

# HARIJAN

Editor: PYARELAL

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TWO ANNAS

## WHAT ARE VILLAGE INDUSTRIES?

Though in a general way people have an idea of the type of industries we include under the category of village, cottage and home industries, yet at the present time, as the Governments are introducing these terms into their administrative directions etc. it would be well to have a clear conception of the features by which we may identify and classify them uniformly. With this end in view this note is submitted.

### I. VILLAGE INDUSTRIES

Industries which answer all or most of the following conditions may be considered village industries :

1. Those that manufacture indispensable articles needed in the villages and for the villagers,
2. Using processes within the easy reach of the villagers,
3. With the help of tools and implements falling within the financial capacity of the villagers carrying on the industry,
4. Utilizing local raw materials,
5. With the aid of human or animal power,
6. Meeting the demand of local or near-by markets,
7. Not causing displacement of labour or unemployment among wage-earners.

Some of these industries may need the co-operation of many workers which may be secured by sharing profits or by payment of daily wages. The number of wage-earners in a unit may differ from industry to industry. Examples: Oil Pressing, Weaving, Tanning, Carpentry, Blacksmithy etc.

### II. COTTAGE INDUSTRIES

These are whole time occupations that do not require factory buildings with elaborate or special plant and equipment but can be engaged in by the workers in their own cottages. Examples: Gold and Silver smithy, Shoe-making, Tailoring etc.

### III. HOME INDUSTRIES

These are those carried on practically, by the members of the family, in their spare time. Examples: Spinning, Fruit-preserving, Embroidery, Needlework, Bee-keeping etc.

Financing of any of the above units or types of industries may be undertaken by the units themselves or raised by co-operation among those engaged in the industry.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

## A STUDENT'S PERPLEXITY

(By M. K. Gandhi)

Here is an extract from a pupil's letter to his teacher who sends it to me for comment:

"Two things completely possess me: my nationalism and my overbearing carnal passions. These always create seeming contradictions in my behaviour, and inconsistency in my decisions. I want to be the first servant of my country and at the same time enjoy the physical pleasures of the world. I must confess, I do not believe in God although I am sometimes terribly afraid of Him. All existence seems to me to be an enigma. I do not know what awaits me at the end. I have seen dead bodies burning: my mother's was the last, and the scene influenced me terribly. I cannot bear to think that such shall be my fate. I feel sick at the sight of a wound; and to think that my body shall burn one day! I know, there is no escape. To me, there does not seem to be any life beyond. That is why I am afraid.

"There are only two courses open to me: either to brood over it and pine away, or to enjoy the physical pleasures of the world, be lost in them and forget the end. I confess, (I have confessed to you things which I have never confessed to anybody else) that I have chosen the latter course.

"This world is the only reality; its joys are worth having for anything. Feeling for my wife who died recently, was genuine feeling; but that feeling was not because she was dead but because I was left alone. For the dead there are no problems; for the living there are all. I do not believe in any pure love; the so-called love is nothing but sex. If there were anything like pure love, I should have felt more attachment for my parents than for my wife; but reverse was the case. I have been a loyal husband but I could not have assured my wife that I would feel for her even after her death. My feeling would perhaps arise from the inconvenience that her passing might cause me. You might call this cynicism but there it is . . . . Please write to me and guide me."

This extract covers three things. (1) Conflict between carnal desire and nationalism, (2) God and future life and (3) Undefined love and sex.

The first is well stated. Carnal desire was the reality, nationalism was the fashion of the day. Nationalism in the sense of power politics is quite

consistent with satisfaction of carnal desire. Instances from life can be multiplied. I have in mind nationalism in the sense of a burning love for the nation including 'this last'. It must burn as it always has burnt carnal desire and the like. Thus there is no conflict but always victory of the latter over the former. All-embracing love of the nation leaves not a minute for any occupation that interferes with that ruling pursuit. He is lost who is possessed by carnal desire.

Uncertain faith in God and the future springs from the lust for life. This lust unhinges a man or a woman. Indecision consumes him or her. Faith in God will live when the animal passion dies. The two cannot co-exist.

The third enigma is a mere restatement of the first. Undeclared love between husband and wife takes one nearer God than any other love. When sex is mixed with the undeclared love, it takes one away from one's Maker. Hence, if there be no sex consciousness and sexual contact, it is a question whether there is any occasion for marriage. The pupil truly says that there was no unselfish love felt for his wife. Had it been unselfish, death of life's partner would have enriched life for, the memory of the disembodied partner would have resulted in greater dedication to the service of down-trodden humanity. New Delhi, 12-10-'47

(Translated from the original in Gujarati)

### OPPORTUNITY FOR PUNJABIS

Whether by reason of sufferings heaped on the Hindus and the Sikhs or fear thereof thousands from the West Pakistan provinces have left their dear homes. In their eyes one reads anger, on their lips is the language of hatred, their hearts betray want of faith in the living God. This outburst is natural. Nevertheless, it has done nobody any good. Society has been damaged by it.

If they curb their anger, they can serve the country and incidentally themselves.

These people generally know only Urdu. Whether they migrate to Gujarat, Bombay, Bihar, Maharashtra, the Central Province or the U. P., these provinces know mostly the *nagari* character only. The Pakistani refugees will possibly be obliged to learn the *nagari* character. The rising tide of nationalism must bring closer the people of the different provinces. The natural displacement of the English language must necessitate the spread of Hindustani. Hence, if the refugees from West Pakistan will zealously teach the *urdu* script, they will promote healthy intercourse with the provinces they migrate to. Some may even add an honest rupee to their income.

For knowing Hindustani a knowledge of the two scripts is as much needed as good pronunciation of the speech. Proper pronunciation of Hindustani is difficult for the people of the southern provinces. Listening to good pronunciation is the quickest and easiest way of mastering it. In this, too, the refugees can play an important part.

New Delhi, 13-10-'47

KAKA KALELKAR

(From the original in Hindustani)

## SWARAJ FOR THE MASSES

### GOOD OF THE MASSES

Our measuring rod for the achievements of our Provincial and Central ministers must be the good bestowed on the masses. In whichever direction we turn—food, clothing or shelter—the conditions are definitely worse today than they were a year ago. Starvation and death face many.

The public is entitled to know what has been done to relieve the food situation. Rationing and controls have played havoc and have helped to create blackmarkets which are deepening in their hue everyday. Money crops are merrily going on increasing. Then how much fresh land has been brought under food crops? What efforts have been made to conserve available food from damage by bad storage and by milling?

### NO BLIND IMITATION

We may not blindly follow the methods adopted by countries like Great Britain. The economy of Great Britain is the very opposite of ours. They export manufactures and import food materials. All food coming into the country is known and that, when it is divided by the population, gives the ration per head. Thus rationing and control of prices can serve to alleviate the situation in Great Britain.

Ours is an agricultural country that should produce a good deal of the food we need. At best the stock available is but an estimate. In the absence of an intensive production drive, rationing existing stocks, with an illiterate population, places an undue strain on the distributing mechanism and encourages blackmarketing. Our approach, therefore, should be from the other end. We have to afford facilities for increasing such production as the country needs. This indicates licensing and regulating production, rather than rationing and doling out the existing stock of goods. While the character of the problem in Great Britain admits of placing it under the administrative machinery for its solution; the situation in our country, on the other hand, calls for technical experts from the Agricultural Department.

### DANGERS OF IMPORTED FOOD

We are extending the beggar's bowl to the already overtaxed producers abroad. These, when they can sell or part with their stock, do so at extortionate prices. Because of the time and distance factors such stuffs have to be polished of much of their nutritive elements to be brought to our land. Our diet is largely based on cereals. When we take polished grains, we lay ourselves open to various diseases of malnutrition if we cannot fall back on other items, such as meat, fish, eggs or milk.

### PROBLEM RAISED BY CATTLE SLAUGHTER

In a vegetarian diet milk plays an important part. Owing to indiscriminate slaughter of milch cattle, both by our cities and by the military, the country has been depleted of well-bred animals. The problem demands attention.

### VEGETABLE OILS AND VANASPATHI

The other source of fat, for most of the masses, is vegetable oils. This source is being damaged by inroads made by industrial demands for soaps, lubricants etc. Even that which can be obtained is

being lessened nutritively by encouragement given to *vanaspati* mills, which destroy the nutritive values of fresh pressed oils. Some provincial governments have even gone to the extent of proposing to run their own *vanaspati* mills!

#### SUGAR OR GUR?

We get part of our energy from sugar. But along with energy we also get minerals and salts from *gur* which is nutritively a much superior article of food to white sugar. *Gur*, therefore, should receive priority to white sugar.

We have already noticed the shortage of cereals. In spite of it, good cereal-producing irrigated lands are being put under sugarcane, while palm trees, from which good *gur* and sugar can be obtained, are allowed to run to waste.

Any scheme of prohibition should carry with it extensive use of palm trees for making jaggery. Then no tapper would be obliged to go without his hereditary employment.

#### CLOTHING

When we buy an article, we have to part with some of our production. When villagers buy cloth, they have to give away a part of their grain or other produce. Instead, if they can make their own cloth during their idle hours, they would retain their other products, which they at present have to part with in exchange for cloth.

#### LEATHER

Crores worth of raw hides are being exported, which can afford employment to lakhs of tanners, if the leather is used in our own land for manufacturing articles thereof. Hardly anything is being done to train or help our village *chamars* in this industry.

#### LAMP OILS

Our villages are giving up crores worth of their produce to obtain kerosene oil for lighting. If the jungle seeds can be crushed locally, and the oil used in vegetable oil burning lamps, it will enrich the countryside to the extent of several crores. Kerosene oil should be banned in the villages and its use should be licensed and controlled in towns.

#### HAND-MADE PAPER

The country has been through severe shortage of paper owing to its dependence on European countries for its supply. Paper-making has been a time-honoured occupation in our land. We have the raw material for all types of paper and the traditional skill for hand-made paper is still there, if only a little encouragement is forthcoming.

We have picked up the lines as left by the British. An empire needs distant sources of raw material and foreign markets. Hence, finance and foreign affairs loom large in their government. But, in an agricultural economy, agriculture and industries followed by the masses, should have the premier place.

We may have shaken off the foreign yoke. But until the masses are free from the yoke of poverty, they cannot feel the glow of freedom. Democracy cannot be in full swing until the distinctions between man and man and the forces that make for that distinction are eradicated and until the State is

consciously based on non-violence. The first step is the economic foot-hold of the villagers.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

## NOTES

### One Drug for Another

Madras is making laudable efforts at banishing the use of intoxicants. This is all to the good. But in their zeal they are advocating another drink, less harmful no doubt, but nevertheless a drug, to take its place. Nearly two lakhs are to be spent in popularizing tea.

Cannot the Government think of wholesome drinks like *neermore* or *panagam* which are common refreshing drinks in the South? They have great nutritive values too. The former is prepared from buttermilk and the latter with jaggery water.

Is the present propaganda dictated by tea interests which have taken advantage of the vacuum created by the prohibition programme?

### A Misplaced Zeal

Much credit is due to Janab Abdul Latif Farookhi for the attempt he made to prohibit wagering or betting on horse-races. His attempt was foiled by Dr. P. Subbaroyan opposing the introduction of the bill in the Madras Legislative Council.

Dr. Subbaroyan waxed strong in support of horse-racing as though horse-breeding was synonymous with racing. To our shame he confessed with pride that Bombay was allowing horse-racing and that Sri C. Rajagopalachari had given a grant for a cup to the Calcutta Race Club!

Apart from this consideration of revenue, which seems to have weighed heavily with the Madras Home Minister, our economy calls for cattle breeding. What have the present Governments done to solve our problem of milk and draught cattle? When will those in power wake up to the real needs of the people?

It will be a great day when these race-courses are ploughed up to grow more food.

### The Left Hand Knoweth?

With commendable zeal Premier Omandur Ramasamy Reddier of Madras is touring the Province imploring the farmers to surrender their surplus paddy and thus save the people from hunger and famine. The world is being scoured to bring in more food grains to India. Food grains are procured from abroad at fabulous blackmarket prices to prevent people dying of starvation. Ships from the four seas are directed to India to save the situation.

On the other hand a news item whispers in a corner of the papers that the Government of Madras have amended the Madras Flour Prohibition Order, so as to permit the use of the flour of food grains and tapioca in the making of paste or starch.

Is the Premier aware of this? Or is the campaign directed towards saving the textile mills from the starvation of starch? Without effecting economies on all sides, with what face can we ask the producers of the world to spare us rice and food grains?

J. C. K.

# HARIJAN

October 19

1947

## A BITTER LETTER

(By M. K. Gandhi)

A Muslim friend writes:

"I am a Muslim of nationalist views. Throughout my life, if I may be allowed to call my twentyone years' existence so, I have never been able to think myself in terms of Hindu or Muslim however hard my elder brother, father and other relatives tried to make me do so. Naturally, the Islamia College, Jullunder, would not admit me as I was a quisling to my community.

"My father with my other relations left Jullunder in April but I did not accompany them because East Punjab, and more so India, was equally my country as it was for my friends of the other creed. But brutal happenings of August have disappointed me beyond words. Even those boys, who had organized processions with me in January, 1946 when Indian National Army people were being tried, wanted to have my life. After all I was a Muslim for them by killing whom they could get applause from members of their own community. So I had to run for my life to Delhi where I thought that this treatment cannot be meted out to those who believed in United India rather than in Pakistan. But it is worse here. Even my friends with whom I am putting up look towards me with suspicious eyes.

"Now tell me, my dear apostle of liberty and equality, whether I should go back to my parents in Western Pakistan to be their butt throughout my life and against my conscience or I should stay in India as a hostage whose life is always sought for against crimes committed by his unhuman co-religionists."

I have condensed the foregoing but little. The bitterness has not been touched. Assuming that the letter is accurate, there is ample excuse for bitterness. A person's worth is, however, tested under most adverse circumstances. Fair weather friends are many. They are worthless, "a friend in need is a friend indeed." Have not persons belonging to the same faith, fought against one another exactly as the Hindus and the Muslims are doing now? What was to be expected of ordinary human beings after uninterrupted preaching of the hymn of hate all these long years? If the correspondent will justify his nationalism, he must not deny himself at the crucial moment. We must avoid imitation of Judas Iscariot. Hence, I have no hesitation in advising the correspondent to return to his home in Jullunder even if he is to be cut to pieces by his erstwhile friends. Such martyrs will be saviours of Hindu-Muslim unity. If he proves as good as his word, I prophesy that his parents will receive him with open arms. Is it not the lot of us mortals that the innocent

suffer for the guilty? It is as well that they do. The world is the richer and better for the sufferings of the innocent. I need not be an "apostle of liberty and equality" to reiterate this plain truth. New Delhi, 13-10-'47

## GANDHIJI'S POST-PRAYER SPEECHES

*Birla House, New Delhi, 6-10-'47*

### THE PROBLEM OF FOOD

Those who ought to know all about our food have gathered together on the invitation of Dr. Rajendra Prasad to give him the benefit of their advice in the grave food crisis. Any mistake made on this important matter may mean avoidable starvation and death of millions therefrom. India is not unfamiliar with starvation and death of tens of thousands, if not millions, due to famine, natural or man-made. I claim that in a well-ordered society there should be always pre-arranged methods of successful treatment of scarcity of water and food crops. This is, however, not the occasion for describing a well-ordered society and for showing how it would deal with the matter. Our concern, for the present, is to see whether we can, with fair hope of success, deal with the present food crisis.

### SELF-HELP

I think we can. The first lesson we must learn is of self-help and self-reliance. If we assimilate this lesson, we shall at once free ourselves from disastrous dependence upon foreign countries and ultimate bankruptcy. This is not said in arrogance but as a matter of fact. We are not a small place, dependent for its food supply upon outside help. We are a sub-continent, a nation of nearly 400 millions. We are a country of mighty rivers and a rich variety of agricultural land, with inexhaustible cattle-wealth. That our cattle give much less milk than we need is entirely our own fault. Our cattle-wealth is any day capable of giving us all the milk we need. Our country, if it had not been neglected during the past few centuries, should today not only be providing herself with sufficient food, she would also be playing a useful role in supplying the outside world with much-needed foodstuffs of which the late war has unfortunately left practically the whole world in want. This does not exclude India. The distress is growing instead of showing signs of decreasing. My suggestion does not include ungrateful rejection of free supply that any foreign country may wish to offer us. All I say is that we must not go a-begging. It demoralizes. Add to this the difficulty of internal transport of foodstuffs from one place to another. We have not the requisite facility for rapid movement of grains and other foodstuffs from place to place. Further add not the remote possibility of delivery of uneatable stuff. We dare not lose sight of the fact that we have to deal with human nature. In no part of the world it is to be found perfect or even very nearly so.

### MEANING OF FOREIGN AID

Next, let us see what possible foreign aid we can get. I am told that not more than three per cent of our present wants. If this information is correct and I have had it checked by several

experts who confirm the figure, I am sure the case for reliance on outside help falls to the ground. The slightest dependence on outside help is likely to deflect us from trying to the fullest extent our immense internal possibilities in the shape of utilizing every inch of arable land for growing crops for daily food in the place of growing money crops. We must reclaim waste land which is capable of being placed under immediate cultivation.

#### CENTRALIZATION OR DECENTRALIZATION?

Centralization of foodstuffs, I apprehend, is ruinous. Decentralization easily deals a blow to black-marketing, saves time and money in transport to and fro. Moreover, the villager who grows India's cereals and pulses knows how to save his crops against rodents. The movement of grain from station to station makes it liable to be eaten by rodents. This costs the country many millions and deprives it of tons of grain, every ounce of which we badly need. If every Indian were to realize the necessity of growing food wherever it can be grown, we should most probably forget that there was scarcity of foodstuffs in the land. I have by no means dealt fully with the fascinating and absorbing subject of growing more food, but I hope I have said enough to stimulate interest and turn the wise towards the thought of how every individual can help in the laudable enterprise.

#### HOW TO DEAL WITH SHORTAGE

Let me now show how to deal with the three per cent of grains we might possibly get from outside. Hindus observe a fast or a semi-fast every eleventh day per fortnight. Muslims and others are not prohibited from denying themselves especially when it is for the sake of the starving millions. If the whole nation realized the beauty of this partial self-denial, India would more than cover the deficit caused by the voluntary deprivation of foreign aid.

Personally I hold that rationing has very limited use, if any. If the producers were left to themselves, they would bring their produce to the market and everyone would get good and eatable grain, which today is not easily obtainable.

#### PRESIDENT TRUMAN'S ADVICE

I shall close this hurried review of the food crisis by drawing attention to President Truman's reported advice to the American people that they should eat less bread, and thus save the much-needed grain for starving Europe. He added that Americans would not lose in health by the recommended act of self-denial. I tender my congratulations to President Truman on this philanthropic gesture. I must decline to endorse the suggestion that at the back of this philanthropy there is a sordid motive of deriving a pecuniary advantage for America. A man must be judged by his action, not the motive prompting it. God alone knows men's hearts. If America would deny herself for the sake of hungry Europe, should we fail to do this little act of self-denial for ourselves? If many must die of starvation, let us at least earn the credit of having done our best in the way of self-help, which ennobles a nation.

Let us hope that the Committee that Dr. Rajendra Prasad has called together will not disperse without presenting a workable solution of the food crisis that faces the country.

*Birla House, New Delhi, 7-10-'47*

#### APPEAL FOR MORE BLANKETS

Speaking after prayers Gandhiji said that he had received a few more blankets since the day before. While he thanked the donors, he was constrained to say that donations at this rate would not help in providing blankets for lakhs of homeless refugees. The public should so organize the collections that large numbers of blankets might be collected in a short time. They could send them to him or entrust them to any person or organization of their choice for proper distribution.

#### BE TRUE TO THE CONGRESS CREED

He referred then with sorrow to the murder of a noted Muslim in or around Dehra Dun. His only fault was that he was a Muslim. Was he (the speaker) to tell millions of Muslims in the Indian Union to leave India? Where were they to go? They were not safe in the trains even! It is true that the Hindus were suffering a similar fate in Pakistan. Two wrongs did not make one right. They could not help the Hindus and the Sikhs in Pakistan by retaliating on the Muslims in the Union. He appealed to them to be true to their religion and to the Congress creed. Had the Congress done anything during the past 60 years to injure the interest of the country? If the Congress had now lost their confidence, they were at liberty to remove Congress ministers and bring any other men in power. Only they must not take the law into their own hands. Let them not act in such a way that they might have to repent afterwards.

#### FOOD CONTROL

Referring to his remarks about food control yesterday, he said that he was convinced his suggestion would remove the major part of the problem of food shortage within twentyfour hours. Whether the experts would accept it or not was a different question.

#### WARNING TO MINISTERS

Many people came and talked to him and left literature with him to the effect that the popular ministers were acting in an autocratic fashion like their British predecessors. He had not talked to the ministers in this connection. But he was quite clear that nothing for which they had criticized the British Government should happen in the regime of responsible ministries. Under the British rule the Viceroy could issue ordinances for making laws and executing them. There was a hue and cry against the combination of judicial and executive functions. Nothing had happened since to warrant a change in the opinion. There should be no ordinance rule. Their legislative assemblies should be their only law-makers. Ministers were liable to be changed at will. Their acts should be subject to review by their courts. They should do all in their power to make justice cheap, expeditious and incorruptible. For that purpose *Panchayat Raj* had been suggested. It was not possible for a high court to reach lakhs and lakhs of people. Only extraordinary situations required

emergency legislation. Legislative assemblies, even though the procedure might entail some delay, must not be superceded by the executive. He had no concrete example in mind. He had based his remarks upon the correspondence he had received from various provinces. Therefore, while he appealed to the people not to take the law into their own hands, he appealed to the ministers to beware of lapsing into the old ways which they had condemned.

#### SECRET OF RAMA RAJ

To the people he appealed once again to be loyal and faithful to their Governments and strengthen them or dismiss them which they had every right to do. Jawaharlalji was a real *jawahar* (jewel). He could never be party to *Hindu Raj*, nor could the Sardar, who had championed Muslim friends. Though he (Gandhiji) called himself a *Sanatani* Hindu he was proud of the fact that the late Imam Saheb of South Africa has accompanied him to India on his return and died in the Sabarmati Ashram. His daughter and son-in-law were still at Sabarmati. Was he (the speaker) or the Sardar to throw them overboard? His Hinduism taught him to respect all religions. In that lay the secret of *Rama Raj*. If Jawaharlal, the Sardar and people with their ideas had forfeited their respect and confidence, they could replace them by another team that had their confidence. But they could not and should not expect them to act against their conscience and regard that India belonged only to the Hindus. That way lay destruction.

*Birla House, New Delhi, 8-10-'47*

#### BLANKETS RATHER THAN MONEY

Gandhiji said that a few more blankets had been received. A friend came in the afternoon and offered money or blankets. He asked him to send blankets. Another, as he was coming to the meeting, offered him Rs. 500 for the purpose and he accepted it. He would rather have blankets than money.

#### NON-VIOLENCE OF THE BRAVE

A good man had been to see him. He had come from Dehra Dun. The compartment in which he travelled was full of Hindus and Sikhs. A new comer excited their suspicion. On questioning he said he was a *chamar*. But on his arm was a tattoo mark which showed that he was a Muslim. That was enough. The man was stabbed and was thrown in the Yamuna. This good man said that he turned away from the sight. Gandhiji then twitted him for not intervening to save the Muslim brother even at the risk of his life. Had he done so, it was highly probable that the Muslim's life had been saved though he might have lost his. That would have been non-violence of the brave. It was also probable that his bravery would have infected the other passengers and they might have joined in the protest. The good friend admitted that it had not struck him that way though it should have.

Gandhiji was loth to think that all the passengers were mischievously inclined though his advice would still have been the same. Gandhiji had realized that their struggle against the British Government was not based on non-violence of the

brave. He and the country were suffering from the consequence. The rest of his days he wanted to concentrate on inculcating into the people the *ahimsa* of the brave if he could. It was a difficult task. What happened and was happening in Pakistan was very bad, he admitted, but what was happening in the Union was equally bad. It was a fruitless search to discover who was the beginner or who was more wrong. If the two wanted to be friends now, they had to forget the past. Enemies of yesterday could be friends of today, if they ceased retaliation in words or deeds.

#### DUTY OF NEWSPAPERS

Newspapers were a powerful influence. It was the duty of the editors to see that no false report or report likely to excite the public was published in their newspapers. He referred to the news published in a newspaper alleging that the Meos had attacked the Hindus in Rewari. When Gandhiji read it, it had upset him. But the next day he was pleased to see in the papers that the news was untrue. What he said was only one of several such instances. The editors and their assistants had to be extra careful about the news they gave and the manner in which they dressed it. In a state of independence it was practically impossible for Governments to control the Press. It was the duty of the public to keep a strict watch on the newspapers and keep them on the right path. An enlightened public would refuse to patronize inflammatory or indecent newspapers.

#### DUTY OF MILITARY AND POLICE

Just as the Press was a powerful arm of the State, so was the military and the police. They could not take sides. The communal division of the military and the police was deplorable. But if the military and the police became communally minded, it would be disastrous. The military and the police were bound in the Union to protect the minorities at the cost of their lives. They could not for one moment afford to neglect this primary duty. He would say the same of the Pakistan military and the police who were bound to protect the minorities there. Whether the latter listened to him or not, if he could make those in the Union do the right thing, he was convinced that Pakistan would have to do likewise.

The whole world was impressed by the fact that India had achieved independence without bloodshed. They had to be worthy of that independence by their right conduct. Moreover, the military and the police must be incorruptible under independence. No free government could function unless every citizen did his duty by the State. He was not here asking them to take to non-violence. He merely pleaded for correct conduct irrespective of non-violence. He warned them that unless they paid attention to his words, they would have to repent afterwards.

*Birla House, New Delhi, 9-10-'47*

#### DONATE BLANKETS EARLY

Gandhiji reported that he had received at least 30 blankets during the day. He appealed to the donors to hurry up with their donations as the

winter in Delhi became pretty severe from about the middle of October. Donations lost in value when they were not made in time.

#### PATIENT HEARING NOT ENOUGH

He was grateful to the people for giving him a patient hearing. But that was not enough. His advice, if it was worth listening to, should be acted upon.

#### THE MINORITIES IN PAKISTAN

The Hindus and the Sikhs in Pakistan were in a terrible plight. Evacuation was a difficult process. Many must die on the way. After coming across to the Union their condition in the refugee camps was none too enviable. There was the camp at Kurukshetra where thousands lay under the sky. Medical facilities were inadequate, nutrition poor. It would be wrong to blame the Government. What advice was he to give to the people? Some friends from Western Pakistan had seen him during the day. They had narrated to him their tale of woe and pleaded for speedy evacuation of those left behind. He was not the Government. But with all the will in the world no Government would be able to do all that it wanted to do in such extraordinary circumstances. News came from Eastern Bengal that people had started fleeing from there too. He did not know the reason. His co-workers including Satish Babu and others of the Khadi Pratisthan, Pyarelalji, Kanu Gandhi, Amtul Salaambehn and Sardar Jiwan Singhji were still there. He himself had toured through Noakhali and tried to impress upon the people to shed all fear. It made him think of the duty of the people and that of the Government. Those fleeing from one dominion might imagine that the conditions on the other side would be much better. But they were mistaken. With all the will in the world the authorities won't be able to cope with so many refugees. They could not reproduce the original condition. The only advice that he could give to the people was to stick to their places and look to none but God for their protection. They would die courageously if they must in their own homes. Naturally, it would be the duty of the other Government to ask for the safety of the minorities. It was the duty of both the Governments to act correctly and in co-operation. If that desirable thing did not happen, the logical result would be war. He was the last person to advocate it. But he knew that the Governments which possessed arms and armies could not act in any other way. Any such procedure would mean annihilation. Death in the process of exchange of population did no good to anyone. Exchange raised tremendous problems of relief and rehabilitation.

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

#### MORE BLANKETS RECEIVED

Gandhiji announced that several more blankets had been received. There was also donation of some money and a gold ring for that purpose. He had received a telegram from Baroda informing him that 800 blankets were ready for dispatch and many more could be sent if railway permit could be secured. He hoped at this rate there would be enough blankets to save the refugees from the ravages of the cold weather.

#### FOOD AND CLOTH SHORTAGE

He then referred to the problem of food and cloth shortage in the country. With the advent of independence the problems appeared to have become more acute than before. He was unable to understand the reason thereof. These were not the signs of independence. Indian independence was all the more precious for the reason that their means of achieving it had commanded universal appreciation. The fight they gave was bloodless. Such independence should help them to solve their problems more speedily than before.

As for food, the system of control and rationing in his opinion was unnatural and unbusinesslike. They had plenty of fertile land, there was enough water and no dearth of man-power. Why should there be food shortage under these circumstances? The public should be educated to become self-reliant. Once they knew that they had got to stand on their own legs, it would electrify the atmosphere. It was well-known that fright took a larger toll of life than actual disease. He wanted them to shed all fear of calamity if they took the natural step of self-help. He was convinced that removal of food control would not result in a famine and deaths from starvation.

Similarly, there was no reason why there should be shortage of cloth in India. India produced more cotton than she required for her wants. People should spin and weave themselves. He was, therefore, for the removal of cloth control too. That might result in increase of prices. He was told and he believed that if people abstained from buying cloth for at the most six months, the abstention was bound to result in a natural fall in prices. And he had suggested that in case of need in the meantime the people should produce their own *khadi*. He did not at the present stage bring in his belief in the use of *khadi* to the exclusion of any other cloth. Once the people began to produce their own food and cloth, it would change their entire outlook. Today, they had gained political independence only. By following his advice they would gain economic independence also and that would be felt by every villager. Then there would be no time or inclination left for fighting amongst themselves. It would result in elimination of other vices like drinking, gambling etc. The people of India would gain in every sense of the term. God would also help them, for He helped those who helped themselves.

*Birla House, New Delhi, 11-10-'47*

#### RENTIA JAYANTI

In his after-prayer speech Gandhiji reminded the audience that that day was the twelfth day of the dark half of the month of *Bhadon*. This day was known as *Rentia Baras* or Charkha Jayanti in Gujarat including Cutch and Kathiawad. Meetings were held and people were reminded of the programme of the spinning wheel and the allied activities. Time was unfavourable for an enthusiastic celebration of Charkha Jayanti. In its extended sense he had called the *charkha* the symbol of non-violence. That

symbol appeared to have been lost, else they would not be witnessing the scenes of fratricide and the like. He asked himself whether it was not enough to stop observance of the Charkha Jayanti completely. But there was a lurking hope in his heart that there might be a few scattered individuals at least who might be true to the message of the wheel. It was for their sakes that the Charkha Jayanti should continue to be observed.

#### BADGES FOR HARIJANS

He had noticed the previous day a statement that Mandal Saheb and some other members of Pakistan had decided that the Harijans would be expected to wear a badge showing that they were untouchables. The badge had to have a sign of the crescent and the star. This was intended to distinguish the Harijans from the other Hindus. The logical consequence of this in his opinion would be that those Harijans who did stay there, would ultimately have to embrace Islam. He had nothing to say against change of faith out of heart-felt conviction and spiritual urge. Having become a Harijan by choice, he knew the mind of the Harijans. There was not a single Harijan today who could fall in that category. What did they understand of Islam? Nor did they understand why they were Hindus. This was true of the followers of all faiths. They were what they were because they were born in a particular faith. If they changed religion, it would be merely from compulsion or some temptations held out to them in return. In the present atmosphere no voluntary change of faith should have any validity. Religion should be dearer than life itself. Those who acted up to the truth were better Hindus than one well versed in Hindu scriptures, but whose faith did not hold out at the time of a crisis.

#### DASSERA AND BAKR ID

Gandhiji then referred to the approaching festivals of Dassera and Bakr Id and appealed to the Hindus and Muslims to be most vigilant and considerate so as not to hurt the feelings of each other. He wanted them to avoid giving cause for any outbreak of communal disturbances at the time of these festivals.

#### SATYAGRAHA IN SOUTH AFRICA

Lastly, he referred to the proposed launching of *satyagraha* in South Africa the next day. *Satyagraha* had been going on for some time. It had been suspended for some time. India's case was before the U.N.O. and the Indians, both Hindus and Muslims, in South Africa had decided to restart their *satyagraha* the following day. His advice to them was to seek the assistance of both the Indian Union and Pakistan Governments and it was the duty of both the Governments to give all possible assistance and encouragement to the Indians in South Africa. Conditions for successful *satyagraha* were that the cause must be just and the means fully non-violent. If the Indians in

South Africa observed these, success was bound to be theirs.

*Birla House, New Delhi, 12-10-'47*

#### A WORD TO THE REFUGEES

Gandhiji said that he had received more blankets and promises of quilts during the day. Some mills were also getting quilts ready for the refugees. Unlike blankets quilts would get wet with dew. But an easy way out of it was to cover them with old newspapers at night. The advantage of quilts was that they could be stripped, cloth washed and the cotton refilled after hand-loosening it.

Those who invoked God's assistance could turn even misfortune to good account. There were some among the refugees who were embittered by their sufferings. They were angry. But anger did not help. They were well-to-do people. They had lost their all. So long as they did not return to their homes with honour and dignity and assurance of safety, they had to do the best they could in the camp life. Contemplated return was, therefore, a long-range programme. What were they to do in the meantime? He was told that 75% of those who had come from Pakistan were traders. They could not all expect to start business in the Indian Union. That would upset the whole economy of the Union. They had to learn to work with their hands. As for people with professions, as for instance doctors, nurses etc., there should be no difficulty in finding work for them. Those who had felt driven from Pakistan should know that they were the citizens of the whole of India, not merely of the Punjab or N.W.F.P. or Sind. The condition was that wherever they went, they should so mix with the inhabitants there, as sugar with milk. They should be industrious and honest in their dealings. They must realize that they were born to serve India and add to her glory, never to degrade her. They should refuse to waste their time in gambling or drinking or quarrelling among themselves. It was human to err, but it was also given to human beings to learn from their mistakes and not to repeat them. If the refugees followed his advice, they would be an asset wherever they went and the people in every province would welcome them with open arms.

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