

PRESS NOTE

9/11 1906 vs 9/11 2001 A Revelation: Commemoration event of September 11, 1906, the Birth of Satyagraha in light of September 11, 2001

September 11, 2001, now known as 9/11, terrorism struck on America, grounded to dust the symbols of American power. Counter-terrorism in its revenge grounded to dust two nations. Thus started the vicious cycle of, violence and counter-violence, feelings of fear, hatred and aggression... an unending chain of, “an-eye-for-an-eye”.

History sometimes takes such turn in the life of nations that it radically changes nations' relationship with themselves and with rest of the world. Either the reigns of destiny slip into foreign hands, turning sovereign people into agents, subordinates and slaves; or, the reigns of destiny rollback into one's own hands and nations regain dignity, freedom and sovereignty. Representing the contrary turns of history 9-11 of 2001 and 9-11 of 1906 stand face-to-face in juxtaposition, both challenge each-other. It is no ordinary coincidence that on the same date as Satyagraha was borne the world is once more thrown in the throws of extremism of violence and counter violence. One 9/11 shows the path of liberation from fear and domination; the other enslaves us to fear and domination.

Today, we remember 9/11 frightfully for the most shocking show of terrorist violence in this age. We have forgotten that the ultimate antidote to brute force and repression was also born on the same day, slightly less than a century back.

It was 9/11, 1906 in South Africa that Satyagraha was born as an antidote to hatred, fear and domination.

Thus, we at 'Swarajpeeth' and 'Nonviolent Peaceforce' firmly believe that we have far better reasons to celebrate the day as a mark of human liberation from fear and violence, than to commemorate it as a day of fear and terrorism. Thus, one 9/11 shows the path of liberation from fear and domination; the other enslaves us to fear and domination.

It must also be noted that the Advent of Satyagraha as Gandhiji calls it, was a combined action of Hindus, Muslims and others.

In order to carry forward the spirit of Satyagraha, 'Swarajpeeth' and 'Nonviolent Peaceforce' initiated a process of dialogue amongst communities.

To commemorate the Birth of Satyagraha, 9/11, 1906, a group of citizens involved in a dialogue on non-violence will dedicate themselves to be the Messengers of Peace and Non-violence as Shanti-Sainiks.