

The Voice had to be listened to, not only on account of its form but for the matter which it delivered. It gave a message to the country that it needed greatly. It brought to the common people a realization of their duty to concern themselves with their affairs. The common people were made to take an interest in the manner in which they were governed, in the taxes they paid, in the return they got from those taxes. This interest in public affairs—politics as you may call it—was to be the concern no longer of the highly educated few but of the many—the poor, the propertyless, the workingmen in town and country. Politics was not to be the concern of a small aristocracy of intellect or property of the masses. And with the change in the subjects of politics that Voice brought about also a change in the objects of politics. Till then politics had busied itself mainly with the machinery of Government towards making its personnel more and more native, with proposals for a better distribution of political power, with protests against the sins of omission and of commission of the administration. This Voice switched politics on to concern for the needs of the common people. The improvement of the lot of the poor was to be the main concern of politics and the politician. The improvement, especially of the lives of the people of the neglected villages, was to be placed before Governments and political organizations as the goal of all political endeavour. The raising of the standard of living of the people of the villages, the finding of subsidiary occupations which would give the agricultural poor work for their enforced leisure during the off season and an addition to their exiguous income, the improvement of the housing of the poor, the sanitation of the villages—these were to be the objectives to be kept in view. In the towns, the slums and *cheries* were to receive especial attention. There was especially a class of the poor for which that compassionate Voice pleaded and protested. This was for the so-called **depressed class, the outcastes of Hindu society**. The denial of elementary human rights to this class of people is considered the greatest blot on Hindu society and history. It raised itself in passionate protest against the age-old wrongs of this class and forced those that listened to it to endeavour to remove the most outrageous of them like **untouchability**. It caused a revolution in Hindu religious practice by having Hindu temples thrown open to these people. It made the care of them a religious duty of the Hindus by re-naming them Harijans.



—Mr. Ruthnasami

QUESTIONS

1. Why had people to listen to “The Voice” of Mahatma Gandhi ?
2. Why had people to take an interest in politics ?
3. What was the change brought about in the objects of politics ?
4. What improvements were made for the common man ?
5. Explain :—
 - (a) Sins of omission and of commission of the administration.
 - (b) No longer the monopoly of the classes, but the property of the masses.



Wren & Martin Exercise #02

(1)

The people had to listen to "The Voice" of Mahatma Gandhi because of the important message it carried for the common people. It made them ^{realize} their much needed participation in the political affairs to fight for their basic rights. Also, it informed the common people that politics is not just for a selected few but everyone.

(2)

The people had to take interest in politics because of its concentration into the hands of a selected few elites. These elites were not interested about the rights of the common people. They were only concerned about the political power distribution among themselves.

(3)

The change was brought about in the objects of the politics to decentralise the power and distribute it properly among the masses. Priorly, the politics was only limited to a few families and they were manipulating it into their favor. Later on, it was shifted to fulfill the needs of common people.

(4)

A number of improvements were made for the common man. Firstly, the living standard of the people was upgraded. Secondly, the farmers were given extra opportunities to work in the off season and earn a living. Thirdly, the housing and the sanitization of villages were also improved. Finally, the special attention was given to the neglected minorities.

(5)

2) It means the wrong doings of the government by not allowing common people to be a part of administration and just

continue governing them.

b) It implies that the politics is not just for the elites but it is for everyone. So, it shouldn't be limited to just a few families.