

Dudman's Clear Path

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INDIA'S CLEAR PATH

BY DR. GEORGE S. ARUNDALE

*(An address given before the Y.M.C.A.,
Vepery, Madras, on the 8th October 1940)*

DR. V. K. JOHN, CHAIRMAN: Ladies and Gentlemen, we are all met to hear Dr. Arundale speak to us this afternoon on the present situation. Wherever Dr. Arundale speaks I have been anxious to attend, for the reason I have found that he thinks and feels in a way different from us ordinary mortals and he has the gift to translate his thoughts and emotions into language. I am sure you will listen with great pleasure and profit to what he has to tell us.

DR. ARUNDALE: Dr. John and Friends, I do not know whether my views are substantially different from the views of those around me, but at least I can say that whatever my views are, they are my own views, they come from my heart and they are as fraught with intelligence as I am able to make them.

I am not concerned with agreeing or disagreeing with this, that, or the other political party. I am concerned with the effort to try to speak my honest word, and I think that if we all tried to do that, if we all tried not to echo the views of others, but, as best we could, to speak our own, we should be

very much more helpful than if we are just part of a crowd, part of that which happened to be the popular opinion for the moment.

I find myself here to speak to you on the International Situation just as I see it and not necessarily as you will see it. I see it in my own way, and I work in order that, as best I can, I may spread my views everywhere and that they may be accepted, not to convince people, but in order to try to show any audience I may have what is my particular individual sincerity.

WHY WAR?

Why war at all? So far as I am concerned, I think that war is a part of the evolutionary process. So far as I know, the world has never been without war. I will go further: I will say that war is going on all the time, whether it be the kind of war that we generally call war or some other kind. We war with words. We war in our daily lives. We quarrel, we are angry, we are irritable, we have all kinds of weaknesses. All that is war of a particular kind. We are continually in the habit of warring, so that war is a constant factor in the evolutionary process and in the individual life of every one of us. We are all of us warriors, fighters of one kind or another. I think if only you look into your own individual lives, you will see that from time to time you do fight. You may fight in the midst of your family perchance, or you may fight with your friends, or you may fight in other ways, but there is always more or less occasion for fighting, for disagreement, for an act of war either on the plane of the mind or on the plane of the emotions, so that in the life of every single individual there is the spirit of war.

Why then, particularly at certain times, does war occur? I think that when one has such a war as we have at the present time throughout the world, there is an accumulation

of all the little wars taking place in the individual homes, in family lives. All these contribute to a war-to-be. By the various cruelties we may perpetrate without necessarily being conscious of them, by the various hatreds we may generate, by the various angers which we may let loose, by all the various ways in which we are in a state of war with those who happen to be in our surroundings—when there comes an accumulation of all that, then it bursts as a kind of abscess either upon a part of the world, as is sometimes the case, or upon the whole of the world as it is at the present time.

The War Spirit at Work

Hence this world-wide war born of hatred, born of suspicion, born of distrust, born of anger, born of every vice which may be inherent in humanity. It works itself out in a war of the magnitude of the present world-wide conflagration, so that I should like to make very clear my belief that each one of us is responsible for this war directly as well as indirectly. There is no use anyone saying, unless he is a very perfect individual like the Lord Christ, or the Lord Buddha, or the Lord Sri Krishna, or any of the other great Saviours of the world, that "This war has nothing to do with me." We add to the war by our warlike activities on whatever plane of consciousness these warlike activities may be.

Suppose I am irritable with a servant. One is very much more apt to be irritable with one's subordinates than with one's superordinates, with one's inferiors rather than with one's superiors. It is quite natural. Suppose I am irritable, angry, annoyed, suppose I speak sharply or loudly to him, I am contributing to the war spirit throughout the world.

We must try to remember that there is no isolation in the world, that the world is one great Unity, whatever may be the differences which separate us as to religion, race, nationality, or as to any other demarcation. There is a

Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, and we are within that Universal Brotherhood, not only despite the differences but perhaps even more truly because of them.

If anyone says, "India has nothing to do with the war," I should reply, "Whenever the war spirit is in you, whenever weaknesses display themselves in you, whenever you give expression to that which is unkind, untrue, unjust, then you bring yourself within the war." From that point of view alone every country is in this world war, whether actively participating in it or not.

When people say, "This is an imperialistic war"—and know very little what imperialism really is—when people assert, "This is a war which only concerns Britain and Europe," or "This is a war for the redemption of the Christian civilization," they can from one point of view, though an erroneous one, regard the war in such a manner, but from the truer point of view we are brothers, and our brothers are everywhere throughout the world. From the standpoint of that Universal Brotherhood and the fact that we are our brothers' friends and helpers, and we are interdependent, however we may label this war, it is a war of us all.

Evil Seeks to Dominate the World

That is the universal way of looking at it. But from the emotional, the mental, the psychological standpoint, when we come down to a more ordinary point of view and we compare the fighters on one side and the fighters on the other side, we have the most overwhelming evidence that this is a period in the world's history when evil seeks to dominate not merely Europe, not merely those places where war is actually taking place, but evil seeks to dominate the whole of the world.

I do not think that any sensible individual can come to any other conclusion than that, so far as Germany and Italy are concerned, they represent the forces of evil, and that that

which is opposed to them must necessarily represent the forces of Good. Not that in the forces of Good there may not be weaknesses, injustices, wrongs. Not that there may not be a taint—we will not say of definite evil but certainly something less than Good, but the opposition is certainly one of evil force. One sees clearly that wherever Germany, at least, is dominating any particular country evil is let loose throughout that country, so that evil becomes a far greater menace than ever before, because it becomes more widely spread.

I myself take particular interest in that beautiful country of Poland, which I happen to know particularly well, having visited it many times. I have many friends in Poland as well as many friends among the refugees from Poland. You cannot have any idea of the horrors and atrocities committed by Germany in that wonderful country, simply because Germany wants to crush Poland out of existence, and everything Germany can do to crush Poland she does, largely through an endeavour to do every possible evil to the women of Poland, to those who are, after all, the very heart of the country itself. The same is taking place in Holland, in Belgium, in France, all countries where I have numbers of friends.

But we do not merely have to look at Germany or Italy in order to see the forces of evil at work. We can go into an eastern land and see Japan as a representative of evil wreaking her horrible activities on that very beautiful age-old and supremely philosophic country, China. I am afraid it must be confessed that India has been sorely lacking in her duty not to stand up far more ardently for China than she has stood up. China is almost a blood brother of India. China is a great eastern land as India is also a great eastern land. One would have hoped that through public opinion—India has not much capacity to express herself otherwise—India would have ranged herself by the side of China, so that the whole world might have known that India stands shoulder to shoulder with

her brother eastern land. We have been so much preoccupied with our own internal affairs that we have forgotten to look abroad.

Two Schools of Opinion

The menace of evil is no less in the East than in the West. These are days for evil to try to ascend the throne of the world, and the endeavour for world-domination is being made as much in the East as it very obviously is in the West. So I say this war is a war for which we have our own responsibility; no matter how far away from the war we may seem to be, we are also vitally concerned in the war; we know very well, we do not need any Government communiqué to tell us, that if Germany and Italy win, and one or another of the so-called Axis countries is added to them, the whole world, and especially India, will be in the worst possible plight. There is no doubt about it whatever. I think that is generally understood and believed and agreed to throughout the length and breadth of the land.

The difference here lies in the fact that there are two schools of opinion—the one inclining to the belief that unless India's political demands can be satisfied, she cannot enter this war, and the other school of thought being along the lines that unless India enters the war, there will be no political demands to be satisfied.

I have always been one during the whole period of my nearly forty years of life in India to stand up fully for India's rights, for India's future, for India's freedom. In fact with my revered leader, Dr. Besant, I was interned by the Madras Government about twenty-three years ago for advocating Swaraj and Home Rule, and we were sent to Ootacamund and stayed there for about three months under the hospitality of His Majesty's Government, until public opinion became so strong, with the aid of Gandhiji, that we had to be released and duly were released. But at the time we were interned we

did not know whether or not we would be kept in "durance vile" for the duration of the war. But I take things lightly, and when they tapped me on the shoulder and said I was to be His Majesty's guest, to me it was a very good joke. I accepted the hospitality, not in the spirit it was accorded me, for I do not think it was a very favourable spirit, but rather as an opportunity to be of greater service to my adopted Motherland.

I feel as strongly as ever for Swarâj for India. I cannot change my particular political coat so far as that is concerned. There is no one more ardent for India's freedom than I am. I think and feel and dream all day long and I hope all night long too—I hope I do not waste my nights by refraining from my daytime activity which is ardently demanding India's undoubted rights.

The Menace to India

But the war is upon us, and I say to myself that the war is a far greater menace to India than the fact that she does not receive from Britain what she should receive. I am perfectly clear that if Germany and Italy win the war, India's fate is sealed for a considerable time to come. I have not the slightest doubt about that.

THIS IS INDIA'S WAR

I therefore say with a full heart and being intent on India's Swaraj: "Let all else go if necessary for the time being. This is India's war, and India must concentrate on Britain winning the war. Do not be deceived by such labels as "Imperialism," or any other such adjectives. Pay no attention to such comments as "This war does not concern us," "This is a European war," "This is a Christian war." This is a war that concerns not only the Christian faith but every religion throughout the world. This is a Holy War,

this is a Religious War. As for "imperialism," imperialism is as dead as dead can be. We know perfectly well that in Britain there is not such a thing as imperialism. You get a reflection here and think that Britain is reeking with it.

Britain is almost the most unimaginative country in the whole world. I was much interested to read in a recent issue of a very conservative and respectable journal, *The Spectator*, that the present Government of Britain is, as usual, an unimaginative Government. I am doing all I can through telegrams and cables and perhaps many other useless efforts to wake up my British brethren to realize what their duty is to India at the present time. There is nothing more distressing to me, there is nothing which can cause me more sleepless nights than the thought that Britain is misusing her opportunity today and again day after day. I see the whole situation perfectly clearly. I see that it is the British Parliament's duty to advise His Majesty the King-Emperor that it is appropriate that a great Declaration should be made by the King-Emperor Himself, declaring India's Self-Government in the fullest and most responsible way. I see that that should be done without delay. Whether any attention is paid or not, I can but go on hammering and hammering and hammering.

I am not thinking of the results. Those are in God's hands, not mine. I did not create the world. I am not responsible for the world. All I can do is to give my little best to the world while I happen to be in it. As for results, I do not bother about them. I hammer and hammer and hammer. If nobody pays any attention, it does not matter. If they do, so much the better. As the proverb says, "Blessed is he that expecteth nothing, for he generally gets it." There is a great deal of truth, a great deal of solace, in those words to every one of us who is fighting in any field whatever. If we expect nothing and get nothing, we are not troubled. If we expect nothing and get something we ascend into the seventh heaven of delight. But so far as the British Government's

ears are concerned, they have been absolutely deaf, not only to my insistencies but to the insistencies of many other people far more important and more competent to speak on India's behalf than I could ever be.

While I say all this, so far as Britain is concerned, to India I say; If Britain does not do her duty, that is Britain's business. India is the older, the greater country. India is the Head of the family of nations and certainly will be that in all reality in due course of time, without, I hope, any unreasonable delay. India is the Head of the world family of nations. India is the older brother of every nation. India must set the example.

India must not wait until Britain does something. She must see her duty and do it. She must brush Britain aside if Britain does not do her duty and be intent on doing her own. Self-interest demands that India shall do her duty. Self-preservation insists that India shall throw herself with her whole heart into the war. This is a war for India's own freedom. This is a war for India's continued existence even as she is, and still more for that greater life which awaits her in the future.

What India Can Give

When I talk of India's throwing herself into the war, I do not think so much of men, of money, and of material. Somehow or other that particular idea grates upon me. I know very well that the most precious contribution India can make to any cause of any kind is the great force of her soul. Her Soul-Force is her most priceless asset. I like to go about saying; If you can contribute men, well and good. If you can contribute material, well and good. If you can contribute money, well and good, so long as it is on a voluntary basis and we are perfectly sure there is not the slightest element of coercion. But what I want to see is the will of the people, the village people, the poor people, the people who are closest

to Mother India, the people who live nearest to her sacred soil, I want to see them all blessing the war, for that blessing they could give would ensure to the war a victory far sooner than it would ever be achieved otherwise by any western land alone.

I do not hesitate to say India and Britain can end the war quickly. Britain alone can and will end the war, but not so quickly. I do not hesitate to say that India and Britain can achieve a righteous and an enduring peace. I say that Britain alone will not be able to achieve an enduring peace, but rather a patched-up peace such as we had in 1918, which was no peace at all.

East and West Together

The time has come for the East and the West to unite. The time has come for the East and the West to work together as brothers. The time has come for the East and the West to work in the interests of a greater civilization than the world has so far known. If India be left out, so much the worse for the whole of the world. Each nation has a life in terms of the other nations of the world. Each must reveal its ideal for the sake of the whole world.

India must arise and take her part in this world-wide struggle between Good and evil, between Freedom and slavery, between Justice and tyranny. I feel so strongly about it that I become impatient with those who seem to me to tend to avoid the real issue. We know that Gandhiji went to see the Viceroy in order that there might be freedom for people to oppose the war, in order that there might be "freedom of speech"—a magnificent slogan undoubtedly, and we are all in favour of it. But this is the time when we have to work as one, when that very freedom and liberty has to be given up and is given up in every combatant country throughout the world for the sake of a united effort. I think it was a very grave error to ask the Viceroy to sanction something which

he could not possibly approve. In fact it was exercising the greatest freedom of speech even to suggest such a course of action to the Viceroy, and especially to make an issue of that particular point. I could have understood it on the issue of independence, if he had said, "We will not and cannot enter the war unless and until our independent status is assured." I am afraid I feel India has not been wisely led when such an issue has arisen as exists at the present moment.

Two Great Gestures

I want to see two great gestures made: one great gesture by Britain, another by India. I do not care which comes first. Some people say, "Let Britain give us Self-Government and then we will participate in the war." That is ignoble, that is bargaining. That is sordid commercialism, which is quite unthinkable. There are many who emphasize the slogan, "Britain, do your duty." If the whole of India everywhere wished to do so, we might have a "Britain, Do Your Duty Day." I am quite prepared to address meetings on this day. But then I should insist that we follow it by an "India, Do Your Duty Day." And if Britain turns a deaf ear to the slogan chanted by millions of Indian lips, I should insist, "India, you are not concerned with sitting on the doorstep of Britain, praying for alms, crying, 'Please give me this, that, and the other.' You are concerned with doing whatever you conceive to be your own honourable and dignified duty."

It is for India to say, "We enter this war not just for Britain's sake, not for the sake of Europe, not for the sake of the war aims as they are stated seven thousand miles away, but for the sake of our own honourable and dignified future." This has to be done, and until it is done I doubt if we are going to advance any further. Until Britain does her duty to India, and India does her duty to the world, the world is not going to be a happy place to live in.

India Can Lead the World

India is the spiritual Mother of the world. Every great religion is represented in this land. There is nothing more marvellous than to think that there are Hindu Indians, there are Muhammadan Indians, there are Christian Indians, there are Parsi Indians, there are Buddhist Indians, there are Sikh, Jain, Hebrew Indians, there are Indians of every faith, all of them Indians but following different ways, each way as beautiful, as splendid and as glorious as all the other ways, and each way to every individual who treads it the quickest and the most wonderful way to God.

How true it is that there is a great fellowship of Faiths which is enriched by the wonderful differences between each, so necessary for the varied temperaments of God's great Family of Nations and of Peoples.

Being a Theosophist myself, and incidentally a Christian Theosophist, I have the greatest delight in reverencing every faith and trying to perceive in all its splendour the beauty of every faith. I have been able so to perceive the great glories of the great jewels which each faith is in the crown of Universal Truth. I say to myself, "Here in India, as in no other country throughout the world, every faith is nobly, splendidly, finely represented. What a tremendous force that makes."

India has her own wonderful tradition, her own magnificent background unique throughout the world, and I say to myself, "Yes, India is the land above all other lands which can lead the world."

India must be expected to lead the world and to make the war her war, so that she may contribute as much through her soul force to the victory which is certain as any other country can contribute through men, money and material.

One fact of very great interest emerges, and that is the extent to which every country which is on the side of Good and against evil day by day becomes more religious.

and more spiritually minded. I have letter after letter from very many friends in Britain who say to me that a wonderful change has come over the British people. They still have their faults and their weaknesses, but they realize that this is a holy war, they realize that they have the immense privilege of fighting under the generalship of the great Rishis, Saints, and Saviours of mankind. While most of them are Christians and look to our Lord the Christ as rightly they should, still do they begin to feel now that there are other faiths, and those faiths need their rightful and respected recognition and inclusion within the great Brotherhood of Truth.

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I shall now turn the meeting back to your virile chairman, who knows his mind and speaks his mind and lives both without fear impartially and without favour. I think it is very fortunate for the Legislative Council that he has been elected to its membership. We will be perfectly certain that when he takes his seat, his name will appear frequently in the records and no doubt he will occupy more than the average space occupied by the ordinary member of the Legislative Council in the columns of the press. At least I hope he will, because we want live wires, and he is one.

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AN INDIAN VIEW

DR. JOHN: "We could not have spent the last forty minutes more profitably. During the time Dr. Arundale was on his feet our minds and our hearts have been worked up in such a way that I can say there has been more activity in my brain and heart than for days together. Dr. Arundale said that he did not want to argue, neither did he want us to agree with him. I can say that every one of us is in perfect agreement with what he says.

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“ I can look back to 1917 when I was a young man in Law College and I remember that on reading a leading article in *New India* I led fifty students on a deputation from the Law College and assured Mrs. Besant of the support of the younger generation. As then, so today I am moved by the fact that what we Indians require is freedom for our country. If there be any Indian inside or outside of this hall who does not want freedom for his country, it pains my heart and I deeply sympathize with him.

“ I do not believe minorities should obstruct majorities. Nor should a majority oppress minorities. We want political freedom for ourselves as we want it for every country in the world.

“ We want political freedom, and this yearning is in part, if not mainly, due to the reading of the British conception of the right of a people to responsible institutions. Wherever Britain has conquered a people she has sowed on the very day of conquest the germs of freedom.

“ I am sure all Indians who are fair-minded will concede one thing—that if anybody else had occupied India, we would not now be having the struggle for freedom we have had for the last fifty years. Great Britain, though imperialistic, is democratic. Wherever she goes, Great Britain in the very nature of things fosters and develops free institutions. It is this very Britain which today is fighting single-handed for democracy in the new world.

“ I endorse the remarks of the speaker that we must not be indifferent to what is happening in this world. A mass of protoplasm may not react to what is round about it, but you men and women must see and think and consider and never be indifferent.”

The Chairman then called attention to the terrible havoc that Germany wreaks in every country she has conquered. “ If Germany wins, democracy will vanish from the face of the world. It is that democracy in England that has taught us

the ideals of freedom. If today we want freedom and are on the threshold of freedom, we must support that democracy that is fighting for its very life.

“Stand Up, O Bharata!”

Dr. John challenged any thinking reasonable Indian to admit that he would wish Britain to lay down arms and surrender to the Nazis. “The *Gita*, which is a scripture not only for Hindu Indians but for all Indians, tells Arjuna he must take up arms and do his duty even though it may mean he must kill his guru, which is the greatest crime that we Indians know. Lord Krishna did not say, ‘You must lay down arms and be non-violent’.”

The Chairman questioned the inconsistency of the Congress attitude in its *volte face* from willingness to participate in the war were freedom granted and its then repudiation of Gandhiji with its present surrender to his leadership and insistence on non-violence. He raised the additional point of inconsistency with its desire for free speech and its discipline of Mr. M. N. Roy. The rank and file of the Congress had not freedom to speak their minds if in disagreement with the leaders.

“We want freedom not only for the great and the mighty but for every man, woman and child in this country to speak his mind.

“If Britain is beaten in this war, not only is freedom gone but a form of Government of freedom in action consistent with the security of the State, that is also gone. I shall ask you in the phrase that our speaker of the evening has used before, to become, ‘war-minded and war-hearted’.”

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THE SECRETARY: “Dr. Arundale is not only a Britisher, he is a world citizen and President of a World Movement. When such a message comes from one with such new vision

and prophetic mind, I am sure we should be, as we all have been, persuaded by his sincere and earnest appeal. I am deeply grateful for his dynamic message. . . ."