

Four years are not a very long period in the life of a nation. Yet it is true that the last four years seem to be an age so far as India is concerned. Vital experiences the Indian people have passed through have apparently lengthened the span of these years considerably.

I sometimes wonder what would have happened had the people of India not passed through the trials and tribulations which had fallen to their lot during the past four years.

Even today, when times are hard, many people are prone to be careless, ease-loving and selfish, much to the detriment of the nation. Naturally, I fear to imagine that if the times were not so difficult, perhaps the whole nation might have fallen a prey to carelessness and selfishness. Nothing can be more dangerous and deplorable than that a nation should become careless and forget its ideals.

What was that power which inspired us in our fight for freedom? That power was the strength of our minds, of the hearts of millions of ordinary men whom Mahatma Gandhi had taught not to be afraid even of the mightiest imperialist power. If that strength of heart and mind was lacking, then no other power could save the country.

It is, therefore, proper that on this anniversary day of nation's freedom, the people should look back and ponder over what had increased their strength and had helped them in winning freedom. At the same time, they should pledge to avoid all those pitfalls which had weakened India in the past and made her the slave of others.

Unfortunately, many people believe that after independence their work has been completed. This attitude is utterly wrong because, for the maintenance of independence, eternal vigilance is necessary and whosoever is not vigilant is bound to go under in the harsh merciless world of today.

I am proud of the Indian Army, Navy and Air Force which are manned by brave young men who can be depended upon to protect the country. But, a country can ultimately be defended only by its people and not by

armies alone. The security of the country depends on whether the people are brave or not, and whether they entangle themselves in minor conflicts or care for big things.

There is great need for hard work. A country whose people shirk work is bound to be weakened. Along with hard work, united action is necessary. People must remember that we are all sailing in the same boat. We have, therefore, to sink or swim together. If the country goes ahead, all are bound to be benefited. But if, unfortunately, it goes under, nobody will be able to escape his doom.

Some foolish people may try to disturb national unity either out of sheer stupidity or because of their calculated move to weaken the country. I have heard that some persons tried to create some trouble in the city of Delhi this morning or last night. It is the bounden duty of the people to frustrate each and every move of such foolish people.

People are facing the problems of rising prices, black marketing and other such difficulties. These problems are created by two factors, first, those which are out of our control, like the Korean war, and secondly, those which can be controlled by us. The black market is of the latter category and any government should try to curb it with an iron hand. Perhaps, in the past that vice had not been combated as effectively as it ought to have been. But then it was not merely the responsibility of the Government to do that. People also had to cooperate with the Government and both had to find a way out of the mess.

The success of the five-year plan depends upon the measure of people's support. Many people have suggested that we should get foreign aid in order to push through national projects. Foreign aid is welcome if no strings are attached to it. But the people must realise that we cannot go on looking towards outsiders for help.

Moreover, silver and gold alone, howsoever important they are, do not constitute by themselves the wealth of a nation. In fact, the real wealth of a nation is the hard work of its people. Government help may be there, but the work has to be done by the people. For instance, China is making

rapid progress because its people are working hard. Each village there is competing in a friendly manner with every other village to construct and produce more and more, and naturally great results are being produced. The United States of America is another example worth following. This country is the richest in the world because its people work hard to produce wealth. In India also some people in villages have built roads and public buildings without depending on Government machinery which is inevitably slow.

I appeal to you not to look down upon manual work and to keep up the dignity of labour. It is not proper for everyone to seek office jobs. You must produce with your own hands.

A world war will completely destroy civilization as it exists today and will take the world back to savagery. Korea ought to be a lesson to those who talk glibly of war. That unfortunate country has been almost completely devastated by a war between two great powers. People claim that they have gone to Korea to liberate it. I am afraid that soon there might not be left any Korean to need liberation.

That is why India has consistently followed a policy for world peace and particularly for peace with its neighbour, Pakistan. It has to be understood that partition has been brought about by mutual agreement and has to be accepted. Therefore, all talk of its annulment is wrong, and does no good to anybody.

War drums are being beaten in Pakistan and there is a cry for jihad. India has naturally taken precautionary measures, for the defence of the country is our primary responsibility. At the same time we have made it clear that we want no war with anybody, much less with Pakistan.

I am grateful to the people of India who have remained perfectly calm despite sabre-rattling on the other side of the border. Even in our border areas people are carrying on their normal vocations unruffled. This is a sign of our strength and our peaceful intentions.

I want to tell the people of Pakistan and the whole world that there is

no reason why the bonds which had tied the people of India and Pakistan so long should now be broken. Why should the two countries waste their strength in mutual conflict?

I urge the people of India not to bear any ill will towards the people of Pakistan. There are good people and bad people on both sides. If some people in Pakistan do something wrong, it does not mean that we should consider the whole nation as our enemy.