

HARIJAN

Editor : PYARELAL

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TWO ANNAS

GANDHIJI'S POST-PRAYER SPEECHES

Birla House, New Delhi, 29-9-'47

FRUIT OF FRATRICIDE

My reference to the possibility of a war between the two sister dominions seems, I am told, to have produced a scare in the West. I do not know what reports were sent outside by newspaper correspondents. Summaries are always a dangerous enterprise except when they truly reflect the speaker's opinion. An unwarranted summary of a pamphlet I had written about South Africa in 1896 nearly cost me my life. It was so hopelessly unwarranted that within twentyfour hours of my being lynched European opinion in South Africa was turned from anger into contrition that an innocent man was made to suffer for no fault that he had committed. The moral I wish to draw from the foregoing version is that no one should be held responsible for what he has not said or done.

I hold that not a single mention of war in my speeches can be interpreted to mean that there was any incitement to or approval of war between Pakistan and the Union unless mere mention of it is to be taboo. We have among us the superstition that the mere mention of a snake ensures its appearance in the house in which the mention is made even by a child. I hope no one in India entertains such superstition about war.

I claim that I rendered a service to both the sister States by examining the present situation and definitely stating when the cause of war could arise between the two States. This was done not to promote war but to avoid it as far as possible. I endeavoured, too, to show that if the insensate murders, loot and arson by people continued, they would force the hands of their Governments. Was it wrong to draw public attention to the logical steps that inevitably followed one after another?

India knows, the world should, that every ounce of my energy has been and is being devoted to the definite avoidance of fratricide culminating in war. When a man vowed to non-violence as the law governing human beings dares to refer to war, he can only do it so as to strain every nerve to avoid it. Such is my fundamental position from which I hope never to swerve even to my dying day.

Birla House, New Delhi, 30-9-'47

DUTY OF THE GOVERNMENT

Gandhiji said that some friends from Mianwali had seen him during the day. They were worried about their friends left behind. In this way thousands upon thousands were still in various places

in Pakistan. Friends from Mianwali told him that they were afraid that those who were left behind might either be forcibly converted, murdered or starved and the women abducted. They asked if it was not the duty of the Union Government to protect them. It was the same story from other parts. Gandhiji agreed that it was the duty of the Government to give protection to those who looked up to it or resign. It was for the people to strengthen the hands of the Government.

There were two ways of protecting the minorities in Pakistan. The best way was that Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah and his ministers should inspire the minorities with confidence as to their safety so that they might not have to look to the sister dominion. It was up to the Pakistan authorities to keep the vacated properties in trust for the evacuees. Surely, there should be no forcible conversions nor abductions. Even a little girl, Muslim or Hindu, should feel perfectly safe in the Union or in Pakistan. And there should be no attack on anyone's religion. In democracy the people could make or mar the Government. They could strengthen it or weaken it. Without discipline they would be able to achieve nothing.

INDIVIDUAL'S CAPACITY

As for himself, he must repeat even at the risk of irritating them that it lay in one's own hands to protect one's religion. Every child should be educated to lay down his or her life for his or her religion. They all knew the story of Prahlad and how he stood up against his own father at the age of 12 for the sake of his faith. Every religion was replete with such heroic instances. He had given the same education to his children. He was not the custodian of his children's religion. It was wrong to call women weak. No woman who was firm in her faith need fear any attack on her honour or her faith. The Government should offer them protection. But supposing the Government failed, would they change their faith as they changed clothes?

INDIAN MUSLIMS

Referring to the wanton attacks on Muslims Gandhiji asked who were the Muslims of India? The vast majority had not come from Arabia. A few had come from outside. But the crores were converts from Hinduism. He would not mind intelligent conversion. The so-called untouchables and *shudras* were converted not by an appeal to reason. The responsibility was their own. By giving place to untouchability in Hindu religion and by oppressing the so-called untouchables, they had forced them into the arms of Islam. It was

unbecoming on their part to kill or oppress those brothers and sisters.

Birla House, New Delhi, 1-10-'47

FIELD OF SERVICE IS UNLIMITED

Speaking after prayers Gandhiji said that a sister had handed a note to him the previous evening in which she had said that both she and her husband were anxious to serve, but no one told them what to do. Gandhiji said that there were several such complaints. He had one and the same reply for all of them. The field of service unlike that of authority was unlimited. It was as vast as the earth itself. It could take in an unlimited number of workers. For instance, the city of Delhi had never been ideally clean. With the influx of refugees the sanitation had become poorer still. The sanitation of the various refugee camps was far from satisfactory. Anyone was free to take up that work. Even if they could not get to the refugee camps, they could clean their own surroundings and that was bound to affect the whole city. No one should look to anyone else to give directions. To physical cleanliness he added cleanliness of mind and spirit. This was a big job and pregnant with great possibilities.

CONDITIONS FOR PEACE

He had been to a meeting of the prominent citizens of Delhi convened by Baba Bachitter Singh. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was to address it. But he had asked to be excused as Liaquat Ali Saheb had come to confer with him and he had to attend the meeting of the Congress Working Committee at 4 p. m. and a Cabinet meeting at 5 p. m. Baba Bachitter Singh, therefore, asked Gandhiji to address the invitees and Gandhiji agreed to do so. He (the speaker) had invited brief questions. A friend got up and practically delivered a speech. The substance of it was that the citizens of Delhi were ready to live in peace with the Muslims, provided they were loyal to the Union and surrendered all arms and ammunition which they possessed without licence. There could be no two opinions that those who wished to live in the Union must be loyal to the Union whatever may be their faith and they should surrender unlicensed arms unsolicited. But he asked the friend to add a third condition to the two mentioned by him (the friend) and that was to leave the execution of the conditions mentioned by him to the Government.

INDIVIDUAL RETALIATION NO REMEDY

There were about 50,000 Muslim refugees in the Purana Quila and some more on the Humayun's tomb grounds. The conditions of life were none too pleasant there. To justify their suffering by stating the sufferings of the Hindu and the Sikh refugees in Pakistan and even in the Indian Union was wrong. The Hindus and the Sikhs had suffered no doubt and suffered heavily. It was for the Government of the Indian Union to secure justice for them. Lahore was famous for its various educational institutions. They had been founded by private enterprise. The Punjabis were industrious. They knew how to earn money and how to spend it in charity. There were

first-class hospitals raised by the Hindus and the Sikhs in Lahore. All those institutions and private property had to be restored to the rightful owners. It could not be done by seeking private revenge. It was the duty of the Union Government to see that Pakistan Government did its duty as it was that of Pakistan to ensure justice by the Union. They could not secure justice by copying the evil ways of one another. If two men go out riding and one falls down, was the other to follow suit? That would merely result in breaking the bones of both. Supposing the Muslims would not be loyal to the Union, nor would they surrender arms, were they to continue murder of innocent men, women and children on that account? It was for the Government to see that the traitors were dealt with properly. By taking to savagery the people in both the States had tarnished the fair name that India had earned in the world. They were thereby bargaining for slavery and destruction of their great religions. They were free to do so. But he who had staked his life to gain the independence of India did not wish to be a living witness to its destruction. With every breath he prayed to God either to give him the strength to quench the flames or remove him from this earth.

CABLEGRAMS FROM MUSLIM FRIENDS

Gandhiji referred to cablegrams from Muslim friends from Amman and another place in the Middle East hoping that the present fratricide was a temporary phase in India and that she would soon regain her former glory and that the Hindus and the Muslims would live together as brothers.

MOST COWARDLY AND INHUMAN

He then dealt with sorrow with the reported attack on a hospital in Delhi by a mob from a near-by village resulting in the death of four patients and injury to a few more. It was a most cowardly and inhuman act, which could not be justified under any circumstances.

There was another report that some Muslim passengers had been thrown out of a moving train coming from Naini to Allahabad. He was at his wit's end to understand the rationale behind such acts. They should make every Indian hang down his head in shame.

Birla House, New Delhi, 2-10-'47

MESSAGE OF THE SIKH GURUS

Gandhiji began his discourse this evening by referring to a conversation he had during the course of the day with Baba Sardar Kharak Singh's Secretary, Sardar Santokh Singh. This friend told him that Guru Govind Singh had said exactly the same as he had quoted from Guru Arjun Dev. Most people imagined, quite wrongly — and on this score many Sikhs also were very ignorant — that Guru Govind Singh had taught his followers to kill the Mussalmans. The 10th Guru, whose *bhajan* Gandhiji read out, had said that it mattered little how, where or by what name man worshipped God. He was the same for everyone and, what is more, man was the same, i. e., he was of the same genus. Guru Govind Singh said that humanity could not be differentiated.

Individuals differed in temperament or appearance but all were built in the same mould. They had the same feelings. They all die and are mingled with the dust. Air and sun were the same for all men. The Ganga would not refuse her refreshing waters to a Muslim. Clouds showered their rain on all alike. It was unregenerate man alone who differentiated between himself and his fellow. If, therefore, the message of the great Sikh *Gurus* and other religious leaders was true for them, they should realize that it was wholly wrong for anyone to say that the Indian Union should be purely a Hindu State composed of none but the Hindus.

THE RIGHT USE OF THE KIRPAN

Gandhiji went on to say that by this he did not mean that the Sikhs were wedded to non-violence. They were not. But the Sardar told him that in Guru Govind Singh's day the Muslims had gone away from their religion and, therefore, he ordered his followers to fight them. The *kirpan*, which the Sikhs carried, was a weapon for the defence of the innocent. It was meant to fight against tyranny, never to kill the innocent or women and children or old or disabled persons. Even during the war against the Muslims the code was to tend the wounded of both sides. But today the *kirpan* was often used for totally wrong purposes and he who used it wrongly was really not fit to carry it.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

Gandhiji then went on to describe the stream of visitors he had had all day—including representatives of the Foreign Embassies and Lady Mountbatten. They had all come to congratulate him. He had received scores of telegrams also both from home and abroad. It was impossible to send individual replies. But, he asked himself, "Where did the congratulations come in? Would it not be more appropriate to say condolences?" Flowers even had come to him from refugees and many tributes both in money and good wishes. Gandhiji, however, said that there was nothing but agony in his heart. Time was when whatever he said the masses followed. Today, his was a lone voice. All he heard from them was that they would not allow the Muslims to stay in the Indian Union. And if the cry was against the Muslims today, what might be the fate of the Parsis, the Christians and even the Europeans tomorrow? He said that many friends had hoped he would live to be 125 but he had lost all desire to live long, let alone 125 years. He was utterly unable to appropriate any of the congratulations showered on him. He could not live while hatred and killing marred the atmosphere. He, therefore, pleaded with them all to give up the present madness. It did not matter what was being done to non-Muslims in Pakistan. If one party had sunk low, the other could not afford to do likewise. He asked them to pause and consider the evil consequences of such misdeeds. They should purge their hearts of hatred. It was their right and duty to place their grievances before their Government and to ask for redress.

(Continued on p. 371)

"NOT A PENNY"

On the 30th of July, 1947, at the Savoy Hotel in London, a luncheon symposium on "Sterling Balances" was held at which Professor R. F. Harrod of Oxford, Dr. Lokanathan of the *Eastern Economist*, and Professor G. D. S. Cole took part.

Professor Harrod drew a dark picture of the economic conditions in England and the dire distress in which the country found itself today and the great need for a rapid economic recovery. Under these conditions he surmised that the man in the street would definitely declare: "not a penny" can Britain pay. This was more or less the chorus of his whole talk.

Professor Lokanathan put forward the usual approach to this problem that is presented in India and claimed that these credits of India were due to actual contributions by India of material goods at low prices and, therefore, they cannot be repudiated. The present conditions in England should not be made an excuse for repudiation.

Professor Cole brought the discussion to a high moral level and pointed out the absurdity of Professor Harrod's presentation. To begin with, he stated that today a man in the street in London, if asked about the Sterling debts, would probably ask the questioner as to what these Sterling debts are! He knows nothing about them and cares less about its repayment. And he also brought out the fact that India, not being a separate political entity contributed nothing but whatever commodities Britain got were actually taken without India's consent by virtue of her political subordination and, therefore, it is immoral to make a convenience of our obligations and say that we cannot now afford to pay. Even here, he questioned Professor Harrod's plea of England's inability to pay. He granted that it may be difficult, but, of the European countries England was much better off and taking into consideration comparative conditions in India, he definitely held that not a penny should remain unpaid.

This will show the forces at play in Great Britain in regard to this question. Unfortunately for us, men of the way of thinking of Professor Cole are few and far between and are not very effective in the councils of the nation. We may add that we have such faith in the general British character that we can say without fear of misrepresenting the situation that if the man in the street in England were made fully aware of the conditions under which the commodities were taken from India and their moral obligation to repay the debts, one may almost say with certainty, the man in the street will be detached and impartial enough to say, "If we have utilized these commodities, we must be honest enough to pay for them, come what may." The British financial interests are very different from the common citizens of Great Britain. The ordinary citizen has still left some moral backbone and a sense of honour which will affect his decisions on such questions.

The settlement of the Sterling Balances is still pending although an Interim Agreement has been negotiated for India's expenditures till the end of the current year. We hope, therefore, that when the final settlement is to be negotiated, the Government of India will take into consideration the prevailing strong propaganda in favour of "not a penny" attitude and press India's claims strongly.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

HARIJAN

October 12

1947

NO DEPRESSION

(By M. K. Gandhi)

This is from one of the many messages of birthday congratulations:

"May I suggest that the present situation should not depress you? In my opinion this is the final attempt of the forces of evil to foil the divine plan of India's contribution to the solution of the world's distress by way of non-violence. You are today the only instrument in the world to further the divine purpose."

This is a telegram sent more out of personal affection than knowledge. Let us see.

It is perhaps wrong to describe my present state of mind as depression. I have but stated a fact. I am not vain enough to think that the divine purpose can only be fulfilled through me. It is as likely as not that a fitter instrument will be used to carry it out and that I was good enough to represent a weak nation, not a strong one. May it not be that a man purer, more courageous, more far-seeing is wanted for the final purpose? This is all speculation. No one has the capacity to judge God. We are drops in that limitless ocean of mercy.

Without doubt the ideal thing would be neither to wish to live 125 years nor to wish to die now. Mine must be a state of complete resignation to the Divine Will. The ideal ceases to be that when it becomes real. All we can do is to make as near an approach to it as possible. This I am doing with as much energy as I can summon to my assistance.

If I had the impertinence openly to declare my wish to live 125 years, I must have the humility under changed circumstances, openly to shed that wish. And I have done no more, no less. This has not been done in a spirit of depression. The more apt term perhaps is helplessness. In that state I invoke the aid of the all-embracing Power to take me away from this "vale of tears" rather than make me a helpless witness of the butchery by man become savage, whether he dares to call himself a Muslim or Hindu or what not. Yet I cry — "Not my will but Thine alone shall prevail." If He wants me, He will keep me here on this earth yet awhile.

New Delhi, 5-10-'47

OUTRAGEOUS ANALOGY

(By M. K. Gandhi)

A correspondent, who from his name appears to have Hindi as his mother-tongue, writes thus in English:

"This is with reference to your many and continued appeals to treat Muslims as brothers and guarantee their safety so that they do not migrate from here to Pakistan. — 'A man was walking along one cold day, when he came across a snake lying frozen with the cold. Taking pity on the reptile, he picked it up and thinking to give it warmth, put it in his pocket. The warmth soon revived the snake and the first thing it did was to dig its poisonous fangs into his saviour and kill him.'"

Anger has betrayed this correspondent into an outrageous analogy. To liken a human being, however degraded he may be, to a snake to justify inhuman treatment is surely a degrading performance. To damn crores of human beings for the faults of a few or many belonging to a particular faith seems to me to be the height of madness. The correspondent should also remember that I have known rabidly fanatical Muslims to use the very analogy in respect of Hindus. No Hindu would like to be regarded as a snake.

To treat a man as a brother is not to say that he should be trusted even when he is proved untrustworthy. And is it not a sign of cowardice to kill a man and his family for fear that he may prove untrustworthy? Picture a society in which every man is permitted to judge his fellow. Yet, that is the state to which we are being reduced in some parts of India.

Lastly, let me, for the sake of the snake kind, correct the common error that eighty snakes out of every hundred are perfectly harmless and they render useful service in nature.

New Delhi, 3-10-'47

Re : English into Hindustani

It was due to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur's unfailing regularity in sending the words for the English into Hindustani Dictionary that we were able to give an instalment of four columns every fifteen days. As the readers are aware she has undertaken more onerous duties since the 15th of August last. It is not, therefore, possible for her to cope with the work of the English into Hindustani Dictionary with the same regularity as before. She has, however, assured us that she will be sending in words off and on whenever she finds time to work at her labour of love. The columns of the Dictionary will thus henceforth appear not regularly as before but as and when the words are received from the Rajkumari.

8-10-'47

J. DESAI

"A GOOD DEED SHINES IN A NAUGHTY WORLD"

During the past few days the two following incidents have come my way. Both of them happen to show goodness shining through the hearts of Muslims. No doubt, many other such incidents could be told of good Hindus and Sikhs. All such deeds help to redeem the credit of human nature and to assure us that the madness that has seized so many of our neighbours will pass.

I happened to meet a Delhi professor, a Muslim, who had had his possessions completely wrecked. All his cherished treasures, his books, an unfinished manuscript, his whole life's work, had been laid waste. I tried to express my sympathy. He then said: "I do not blame anyone. They are seized with madness, so that they do not know what they are doing. As I look into my heart," he added, "I can find no trace of bitterness there." Those last words I found most moving. It was almost as if he had peered down into the recesses of his heart, almost sure that there would be bitterness in some corner, but, after a thorough investigation, to his own surprise he was able to report that he found none. He evidently claimed no credit for this. It was due to what an older generation called the grace of God.

A friend of mine got into conversation with an unknown Sikh in the Delhi coffee-house, who told him this story. On the 14th or 15th of August, he was living in his house in Lahore, and he went to a Muslim neighbour across the street to play cards. While they were playing, a mob collected in the street. The Sikh had time to run back to his home, where he bolted the door, and began to fire at the Muslim crowd from his window. Soon his ammunition was exhausted, and meanwhile the infuriated mob broke into his house. In spite of the fact that he was firing at the Muslims outside, his Muslim next-door neighbours meanwhile feverishly busied themselves cutting a hole in the wall, and through this hole the Sikh's young sister escaped. The Muslim neighbours then dressed her in Muslim clothes. The brother also escaped, and the Muslim neighbours drove them both to a railway station some way from Lahore, from where they travelled safely to Delhi. They had, of course, like many more, lost all their possessions, but, owing to the valiant action of their Muslim neighbours, who put neighbourliness before community feeling, their lives were saved.

HORACE ALEXANDER

Apt Lines

A friend sends the following apt lines from George Matheson :

"It is by my fetters that I can fly;
It is by my sorrows that I can soar;
It is by my reverses that I can run;
It is by my tears that I can travel;
It is by my Cross that I can climb into the heart of humanity;
Let me magnify my Cross, O God!"

New Delhi, 3-10-47

M. K. G.

THE FOOD SITUATION

At the last conference of Food Officials at Delhi it was stated that the next rice crop will yield only about 83 per cent. The shortage is therefore considerable, though the situation may be ameliorated in some parts of the country where the rains are good. In any case, the food situation in the country is one which requires careful attention. India is importing thousands of tons of food from abroad. This is a reflection on an agricultural country. India has now become independent of the British rule, and it hopes to attain Swaraj in the near future when the will of the masses will be reflected in the Central Government. No country that aims at being independent can attain that position as long as that country is dependent on other countries for its primary necessities. We have, therefore, to put forth our best efforts to make India self-sufficient in food.

After a great deal of turmoil and suffering the European nations are beginning to realize that it is dangerous to depend on distant countries for their food requirements. Even England, which so far has been depending on outside help to meet its food requirements, has realized that it is futile to depend on foreign countries for food if they have to maintain their independence. With this end in view, they are launching out on a new land programme to increase their agricultural products. Mr. Tom Williams, the Minister for Agriculture, stated that the Government programme is essentially one for reviving the expansion and production of meat, eggs, wheat, and barley and adding no less than 400,000 acres of linseed. They are hoping to increase the wheat acreage next year by 500,000 acres. To do this the Government assures the producers of their markets, good prices, subsidies and grants giving the industry first priority for buildings, housing and other assistance.

One may understand a highly industrialized country like England depending on her exports to get food in return. Even here, Great Britain is cutting down imports of such consumer goods as can be foregone, though under austerity conditions, and at the same time, she wishes to export textiles, etc., even at the cost of shortage at home, to maintain her food imports. The determined effort put forward by the ministers in this direction stands in marked contrast with the mere propaganda work of our Government in India. India can hardly compare industrially with Great Britain and yet with the little industrialization that we have had, the country has had to depend on foreign imports for food. If we pursue the industrialization policy indicated by some friends in high places, we may well imagine the dire consequences that may follow in its train on the food sector. One of the striking features of the British landscape today is the appearance of vegetable patches wherever land can be utilized for that purpose. In addition to this they are hoping to bring in hundreds of thousands of acreage under fresh cultivation. Cannot the Ministry of Food in our country follow this good example and

ban money crops for industrial purposes and give priority for food crops to such lands as are under industrial exploitation today? This can be done if there is a will to feed the population by its own effort. It may require controlling of the use of land and may lead even to licensing of land for particular crops. Farmers desiring to raise industrial crops may be required to take out licences paying adequate fees and by this method it may be possible to regulate the use of land in the interests of the nation rather than in the interests of the bank accounts of a few persons. This would entail a close co-operation of effort between the Ministries of Food and Industries. We trust such co-operation in the interests of the health of the nation will be forthcoming.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

COW SLAUGHTER

There is a good deal of talk today about protecting the cow from the slaughter house. It is good that people are becoming conscious to the great evil that indiscriminate slaughter of cattle has brought to our country. On the purely short-sighted view, the need for milk, in a vegetarian country being important, gives a premier place to the cow as a feeder of the nation. Apart from that it also provides the bullock which is the motive power with which the farmer produces his produce from the land. The importance of this aspect of the question has been fully realized in conferring divinity on the cow and raising cow slaughter to the level of a religious question. However, because of fanaticism the very same zeal on the one side has created a cussedness on the other side and we often find conflict between different sections of the population centred around cow slaughter. Therefore, it now becomes necessary to ascertain exactly the place of the cow in India and give it a rational approach.

With an artisan the tool that he uses becomes almost an object of worship. In fact, in India we have a definite festival — *shastra pooja* — devoted to this ceremony. Man recognizes his economic dependence on the means of production. Just as an artisan depends on his tools, similarly the farmer depends on the cow and if we may extend the economic sphere, we may say that the cow, being the means of producing food, becomes the centre of the economic organization of man, especially in an agricultural country like India.

Apart from this aspect, when we look upon the cow as the producer of the bullock, the importance of the cow is enhanced. She now represents the centre of our economy. We may call our economic organization, where the cow contributes towards motive power, transport, food production, etc. a "cow-centred economy" in the same manner as England and certain other European countries were, not long ago, horse-centred economies.

During the last century England drifted from being a horse-centred economy into a coal-centred

economy and from being a coal-centred economy she is fast moving into an oil-centred economy. These stages are very important to notice as the fate of the world itself depends on the source from which we obtain our power.

In the cow- and the horse-centred economies we have unlimited sources as we could breed as many bullocks and horses as we needed and, therefore, there being no restriction on the number available, it does not arouse anybody's greed or jealousy, but coal and petrol being limited in their supply and quantity, uses of such sources of power lead to friction amongst nations as the source dries up. It is now well recognized that these global wars are in no small measure due to different nations seeking to get control over oil fields. Hence, the coal and oil economies lead to conflict amongst nations. Unlike these two, the cow and horse-economies are, comparatively, peaceful economies. Therefore, in a wider sense we may say that when we break through a cow-centred economy we are really causing cow slaughter, i. e. in other words, when our actions are inimical to the existence of the cow-centred economy, we are not in the company of the protectors of the cow. For example, when we use coal and oil as our source of motive power, we are really banning the cow from our economy. When we are making asphalted roads, which are not in the interests of animal traction, we are also guilty of breaking through the cow-centred organization. This aspect of the question is much more vital to us than the mere slaughtering of the four-legged and two-horned animal.

We wonder how many of our friends who stand up against cow slaughter can show their hands clean of bovine blood from the point of view of this higher interpretation of cow protection. The "cow", like *khadi*, is symbolic of a way of life. "Cow slaughter", therefore, would signify making impossible that way of life. We hope that those who stand for cow protection will realize the extensiveness of the cause which they stand for and will wholeheartedly support this wider application of the principle.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

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GANDHIJI'S POST-PRAYER SPEECHES

(Continued from p. 367)

But to take the law into their own hands was wholly wrong. In that way lay the ruin of all.

Birla House, New Delhi, 3-10-'47

ALL EQUALLY GUILTY

Congratulatory wires keep pouring in on Gandhiji. He referred to the physical impossibility for him of replying to them. Friends had suggested that he should publish some of the messages. He had had many beautiful messages from Muslim friends too but he did not consider that the present time was opportune as it was not likely to benefit the general public, who today did not believe in *ahimsa* and Truth. Evil-doers, he held, were equally guilty, whoever they were.

SATYAGRAHA AND DURAGRAHA

Today, he was getting news of *satyagraha* being started in many places. Often he wondered whether the so-called *satyagraha* was not really *duragraha*. Whether it was strikes in mills or railways or post-offices or movements in some of the States, it seemed as if it were a question of seizing power. A virulent poison was leavening society today and every opportunity for attaining their object was seized by those who did not stop to consider that means and ends were convertible terms.

GOOD WORK ITS OWN BLESSING

Gandhiji referred to the fact that he was even getting letters asking him to bless people's work or the starting of their movement. In his opinion every good work carried within it its own blessings and did not need his or anyone's backing. A good man who was doing good work and who came to him understood his proposition at once. Truth was always self-evident and it was everyone's duty to abide by it at all costs. But those who resorted to *satyagraha* should search their hearts and find out whether it was Truth that they were seeking. If not, then insistence became a mockery. He affirmed that those who were trying to get what was not in reality theirs could not possibly abide by *ahimsa*, and Truth could not be found without it.

SANITATION OF REFUGEE CAMPS

Gandhiji next referred to the many refugee camps here and the insanitary conditions prevailing there and in the city. Everyone wanted scavenging to be done for them. He said that those who were not in the camps should see to their own surroundings being clean themselves. The taint of untouchability was tarnishing the fair name of Hinduism. One way of removing the blot was for everyone to become a *bhangi*. Sweeper's work was not a dirty work. It was a work that made for cleanliness. If the citizens of Delhi personally saw to the sanitation of the city, they would not only make Delhi beautiful but their example would have far-reaching results. If he were in charge of the camps he would induce the refugees to do everything for themselves. It was demoralizing for anyone to eat the bread of idleness and spend their days in gambling or playing cards. They should be glad to take up any craft that suited their taste—whether spinning, weaving, tailoring, carpentry, agriculture, or anything else.

He was perfectly certain that they should learn to stand on their own legs and not depend on others' service. He felt sure that if they became absorbed in work, they would to a large extent forget their sufferings also. Gandhiji said that he knew the sufferings they had had to endure and he did not for one moment condone those who had inflicted those sufferings on them. But he must reaffirm again and again that the correct path was to return good for evil.

A FRENCHMAN'S ADVICE

Gandhiji then referred to a kind Frenchman who had, while congratulating him, tried to persuade him to wish to live for 125 years in order to finish his work. He had, the friend said, achieved so much and, after all, if God was responsible for every happening, He would bring good out of evil. Gandhiji should not be sad or depressed. The speaker said that he could not deceive himself by kind words. Today, he felt that what he might have achieved in the past had to be forgotten. No one could live on his past. He could wish to live only if he felt that he could render service to the people. That meant that the people saw the error of their ways and listened to his words. He was in God's hands. If God wished to take further work from him, He would do so. But he certainly felt that today his words had ceased to carry weight and if he was not able to render more service, it would be best that God took him away.

Birla House, New Delhi, 4-10-'47

APPEAL FOR BLANKETS

In his after-prayer speech Gandhiji said pointing to Dr. Sushila Nayyar sitting in front among the prayer party that she was at present concentrating on rendering medical aid to the refugees, Hindus and Muslims alike. She was giving four hours daily to the Muslim refugees at the Purana Quila. She had visited the Kurukshetra Camp on the previous day in company with a Red Cross party including Dr. Pandit, the Director of the Maternity and Child-Welfare Bureau of the Red Cross and Prof. Horace Alexander and Mr. Richard Simonds of the Friends Service Unit. At the Kurukshetra Camp the refugees were Hindus and Sikhs. Their number was at least 25,000 and it was daily increasing. Tents had been pitched up to house the refugees but they were not enough to give shelter to all of them. The diet was enough to prevent death from starvation, but it was not a balanced diet and was already resulting in malnutrition and lowered resistance to disease. He was constrained to say that the suffering of humanity could have been greatly minimized if one side at least had retained sanity. The spirit of revenge and retaliation had started a vicious circle and brought hardships on increasing numbers. The Hindus and the Muslims today seemed to vie with each other in cruelty. Even women, children and the aged were not spared. He had worked hard for the independence of India and had prayed to God to let him live up to 125 years so that he could see the establishment of *Ramarajya*—the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, in India. But today there was no such prospect before them. The people

had taken the law into their own hands. Was he to be a helpless witness of the tragedy? He prayed to God to give him the strength to make them see their error and mend it, or else remove him. Time was when their love for him made them follow him implicitly. Their affection had not perhaps died down, but his appeal to their reason and hearts seemed to have lost its force. Was it that they had use for him only while they were slaves and had none in an independent India? Did independence mean goodbye to civilization and humanity? He could not give them any other message now than the one he had proclaimed from house-tops all these years.

His purpose for the evening was to draw the attention of his hearers to the approaching cold weather, which was very severe in Delhi and the Punjab. He appealed to all who could afford to donate warm blankets or quilts they could spare. Even thick cotton sheets could be sent. They should be washed and mended if necessary before sending. The Hindus and the Muslims should all join in this humanitarian task. He would like them not to earmark anything for any particular community. They should rest assured that their gifts would be distributed to the deserving people only. He hoped that gifts would begin to pour in from the next day. It was not possible for the Government to provide blankets to lacs and lacs of homeless human beings. The crores of India had to come to the rescue of their unfortunate brethren.

Birla House, New Delhi, 5-10-'47

HIS ILLNESS

In his post-prayer speech Gandhiji expressed regret that news about his illness had again appeared in the Press. He did not know who had given it out. It was true that he had a cough and a little fever but its publicity did not help him or anyone else. It was liable to cause unnecessary anxiety to many. Therefore he requested friends not to give any publicity to his illness again.

BLANKETS

In response to his appeal for blankets the day before two friends had sent two good blankets and another had sent ten more. He assured the donors that they would be given to deserving people.

A PREPOSTEROUS SUGGESTION

He had received a telegram saying that if the Hindus and the Sikhs had not retaliated probably even he would not be alive today. He considered the suggestion preposterous. His life was in God's good hands as theirs was. No one could put an end to it till He permitted it. It was not for human beings to save his life or that of anyone else. The telegram further said that 98% of the Muslims were traitors and would betray India in favour of Pakistan at a given moment. He did not believe it. The Muslim masses in the villages could not be treacherous. Supposing that they were, they would destroy Islam. If the charge could be proved, the Government would deal with them. He was convinced that if the Hindus and the Muslims continued to be enemies of one another, it was bound to lead to war, which

would mean the ruin of both the dominions. It was the duty of the Government to offer protection to all who looked up to it, wherever they were and to whatever religion they belonged. Ultimately, the protection of one's faith lay with oneself.

MR. CHURCHILL AGAIN

He then referred to Mr. Churchill's second speech in which he had attacked the Labour Government for bringing ruin upon India. They had liquidated the empire, he said, and brought misery upon India's masses. He was afraid the same fate would befall Burma. Was the wish father to the thought? Mr. Churchill was a great man. It hurt him (the speaker) that he should have spoken in that manner again. He put party before the nation. India consisted of seven lakhs of villages. These seven lakhs of villages had not run amuck. But supposing that they did, would that be a justification for reducing India to slavery? Was it only the good who had a right to freedom? It was the British who had taught us that freedom with drunkenness was any day preferable to slavery with sobriety. We were rightly taught that self-government included the right to misgovernment and that good government was no substitute for self-government. Socialism was Mr. Churchill's *bete noire*. Labour could not be other than socialist. Socialism was a great doctrine. It did not admit of condemnation, but wise application. Socialists may be bad, not socialism. The victory of the Labour Party in England was the victory of socialism. Labour Government was a government by labour. He had long held the view that when labour realized its dignity, it would eclipse all other parties. Labour had withdrawn British power from India by the consent of all parties. It ill became Mr. Churchill to quarrel with the great act. Supposing that he succeeded at the next election, surely he did not dream that he would undo the act and compel India to a second dose of slavery. He would have to face a living wall of opposition. Did he for one moment think how shameful was the act of the annexation of Burma? Did he remember the way in which India was brought under subjection? He did not wish to open the dark chapter. The less said about it the better. While he said all this, he did not want his hearers to forget that their dearly-won liberty might be lost to the world powers, if they continued to act like beasts rather than men. He did not wish to be a living witness of the tragedy if it was to overtake them. Who was he to save India single-handed? But he did want his hearers to falsify Mr. Churchill's forebodings.

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