

Strange Non-Violence...

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-Osho**



Gandhi had said to an American journalist, Louis Fisher... because Fisher had asked him, "You are against violence. If India becomes independent, what will happen to the biggest army in the world?" -- which was in India. "What will happen to your air force, your navy and all your war weapons?" -- a relevant question.

Gandhi said, "I will dissolve all armies, send them to the farms to work there, and I will drown all the weapons in the ocean. My country is going to be absolutely non-violent." India became independent. The army was not dissolved; the question was not even raised. On the contrary, India and Pakistan started a war. The three war planes -- the first to go over the Pakistan borders to bomb citizens -- were blessed by Gandhi. This is a strange kind of non-violence.

When India was under British rule, non-violence was a good policy because India could not have managed any armed revolution against the British -- that was impossible. The only way was what Gandhi did: "Fill the prisons. Go and declare to the prison authorities, 'We are for independence. If you want to imprison us, imprison us.'"

Now, India is a vast country. Today its population is eight hundred million. Where can you find so many prisons?

And Gandhi insisted that no freedom fighter do anything which could provoke and provide an excuse to the British government to be violent. "Don't throw a stone at a police station. Don't burn a train, don't dynamite a bridge, because anything done by you will be enough excuse for the British government to kill thousands of people. And we will not be able to stand before the world to say that we are non-violent and non-violent people are being killed who have not done any harm. Then we will not be able to gain the sympathy of the whole world."

This is simple strategy, and Gandhi succeeded in his strategy; he really confused the British government. What to do with this man? He would not do any violence, nor would he allow his followers to do any violence, and if people are not doing anything, how can you start shooting them? On what grounds?

Finally Britain decided to leave India -- not because of Gandhi's movement; his movement happened in 1942, and the British government left India in 1947. Revolution brings an immediate effect. Cause and effect are joined, not five years apart. The revolution that happened in 1942 in India was crushed within nine days. Never in history has there been such an impotent revolution, ever. Nine days, and the whole revolution had disappeared.

There was no reason for the British government to be afraid of such a revolution and let India be free. India was almost half the empire of Britain. The reason why they left was totally different. The reason was that they had exploited India enough; now there was no more possibility to exploit it. On the contrary, it was becoming an economic burden on Britain. They were the rulers, obviously they were responsible for the people, and the responsibility was growing every day as India's

population was growing. It is simple arithmetic that if an empire becomes an economic burden on you, then the best way out is to make it free. Let them have their own responsibility. And moreover, it was beautiful to give India freedom while there was no revolution, so you could maintain a friendship with the country. You have not been thrown out, but by your own will you have made the country free. You have obliged the country.

So as far as Gandhi's non-violence goes, the moment Britain left India, non-violence also disappeared. And a strange coincidence is, that Gandhi had been for forty years continuously forcing people not to be violent. He had no discipline, no method of meditation that could recreate a man's energy, could transform his being and make him non-violent. He had only this ideology: don't be violent.

And violence is within you. It is man's inheritance of millions of years, it needs tremendous work to change it. Gandhi had not given any idea how it had to be changed. But "Don't be violent" meant repress it, go on repressing. For forty years he managed to force Indians to repress their violence. And his logic was appealing: "If you are violent, Britain is never going to leave India. If you are non-violent, then sooner or later they will be ashamed of keeping an innocent, non-violent country in slavery."

So people remained non-violent for forty years, and as Britain left India, a tremendous violence exploded in India.

-Osho, *From Death to Deathlessness* # 15

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