continuously sex-conscious, they would be useless for advancement of self and society.

New Delhi, 20-7-'47

(Translated from the original in Gujarati)

Universal Military Training

A friend put forth a suggestion that compulsory military training for the youth of India would go far to inculcate the virtues of discipline and unity. Gandhiji agreed that discipline and unity were absolutely necessary if India was to stand on its own legs. The distinctions of high and low must disappear. But was it so in the ranks of the military? He did not know that military training was responsible for social virtue.

The friend cited the example of the I. N. A. Had not they solved the communal problem satisfactorily whilst they were fighting under Netaji? They were all Indians first and last. "Whatever they did then was under stress," said Gandhiji. "But have they been able to live up to that ideal after their return to India? In the British military system the Gurkhas, the Pathans, the Rajputs, the Sikhs, and the others had been kept aloof from each other. If all that the militarists claimed were true, there would not have been the ugly wars that we have witnessed. The less said about military training the better." Discipline was common to both. The victories of peace were any day superior to those of war.

New Delhi, 18-7-'47

S. N.

THE ROOT CAUSE OF PARTITION

Many people come to Gandhiji and express their dissatisfaction over the partition of India. They know that Gandhiji has always been opposed to it. Why does he not give tangible form to his opposition? they ask. It is wrong for him to say that he is a spent bullet or that the country is not behind him. "Give us the lead and you will see for yourself whether the country is behind you or not." Gandhiji is sometimes amused by such talk. Against whom is he to give the lead? It was not the British who had partitioned the country. It had been done with the consent of the Congress howsoever reluctantly. There was only one way to avoid the calamity and that was by the non-violence of the brave. But how could the people develop it overnight? Talking to some friends on this subject he said that the leaders had agreed to the partition as the last resort. They did not feel that they had made a mistake. Rather than let the whole country go to the dogs, they agreed to the partition, hoping to give the country a much-needed rest. He felt differently. He had said that he would rather let the whole country be reduced to ashes than yield an inch to violence. But non-violence was his creed. It was not so with the Congress. The Congress had accepted non-violence as a policy. Badshah Khan was the only leader who believed in non-violence as a creed. Even he had not imbibed the doctrine through and through.

"I have admitted my mistake," he continued. "I thought our struggle was based on non-violence, whereas in reality it was no more than passive resistance which essentially is a weapon of the weak. It leads naturally to armed resistance whenever possible." In South Africa the English Chairman of his meeting, the late Mr. Hosken had said that he (Gandhiji) was fighting for the cause of the weak. Therefore he was resorting to passive resistance. Gandhiji had contradicted the statement. He had said that they were not weak in the sense the Chairman meant. The struggle in the Transvaal was not passive resistance. It was based on non-violence. The source of their strength was soul force, not physical force.

Intoxicated with his success in South Africa, he came to India. Here too the struggle bore fruit. But he now realized that it was not based on non-violence. If he had known so then, he would not have launched the struggle. But God wanted to take that work from him. So He blurred his vision. It was because their struggle was not non-violent that they today witnessed loot, arson and murder.

A friend interposed that Gandhiji had always maintained that our struggle was based on non-violence, though of the weak.

Gandhiji said that his was a mistaken statement. There was no such thing as non-violence of the weak. Non-violence and weakness was a contradiction in terms. He had never experienced the dark

despair that was today within him. He was a born fighter who did not know failure. But he was groping today.

"But why should you feel despondent?" persisted the friend. "I see clearly," replied Gandhiji, "that if the country cannot be turned to non-violence it will be bad for it and the world. It will mean goodbye to freedom. It might even mean a military dictatorship. I am day and night thinking how non-violence of the brave can be cultivated.

"I said at the Asiatic Conference that I hoped the fragrance of the non-violence of India would permeate the whole world. I often wonder if that hope will materialize."

New Delhi, 18-7-'47

S. N.

NOTES

Nationalist Muslims

The plight of the Nationalist Muslims is sad. They have believed in the unity of India. They considered themselves Indians first and last though they were no less proud of Islam. There was no conflict between the two states—nationalism and religion. Nevertheless they have come under the shadow of suspicion. Only those who are true will come out scatheless.

A Plea for Tolerance

A mad man disturbed the prayer meeting last week. He was gently led away from the prayer ground. Quoting an Italian doctor Lambroso, Gandhiji said that he (the doctor) was right when he said that the whole world was a mad house in which some were less or more mad than others. He (Gandhiji) appealed to all to be tolerant of each other's shortcomings. If they befriended the weak-minded they would find that love would soothe them and make the insane much less insane. Anger and rough handling only exaggerated the failing.

New Delhi, 18-7-'47

S. N.

ASHRAM BHAJANAWALI

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FROM GANDHIJI'S SPEECHES

(Continued from p. 251)

were going to be Bengalis and speak the same language. The Hindus of Western Bengal must live as friends with the Muslims there. If they did, the Muslims of Eastern Bengal would certainly reciprocate the friendship with their Hindu brothers. None must look upon the other as his enemy. Only such action could drive out fear. He added too that Western Bengal was better able to help the Hindus in East Bengal because the government of West Bengal was in their hands.

He had been asked whether the B. P. C. C. should now be split up into two. His answer was a firm negative. The Congress Committee there must never look upon Bengal as divided. The B. P. C. C. would act as before though there would be sub-committees in the two halves working under the parent body. The Congress was national. Its doors were open to every Indian who chose to enter its portals.

He was also asked why Profulla Babu and Suresh Babu who were of Eastern Bengal were serving as ministers in Western Bengal, thus deserting their brothers of East Bengal. He saw no reason whatsoever why they should not serve in the West. It did not mean that they were deserting their homes. In fact they would serve as links and strengthen the bonds between the two Provinces.

Gandhiji asked them not to see evil everywhere. All Muslims were not bad just as all Hindus were not bad. It is generally the impure who see impurity in others. It was their duty to see the best and have no fear.

New Delhi, 16-7-'47

Gandhiji commenced his prayer discourse by a reference to the *bhajan* of the evening. He first came across it as a schoolboy. Whilst the opening line rang true, namely, that there was nothing in the body or the world's goods to gloat over, for the body would be reduced to ashes and worm-eaten, the last line did not appeal to him. Why had Kabir, the author of the song, said that the world perished with one's body? They knew that the world would survive the destruction of millions of bodies. The truth was that men should leave the world the richer for their having lived in it. Was it not richer for Kabir having lived in it? The world lived because men died. The world would die of suffocation, if men could refuse to die.

DRAVIDISTAN ?

Gandhiji then referred to the movement for Dravidistan—Southern India comprising the population speaking the four Dravidian languages—Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam and Kanarese. Why should this portion of India speaking the four languages be separated from the rest? Had not these languages, rich as they were, drawn largely upon Sanskrit for their richness? He had travelled through the four provinces and he found no difference between them and the rest of the provinces. It was a myth to consider that those living in the south of the

Vindhya Range were non-Aryans and in the north Aryans. Whatever they might have been at one time, they were so intermixed that they were one people from Kashmir to Cape Comorin, notwithstanding that India was cut into two. It would be folly to make further divisions. If they did not stop at that division, there would be no end to independent sovereign States which would be useless for India and the world. Let it not be said of them that they were fit for one political system only under bondage and as free men, savage-like they would split up into as many groups as they liked, each group going its own way. Or would they be held in bondage by one despotic State possessing an army large enough to bring them under subjection? He adjured them and especially the people of the South to give up the thralldom of the English language which was good as a language of international commerce and diplomacy. It could never become the language of the millions of India. The century or more of British rule had failed to make English spoken by more than a few millions in this ocean of Indian humanity. If they looked at the census they would discover that more millions spoke Hindustani, a mixture of Hindi and Urdu, written in the Nagari or Urdu scripts. Sanskritized Hindi or Persianized Urdu was confined to far fewer. He was asked whether they could learn it in their own provincial script. He had no objection. As a matter of fact the Hindustani Prachar Sabha allowed the boys of the South to learn Hindustani in their provincial script. They later on learnt the two scripts, so that they could become easily acquainted with the literature in the North. Patriotism demanded that much from them. There was a grave danger of their becoming pettily provincial-minded. If all became petty, where would be the India of their love? He freely admitted that if it was, as it was, wrong for the Southerners not to learn Hindustani, it was equally wrong for the Northerners not to learn one or more of the Southern languages which had very rich literature. He appealed to members from the South to resolve never to ask for English speech in an Indian audience. They would then soon pick up Hindustani. Let them remember that India free could cohere as one, only if it accepted moral government. Congress as a fighting machine against bondage was held together by its moral force. Should it be different when it had almost attained political freedom?

New Delhi, 17-7-'47

INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Referring to the newspaper report that the latest campaign against Indians in South Africa had taken the form of boycott of the Indian traders by the European community, accompanied by threats of violence, Gandhiji said that he was deeply interested in the problem of Indians in South Africa, having spent 20 years of his life in that country. He would be pained and surprised if the Boers with whom Indians did not compete, were in any way associated with violence to the Indians. He recalled with pride how when he was marching through the Transvaal with probably two thousand humble

Indians, the Boers were uniformly kind to them who were completely non-violent. He suspected that there were mischief-makers at the back of this proposed violence. He hoped that the news was highly exaggerated. Field-Marshal Smuts and the South African Whites knew that now India was as independent as they and they were for the time being members of the same Commonwealth as they. Were their partners to be singled out for invidious treatment? Was Mrs. Pandit to be baulked of the victory her deputation to the U. N. O. had attained? If Field-Marshal Smuts could not control the unruly element in the community it was his duty to resign. He called upon Pandit Nehru and Jinnah Saheb to send a joint telegram to General Smuts that now that India had come into her own, it was the duty of the Union Government to accord equal rights and protection to the Indians in South Africa.

The speeches in the House of Commons reported in the papers said Dominion Status meant Independence plus something more. The proof of the pudding lay in the eating. Did Dominion Status really mean that all those who became members of the Commonwealth would become equals? The spoken word to be true had to be supported by corresponding action throughout the Commonwealth.

Lord Mountbatten was still the Viceroy. He was a great admiral and belonged to the Royal House. He should use his great personal influence to secure justice for the Indians of South Africa. He also warned the Indian compatriots to cohere together. Let there be no divisions among them. The rich should not neglect the poor.

TEMPLE ENTRY AND UNTOUCHABILITY

Referring next to the question of untouchability Gandhiji said that South India except Cochin had made big strides in that matter. He complimented Sir C. P. for the good work he had done in advising the Maharaja to throw open to the Harijans all the temples in Travancore. Now Andhra, British Kerala and Tamil Nad had followed suit. This was a cheering news. But what about Kashi Vishwanath, the temple in Haradwar and other temples throughout India? He knew that many Harijans wanted economic betterment and educational facilities. This they were entitled to. But for their own sakes the Hindus could not be satisfied unless temple entry was complete. In his opinion Hindu temples were not pure till every Hindu without any distinction whatsoever was freely entitled to offer worship precisely in the same way as the tallest among them. Pure Hinduism had no inequality. All were equal in the eye of God. All the religions in the world were on their trial today. He wanted Hinduism to come out of the test with full marks.

New Delhi, 18-7-'47

OUR HELP IN DIFFICULTY

Drawing attention to the *bhajan* of the evening Gandhiji said that he did not know whether it was

Mira's *bhajan* or not. The tune was different from Mirabai's ordinary tune. The sentiment was undoubtedly hers. It said that God alone could extricate man from difficulties. Today India was passing through great difficulty. Were they to look to man or God to deliver their country? If they believed in the *bhajan* they were to look to God and none else and they would be perfectly safe. Independence of India Bill would be proclaimed the day after. (19th July). According to it the Governors-General would be appointed by them, the people of India and not imposed on India as hitherto. Therefore, Lord Mountbatten would be the Governor-General of India by their appointment precisely as a *chaprasi* could be. This was not said in disparagement. It was a compliment paid to Lord Mountbatten that he had elected to be the Indian Union's servant deriving his appointment from them. It was necessary to say this in order to dispel the suspicion that still lingered in many minds.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAWN

Gandhiji next referred to an open letter written by the editor of the *Dawn* to him in the day's issue. It was the Qaid-e-Azam's mouthpiece. The editor had taken Gandhiji to task for saying that Jinnah Saheb's assurances about the protection of the minorities in Pakistan would be valued according to the corresponding deeds of the Muslims in Pakistan. He adhered to his statement and held that it carried no reflection. He had said the same of the Viceroy and the Congress ministers. The fear that had seized the Hindus of Sind was an ominous beginning. The editor had further talked about the sufferings and fears of the Muslim minority in the U. P. and had given a number of instances in support. He (Gandhiji) would reply that even if the allegations were proved true, there would be no justification for similar treatment in Sind as Sind's misdeeds would be none in the U. P. He must confess that he had known nothing about many allegations against the U. P. The editor perhaps did not know that he had alluded publicly to the allegations about which he knew nothing. As soon as he read the remarks referred to, he wrote to Rafi Saheb and as he was not in Delhi he wrote to the Chief Minister who wrote in reply and later saw him and told him that there was great exaggeration in what the editor had written. What was true in it was attempted to be remedied at once. The guilty parties were punished whenever traced. No pains were spared in order to trace the offenders. But he added that the aggression in the first instance had come from the Leaguers. He did not seek to justify the Hindu offenders. He and his fellow ministers were doing their best to keep the turbulent element under check. He had a suggestion to make to the *Dawn* and all the newspapers, whatever their hue, that they should avoid all exaggeration. In order to give effect to the suggestion they should appoint a Joint Board to which all reports about communal trouble would be submitted and even passed on to responsible ministers and when

necessary, given publicity. His suggestion could find favour only if the editors realized their duty to the public and were anxious that a peremptory stop should be put to all communalism. Division having become a settled fact it was surely time that the country was allowed to settle down to the constructive work of feeding and clothing the ill-fed and ill-clad millions. The editors had a weighty part to play in the noble task. To foment trouble was ignoble.

New Delhi, 19-7-'47

GOVERNMENT JOBS

Gandhiji began his after-prayer discourse by telling the gathering that there was nothing of special import that he could pass on to them in connection with the day's Working Committee meeting. One thing, however, he thought he should share with them. The members of the Working Committee were deploring the mad desire for holding office that had today seized the Congress ranks. It was a sad commentary on the members of an organization that had identified itself with the masses. How many jobs could any government provide in any case? Government service was only for those who would serve as a matter of duty as was the case with top-ranking leaders. It was no use reminding him that such was not the case under British rule. They must not do as free men what they were not ashamed to do as slaves. Any hankering after government jobs by Congressmen simply because Congress was now in power was inconsistent with Congress ideals.

COW PROTECTION

The second thing Gandhiji alluded to was the number of wires which he was receiving, advising prohibition of cow slaughter. While he had always been a worshipper of the cow, he saw no reason why he should ask their Government to stop the slaughter of cows because it was contrary to Hindu religion. The tragedy was that the senders of the wires, and the Hindus as a whole, did not realize that while they did not actually slaughter cows themselves, they did equally badly by them. In the end God was the Protector of the cow as He was of all. But the Hindus starved cows and cattle in general, they did not look after them as they should, they sold cows that were out of milk and never thought that they were sending them to the slaughter house. They sold them to the best bidder. They were cruel to bullocks and tortured them with goads. It ill befitted them to expect the law to observe their religion for them. Cattle wealth was largely in the hands of the Hindus but in no country was the breed so poor and so neglected. He remembered the magnificent specimens of cattle in England where, while they certainly did eat beef, they bestowed the greatest care on their cattle wealth. Gandhiji implored them

to turn their attention to the preservation of cows and cattle wealth. They could save them without recourse to law.

THE NATIONAL FLAG

He then spoke of a letter he had received from a person who had written angrily about the rumour that from 15th August the Union Jack would occupy a corner of the National Flag. If this happened, the writer said, he would tear the flag into pieces and die rather than tolerate it. This, the speaker said, was a thoughtless outlook. The Union Jack in itself had committed no crime. The hurt caused to India during long years of subjection had been caused by British officers. But they were now going. Lord Mountbatten was staying on but not as Viceroy. He would henceforth be their first servant, carry out the will of the Cabinet who were the people's representatives. Gandhiji saw no harm whatsoever in the Union Jack occupying a corner in their flag so long as India remained a Dominion. It would be an act of courtesy towards their erstwhile enemy. It was a gesture worthy of the tradition they had patiently built up. The Indian Independence measure had become law with amazing speed. It sometimes took a year to get an important Bill through the British Parliament but this had been passed inside of a week. Whether the British were giving up their hold on India with good intent or otherwise time alone would show. In the meantime they must realize that the retention of the Union Jack for such period as India was a Dominion was in his opinion a point of honour. Even if in the past they had looked on the British as enemies—he himself never looked upon anyone as an enemy—that was no reason for visiting the sins of the fathers on the children. He had been a born fighter and a rebel all his life and he would be the last person in the world to submit to any indignity. As a matter of fact, however, he had heard with sorrow at the Working Committee that the Union Jack was not going to occupy a place on the flag. He asked them not to rejoice over the omission. The British Government having recognized their independence, it was open to them to do as they liked. He was solicitous about their traditions.

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