

Since I first unfurled the National Flag on the Red Fort, two years have been added to India's long history which began thousands of years ago. During these two years, we have seen achievements and failures, we have experienced joy and sorrow. The good work we have done will remain even though we pass away. So will India, though generations come and go.

Great questions face us and our task will not be over till we have answered them. Our objective is to make it possible for the millions of India to lead contented and purposeful lives. We cannot do that till we have solved, to a large extent, the problems that face us.

On a day like this we should try to detach ourselves from the problems of the moment and see from a distance, as it were, what is happening in our country and in the world. It is right that we forget our little troubles for a while and think of the major currents that are flowing in our country.

Thirty years ago there appeared on the Indian scene a mighty man of destiny who lighted our path. That light illumined our minds and hearts and large numbers of our people, forgetting their own troubles and domestic difficulties, their property and family, responded to his call. It was not for personal gain of any kind. Among these there existed a friendly competition as to who could serve the motherland better and more effectively. Our consuming obsession was the liberation of our country.

The star of a free India beckoned us forward. We dreamed of freedom from poverty and distress. We gained our political freedom at last but the other freedom still remains for us to achieve. Before we could do much to achieve it new problems came in our way. Sixty lakhs of people migrated to India as refugees. We faced this problem as we had faced others. I suppose we made some mistakes but no one reviewing these two years will fail to appreciate our forward march in the face of all kinds of difficulties.

Unarmed and peaceful, we faced a proud empire, not looking for aid to any other country and relying only on ourselves. We had faith in our leader, our country and in ourselves. This gave us the strength that

sustained us during our struggle for independence. If we had faith and self-confidence when to outward seeming we were powerless, then surely we are much better off today when we are a free people with the strength of a great country behind us. Why then should our faith and our confidence in ourselves weaken? It is true that we have tremendous economic and other difficulties to face; it is also true that while we have rehabilitated lakhs of refugees, large numbers still remain to be helped and rehabilitated. But we have faced even bigger problems in the past. Why should we not face these in the same way also? We must not let our minds get entangled in petty questions and difficulties and forget the main issues.

We belong to a great country, a country that is not only great physically but in things far more important. If we are to be worthy of our country, we must have big minds and big hearts, for small men cannot face big issues or accomplish big tasks. Let each one of us do his duty to his country and to his people and not dwell too much on the duty of others. Some people get into the habit of criticizing others without doing anything themselves. Nothing good can come out of that type of criticism. So, wherever you may be, whether you are in the Army or the Air Force or the Navy or in the civil employ of the Government, each one of you must do your duty efficiently and in a spirit of service to the nation. If the vast number of our countrymen apply themselves to their tasks in their innumerable capacities and co-operate with others, forgetting the petty things that divide them, we shall marvel at the speed with which India will progress.

I want you to think for a moment of the days when we fought the battle of India's freedom without arms and without much by way of resources. We had a great leader who inspired us. We had other leaders, too, but it was the masses of this country who bore the brunt of the struggle. They had faith in their country and their leaders and they relied upon themselves. Today, we have more strength than we ever had. It is, therefore, surprising that some people should feel dejected, have no confidence in themselves and complain all the time.

Let us get back the purposefulness, the enthusiasm, the self-confidence and the faith which moved us at the time of our struggle for freedom. Let us put aside our petty quarrels and factions and think only of the great objective before us.

In our foreign policy, we have proclaimed that we shall join no power bloc and endeavour to co-operate and be friendly with all countries. Our position in the world ultimately depends on the unity and strength of the country, on how far we proceed in the solution of our economic and other problems and on how much we can raise the depressed masses of India. We may not be able to complete that task, for it is colossal. Even so, if we make some headway it will be easier for others to complete the task.

A nation's work never ends. Men may come and go, generations may pass but the life of a nation goes on. We must remember the basic fact that we can achieve little unless there is peace in the country, no matter what policy we pursue. There are some misguided people who indulge in violence and try to create disorder. I wonder how anybody with the least intelligence can think in terms of such anti-national activities. Bomb throwing, for instance, can do the country no good. On the contrary, it further aggravates our economic situation, which is a source of great anxiety to us. Therefore, it is the duty of everyone, no matter what his politics, to help in the maintenance of peace in the country.

The people have every right to change laws and even to change governments and they can exercise that right in a peaceful and democratic manner. But those who choose the path of violence have no faith in democracy. If their way were to prevail, there would be complete chaos in the country and the condition of the people would deteriorate even more. All progress would cease and the next few generations would have to carry a heavy burden.

I am still more distressed by those who, while condemning violence, join hands with those who indulge in violence. They think only in terms of winning an election and forget that the cause of the country and of the people is bigger than any party. If we forget India and her people while

pursuing our smaller objectives, then we are indeed guilty of betraying our country. I wish to emphasize that all of us must understand that our most important objective is the safety and security of India and the prosperity and advancement of her people. That can only be achieved effectively if we stop quarrelling amongst ourselves and try to solve the great problems that confront us by democratic and peaceful methods.

We must look at our problems in a proper perspective. If we are preoccupied with petty problems, we shall fail to solve the larger and more important ones.

We must learn to depend on ourselves and not look to others for help every time we are in trouble. Certainly we want to make friends with the rest of the world. We also seek the goodwill and co-operation of all those who reside in this country, whatever their race or nationality. We welcome help and co-operation from every quarter but we must depend primarily on our own resources. We should not forget that those who lean too much on others tend to become weak and helpless themselves. A country's freedom can be preserved only by her own strength and self-reliance.

We are not hostile to any country and we do not want to meddle in other people's affairs. Every nation should be free to choose the path it considers best. We do not wish to interfere with the freedom of other nations and we expect them to feel the same about our freedom. That is why we have decided not to join any of the power blocs in the world. We will remain aloof and try to be friendly to all. We intend to progress according to our own ideas. We have decided to follow this policy, not only because it is essentially a sound one from our country's point of view but also because it seems to be the only way to serve the cause of world peace. Another world war will spell ruin and we shall not escape the general disaster. We are determined to make every possible effort in the cause of peace. That explains our present foreign policy.

Perhaps you know that I am shortly going to visit a country which is great and powerful. I propose to carry with me a message of friendship and assurances of co-operation from our people. Keeping our own freedom

intact, we wish to befriend other nations. Our friendship with one country should not be interpreted as hostility to another.

Asia is passing through a great revolutionary phase and naturally India has also been affected. In other parts of Asia there is struggle and ferment. This morning's newspaper contained the news of trouble and upheaval in a small but important country of Western Asia. We do not know all the facts and in any event I do not wish to express an opinion. All I want to say is that the prevalence of violence and violent methods weaken a country and undermine her progress.

In Eastern Asia, a great and ancient country is experiencing revolutionary changes of tremendous significance. Whatever our individual reactions to these may be, our policy, namely, that we do not wish to interfere in any way with the internal affairs of other countries, is clear. Each country should have the freedom to go the way it chooses. It is for its people to decide their future. Any attempt at outside interference or compulsion must necessarily lead to evil results. No country can impose freedom on any other. That is a contradiction in terms. The world has a great deal of variety and it should be no one's business to suppress this variety or to impose ways of thinking and acting on others. We should, therefore, survey world events in a spirit of understanding and friendship to all.

Our Constituent Assembly is busy framing a new constitution for India and soon we shall adopt a republican form of government. However, laws and constitutions do not by themselves make a country great. It is the enthusiasm, energy and constant effort of a people that make it a great nation. Men of Law lay down constitutions but history is really made by great minds, large hearts and stout arms; by the sweat, tears and toil of a people.

Let us, therefore, learn to study our country's problems in the larger perspective of the world and let us not permit the minor questions of the day to overwhelm us. I have faith in India and her great destiny. A country must have military strength but armed power does not by itself constitute a

country's real strength. Her real strength lies in the capacity of her people for disciplined work. Only hard work can produce wealth for us and rid us of our poverty. Each one of us, man or woman, young or old, must, therefore toil and work. Rest is not for us. We did not win our freedom so that we might rest afterwards but in order to work harder to hold and strengthen that freedom. There is a great difference between the voluntary labour of a free man for an objective of his choice and the drudgery of a slave. Our labours as free men and women will lay the foundations for a great future and our labour of love for the cause of India and her people will endure; so will the fact that we are building, brick by brick, the great mansion of free India. There is joy in such work and even when we have departed that work will be there for future generations to see.

One of our most important problems today is that of growing more food. We must avoid wasting food at all costs. We must conserve our present resources with great care. We have to tighten our belts. If the co-operation of the people is forthcoming, we shall solve not only this problem but many others. Our petty squabbles and party differences can wait. What is vital and important for us is to keep before us the picture of a great India. India is enduring and will continue to be there long after we are gone.