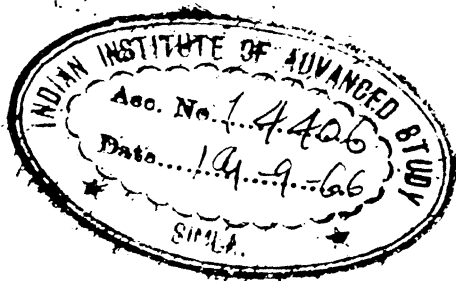





The Philosophy of  
Non-Co-operation  
and of  
Spiritual-Political Swaraj

By  
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## FOREWORD

A series of articles, dealing with Non-Co-operation and Swaraj, written by me at the wish of the editor, were published, in March and April, 1922, in the *Swarajya* of Madras, a most ably conducted and very widely read daily. The enterprising publishers, Messrs. Tagore & Co. of Madras, desired to reprint them. This booklet is the result. I have revised the articles somewhat, and added, as the last chapter, a paper on 'What is Spiritual Political Swaraj.' Copies of it were given to members of the All-India Congress Committee, at its meeting, in Calcutta, in November 1922; it was also reproduced in many dailies.

I was to have added some more chapters, noting parallels and divergencies between the eastern Non-Co-operation movement on the one hand, and on the other, the western Syndicalist and such-like movements, generally, and the Irish Home Rule movement, specially. But this could not be

done, partly because of the pressure of other and more urgent, if perhaps less important, work, in strenuous and distracting times; and partly because of the difficulties, in the way of satisfying each other's requirements, in respect of additions, alterations, proof corrections, etc., which are unavoidable when author and publisher are placed fifteen hundred miles apart. These circumstances are the cause of various other defects in the form as well as the substance of the work.

I will content myself with quoting here some sentences from Michael MacDonaugh's *The Home Rule Movement* (pub. 1920) and J. H. Harley's *Syndicalism*. I do so in order to support and strengthen my plea that the Indian people should make clear to themselves what they ought to understand by swaraj or self-government, to visualise as clearly as possible our goal, and the roads thereto, and not run blindly after unexplained and ill-understood words.

“Reading the speeches [of the Home Rule Conference of 1873], it is very noticeable that an Irish Parliament was claimed principally in satisfaction of the national sentiment, and as an end in itself. Ireland, it was said, must be allowed to work out her own salvation in her own way. *The kind of salvation, or the particular means by which it was to be attained*—when the matter was freely in

Ireland's own hands--troubled the mind of no one at the Conference. This was a characteristic of the movement to the very end. None of the very able men enlisted in its cause ever attempted constructively to show *how Home Rule, which was to consist of political machinery of the English type*--a Parliament of two Houses, law-courts, police, tax-gathers--worked according to old established principles, by legislators and officials of the same social class, and fundamentally of the same types of mind and ideas, however they might differ in race, *was to right the economic disorders* of Ireland, merely because the same kind of strings, legislative and administrative, were to be pulled in Dublin instead of at Westminster. How were unemployment and hunger to be banished? If any of the leaders was asked for his opinion on this point, he would be sure to reply--'Well, we could not possibly make a worse mess of Ireland than is being made of it by the Imperial Parliament; and at any rate, the hands pulling the strings would be Irish.' Or, answering in another and more decisive way, he would say, 'The Irish people want Home Rule, and that, for the present, is enough about it . . . vague and indefinite hopes prevailed, to some extent, that a good time would follow . . . But the expectations hardly counted.'

'The people always were most unified and



determined when the agitation was concentrated upon the *national* question. . . The Establishment of an Irish parliament never implied a scheme of regeneration on a grand scale. "Ireland a nation" was regarded by the vast majority of its adherents, not as an expedient but as a fulfilment—a perfected and finished thing. It was to be a satisfaction of the desire for *a separate national existence*, and that was enough *without any serious thought of what was to follow, if anything, in the way of social betterment*. What the idealist desired for Ireland was a proud position in the world, a voice in the International Councils of Nations, backed by an army and fleet, and all the rest of what we now generally abhor as Jingoism, which, in the opinion of these dreamers, were the surest tokens of a great nation and a happy people.' (Michael MacDonaugh, *The Home Rule Movement*, pp. 25-26, 271).

'It is unnecessary to dwell on the story of this syndicalist millenium. . . All the difficulties are cautiously avoided. For example, how are the members of the Executive Committee of the Confederation elected? And how are they to be elected for the future? And is it possible to devise a method of election which will not bring you face to face with all the difficulties of representative government. . . Or this Confederation which is to balance demand and supply—is it not the old

tyrannical collectivist and bureaucratic State under another name? Does it not involve the rule of the expert? And are we not to be hurried and hustled about in the same uncompromising way at the behest of the powers that be? Surely the rulers are as tyrannical as ever in this new Syndicalist millennium.' (J. H. Harley, *Syndicalism* p. 69).

The leaders of the N.-C.-O. movement should guard it against a similar and dangerous deficiency. They should make clear to themselves and to all concerned the fundamental principles of *What Swaraj should mean for the Indian people*.

In the first strong and pervasive revulsion of feeling against bureaucratic misrule and oppression as focussed in the Rowlatt Act, in the Punjab atrocities of 1919, and in the subsequent continuous and gross repression and ruthless bullying and blindly extravagant increase of administrative expenditure and waste of the public's money and reckless taxation, in place of penitence and expiation—in the reaction of the public consciousness, against all this the Indian People's natural cry is for Complete Freedom, absolute Independence, *mukammal azadi*, *purna swa-tantrata*, "a separate national existence for the Indian 'Nation'", etc. There is much reason in the cry. But there is an element of serious error in it too. There is a tendency to forget that Freedom does *not* mean

freedom for every one and any one to do as he pleases, but very closely *Regulated* Freedom; that independence does *not* mean rudeness; that *Interdependence*, of individuals as well as nations, and not absolute independence, is the whole truth; that Humanism should dominate nationalism; that *azadi* and *swa-tantrata* do not explain Swaraj, but are only synonyms, and themselves require so much explanation as the word Swaraj which they profess to explain; that the true and essential connotation of that word is--the *raj*, the rule, of the community, the making of good laws for the community, by its *true swa*, its *higher self*, *i.e.*, its *wisest*, *i.e.*, most *experienced* and most *philanthropic* men and women; that the finding out of ways of election which will secure *such* legislators, to make all laws is the whole and sole crux of all political science and art, and the *most* important as well as most urgent work for all those who are struggling for political reform; and that the question of what the relations of the Indian people should be with the British or the Japanese or the Russian or the Turkish or the Afghans or the Nepalese, is a *secondary* question. No doubt, the matter of the British connection has an urgent significance for the Indian people; but it too can be solved best only *after* defining Swaraj *in its essence*, as above.

The last chapter of this booklet deals with this all-important question.

With a clear intellectual vision of our goal, now all hazy, added to the moral energy generated by the widespread and intense realisation of the fact of their political slavery, brought home to them by the event of the last four years, there is no reason why the Indian people should not attain true Swaraj, with peace and friendliness inside as well as outside India, before very long. The success of the heroic Akali Sikhs at Amritsar, in obtaining possession of their Gurudwara temples and connected endowment properties, by perfectly non-violent persistence (in September, October, and November, 1922). Though themselves subjected to the most shameful violence by "public servants" (so that over a thousand were seriously wounded and had to be carried into hospitals organised by the Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee and served by patriotic doctors of the highest qualifications; and over five thousand were put into jail)--this success is full of the most hopeful auguries. Amritsar, the scene of Dyer's butchery, of his massacre of the innocents of Jallianwala Bagh in 1919, has again suffered heroically in 1922, and done what Bardoli was prevented by circumstances from doing.

Wrongs may be righted in two ways; by active

And be it remembered, for the satisfaction of those who cannot help feeling doubts as to success by mere non-violence, in view of continual destruction of the weak by the strong, of the swallowing of the sheep by the wolves and the tigers, that in human affairs, some other laws come into play, also. Passive resistance is a form of resistance, and combined resistance, though non-violent. And human oppressors and human oppressed being both human, psychological and moral forces come into operation. That which appears as conflicts of conscience in the individual, appears as *internecine wars* in communities and groups of oppressors. The external international wars and the internal class-hatreds of the western nations are illustrations. Even wolves and tigers fall out over their prey and end each other. Much more so must nations and communities which foster among their members the cultivation of the harsher emotions of hate and lust and greed and pride, and the growth of the habit of oppression and exploitation of others. Prahlada and Vibhishana, of the Indian legends, represent the nerve strands of conscience of the Daitya and the Rakshasa races, and they bring about the destructions of the more evil ones of their own kith and kin, and the consequent purification of their peoples, so that they set their own houses in order, cease to feed upon others and

become able to live in terms of peace and good-will and mutual help, with the Aryans.

BENARES }  
*12th December, 1922* }

BHAGAVAN DAS.

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1922

# THE PHILOSOPHY OF NON-CO-OPERATION

## I

### THE WOLD-UNREST

Even amidst the din and dust of active political struggle, it is useful to be sure about and to bear constantly in mind, the principles, the philosophy, the outlook upon life, which should form the basis of our cause and should guide our endeavours to promote it. It is also desirable to observe, and take lessons from, similar struggles going on elsewhere.

Monsieur Bergson is a living philosopher of great influence. One of the many books written to expound his views is *Bergson and his Philosophy*, by Mr. J. A. Gunn. Chapter X of the work deals with the "Ethical and Political Implications" of that Philosophy. Many passages apply closely to the conditions in India. Naturally, for there is deep unrest in human society all over the world. And



the underlying cause everywhere is the same. Only the outward forms of manifestation vary in the different countries, with the variations in the special circumstances. The Great War has been only one of these manifestations. This one cause is the already extremely and still growingly and iniquitously unequal distribution of the requirements of human life, viz., work and play, necessities and comforts, wages and special rewards. This iniquity is *the* disease-germ which is spreading fever through the whole body of Humanity to-day.

### THE REAL CAUSE

What these requirements are, whether the western statement of them, and the western suggestions (of Socialists, Anarchists, etc.) for securing a fair and reasonable distribution of them, are right and helpful, or whether the ancient eastern statement and suggestions are such, or at least more such—this question has been dealt with by me elsewhere (in the booklets on *The Meaning of Swaraj or Self-government*, published by the Gyan Mandal Press, Benares, and *Social Re-construction*, published by the Manager, *New India*, Madras, as well as other writings). I will not dwell upon this subject here, beyond observing that the ancient Indian method of dealing with the problem takes account of *the cause of this cause, i.e.*, it takes account of

*the psychological cause of the physical inequality of distribution, and suggests ways for helping on the indispensable change of heart which alone will make possible a more reasonable division.*

### COMPARISON BETWEEN EASTERN AND WESTERN MOVEMENTS

My immediate object is to invite public attention to certain important similarities and differences between the efforts of the European and the Indian "Proletariats," the "Masses," to better their lot; to show that we are in great danger of imitating some serious mistakes which are being made in the west; and to point to the urgent necessity of giving more attention to the root-cause of the disease (referred to in the previous para) than to the surface-symptoms.

For this purpose, I will make some long quotations from the book referred to, with comments intermixed. But before doing so, I will premise that that which appears in the west as the struggle between Labour and Capital, in India appears as the struggle between the People and the Bureaucracy, exacerbated by the addition of racial humiliation on the one side and racial arrogance on the other; and that while in England the interests of Capitalism are subserved by the State, *i.e.*, the Bureaucracy, here the interests (—not

the real, but the false and short-sighted interests---) of the Bureaucracy are subserved by certain large sections of the people, whose interests are for the time being, for one reason or another, identified with, or dependent upon, those of that Bureaucracy ; also that the Bureaucracy of India too ultimately subserves the Capitalist interest of England.

Mr. Gunn makes the following important observations.

“ Both ethical and political thoughts to-day are deriving fresh stimulation from the revision of many formula, the modification of many conceptions, which the War has inevitably caused. At the same time, the keen interest taken in studies like social psychology and political philosophy” (unfortunately almost wholly absent in India) “ combines with a growing interest in movements such as Guild-Socialism and Syndicalism. The current which in philosophy sets against Intellectualism, in the political realm sets against the State. If social psychology tends to base the State as it is, on other than intellectual grounds, *Syndicalism is prone to expect that non-intellectual forces will suffice to achieve the State as it should be . . . (It is thought) that impulse is a larger factor in our social life than conscious purpose.*”

## SIMILARITIES

The avoidance by the leaders of the Congress organisation to state, even provisionally (as must be the case, any way), the principles and outlines of that form of Swaraj which they consider most suitable for India, is somewhat similar to this deliberate and, so to say, intellectual "non-intellectualism," of the Western Syndicalists.

"In America. . . the Syndicalist organisation . . . is the body known as the Industrial Workers of the World. In its declaration of policy, it looks forward to a union which is to embrace the whole working class and to adopt towards the capitalist class an unending warfare, until the latter is expropriated."

For 'Syndicalist' substitute 'Congress'; for 'working class', 'Indian people'; for 'the capitalist class', 'the present system of Government'; for 'warfare', 'non-violent non-co-operation'; for 'expropriated', 'replaced by Swaraj'; and you have the description of conditions in India instead of America. But even so, 'expropriated' has a rather more definite meaning than 'Swaraj'. The Syndicalists' declaration says: "The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. Between these two classes a struggle must go on until all the toilers come together on the industrial field and

take and hold that which they produce by their labour." The former Congress Creed, making its goal "Self-Government on Colonial lines" had a clear meaning. Whether that particular form of democratic government, with its methods of election and its quality of legislators, is really better (or, as I do believe, no better, or, in some ways, even worse) than our present system of government—this is another matter. That the previous creed had a tangible meaning, while the word Swaraj, in the new creed, has been deliberately left elusive, is the point to be considered.

"NO PROGRAMME—NO PREARRANGED PLAN ;  
MORAL VICTORIES ENOUGH FOR  
THE PRESENT "

"Syndicalism stands for class war. Its central feature is the idea of a General Strike. . . Its war-cry is not only 'Down with Capitalism', but also, in a great number of cases 'Down with Intellectualism.' Instinct and Impulse alone are to be guides. Syndicalism, unlike Socialism, *has no programme—it does not believe in a prearranged plan.* Reality, it says, quoting Bergson, has no plan" (which is a half-truth and a very great mistake, for Reality, on the large scale, astronomical, geological, biological, even sociological and historical, has a fairly obvious plan, and includes uncertainty and

disorder as part of itself only in respect of details). "It says, let us act instinctively and impulsively, against what we feel to be wrong, and the future will grow out of our acting," which, by the addition of 'instinctively and impulsively' becomes a caricature of the *Gita*; for the *Gita* says, on the contrary, that we should act very deliberately, against what we have decided to be wrong, in the light of a whole philosophy of life, and with a clear idea of what is desirable to achieve by our action; but that having once decided what is the right course of action, we should enter upon it without allowing ourselves to be influenced any further by any consideration of whether we are likely to achieve the object or not.

". . . Georges Sorel, the philosopher of Syndicalism . . . talks emphatically about the tremendous *moral value* of strikes, apart from any material gain achieved by them. He believes religiously in a General Strike as the great ideal, but considers it a myth capable of rousing enthusiasm in the workers. . . . 'Strikes', he says, 'have engendered in the proletariat the most noble, the most profound, the most moving sentiments they possess'. In England, though the idea of the General Strike has not been so prominent, yet in recent years strikes have assumed an aspect different from that of former years. Workers who had struck before

for *definite objects*, for wages or hours or reformed workshop conditions, now seem to be seeking after *something vaster—a fundamental alteration* in industrial conditions or *the total abolition of the present system*. The spirit of unrest is on the increase. . . . The Confederation General du Travail and the Industrial Workers of the World are out for what they call, 'Direct Action'—for the obvious reason that the 'indirect action,' of begging and petitioning and circumlocuting, has been tried for a very long time and has failed. "Their anarchy is really an organisation directed against organisation, at least against that organisation known as the State. They have no hope of salvation for themselves coming through the State in any way. . . . The cries of 'Don't vote,' 'Don't enlist,' are heard, and care is taken to keep the workman from ceasing to quarrel with his employer. . . . As the portals of the future stand wide open, as the future is being made, . . . that is deemed an excuse by the Syndicalists for having *no prearranged plan of the General Strike and no conception of what is to be done afterwards*. It is unforeseen and unforeseeable."

It will be seen readily, I believe, that with a very few changes in the words, the above becomes a fairly good description of the N.-C.-O. movement as it is operating in India to-day. For 'Syndic-

alism,' read 'the Congress organisation and N.-C.-O. movement; for 'class-war '--' opposition to the present system of Government in India'; for 'capitalism '--' bureaucratic irresponsibility'; for 'Intellectualism '--' the spirit of western civilisation'; for, the General Strike '--' Mass Civil Disobedience'; 'Don't vote,' 'Don't enlist', have their counterparts in 'Don't go to the Councils, the Schools and Colleges, the Law Courts, and the Government Service generally'; 'has no programme', 'does not believe in a prearranged plan', 'has no conception of what is to be done afterwards,' have their obvious equivalent in 'has no idea of what form of government it wants when it says it wants Swaraj.'



## II

### WHICH IS THE GREATER EVIL? PROS AND CONS

Are we then to condemn the N.-C.-O. movement wholly, as, apparently, the writer quoted above is condemning Syndicalism? Or even only the negative or destructive, as distinguished from the positive and constructive, side of that movement?

Emphatically no. But as it is at present working, it may well be regarded as partly an evil. But *the lesser evil, and a necessary evil* in the circumstances, which, however, is further *reducible*, the purpose of these papers being to suggest how.

The present system of utterly irresponsible Government, on the other hand, and what it has done, and is doing, to "repress", not merely the N.-C.-O. movement technically, but actually the Indian People as a whole, to devitalise and degrade them—all this may well be regarded as much *the greater evil, and perfectly unnecessary evil*.

"The moral victories" of the people, the gain by them, to whatever extent, of self-respect, of the

courage of conviction, of feeling of being 'also human beings' like the man in office, of moral purification and of the spirit of self-denial—this is the undoubted gain of the N.-C.-O. movement. If the self-respect tends now and then to pass into bluster and rowdiness, and that, under provocation, into violence, or crimes, though very rarely—do we not know that Governmental Prestige is largely a cloak for what Shakespeare has called the "insolence of office," that there is proportionately much more criminal abuse of power by public servants, and that there is an immense amount of bribery, corruption, blackmail, theft of public funds, and oppression of the people, going on all the time, in every Governmental department, from the highest to the lowest? We can do neither without self-respect in the People, nor without a just authority in a Government. But we have to try to correct the personal self-importance and "insolence of office" and oppression of the people in the one case, as much as the bluster and the bravado in the other.

### THE POSITIVE SIDE OF THE N.-C.-O. MOVEMENT

So far as the constructive side of the N.-C.-O. movement is concerned, the revival of panchayat arbitration ; of swadeshi industries, especially of the handspun cloth industry ; of more useful methods of

education ; the turning away of men from the degrading and ruinous ways of drink and drugs towards healthy forms of recreation and relaxation ; the training and organising of young and old for all kinds of public work, social, economical, educational ; the abatement of the disastrous disputes of creed and caste and touch-me-not : all this is pure good to whatever extent it has been and may be achieved. Some persons, even non-officials, affect to ridicule the little success so far attained. But the shame is to those that ridicule—in that they have not helped to make the success greater. the *principle* of such constructive work, even the bitterest opponents do not venture to deny ; indeed Ministers, in charge of Industries, even profess, in this or that province, to sympathise with the swadeshi efforts, though the men in power, fearing a diminution of that power, seem to be doing all they can, openly or under-handedly, to thwart the people's efforts towards self-reliance. Such is the duality, the ambivalence of human nature, that the man in power, while he says he wishes to promote self-government, in act takes good care that the 'self-government' shall be carried on under *his complete control*. Even if his *heart* sincerely believes that self-government should be promoted, his *heart* effectually prevents it. He gives with one hand, and he takes away more with the other. Witness

the working of the new so-called Reforms (of Messrs. Montagu and Chelmsford).

### PARROT-CRIES

Some have spoken of the "parrot-cry" of "Punjab wrongs, Khilafat wrongs, Swaraj." Yet this parrot-cry is far more reasonable, much better grounded, far less hypocritical, than the parrot-cry on the other side, of "law and order." A western journalist, writing in the *Nation*, recently said, "Between Dyerism and Gandhism, India is fast becoming ungovernable." What is the remedy? Simply to decide honestly, whether Dyerism started first or Gandhism. Has any one any serious and sincere doubt as to the answer? If the whole history of the "progress"—in poverty and humiliation and emasculation and helplessness—of India under British Rule were not enough, then the solid Indian vote against the Rowlatt Act would give the answer. They were all Moderates and Liberals then; Mahatma Gandhi the most moderate of all. The N.-C.-O. movement did not exist. Well, then, if you really do not want Gandhism, abolish Dyerism, and Gandhism will disappear of itself. The reasons going, the law goes. The causes disappearing, the effects disappear.

It has been said, by some, that the heavy expenditure of the Military and the Police is due to

the N.-C.-O. movement. But, pray, what is the N.-C.-O. movement due to? Inherent wickedness in the proverbially docile Indian people? Or, inherent oppressiveness in a mammonism-and-militarism-ridden arrogance-driven Bureaucracy?

### THE ONLY RIGHT CURE

Unless the gentlemen in superior power and office realise that it is the bad political manner in which they have dealt with the larger problems of administration, and the bad personal manners which they have consciously or unconsciously encouraged themselves and their subordinates, especially of the police and similar other pervasive departments, to adopt, in dealing with individual members of the public generally, which are responsible for this unrest; unless they realise this, and unless they make up their minds to straightforwardly invite and consult with the recognised leaders of the people as to the remedy, the fight between Dyerism and Gandhism, as between Capitalism and Syndicalism, must go on and become worse and worse—checked a little, for a while, may be, by violent repression, but only to begin afresh, “baffled to fight better,” as has been always the case throughout history.

## THE FALSE CURE

Recent doings in the U. P. Council show that the Government intend to anticipate the Easher Committee. They are trying to establish Military Police at every divisional head-quarters. Probably other Provincial Governments will follow suit. That is to say, they are going to aggravate the causes of the disease. Medicine given at the wrong time, in wrong doses, makes the fever worse. Bullying, brow-beating, terrorism *has brought about* this unrest. The Jallianwalla massacre and "martial law" in the Punjab are the primary and undisputed causes of the N.-C.-O. movement. Yet it is believed that more bullying and browbeating will cure it. It may. The 'seditious' and 'disloyal' and 'rebellious' unrest of the old empires of Mexico and Peru was cured by the 'valiant' and 'righteous' Spanish maintainers of "law and order" by the simple method of butchery and extermination. Or it may not. No modern Government has had a larger and more powerful military and police organisation than the Tsarist. Yet it failed to "repress" the unrest in its country, and itself crumpled up in a day under the decrees of Providence, ruining itself and the whole country also for long years to come.

There is always a weak link in the strongest

chain that human beings can forge for the binding of their fellows. The condition of the new Budgets of the Supreme and the Provincial Governments patently exposes the very weak link in the military-and-police chain with which it is sought to bind the limbs of the unhappy Indian People. You cannot strengthen the superstructure with material dug out from the foundations. The whole building will topple ever. You cannot go on thickening your arms and starving and thinning your stomach. The whole body will die.

Honesty is the best policy. Hatred ceases by love and not by worse hatred. The greater responsibility lies on the man in the position of superior power. Let him change his own heart. Let him make the advance. There is no shame in it. Does not the King in England send for the leader of the Opposition? If the slightest real advance is made by the men in authority, it will be sincerely and most eagerly responded to by the People's leaders. It is no pleasure, but an immense worry, to the People to keep up N.-C.-O. Only sheer necessity, the feeling that there is no other way, compels them to do so.

#### MY FAIR-MINDED VISITOR IN JAIL

A European I. C. S. happened to visit me in jail (in January, 1922). We discussed the burning topic.

He complained of what he called the rowdy ways of the N.-C.-O. Volunteers, and called them riff-raff who were utterly ignorant of what Swaraj and self-Government meant. I asked him, "Grade for grade and rank for rank, are these volunteers more riff-raff than your police and your soldiers in the barracks? Are they more ignorant and more rowdy by nature—apart from training—than those? And, finally, is there any other way than what you call 'rowdy ways' to bring sufficient pressure to bear on the Government *i.e.* the men in power, to induce them to pause and listen?" My visitor had the fair-mindedness to say "No".



### III

## DIRECT ACTION

The Syndicalist unrest in the west is similarly due to the mismanagement of affairs by the mammonists and militarists and navalists, who are far more to blame than the Syndicalists. For, always, the greater responsibility ought to lie on the man who has the power.

### SOPHISTRY AGAINST DIRECT ACTION

“Direct action”, by strikes etc., on the part of the people, has been blamed, especially when it seeks to bring about “political” results. How the “political” is inseparable from the other departments of the communal life, will be dealt with in a moment. In the meanwhile it may be asked, why is direct action by the people, in large bodies, any worse or more unjustifiable than direct action by the men in power? Do Governments—and be it remembered that Governments are nothing else than bodies of human beings in power—shoot down or bludgeon and disperse unarmed public gather-

ings, or imprison people, or issue executive prohibitions of all kinds, or collect fines by distraint of private property—do they do these and similar things by “direct”, or by “indirect”, action (using the words in their plain and direct sense, and not in any technical one)? And when the gentlemen who compose and constitute the government and parliament in England are elected by the people, do the people elect them by “direct action” or by “indirect”? There is some deep sophistry about this condemnation of “direct action”, which sophistry has to be carefully ascertained and guarded against. A handful of diplomats have the right, by “direct action,” by their mere fiat, to plunge scores of nations into devastating war; but thousands of human beings, some of whom at least may be every way better than those diplomats, have no right peacefully to discuss and decide on and adopt perfectly peaceful direct action of any kind—such a proposition is not to be blindly assented to.

#### MENDING LAWS BY LAWS

It has been said: “Mend laws by laws.” But how? The thief does not usually mend himself without moral, mental, social and often physical pressure from without. Unless effective pressure, of some kind, is brought to bear on the law-makers,

how can a law be mended? Were even the hollow Reforms passed without long Congress 'agitation,' *i.e.*, 'direct action'? Has any substantial change in the Constitution, the Basic Law of any country, been ever made in History without direct action? The Magna Charta, the Cromwellian Reform of England, the American Independence, the Correction of Aristocratic Corruption called the French Revolution—were any of these achieved by Indirect Action? Were they not all achieved by Direct Action—and of a very violent kind?

If India is now seeking to achieve her escape from strangulation, or perpetual enslavement, and by NON-VIOLENT Direct Action, and thereby establish a new spiritual principle and method in History—it should be matter, not for condemnation, but deep thankfulness.

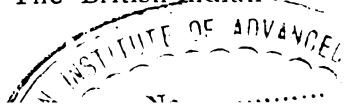
#### THE BEHAVIOUR OF THE PREACHERS OF INDIRECT ACTION

This question of Direct Action will bear a little more dwelling on. When the statesmen of one nation declare war against another nation, is that not direct action? Why do they not think in such cases of "mending laws by laws," of taking indirect action even when the machinery is available? Why was not the Hague Court of Arbitration appealed to by these maintainers of "law and order?" Why

did they rush into the Great War by direct action, and thereby so splendidly maintain law and order that they have slaughtered and mangled millions of human beings, driven whole nations into bankruptcy and economic slavery for generations, and have nearly ruined civilisation—all ultimately for the benefit of a few capitalists? Why do the gentlemen in office and power affect so very much more indignation when a mob murders a few men and destroys a few hundreds or a few thousands of rupees worth of property, than when they themselves murder many millions of men, destroy many thousands of crores of rupees worth of property and bring untellable misery upon millions of families—to say nothing of such minor butcheries as the Amritsar massacre?

#### WHAT IS THE PEOPLE'S REMEDY AGAINST THE ESPRIT DE CORPS OF THE BUREAUCRACY?

When things are brought to such an unhappy pass in a country, by the perversity of the men in power, that the 'classes' and the 'masses' become as opposed in interest to each other as two different nations, what is the remedy for the masses? Complaint against bureaucrat to his brother bureaucrat? Would it not be more effective to complain against the thief to the receiver of the stolen goods? The British Indian



Criminal Procedure Code says that no person shall try a case in which he has a personal interest? But what interest is more personal and stronger to-day than that miserable "esprit de corps" of "The Service", which has crushed out all the *esprit* of Justice, even as, on the larger scale, the mean and mischievous spirit of nationalism and racialism has thrust aside the spirit of humanism—with such consequences as the Great European War? Will not the consequence of this pernicious *esprit de corps* be similar, some day sooner or later? If there was any equity and righteousness in the administration, would it not be arranged that as public servants sit in judgment over members of the public, so should benches, commissions, or committees, of experienced and widely trusted members of the public sit in judgment over offending public servants? But conditions are such at present, not only in India, but in many western countries also, it seems, that as soon as a man gets into office, he begins to feel something entirely apart from and superior to the people, and says to them. "You must not take the law into your hands; it must all remain in *my* hands." What is the remedy of the people against the Bureaucracy in such conditions?

Laws are not tangible objects so that you can pick up one with your hands and with it hammer another into such shape as you like. Every law

means ultimately a power entrusted to a 'public servant' to force a certain kind of conduct on some person or another. Now, when all the '*public servants*' begin to think themselves and to behave as '*public masters*'; when they forget that the power which they have, is, at bottom, derived from the 'good' portion of the public for use against the 'bad' who may happen to offend against the law; when they begin to behave as over-bearing 'masters' towards the good and the bad alike, instead of regarding the former as their employers, their bread-givers, and their true masters and guides, (through the people's elders); and when they combine in what may be called a vast clique, a 'seditious conspiracy' against the people, and show their 'disaffection and disloyalty' towards the people by all kinds of high-handed oppression, excessive taxation, self-aggrandisement, worship of their own prestige, and the corruptness before referred to; how, *then*, can the people "mend laws by laws"? Every law is in the hand of some public servant, and he has to work it in the interests of the clique, either of his own wish and will, or under the general pressure of that *all-gripping octopus* called *The Service*.

UNIVERSAL MIND ; UNWRITTEN LAW ;  
DIRECT ACTION

The only Law by which these laws made by 'The Service' can be mended, the only law which is available to the people for the purpose, which is always, inherently, in their hands, is the Unwritten Law, known as 'Diffused Intelligence,' Brahma, Universal Mind, Mahat, Collective Mind, Mass Mind, 'Popular Instinct,' Commonsense, sometimes called also 'Intuition,' or the working of the Unconscious, the Sub-conscious, or the Supra-conscious the Mahan Atma, the Avyakta, the Sutatma, the Oversoul, the Group-soul, the "We," the "Great Reason," the "Great or Collective Soul," or Divine Law, the Qanun-i-Qudrat, which is the ultimate ancestor of all written laws. It is the very law of Direct Action. Indeed, this Unwritten Law originally *creates*, by very direct action, all the state-constitutions and all the governments which afterwards *seem* to make the written laws.\* And not only [does it so create them initially, but it is no "absentee God." It is always present behind these governments and state-constitutions. It, in reality perpetually creates, maintains, abolishes, or modi-

\* *Mahabharata*, Shantiparva, chs., 66, 308, 317, 327. Also *Vayu Purana*, I, iv.

fies all the written laws (through the outward machinery of the government), and also the state-constitution itself from time to time, as it pleases to think necessary. And it does so by means of the Direct Action of tacit or express support or requisition and covert or overt disapproval and demand, or 'violent revolution'; in short, by means of the force of *loka-mata*, Public Opinion and Public Action, which is another name for itself. It is the ultimate compulsive force on which all government rests. It is the "constant vigilance" which is "the price of liberty." Its heavings and surgings are beyond the ken of those greed and pride blinded 'public servants' who, being its creatures, imagine themselves its creators in their purblind and arrogant selfishness.

#### CATCH-WORDS

The tyranny of the phrase, the hypnotic power of catch-words, and the capacity of human beings for self-deception under the stress of self-interest are very great. When citizens offer themselves as recruits and soldiers, and offer their property as loan or gift, for a war, it is all direct action enough. But the persons who inveigh most loudly against direct action when it opposes governmental perversity, do not condemn it in those cases, but rather unctuously eulogise it, when it supports a



governmental measure, even though that measure be, not a defensive but a very offensive war.

Of course there are *possibilities* of danger and mischief in direct action. But there are *actualities* of greater mischief in mis-government. And, by the eastern traditions, the king, the governor, the ruler, the man in office, who "Eats the Salt" of the people, is paid and maintained by them, he is *far more* responsible for the misconduct, the sins of omission and commission, of himself and his subordinates, whereby the people suffer, than any unpaid adviser of the people can be when the latter ignore or abuse the advice. Thus, the Indian *smritis* lay down that the king must refund from his own property the value of unrecovered stolen goods. Anb Sādi in the *Bostān*, asks,

If thieves will steal the peasants' packs,  
Why shall the king eat tithle and tax?

#### DANGERS OF DIRECT ACTION GUARDED AGAINST IN ANCIENT INDIAN TRADITION

In the ancient Indian tradition, the evils of misgovernment by the Executive are cured by the Direct Action of the people, and the dangers of such Direct Action are guarded against by the prescription of who are the true guides thereof.

The current western thought on the subject is that "Direct Action is opposed to Representative

Government; the workman is to influence those in authority, not through M. P.'s or delegates, but directly through the embattled strength of his associated union." (Harley, *Syndicalism*, Page 41). But what is to be done where there are no M. P.'s or delegates, or where "the law" gives no power to the delegated" over the men in office, or where the M.P's and delegates identify themselves with the Executive in oppressing the great mass of the people? It should be remembered that *all* public servants are, in a sense, "delegates." The ancient way of dealing with the situation is this. "The military power, the Executive Arm, of the State, is created by the spiritual and intellectual power; the wisdom-stored ultimate Law-making Head thereof. Therefore, when the executive power runs amuck, takes the bit between its teeth and bolts, it is the right and the duty of this *Intelligentsia* (in the higher sense, of the wise, the learned, the scientists priests, the elders, the Men of Thought, the natural leaders and head of the people) to restrain and bring back again under control, this straying and mis-directed Executive force, the Men of Action." (Manu, ix, 320-322.)

We have seen before that Universal Mind or Brahma, impels the people to and guides them in the primal Direct Action which results in the formation of States and organisations of all kinds. Even

to-day, every day, there occurs everywhere a surging, an at first undefined 'movement' of one sort or another, in the community, the body politic, which movement is initiated by the mentally advanced, the men and women of thought, of action, and of desire, who leaven the society, then a public meeting takes place, and elects its chairman by direct action. *After* this, organisation and indirect action of all kinds begin. But even then the principle and the instruments of that Brahma-movement do not become extinct. They simply retire into the back-ground and do their work thence—*i.e.*, such of them as are not required to become factors in the outer organisation—ever ready to come forward again when necessary. And the ancient Indian tradition says that all Direct Action by the people should be carried on, not mob-like, but deliberately, under the guidance of such elders and leaders, the repositories of Brahman, *i.e.*, knowledge and self-denial, and therefore true Brahmanas (not in the hide-bound and degenerate hereditary sense, but in scientific sense, missionaries of the Divine Self, priests, presbyters, elders, whether Vaidika Brahmanas, or Parsi Brahmanas, or Jew Brahmanas, or Bauddha or Jaina Brahmanas, or Christian or Musalman or Sikh Brahmanas.) This should be done with care and discrimination and forethought, and so with harmony and steadiness and science; and

not merely instinctively and impulsively, under haphazard, immature and unwise leadership (for some leader or leaders, there always have been, are, and must be, even in the crassest democracies and so with much discord and error, as in modern western movements and in those others in India and elsewhere which imitate them.

The society which is poor in the possession of such elders, which lacks wise and far-sighted and self-denying leaders, or which cannot appreciate and deliberately ignores those whom it may happen to possess—such a society must sink deeper and ever deeper into barbarism and slavery. But the community which is rich in such ‘elder-men’, prospers, and is always readily able to cure the errors or the misconduct of its State-Executive by quick and effective direct action under their guidance.

It is true that this task of mending the world is an unending one, a Sisyphas labor; for, as the *Upanishads* say, “Whatsoever the gods (*i.e.*, the forces of good, the better half of life and consciousness) create, that the titans and demons (the forces of evil, the cousins, step-brothers, counterparts, the complementary worse half of the same) run after, and touch with sin, and cause to corrupt and decay.” But such is the very nature of the cyclings and wheelings of the world-process; and it does not

mean that the ' gods ' should therefore neglect their duty and cease from their proper work,—the work, in the present case, of perpetually endeavouring to cure the diseases, the sins and corruption, of capitalistic, bureaucratic and falsely representative government, by rightly guided Direct Action.

#### THE GLAMOUR OF ' SUBJECT ' AND ' RULER '

All this sweeping condemnation of all political direct action in general, when it happens to oppose bureaucratic or other special class-interests, must, then, be counted as either deliberate or unconscious hypocrisy, or at least, as great error and inability to escape the glamour of catch-words. In consequence of this hypocrisy and glamour combined, the public which (through its Elders, its true Head and Heart) is the true master, has become the subject, *i.e.*, ' down-trodden ', and the ' public servant,' has become the ' public master ' the governor, the ruler, the sovereign. Such is the topsy-turvydom of things in most countries to-day.

#### THE PEOPLE HAVE DEGRADED THEMSELVES ; THEY MUST RAISE THEMSELVES

Of course, the fault, ultimately, is the public's, the people's ; the fault, selfishnesses, lusts, greeds, hates, jealousies, gamblings of many kinds, deceivings of each other in many ways, and all untruth-

fulness, to creep in and grow up among them; of having allowed themselves to fall into the state of (evil) nature ; whence arose the necessity of appointing third parties—to enforce the peace, first, and gradually, to swallow up the whole patrimony of the quarrellers afterwards ; for as the masters grow more and more incapable and unworthy, so more and more their servants become their masters. The ancient fable holds eternally true that if the cats will quarrel over their piece of bread and ‘ appoint ’ or ‘ elect ’ or suffer the monkey to step in between and judge and settle, the monkey will eat up the piece himself.

But if the fault is the people’s, the remedy for it and for its consequences must come from within them too ; *i.e.*, from the higher and better elements of the Universal Mind pervading them, and from the higher self, the conscience, of the special Oversoul ensouling them. They must get back into “ the state of (good) nature ”, out of which they fell into sin and “ the state of (bad) nature ”, go back to the state of a higher morality and a higher general level of character. So they would become less dependent upon their servants, the ‘ public servants ’ ; would manage their own affairs and settle their own disputes and so give the fewest possible chances to the public servants to interfere ; and would get back into their (elder’s) own hands

the most important (legislative and supervisory) elements of the power which they have carelessly, slothfully, nay, viciously and sinfully, let pass into the hands of these servants.

### THE RAJ OF THE BUREAUCRAT

And this is possible only by the direct action of the public (under the guidance of their trusted and natural elders and leaders) when the public servants have become forgetful of their duty, their origin and their true position in the communal life; when they manipulate elections so that only such persons are elected as will serve the interests of the bureaucracy, or make laws which give the legislators no real power; and when they arrogate to themselves 'the divine right of kings' in a new and more dangerous, because more wideflung and at the same time more minutely ramified, form, which ever tends to puppetise the people more and more, to make them ever more and more dependent upon the will of the Executive in every respect, by means of the wires of an all pervading and minute legislation, the ends of which wires are all held by that Executive ultimately.

### THE FALSE SWARAJ OF THE INDIAN STATES.

It is true that in many Indian States to-day 'the divine right of kings' is still at work, and the

people there are much more 'subject,' much more 'down-trodden,' and repressed and terrorised and helpless, than even in British India; but the reason for that too is ultimately the British Bureaucracy which spreads the aegis of the '*Pax Britannica*' over the chiefs in such a way that they have become more irresponsible than ever before, so far as their 'subjects' are concerned, de-Indianised and unsympathetic to their own people and more and more extravagantly high and fast living, because of European travels and imported tastes, more exhorbitant in their demands from their 'subjects,' and more servile to the British Bureaucracy and the very expensive guests from England.

#### THE MEANING OF SELF-DETERMINATION

A less mystical and more commonplace phrase that 'Diffused Intelligence' and 'Universal Mind' may also be advanced to support our argument in favour of direct action, We have heard much of 'self-determination' since President Wilson brought the word into much prominence towards the end of the Great War, though it has been going out of sight again latterly. It seems that at least the first manifestation of the self-determination, by the peoples in reference to whom President Wilson used it and in the sense in which he used it and the deplomats of these nations accepted it could



be made only by *direct action* of some sort. The 'referendum', the 'plebiscite,' are also forms of direct action. Every election of a legislator is a piece of more or less direct action. The process of mending laws by laws, *i.e.*, ordinary legislative work, is the rule only for the normal routine of the daily life of a nation, and not for the abnormal times when radical faults and deep-seated corruptions of the Constitution of a State require to be cured, and new eras have to be begun. When things come to such a pass that the public-servants, from top to bottom (—and the king or other chief official is expressly included in these by the ancient Indian tradition, in so many words, *vide, e.g.*, the *Shukrama*) begin to regard them. Thus as public-masters, and treasonably conspire together against the people in order to oppress them and take to all kinds of dishonest corrupt high handed action or inaction, then the only possible remedy for the People is recourse to Direct Action.

Enough has now been said to justify Direct Action on special occasions, and we may pass on to other matters and, first among these, consider the leaders of such movements.

## IV

### BONAFIDES

The State-Socialist and Communist and Guild-Socialist and other similar movements of the West are clearly not carried on by hand labourers alone, but include thoughtful men and women of all classes in their ranks. The Syndicalist movement also has helpers and sympathisers who are not industrial workers.

So far as the All-India Congress Committee and the Provincial Congress Committees are concerned, we see that the majority of the members are not industrial workers or hand-labourers. They were born and brought up in and continue to belong to "middle-class" families, the "bourgeoise", as it seems they are called, with dislike, by Syndicalist and Socialist and Bolshevik in the west. They are lawyers, landholders, business-men, schoolmasters, professors, physicians, shop-keepers, etc., who have had to suffer greater or lesser loss of their professional work for joining this movement. Some have also been in government-service. Their natural

sympathies are with the middle class. They have children and grandchildren, and heritable property. Their interests, their 'stake in the country', are, very likely, not below the *average* of those of the Moderate-Liberals and the public servants, not counting the Maharajas and Nawabs and the super-paid 'higher' officials and ministers, Executive Councillors and the Governors. Yet are they on the side of the N.-C.-O. Why? Is there any other reason than that they cannot help feeling strongly, and feeling honestly, that the present system of Government in India is very wrong, that the whole scheme of mutual relations and proportions between the various classes that make up the people, is being poisoned by it, and that disaster will overtake the whole body politic by internal and external accident, soon rather than late, if that system is not mended? Whether their feeling is justified and wise, or unjustifiable and foolish—this is another matter. That they have not been able, so far, to put forward any scheme which offers reasonable prospects of a better condition of things all round—this also is another matter. The question here is whether there is or is not reason for suspecting their good faith, their honesty of motive. The immediate personal ease and comfort of themselves and their families would be best served if they joined the Moderate-Liberals; if they

criticised the Government "moderately", on the one hand, utilising the N.-C.-O. "discontent" to point their moral and adorn their tale, and give the proper dignified flourish to their pose and argument; and, on the other, abused the N.-C.-O.'s breach of "law and order" *ad libitum*, while recognising in their hearts that it was the heat of the self-denials and sufferings of the N.-C.-O.'s that was giving *them* the Moderate Liberals the needed warmth to speak up to the men in power; and if, all the time, they were careful to keep within the limits of safety, to see that nothing was said or done or happened which would disturb their existing comfort, or even to see, in cases here and there, "on which side the bread was buttered."

[While saying this it should also be gratefully recorded that some members—unfortunately too few—speak up boldly according to conscience, and try to do the work which N.-C.-O. leaders would do if they were in the Legislative Councils. A few others also support the people's cause against the perpetual official high-handedness, but in a more subdued and vacillating manner. But a few, and these are prominent, are unfortunately so small-minded and "agitated" that they cannot avoid making references to the "agitators" with much sanctimonious indignation, while themselves using the very same arguments that these "agitators"

use against governmental measures. In the course of the Budget debates that are going on while these papers are being written in January-February, 1922, some of these "agitators" said that the extravagant budget would go to justify the "agitation".]

Yet the N.-C.-O. workers are bearing the loss of the sympathy and good opinion of their "class," are shunned, more or less, by their old-time friends, have to give up their accustomed ways and routine of life, and have, in large numbers, to go to jail for giving expression to their few convictions and suffer the rigors, and often the lawless brutalities of the officials, of these jails, though, it is also true that to such few of them as are not sentenced to rigorous imprisonment, and are allowed books and papers, the sojourn in jail may mean greater leisure and freedom from minor worries and interruptions than they have outside.

Why are the N.-C.-O.'s undergoing all this voluntarily? Is it because of inherent wickedness and love of anarchy? Or is it simply because of their feeling of the unrighteousness of the present system of Government? And if it the latter then is it not the wiser way, more expedient even, to invite them to a conference and try to convince them or be convinced by them?

But, no, the harsher emotions hold sway to-day

all over the world, and the hearts of the men in power are hardenened, and prestige reigns, and no attempt is made sincerely and open-mindedly to hold a discussion, with the N.-C.-O.'s in India, or the Syndicalists and the exponents of the General Strike in the west.

## PUBLIC AND PUBLIC SERVANT

RE SEPARATION OF ACTIVITIES AND THE  
SIGNIFICANCE OF A STRIKE

(a) It may be noted here that the endeavour to keep social and religious and other affairs *wholly* apart from the political, the economic strike from the political strike, to prevent "direct action" in one department of the communal life from passing into "direct action" in other departments, cannot succeed for long. The plain and simple reason is that all aspects of human life are inseparably bound together. You cannot have disease in one part of the body, without the others being affected more or less.

In this fact may we see the significance of what had been said in the quotation above, that "Workers. . . . now seems to be seeking something vaster—a fundamental alteration" in conditions. Instinctively men are beginning to feel that it is no use patching each boil, each sore, where new ones are appearing every day. The

whole organism must be overhauled and an alterative administered which will remove the root-cause, the poison, the taint, from the blood.

The great strike which began, on the E.I. Ry., with February 1922, and has been in force for the extraordinary period of early six weeks at the date of writing it ended about the middle of April with a compromise is illustration of what has been said above. It brings home other truths also. It began because, it was alleged, two European employees of the E. I. Ry. had beaten an Indian employee without any sufficient cause; and then later on, demands for better wages, were added. An English Joint Magistrate made an enquiry and decided that the beating was all a myth. This Magistrate's judgments in important previous cases have been reversed by higher courts. A man who was nearly murdered, was charged by him with giving false evidence. Higher courts quashed this atrocious proceeding and convicted and heavily sentenced one of the accused in the original case for attempted murder. In the case of the origin of the strike medical evidence, subsequently published, shows that the man was beaten.

But whether the original allegation be or be not true in every particular, is of no consequence from the broad standpoint. It is only a symptom. The root-fact of racial humiliation and differential



treatment in ordinary human relations as well as in the payment of wages, is unquestionable. And here politics and economics inevitably and inextricably mix together.

Another lesson of the strike is the very great dependence of the "self-important" upon the "unimportant" of the "mighty" upon the "insignificant", of the great guns and the huge steam-Engines and the "glorious" military and railway and other systems which make up a "great" government and a "mighty" administration, upon poor human labor. Pride goeth before destruction. Out of the mouths of babes shall wisdom be taught to those who think themselves omniscient. Harden not your hearts; harbor not any pride therein; love one another, rich and poor; help each other, strong and weak; that is the only way.

#### RE PROFESSION AND PRACTICE

(b) The Governments do not and cannot keep all their departments disconnected. They are all thoroughly co-ordinated. And they all subserve one purpose. That one purpose is, by profession, "the welfare of the people"; by practice, it is ever greater aggrandisemen, of the Bureaucrat and the Landowner Capitalist, and the ever greater strengthening of their grip upon the masses. How can the people keep the departments of their life

disconnected? They are all unconsciously, necessarily, co-ordinated, though very imperfectly, as yet. The co-ordinating common purpose is by profession, here, too the welfare of the people", and by practice, opposition to the existing systems or forms of government, generally.

### ORGANISATION OF GOVERNMENT AND ORGANISATION OF THE PEOPLE

(c) The Governments are mightily and "efficiently" organised with police and military and navy and guns and bombs and aeroplanes and submarines and high salaries and huge revenues drawn from the people against whom the organisation is mostly used! But the weak link in their chain armour is that the human parts of their vast machine are, after all, of the people, and have to live and die and among the people and cannot altogether get over natural sympathies (witness Russia), and that the whole vast organisation of the Governments rests on the feet of Labor.

The People have also become organised side by side with the Government, on parallel lines, and quite *helplessly*. For the men composing Governments simply *could not* organise and unify and 'civilise' themselves *without* producing similar effects—even against their own wishes—on the People. It was *not possible* for a few to enjoy the

delights of railways steamships, telegraphs, telephones, post offices, the apparatus of war and the sense of power that goes with it, and electric lights, motor-cars, water works, printing-presses, and the produce of vast machineries of all kinds, *without* taking the *many* as servants, at least, to begin with, and then, unavoidably, as assistants, co-operators, confidants, and, finally, making them claimants of partnership. "We gave you political consciousness and national unity"—is no use to say. The reply is: "You did not wish to, but you could not help it; you gave it unconsciously, unavoidably, unwillingly, in the course of serving your own interests; *and* you have taken away from us much that was perhaps even more valuable than this "political consciousness and nationalism" business; you have impoverished us and humiliated us endlessly; and you have nearly made us forget "humanism."

But in this politico-economic unification and awakening of the people, also, there is a corresponding very weak chain link, a point of possible relapse into drowsiness and painfull dreams, viz., their mutual suspicions and quarrels, of caste and creed mostly in India, and of other kinds elsewhere.

#### RE VIOLENCE AND NON-VIOLENCE

(d) On the side of the Governments, all over

the world, we find a regular and openly admitted monopoly of "violence" through police and military --partly for defensive and (but this is not admitted though patent) largely for offensive and aggressive purposes. On the side of the People, in India at least, we see a great and unique experiment in progress, *an effort* to bring about a radical change in the form of the Government, from irresponsible to responsible, by what may be described as a vast political "General Strike," and the practical creation of "a State within a State" (as in Sinn Fein Ireland, so far as law courts, some industries, education, to some extent watch and ward etc., are concerned)—*but with the utmost non-violence*. In practice, this profession of non-violence has failed occasionally, but *very rarely*—to speak comparatively—when we consider the extent of time and space, the circumstances, and the numbers of the population involved.

#### RE THE ACHILLES' HEEL

(e) "God fulfils himself in many ways", and  
 "While the tired waves vainly breaking,  
 Seem here no painful inch to gain,  
 Far back, through creeks and inlets making,  
 Comes silent flooding in, the main."

The downfall of the pride of the mightiest has often been brought about by Providence through

the agency of the lowest forms, or through self-destruction. "Governments are not overthrown; they commit suicide". In the Puranic story, all-conquering Ravana's empire was broken by "bears and monkeys". Invincible Sunda and Upasunda slew each other over Tilottama. Bhasm-asura, in his infatuation, placed his fiery hand over his own head. Mahisha and Shumbha and Nishumbha, unconquerable by masculine strength, had to be slain by women. Modern militarism, highly organised, science-supported, mammon-fed, cannot be defeated by sporadic mob-violence. It must be helped to die of internal disease, as it will. Military and naval and police bluff and bluster are being neutralised in most countries by economic bankruptcy. In India, the local and the chief Governments are faced with very heavy deficits. What to do? Why, what does the wisely reckless spendthrift do! Rackrent your tenants, juggle and gamble with the currency, write I. O. U.'s, mortgage the family property, borrow! And, "Eat, drink, and be merry—for *to-morrow we die*"! Are not all the greatest modern States founded on the largest National Debts?

#### RE HARD FACTS

(f) 'Hard facts' and 'utter failures in every respect' have been eagerly and jubilantly brought

forward by the Government officials and the Anglo-Indian papers against the N.-C.-O., movement: yet the deficit budgets show that at least some temporary success achieved in respect of the saving of the people from drink and litigation and exploitation by foreign industries; there are decreases in the revenue from excise and stamps and customs. What a state of things! That the Government and its supporters should rejoice, if there is no success in the reduction of drink and litigation and use of foreign cloth and other goods, and in the promotion of swadeshi industries; and the N.-C.-O.'s should go "The Christ is crucified; the Christ has failed; come Jews and Romans, come, let us rejoice", Good Brothers all, if the N.-C.-O. does really fail, after all, either for lack of clear vision of the good, or misconducting of operations, or because of the over powering strength of the evil forces opposed to it, it will be matter, not for rejoicing, but for deep sorrow of shame and suffering for, long yeas to all Indians. To jail for trying to save the people from those evils!

But let us see what on the other side, are the "soft and gentle facts" and the "utter successes in respect" that have been achieved by the Government? The insolvency Budget sums them up all.

RE GOVERNMENT FINANCES AND CONGRESS  
FINANCES

(*g*) There has been special jubilation in some quarters over the failures of some Provinces to make up their quota of the Tilak Swaraj Fund and of the numbers of Congress members. The Bankrupt's Budget recently presented to the Legislative Assembly is obviously in much worse case? For the Congressmen did, somehow or other, make up their crore of rupees within date. These gentlemen in high office, on the other hand, have ruined Europe with their cleverness and their "efficiency", have already "bled India white"; and now seem determined to make confusion worse confounded here. And yet the N.C.O.'s must be twitted over the Swaraj Fund!

The people have to pay the salaries—the excessive salaries—of these gentlemen—for *not* doing their duty to the people, their duty of helping on Indian uplift and nation-building, of helping on the right education, the self-defence, the industries, the healthy recreation, of the people; the people have to raise more money in endeavours to get these duties done by others; *and* the people have to bear this twitting besides!

If the workers of the people, without regular wholetime organisation, doing all this Congress.

## PUBLIC AND PUBLIC SERVANT

work without pay, in addition to the bearing of their other and heavy burdens (including the high and low salaries of all the men in office) —if they have not succeeded in all provinces, in registering their proportion of members or collecting their share of the Swaraj Fund, is there any wonder? The Government, with a vast and heavily paid special wholetime office organisation, in the course of a whole year almost, registered some six million voters for its new Reform Scheme, and yet, it is said, a good percentage of these entries are wrong and not in accordance with the law. [There was a public complaint in the papers, in September, 1922, on the subject, by a *European Association in Calcutta*]. And as to the Government's, *i.e.*, the officials management and accounting of funds, careful examination would give surprising results—despite the vast Treasury and Accounts and Revenue Staff. Sir Antony Macdonnell, when Lieutenant-Governor of the U.P. in the nineties of the last century, used to say that *ninety lakhs of rupees* had to be written off as unaccounted for, in connection with a famine and its relief works, which he had had to deal with in his earlier days in Behar. Some famine-funds have disappeared bodily into war funds. The waste of the P. W. D. and the Army is notorious.



## RE LOYALTY

(h) Some ten or twelve years ago, a Commissioner of a division in the U. P. was complaining, in the course of conversation, about the disloyalty of the people. I asked him, "Are *you* loyal to the People? Loyalty is not one-sided, but two sided!" He said, "I know you will turn us all out in about a hundred years hence; we are all sitting on gunpowder." I said, "This shows your own guilty conscience! If you felt really loyal to the People, if the British Indian Government were really and sincerely loyal to the People, the people would, if possible, be far more loyal to you all, and suspicions would never have any grounds for arising and would never arise in your minds!" And, all the time, all the gunpowder was in Europe, not in India! And it duly exploded too in Europe, and not in India. Or if any exploded in India, it exploded only from Governmental guns as for the butchery at Amritsar and elsewhere. This brings us back to the Budgets and the huge Military expenditure.

## RE THE BUDGET

(i) The huge salaries of the top-men cannot be reduced. They must continue to set to the small well-to-do portion of the public, the pernicious example of "high living and plain thinking," and to

prove to the vast ill-to-do masses, the truth of the scriptural saying that "those that have, shall receive more, and those that have not, shall lose even their little".

In Japan, the highest salary, that of the Prime Minister, is about twelve hundred rupees a month; the officer corresponding to the Indian District Magistrate gets about three hundred rupees a month; the highest professors in the universities get something less; the constable gets about twenty rupees a month. (I am quoting from memory from books published in 1905). The difference there, between the District Magistrate and the constable is thus one of about fifteen times. Here, in India, it is one hundred and fifty times! Which is the more equitable, from the standpoint of human needs?

Even elective Ministers in most Provinces continue to insist on their pound of flesh, their full salary, while they talk of retrenchments. If a *rara avis*, a true Christian, like Mr. Madhusudan Das, Minister of Local Self-Government in Behar and Orissa, *suggests* that the Minister should be honorary, even the Indian Press has no word of appreciation for him. If Ministers in the C. P. are so public-spirited as to *actually* vote the reduction of their own salaries to nearly one-half, even the Indian Press has no word of praise for them. Sir

N. G. Chitnavis has reduced his own salary, as President of the C. P. Council, from three to two thousand rupees p.m. The fact has received no notice at all in the Indian Press, apparently. In most Provinces the argument runs thus: The Elective Minister in charge of transferred subjects should have an equal status with the non-elective Executive Councillor in charge of reserved subjects; status is in direct ratio to salary; therefore the Minister must have the same salary as the Executive Councillor. Why is status in direct ratio to the salary? Can it be because the wish (for the large salary) is father to the thought? Is it not more reasonable to think, with regard to executive offices, that status is measured by power? Obviously the Ministers have no powers to compare with those of the Executive Councillors. Would it not be more patriotic, more public-spirited, more wise, more true, even more expedient, for them to reverse the thought and create a new standard, *viz.*, other conditions being similar, the status is in *inverse* ratio to the salary accepted? Why not set an example of honorary work, which would include work on a 'maintenance' allowance? *Then* would status be what it truly is, in direct ratio with *honor*. *Then* could retrenchments be made effectively, without grumblings from anybody. *Then* would new taxes be borne patiently and even willingly by the public.

if necessary to impose. In the meanwhile, what do the public see? If there is any retrenchment, the small-salaried men, who do the real hard work, are reduced and dismissed and disbanded by hundreds and thousands; *and*, what is saved thus is generally overspent on the salaries and travelling expenses of one or two "high" officials, of Commissions or Committees, specially appointed to investigate and suggest and bring about such reductions!

### THE VICIOUS CIRCLE

About two-thirds of the total revenue is swallowed up by the military item! Little for the spread of the light of knowledge; nothing for the promotion of industries which will give food to the people; nothing for discriminate reclamation of land now occupied by vast forests, and the drafting of surplus agricultural populations to them, from the congested tracts, but very much for the big, big stick, with which to beat—whom? These very people who are to pay for it in ever swelling taxes! Does not the Commander-in-Chief say plainly in the Council that "the internal condition" of the country compels this huge expenditure? Imagine the Commander-in-chief of England saying such a treasonable thing of the British People in the Parliament! The people are "rebellious" and must be kept in order, by extra military and extra

police. And why are they "rebellious", pray? Is it not because of the unbearable burdens of the Military, the Police, the I.C.S. and the I.M.S. and the I.E.S. and the other I.S.'s of superfine character, imposed on them without *any* help being given to them to increase their producing capacity and their incomes, and with the facilities for supporting themselves being *taken away* from them, in a hundred direct and indirect ways, day after day? And the vicious circle proceeds apace with its giddy whirl! More taxes to meet more Governmental expenditure; less and less income to the tax-payer because of the dying out of real, honest, productive home-industries, and the enormous growth in the large towns of dishonest, artificial, unreal, unproductive, gambling "business"; and higher prices and worry and unhappiness to *everybody*. For, surely, the man in office, the "public servant" in power and authority, with his *confrere*, the man of capital, and land too, is no less worried to-day, and unhappy and uneasy, unable to enjoy himself at peace and leisure, with all his power and authority and money, than the man of the public, struggling underneath that power and authority!

How long can you go on squeezing juice from the sugar cane when it is already as dry as the bamboo stick? Will not its dead fibres begin to

hurt your palate and stick in your teeth? The cow, in order to yield milk, has to be fed. If you starve it, or actively exercise upon its back only the "big stick," its udders will run dry, and you will have to suffer in the end, as well as the calf. In this mutual worrying between governmental "violence" and Non-co-operational non-violence, the productive powers of the country bid fair to be further weakened, and the bread of the masses and the salaries and incomes of the classes, may both vanish simultaneously some day.

Yet it is not so difficult for the two parties to consult together quietly. And a quiet and honest consultation could not possibly fail to bring about useful results. But Prestige has a hard heart and a strong head! It will not see that while it is jailing by the hundred and the thousand, the non-co-operators who are trying to spread the spirit of non-violence, its own policy of ever-increasing taxation will surely some day drive its co-operators to "co-operate violently."

Why are human minds so away!

## VI

### WHY IS IT ALL SO AWAY ?

The British man, especially when in office, thinks and says, (*vide* recent speeches and writings of Presidents of Associations, Governors, Chancellors, Journalists), [winter of 1921-1922]. "We must maintain law and order (that is to say our prestige, our will to do as we please); we cannot walk out of India at the bidding of the Congress (*ie.*, we must continue to tread and trample on the Indian people—for the Congress *never* asked you to, or even *wished*, that you should walk out of India); We cannot have the Ilbert Bill (*ie.*, the 'spleen-splittings' and 'shootings-by-mistake-for-animals of natives' must continue); We must make India and Egypt, etc. feel our tough fibre, (for what right has the born helot to develop any fibre of his own? We conquered India by the sword, and will keep it by the sword, and if it is to be taken from us at all *it must be taken by the sword, etc.*") During the days of the Great War, old Generals eagerly proclaimed that if India was won by the sword, it was the sword of the Indian

which won it—for the Englishman—what glory!; and, now the taunt is uttered that if the Indians want India for the Indians, they must win it back by the sword; for if the Indians were really brave, would they not fight with their fists, the only swords that they have now, the weapons that nature gave them, and break to pieces therewith the hundred-ton guns and the armoured cars and tanks and aeroplanes etc., of the conquerors!

On the other hand, the Indian, not in office but of the street, the workshops, the field, and also of other classes, begins to think and speak of “equality, liberty, fraternity.” “We have suffered enough hurt-to-stomach and enough hurt to self-respect; we cannot improve our lot by begging and petitioning; we have tried that *ad libitum*; we must do something else; ‘none but the brave deserve the fair’; ‘the price of liberty is death’; *semper vigilans*; violent fighting is neither good principle, generally speaking, nor is it good policy for India, especially in present conditions; let us at least avoid helping our jailor to make our chains heavier; let us try non-violent non-co-operation which is only another, fuller, larger, more refined, perfected, and public-spirited form of the ancient *dharna* (Skt, *dharana*?) and *hartal* of this land, and of the passive resistance and boycott and strike and ‘down tools’ of other lands; let us try to manage our own



affairs, and see if we cannot run a State within a State, as they did successfully in Ireland."

Such is the state of affairs. "Pride in the public servant's post" and greed in his and his friend the capitalist's heart on the one side, and "Defiance in the public eye" "am I not man also?" on the other. Militarism plus capitalism on the one side; emotional patriotism and laborism and 'the rights of man' on the other.

#### THE FALSE ISSUE AND THE TRUE ISSUE

And *neither* party cares to investigate the *root-cause* of the whole difficulty. *Neither*--for aught that is visible in writings or audible in speakings--has any real substantial idea beyond that of "Let him take who has the power, and let him keep who can," so far as the end and aim is concerned, and of thwarting the other, so far as the method is concerned. The official would worry the non-official and suppress his activities directly by violence; the non-official would worry the official by non-violence, combined with non-co-operation, and make life so unluxurious for him as to compel him to yield to the public demands. (At least that is what is understood--for, so far as I am aware, it has *never* been clearly and publicly explained *how* the successive items of the programme of non-co-operation *if* successfully carried out, *would* bring Swaraj--what-

ever that word might mean--which is the still more serious difficulty.)

ALL A FIGHT FOR POWER, OF BOTH SIDES,  
NOT FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS

The man in office says, "I will keep the power I have." The man not in office says, "I must have the right to appoint you and dismiss you, and so your power must come into my hand." It is all a dispute as to who shall have the power. There is no comprehensive systematic thought as to how the power should be used and what should be the ethical as well as the intellectual quality of the men who should be entrusted with its use and how this quality can be secured in them, *i.e.*, how persons possessed of this ethical as well as intellectual fitness can be secured and made legislators.

*Yet these are the things that are the most essential*, and constitute the real meaning of Swaraj. Among the "masses," in groups of different occupations, many and dangerous misunderstandings are current as to what Swaraj will mean for them, as I have tried to show elsewhere; also among some groups of the "classes". But most "educated" persons have at the back of their minds, a system of government more or less like the British Parliamentary system. "The people should have power over the purse, the law, the military, the police,"

“all the at present reserved subjects should also become transferred,” etc. But they do not pause to think that that Parliamentary system has failed to check, has apparently helped to intensify, the spirit of “class-war” which, at bottom, has plunged Europe and America and their “dependencies” into the Great War and nearly brought ruin to civilisation; *and has, not finished yet.*

### THE TRUE ISSUE

It is absolutely no use fighting over “whether you will hold the power or I,” no use insisting that “I will have the power and not you,” until it has been outlined (1) *how* power can and should be used, *so as to abate the real root-causes of the unrest, which is confined not to India, or to any one country, but is world-wide* and (2) what sort of persons are the best fitted to use it. *This should be settled first of all*, as first and foremost and most essential part of his programme, by whomsoever comes forward with a programme for political reform. Because, if it is not settled, the quarrel, as to “whether you will hold the power or I,” will *never* be settled; and will be repeated, over and over again, at shorter and shorter intervals; witness the risings and fallings of “leaders” in all such movements; and because, if it is not settled, even if the people should succeed in wresting the power from the

*present* bureaucracy, *i.e.*, from the *chiefs* of the bureaucracy, they will have to put other men into the place of those chiefs, and *there is no guarantee at all that the new men will be better than the old*, no certainty that they will not make a new and worse bureaucracy. Indeed, there is much reason to believe—with the example of the Western countries before us—that *the people, in general, will be no better off than now*, and very likely worse,—witness the republics of South America. But with these things properly outlined by the would-be reformer, there is much chance that the quarrel over “I will have the power and not you,” may abate of itself; if the scheme is reasonable, its reasonableness *may* appeal to the party now in power; they *may* see that under such a scheme, they would not lose everything and that there is a fair chance of a more equitable distribution, throughout human society, of what human beings want. Or, if the quarrel should not abate; if the persons now in power should cling on, tooth and nail, to what they have grabbed hold of, and should refuse to yield even an inch, even after the offering of a reasonable and righteous programme, *then, and then only, there would be good reason, and clear conscience, in carrying on the non-violent struggle ever more and more strenuously for a clearly visualised goal.*

NO RELAXATION OF EFFORTS SUGGESTED BUT  
ADDITION OF AN ITEM RECOMMENDED

It is not suggested that the efforts of the reformers, the Congress organisation here, or the Syndicalist or other organisations elsewhere, should be relaxed. No; let them be redoubled; let them all *also* make up a clear programme, let them get a clear conception of how the administration of human affairs should be carried on, so as to secure "the greatest happiness of the greatest number," and not "the greatest cash and power and glory of the smallest number". If there is any rule at all, then always there must be "a ruling minority and a ruled majority" so far, at least, as the daily work of administration is concerned, and even if the chief "rulers" be ultimately elective, they cannot be put up and pulled down every day, and therefore may "make hay while the sun shines", during their tenure of office, whatever the length of its period. It is more necessary, therefore, to ensure the *ethical* fitness of the legislator and of the head of any department than his intellectual or physical fitness. Every programme of political reform should provide for this, first of all, yet, so far as I am aware, no programme extant does this. At the most there is an assumption that "the fear of dismissal" will keep them in order. It has never

done so, in past and present history. Rather, the terror, which is held over the head of the man in office, is passed on by him to the head of the public, and he 'governs by terrorism.' The *fear* of "dismissal" has to be replaced by "*love* of the people," and *then* only will "*government by fear*" be changed into "rule, or rather *service by love*".

### WHY THE STRUGGLE IS EMBITTERED AND PROLONGED

It is worth while to repeat and emphasise here, that the struggle between the opposing parties, whether in India or elsewhere, is embittered and prolonged *because* it is a struggle for *power*—"I will have the power and not you"—and is *not* a struggle for an unmistakably *righteous use* of power.

The men now in power instinctively feel like this. "These Congress-leaders (or Syndicalist or Labor leaders) if they come into power, will use it as selfishly as we are using it; therefore, why should *we* not cling on to what we have? If they come into power, they will harm us, as we have been harming them; therefore, why should *we* not remain in the position of harming them, instead of allowing them to harm us? If any of them will come over to our side, in return for high offices and large salaries, or titles, or mere smiles and courtesies and dinners,

let us win them over by all means. If they will not, then they had better go to jail rather than be our rivals for precious power. If they have any weaknesses of the flesh, for money, for luxuries, etc., weaknesses like ours, which will give us a hold over them, which will induce them to side with us, and will enable us to hold them to us and to our service, let them come over; otherwise, their proper place is either the jail or the jungle. The masses will always be under somebody's thumb; therefore, best under ours; and terrorising them, on the one hand, and keeping them quarrelling with each other, on the other—these are very good and ancient ways of so holding them under our thumb.”

There are the old, old ways of *sama*, *dana*, *danda*, and *bheda*. And this is the way the men, who happen somehow to be in power, feel. And how can it be said that it is unnatural, or even unreasonable, of them to feel so, until the Congress leaders (and Syndicalist leaders elsewhere) make it clear that *if* they come into power, they will use it selflessly, and will not make life wholly unbearable and impossible for the present officials and the capitalists—but will make only *some* and reasonable curtailment of their privileges and perquisites? One main reason for the stubborn opposition of the Ulsterites to the Sein Fein was that they felt quite sure that the latter, as Roman Catholics, if they

came into power, would avenge all the old wrongs upon the former, as Protestants.

For this plain psychological reason, if nothing else, is it urgently necessary to outline a *programme* of Swaraj, and not offer *the mere word* without a clear meaning or with the mere implication, at most, of a change of *personnel* only in the *holders* of power. Until the spirit of humanity, of humaneness, is definitely invoked by means of a national programme, the *esprit de corps* of the Bureaucracy is sure to hold sway. "My official brother or subordinate and the Prestige of the Service—right or wrong", like "My country—right or wrong."

#### A RECENT ILLUSTRATION

In the U. P. Legislative Council, in the course of a debate over the item for special military police, soon after the Chauri Chaura occurrence, an elective member had the courage and the conscience to say words to the effect that the police had originated the trouble. Such is the hypnosis of the bureaucratic atmosphere and influence, and of catchwords like law and order, under which the members generally labour, that none supported this solitary defender of the People, and some even cried "shame" on him; and an official got up promptly and protested against "the defilement of the memory of a loyal and devoted servant of the



crown." Alas! all were for the loyal and devoted service of the Crown, an inanimate symbol of the power which is *de facto* held by the bureaucrat; and only that solitary brother was for the loyal and devoted service of the living People whose salt the bureaucrat eats!

Even the official communiques had admitted that the police had fired first on the crowd, had killed at least two and wounded many, and that *after* this the crowd had rushed upon the the police and committed its crimes. Yet the protesting official member prejudged, by a gross *argumentum ad hominem*, that anything said against the slain policemen was a defilement of a sacred memory. Even by the communiques, and much more by the governmental pleader's opening of the case for the prosecution there was absolutely nothing heroic or devoted or even dutiful in the conduct of the unfortunate policemen. And if during the subsequent magisterial enquiry and judicial trial, the plea of provocation were advanced by the accused, then presumably, the aforequoted *argumentum ad hominem* would probably not be allowed to bar out the plea, whatever the ultimate result of the case might be. Yet perhaps the official member's protesting pre-judgment of a matter then *subjudice* was an "intelligent anticipation"—*because* of the inevitable *esprit de corps*.

The intensity of this self-preserving *esprit de corps* can be weakened only by a *rational* presentation of the *esprit de humanite*, embodied in a proper scheme of Swaraj which will mainly deal with the *qualifications* of the legislators and their electors, will make it fairly clear that the 'self-preservation of all is provided for sufficiently, and will show that, and how, it is possible to replace "the government of terror" by "the rule of love" instead of by only "another government of terror."

## VII

# THE LACK OF RATIONAL, COMPRE- HENSIVE PROGRAMME

In the meanwhile, neither of the parties of the struggle, neither the "agitators" nor the "agitated", has any reasoned out and comprehensive programme as to how human affairs should be arranged and administered, any pre-arranged plan, any conception of what is to happen afterwards," in the words of the writer before quoted.

Leaders of the people are, and have to be, *men and women of action*. They have seldom the temperament or the inclination to take long views ahead. So, too, men and women of thought are seldom good for sports and rapid decisions in emergencies. Great persons are great in virtues as well as corresponding weaknesses. Also, even if the the popular leaders had the temperament and the inclination, they have not the leisure and the opportunity, after the struggle has begun. If they happen to have thought out something, more or less vaguely, without due discussion with others,

before the commencement of the struggle, that has last them throughout, without chances of careful readjustment. Hence nearly failures, and disappointment *afterwards*. The longed for sweets turn to ashes in the mouth. The last state is worse than is the first. Combinations of men of thought and men of action are rare; but when they occur lead to success. Popular instinct rightly brings together Rama and Vasishta, the Pandavas and Krishna, Alexander and Aristotle, Luther and Melanathon, Akbar and Birbal, Shivaji and Ramdas.

In the West State-Socialists, philosophical anarchists, etc., have a philosophy of some sort, a theory though provenly defective, behind their practice. Even the Syndicalist movement has its philosophers; though, as said before, their philosophy, so to say, denies philosophy. But in India, the Swaraj movement has no theory behind it at all. Gandhiji's own philosophy of life (see his *Indian Home Rule*) is by no means the accepted philosophy of the movement. It is not taken seriously by the Congress Workers at large. There is no discussion of it amongst them. The one idea is "Power in the hands of the people" whatever that might mean. On the other side, the bureaucracy do not bother their heads over any such programme either. "My country—right or wrong", "Britannia rules the waves", "the aggrandisement of the

service, and of England"—by the old, old methods of alternate sweet word and big stick, fraud and force—that is enough programme for them.

Hence, opportunism, "living from hand to mouth", "day to day", continual talking about, "do something, do something, don't talk", dealing with "the immediate issue", patchwork, is naturally the order of the day—for both sides—with the exception, of course, of the one fixed pole-star of "power"—power for good, or power for evil does not matter. Yet "One step enough for one"—may be the right attitude for the feet; but the eyes have to look a thousand steps ahead, if the feet are not to walk into the pit. "Enough for the day is the evil thereof"—is right as a consolation, or even as a guide, for the Junior member, whose day's work is assigned to him by the elders of the family; but the elders, the patriarchs, *have* to make provision for future generations, humanly speaking, if they would not themselves send the family to perdition. They *have* to propose, however God may dispose.

But, to-day, in India, or in any other country, really none of the parties struggling with each other, cares to work out any clear notion of *Wherein consists the people's welfare* which all of them *profess* to seek.

CURRENT RIDICULE OF SUCH  
PROGRAMME—THINKING

The very notion of thinking out such things arouses ridicule in many quarters. The syndicalists' view, that "Reality has no place; therefore let us act impulsively", has been already referred to. The state socialism of Bolshevism is, by newspaper accounts, gradually lapsing into the old methods, and is beginning to recognise property and capital, as was inevitable. Most other people content themselves with saying, "It is impossible to think out such things." "It has never been done," "It is difficult," "It is useless," "It is impossible idealism," "It is utopia," "It will cause endless dispute, and distraction, and diversion of energy if this sort of discussion is taken up now", "It will weaken our cause," and so on. And so the waste and diversion of energy is avoided by European Wars and endless internal disturbances in every country, strikes, riots, meetings, demonstrations, processions and jailings, fining, whippings and shootings! It is not impossible to bring about and carry on the War! It is not difficult to cause Russian Revolution! It is very useful and practical to spend two thirds of each country's revenues on armaments. It is even possible to collect a crore of rupees in a few weeks for the Swaraj Fund in

impoverished India. But to think out a rational programme—that is, of course, impossible, difficult, etc. Everybody says, “Difficult, Difficult,” “Impossible Impossible”, and *nobody will try though there is no other rational solution*, and the only other alternative is to keep on with the blind, frantic, tooth-and-nail and claw-and-fang business of the past and the present. The real psychological reason of the shirking of this root-problem of human welfare is that, un-consciously and subliminally, or indeed deliberately and consciously, *every body wants power* for himself or his group or class or party, and *not* the welfare of mankind.

#### ELUSIVE WORDS

And yet, if we try to analyse what “Bureaucracy”, or the “People”, or any group” means—what a *Maya* is revealed! The Bureaucracy, if we include all officials, still means a continually changing personnel; if we think only of the heads, the chiefs who hold, in their hands, the real strings of the puppet-show, they show a still more short-lived and changing personnel. The “People”, is almost even more difficult to fix. It means only the representatives, and, yet more, the leaders of those representatives (witness the Working Committee and Mahatmaji in India, and the Presidium and Lenin in Russia); and these are perpetually chang-

ing, almost more frequently than the chiefs of the bureaucracy. It is like the Cabinet and the opposition of the British Parliament, though in other ways and on other scales, and with different forms and degrees of violence or non-violence of thought, word, and deed, and with other differences of detail.

### THE ONLY TRUE ISSUE

Nowhere a serious, earnest, grappling with the real issue—of Wherein consists the Welfare of Human Society; How it can be achieved. How should administering, ruling, guiding, governing Power be exercised. Who are best fitted to exercise it; How to secure these best fitted men and induce them to hold the power! On the rock of this neglectships of state have to split, sooner or later, if the sailors and the passengers continue to dispute, as at present, *blindly*, without thinking out the *rational course of future progress*. It is said that this is the Age of Reason, of Science, of Intelligence rather than question; yet the external wars and the internal conflicts do not support this claim of scientific wisdom and reason, though they do prove much scientific destructive skill. Where is that most important Science of all Sciences—the Science of regulating the affairs of Human Society, so as to bring about the greatest happiness of the greatest number? Blind



with greed and pride the Captains and Lieutenants and Sailors of the ships of State ! Blind with more or less impotent indignation, however just and righteous and non-violent--the passengers ! If they could only light the searchlight of reason, and throw its bright rays on the path ahead, if they would only do this, then the dispute born of the heat of passion in the darkness of the mind, would automatically die out in the resultant illumination of intelligence; nay, it would be replaced by eager mutual cooperation between voyagers and sailors, and the rock of disaster would be easily avoided, because plainly visible in that light of reason.

The traditions of India place before our eyes a substantial answer to the root-questions. Men like H. G. Wells, writing about Indian Unrest, express the hope that India with her special genius, her peculiar spiritual individuality, should be able to work out a special scheme of political regeneration for herself at least. And that scheme is there, requiring only to be cleared of the dust and dirt that has gathered on it in the course of ages, owing to the neglect of degenerate custodians ; a real, scientific scheme, based closely upon that most important of sciences, the Science of human nature, Psychology ! But no one has leisure to look at it, leisure from the more urgent and important work of carrying on the fight,

from day to day, over the "immediate," *i.e.*, the Ephemeral issues (With many apologies, and much diffidence, and only because there is no other writing available, on the subject, in India, so far as I am aware, I invite again, the attention, of those who may possibly become interested in obtaining some notion of this ancient, traditional, indigenous, Indian scheme of Political Health for the Community, to my feeble endeavours to sketch it in the pamphlet of "The Meaning of Swaraj or Self-Government"—published by the Gyan Mandal Press, Benares, and 'Social Reconstruction'—published by the Manager, *New India*, Madras.)

#### WESTERN ADVICE

I may here make another quotation from the book from which extracts have been made at the outset of this series.

"It is of very vital importance that we should will the right thing. This we are not likely to do impulsively and without reflection. - Even if we admit that... impulse has more effect than conscious purpose in moulding man's lives, and agree that it is not the wakening of impulse that is to be desired, but the direction of impulse towards life and growth, yet we nonetheless assert that instinct is an insufficient guide in the determination of social behaviour, and ask how the *direction* of impulse is-

to be arrived at? Surely our only hope lies in striving to make men not less but more rational, in order that they may grasp—however dimly—something of what is implied in ethical and practical ideals, that they may recognise in society some embodiment of will and purpose, and come to look upon Thought, and Reason as the unfailing aid, not abusing principles of Human Society.” We would say, for our immediate purpose, “of what is implied in the political ideal of Swaraj and may not go on chasing a word without a meaning, or with many conflicting meanings like President Wilson’s ill-fated word, Self-determination, but may have for goal *an embodiment of strong will guided by a definite rational purpose.*

## VIII

# WHAT IS SPIRITUAL, POLITICAL SWARAJ ?

### (a) MAIN QUESTIONS

What is Spiritual Swaraj? What is Political Swaraj? Is there any such thing as the former? If there is, has it anything to do with the latter? If it has, what is the relation between the two? The purpose of this paper is to endeavour to answer such questions as these.

### (b) VARIOUS DEFINITIONS OF SWARAJ

We often read in the reports of N.-C.-O. leaders' speeches, and in N.-C.-O. journals, especially *Young India*, expressions of opinion like the following: To obtain mastery over oneself is Swaraj. Chastity, poverty, truthfulness, fearlessness, non-violence mean Swaraj. Workers for the uplift of India who seek Swaraj for it, should possess these qualifications. Those who go to jail in consequence of N.-C.-O., attain Swaraj. The jail is the gateway of Swaraj. I, who used to think and feel so and so,

now think and feel so and so; therefore, I have attained Swaraj. Swaraj is not an outer but an inner state. Popular control over the military, the police, the law, the revenue—is Swaraj. Responsibility of the public servant to the people is Swaraj. That 'We' should be able to appoint and dismiss our public servants—this is Swaraj. Dominion status, Colonial Self-Government, with right to maintain or sever the British connection, for sufficient cause, to be judged by the Indian people themselves—is Swaraj. And so on.

#### (c) NEED TO RECONCILE THEM

These expressions of opinion by popular leaders deserve consideration. There is much reason to believe that they remain rather confused—a sort of pell-mell mechanical rather than chemical mixture—in the minds of most hearers and readers. There is some reason to fear that they are not quite clearly synthesised with each other in the minds of some of the utterers even. For, despite calls from various quarters during the last fifteen months and and more, no such presentation of the subject has yet been made, by any competent body of the Congress organisation, or recognised individual leader of all-India influence, as would clear up the confusion. But side by side with this fear, we have also the feeling that there is an element of

truth in each and every one of these views. There is no obvious contradiction between any two of them though neither is there any obvious connection or congruity between all. And if a person says two seemingly unconnected things, there generally is, in his mind, at least sub-consciously, some sense of consistency or even vital connection between them. To transform the sub-conscious into the conscious, when it is healthy to do so, is part of the business of education—the education of the individual, as also of public opinion.

The President-elect of the coming Congress Session, Mr. C. R. Das, has at long last, just issued a statement, in November, 1922, in which he expresses the opinion that "It would be the duty of the Indian National Congress to frame a clear scheme of what we mean by a system of government which is a real foundation of Swaraj. Hitherto we have not defined any such system of government." But he goes on to add "Swaraj, I know, is indefinable," though to others the word seems to carry in its very etymology, the the very simple definition of the thing meant, which a little thinking would make quiet scientific and indeed indubitable. Very fortunately Mr. C. R. Das goes on to add, "Yet the formulation of such a demand is necessary to-day. It is the duty of the

Congress therefore to place before the country a clear sketch of the system of government which we demand.”

For the behoof of those who may be in the same case with the present writer, with regard to this jumble of opinions and who, like him, feel the need of *understanding* them *congruously*, an attempt will be made here to put forward a few considerations which may possibly help us to such understanding; and so, perhaps, help us also to better success in the pursuit of our aim of Swaraj. These considerations will largely take the shape of suggestions of answers to the questions recorded at the outset.

#### (d) IMPLICATION OF SELF-GOVERNMENT

Swaraaj, in English, is obviously self-government. This can only mean the government of the self by the self. But one governs another. The same cannot and does not govern exactly the same. The mind governs the body; or the body prevails over the mind; the higher motive controls the lower; or the baser passion dominates the nobler sentiment; the sense of duty over selfish greed; or avarice conquers honesty—in one and the same individual. The same motive does not govern the same motive; the same sentiment does not control the same sentiment. That is to say, even in the

self-government, the self-guidance, self-control, the self-determination, of one and the same individual, that individual becomes divided up into two parts, as it were ; and one part (whichever is the stronger for the time being), directs, compels, governs the other.

### (e) TWO SELVES IN THE INDIVIDUAL

Accordingly, it is almost a commonplace that in the individual, there are *two* selves, a higher and a lower, a better and a worse, a virtuous and a vicious, a wise and a foolish. What is less commonly and clearly recognised is that this is so, necessarily so, in *every* individual, highest angel or lowest devil. All the seeds of all the virtues and all the vices are present in every one. The only difference between the saint and the sinner is that, in the former, the seeds of good are predominant, are blossoming and fruiting, and the seeds of evil more or less starved and atrophied ; while, in the latter the reverse is the case. Much more obviously in ordinary human beings are good and evil intermixed. The person in whom the good points are more prominent than the bad is called a good person ; while he in whom the bad points prevail is called a bad person.



## (f) INDIVIDUAL SPIRITUAL SWARAJ

When the elements of good become definitely predominant in a person, when he becomes outstandingly self-denying and philanthropic, when he has permanently subjugated his baser passions, greeds, fears, he may be said to have attained *Spiritual Swaraj*, to have become truly self-governing, in the sense that in him the righteous Spirit, the higher self, the *true swa* has attained *raj*, lasting power and domination over his lower self, the *false swa*.

## (g) TWO SELVES IN THE COMMUNITY

As it is with the individual, so is it with the Community, with any given group of human beings, a family, a clan, a tribe, a nation, a race. Every such group may be said to have a corporate unity, an individuality, a self, a group-soul or over-soul.

For those who are shy of anything savouring of the mystical, it may be noted that the words group-soul or over-soul are not at all essential to our theme. It is enough if we believe in the words 'I' and 'we.' The 'I' signifies what the 'mystic' might call the 'individual soul'; and the 'We' what he might term the group-soul, what should be borne in mind, however, is that "We" does not mean *merely* a mechanical collection of in-

dividuals, but *also* some common idea, common interest, common purpose, sympathy, sentiment, enthusiasm, en-souling and animating then all, making them act alike, *binding them together* making them an *organised* society, a *samaj*, a *jamaat*, rather than a mere fortitious horde—even as the 'I' en-souls and holds together the limbs, organs, tissue and cells of an individual organism.

As the 'I' of every individual is divided into a higher and a lower self, so is the 'We' of every community. Every such group has also a higher self and a lower, a better and a worse, a more virtuous and a more vicious, a wiser and a more foolish. The outstandingly good and wise men and women in a community, those who have achieved *individual spiritual Swaraj*, make up its higher self; the comparatively bad and ignorant, its lower self.

#### (h) COMMUNAL OR POLITICAL SPIRITUAL SWARAJ

In the self-government of a community, as in that of an individual, if the higher self legislates and rules, then only have we true self-government; then only have we wise and beneficent administration which takes into account the just needs of every limb and organ of the body politic, and ministers to each such need in proper proportion, so

that: the health of the whole is maintained, and the total social organism enjoys peace, prosperity, and happiness. *When spiritual-minded persons legislate and rule, then individual spiritual Swaraj becomes the foundation of communal or political spiritual Swaraj.*

(i) MERELY POLITICAL (AS DISTINGUISHED FROM SPIRITUAL-POLITICAL) SWARAJ

Political Swaraj or self-government, in ordinary English, means, generally speaking, a government in which the persons who have the final powers of legislation and of executive administration are all or almost all elected by the people, in one way or another. Because they are all chosen by the people them-selves, therefore government by them is regarded as the people's *self-government*.

But where the lower self of the people, its selfish, cunning, scheming, pushful, hypocritical, avaricious, arrogant element manages to get itself elected, and seizes hold of power, and so class-interest or personal interest overpowers communal, philanthropic, humanist interest; where 'private' spirit suppresses 'public' spirit; where the cravings and morbid appetites of any one organ are excessively indulged at the expense of the others; where any one class, clique, cabal, caucus, or junta becomes too preponderant; where disease-microbes begin to

reign in the body and eat up the healthy blood-corpuses; there the physical, moral, financial and all other health must fail ere long; there the organism will inevitably suffer from fevered unrest and dire disease; and if the only right remedy is not soon applied, disruption of the communal as of the individual organism will follow, sooner or later, according to the virulence of the disease.

Such domination of the higher by the lower self is essentially Para-raj, foreign-government, alien-government, other-government, even though the ostensible name and form be that of *self-government*. And this is unhappily the case with all the Western democracies of the present day. If a man takes into his system a poisonous substance, a disease-germ, under temptation or deception, believing that it will do him good, although it be an act of self-choice, self-determination, ostensibly, still painful consequences will inevitably come to him, and he will then realise that it was not *true-self-choice*, but *false-self-choice*, *false-swa-raj*, that he made. "That 'We' should be able to appoint and dismiss our public servants" is all right. But who are the 'We'? It should be only 'the best of the 'We,' the best of us; obviously not *all* the 'We,' no *all* the members of the community. The all-important question, of how to find out and elect these, "the best of us," will be dealt with in at moment.

## (j) NEED TO GUARD AGAINST FALSE SWA-RAJ

The need to guard against this mistaking of *false* for *true self-government* is very great. For the mistake is pervasive and perennial. It appears under ever so many forms. The unfortunately too 'popular' notion of *self-government* is that "I will be able to do exactly what I please, and nobody else will be able to stand in my way." If I am able to deal with my neighbour and my neighbour's goods just as I like—then, and then only, there will be self-government, *swaraj*, *my raj*. Obviously this crude interpretation of *swa* makes directly for 'jungle law' and universal anarchy, wherein every one's hand is against every one else. Under it, rudeness, indiscipline, wilfulness and lawlessness, are mistaken for independence and freedom, liberty. Self-display, bluster bravado, are mistaken for dignity and self-respect. So, on the other hand, under other wrong interpretations, 'the insolence of office' is mistaken for just authority, and personal self-importance, arrogance, and high-handedness are regarded as 'the majesty of the law'.

We have therefore to be very alertly on guard against the mere shibboleth and fetish of the *word Swa-raj*, lest, glamoured by mere catchwords, we mistake *false* for *true self-government*.

(k) MISCONCEPTION RE QUALIFICATIONS OF  
LEGISLATORS IN SWA-RAJ AND RE NATURE  
OF NATIONAL UNITY

In order to constitute true Swaraj, it is not enough that the legislators and governors or executive administrators should be of the same race or nation or class or religion, etc., as the ruled. If in any of these cases, the legislators and administrators have no affection for the people, if their interests are not the same as, but antagonistic to, those of the latter, then they are not *swa* but *para*, not 'self' but 'alien'. The rule of those who have affection for us (and for whom therefore we too cannot help having affection), even if they be of different race or religion—that rule is the rule of *our-self*, of *our-selves*. Where the hearts are at one, differences of race and religion are only as differences of clothing, or of taste in food. The rule of those who have disaffection for us, who are disaffected towards us, who are disloyal and seditious towards us, (and for whom therefore we too cannot help developing disaffection)—the rule is foreign-rule, even if the rulers be our own uterine brothers.

If people instinctively want the race, creed, etc., of their legislators and rulers to be the same as their own, it is only because, ordinarily, the sameness

of these tends to make someness of interest, and a better mutual understanding. But while this may be so, ordinarily, there is, as a fact, at the present time, no nation, no state, worth mention as such, which possesses any such unity, even distantly. The small British State or Nation proper (one-twelfth of India in area, and one-sixth in population) comprises at least four distinct races, as many languages, and as many separate tracts of country, *viz.*, English, Scotch, Welsh, and Irish (if we may still count the Irish in), and at least two strongly distinguished, or even antipathetic, forms of religion, *viz.*, Protestant and Roman Catholic, and many minor sects. The still smaller country of Switzerland has three races and as many languages. The U. S. A. include dozens of races and speak as many languages. On the other hand, it is also well-known that when brothers do fall out, they fight with each other more bitterly than strangers do. Indeed, the conquest of most countries by 'foreigners' is a story of betrayal by 'natives.' And, incidentally, the breaking away of the Irish Free State from Britain illustrates how 'self-government' may be a fraud; for Ireland was included in the 'self-government' of 'Great Britain and Ireland,' and used to send about one hundred members to 'the Mother of Parliaments'; but realised that the remaining five hundred and odd

members were very much '*para*' or alien and foreign to her, and not at all 'self'. Merely *political* unity, based only on selfish earthly interests, is a very flimsy and brittle affair, and a poor substitute for such *spiritual* unity as the immense and varied population of India enjoyed before degeneration set in, the tattered and draggled remnants of which spiritual, cultural, socio-religious unity it still continues to show.

What is needed to-day, as indispensable basis and foundation for true Swaraj, not only in India but in all countries, is that same deeper feeling of spiritual unity in the community, which is constituted by the sentiment, not of nationalism or territorial patriotism, etc., but of Humanism, and reasoned Humanism too—that unity of which the other unities, of race, religion, language, etc. are very imperfect expressions which have never prevented internecine oppressions, cheatings and wars.

#### (1) THE WORK OF N.-C.-O. IN BRINGING ABOUT THE NEEDED CHANGE OF HEART

How to bring about this revival of the sense of Spiritual Unity, of the sense of the Interdependence, the Solidarity, the Brotherhood of Man, is the question that arises immediately. By example and precept—is the only and the ancient answer.



The more individuals there are, in any community, who have attained 'individual spiritual Swaraj,' the more easy will the general revival become.

The Providence which guides human destinies, seems to have tried, through the precepts and example of Mahatma Gandhi, to bring about such a leavening of the Indian People by the N.-C.-O. movement; to effect a moral regeneration of the people, to fill them with the courage of conviction and the spirit of peaceful self-sacrifice, and bring about in a fair number of individual cases, and also make a general and widespread atmosphere of, that spiritual Swaraj, which is embodied in the scriptural sayings that "Hatred ceases not by hatred but by love," that the *yamas*, the vows, the virtues, the disciplines, which are preliminary to Freedom, are "Non-violence (a-himsa), truthfulness (satya), fearless honesty (a-steeya), chastity (brahma-charya), poverty (a-parigraha)," etc.

Because of the enormous quantity and the long-impooverished quality of the material dealt with, and the many adverse circumstances, the *tour de force, coup*, of N.-C.-O. has not succeeded as fully and rapidly as many over-ardent spirits hoped. But neither has it failed so wholly as jeerers and jibbers love to say. Sober thinkers feel that substantial good work *has* been done, the seed of self-respect and self-dependence, and so of self-govern-

ment, *has* been sown broadcast in the heart of the Indian People, and that its sprouting and growing and fruiting are only matter of time and tending. Yet there is the danger also of the tending being neglected, of weeds and tares over-running the genuine sprouts, of even a reaction setting in, of more ground being lost than has been gained, of the last state of the country becoming worse than the first.

(m) A LACK IN THE N.-C.-O. MOVEMENT, AND  
HOW TO SUPPLY IT

In order to avoid all such untoward result, to make sure that the enthusiasm of the people shall neither evaporate nor go astray into wrong channels, to secure the proper tending and the watering and the weeding of the field, it is necessary that a deplorable lack, from which the N.-C.-O. movement has so far suffered, should be carefully supplied. The moral *heat* generated by the N.-C.-O. movement requires greatly to be supplemented with a corresponding intellectual *light*. Not only does the *heart* of the people require to be educated—as it has been, by N.-C.-O., and *imperfectly because* of this lack—but also the *head*. To connect, and thereby steady, right aspirations with right ideas—this only is sound education. Mere emotion, without sound knowledge to guide it, is steam without engine and rails.

The last numbers of *Young India* that were issued by Mahatma Gandhi before his arrest, show that he was turning his attention to this subject, and would probably have done before long what was needed. But he was prevented by the Bureaucracy imprisoning his body.

The education of the public that is needed in respect of the head is not more difficult—indeed, it is, perhaps, simpler and easier—than the education of the heart. As the *implication* of self-dependence in the word Swaraj embodies in itself all the (a) *moral-emotional education* of the heart that the people need in respect of politics, so *the full and true meaning* of that word will embody all the (b) *intellectual education* of the *head* that they need in that respect; and the carrying out of the constructive items of the programme of the N.-C.-O. in the light of this meaning, will similarly, constitute the *practical education* of the *limbs*, so to say, of the body—politic, a re-training of the people in the almost forgotten arts of local self-government. Only on the foundations of such a threefold education of the public, can the positive and the negative sides of the N.-C.-O. movement work out to the successful issue of a stable Swaraj.

And there is no sufficient reason for the Congress to shirk the ascertainment and explication of the true *meaning* of the word, Swaraj. Indeed, if a

person uses a word, it is his duty to explain its meaning when asked. It is absolutely necessary, therefore, that the leaders should take counsel together, quietly, deeply and fully, should first make their own minds clear as to what they should understand by the word and then assiduously (and authoritatively, by resolution of a competent body) instruct and clear the mind of the country on the subject. It is not enough to feel keenly that we are ill; not enough to have general idea of the disease; not enough to shout aloud for health; not enough even to know the name of the remedy. We (*i.e.* our physicians, at least) should know the exact nature of the particular remedy that is suitable to our case; should know also the correct way of taking it; and we should take it accordingly. And, in order to attain this knowledge, it is necessary to study the cases of more or less similarly diseased nations all around, and the effects upon them of the remedies they have tried—remedies bearing the same name, yet different in qualities. If this is not done, we shall only exemplify the sayings about “the more haste, the less speed,” and “out of the frying-pan into the fire.”

#### (n) SOME OBJECTIONS

Most people seem very averse to this thinking out precisely of the fundamental nature and

principles of that form of Swaraj which will be our special remedy. They say the discussion is unpractical and will fritter away energy which is wanted for other and more important works. Yet there is no other work at all, before the country, which is more important and more urgent than this--of getting a clear idea of the goal that we are shouting for, and of the roads that will lead to it, so that we may not run blindly in wrong directions. People do not realise that only that activity is practical which leads towards a well-understood as well as much desired goal by well-understood and appropriate means; and that all other moving about of hand and foot and tongue and pen, however energetic, is utterly unpractical. Hard thinking is probably a mere painful process than muscular action, for the majority of us. "Enough for the day is the evil thereof," and "One step is enough for me," etc., occur readily. Yet one step is enough only for the feet; the eyes must look a hundred steps ahead, if the feet and the whole body are not to tumble into a pit. And the head of the household has to think of and plan for the morrow and the day after and the coming months, though for the junior member, with a fixed task for the day, the day's concern is enough to occupy the mind with.

The real fact seems to be that the leaders fear disagreement, and therefore wish blindly "to

postpone the evil day" of the discussion of the nature of Swaraj, and say lightly that "we shall do it after we have gained Swaraj." This is very like saying that "we shall learn to swim after we have been thrown into a roaring flood," or that "we shall kill the bear after having sold the skin." It means lack of will and power to tackle difficult problems, and in time. And yet the problem is not so very difficult after all. It is not the endless details that require to be settled now, but only *the fundamental principles*, only the true meaning of the very important word *Swa*, in the two-worded compound Swaraj, which is on the lips of every one and to which every one now assigns his own meaning. Many persons, as soon as the subject is broached, run away with the idea that a three-hundred-page volume of draft Bill and Act, and Bye-laws and Rules, dealing minutely with all departments of administration, is wanted. Nothing of the kind. The treaty between the British Government and the Irish free State is only a statement of principles, and occupies about two columns of a daily. Less will contain all the fundamental principles of the Swaraj that India needs. *An un-understood or ill-understood or mis-understood Swaraj, a Swaraj not radically different in some important respects from the varieties current in the west, is not worth struggling for.*

(o) MAIN POINTS IN THE NEEDED INTELLECTUAL  
EDUCATION OF PUBLIC OPINION

The widespread education of public opinion, then, as to the nature of true 'Swaraj', is absolutely indispensable. The main points in the explication of this nature, which seem, to some of us at least, to be necessary to instil into the minds of every individual member of the Indian People, are comparatively few and simple. Indeed, some of them are so simple that some may well think that they are too obvious to require telling. But arithmetic is 'obvious' and 'self-evident' and 'incontestable', yet it requires very much to be *taught*. On the other hand, some go so far as to think the Swaraj is undefinable, although its definition, as given before, is even 'obvious'. Some of these main points have been noted above already, in sections (d) to (k). The following additional points may be noted.

(1) Government by any one class or section, as such, exclusively or predominantly, of any or all other classes or sections, as such, *e.g.*, of the labouring class by the capitalist, or of both by the militarist, or of three by the sacerdotalist, or of the Hindu by the Muslim, or the Muslim by the Hindu, or the Shia by the Sunni, or the Shaiva by the Vishnava, or the Brahmana by the non-Brahmana,

or the Roman Catholic by the Protestant or *vice versa*, is as much other-government, foreign-government, alien-government, even when both the governing and the governed classes belong to the same race and nation, as when one race and nation governs another race or nation.

(2) The essence of true and good self-government (as distinguished from false and bad self-government) is the making of good laws, and the enforcing of them justly and efficiently.

(3) The essence of good laws is the equitable division and balancing of rights and duties, the attaching of an appropriate duty to every right, in such a manner that a fair chance may be given (a) of obtaining the necessaries of life, to all who are willing to do work suited to their several psycho-physical constitutions, temperaments, tastes and inclinations, and, (b) of securing special rewards of different kinds for special talents and achievements; e.g., extra *honor* to the person who gathers and spreads and advances *knowledge*; special *power* to the person who shows special capacity for such administrative *action* as gathers the means of and spreads *protection*; more *wealth* to the person who possesses more ability for trade, commerce, management of agricultural and mechanical industries, and at the same time utilises the wealth in the spirit of a trustee of public well-being, who, in



short, gathers and spreads *necessaries and comforts*; more amusement, games, holidays, etc., to the comparatively unskilled manual worker; and so on.

(4) Such good laws can be made only by the 'higher self' of the community, i.e., by wise, i.e., *experienced* as well as *benevolent* legislators, each one of whom has gone through the work of some one class or another, but has retired from it; so that the legislators possess, between them, the experience of all departments of the national life, yet none of whom actively belongs to or is identified with the interest of any class in particular, and all are disinterestedly wishful of securing the well-being of all classes, by recognising the proper place and function of each in the Social Whole, and establishing a just balance and due proportion between them all. If all the *classes* within each nation are reconciled, all the *nations* will become automatically reconciled at once. It is the *class*-conflicts, due to legislation by the *un*-spiritual minded, which cause international troubles and wars also. Can any one doubt seriously that if the law-makers of the more powerful *self-governing* nations had been really *wise* and spiritual-minded persons, instead of merely *clever* and *cunning* and utterly short-sighted, the horrors of the great war of 1914-1918 and its consequences would not

have happened, and all the nations would have been friends ?

(p) QUALIFICATIONS OF LEGISLATORS IN TRUE  
SWA-RAJ

(5) The securing of such legislators is the very crux of all political science and art. Western countries have been trying for the last hundred and fifty years. But the methods and rules of election, etc., devised by the current western forms of government, have all failed disastrously and admittedly (*vide* Bryce's *Modern Democracies*). The masses of the people seem to be no more happy, in some cases are perhaps even more miserable, than the masses in India—and this, despite the adventitious fact that, while 'self-governed' within their own proper countries, they are very much 'other-governing' outside, and exploit and drain and subject to systematic and organised and 'lawful' plunder the vast countries and immense populations of weaker nations. The internal ferment and the external wars in and between these western self-governing countries are patent proofs of the failure of their forms of self-government. None of these forms is suitable for India, *because of the radical defect* that in none of them is care taken to ensure that the *higher* self should govern, the self that is *ethically*, as well as intellectually fit.

To copy any of these blindly would be the very climax of slave-mentality for us. *We have to think out our own methods and rules of election* whereby we may make humanly probable—for *certainty* is obviously impossible in human affairs—that men and women of the right qualifications may be elected to the legislature.

It is a primary duty—so some of us feel—of the Congress authorities to do this thinking out. If a fairly reasonable scheme were put forward by them, after public discussion in the press, the Opponent, the Adversary of the People, viz., the Irresponsible Bureaucracy, would have at least a chance of seeing that it was reasonable, of seeing that the Congress fight was not a fight for the mere transfer of power from one set of Irresponsibles to another set of Irresponsibles; and so it would have a chance of giving its acceptance to the new scheme and of transforming itself from irresponsible into responsible. On the other had, rejection by it of a scheme—(in outlines and fundamental principles only)—which was *prima facie* reasonable, would not only strengthen the case of the N.-C.-O's, but would also turn the opinion of the Moderate-Liberals, and of any other non-official political parties that there may be, more definitely and energetically and actively against the present system of Irresponsible Bureaucratic Government, and would

enlist public opinion outside India too in our favour.

The discussion and declaration of the fundamental principles of the scheme would also constitute most valuable intellectual education of public opinion.

(6) It is likely that if the following principles (suggested here simply as a basis for discussion) are observed, the right quality of legislators may be secured.

(a) Legislators should be permanent residents of the country for which they are to legislate; but their creed, caste, class, color, race, or sex should not, as such be regarded either as a qualification or as a disqualification. Without permanent residence in the country, sympathetic understanding is not possible; while taking account of creed, caste, etc., in the elections, imports into the resulting legislature the vicious spirit of conflicting interests and party-politics in place of the virtuous spirit of each caring for all.

(b) There should be no 'standing,' offering of, or canvassing for, himself, by any one, as a candidate for election. The idea of self-display and seeking election is wholly incongruous with the spirit of philanthropic public service. Favours are sought, not burdens. The conception here should be, not that the electors confer a favour or honor

on the elected, but that they place a heavy burden of public work on him; and it is therefore they who are to be placed under obligation, and should request the electee, instead of being requested by him. *Seeking* election for oneself has an inevitable savor of selfishness of some sort or other about it, which is quite inconsistent with our ideal of the legislator. Of course there will always be possibilities of abuse. But the point to be considered is whether they will be less or greater than under the current systems, under which the gross abuses of "electioneering" are as much a by-word as commercial and financial "profiteering" and bureaucratic "domineering." And it has also to be remembered that the mere public acceptance and declaration of the principles and ideas here suggested will change for better the whole tone and atmosphere of politics.

(c) As a general rule, to which there will be exceptions, of course, all heads of families, *i. e.*, the master as well as the mistress of every household, irrespective of property qualifications should be electors. A given proportion of them, with special qualifications (to be specified), should nominate a person as having their trust and being desired by them to have a place in the legislature. Only such nominees should be voted for at the general election.

(d) The nominees should, ordinarily, have passed middle age, i.e., should be forty years of age or more, and they should have children of their own and so experience of the household life. This will make reasonably probable that the legislator possesses intimate knowledge of human nature in its more common and important aspects, knows what responsibility for the well-being of others means, and has sobered and matured judgment. But he should have also retired from all competitive bread-winning or money-making, and should be living on his past earnings or on a 'pension.' So he would feel financially independent; his outlook upon life, his attitude towards his fellow-beings, would have changed from that of selfish taking to that of unselfish giving, and he would have all the leisure needed for his public duties. Yet more. He should have done outstandingly good work in *some* walk of life—whether literary, scientific, educational, priestly, medical, artistic, etc or administrative, official, military, etc., or commercial, agricultural, industrial, financial, etc., or as a labourer and manual worker; and he should have done this and at the same time acquired a reputation for uprightness and honest dealing and sympathy for fellow-creatures. An aged agriculturist who has tilled his few acres successfully, has raised up a good family, is respected and trusted in his own

and neighbouring villages, and can express his views clearly, is a wise village-elder, in short, may be a more useful member of a [legislature which has to deal with vast agricultural interests like those of India, even though he may be unable to sign his name than many brilliant speakers or writers with only a college education that has little touch of reality.

(e) Another desirable condition is that the legislator should not receive any cash remuneration for his work from the public funds. Such cash payment, while perfectly right and even necessary in other fields of work, taints the peculiar fiduciary status of the *legislator*, who should stand in the position of Trustee and Elder to the People. He should therefore meet all his *personal* expenses himself. But of course, all *ex-officio* expenses must be met out of public funds. This would invest the legislator with the venerable dignity which naturally belongs to such an Elder. Trust, honor, reverence—these are the proper, the only, and the natural price of patriarchal benevolence and caring; and they usually *are* paid, where the generous instincts and traditions of the community have not been perverted. Also, the giving and receiving of such honor—a reward greater than power and wealth and amusements, for it can be enjoyed not only in life, but also after the death of the physical body, which the others cannot be—is

a great nourishment to the heart of both giver and receiver, and is a continuous inducement to benevolent work on the part of the latter (*when it is not mixed up with and corrupted by power and wealth*), and a powerful check against temptations to corruption. The natural corollary of this is that in all public functions, the unsalaried legislator should have rank and precedence above all salaried office-bearers as well as above all persons engaged in competitive money-earning professions.

It will be readily seen that the idea underlying this condition is that which has been discussed and emphasised before, the idea of spiritualising politics by changing the whole culture and civilisation of society from its present mercenary to a missionary basis, even as the work of the elders in a family is done for the youngers not for mercenary motives, but out of 'missionary' benevolence. The right instinct is already there, it has only to be revived. Many western countries do not, or until recently did not, give any salary to their legislators. Aldermen are not paid. Nor are Justices of the Peace. The theory about the *honorarium* of the barrister is the same. But the 'trade-winds' of commercialism, capitalism, mammonism have ushered in a new season, and have flung their tinge and taint over those departments of life also which should have been beyond their touch.



(f) Intimately connected with the last-mentioned condition is another, viz., that no legislator should have direct executive power. This separation is even more necessary than the separation of Executive and Judicial. But the Legislature should supervise and control the Executive which should be responsible in every way to the Legislature. This is the very essence of responsible government and self-government as conceived here. When the chief executive and the chief legislative are practically identical, and the members of the former are substantially or heavily salaried, as in England, true responsibility ceases, manoeuvres and intrigues of party-politics become rampant, and legislation cannot be disinterested. In other places, the opposite error is observable, viz., that if the legislative is separated from the Executive, the latter is free of control by the former.

(g) Finally, rules of election should be so framed that the experience of all the main departments of the communal life should be present in the legislature. The words "all *interests* should be *represented*" are avoided here because of their associations of conflicting class-interests.

#### (q) RELIGIOUS PEACE

Q.—Is it possible for Indians to get over their religious antagonisms sufficiently to agree to eli-

minate all conditions based on religious differences from election rules ?

A. How can one tell without trying? And possible or not, we have got to try. For, is it any use assuming that it is impossible, and therefore doing nothing? Would that give us better results? Or is there any other way which is better? If so, let us hear.

More ; if it is possible for Indians to unite on the *word* Swaraj, it is not impossible for them to unite on the *meaning* of it, if only the acknowledged leaders could agree among themselves and unitedly give the lead to the country on this point. If *they* cannot agree on the *meaning*, then the Swaraj-word may also be given up altogether as well. And the true and plain meaning of Swaraj, rightly understood, covers quite naturally the highest *religious* and spiritual *self-government* and unity as well the finest political unity and self-government. We want self-government (elastic and true democracy very different from mobocracy) and a 'living legislation' in *religion* as much as in *politics*. If we do not want bureaucracy, no more do we want theocracy. The one is as mischievous as the other. We must have Religion, as we must have Politics. But they should both be Spiritual, Humanist, all-reconciling, not bigoted and narrow-minded and sectarian and nationalist, setting one against

another and tyrannising over all. As there are some *essentials* in *Politics*, which *ought* to be common to all countries and communities, amidst difference of local details; so there are some *essentials* in universal *Religion*, which *ought to be* common to all special religions, amidst many perfectly allowable and even necessary differences of details, of customs and practices and conventions. If the Congress wishes to bring about religious peace in India, it should take its courage in both its hands and should begin to diligently educate the people to recognise and realise the obvious fact that it rests upon every human being *himself*, rests upon every one's *swa*, to retain his present religion, or cast it off and take up any other he likes. He himself, his *swa*, is the final judge in the matter. He has absolute, unquestionable, Swaraj in this respect. He has only to think of it, in order to realise it. If I say, "I will not decide for myself, but will believe what so-and-so tells me," this, the *decision* to put my trust in and abide by *another's* decision is still *my* decision. That this scripture is to be believed, this avatara, or rishi, or messiah, or prophet, is worthy to be believed, or is not worthy—this is *my* decision, is all ultimately the decision of the soul that is in *me*, or is *me*. It follows, then, that the soul, the spirit, the Universal Spirit in Man (and in all living beings) is the

Primal Truth, and is at the heart of all religions ; while the special rites and ceremonies and customs of the various creeds are all only like so many different kinds of clothes, suited to different times and places and conditions and tastes, which may be put on and put off at will, which it is most foolish to fight over, and which should be so regulated that, while they differ as much as you please, they should not positively hinder one another.

If this Religious Swaraj, this very important and essential aspect of Spiritual Swaraj, without the realisation of which what has been described before as 'individual spiritual Swaraj' must remain imperfect, even after the initiation has been undergone, of imprisonment or other privation for peaceful patriotism or rather humanism—if this Religious Swaraj is preached diligently by the Congress all over the land, (and so much the more effectively if it can induce the Pandits and the Maulvis and the Christian priests to rise to the height of their duty and change themselves from irresponsible into 'responsible', and help in the work), then the needed peace between the creeds will certainly be brought about. And when Religious Swaraj is achieved, Political Swaraj will certainly not lag behind. Kamal Pasha's proposal to *elect* a separate Khilafat periodically, with the due regard to mental and *moral* qualifications, is a fine inspiration.

Q.—Is not your faith in preaching too great and too simple?

A.—Perhaps. But do you put faith in not-preaching? That faith would be even more simple; Agitate, educate; educate, agitate—this is the advice of the most experienced political workers. Preaching is nothing else than educating and agitating. And what else than preaching is any politician of any school doing? Or have you got some better plan? If so, let us have it, and the sooner the better!

#### (r) RE CANVASSING

Q.—You may make a rule that there must be no canvassing, etc. But will not persons surreptitiously get others to nominate and canvass for them?

A.—In the first place we do not profess to be able to abolish all evil. Whoever or Whatever made the Universe has not succeeded in doing so. Human beings can obviously not do better. Indeed, some people think and believe that if evil *were* abolished, *good* would disappear automatically also. But what human beings ought to and can do is, to try to minimise the evil and maximise the good in a given time, place, and circumstance. We profess only to make suggestions towards this. No doubt, there will be room for under-hand doings.

But the *other* conditions which we propose must not be overlooked. They will blunt the edge of the temptations to such doings. Thus, legislators will not be entrusted with executive powers, as they are to-day, in the capacity of Ministers or Executive Councillors, etc. Judicial powers will also be separated off from the other two. And the re-formed public opinion will make a different atmosphere altogether. The general recognition of the non-mercenary principle, and of the principle of the separation of the rewards of extra honor, and special official powers, and extra wealth, and more amusements, etc.; the condition that legislators should not be engaged in any money-making business, which will naturally keep the public eye alertly and wakefully upon his purity—all this will make the election something to be accepted only from a sense of duty, as a burden for which the only (but great) recompense is honor, rather than to be eagerly sought for as a means of easy selfish joys.

Q.—Would not the conditions ‘of forty years’ etc., exclude many brilliant young men?

A.—Our conception of the Legislature requires not brilliance, but *wisdom*. “Brilliance comes” and goes, and plays false, and proves tinsel, and makes messes, but “wisdom lingers.” Brilliance should wait and mature into a softer, steadier,

soberer light, and do its duty so much the better *after* attaining forty years. If it is worth anything, if it is substantial, it will not get extinguished by waiting a few years. More ; there is always provision for exceptions. If you find that the country will go to rack and ruin if your particular brilliant youth does not get a chance of putting his Atlas-shoulder underneath, then put him in by all means. But please remember that a *wise* Legislature need not consist of hundreds and thousands. A *few* persons, *provided* they have the necessary experience, knowledge, and philanthropy, and possess the trust of the people, are quite enough. Even under present conditions, only about five per cent of, *e.g.*, the members of the British Parliament are active. The rest are practically dummies. The only result of having large numbers of legislators and of other present day arrangements is to waste enormous amount of the time, money, energy, good temper, etc., of the public, over elections and Council expenses and debates, to make politics professional and mercenary, to take away men from far more useful 'productive' work, and generally to make the administration and the whole civilisation top-heavy.

(8) THE SEPARATION OF THE SPECIAL  
REWARDS

The principle of the separation of the four main prizes of life should be very carefully borne in mind. The preservation of the integrity of the central authority (in other words, of the purity of the Legislature), and the inducing of all the individuals composing the community to put forth the best work that there is in them—these are the main problems of government and social organisation. Modern governments and modern collectivist schemes and experiments are all failing to find a solution for them. It appears that Lenin, in Russia, after extraordinary efforts to abolish private property, has realised that capitalism has to be restored (though, no doubt, with limitations). He is reported to have found out that the peasants avoid working more than will produce enough for their necessary wants, and are not interested in supporting the 'intellectuals', etc., who are necessary for the 'State,' unless special inducement is applied. Now the simple old traditional solution, in India, of these problems is the separation of the four main prizes of life, honor, power, wealth, and amusements, which constitute the main ambitious inducement to strenuous work of correspondingly different kinds. The possibility of combining



them, of securing them all, is the one prime cause of all kinds of social and political corruption. Separate them, and you at once minimise the temptations of the central authority, and at the same time provide an adequate (if not excessive) inducement to every worker to put forth his best. Socio-political reform, if it is to be [successfully carried out, must not ignore these facts and laws of the Science of Psychology.

(t) THE ESSENTIALS OF SELF-GOVERNMENT:  
THE CRUX OF ALL POLITICAL  
SCIENCE AND ART

1. Are there not two 'selves' in every community, as in every individual, a higher and a lower, a good and a bad, a virtuous and a vicious, a wise and a foolish?

2. Is it not essential that in self-government, the good self of the community, its higher, wiser, and more virtuous self, and not its bad, foolish, and vicious lower self, should govern?

3. Is not government, by any one class, exclusively, of any other class or all other classes, *f. i.*, of the laboring class by the capitalist, or of both by the militarist, or of all three by the ecclesiastical, or of the Protestant by the Roman Catholic, or the Hindu by the Muslim, or the Muslim by the Hindu, or the Shia by the Sunni, or the

Shaiva by the Vaishnava, or the non-Brahmana by the Brahmana, or *vice versa*, as much other-government, foreign-government, alien-government, even when both the governing and the governed classes belong to the same race and nation, as when one race and nation governs another race and nation?

4. Is not the essence of good government, the making of good laws and the enforcing of them justly and efficiently?

5. Is not the essence of good laws, such equitable division and balancing of rights-and-duties, as will give a fair chance (a) of necessities to all who are willing to do work suited to their psychophysical constitution, and (b) of special rewards to special qualifications, *f. i.*, extra honor to the man of thought, special power to the man of action, more wealth to the man of desire, more amusement to the unskilled, etc.?

6. Are not such good laws possible to be made only by the higher self of the community, *i.e.*, by pure and wise and philanthropic legislators?

7. Is not the securing of such legislators the very crux of all political science and art?

8. Can such legislators be secured, and have they been secured, by any of the methods, of election, etc., in vogue in the current western forms of self-government? Are the masses of the people happy in those western countries?

9. Are any of these systems suitable for India? If so, which?

10. If not, what is the method, of election or other, by which the better self of the Indian (or any other) people, *i. e.*, philanthropic, unselfish, and at the same time experienced and wise men and women, may be brought into the legislature?

11. Is it not desirable that such a legislature should have full supervising control over the executive, without itself exercising any executive power directly, in order that the laws may be enforced justly and efficiently?

12. Would it be helpful towards securing such worthy persons for the legislature, to observe some such conditions as that,

(a) All legislators should be elected, from among the permanent residents of the country, irrespective of creed, caste, class, color, race or sex;

(b) They should not offer, or canvass, for themselves;

(c) Should be nominated by a given proportion of the electors, the nominators being possessed of certain qualifications of age and experience themselves; the Electors generally (with exceptions) being independent heads of families *i. e.*, the masters and the mistress of each family home.

(d) Should be at least forty years of age (with exceptions); should ordinarily (with exceptions)

have had experience of the responsibilities of the household life, with children of their own; should have retired from competitive, professional, business, or other life of bread-winning or money-making; should have done distinguished work in some, however humble, walk of life; be able to support themselves on their own savings, or be assured of all necessities and personal requirements by their families or friends; should give all their time, practically, to the national work, and do so without any cash remuneration, all requisites for the discharge of their duties being provided to them out of State funds;

(e) Should have rank, precedence, and honor above all salaried office-bearers; and that

(f) The Legislature should have on it persons possessing, between them, experience of all the main departments of the national life?

## IX

### CONCLUSION

It is Ancient Teaching--which no-thing in Modern Science can or does gainsay--that Right Knowledge, Right Desire, Right Action, lead to Swaraj, Self-dependence, Moksha, Freedom, spiritual as well as political, from bondage to the fear of Death, and from bondage to others in alien-government.

India is Desiring Freedom, and is Struggling and Acting for Freedom. But what the nature of true Swa-raj and true Freedom is, she does not Know, or even knows wrongly. And therefore she is often straying, often wasting effort, often making mistakes, running risk of becoming worse bound. Let India first achieve Right Knowledge of the nature of the Goal, her End and Aim, and also of the appropriate Roads, Measures, Policies, which will lead thereto. Then only will her Desiring and her Acting become Right also. And then Spiritual-Political Swaraj will be won with certainty.