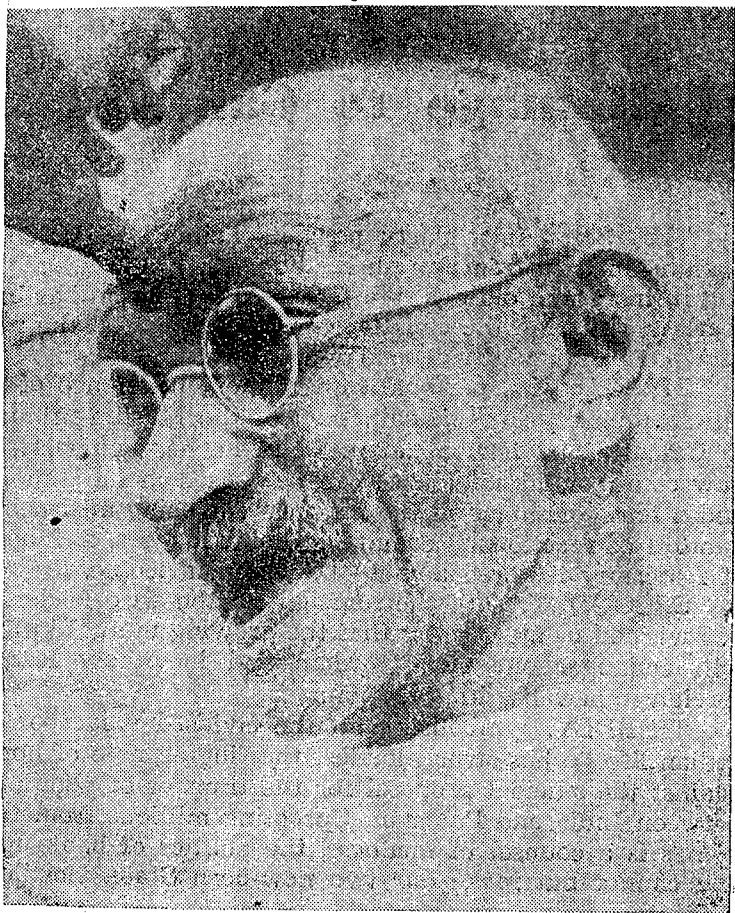


ON HIS 79th BIRTHDAY



OUR HOMAGE

&

OUR PLEDGE

1947

Anna I

Homage to Gandhiji

THE Communist Party pays its homage to Mahatma Gandhi on his seventy-ninth birthday.

In his grand old age, the father of the nation has been fearlessly stirring the conscience of the nation on the most vital issues on which depends our future.

FIRST, by his personal intervention in defence of the Hindu minority in Noakhali, then of the Muslim minority in Calcutta and now again in Delhi he has demonstrated how courage and confidence can be roused in the minority and a sense of shame in the majority for being misled by a handful of reactionary communal hate-mongers, and bonds of fraternity restored among the common people.

SECONDLY, with the foresight of the wise leader, he has warned us all betimes that the growing mutual killings will endanger our own freedom and inevitably lead to foreign imperialist intervention.

THIRDLY, symbolising all the civilised values of our Indian life he has struck loudest the ringing note of horror against the suicidal proposal for the transfer of population between India and Pakistan. Uprooting millions from their homes is a counsel of madness, the politics of bankruptcy and cannot but make our two new-born States hostile to each other.

FOURTHLY, among all our top leaders he alone has the undying faith that the hunted minority can be made to stay in their own homes and the temporarily misled majority made to welcome and protect the minority as their own flesh and blood.

All this needs being seen, said and done by us all. Of all the tallest leaders of our people, he alone has refused to be drawn into the war of statements and counter-statements; he alone has clearly seen that the crisis in our coun-

try cannot be solved by mere administrative measures, but demands reawakening the best traditions that live in the heart of our great people, rousing them to fight the danger threatening all that they have gained in the sixty-two years of our national struggle.

The British imperialists have handed power to our leaders after setting our country afire. Our great people can and will stamp out the fratricidal fire and get the better of the imperialist agents, the Princes, big landlords, and black-marketeers, who seek to spread it by arming communal bands, and rely upon the aid of their keymen in the tottering corrupt British-made bureaucratic machine which yet continues to run our administration.

With this spirit the Communist Party will wholeheartedly participate in and help to organise the Gandhi Jayanti celebrations. With the memory of the glorious unity upsurge of August 15 fresh in our minds, and with the will of young and strong sons and daughters of a great nation, let us all together work to make October 2 a greater and more united August 15.

Let us make the nation's homage to Mahatma Gandhi the culmination of a people's peace campaign in which Congressmen, Nationalist Muslims, Leaguers, and all Left parties and popular organisations participate.

We shall then be able to declare before millions of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Touchables and Untouchables, that the riot-demon stands buried and the minorities shall enjoy the protection of the living wall of the majority.

Thus alone can we defeat the anti-national communal reactionary and go forward to long delayed and eagerly awaited plans of national reconstruction which will ensure food, cloth and jobs to our common people and bring our nation new strength and unity to march ahead to full and final independence and play our proud role in shaping the destiny of the new world.

—COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA

Let His Thoughts Be Our Actions

ON COMMUNAL RIOTS

"There are, however, the goonda element and the wild mischief-makers in every community and part of India who are not concerned with patriotism or obligations to the interests of their community. They are not influenced by reason or social responsibilities. They understand only one argument, the assurance that Government is ready for them...

"Enough has already happened in all conscience. But goondas and mischief-makers had better know that Governments in India are ready for them...."

—Address at post-prayer meeting in New Delhi on May 28, 1947

In conclusion Mahatma Gandhi said any Hindu who tried to save Hinduism by subjecting every other community by force, whether open or tact, did not know that he was doing the greatest disservice to his religion. Hinduism would only be saved through unadulterated justice to every man to whatever religious community he might belong.

—Address at post-prayer meeting in Calcutta on August 20, 1947

"I must warn all the officers and all the men in the police force that in their work they are neither Muslims nor Hindus nor Sikhs. They are Indians bound by oath to give full protection to their religion. Thereby they do not cease to be Muslims, Hindus or Sikhs but become better."

—Prayer speech in Calcutta on August 22, 1947

ADVICE TO PEACE COMMITTEES

"They have to see the poor Muslims are rehabilitated just as the Hindus also have to be rehabilitated in the areas from where they have evacuated. Local Peace Committees should be set up in each mohalla and they must find at least one Hindu and one Muslim of clean heart to work together. These committees must tour the areas under their jurisdiction, they should work to create a feeling of friendliness where it is lacking. For purposes of rehabilitation they will have to go into innumerable local details. Food, shelter and clothing have to be found for the evacuees returning home and they have also to be restored to normal occupation."

—Press conference at Bellaghata residence in Calcutta on August 25, 1947

"I am glad to be able to say that the residents of Delhi do not want the senseless destruction that is going on. I am prepared to understand the anger of the refugees whom fate has driven from Western Punjab. But anger is short madness. It can only make matters worse in every way. Retaliation is no remedy. It makes the original disease much worse. I, therefore, ask all those who are engaged in the senseless murder, arson and loot to stay their hands."

—Statement in Delhi on September 9

Mahatma Gandhi addressing a prayer meeting in Delhi on September 12, 1947, warned Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims that by killing, loot or arson they were destroying their own religion and implored them to stop their insane action at once. He said,

"Let not future generations say that you lost the sweet bread of freedom because you could not digest it. Remember that unless you stop this madness, the name of India will be mud in the eyes of the world."

"Anger breeds revenge and the spirit of revenge is today responsible for all the horrible happenings here and elsewhere. What good will it do the Muslims to avenge the happenings in Delhi or for Sikhs and Hindus to avenge cruelties on their co-religionists in the Frontier and West Punjab? If a man or group of men go mad, should everyone follow suit? I warn Hindus and Sikhs that by killing and loot or arson they are destroying their own religion."

ON TRANSFER OF POPULATION

"The transfer of population will be a fatal snare and it will mean nothing but greater misery. It is a shame for both. I claim myself to be equal servant of all. I wish India and Pakistan can unitedly make up their minds against the transfer of population."

—Address at prayer gathering in Delhi on September 13, 1947.

ON MINORITIES

"Similarly, if the Hindus felt that in India there was no place for anyone else except the Hindus, and if non-Hindus, especially Muslims wished to live here, they had to live as the slaves of the Hindus, they will kill Hinduism. Similarly, if Pakistan believed that in Pakistan only the Muslims had a rightful place and the non-Muslims had to live there on sufferance and as their slaves, it will be the death-knell of Islam in India."

—Address to Rashtriya Sevak Sangh, at Bhangi Colony on September 16, 1947.

"While it is true that the minorities i.e. the Hindus and Sikhs are badly treated in Pakistan, it is equally true that

East Punjab has also treated its minority, the Muslims, likewise. Guilt cannot be weighed in golden scales. I have no data to measure the guilt on either side. It is surely sufficient to know that both sides are guilty. The universal way to have proper adjustment is for both the States to make a frank and full confession of guilt on either side and come to terms, failing agreement to resort to arbitration in the usual manner."

—Address at gathering at Kishanganj, in New Delhi on September 17, 1947.

THEY MUST NOT LEAVE

"I cannot rest in peace till every Muslim and Hindu and Sikh in India and Pakistan is not rehabilitated in his own home. What is to become of Juma Masjid, the biggest mosque in India or of the Nankana Saheb or Punja Saheb if no Muslim can live in Delhi or India and no Sikh live in Pakistan? Are these sacred places to be turned to other purposes? Never."

—New Delhi on September 18, 1947 prayer meeting.

"MADNESS TO BANISH MUSLIMS"

"So long as I have breath in my body, I will continue to advise against any idea of banishing all Muslims from India." It is sheer madness to think that four crores and a half can be wiped out or banished to Pakistan. This I warn, is an advice to commit national suicide and to uproot Hinduism. The world which, upto now, has looked up to India, will certainly cease to do so."

—Prayer meeting in Delhi on September 21.

"To drive every Muslim from India and drive every Hindu and Sikh from Pakistan will mean war and eternal ruin for the country. If such a suicidal policy is followed in both the States, it will spell ruin of Islam and Hinduism in Pakistan and the Indian Union. Good alone can beget good. Love breeds love.

"It is the bounden duty of the majority in Pakistan as of the majority in the Union to protect the small minority whose honour and life and property are in their hands."

—Prayer meeting in Delhi on September 20, 1947

GANDHIJI'S DREAM

"God will fulfil my dream of Hindus and Muslims living together as brothers and friends or take me away and save me from witnessing the awful tragedy of one part of India being inhabited by Muslims only and the other part by Hindus."

—Prayer meeting in Delhi on September 19, 1947.