

HARIJAN

Editor: PYARELAL

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TWO ANNAS

THE INTERNATIONAL CHORE-BAZAAR

A few weeks back, we commented on the immorality of India taking part in any programme of reparations. We hold that we were not a party to the last war, nor do we now seek to gain anything as a consequence of the last war, which was waged for imperial purposes by all parties concerned. In any case, to take advantage of people who are down at the moment, because of their inability to be the first amongst the most violent, is mean and unchivalrous. It is on a par with highway robbery or with depriving the weak of their property, using one's own strength for the fulfilment of one's own desires. First came the news that German patents were being distributed amongst the Allies and some of their industrial establishments were being dismantled for distribution among the so-called "victors". Then a similar news item in regard to Japanese assets also appeared. India was asked to send her indent for the German booty. Our reaction was that to have any part in those nefarious transactions would dab us with the same brush with which we have been painting the imperialists.

Greed and selfishness have been the root cause of creating hatred and illwill amongst all nations; and they have led to repeated global wars which have brought in distress, starvation and death in their wake. India's cultural background is one of peace and goodwill amongst nations and we ought not to deviate from this tradition of India if India is to deliver the message of goodwill amongst the nations of the world.

Referring to Reuter's report that 80 million yards of piece goods and 8 million pounds of yarn of Japanese textiles are being allotted to India, the special correspondent of a Madras newspaper reports that the Government of India seem to be chary of giving any information in regard to the news. He added that the Government of India have asked for higher allotment than that mentioned above and that the question of distribution was under active consideration. We are not clear whether these goods form part of the reparations loot from the Japanese. If it is so, it would mean that India is rapidly drifting towards imperialism. We earnestly hope that the present Interim Government would do all it can to keep us from following the downward path that the Japanese had taken during the last century.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

PUBLIC PROTESTS

A news item from Madras states that thousands of people had foregathered at the Tilak Ghat on the beach at the meeting arranged for Shri C. Rajagopalachari and Dr. Rajendra Prasad. Rajaji's arrival seemed to be the signal for an unseemly demonstration of hurling sandals, stones and sand at the platform. This kind of demonstration is simple hooliganism and lawlessness and this tendency appears to be gaining ground all over the country. It is a disgrace to the public life of any country and much more so to that of ours which aims at achieving great political ends through non-violent means.

In a vast country like ours, there will be occasions for public dissatisfaction at the course adopted by the powers that be. Governments are not omniscient and often are led away by those who are in the proximity of the ministers. It may be that the people of Madras had a great many grievances against the Interim Ministers which they wished to bring to their notice. This is both natural and proper; and it is also the duty of the public to keep the ministers in touch with their desires and it is their right to pull up the ministers when they deviate from the path laid down by the nation. But, at the same time, the ways and means of doing this must be both dignified and graceful. Unruly methods, such as the one adopted at the Madras meeting, harm the cause much more than perhaps the participants were aware of. It is an insult to the guests and it is a reflection on our public life. As we move towards Swaraj and democracy, greater and greater opportunities will occur for bringing to the notice of the ministers and Governments the grievances of people. Hence, it would be necessary for us to develop self-control and discipline in such matters even from now.

To this end we would suggest that the leaders of the various parties should educate their followers, either through regular classes or propaganda, in the proper ways of bringing to public notice the grievances of the parties. This should be considered as a very urgent item of their immediate programme; otherwise lawlessness and indiscipline will spread and mar the public life of the country.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

HOW FOOD MAY BECOME POISON

[The following from a correspondent will be of interest to the readers. The quotation from an authority on nutrition values of food clearly explains how oils lose their food value in the process of hydrogenation — the process through which oils have to pass to become *vanaspati*. — Ed.]

I have been watching with interest and pleasure the efforts you have been making to bring home to the Governments and the public the injurious nature of the foods of commerce such as *vanaspati* and such other oils. The following passage taken from the book *Chemistry of Food and Nutrition* by Sherman, an authority on nutritional matters, may help to clarify the position. The passage is under the heading *Unsaturated Fatty Acids*.

"These unsaturated acids have as a rule a much lower melting point than the saturated acids containing the same number of carbon atoms. The glycerides show correspondingly lower melting points than those of the saturated fatty acids and are therefore found more largely in the soft fats and the fatty oils. Such soft fats or fatty oils can be hardened to any desired consistency (up to that of stearin) by hydrogenation which changes the unsaturated fatty acid radicals into the corresponding members of the more saturated series. This process has been enthusiastically developed commercially, and large quantities are now hydrogenated to the consistency of lard substitutes. It remains to be determined how far this is at the expense of the special nutritional value which food fats owe to the presence of some of the more highly unsaturated fatty acid radicals. (Then follow details of oleic, linoleic and such other fatty acids). These are but examples; doubtless many other fatty acids of this series occur in natural fats.

"It is now generally regarded as established that some unsaturated fatty acid or acids, is or are *nutritionally essential* in the sense in which this term has long been applied to some of the amino acids in connection with protein metabolism; i. e. these acids are either not synthesized in the body, or not rapidly enough to meet its needs; so they must be furnished in some form in the nutriment.

"Recognition of the special nutritional importance of some of the more highly unsaturated fatty acids has been followed by reinvestigation of several food fats as to the presence of such acids, with the result that they are now being reported, where previously they had escaped attention."

It must be borne in mind that food, when all its components are intact, promotes health and longevity, but the same food when one or more of its elements are either missing, or are changed chemically, not only ceases to be a food but is a source of disease. It is not food but poison. This is in accord with the definition of food (अन्नम्) given in the *Upanishads*. It is, therefore, highly necessary that both the public and the Government should beware of patronizing or encouraging chemical methods of converting foods into a form fit for preserving them. There must be

sufficient clinical experiments on men, spread over a sufficiently long period, before advocating such foods to the public.

"MIST OF DEATH OVER NEW YORK"

[This is an article contributed by David B. Parker, Lieutenant Colonel, U. S. A., to *Coast Artillery Journal* and condensed in the *Reader's Digest* of April 1947. It gives us a vivid picture of what is in store for mankind if the sub-brutal instinct of man's inhumanity to man is not subjected to salutary restraint. —V. G. D.]

Excerpts from some future historian's note book

At 3-30 in the morning of February 25, 1952, Roger Jones, a resident of lower New York, woke up with a violent, inexplicable attack of nausea, which lasted a quarter of an hour. When he went back to bed he noticed a thick mist blowing in at his window. This surprised him, for the night had begun clear, with a strong steady wind.

At 3-40 Ellis C. Manchester, Port Commissioner of New York, arrived at the water front. He had been routed out of bed by frantic phone calls from subordinates, who now met him at Pier 10, the end of which had been battered by a huge wave. In spite of darkness and mist, he could see more damage farther up the Hudson. The excited men about him spoke of a great tidal wave caused by an earthquake far out at sea. As the Commissioner walked back to his car, he was overcome by a sudden attack of nausea.

At about the same time Dr. Hiram Strandberg, a Columbia University radiologist, who often worked all night in his laboratory, noticed that the pointers of three of his radio-activity meters had moved clear off the calibrated dials. After a hurried check with other instruments, he telephoned his wife to get out of the city at once. Then he called the police, the Mayor and Army Headquarters. Some of those who answered were politely incredulous, others sleepily annoyed. As Strandberg left his laboratory, he noticed the mist riding on a stiff southwest wind—a combination he had never observed before.

By five o'clock the Mayor's office was full of officials, newspaper and radio executives. Pale and unshaven, they listened to a group of scientists, among whom was the famous physicist and Nobel Prize winner, Dr. Felix Novak, trying to outlive a catastrophe that no reliable witness had actually seen.

Not until months later was the whole story of the disaster pieced together. An atomic bomb had been detonated deep in the waters of New York Harbour. Whether the bomb had been planted by a submarine, or dropped overboard with a time fuse from surface craft was never determined. It exploded at 3 a. m. with a muffled roar noticed by few of the city's sleeping millions. The explosion sent skyward, a mile or more into the air, several million tons of water—not solid water but a rainy mist of particles each one of which was laden with radio-active fragments that shot forth deadly gamma and beta rays. The enemy had picked a night ideally

suited to his purpose: a 30-mile wind was blowing from the bomb's bursting point straight up the long splinter of Manhattan island. In less than an hour the lethal rain had fallen all over the city. Although the intensity of the radio-active deposits varied greatly from block to block, death threatened everyone.

At 5-15 the Mayor put into effect "Schedule 99" — a plan for the evacuation of New York which had been prepared some years ago. Immediately orders and warnings flooded the air from all radio stations — until they were silenced by power failure caused by the flight of power house employees. There were some other deserters, but city firemen, policemen, national guards and scientists remained at their posts, risking the accumulation of an almost certainly lethal dose of gamma rays. The calmest people in the city were the scientists who had mustered New York's collection of Geiger Counters (most sensitive instruments for the detection of radio-activity invented by Hans Geiger, Rutherford's German assistant) — a pitiful 100 machines where 10,000 would have been too few — and went about mapping the contours of infection.

Ten minutes after the news of the explosion reached him, Dr. Felix Novak had estimated the amount of radio-activity released. "Over the city's most heavily contaminated areas," he told the Mayor, "the average dose of gamma radiation is enough to be fatal to anyone who remains there for more than three hours. In these cases death will not occur for at least nine days — possibly not for six weeks — and there will be no symptoms for two or three days. In a few places people will get such a concentrated dose that they will be nauseated almost at once.

These people will die within four days. The people who are able to get out of the city fast may lose some of their hair next week, or run a slight fever, but they will recover completely. Only the future can tell what the gamma rays will do to their descendants."

Dr. Novak died on the ninth day after the disaster. But while his estimate of the radio-activity proved uncannily accurate, there were many who died in less than the minimum time he predicted. For neither he, nor the Mayor, nor the police, nor the young soldiers, who wept as they fired into mobs, foresaw the chain reaction of hysteria which seized the inhabitants of New York as they tried to get off their narrow island. It was the worst panic known in all human history.

Thousands were crushed to death in subway stations, on bridges, in the tunnels under the rivers. After the first hour of the panic the city's exits were so clogged with wrecked cars and corpses that only a trickle of people — some of them swimmers — were able to escape. The trains that were in the city early that morning got out with capacity loads. Many train crews heroically volunteered to return, and continued the evacuation until the city was nearly emptied and the panic had subsided. But these return trips often exposed the volunteers to the few additional minutes of radiation needed

to tip the balance, and caused their deaths four weeks later.

At the time of the explosion, there were more than 20,000,000 people on Manhattan. According to figures admittedly inaccurate, given out later, within six weeks 3,89,101 New Yorkers were dead or missing. Most of the survivors suffered from some form of radiation sickness. In addition, many thousands outside of Manhattan were stricken, particularly in the Bronx and Westchester County, and large numbers of them died. The casualties most distant from explosion were in the upstate town of Watkins Glen, about 180 miles away, where the vagaries of the air currents dropped a large concentration of fission products.

Dr. Strandberg, the first man to see the disaster recorded on his tell-tale instruments, had at once been put in charge of the Geiger-counter survey squads, and had worked night and day until ordered out of the city by Dr. Novak. Two weeks after the explosion his hair began to drop out. After 18 days he began to lose weight and ran a fever. After four weeks he was deathly pale, suffered from nose bleeds and had lost 25 pounds. Only many transfusions and vitamins saved his life. The Wall Street night watchman in the hospital bed next to his developed exactly the same symptoms and died on the 32nd day.

It took nearly a week to get all the living out of New York. No one will ever know how many died from causes other than radiation, — how many were drowned in the rivers, how many were killed in subways by contact with third rails, how many were shot as looters.

On March 6, a small party of bold scientists, Geiger counters in hand, threaded its way back through the invisible maze of death to retrieve precious documents. Gradually, as radio-activity on the city's walls and pavements and stairways and table tops decayed, more such raids were organized, some of them in lead-lined army tanks.

It was not easy to find volunteers for such expeditions, even when under the protection of Geiger counters. The gamma-ray effects were cumulative and made repeated exposure as deadly as a single concentrated dose.

All through the spring and summer, efforts to decontaminate portions of the city were continued. A good deal of radio-activity was washed from the streets with sea water but once the first layer had been removed, repeated treatment had little effect on the residue. It was particularly difficult to decontaminate the outside of buildings, for hosing them down collected deadly washings at their base. There were no chemicals that could be used to neutralize the poison of radio-activity. Machinery worth countless millions was a total loss. Even when it could be removed, its contamination stayed with it.

Not for a whole year was New York City officially declared fit for repopulation by its survivors.

HARIJAN

June 1

1947

QUESTION BOX

(By M. K. Gandhi)

HOW TO COMBAT HIMSA

Q. 1. The leaders and followers of the League do not believe in attaining their object through non-violence. In such circumstances, how is it possible to melt their hearts or to convince them of the evil of violent action?

A. 1. Violence can only be effectively met by non-violence. This is an old, established truth. The questioner does not really understand the working of non-violence. If he did, he would have known that the weapon of violence, even if it was the atom bomb, became useless when matched against true non-violence. That very few understand how to wield this mighty weapon is true. It requires a lot of understanding and strength of mind. It is unlike what is needed in military schools and colleges. The difficulty one experiences in meeting *himsa* with *ahimsa* arises from weakness of mind.

Q. 2. Today many people are beginning to feel that a clash, possibly of a violent character, with the supporters of the League is inevitable. The nationalists feel that until the League agrees to the partition of Bengal and the Punjab, its demand for Pakistan is unjust. What means should they adopt to meet the situation?

A. 2. If the answer to the first question is held valid, the second question does not arise. However, the question may be discussed for a clearer understanding. If the majority of the Muslims obey Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah, a violent conflict should be out of the question, or if the majority of the Hindus take their stand on non-violence, no matter how much violence the Muslims use, it is bound to fail. One thing, however, should be perfectly understood. The votaries of non-violence cannot harbour violence in thought, let alone the question of doing it. If Pakistan is wrong, partition of Bengal and the Punjab will not make it right. Two wrongs will not make one right.

Q. 3. The majority of the Socialists claim that if there was a socialist revolution the economic question will come to the forefront throwing the communal conflict in the background. Do you agree? If such a revolution takes place, will it promote the establishment of the Kingdom of God which you call *Ramarajya*?

A. 3. The economic conflict you envisage is likely to make the Hindu-Muslim tension less acute. Even the end of the Hindu-Muslim conflict will not end all our troubles. What is happening is this. With the end of slavery and the dawn of independence, all the weaknesses of society are

bound to come to the surface. I do not see any reason to be unnecessarily upset about it. If we keep our balance at such a time, every tangle will be solved. As far as the economic question is concerned it has to be solved in any case. Today, there is gross economic inequality. The basis of socialism is economic equality. There can be no *Ramarajya* in the present state of iniquitous inequalities in which a few roll in riches and the masses do not get even enough to eat. I accepted the theory of socialism even while I was in South Africa. My opposition to the Socialists and others consists in attacking violence as a means of effecting any lasting reform.

Q. 4. You say that a *Raja*, a zamindar or a capitalist should be a trustee for the poor. Do you think that any such exists today? Or do you expect them to be so transformed?

A. 4. I think that some very few exist even today, though not in the full sense of the term. They are certainly moving in that direction. It can, however, be asked whether the present *Rajas* and others can be expected to become trustees of the poor. If they do not become trustees of their own accord, force of circumstances will compel the reform unless they court utter destruction. When *Panchayat Raj* is established, public opinion will do what violence can never do. The present power of the zamindars, the capitalists and the *Rajas* can hold sway only so long as the common people do not realize their own strength. If the people non-cooperate with the evil of *zamindari* or capitalism, it must die of inanition. In *Panchayat Raj* only the *Panchayat* will be obeyed and the *Panchayat* can only work through the law of their making.

(Adapted from the original in *Hindustani*)

New Delhi, 25-5-'47

KHADI IN OUR LIFE

For nearly three decades Gandhiji has been preaching *khadi*. Thousands of our national workers have taken to wearing handspun and handwoven cloth as a result. But few of them realize the full implications of this symbolic apparel. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in one of his oratorical flourishes, has called *khadi* the "livery of freedom". Others have looked upon the wearing of *khadi* as a matter of discipline. But how many have realized that *khadi* is the way of life which aims to bring our practical everyday relationship between our fellowmen to conform to the ideals of non-violence and truth which is the basis of this programme?

Khadi is not merely the wearing of handspun and handwoven cloth. *Khadi* stands for an economic organization based on a self-sufficiency and cooperation wherein production takes place for use or consumption and not for exchange. This is in contrast to the present economic order which is based on competitive production for exchange. The rules and regulations as well as the principles which

govern our actions under co-operation greatly differ from those which regulate competitive life. The competitive order, when pushed to its logical end, brings us to the jungle law of the survival of the fittest and let the weakest go to the wall. But, under co-operation, if anything, the weak get greater care and consideration; and the satisfaction of our primary needs is given priority over production for exchange purposes. Trade takes place only on surplus goods and not on those which supply the needs of our existence. Co-operation ultimately leads us to achieve goodwill and peace in society, while competition spells hatred, jealousy and strife.

Hence, if we appreciate the introduction of *khadi* into our life, the idea should be broad-based so as to include all goods produced by our own efforts for our own consumption. In such an order, importation or buying of articles produced by organization within the competitive realm of production would be avoided and encouragement of production by mutual cooperation and understanding should be the order of the day.

The adherence of our Congress workers and public-minded citizens to *khadi*, therefore, will support village industries and they will not be guided purely by money considerations and prices. The price mechanism is distinctively a device of the competitive economy. "Will an article pay?" is a rule of law which will not be allowed to guide the *khadi*-minded.

In a household, when the mother prepares food for her child, her consideration is not based on money values; she puts in her labour of love as a matter of course and delights in her service as a member of the family, not as an imposed duty but as a function and of part of her life. She has her being in the happiness of her child. She gets her satisfaction in attending to the needs of those who are helpless.

The guiding factors in a social order governed by the ideals of *khadi* are our cultural tradition, the equitable distribution of goods and such other considerations which bring us into close relationship with our fellow-men. These will be determined by the existing needs and not by the ideas of creating and accumulating wealth. If there is land available, it will be first utilized for production of the food needed by the community and not for growing tobacco, long-staple cotton and such other raw materials for mills which may bring in more money. When land is diverted from food to raw materials, by the consideration of the return the owner gets, society will suffer from the maladjustment of its economic organization.

The message of *khadi*, therefore, includes bringing enough food into existence which will supply all our needs by our own efforts, looking after those in need of help and bringing about human relationships based on non-violence and truth not only amongst our immediate neighbours but also in our relations with our neighbouring nations.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

STORY HOUR

(Continued from Vol. XI, No. 14, Page 135)

[XV is from Southey's letter to Caroline Bowles and XVI from Martin G. Brumbaugh's *The Making of a Teacher* (Harpers). —V. G. D.]

XV

There is a story of a Spaniard who was fond of cherries, and whenever he ate them, put on glasses to make them look large and finer. I do this with all my enjoyments of every kind; make little pleasures into great ones, and put on diminishing glasses when I look at the inconveniences.

XVI

She taught a rural school far back in pine woods. The school had neither door nor windows, and the children sat on cross-sections of trees set on end. The teacher had no chair, no stove, no protection from bad weather. One day in February a severe storm damp and cold and penetrating, swept over the State. Without a moment's hesitation she stood in the open doorway, with her face turned to the pupils and her back to the cruel cold that she might afford them shelter. But her love cost her her life. She had an attack of pneumonia and in less than a week was laid to rest in a bower of roses carried by those that loved her and for whom she had given the highest expression of human love.

INDIA MUST NOT BE DIVIDED

I had the privilege of being with Gandhiji for a week during his recent trip to Calcutta. It was very tragic to find that the Bengalis who had so valiantly resisted the division of Bengal in the early years of this century were now mad after partition. "If there is to be Pakistan, Bengal must be divided," is their slogan. "But where is Pakistan?" asked Gandhiji. "Why do you regard Pakistan as inevitable?" The usual replies were: "Jinnah Saheb is adamant on Pakistan; he will surely have his pound of flesh! Oh, there seems to be no other way out!" "Why do you silently submit to all the tyranny?" interrogated Gandhiji impatiently. "Have you forgotten the technique of fearless civil disobedience that has been so successfully employed against the British?" But the people seemed to be in no fighting mood; they were overwhelmed with panic and a sense of utter frustration. Gandhiji was, indeed, deeply distressed to witness all this frustration and abject helplessness betraying a defeatist mentality.

And the pity of it all is that the Congress initiated the move for the partition of the Punjab and Bengal. Had we not been repeatedly assured by our national leaders that Pakistan was an idle dream and that it could never be established on the Indian soil? But the communal disturbances in Bengal and in the Punjab seem to have unnerved the people and, perhaps, even the leaders. The very demand for the partition of provinces implies that we have reconciled ourselves to Pakistan. Otherwise, instead of saying that if there is Pakistan, Bengal and the Punjab should also be divided, we should

have firmly declared: "No, India shall remain one; no power on earth can divide her!"

Even the British Cabinet Mission, after patiently listening to all that Mr. Jinnah had to say in the matter, had definitely rejected Pakistan for very good reasons in their statement of May 16, 1946. In his recent pronouncements as well, the British Prime Minister has promised to abide by that statement. Why should we, then, take any step which renders the statement of May 16 out-of-date? We are told that in their statement of February 20, the British Government have declared that, if necessary, power could be separately transferred to the existing provinces. It is argued, therefore, that Pakistan is inevitable. But such arguments ill befit a great organization like the Indian National Congress. If we could compel the Britishers to quit India, we can also tell them plainly but firmly: "No, India shall not be divided." And if Pakistan is forced on us, even then the nation must resist it with all the strength at its command by starting a country-wide mass rebellion.

It is hardly necessary to repeat that the demand for Pakistan is most illogical and absurd. I need not enumerate the reasons which are legion. Even the British Cabinet Mission pooh-poohed it. But the Muslim League has been threatening to achieve Pakistan by 'Direct Action' which has now come to mean naked and inhuman violence. Have we not yielded to these threats by demanding partition of provinces? Are we not directly encouraging political *goondaism* by regarding Pakistan as 'inevitable'? If we could liquidate the might of British Imperialism, it should be a child's play to liquidate the bogey of Pakistan.

There would have been some sense in conceding Pakistan if that would have satisfied Mr. Jinnah once and for all. But he is deadly against the partition of provinces, and wants the whole of the Punjab and the whole of Bengal. And his ambitions do not stop at that either. His latest demand is for a corridor joining the Western and Eastern Pakistan Zones. Later on, corridors may be demanded for joining Pakistan with the Nizam's Dominions which would, sooner or later, become part and parcel of Pakistan. Thus Mr. Jinnah's Pakistan would ultimately engulf the whole of India, perhaps, with the help of the neighbouring Muslim countries. The establishment of a sovereign Pakistan would be a constant threat to the defence of Hindustan. By hobnobbing both with the United Kingdom and the U. S. S. R., Pakistan may be able to create a very uncomfortable international situation for India. And, if unfortunately for us the Tories succeed in capturing power at the next general election, a Divided India would once again easily fall a prey to cunning British Imperialism.

Moreover, the demands for Pakistan and the partition of provinces are exercising a very unhealthy psychological influence all over the country. Many Indian States have already begun thinking in terms of sovereignty. There are serious talks for the establishment of a sovereign Pathan State, a

sovereign Baluchistan Province, a sovereign Rajasthan, a sovereign Maharashtra, an independent Dravidistan and so on. The Muslim League will also claim numberless "pockets" of Pakistan in the Hindustan areas. The logical conclusion of partition will ultimately mean the partition of districts, *talukas*, villages and even streets in cities. Are we prepared for all this? If not, we must resist the vivisection of the country with all the strength here and now. If not now, then never.

Fortunately for us, Gandhiji is still in our midst to guide us. He is definitely against both Pakistan and partition of provinces. We should seriously think a hundred times before disregarding his advice. There is yet time to ponder and decide. From one end of the country to the other, a powerful voice should be immediately raised against the vivisection of our country: *India must not be divided.*

S. N. AGARWAL

GANDHIJI'S BIHAR TOUR DIARY

19-5-'47

Gandhiji addressed a huge but a perfectly quiet audience at Barh this evening. He congratulated the audience and the volunteers for the perfect order maintained. With the advent of their own Government the latter had to play the new role of builders of the nation, for which they required to build considerably on the constructive training received incidentally during their fight against the foreign Government because of the non-violent character of the fight.

His topic, however, for the evening, continued Gandhiji, was the great sin Bihar had committed and its atonement. He warned the people against falling into the snare of the seemingly plausible argument that in view of Muslim provocation, retaliation was inevitable and the only effective method of putting an end to it. To answer brutality with brutality was to admit one's moral and intellectual bankruptcy and it could only start a vicious circle of which they had already seen so many manifestations. He could only say that if they continued their mad game, they would not be able to retain the independence that was coming.

Barh was one of those fortunate places which did not entirely go mad. But it could not escape the responsibility for the acts of those around it. It was difficult to estimate what India had already lost through madnasses like Bihar's or what she might have to lose in future. The only way to escape the consequences of their acts was to show genuine repentance and thus lighten the heavy responsibility of Ansari Saheb, with which he had been entrusted by the ministry. The people should refuse to shelter criminals who had acted barbarously or who were still threatening the returning Muslims under the false belief that they had done something heroic. How it could be heroic, Gandhiji said, he failed to understand.

To the criminals Gandhiji said that as a mark of true repentance they should surrender themselves to the police and bear the punishment that might be meted out to them. Even otherwise it was in

their interest to surrender, for if the Government and the police did their duty—which they must if they wanted to justify their existence—they would be arrested sooner or later. A voluntary surrender was bound to win them consideration from the court. What he had said, continued Gandhiji, should not be dismissed as a counsel of cowardice.

Inculcation of cowardice was against his nature. Even since his return from South Africa, where a few thousand had stood up not unsuccessfully against heavy odds, he had made it his mission to preach true bravery which *ahimsa* meant. They could not forget how in their own province the age-long tyranny of the indigo planters was swept off in six months in Champaran through non-violent resistance. They had to show the same bravery to a much greater extent if they wanted to get out of the abyss in which the country was being plunged at the time.

20-5-47

This evening Gandhiji's prayer was held at Hilsa, one of the worst affected areas in the riots. Addressing the gathering after prayer was over he said that it was a matter of great shame and sorrow. But the shame of the sin could be turned to good account by adequate repentance. All the religions that he had studied were full of instances proving the maxim: "The greater the sinner the greater the saint". For the poignancy of the pain of the guilt enhanced the joy that a guiltless life brought with it. The speaker wished that the maxim could be proved true in the reformed life of the people of Hilsa. They would be repelled by physical dirt. Surely the repulsion caused by mental dirt which the insanity of the Hindus of Hilsa meant was much greater than the pain caused by any physical dirt however great. He was wondering, continued Gandhiji, how he could awaken genuine repentance in the hearts of the Hindus of Hilsa. It had been suggested to him that if he settled down in Hilsa and went from house to house, he would be able to effect the desired transformation. Although there was truth in the remark, he must own his physical weakness and consequent inability to follow the advice. They were none the better for his confession. He hoped, therefore, that his remarks would penetrate the hearts of the large audience and that they would invite the Muslim sufferers to return.

He had been told that many Muslims came to see the place and finding it unprepared left it. He expected them to help the process of renovation of the shattered houses. The rainy season was approaching. They should, therefore, be quick about their work. Till then it was their duty to accommodate the Muslims in their own houses as they would accommodate their own blood relations. The Hindus and the Muslims had lived like blood relations in Bihar before. There was no reason why they should not revive the old time.

If the Hindus showed the spirit of brotherliness, concluded Gandhiji, it would be good for Bihar, for India and the world.

21-5-47

Gandhiji addressed a mammoth gathering at Bikram this evening. He congratulated the audience for the perfect quiet maintained throughout the prayer and the correct beating of time in the singing of *Ramadhun*.

He also congratulated them for keeping their sanity while insanity raged all round—thanks to the efforts of Congressmen and other Hindus. Still some tension did exist and many Muslims left the place out of fear. As the houses were intact, the problem of their repair did not arise. The Hindus could, however, clean up lanes and houses deserted by the Muslims and create such an atmosphere of hospitality that the Muslims would be forced to return.

Gandhiji next took up the thread of his talk at Hilsa where he had dropped it the day before. He had heard from various quarters that ever since the acceptance of office by the Congress it was abandoning its tradition of penance, sacrifice and service, so painfully built up during its glorious history of over 60 years, from its humble beginnings in 1885 to the present day when it had become a mighty organization having millions of followers. They said that it was fast becoming an organization of selfish power-seekers and job-hunters. Instead of remaining the servants of the public, Congressmen had become its lords and masters. The Congress was, moreover, torn by petty intrigues and group rivalries. What he said was true of all the provinces. If that continued, he was afraid Indians would not be able to retain the precious thing that was approaching. For that they required knowledge, understanding and purity of mind. If the Congress and the League did not retain the requisite purity and strength, they would find all power slipping from their hands. They could not hope to maintain it with the help of the bayonet like the British. All their power came from the people, who were the real masters, though they might not realize it at the moment. The Congress won their confidence through years of service. If it betrayed them, he was afraid, they would fall a prey to the white-robed *goondas* of society in whose hands all power would pass.

He had come to Bihar for solving the Hindu-Muslim problem but things were so interrelated that he was forced to take up other issues as well. He had, therefore, dwelt on the corruption that was coming in the Congress. The Congress should be above party intrigues and be a symbol of unity and service of the whole of India.

22-5-47

Explaining to the huge congregation at Fatehpur how the people could make the best of his present programme of holding his prayer meeting at different places everyday, Gandhiji said that if the people living within a radius of five miles from the place of the prayer could walk up to it, which they could easily do, instead of waiting for him on the roadside, they would not have to disturb his

rest on the way and would have the additional advantage of hearing his message.

He knew, continued Gandhiji, that a peace committee had been formed to work in the disturbed areas. Such a committee should have on it all the influential Hindus and all the Muslims of the province who formed after all a very small percentage.

Gandhiji next explained how women could help in the work of rehabilitation in answer to a sister's question. Fortunately most of the Hindu women were free from purdah. True purdah should be of the heart. Whatever sanction outward purdah might have in any religion, it was entirely out of keeping with the present times.

Hindu women, therefore, could and should freely mix with their Muslim sisters and share their pain and sorrow. He had heard, continued Gandhiji, that at the Masaurhi milk distributing centre Muslim children were objecting to taking milk in cups already used by Hindu children. This should not make the Hindus angry. It was their own untouchability practised against the Muslims and others which had infected the Muslims. Otherwise, untouchability should be foreign to the spirit of Islam. Hindu women, unalienated by this new sad development and full of the spirit of love and service, could perform the noble task of creating understanding among their Muslim sisters.

Gandhiji next referred to an incident related to him by his grand-daughter who had just come back from the hospital. The sad significance of that incident was that with the advent of power, Congressmen had begun to think that everything belonged to them. In a way it was true. But that did not imply that all sense of discipline should be thrown to the winds. Discipline and true humility should be a matter of pride for Congressmen.

Gandhiji also dwelt on black-marketing that was rampant in Bihar as in other provinces. If the people made up their minds not to buy from the black market even if they had to starve, the evil would end at once. He also advised the merchant class to become honest. For, black-marketing was criminal when the country was passing through a period of acute shortage of cloth and food grains, and Dr. Rajendra Prasad was saying in Madras that unless food came from outside, he saw no way to prevent starvation. He could not subscribe to this cry of despair. If all followed his advice, none need strave in this land which was capable of producing all the food grains it required rather than be reduced to the position of a beggar. Australia had offered to sell food grains to India provided the latter sold her linseed in return. Such bargaining spirit ill-became any country when dealing with another country in dire need. Such were however the ways of the world.

23-5-'47

After making a feeling reference to Saint Makhdum Maneri who lived about eight hundred years ago at Maner where the evening prayer was

being held, Gandhiji proceeded to say that in Maner though communal tension had existed it had been saved from actual rioting by the efforts of Congressmen. As he had said the day before, continued Gandhiji, due to the interrelations of things he could not help taking up other questions along with the present task of rehabilitation. He referred to the question of the landlords.

They all knew the century-old *Raj* of White indigo planters ended by the determined will and concerted action of all the people and their leaders, the most well-known of whom were the late Brij-kishore Babu and Rajendra Babu, but he was told that the tyranny of white *Rajas* was being continued today by the Indian zamindars who exploited their ryots economically, terrorized them through their officials and escaped due punishment through collusion with the authorities. If it was true, the zamindars were digging their own graves. Their future lay only in being the trustees for their tenants.

But as a man of truth and justice, he must also dwell, said Gandhiji, on the other side of the picture presented to him by the zamindars who recognized him as a friend because of his universal friendliness although they knew his identity with the masses. They told him that with the coming of Congress *Raj*, drawing its sanction from the masses, the ryots felt that they could commit all sorts of excesses, dispossess zamindars of their entire property, destroy their crops and terrorize them by other acts of violence. Similarly, labourers in mills thought under the influence of false propaganda that they could become the masters of the mills by damaging them.

As one of the masses he could only say to the peasants and industrial labour that they were only harming their own cause by that senseless policy. They were the real masters but they must realize their strength, and know its use. By going mad, the millions could easily destroy a handful of zamindars but ultimately their madness would turn against themselves.

He also heard destructive criticism of the Government by people who could not themselves wield the power that had come to the nation, and would not let those wield it who could. The Ministers of the other hand should be real servants of the people from whom they derived their power, free from nepotism and corruption, meting out even justice to all.

If all the three—the zamindars, the ryots and the Government—in Bihar did their duty, concluded Gandhiji, Bihar would give a noble example to the whole of India.

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