THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

LXXVI (1942)

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VOLUME SEVENTY-SIX

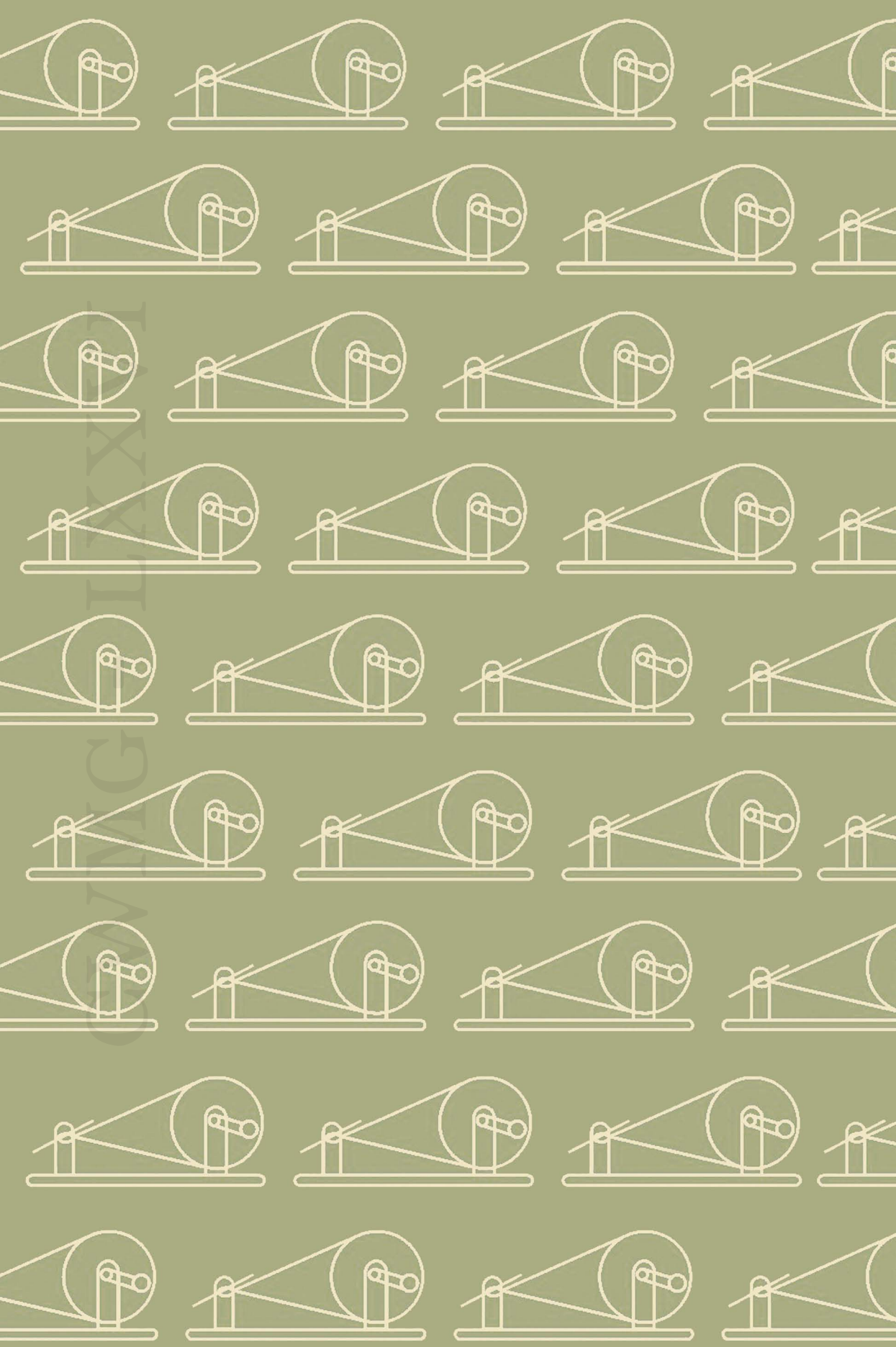


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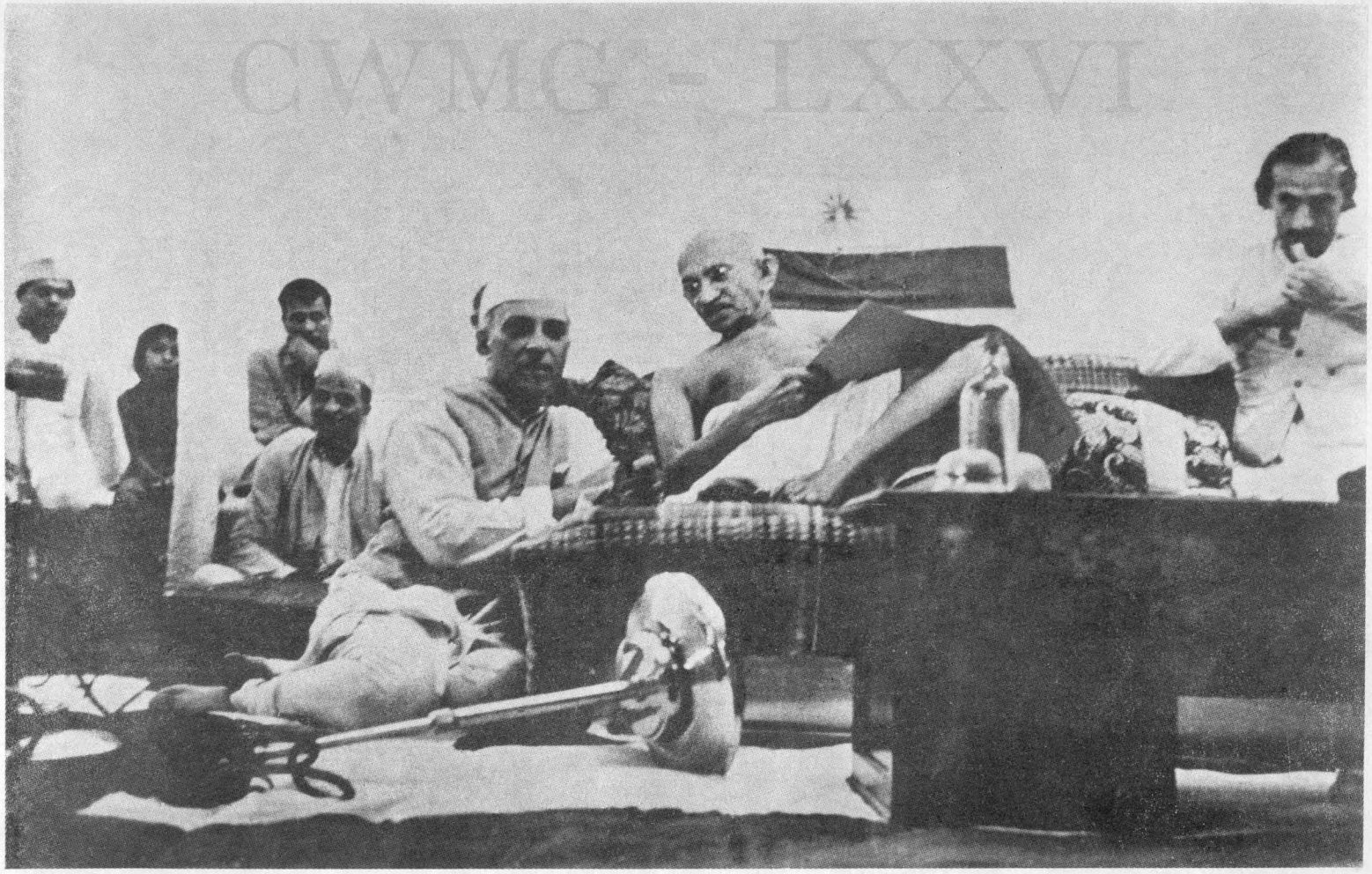
THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

LXXVI

(April 1, 1942 – December 17, 1942)

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AT THE A.I.C.C. MEETING IN BOMBAY

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF
MAHATMA GANDHI

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THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION
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PREFACE

The period covered by the present volume (April 1 to December 17, 1942) marks the most momentous phase of India's struggle for freedom. At no other period in its long history had the national movement been called upon to surmount such formidable problems of morale and organization. As the tempo of the war in the Far East mounted and the defences of the Empire crumbled everywhere, lacking as they did the sympathy and support of the local populations, statesmen in China and the USA—Britain's allies in the war—expressed concern and earnestly pleaded with Britain to make concessions to the national sentiment and come to an understanding with the Congress, so as to ensure India's willing and whole-hearted participation in the war effort. Britain bluntly told both to keep off the subject of India, and at the same time despatched Cripps to Delhi on a mission intended more to satisfy Britain's allies than to meet India's urgent demand.

The worst sufferer was Cripps himself, for he managed to displease not only all the shades of Indian political opinion but also the Viceroy and the Secretary of State. Commenting on his proposal for the Balkanization of India without any real transfer of control over defence, Gandhiji wrote : "I have no doubt about his goodwill . . . . But he should have known that at least the Congress would not look at Dominion Status. . . . He knew too that the proposal contemplated the splitting of India into three parts each having different ideas of governance. It contemplated Pakistan, and yet not the Pakistan of the Muslim League's conception. And last of all it gave no real control over defence to responsible ministers" (p. 28).

The failure of the Cripps mission widened the breach and precluded further dialogue between the Congress and the British Government. It also exposed the hollowness of the Allied claim that they were fighting the war in order to safeguard democracy in the world. "Both America and Britain," wrote Gandhiji, "lack the moral basis for engaging in this war, unless they put their own houses in order. . . . They have no right to talk about protecting democracies and protecting civilization and human freedom until the canker of white superiority is destroyed in its entirety" (p. 115).

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Gandhiji and the Congress leadership were forced into a situation where they had not only to mobilize the country for resisting the threatened Japanese invasion, but also, and in order to do this more effectively, to try and wrest for the country freedom from the foreign rule that had become a millstone round its neck. "My firm opinion," Gandhiji told an English friend, "is that the British should leave India now in an orderly manner." Such withdrawal he regarded as a military necessity both for India's and Britain's safety. "Britain cannot defend India, much less herself on Indian soil with any strength. The best thing she can do is to leave India to her fate" (p. 61). The reason, as Gandhiji was to put it in his draft resolution for the AICC, was clear, "There is an eternal conflict between Indian and British interests. It follows that their notions of defence would also differ. The British Government has no trust in India's political parties. The Indian army has been maintained up till now mainly to hold India in subjugation" (p. 63).

There was at the same time the deep-rooted anti-British feeling to consider which had become so pronounced in the country that it was beginning to be expressed in a pro-Japanese attitude. Gandhiji believed that voluntary British withdrawal would turn this hatred into goodwill and enable Indian leaders to arouse the people and organize resistance against the Japanese, help China and Russia more effectively and thus promote world peace. "I am convinced," he wrote further, " . . . that the time has come during the war, not after it, for the British and the Indians to be reconciled to complete separation from each other. That way and that way alone lies the safety of both . . . " (p. 86).

Gandhiji's proposal for "an orderly withdrawal by the British" raised strong doubts and provoked opposition even among some of his close colleagues and he patiently strove to win them over and to educate public opinion in India and abroad. It was also clear that the British could not be made to do the right thing without a struggle. The volume witnesses the unfolding of the pattern of this struggle, inspired and led personally by Gandhiji, till the passing of the famous "Quit India" resolution in August and the ruthless repression and reprisals that followed it.

Organizing such a movement proved an uphill task. To begin with, there were differences of opinion in the leadership which Gandhiji publicly admitted. "I do not mind telling you," he told a journalist, "that there are differences between me and the Working Committee. The whole nation is not with me on the non-violence question" (p. 3). These differences became

more glaring as the Japanese advanced to the borders of India, Vishakhapatnam and Kakinada and then Chittagong had been bombed and landings on the Eastern coast seemed imminent. Nehru, Azad and Rajagopalachari advocated armed resistance, guerilla struggle and even a scorched earth policy under certain circumstances. All this made Gandhiji unhappy. "My line is cut out for me even though I may be alone in my faith. I must follow it unfalteringly, believing the masses will never take to the violent method. They will either remain inert or take to non-violent action. Guerilla warfare can take us nowhere. If it is practised on a large scale, it must lead to disastrous consequences" (p. 52).

He was disinclined to attend the Working Committee meeting at Allahabad at the end of April. ". . . what shall I do by going there? I have the same one thing to offer" (p. 53). He told Vallabhbhai Patel that it was his duty to resign if the Working Committee did not adopt an unambiguous resolution of non-violent non-co-operation. And he added, "You must also oppose the scorched-earth policy and any suggestion to invite foreign troops" (p. 61). At the same time he sent through Mirabehn a draft resolution for the AICC (pp. 63-5) demanding British withdrawal from India, advocating complete non-violent non-co-operation to the Japanese forces, should they attack India, disapproving the scorched earth policy and introduction of foreign soldiers into India and calling upon the people whole-heartedly to take up the constructive programme, "banish communal strife" and "exorcise the demon of untouchability". To Nehru he wrote : "If you do not like my resolution I really cannot insist. The time has come when each of us must choose his own course" (p. 66). Though the AICC did not adopt Gandhiji's resolution as drafted by him, the alternative draft that was passed incorporated all the points he had made, including the one about non-violent non-co-operation against the Japanese "as the British Government has prevented the organization of national defence by the people in any other way" (p. 425).

Then there was the question of communal unity, which Gandhiji asserted was indispensable not only for attainment of independence but also for any successful resistance against Japan. Stressing the need for such unity, Gandhiji said: ". . . with the aggressor at the gates, more than ever unity is vital in India. I desire above all things to see a joint struggle against him and to achieve independence. In the very process of doing this, it is highly likely that we shall have forgotten our quarrels in the

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same common goal'' (pp. 25 and 29). But the Muslim League, with its two-nation theory, persisted in its demand for partition. Rajagopalachari was for conceding the demand. Gandhiji would have none of it. He emphatically declared : ''I consider the vivisection of India to be a sin. . . . Shri Rajagopalachari would be party in the sin. . . . What is more, I am firmly of opinion that there is no unity whilst the third party is there to prevent it. It created the artificial division and it keeps it up'' (p. 120). And again, ''. . .with the third party in possession, no unity—cultural, political or other—is possible. That is why withdrawal is a necessary preliminary to unity'' (p. 228). One notes here a shift from viewing communal disunity as a cause to viewing it as an effect of foreign rule. In any case the two were interrelated and the struggle against the one must at the same time serve as a struggle against the other. ''Today,'' Gandhiji wrote, ''we do not even know that the goal of the Congress and the League is one. And you cannot bribe the League to co-operate for independence'' (p. 167).

Gandhiji's stand on the Pakistan demand was as cruelly misrepresented by the Muslim League leaders and Press as his attitude to Japan was by the British Government and the British and American Press. Gandhiji could not accept the Pakistan of Jinnah's conception, a sovereign State which could go to war with the rest of the country or make independent treaties with other nations (p. 315). But he declared that if the Muslims really desired Pakistan they must have it, unless the Hindus wanted to fight, but this, he warned, was the way of suicide to which he would not be a living witness (p. 29). This was interpreted as an invitation to the Hindus to fight (p. 70). Jinnah described the Working Committee resolution as an attempt to blackmail and coerce the British to concede the demand for a Hindu Raj (p. 368), though Maulana Azad, the Congress President, had publicly made the offer that, if the British Government invited the Muslim League to form a provisional government, the Congress would co-operate. Gandhiji went further and said that the Congress would even join the Government formed by the Muslim League and help to run the machinery of the free State. ''This is meant in all seriousness and sincerity'' (p. 382) he said. But Jinnah was not to be deflected from his course of total opposition to the national movement for freedom. It seemed to Gandhiji that Jinnah did not want Pakistan by consent. While Gandhiji was prepared to reason with the Muslim League leaders, and to be convinced by them of the necessity of their

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demand, Jinnah insisted on Gandhiji meeting him as a Hindu leader on behalf of the Hindus and this, of course, barred the door to any further dialogue between the two leaders. And so Jinnah and the Muslim League stood in isolation from and indeed in opposition to the national movement for freedom.

The situation in the princely States like Travancore, Mysore and Jodhpur added yet another dimension to the problem. High-handedness of the administrators and suppression of the people's liberties in certain States had brought about conditions which could not be "described by any other adjective than lawless" (p. 84). Gandhiji continued to counsel the people to "remain calm and so far as possible not precipitate a clash" (p. 83). He appealed to the Princes to renounce their autocratic powers and become trustees of their subjects (pp. 183-4, 335-7 and 393). At the same time he appealed to the British Government to protect the people from the tyranny of the Princes : "The British Government cannot escape blame and responsibility for every such happening in the States. It is bound by treaty obligations to protect the people of the States from inhumanities such as those going on in Jodhpur . . . " (p. 221).

Law and order appeared to be breaking down all over the country. In Sind, following the arrest of a tribal leader, the Pir of Pagaro, the Hurs had gone on a rampage, plundering, killing and attacking railway stations. The Government was unable to curb them. Gandhiji advised "Congress members to withdraw from the Assembly and Khan Bahadur Allabux and his fellow ministers to resign". He asked them to "form a peace brigade and fearlessly settle down among the Hurs and risk their lives in persuading these erring countrymen to desist from the crimes" (p. 126). Dacoities were on the increase, especially in Gujarat. Gandhiji suggested that the people should defend themselves, with lathis if necessary. But they must get ready (pp. 226-7). When asked what they should do if they were refused permission to organize themselves for self-defence, he unhesitatingly answered : "People have to protect themselves against officials, against dacoits and possibly Japanese. If they do not, they are doomed. Therefore they may not brook any interference with their preparation . . . . What I have in mind is gymnastics, drill, lathi play and the like" (p. 133).

Shortage of food grains in certain areas of Punjab, Rajputana and Bengal had assumed the proportions of famine. Gandhiji appealed for local charity and for avoidance of waste. Government had sent out grain and what stocks were left were

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being hoarded by unscrupulous traders. Gandhiji suggested setting up of "grain offices like post offices where people can buy grain like stamps". He appealed to the "mercantile community to take the matter into their own hands and ensure a regular supply of grain to the poor at reasonable rates". He warned: "The matter brooks no delay. Hunger knows no law and bread—or rather grain—riots are sure to break out all over the country if energetic benevolent measures are not taken in time" (pp. 280-1).

Misbehaviour of troops, wherever they were stationed in civilian vicinity, was another irritant. Here again Gandhiji's advice was categorical : "People must everywhere learn to defend themselves against misbehaving individuals, no matter who they are. The question of non-violence and violence does not arise. No doubt the non-violent way is always the best, but where that does not come naturally the violent way is both necessary and honourable. Inaction here is rank cowardice and unmanly" (p. 242).

The sufferings of the people in Bengal were especially acute. First, as Gandhiji noted (p. 33) there were communal riots, then famine and then, to top it, came the threat of invasion and the ruthless measures that followed to evict whole masses of villagers from their homes and lands in the name of military necessity. Even boats and bicycles were not spared. Gandhiji condemned this high-handedness in the strongest terms and advised the people affected to resist it. The authorities were bound to offer equivalent land and buildings and cart the people and their belongings to the places prepared for them. "The people, if they have nowhere to move to, should simply refuse to vacate and suffer the consequences" (p. 242).

Gandhiji and the Congress were similarly concerned with the fate of the hapless Indians, hundreds of thousands of them, trapped in Burma following the Japanese advance and the collapse of British administration in that country. While British evacuees were provided transport and other facilities for their flight, the Indians were left to fend for themselves. Even the vehicles they possessed were sometimes forcibly acquired for the use of the whites. "Hundreds, if not thousands," Gandhiji noted, "on their way from Burma perished without food and drink, and the wretched discrimination stared even these miserable people in the face. One route for the whites, another for the blacks! Provision of food and shelter for the whites, none for the blacks! And discrimination even on their arrival in India! India is being

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ground down to dust and humiliated, even before the Japanese advent, not for India's defence—and no one knows for whose defence'' (pp. 195-6). Describing these ''avoidable hardships and blatant discrimination'', Gandhiji said, ''The question is too big to be tackled by any existing organization. It requires a special temporary committee . . . to attend to the orderly and quick evacuation of the eight to nine lacs of men and their disposal after they are on Indian soil'' (p. 55).

The conditions in the country were thus far from propitious for the successful launching of a mass non-violent movement, and yet it was precisely to overcome these conditions that a movement became necessary. ''I always thought,'' said Gandhiji, ''that I would have to wait till the country was ready for a non-violent struggle. But my attitude has undergone a change. I feel that if I continue to wait I might have to wait till doomsday. For the preparation that I have prayed and worked for may never come, and in the meantime I may be enveloped and overwhelmed by the flames of violence that are spreading all around'' (p. 159).

The AICC, as has been noted, had already, in May, passed a resolution asking the British to withdraw from India. As Gandhiji said, ''the first condition of British success is the present undoing of the wrong. It should precede, not follow, victory. The presence of the British in India is an invitation to Japan . . .'' (p. 87). In an appeal ''To Every Briton'' he wrote : ''Britain may . . . be said to be at perpetual war with India which she holds by right of conquest and through an army of occupation. . . . Before the Japanese menace overtakes India, India's homesteads are being occupied by British troops—Indian and non-Indian'' (p. 99). He concluded by appealing for a ''bloodless end of an unnatural domination and for a new era'' (p. 100). To the question to whom the British were to entrust the administration of the country Gandhiji's answer was: '' . . . they have to leave India in God's hands, but in modern parlance to anarchy, and that anarchy may lead to internecine warfare for a time or to unrestrained dacoities. From these a true India will rise . . . '' (p. 105). Indeed, even then it was ''a state of ordered anarchy'' that prevailed in the country and if, as a consequence of British departure, there was lawlessness in India, he would risk it (p. 114). He did fear that ''non-violence alone will not operate . . . . When there is chaos it will be a test for everyone'' (p. 220).

There were still, even after the Allahabad resolution of the Congress, dissenting voices. Of these the chief one was Raja-

gopalachari's. He continued to expound the view that the Congress must conciliate the Muslim League and throw its full weight into the war effort. Gandhiji had to ask for his resignation from the Congress and from the Madras Assembly to which he had been elected on the Congress ticket. This he did, thus adding "to his dignity" (p. 293). Azad, too, had his misgivings. He was not satisfied with Gandhiji's demand or the manner of enforcement (p. 227) and he did not share Gandhiji's view "that any country can defend itself without force of arms" (p. 292). Gandhiji observed in a letter to Nehru : "I find that the two of us have drifted apart. I do not understand him nor does he understand me . . . . Therefore I suggest that the Maulana should relinquish Presidentship . . . . This great struggle cannot be conducted properly without unity and without a President who comes forth with a hundred per cent co-operation" (pp. 293-4). In the end, however, Azad fell into line and continued to serve as President.

In the second week of July, in a draft resolution for the Working Committee, Gandhiji clearly gave notice of his resolve to start a mass movement, should the British not heed the appeal to withdraw. He wrote : "The struggle this time would have to resolve itself into a mass movement on the widest scale possible involving voluntary strikes, voluntary non-co-operation on the part of all those who are in Government employ . . . in any shape or form and it may involve also non-payment of land revenue and taxes" (p. 284). On July 14 the Working Committee, not without some persuasion by Gandhiji, passed the resolution, though in a somewhat changed form, and also authorized Gandhiji to take charge of the movement and lead it.

The British still had an opportunity to enter into negotiations with Gandhiji and heal the breach, but they chose to make use of the resolution to malign the Congress as a pro-Japanese organization and to suppress Gandhiji and the other leaders. The documents now being published by the British government reveal how the ground had been carefully prepared and the plan perfected to arrest Gandhiji and have him transported to some place in British Africa. Amery gave expression to his wish that the Congress should "disintegrate" and the Home Department in Delhi informed him of their plan (a) to avert, (b) to abort and (c) to suppress the movement.

To counter British propaganda Gandhiji wrote to both Chiang Kai-shek and Roosevelt explaining the Congress position vis-a-vis the war against Japan. He assured Chiang: ". . . I shall

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take no hasty action. And whatever action I may recommend will be governed by the consideration that it should not injure China, or encourage Japanese aggression in India or China . . . . I am straining every nerve to avoid conflict with British authority. But if, in the vindication of the freedom which has become an immediate desideratum, this becomes inevitable, I shall not hesitate to run any risk however great'' (p. 225). To Roosevelt he wrote : ''. . . I have suggested that, if the Allies think it necessary, they may keep their troops, at their own expense in India . . . for preventing Japanese aggression and defending China'' (p. 265, also pp. 215, 225, 240 and *passim*). These troops would operate in India in accordance with a treaty with the Government of free India, which might also adopt, to help the Allies, ''the military measures they may consider necessary'' (pp. 187, 313 and *passim*).

Gandhiji conceded that this was an ''anomalous position for a free country to be in'' but, he argued, honesty dictated the course (p. 313). ''One thing and only one thing for me,'' he wrote, ''is solid and certain. This unnatural prostration of a great nation—it is neither 'nations' nor 'peoples' —must cease if the victory of the Allies is to be ensured. They lack the moral basis'' (p. 187).

Immediate freedom for India was imperative because, ''if India does not become free now, the hidden discontent will burst forth into a welcome to the Japanese, should they effect a landing. We feel that such an event would be a calamity of the first magnitude. We can avoid it if India gains her freedom'' (p. 331).

Gandhiji clearly dissociated himself from the position of Subhas Bose. He said: ''I do not feel flattered when Subhas Babu says I am right. . . . For there he is attributing pro-Japanese feeling to me. If I were to discover . . . that I was helping the entry of the Japanese in this country, I should not hesitate to retrace my steps. As regards the Japanese, I am certain that we should lay down our lives in order to resist them, as we would to resist the British'' (p. 329).

He took great pains to make it clear that he intended to keep this, his ''biggest movement'' (p. 299) an ''open rebellion of a non-violent character'' (p. 297). ''I want to guard against a sudden outburst of anarchy or a state of things which may be calculated to invite Japanese aggression. . . . I shall take every precaution I can to handle the movement gently, but I would

not hesitate to go to the extremest limit, if I find that no impression is produced on the British Government . . .'' (pp. 298-9). Then if there were to be any violence ''the blame . . . will go to the Government which under the pretext of anarchy . . . goes on consolidating its own anarchy'' (p. 220).

He also would see to it that the British war effort was not directly hampered by the movement. ''Those employed in Government offices, Government factories, railways, post offices, etc., may not participate in the hartal, because our object is to make it clear that we will never tolerate Japanese, Nazi or Fascist invasion, nor British rule. Therefore, we shall not for the present interfere in the above-mentioned Government departments'' (p. 365).

What the Government was doing was precisely to consolidate its ''anarchy''. Strict censorship of the Press was being enforced, all mail passing through post offices was being opened. On May 28 the offices of the Congress at Allahabad had been raided and documents seized. All leading Congressmen were being shadowed and their movements reported. In his instructions to the Ashram inmates on the eve of his departure for Bombay Gandhiji said: ''Those who are in the Ashram should know that anything can befall them. It is possible that Government may even stop the supply of our food. Only those therefore should stay here who are ready to live even on leaves'' (p. 349). As early as July 13 Amery was asking the Viceroy to ''get his blow in first'', and not allow Gandhiji ''time to work up his campaign''.

It was in this atmosphere that the AICC met in Bombay on August 7 and 8 to consider and pass the ''Quit India'' resolution. In Gandhiji's speeches at the session, the dominant note was non-violence. ''I want you,'' he told the members, ''to adopt non-violence as a matter of policy. With me it is a creed, but so far as you are concerned I want you to accept it as policy. As disciplined soldiers you must accept it *in toto* and stick to it when you join the struggle'' (p. 381). In the event of the movement being launched Gandhiji's instructions were: ''Everyone is free to go the fullest length under ahimsa. Complete deadlock by strikes and other non-violent means. Satyagrahis must go out to die, not to live. They must seek and face death. It is only when individuals go out to die that the nation will survive'' (p. 403).

But he let it be known that the mere passing of the resolution did not signal the launching of the movement. He said:

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" . . . the actual struggle does not commence this moment. You have only placed all your powers in my hands. I will now wait upon the Viceroy and plead with him for the acceptance of the Congress demand. That process is likely to take two or three weeks" (p. 391).

But the British had no intention to allow any time to Gandhiji. At 5 p.m. on August 9 he and all the top Congress leaders then in Bombay were roused from their beds and carried to places of internment prepared in advance. On the same day similar raids were carried out all over the country. Then began a reign of terror unparalleled in the country's history, followed by more or less spontaneous uprisings of students, factory workers, *kisans* and intelligentsia throughout the length and breadth of the country, with here and there some violent incidents involving destruction of property. British official propaganda blamed Gandhiji for this. Gandhiji disowned responsibility, saying, that if the Government had awaited his "contemplated letter to His Excellency the Viceroy and the result thereafter" the "reported deplorable destruction would have most certainly been avoided. . . . The wholesale arrest of the Congress leaders seems to have made the people wild with rage to the point of losing self-control. I feel that the Government, not the Congress, are responsible for the destruction that has taken place" (p. 414). This letter (September 23, 1942) was deliberately suppressed by Government and not included in the correspondence between Gandhiji and the Viceroy released to the Press (p. 415 *fn*.).

The period also brought a personal tragedy to Gandhiji. Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji's dedicated secretary and closest co-worker, died suddenly on August 15 at the Aga Khan Palace, where he had been interned with Gandhiji. Telegraphing the news to Chimanlal Shah he said: "Mahadev has died yogi's and patriot's death. . . . Cremation taking place front of me. Shall keep ashes" (p. 410). His jailors posted the telegram as a letter!

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NOTE TO THE READER

In reproducing English material, every endeavour has been made to adhere strictly to the original. Obvious typographical errors have been corrected and words abbreviated in the text generally spelt out. Variant spellings of names have, however, been retained as in the original.

Matter in square brackets has been supplied by the Editors. Quoted passages, where these are in English, have been set up in small type and printed with an indent. Indirect reports of speeches and interviews, as also passages which are not by Gandhiji, have been set up in small type. In reports of speeches and interviews slight changes and omissions, where necessary, have been made in passages not attributed to Gandhiji.

While translating from Gujarati and Hindi, efforts have been made to achieve fidelity and also readability in English. Where English translations are available, they have been used with such changes as were necessary to bring them into conformity with the original.

Where an item has no date in the source, the inferred date is supplied within square brackets, the reasons being given where necessary. The writings are placed under the date of publication, except where they carry a date-line or where the date of writing has special significance and is ascertainable.

References to Volume I of this series are to the January 1969 edition.

In the source-line, the symbol S.N. stands for documents available in the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad; G.N. refers to documents, M.M.U. to the reels of the Mobile Microfilm Unit and S.G. to the photostats of the Sevagram collection available in the Gandhi National Museum and Library (Rashtriya Gandhi Sangrahalaya), New Delhi; C.W. denotes documents secured by the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Appendices provide background material relevant to the text. A list of sources and a chronology for the period covered by the volume are also provided at the end.

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1. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
April 1, 1942

RAJKUMARI
SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

SORRY. DETAINED PROBABLY THREE MORE DAYS. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4121. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7430

2. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

April 1, 1942

CHI. VANUDI[1],

I have your letter. You must either get well there or come over. Do not lose patience and courage. Make up your mind that the ear trouble has to be cured.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5789. Also C.W. 3012. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

3. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN CHOUDHARI

DELHI,
April 1, 1942

CHI. RAMNARAYAN,

I have brought with me your letter dated March 12, 1942. I have gone through the rules and the curriculum. The letter is good. So are the rules.

[1] Daughter of Narahari Parikh. She later married Mahendra V. Desai.

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What you are doing to improve hygiene and to popularize Hindi is satisfactory. Spread as much fragrance as you can.

Mahadev is well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapu: Maine Kya Dekha Kya Samjha?, p. 132

4. *TALK WITH AN AUSTRALIAN JOURNALIST*[1]

[Before *April 3, 1942*][2]

What I cannot understand is man hating brother man and thirsting for his blood. I can see no justification for the war that is going on and fast enveloping the earth. It is based on hate and vengeance and will leave a crop of hate and vengeance behind. The waste of human life and material that might be useful otherwise for the world is appalling and sickening. Why should your country and mine have to be involved in this war ? You are a fine resourceful people. Rather than that you should build up your country and make it useful to the rest of the world, why should you be asked to sacrifice your manhood? And what is more painful is that it is all to no purpose. I do not know why all this fighting is going on, for whose benefit, with what great end in view.

JOURNALIST: I doubt if anyone knows.

GANDHIJI : There is this thing. Perhaps God wills peace to come as a lesson of this carnage.

J. Could you possibly say something about what is going on at present.

G. For that, you must go to the men in office. I can say nothing.

J. But, Sir, you are with them.

G. And, yet, it will surprise you when I tell you that those things do not interest me. I relinquished my membership of the Congress

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Two Australian Visitors". The source does not mention the name of the journalist, who was a war correspondent. Gandhiji talked to him while out on a stroll.

[2] Mahadev Desai has referred to the visit of this journalist in an article "How to Be Worthy of Our Heritage", dated April 3 and published in *Harijan*, 12-4-1942.

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eight years ago.[1] I go to the Congress, attend meetings of the Working Committee, even advise in a detached way when my advice is sought. You will be surprised to hear that I have never listened to a radio, nor have I ever been to a cinema.

J. Do you think these things are bad?

G. I will not say so. I may say that cinema films are often bad. About the radio I do not know. I can certainly say this that I do not care to have news from all quarters of the globe within the space of half an hour. It leaves one little time to think. And why must one have news from all quarters of the globe every half an hour or so? I should be content to react to my nearest surroundings and happenings therein.

But the youth whispered some question about the Working Committee.

G. I do not mind telling you that there are differences between me and the Working Committee. The whole nation is not with me on the non-violence question. If the nation as a whole was absolutely peaceful, I am sure we should not be in the war, I am sure we should not have this foreign domination here. The alien rulers should not be dictating to us. We should have people here from foreign lands on terms of friendship, and we should gladly make use of their talents at our will. But I am not worrying over the nation not being with me. When I have failed to convert my nearest associates, the members of the Working Committee, I have no business to be impatient with my people. It must be my fault. It means that there is not sufficient non-violence in me to enable me to carry everyone with me. But my faith in non-violence is undimmed and unshaken. In fact it is growing every day.

Harijan, 3-5-1942

[1] *Vide* Vol. LIX, pp. 3-12, 174-5, 212-9 and 228-30.

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5. *INTERVIEW TO BERTRAM STEVENS*[1]

DELHI,
[On or before *April 4, 1942*][2]

BERTRAM STEVENS: I have heard a lot about you from Mr. Birla. You have been to England, to Europe, and you stayed long in South Africa. But you have never been to Australia.

GANDHIJI: No, thanks to you.

B. S. You have made a very good reply, Mr. Gandhi.

G. Haven't I? You have vast living spaces, you can absorb millions and millions of human beings. But I know what you are doing. I have followed the history of your country for over 35 years. White Australia is your policy, and as a result you are without the wonderful accession of strength that would have been yours if you had followed a policy of brothering all.

B. S. I agree. But our country is only 150 years old. Prejudices die hard, but they are dying.

G. You might very well have absorbed our people. Wherever they have gone they have been able to show that they are business-like, able, and quite competent to take care of themselves. Your country with its infinite resources would have been a different country with these Indian settlers.

B. S. Yes, Australia is half as big again as India. But it is not quite so fertile as India. But I agree with what you say. There is nothing like developing vital contacts between the peoples of different countries. During my sojourn in India I have met many people. I have found them quite capable and industrious, and the more our business people could know and come together with your business people the better for both Australia and India. And, Sir, we must not forget that the old world is already passing, old ideas are fast changing, and we are getting ready for the coming of a new world.

G. I am sure.

Harijan, 3-5-1942

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Two Australian Visitors". Bertram Stevens was a member of the Eastern Group Conference and sometime Prime Minister of the Province of New South Wales in Australia.

[2] Gandhiji left Delhi on April 4.

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6. *NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE*

Japan is knocking at our gates. What are we to do in a non-violent way ? If we were a free country, things could be done non-violently to prevent the Japanese from entering the country. As it is, non-violent resistance could commence the moment they effected a landing. Thus non-violent resisters would refuse them any help, even water. For it is no part of their duty to help anyone to steal their country. But if a Japanese had missed his way and was dying of thirst and sought help as a human being, a non-violent resister, who may not regard anyone as his enemy, would give water to the thirsty one. Suppose the Japanese compel resisters to give them water, the resisters must die in the act of resistance. It is conceivable that they will exterminate all resisters. The underlying belief in such non-violent resistance is that the aggressor will, in time, be mentally and even physically tired of killing non-violent resisters. He will begin to search what this new (for him) force is which refuses co-operation without seeking to hurt, and will probably desist from further slaughter. But the resisters may find that the Japanese are utterly heartless and that they do not care how many they kill. The non-violent resisters will have won the day inasmuch as they will have preferred extermination to submission.

But things will not happen quite so simply as I have put them. There are at least four parties in the country. First the British and the army they have brought into being. The Japanese declare that they have no designs upon India. Their quarrel is only with the British. In this they are assisted by some Indians who are in Japan. It is difficult to guess how many, but there must be a fairly large number who believe in the declaration of the Japanese and think that they will deliver the country from the British yoke and retire. Even if the worst happens, their fatigue of the British yoke is so great that they would even welcome the Japanese yoke for a change. This is the second party. The third are the neutrals, who though not non-violent will help neither the British nor the Japanese.

The fourth and last are non-violent resisters. If they are only a few, their resistance will be ineffective except as an example for the future. Such resisters will calmly die wherever they are but will not bend the knee before the aggressor. They will not be deceived by promises. They do not seek deliverance from the British yoke

through the help of a third party. They believe implicitly in their own way of fighting and no other. Their fight is on behalf of the dumb millions who do not perhaps know that there is such a thing as deliverance. They have neither hatred for the British nor love for the Japanese. They wish well to both as to all others. They would like both to do what is right. They believe that non-violence alone will lead men to do right under all circumstances. Therefore, if for want of enough companions non-violent resisters cannot reach the goal, they will not give up their way but pursue it to death.

The task before the votaries of non-violence is very difficult. But no difficulty can baffle men who have faith in their mission.

This is going to be a long drawn out agony. Let non-violent resisters not make impossible attempts. Their powers are limited. A resister in Kerala is not physically responsible for the defence of Assam which is just now in imminent danger. If Assam is non-violently inclined, it is well able to take care of itself. If it is not, no party of non-violent resisters from Kerala can help it or any other province. Kerala can help Assam, etc., by demonstrating its non-violence in Kerala itself. The Japanese army, if it gets a foothold in India, will not stop at Assam. In order to defeat the British, it has to overrun the whole country. The British will fight every inch of the ground. Loss of India will probably be admission of complete defeat for them. But whether it is so or not, it is quite clear that Japan will not rest till India is wholly in her hands. Hence non-violent resisters must remain at their posts wherever they are.

One thing has to be made clear. Where the British army is actually engaging the 'enemy', it would be perhaps improper for direct resistance to function. It will not be non-violent resistance when it is mixed with, or allies itself to, violence.

Let me therefore reiterate what I have said so often. The best preparation for, and even the expression of, non-violence lies in the determined pursuit of the constructive programme. Anyone who believes that without the backing of the constructive programme he will show non-violent strength when the testing time comes will fail miserably. It will be, like the attempt of a starving unarmed man to match his physical strength against a fully fed and panoplied soldier, foredoomed to failure. He who has no belief in the constructive programme has, in my opinion, no concrete feeling for the starved millions. He who is devoid of that feeling cannot fight non-violently. In actual practice the expansion of my non-violence has kept exact pace with that of my identification with starved humanity. I am still far from the non-violence of my conception,

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for am I not still far away from the identification of my conception with dumb humanity?

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA, April 5, 1942
Harijan, 12-4-1942

7. *CURIOUS NON-VIOLENCE*[1]

A friend sends the following extract from A. Vambery's[2] translation of *Travels and Adventures* by Sidi Ali Reis (16th Century):

> Amongst the learned of this land of Banians (Gujarat), there is a tribe which they call the Bats (Bhats), whose business it is to escort merchants or travellers from one land into another, and, for a very small remuneration, they guarantee their perfect safety. Should the Rajputs, i.e., the mounted troops of the land, attack the caravan, the Bats (Bhats) point their daggers at their own breasts, and threaten to kill themselves, if they should presume to do the slightest harm to the travellers entrusted to their care. And out of respect for the Bats (Bhats), the Rajputs generally desist from their evil purpose, and the travellers proceed on their way unmolested. Occasionally, however, the Bats (Bhats) carry out their threat, otherwise it would have no force. But if such a thing does happen, if a caravan is attacked and the suicide of the Bats (Bhats) becomes necessary, this is considered a terrible calamity, and the superstition of the people demands that the offenders be put to death, and not only the offenders themselves but the chief of the Rajputs deems it necessary to kill their sons and daughters also, in fact to exterminate the whole of their race. The Mohammedans of Ahmedabad had given us two such Bats (Bhats) as an escort, and so, about the middle of *Safar* of the said year, we started on our overland journey to Turkey.

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA, April 5, 1942
Harijan, 12-4-1942

8. *CREED* v. *POLICY OF NON-VIOLENCE*[3]

More than a month ago Dr. Katju sent to Shri Kishorelal Mashruwala what may be called a short thesis on non-violence. The latter was to decide what to make of it and, if he liked, show it to me. Shri Mashruwala gave it to me some time ago. But I

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".
[2] (1832-1913), Hungarian traveller and writer
[3] Kailash Nath Katju's article under this heading is not reproduced here.

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could get time to read it only during the journey. I read it carefully. It was too long for publication in *Harijan*; and yet I felt that it should be placed before the readers of *Harijan* in some form. The following is the result. I have spent considerable time in reducing the original without leaving out the essential argument. I wholly agree with Dr. Katju that non-violence cannot make further headway without the Congress making it a creed. He suggests that there should be a plan to show how it can be worked under given circumstances. He suggested a book or a series for the guidance of the votaries. Much literature has sprung up on the subject. Richard Gregg has spent years of labour in research. He has written text-books for the guidance of the votaries of the West. His books are very readable. Let Dr. Katju set apart time for producing a book which would be a guide for us in India at this critical hour.

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA, April 5, 1942
Harijan, 26-4-1942

9. *LETTER TO JAGANNATH*

ON THE TRAIN,
April 5, 1942

MY DEAR JAGANNATH,

I had your letter in mind all the time I was in Delhi. You want no separate answer now.[1]

Yours,
BAPU

LALA JAGANNATH
LAJPATRAI BHAVAN
LAHORE, PUNJAB

From a photostat: C.W. 988. Courtesy: Lala Jagannath

10. *LETTER TO PRABHAVATI*

ON THE TRAIN,
April 5, 1942

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter last evening in Delhi. I read the whole of it in the train today.

[1] The addressee had cautioned Gandhiji in regard to negotiations with Stafford Cripps.

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I was sorry to read about Jayaprakash. There was no cause for him to fall ill. It is very difficult to say anything without examining him. You ask how long he will have to live on fruit. That also is difficult to say. If improvement had continued, I could have guided him by letters. But you will understand from the copy of the letter[1] that I am sending you.

About the women, do as you think proper. Do not take up more work than you can manage. What you are doing is more than enough. Consult Rajendra Babu.

You did not write anything about Father.

I think Rajkumari will be going in May.

Khurshedbehn[2] is with me. Mahadev has stayed back in Delhi. He will go to Bombay with Sardar on Monday or Tuesday. He will take some treatment there and then come to Sevagram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3574

11. QUESTION BOX

THE THEORY OF TRUSTEESHIP[3]

Q. From your writings one gathers the notion that your 'trustee' is not anything more than a very benevolent philanthropist and donor, such as the first Parsi Baronet, the Tatas, the Wadias, the Birlas, Shri Bajaj and the like. Is that so? Will you please explain whom you regard as the primary or rightful beneficiaries of the possessions of a rich man? Is there to be a limit to the amount or part of the income and capital which he can spend upon himself, his kith and kin and for non-public purposes? Can one who exceeds such limit be prevented from doing so? If he is incompetent or otherwise fails to discharge his obligations as a trustee, can he be removed and called upon to render accounts by a beneficiary or the State? Do the same principles apply to Princes and zamindars, or is their trusteeship of a different nature?

A. If the trusteeship idea catches, philanthropy, as we know it, will disappear. Of those you have named only Jamnalalji came near, but only near it. A trustee has no heir but the public. In a State built on the basis of non-violence, the commission of

[1] This is not traceable.
[2] Grand-daughter of Dadabhai Naoroji
[3] *Vide* also Appendix I.

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trustees will be regulated. Princes and zamindars will be on a par with the other men of wealth.

SEVAGRAM, April 6, 1942
Harijan, 12-4-1942

12. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

April 6, 1942

CHI. KANTI[1],

Here is Saraswati's[2] letter. I returned last night at 11.30 p.m. The train was late. And then today I got the accompanying note. I told her that she could leave this place if she found it impossible to stay in. It seems she will not stay. In fact the heat has not even started yet. But where one is not at home even a cold place feels hot. Ba had again fallen ill. She is better now. She will go on like that.

Devdas[3] and Lakshmi[4] were all right.

There was nothing in Delhi. Consider all these days as wasted.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I saw Harilal. He had a fracture in the hand. I sent him to a hospital and got the fracture set. He started talking about coming back to me, but that was only a ruse for getting money out of me. He has no sense of truth and falsehood. He is always drunk. You need not worry.

From Gujarati: C.W. 7365. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

13. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

April 6, 1942

CHI. VANUDI,

I got your slip. After you get well you will be coming here for a few days to appear in the examination, won't you? If Mahadevbhai has arrived, tell him that I have not sent his two

[1] Gandhiji's grandson and Harilal Gandhi's son
[2] Addressee's wife
[3] Gandhiji's youngest son
[4] Devdas Gandhi's wife

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short articles. I will explain the reasons when he comes here, if he wants me to do so and if I still remember the matter.

Today everybody is well. What it would be like tomorrow, God alone knows. The weather is curious. It rains, too, occasionally.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5790. Also C.W. 3013. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

14. QUESTION BOX

EXPEDIENCE

Q. Several years ago I once had the temerity to ask whether the fact that you had allowed non-violence to come into the Congress as an expedient rather than as a creed would not be conducive to its breakdown at the critical time. You said you did not think so. But do you still feel the same? Would you not today have had an organized band of believers in non-violence whom you could have sent in groups all over the country? It almost seems as if we had lost time and are found unprepared, as it were, to shoulder responsibility?

A. Yes, I adhere to my opinion that I did well to present to the Congress non-violence as an expedient. I could not have done otherwise if I was to introduce it into politics. In South Africa too I introduced it as an expedient. It was successful there because resisters were a small number in a compact area and therefore easily controlled. Here we had numberless persons scattered over a huge country. The result was that they could not be easily controlled or trained. And yet it is a marvel the way they have responded. They might have responded much better and shown far better results. But I have no sense of disappointment in me over the results obtained. If I had started with men who accepted non-violence as a creed, I might have ended with myself. Imperfect as I am, I started with imperfect men and women and sailed on an uncharted ocean. Thank God that, though the boat has not reached its haven, it has proved fairly storm-proof.

THE ROMAN SCRIPT

Q. You are prejudiced against the Roman script because you are prejudiced against the English. Otherwise you would unhesitatingly advocate it in the place of Devanagari and Persian.

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A. You are wrong. I am prejudiced against neither. But I am against anything or anybody usurping a place not belonging to it or him. The Roman script has come to stay in India. But it cannot take the place of the Indian scripts. If I had my way, there would be only the Devanagari script, for all the provincial languages, and Devanagari and Persian for the all-India speech. The Arabic script, from which the Persian is derived, is a necessity for Muslims as Sanskrit is for Hindus. Roman has been suggested as a compromise and not for its merits. It has none except that it is almost universal in the West. But it must not displace either Devanagari, which is the parent of most provincial languages and is the most perfect of all the known scripts, or Persian, because it is written by millions of Hindus and Muslims in the North. So far as the scripts are keeping them apart, Hindus and Muslims will not come together by adopting a neutral and imperfect script. But they will, if both take the trouble, for the love of one another, to learn both scripts. The Roman script has its own great and unique place. It need not aspire after greater.

SEVAGRAM, April 7, 1942

Harijan, 12-4-1942

15. SCORCHED EARTH

Thus writes a correspondent on my article "Scorched Earth"[1] in *Harijan*.

> In your article headed 'Scorched Earth' appearing in *Harijan* of the 22nd March you say as follows:
>
> "As a war resister my answer can only be one. I see neither bravery nor sacrifice in destroying life or property for offence or defence. I would far rather leave, if I must, my crops and homestead for the enemy to use than destroy them for the sake of preventing their use by him. There is reason, sacrifice and even bravery in so leaving my homestead and crops, if I do so not out of fear but because I refuse to regard anyone as my enemy—that is, out of a humanitarian motive."
>
> Firstly, although I do not approve of the violence which characterized Russia's resistance, I am of the view that there is great bravery and sacrifice in the scorched earth policy which they are adopting to resist the invader. I cannot, therefore, understand your saying that there is neither bravery nor sacrifice in destroying property for defence. Secondly, although you ask people to resist the invader, you

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXV, pp. 409-10.

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would prefer them to leave their crops and homestead for the invader to use, not out of fear but out of a humanitarian motive. I cannot understand how this can be reconciled with your teaching of resistance to evil. I think that non-violent resistance to the invader demands it of me that I should prevent anything which will be of use to him, such as crops or homestead, etc., from falling into his hands even if this means sacrificing my life. May I request you to clarify this subject because it is of vital importance that people should know how they should offer non-violent resistance to the invader?

Surely the meaning is plain. There is no bravery in my poisoning my well or filling it in so that my brother who is at war with me may not use the water. Let us assume that I am fighting him in the orthodox manner. Nor is there sacrifice in it, for it does not purify me, and sacrifice, as its root meaning implies, presupposes purity. Such destruction may be likened to cutting one's nose to spite one's face. Warriors of old had wholesome laws of war. Among the excluded things were poisoning wells and destroying food crops. But I do claim that there are bravery and sacrifice in my leaving my wells, crops and homestead intact, bravery in that I deliberately run the risk of the enemy feeding himself at my expense and pursuing me, and sacrifice in that the sentiment of leaving something for the enemy purifies and ennobles me.

My questioner has missed the conditional expression "if I must". I have imagined a state of things in which I am not prepared just now to die and therefore I want to retreat in an orderly manner in the hope of resisting under other and better auspices. The thing to consider here is not resistance but non-destruction of food crops and the like. Resistance, violent or non-violent, has to be well thought out. Thoughtless resistance will be regarded as bravado in military parlance, and violence or folly in the language of non-violence. Retreat itself is often a plan of resistance and may be a precursor of great bravery and sacrifice. Every retreat is not cowardice which implies fear to die. Of course a brave man would more often die in violently or non-violently resisting the aggressor in the latter's attempt to oust him from his property, but he will be no less brave if wisdom dictates present retreat.

SEVAGRAM, April 7, 1942

Harijan, 12-4-1942

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16. THE LATE HIRJI JERAM—A SILENT WORKER

Bhai Nagardas of Pandya Khadi Karyalaya, Charala writes:[1]

I did not know at all that Bhai Hirji had died. I remember his face very well. All the work Bhai Hirji undertook he did silently. He felt self-conscious even when he gave away his land near Thana. His services were devoid of all ostentation. He was a man of humble means and had had only a little education but all the services he rendered were solid. He never aspired for fame. Service alone was his reward and his testimonial. Such a soul is immortal.

SEVAGRAM, April 7, 1942

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 12-4-1942

17. LETTER TO MULCHAND PAREKH

SEVAGRAM,
April 7, 1942

BHAI MULCHAND,

Bhai Khushal seems to know you. He has come here unnecessarily. I have told him to go back. Do what you think proper.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 68

18. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

April 8, 1942

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Vidya must be sent away. It is not dharma to put up with misbehaviour. About Babu and Saryu also we must

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had informed Gandhiji of the death of Hirjibhai Jeram Mistri who, besides being a good Khadi worker, had rendered considerable financial assistance to the khadi and Harijan activities.

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think.[1] However, I am continuing my efforts. I will try again after I return from Bombay. I am not very hopeful. Babu Mahatma seems to have cast a powerful spell. As a last resort, we can adopt the remedy I have suggested. If they don't listen to us, we should boycott them.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10607

19. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

April 8, 1942

BAPA,

I have read your note. About Bhai Jagannath, it is somewhat complicated. I shall see. I have done nothing much about your fever. The old must protect themselves against fever. Take complete rest.

I hope Balkrishna has started Gadodiyaji's treatment. I have had no news about him.

BAPU

SHRI BAPA
HARIJAN NIVAS
KINGSWAY
DELHI 7

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1191

20. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
April 8, 1942

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have replied to your telegram. Your essay[2] is good but it has become very controversial, and it is full of politics. I expected from your pen something of a more permanent value. Jamnalal's

[1] Vidya, Babu and Saryu were relations of the addressee. The three young people had come under the influence of an impostor, Babu Mahatma of Ahmedabad, and attempts were being made to save them from him.

[2] On Jamnalal Bajaj; *vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", p. 39.

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politics were not his strong point. You might have seen that at the meeting of Mill-owners' Association I did not even touch upon his political work. Even his politics could have been presented in moral terms.

The criticism of the British should find no place in your essay. I am surprised that Kaka did not notice it. We shall talk in greater detail when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I hope you are well and you have found out what quantity of butter you need.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8056. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

21. LETTER TO PARACHURE SHASTRI

April 8, 1942

SHASTRIJI,

One does not see you any more. But I hope you are well and also doing some work of service.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10667

22. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

April 9, 1942

DEAR KU.,

This is Shri Thanu Pillay, President of the Travancore State Congress. He is on his way back to T. Please show him what can be shown during the little time he has at his disposal.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10164

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23. LETTER TO NIMBKAR

April 9, 1942

MY DEAR NIMBKAR,

I was glad to have your letter and to find that you were keeping well. I like your dignified reply to the Government and hope that you will soon be free.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

24. LETTER TO GOVINDDAS

April 9, 1942

BHAI GOVINDDAS,

May the marriage of Chi. Jagmohan and Chi. Vidyavati go through without hitch and may they both be happy.

Blessings from
BAPU

SETH GOVINDDAS
RAJA GOKULDAS PALACE
JABALPUR, C. P.

From Hindi: C.W. 10269

25. TELEGRAM TO HASRAT MOHANI[1]

SEVAGRAM,
April 10, 1942

MAULANA HASRAT MOHANI

CONGRATULATIONS FOR WHAT? I KNOW NOTHING. NEVERTHELESS YOU ARE WELCOME.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated April 9, 1942, which read: "Congratulations. Extremes meet. I also insist retirement policy meaning neither obstruction nor encouragement official war effort. Permit interview."

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26. LETTER TO MANU S. MASHRUWALA

April 10, 1942

CHI. MANUDI[1],

You must not expect a separate letter from me. I am too busy.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MANORAMABEHN MASHRUWALA
BALKIRAN
SOUTH AVENUE
SANTACRUZ
BOMBAY

From Gujarati: C.W. 2681. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

27. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

SEVAGRAM,
April 10, 1942

BHAI TANDONJI,

I have your letter[2]. I could not have expected them to be more generous.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

28. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON,
April 11, 1942

CHI. MIRA,

I wrote to you yesterday. You will, I know, do the best you can for the camp[3]. As to other work I have nothing in view just

[1] Daughter of Harilal Gandhi

[2] The addressee had conveyed to Gandhiji the resolution of the standing committee of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, for the text of which, *vide* "Hindustani Prachar Sabha", pp. 59-60.

[3] A women's camp which she was helping in running

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now and may not have any at any time. But no one knows what will happen the next moment.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 6495. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9890

29. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEGAON, *via* WARDHA, (C. P.),
April 11, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

On the off chance that you will be on today's G. T., Khurshedbehn is going to fetch you. You must come and finish the national week here and give us a report of your doings.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10910. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

30. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

April 11, 1942

CHI. KANTI,

I have your letter. You alone can train Saraswati. There the interests of all the three of you are suffering. Shanti[1] is a very simple child. I am prepared to welcome Saraswati again and again.[2]

About Harilal I have talked to Devdas and asked him to tell Harilal that if he is ready I will get him admitted to some jail or asylum for some time. But he is not likely to accept any reasonable suggestion. What you suggest about yourself becomes you. But such sacrifice is not necessary, at present at any rate. It is also futile to put such a proposal to him. He is devoid of human feelings.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7366. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] Addressee's son
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Kantilal Gandhi", p. 10.

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31. SPEECH ON OPENING OF SWARAJYA BHANDAR

WARDHA,
April 11, 1942

Fifteen leaders sitting in Delhi cannot achieve much unless they are backed by the constructive programme.

For many days I have been contemplating why we cannot introduce yarn currency like Government currency. Vinoba Bhave, with my consent, had introduced yarn currency from one pice to five-rupee notes with which one could purchase corn, leather goods, charkhas and other articles stocked in Gramseva Mandal shops in Wardha.

I warn the people against counterfeiting such notes. Our currency will encourage yarn produce and khadi and increase its value. I bless this Bhandar and its activities. We have named this Swarajya Bhandar, which is significant, as by carrying on constructive activities we can win swaraj. We must approach villagers by mixing with them and organize and strengthen ourselves. I wish that transactions should be in yarn.

I cannot say whether our leaders in Delhi have succeeded or not, but I can assert that their hands will be strengthened if we follow the constructive programme.

The Hindu, 12-4-1942

32. NOTES

LINGUISTIC BASIS

My reply[1] to the Maharajkumar of Vizianagram on the Andhra Province has brought me lengthy correspondence about Hindi and Marathi-speaking provinces. The argument is that all Hindi-speaking areas should be regarded as one province, as also should Marathi-speaking areas. So far as I am concerned I am quite in sympathy with the suggestion. I believe that the linguistic basis is the correct basis for demarcating provinces. I should not mind two provinces speaking the same language, if they are not

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXV, "The Andhras", pp. 414-5.

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contiguous. If Kerala and Kashmir were speaking the same language, I would treat them as two distinct provinces.

The writers suggest, however, that I should lead the agitation for the redistribution, or in this case amalgamation, of the Marathi-speaking and Hindi-speaking areas. This is an impracticable proposition. The demand for amalgamation has to be made by Congressmen living in the respective areas. If it is unanimous, the Congress cannot resist it. The thing is entirely in their own hands.

Let my correspondents and others not mix up the Andhra agitation with their proposals. Andhra is already a separate province for the Congress. But, whilst the Congress ministry was in office, the Andhras agitated for legal recognition. My correspondents ask for Congress recognition of their proposals.

Whilst on merits I endorse the proposal, I would discountenance any such agitation and diversion from the main theme before the country—the duty of every Indian in face of the impending invasion of India by Japan. Redistribution of provinces, etc., important matters though they are in themselves, pale into insignificance before the question which overshadows every other. Those things may easily await the termination of the war. We hope to see a new vision and a new order at the end of the present catastrophe.

Hissar Famine and Spinning

Dr. Gopichand has been discussing with me famine in Hissar. It seems to have become almost chronic. The A.I.S.A. has been working for many years in that district and giving relief to the poor people through spinning. Dr. Gopichand thinks that, if more capital can be made available, much aid can be given. It is perhaps not possible to make a successful appeal outside Hissar. There is so much distress everywhere, and with the terrible spectre of war much more is to be expected. Therefore everywhere local charity has to be depended upon. As often happens even in poor areas there are to be found monied men. Bhiwani is a big trade centre in Hissar, and it has several monied men. Let me hope that they and those others in Hissar who can will come to the rescue and do what they can for the much-needed relief.

Sevagram, April 12, 1942

Harijan, 19-4-1942

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33. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
April 12, 1942

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

I hope you are doing well. I would like to send Abha[1] to Rajkot. Vina[2] is doing extraordinarily well. Abha too would do better there than here. But she perhaps should not go to Rajkot till she is finally engaged to Kanu[3]. Please consult your wife and let me know. I am convinced that Abha's happiness depends on her being tied to Kanu.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10337. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

34. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

April 12, 1942

CHI. VALJI,

I got your article. I have passed it. I have been forgetting to inform you that you will not get anything more, that is at the [higher] rate of Rs. 25. The trustees did not pass the increase. There was no point in insisting on it. I will, therefore, find the additional sum from some other source. Do you need it urgently? Ba is well.

Blessings from
BAPU

PROF. V. G. DESAI
DEVAGIRI
POONA 4

From Gujarati: C.W. 7497. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1&2] Addressee's daughters
[3] Son of Narandas, Gandhiji's nephew

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35. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

April 12, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You have to take the responsibility for Ch. No one will interfere. Love can be tested only when love operates in freedom.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4421; also S.N. 24477

36. UNITY IS VITAL IN INDIA[1]

[After *April 12, 1942*][2]

The proposals that Sir Stafford Cripps advanced for settling the political deadlock in India contemplated splitting the country into three parts, each part to have a different system of government.[3] These proposals, it would seem, would be to the liking of many of India's Muslim leaders, since they have for long advocated dividing the country between Hindus and Muslims. Yet Sir Stafford's plan differed in many respects from the Muslim League's plan, and so it received no more enthusiastic a reception from them than it received from the Indian National Congress.[4]

The Muslim League represents Muslims; the Indian National Congress purports to represent Hindus and Muslims alike. Can the Congress claim be supported? It can. From its beginning it has

[1] The article had originally been published in the November 1942 issue of *Picture World*, an American magazine.

[2] This was obviously written after Sir Stafford Cripps left India on April 12, 1942.

[3] Sir Stafford Cripps arrived in Delhi on March 22, 1942 for resolving the 'Indian deadlock'. For his proposals, *vide* Vol. LXXV, Appendix VI.

[4] Both the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League rejected the Cripps formula; the Congress because it did not concede independence immediately, left the control of defence of India with the British Government and indirectly envisaged partition of India by giving rights to the provinces to secede if they wished. The Muslim League opposed it because the fundamental proposals were not open to any modifications.

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been national, representing all beliefs, not one alone. Its originator was an Englishman, strange though that may seem to some. It has always had one or two Muslim secretaries. It has had Muslim, English, Christian and Parsi Presidents. Through its whole history, now running into the second half of a century, the Congress has ever striven to represent the whole of India, in a manner no other organization has done. Every victory scored by the Congress has benefited all communities, Muslims and Hindus alike.

I believe that the Congress embodies the hopes and aspirations of all India. Its traditions unfit it to represent Hindus as against Muslims or *vice versa*. It is fit only to represent the common interest of all sons of Hindustan.

Yet, differences between Hindus and Muslims remain, and it is said that Hinduism and Islam represent two antagonistic cultures and doctrines that cannot live peacefully together, and that therefore they must be separated into two different nations.

I myself could never subscribe to the partitioning of the country. I would fight it with every means at my disposal and yet I must declare that national independence is an impossibility until Indians have solved this communal problem.

There are two ways of solving it. One is the way of non-violence, the other the way of violence.

Unfortunately, at the present moment, those Hindus who do not know the use of violence, of deadly weapons, would fain learn the trick, so as to be able to match what they describe as Muslim violence. If peace is ever to come in that manner, through both parties being equally matched in violent weapons, I know that it will not come in my lifetime, and if it came, I should not care to be a witness of it. For it will be an armed peace, to be broken at any moment.

Whether those who believe in the two-nation theory can live as friends with those who believe in one nation, I do not know. If the vast majority of Muslims regard themselves as a separate nation having nothing in common with the Hindus and others, no power on earth can compel them to think otherwise. If they want partition of India on that basis, they must have partition, unless the Hindus want to fight against such a division. So far as I can see, preparation for such a fight is going on now on behalf of both parties.

I dread to see it. That way lies national suicide. One party or the other will call in outside help. In that case, good-bye to independence.

The only true and just way is the way of unity and non-violence, of regarding one another not as members of hostile cultures

but as sons of the same great motherland. Hindus and Muslims have worked and do work together in peace; they lived together in peace in the past; they can live together in peace in the future. Our task is to assure each son of the motherland that whatever his beliefs, his rights and religious and cultural interests will be protected by the laws of the land, formulated by a national assembly democratically elected.

Now, with the aggressor at the gates, more than ever unity is vital in India. I desire above all things to see a joint struggle against him and to achieve independence. In the very process of doing this, it is highly likely that we shall have forgotten our quarrels in the same common goal. But if we find that we have not forgotten them, then will be the time to quarrel among ourselves, if quarrel we must. Not now. Now India herself stands in the balance.

The Bombay Chronicle, 25-4-1942

37. NOTES

Acharya Anandshankar Dhruva[1]

The death of Acharya Anandshankar Dhruva[2] is an irreparable loss not only to Gujarat but also to the U. P., for he had rendered invaluable services to the Benares Hindu University for a number of years.[3] It will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to replace him. He was an active educationist to the end. Many students have lost a true friend in him. He was Malaviyaji's right hand. Malaviyaji's grief can be better imagined than described. But Anandshankar Dhruva was no mere educationist. His interests were many and varied. He was a keen student of politics, a worshipper at the shrine of swaraj, and a social reformer. His relations with the orthodox were cordial, for he was an observer of many of their ceremonials. But his instinct and heart were always with the reformer, and he expressed his views fearlessly. He was widely respected for his outstanding knowledge of Sanskrit and the Hindu scriptures, and was a fine representative of the Hindu religion. As for me I had invariably received his help. He was friends equally with labour and

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 19-4-1942. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

[2] He died in Ahmedabad on April 7, 1942.

[3] He was Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the Benares Hindu University from 1920 to 1937.

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capital and, having gained the confidence of both, was able to render great services to both in Ahmedabad. The bereaved family's sorrow will be shared by, and they will have the sympathy of, all who had the privilege of knowing the late Acharya.

Lala Shankerlal

I have two letters about the treatment accorded to Lala Shankerlal of Delhi in jail. They say he is no better off than Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar. I have nothing to do with Lala Shankerlal's politics or views, but the same remarks apply to his case as to Caveeshar's. He is as much entitled to decent and humane treatment as Caveeshar. This is what his nephew writes:

> I went to the place in the company of my aunt, the wife of Lala Shankerlal, for an interview at 3.30 p.m. on the 23rd inst. When face to face, I at once detected signs of great weakness and reduction in the energy of Lalaji. He was reduced physically, his complexion was pale, and his face drawn. To my great horror and dismay I found that he is confined day and night to a dark, damp and unhealthy dungeon which could hardly be a befitting place for confinement even for a criminal, much less a gentleman of Lalaji's status.

If this statement is true, the matter calls for immediate attention and redress.

Economy in Travelling

B.B.&C.I.Railway management are discountenancing travelling as far as possible. It is a timely warning. People should travel as little as possible. Only urgent necessity can warrant railway travelling. One fine morning we may find that all civil booking is stopped. Movement of troops may render this precaution absolutely necessary. It is a good thing to accustom ourselves to the practice well in advance of the necessity.

Sevagram, April 13, 1942

Harijan, 19-4-1942

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38. *QUESTION BOX*

Why Not in Universities?

Q. You have expressed yourself against communalism in cricket. Are not communal universities also to be deplored? In colleges and hostels that are open to all, deep friendships spring up and religious tolerance becomes a natural thing. Would not well-endowed chairs in common centres of learning serve the purpose of advancing different cultures?

A. You are right. If we can do without communal institutions, it would be good. But I am unable to say that there should be no Muslim or Hindu Universities as I am able to say positively that there should be no communal cricket. The communal universities, if their origin is not tainted, may conceivably serve a national purpose. Thus the Hindu University and the Muslim University may, as they ought to, be seats of communal concord. But communal sports seem to be a contradiction in terms. I wholly agree with you that there should be, as there are, non-communal colleges and hostels. Unfortunately the virus has entered even these. Let us hope that it is a passing phase.

When Leaders Differ

Q. You say people in the cities should evacuate under certain circumstances.[1] Panditji and Rajaji say they should not on any account. What are we to do?

A. I appreciate your difficulty. I can only advise you to use your judgment and choose that advice which appeals to your reason. We are living in hard times such as we have never experienced before. I am quite sure of my ground. People who are not wanted should evacuate from cities which are within the danger zone. There is no cowardice in orderly withdrawal. Women and children and aged people and all those who are not wanted should evacuate so as to enable the defenders the better to regulate defence of cities under their control. The evacuees will show real courage if they will settle down in villages and tackle problems that face villagers. Differences of opinion between leaders ought not to worry people. Honest

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXV, pp. 401-2.

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differences are often a healthy sign of progress. And the differences you refer to are honest.

SEVAGRAM, April 13, 1942
Harijan, 19-4-1942

39. THAT ILL-FATED PROPOSAL

It is a thousand pities that the British Government should have sent a proposal[1] for dissolving the political deadlock, which, on the face of it, was too ridiculous to find acceptance anywhere. And it was a misfortune that the bearer should have been Sir Stafford Cripps, acclaimed as a radical among radicals and a friend of India. I have no doubt about his goodwill. He believed that no one could have brought anything better for India. But he should have known that at least the Congress would not look at Dominion Status even though it carried the right of secession the very moment it was taken. He knew too that the proposal contemplated the splitting up of India into three parts each having different ideas of governance. It contemplated Pakistan, and yet not the Pakistan of the Muslim League's conception. And last of all it gave no real control over defence to responsible ministers.

The fact is that Sir Stafford Cripps, having become part of the Imperial machinery, unconsciously partook of its quality. Such is its strength. It is the almost invariable experience in India that those Indians who are drawn into it lose their originality and become like their companions in the service and often outdo the latter in their loyalty to the Moloch of Imperialism.

Had Sir Stafford remained detached, he would have conferred with his radical friends in India and secured their approbation before undertaking his very difficult mission. If it be said in answer that he could not very well do so, that is exactly what I mean when I say that, having become part of the machinery, he was bound to fall under its spell and could not do the obvious thing.

But it is no use brooding over the past or British mistakes. It is more profitable to look within. The British will take care of themselves, if we will take care of ourselves. Our mistakes or rather defects are many. Why blame the British for our own limitations? Attainment of Independence is an impossibility

[1] *Vide* Appendix II. Also Vol. LXXV, Appendix VI.

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till we have solved the communal tangle. We may not blind ourselves to the naked fact. How to tackle the problem is another question. We will never tackle it so long as either or both parties think that independence will or can come without any solution of the tangle. There are two ways of solving what has almost become insoluble. The one is the royal way of non-violence, and the other of violence. In the first way the formal consent or co-operation of the other party is unnecessary. If there is a dispute between two boys over the ownership of an apple, the non-violent way is to leave the apple for the other party to take, the latter well knowing that it would mean non-co-operation on the surrendering party's part. The second way is the usual way of violence. There the parties fight with each other till one is for the time being worsted. All interested in freedom have to make the choice. I suppose the choice has already been made by the chief actors. But the rank and file do not know their own minds. It is necessary for them, if they can, to think independently and take to non-violent action in terms of unity. It consists in Hindus and Muslims on the wayside fraternizing with one another, if they believe that joint life is a perfect possibility, nay, a necessity. Whether those who believe in the two-nation theory and communal partition of India can live as friends co-operating with one another I do not know. If the vast majority of Muslims regard themselves as a separate nation having nothing in common with Hindus and others, no power on earth can compel them to think otherwise. And if they want to partition India on that basis, they must have the partition, unless Hindus want to fight against such a division. So far as I can see such a preparation is silently going on on behalf of both the parties. That way lies suicide. Each party will probably want British or foreign aid. In that case, good-bye to independence. The fight will then range round not independence but the imaginary apple after the manner of the imaginary boys. I dare not contemplate the actuality. I should not like to be its living witness. I would love to see a joint fight for independence. In the very process of securing independence it is highly likely that we shall have forgotten our quarrels. But if we have not, it will be then only time to quarrel, if we must.

SEVAGRAM, April 13, 1942

Harijan, 19-4-1942

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40. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA

April 13, 1942

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

You were punished as you deserved. Do not make such a mistake again. You can do a lot of service even while resting. What is necessary is the urge to serve. That you certainly have.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI ANNAPURNA
SWARAJYA ASHRAM
BARDOLI
TAPTI V. RLY.
B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9436

41. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

SEGAON,
April 13, 1942

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I read your letter addressed to Kishorelal.

You must both stop grieving over the dead.[1] Keep yourselves immersed in your work there. Keep away from quarrels. Let those who indulge in backbiting do so. Settle the disputes, if you can. Otherwise keep away from them.

I can well realize even at this distance that your task is difficult. Carve your way through it. God is our Protector in all misfortunes. He cannot be seen, but is always with us. If you cultivate this faith, you will never feel helpless.

Ba is much better. The others also are quite well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4928

[1] The reference is to the death of Sushila's father, Nanabhai I. Mashruwala.

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42. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
April 13, 1942

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got a letter from you after many days. I went on writing and dictating letters to Mahadev. But you were stuck in the capital. Never mind. You did well.

I am not surprised to learn that the intestines are not coming round. They do need long rest.

Jawaharlal now seems to have completely abandoned ahimsa. You should go on doing what you can. Restrain the people if you can.

His speech[1] reported today seems terrible. I intend to write to him.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI
68 MARINE DRIVE
BOMBAY

CHI. MANI,

I got your note, too. Tell Vanu[2] that I got her letter.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 272

43. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

April 13, 1942

CHI. MITHUBEHN,

I have your letter. If Ba is willing, I will send her. But it seems to me she will not go at such a time. I will talk to

[1] Nehru had advised the people in the event of a Japanese invasion to resort to the scorched-earth policy and guerilla warfare.

[2] Vanamala N. Parikh

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her, though. I can have no objection to sending her to you. I hope you are quite well.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MITHUBEHN
KASTURBA ASHRAM
P.O. MAROLI BAZAAR, *via* NAVSARI
B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2720

44. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

April 13, 1942

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I do not at all feel enthusiastic about offering a plot to Prabhashankar[1]. But if he is prepared to spend money, we may build a house for him without conceding to him any rights over it. It would be convenient to get the alterations asked for by Champa[2] carried out at her expense. It has become my duty and that of the Ashram too, to accommodate Champa and her children. We will not, therefore, make this case a precedent for a general rule. The general rule should be not to give accommodation to anyone.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10608

45. NOTE TO BALVANTSINHA

April 13, 1942

One may dedicate oneself only to God, never to a man. So you cannot dedicate yourself to me nor may I accept such dedication. I am not perfect, nor am I a *jivanmukta*. I have not had the realization. It is still an aspiration. When I have the realization the world will know.

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 303

[1] Prabhashankar Mehta, father-in-law of Ratilal Mehta
[2] Ratilal Mehta's wife

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46. LETTER TO VIDYAVATI

April 13, 1942

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. My blessings and Ba's to the newly-wed couple.[1] May Jogendra[2] be well soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

RANI VIDYAVATI
T. R. N. SANYAL BUILDING
11 BLOCK, JOGENDRA PATHAK ROAD
LUCKNOW

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

47. DISTRESS IN BENGAL[3]

Bengal has suffered from communal riots, it is suffering from famine, and now it threatens to be the target of Japan. Military preparations are inevitable. This means eviction of villagers. Satis Babu sends me a graphic account of an eviction near Chittapore. Thirty-three villages have been evacuated under very short notice. The notices were dated 1st April, served on the 2nd, and the villagers had to leave on the 4th. The troops entered on the 4th. In one village the villagers got the notice on the same day that the troops entered. The evacuees were paid removal cost at the rate of Rs. 10 to 100 according to the Union rates they were paying. Compensation is to be determined and paid hereafter. The rules framed for evacuation are elaborate and read reasonable. But however reasonable they may be, the hardship of sudden evacuation is inevitable, and the enforcement of the rules having unavoidably to be left in the hands of many and petty officials, fairness cannot be ensured. Under the circumstances the utmost that workers like Satis Babu can do is to

[1] The addressee's son and his bride
[2] Addressee's son
[3] This appeared under "Notes".

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cheer up the people. Their solid contribution must be to teach the villagers to face the inevitable hardships calmly and bravely and derive comfort from within. Unless they are depressed by their so-called comforters, they respond to the best in them and cheerfully face the worst. This is not to say that the authorities should be callous to the sufferings of the poor. In the present case I do not see what they could have done if the troops had to be located where they have been all of a sudden. Laymen cannot judge whether the military officers should not have anticipated events and made arrangements in good time.

SEVAGRAM, April 14, 1942

Harijan, 19-4-1942

48. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

SEVAGRAM,
April 14, 1942

CHI. MAGANBHAI,

I have gone through the whole correspondence between Nanavati and you. It has been decided that so long as the new arrangement does not come to stay I myself should continue to write to you. I hope you remember my detailed letter. Will you be able to take care of so many *pracharakas*? Are you yourself interested in this new task or have you agreed to shoulder the burden only because I want you to do it? It is an important task and I can foresee great results from it.

Enclosed is a draft of the new scheme[1]. You may suggest any changes in it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have drafted today a pamphlet for Nanavati. I will also send you a copy of it.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Of yarn currency, *vide* "Meaning of Yarn Currency", pp. 42-3.

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49. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

April 14, 1942

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM[1],

I have your letter. You have lived a third of your life. Complete the remaining two-thirds in a worthy manner. May you go on rendering more and more service. You have done well in including the reading of the *Ramayana* in the prayer. Recite the *chhandas*, *chopais*, etc., in the correct style and understand the meaning properly. The *Ramayana* has always had a special place in the Gandhi family. Paramanand Gandhi[2] had a very sweet voice. He had almost the whole of the *Ramayana* by heart. He knew its deeper meaning. I have not heard another such voice. Be like him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

50. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA KAMDAR

April 14, 1942

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

I have your letter. For the time being let him remain where you have put him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7474. Also C.W. 4920. Courtesy: Hari-ichchha Kamdar

[1] Son of Narandas Gandhi, Gandhiji's nephew
[2] Cousin of Gandhiji

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51. LETTER TO SURENDRARAI B. MEDH

April 14, 1942

CHI. SURENDRA MEDH[1],

I have your letter. This time you gave me no news about happenings there. They do not allow *Indian Opinion* into India. We hardly get any letters. If Bhai Hamid comes to me, I will do what I can. I do not have much say in such matters. Still I will try.

At present there is a scarcity of khadi and woollen material here. We cannot get enough to send to anybody outside.

Ba is quite well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4929

52. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
April 14, 1942

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Again there has been no letter from you. The Professor[2] has given me a detailed account[3]. If you are not well do not go to Allahabad.[4] But you must let them know your views. If the Congress adopts the policy of violence, I think you should resign. This is not the time for anybody to suppress his views and keep quiet. Things are going the wrong way in most matters. It does not seem proper for one to remain a silent spectator of them. It is immaterial whether one is praised or blamed.

I should like you to read carefully what I have been writing in *Harijan.*

In Orissa while on the one hand the Communists are said to be preparing for a guerrilla war, on the other hand members

[1] A co-worker of Gandhiji in South Africa
[2] J. B. Kripalani
[3] Of discussions with Cripps
[4] For the Congress Working Committee meeting

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of the Forward Bloc are said to be preparing to help Japan. Both these are rumours. Nothing is known for certain. But both things are possible. An attack on Orissa seems quite likely. The Government has massed a large number of troops there.

How is your health? What does that sadhu say? How is Vanu? She does not seem to be improving at all.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

There is a proposal to take up Patil[1] in the [Village] Industries Association. Will he have to be paid? And how much? He will have to assume responsibility for Maharashtra.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 273-4

53. KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRY[2]

[Before *April 15, 1942*][3]

Q. You have often said that khadi and village industry are supplementary to each other. But you have created separate organizations for them with the result that a khadi worker, when he goes to a village, is unable to spare time from his own particular work for either village industries or uplift. Recently you have asked for khadi and village industry *bhandars* to be run jointly. Times are such that transport of goods is becoming increasingly difficult. Should not khadi and village industry centres, therefore, be converted into one? Would it not be a good thing if khadi workers gave up all ideas of sending locally produced khadi to distant places and concentrated on both khadi and village industry production for local use? Khadi workers are asked to penetrate into the houses of artisans with charkha and train them, to rouse a love of village products in them, improve their ways of living, health, sanitation, etc. But if they have no time to spare, how can they do all that is expected of them?

A. I admit that, if a khadi worker's entire time is employed in khadi work, he cannot possibly attend to either village uplift or industry. Three persons would be required for the

[1] L. M. Patil

[2&3] This appeared in *Harijan* under "Notes", and was originally published in *Sarvodaya* and *Khadi Jagat* under the date 15-4-1942.

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three tasks. My idea is that in a well-organized village one person should suffice. For example, one worker may devote two hours to taking in yarn, distributing slivers and spinning tools, and sales of khadi; village industry work might take even less, and the remainder of the time he could give to village uplift and general education. This has not till now been possible because the khadi workers' time has been devoted to teaching people how to spin, etc. But now the time has come when khadi and village products, locally produced, must also be locally absorbed. In that case one person will be able to do all the work. Today it suffices to say that all this work is complementary—and must become one as far as possible. The amalgamation cannot be imposed; it must be a natural growth. I do not, I cannot, apportion any blame to anyone for the existing position. Our plans have progressed as far as our intelligence and experience could have taken them. The creation of khadi *vidyalayas* is meant to expand and improve the technique of work. We shall learn from them how all departments of village work can be amalgamated.

Harijan, 31-5-1942

54. LETTER TO CHUNILAL

April 15, 1942

BHAI CHUNILAL,

My blessings to Chi. Pushpa and Chi. Kanchan on their marriages. May the married lives of both couples be ideal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10093

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55. LETTER TO A. S. PATWARDHAN

SEVAGRAM,
April 15, 1942

BHAI PATWARDHAN,

I am definitely of the opinion that Bhayya[1] should form a trust for the money[2] as early as possible and an arbitrator should be appointed to advise on its utilization.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

56. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

April 15, 1942

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. You are right. Such severe criticism of the British is not appropriate in a biography of Jamnalalji.[3] This criticism has a place but not in a book of this kind.

Jamnalal would never have entered politics if he had not been impelled by moral principles. I feel that ill-will against the British had little part in his life. Be that as it may, criticism of the British appears improper in this article of yours and will obstruct your future work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8058. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Annasaheb Sahasrabuddhe
[2] Belonging to the Tilak Vidyalaya
[3] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", pp. 15-6.

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57. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 15, 1942

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

The Professor is here. He has told me everything. I also heard about your Press interview. Whereas we have always had differences of opinion it appears to me that now we also differ in practice. What can Vallabhbhai and others do in such a situation ? If your policy is accepted the Committee should not retain its present shape.

The more I think of it the more I feel that you are making a mistake. I see no good in American troops entering India and in our resorting to guerrilla warfare.

It is my duty to caution you.

I hope Indu and Feroze are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I heard yesterday that the Forward Bloc people in Utkal are armed and that the Communists are ready for guerrilla warfare. I do not know how much truth there is in it.

From the Hindi original: Gandhi–Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

58. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

WARDHA,
April 15, 1942

I asked Gandhiji if he could express his views on the Delhi talks. He said:

I have nothing to say. I left the Working Committee in the middle[1] and in any case I am an all-war resister. But did I have to be with them?

[1] The Working Committee met in Delhi from March 29 to April 11, 1942. Gandhiji withdrew from the proceedings and left Delhi for Wardha on April 5.

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When I pointed out that the reason he gave for leaving the Working Committee during its session was not held by many to be convincing, Gandhiji said:

It may not be convincing to those who do not want to believe. But it is cent per cent true and it was more for Acharya Narendra Deo's[1] sake than for my wife's, for I had heard on the phone that she was all right. But the news about Acharya Narendra Deo was disconcerting and Maulana Azad disengaged me very reluctantly.

The Hindu, 16-4-1942

59. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

SEVAGRAM,
April 16, 1942

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter.

Everybody envies me Shankarrao's shawl[2]. Any arrangement that you propose will be accepted.[3]

There is no possibility of Shankarrao being arrested[4]. I give in my articles as much as I can. Read them carefully and ask me if you do not understand anything in them.

You must have read my reply to the doubt raised by Shankarrao.

Ultimately everybody will have to act on their own as I have suggested. I have no doubt at all that we shall bring credit to the movement only to the extent that we spread out in villages.

Read and understand my scheme for using yarn as currency. It is to appear in *Khadi Jagat*.[5]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 6864. Also G.N. 10425. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

[1] Socialist leader; then a teacher at Kashi Vidyapith

[2] Made from the yarn spun by Shankarrao Deo, presented by the addressee to Gandhiji

[3] The addressee had told Gandhiji that she would give him two shawls made from yarn spun by Shankarrao Deo every year along with two dhotis made from her yarn which she gave to Gandhiji regularly.

[4] For offering civil disobedience

[5] *Vide* "Meaning of Yarn Currency", pp. 42-3.

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60. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SEVAGRAM,
April 16, 1942

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Bhai Shantikumar, Rai Bahadur Virji Sheth and Bhai Dadajan also have come. There are about 8 lakh people in Burma. They are all suffering. To bring them over is our duty. These friends wish that we should form a special committee and that you too should be on it. Do what you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8057. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

61. MEANING OF YARN CURRENCY[1]

I find that I have not been able fully to explain to my co-workers my idea of yarn currency. I attempt to do so here. Metal coins or paper notes are not a true standard because their value is arbitrarily determined. The value of the paper of a five-rupee note is even less than one pice. It has a value because of the government stamp on it. However, this or any such standard is very necessary for carrying on business transactions on a very large scale. But the idea behind khadi and other village industries is quite different. We do not want business on a large scale. We want to restrict our attention to only one of the seven lakhs of villages. We want the same independence for that village as we want for any other of the seven lakh villages and the world at large. So our villages should at least become self-reliant as far as food and clothing are concerned.

In such villages there cannot be any need for metal or any other imposed currency for mutual transactions. Our standard should be a rural product, which everyone can make, which can be stored and the price of which does not fluctuate daily. What can this be? It can neither be soap, nor oil, nor

[1] This was originally published in the April issue of *Khadi Jagat*.

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vegetables. Thus after enumerating and eliminating all the things only yarn remains. Everyone can produce it. There is always a demand for it. It can be stored well. If we can introduce yarn currency in the villages, they will make great progress and become self-reliant very soon. This is not an attempt to enumerate all the advantages of yarn currency. I want to tell you only what it means and how it will function.

For this a shop is needed where items of daily use for villagers can be available. All the villagers could buy anything from this shop by giving only yarn—there should not be any exception to this. As a result all the villagers will have to spin to buy things from the above mentioned shops. In these shops yarn of given strength and in given quantity will be accepted and therefore the yarn spun by the villagers will be properly tied. A villager will not let even a single strand of it be wasted because so many things could be bought with it. The importance of yarn will increase. The commodities secured in exchange of yarn will be of good quality and will not be expensive. Even a child will be able to buy from there without fear of being cheated. As the shops cannot accept any kind of yarn, there will be need for a yarn examiner whose function will be to test the yarn currency. To prevent the yarn from getting dirty it will have to be wrapped in paper or some such thing. The shopkeeper will blindly accept the yarn which is well wrapped by the examiner.

As the examiner and the shopkeepers are connected with an institution such as the Charkha Sangh, the yarn will be daily sent to the Sangh office and from there to the weavers.

There is no room for loss in such shops. There is no possibility of much fluctuation in the prices of things sold there. Generally only those things which are available in the villages will be kept. The number of such things will increase gradually.

In such a scheme every house can become a mint and can make as much money (yarn) as it wants. It is clear that in such shops intoxicants, imported things and harmful products will not be sold. And therefore the yarn nexus will remain more or less pure.

SEVAGRAM, April 17, 1942

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 3-5-1942

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62. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

April 17, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

So you could not give me a day ! ! ! Supposing you had to give one more day to Delhi. But you know best what to do at a given moment. I hope you will find at least a day for Sevagram on your way to Allahabad.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2085

63. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI

April 17, 1942

DEAR SATYAMURTI,

Your letter.

I am doing all I can in the way of showing the non-violent approach to the pending menace. But I am helpless if the Congress policy changes from moment to moment.

I do not know how Hindu-Muslim understanding can be brought about. Our meeting can be easily brought about. I have only to walk to his place. Having gone there, what am I to do or say? If I knew that, I would go. There seems to me to be no meeting ground.

Ba is quite well. Thanks.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: S. Satyamurti Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also C.W. 10371

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64. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS SHAH

April 17, 1942

BHAI KRISHNADAS,

I have your letter. I do have faith in Ayurveda but what can I do if the vaidyas lack competence? All the same I keep in touch with them and take what I can out of them. It is precious little, however.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. KRISHNADAS SHAH
BHARATIYA UDYOG PRACHAR
14 BHASKAR LANE, 3RD FLOOR
BHULESHWAR, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 11536

65. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

April 18, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Even now I am clear about rice. But if the women insist on it, they should be given it. What about the men? They should be consulted. In such things there is much room for judiciousness and generosity.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4422

66. TEN QUESTIONS REGARDING THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE[1]

Q. 1. The Persian script did not originate in India. It came during the Mogul period just as the Roman script has with the advent of the British. But you do not advocate the Roman script for the national language. Why then the Persian?

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 26-4-1942. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

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A. If the Roman script had made a home for itself in India in the same way as the Persian, I would agree with you. But the knowledge of the former is confined to a mere handful of English-knowing persons, while crores of Hindus and Muslims are conversant with the latter. You should try to find out the exact number of persons knowing the Roman and Persian scripts respectively.

Q. 2. If you advocate the learning of Urdu for the sake of Hindu-Muslim unity, then please remember that a large number of Mussalmans in India do not know Urdu. They are conversant only with their own provincial languages. These people would far more easily understand a national language comprising words familiar to their provincial languages. The North Indian languages are all derived from Sanskrit and therefore resemble each other a good deal. Sanskrit words have even crept to a large extent into the Southern languages. Then why advocate for these people the learning of an unfamiliar Urdu tongue full of Arabic and Persian words?

A. There is force in your argument. But I would like you to delve a little deeper into the question. I admit that in asking people to learn the Persian script I have at the back of my mind a contribution to Hindu-Muslim unity. There has been a long-standing conflict between the Hindi and Urdu tongues as between the two scripts. Today it has assumed a virulent form. In 1935 in Indore the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, while defining Hindi, gave a definite place to the Persian script.[1] In 1925 the Congress gave the national language the name of Hindustani.[2] Both scripts were made permissible. Thus Hindi plus Urdu was recognized as the national language. The question of Hindu-Muslim unity was definitely in the forefront in all these decisions. I have not raised this issue today. I have only given it a concrete form. It is a logical outcome of events. If we want to develop the national language to the fullest extent, it behoves us to give the two scripts an equal status. In the end whichever is appreciated more by the people will be the more widespread.

The provincial languages are closely allied to Sanskrit, and it is true that lacs of Muslims are conversant only with their provincial languages, and that Hindi and the Devanagari script will, therefore, be easier for them to learn than Urdu and the Persian characters. My scheme will not interfere with this. In

[1] *Vide* Vol. LX, pp. 443-55.
[2] *Vide* Vol. XXIX, pp. 384-5.

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fact the people will benefit more than ever by learning the Persian script. Your trouble arises because you look upon this as a burden. Whether it is a gain or a burden depends on the outlook of the learner. He who is filled with a love of country will never consider such learning a burden. There will be no compulsion by my scheme. Only those who consider it a gain will learn the Persian script or the Devanagari as the case may be.

Q. 3. A very large proportion of persons in India know the Devanagari script. Surely Punjabis, Sindhis and the Frontier folk can easily learn it too.

A. The reply to this is really embodied in the preceding answer. Frontier people and others will have to learn the Devanagari script.

Q. 4. A national language is really more for speech than literary purposes. Its script is, therefore, not so essential or is, at any rate, of secondary importance. Moreover, is it not easier to learn the national language through the script of the mother tongue? And where would be the harm in so doing?

A. You are right. It is easier to learn the national language through the script of the mother tongue. As far as I know this is being done in Southern India though perhaps not systematically. Unlike you I do not look upon the learning of two scripts as a burden. It is not so hard as you fear. I can never be opposed to the learning of the national language through the script of the mother tongue. Given the keenness to learn it, all systems will be employed.

Q. 5. If it is not possible to make real contacts with the non-Hindi-knowing provinces until some of us have learnt the national language, why not limit the acquiring of this knowledge to workers only? Why make it obligatory for the whole of India?

A. The question of everyone learning Hindustani does not arise. Indeed everyone will never do so. The necessity is for those who have to travel and those who want to serve. The latter's ability for service will be greatly increased by a knowledge of both languages and scripts. If you agree, your opposition and suspicion should subside.

Q. 6. Today the national language is written in both scripts. Whoever wants to learn can choose the one he prefers. Why the insistence on both?

A. In spite of my so-called insistence, only those will learn it who find real gain in so doing. In my eyes he who knows

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only one of the languages and one script will be half-equipped. If he desires a full certificate from me, he must be conversant with both. I am sure you will have no objection to the desirability of there being many such persons in the country. And unless this number goes on increasing there will never be a proper blending of Hindi and Urdu. The Congress ideal of Hindustani will never be fulfilled. That Hindus and Mussalmans in the Hindi-knowing provinces should have a common speech is a consummation devoutly to be wished. Many of us cling to this hope, and some day it will certainly come to pass.

Q. 7. Will it not be a terrible burden and a futile endeavour for people of the non-Hindi-speaking provinces to learn the national language through both scripts at the same time? To learn first one and then the other would surely be simple.

A. The answer to this will best come from experience. He who does not know either script will not learn both at the same time. He will master one before commencing on the other. So far as the vocabulary is concerned the words used in the textbooks in the early stages will more or less be the same. I look upon my scheme as a most important and useful experiment. If it is properly worked, it will be found to have energized the nation and made a big contribution towards giving practical shape to the Congress resolution. I hope lacs of patriotic men and women will take to it.

Q. 8. Certain changes must inevitably take place in any language, as for example, the ingress of foreign words which become part of the language and cannot be evicted. But Devanagari has been the traditional script all through the ages. During the period of the Mogul dynasty the Persian script came in. But Gujarati, Marathi, etc., while assimilating Persian, Arabic and English words, have not abandoned the script. Why should the Devanagari script then not be maintained?

A. There is no question of giving up anything that is ours by tradition. It is a question of adding to or improving what already exists. If I know Sanskrit, what harm if I learn Arabic too, or *vice versa*? The result will probably be an enrichment of my knowledge of either language. And my contacts with the Arabs or Hindus, as the case may be, will increase. Surely there can be no opposition to the acquiring or right knowledge in any sphere.

Q. 9. From the point of view of easy mastery over the pronunciation of the national language, is not the Devanagari script the best? The Persian script is surely defective for the purpose.

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A. You are right, but your opposition to the Persian script has no place here. Devanagari is not to be displaced. It is a question of adding to the existing knowledge.

Q. 10. Where is the need for a national language? Will not the mother tongue and an international language suffice? And then why not the Roman script for both?

A. Your question surprises me. English no doubt is the international language. But can it ever be our national language? The latter must be the common property of millions of our people. How can they sustain the burden of learning the English tongue? Hindustani is the natural national language, for it is already understood by 21 crores. The remainder of the population can also easily understand it. But English may be said to be the mother tongue of a mere handful—say, a lac at the most. If India is a nation, it must have a national language. English will appropriately remain the international language with the Roman script. But the latter can never be the script of the national language.

SEVAGRAM, April 19, 1942

Harijan, 26-4-1942

67. *FOREIGN SOLDIERS IN INDIA*

Among the multitude of questions contained in my correspondence is the one referring to the advent of foreign soldiers in India. We have foreign prisoners enough. Now we have promise of a never-ending stream of soldiers from America and possibly China. I must confess that I do not look upon this event with equanimity. Cannot a limitless number of soldiers be trained out of India's millions? Would they not make as good fighting material as any in the world? Then why foreigners? We know what American aid means. It amounts in the end to American influence, if not American rule added to British. It is a tremendous price to pay for the possible success of Allied arms. I see no Indian freedom peeping through all this preparation for the so-called defence of India. It is a preparation pure and simple for the defence of the British Empire, whatever may be asserted to the contrary. If the British left India to her fate as they had to leave Singapore, non-violent India would not lose anything. Probably the Japanese would leave India alone. Perhaps India, if the main parties composed their differences as they probably would, would be able effectively to help China in the way of peace and in the long

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run may even play a decisive part in the promotion of world peace. But all these happy things may not happen if the British will leave India only when they must. How much more creditable, how much braver it would be for Britain to offer battle in the West and leave the East to adjust her own position! There is no guarantee that she will be able to protect, during this war, all her vast possessions. They have become a dead weight round her. If she wisely loosens herself from this weight, and the Nazis, the Fascists or the Japanese instead of leaving India alone choose to subjugate her, they will find that they have to hold more than they can in their iron hoop. They will find it much more difficult than Britain has. Their very rigidity will strangle them. The British system had an elasticity which served so long as it had no powerful rivals. British elasticity is of no help today. I have said more than once in these columns that the Nazi power had risen as a nemesis to punish Britain for her sins of exploitation and enslavement of the Asiatic and African races.

Whatever the consequences, therefore, to India, her real safety and Britain's too lie in orderly and timely British withdrawal from India. All talk of treaties with the Princes and obligations towards minorities are a British creation designed for the preservation of British rule and British interests. It must melt before the stern reality that faces all of us. Princes, in so far as they rely upon their armed strength, are more than able to defend themselves against unarmed India. The fiction of majority and minority will vanish like the mist before the morning sun of liberty. Truth to tell there will be neither majority nor minority in the absence of the paralysing British arms. The millions of India would then be an undefined but one mass of humanity. I have no doubt that at that time the national leaders will have wisdom enough to evolve an honourable solution of their difficulties. This presupposes Japan and other powers leaving India alone. If they do not, I should hope even then for wisdom to guide the principal parties to devise a scheme whereby they can act with one mind to face the new menace.

Holding the views I do, it is clear why I look upon the introduction of foreign soldiers as positive danger thoroughly to be deplored and distrusted. The present state of things and the attempt to uphold it are a distinct sign of corroding consumption of the body politic in India.

SEVAGRAM, April 19, 1942

Harijan, 26-4-1942

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68. QUESTION BOX

If They Really Mean?

Q. If the Japanese really mean what they say and are willing to help to free India from the British yoke, why should we not willingly accept their help?

A. It is folly to suppose that aggressors can ever be benefactors. The Japanese may free India from the British yoke, but only to put in their own instead. I have always maintained that we should not seek any other Power's help to free India from the British yoke. That would not be a non-violent approach. We should have to pay a heavy price if we ever consented to take foreign aid against the British. By our non-violent action we were within an ace of reaching our goal. I cling to my faith in non-violence. I have no enmity against the Japanese, but I cannot contemplate with equanimity their designs upon India. Why do they not realize that we as free men have no quarrel with them? Let them leave India alone. And if they are well-intentioned, what has China done to deserve the devastation they have wrought there?

Guerrilla War

Q. You declared the other day at Wardha that Jawaharlal Nehru was your 'legal heir'[1]. How do you like the idea of your legal heir advocating guerrilla warfare against the Japanese? What will happen to your ahimsa when Jawaharlal openly advocates violence and Rajaji wants arms and military training for the whole nation?

A. As you have put it the situation does appear awful. But it really is not so awful as it appears to you. In the first instance 'legal heir' is not my phrase. I had spoken in Hindi. I had said that he was not my 'legal heir' but that he was virtually my heir. That means that he will take my place when I am gone. He has never accepted my method in its entirety. He has frankly criticized it, and yet he has faithfully carried out the Congress policy largely influenced, when it was not solely directed, by me. Those like Sardar Vallabhbhai who have

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXV, p. 224.

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followed me without question cannot be called heirs. And everybody admits that Jawaharlal has the drive that no one else has in the same measure. And have I not said also that when I am gone he will shed the differences he often declares he has with me? I am sorry he has developed a fancy for guerrilla warfare. But I have no doubt that it will be a nine days' wonder. It will take no effect. It is foreign to the Indian soil. Twenty-two years' incessant preaching and practice of non-violence, however imperfect it has been, could not be suddenly obliterated by the mere wish of Jawaharlal and Rajaji, powerful though their influence is. I am, therefore, not perturbed by the 'apostasy' either of Jawaharlal or Rajaji. They will return to non-violence with renewed zest, strengthened by the failure of their effort. Neither goes to violence for his belief in it. They do so because they think probably that India must have a course of violence before coming to non-violence. No one can say beyond doubt how events will shape themselves. It may be that their instinct is correct and mine, backed though it is by experience, is not. I know this, however, that my line is cut out for me. Even though I may be alone in my faith, I must follow it unfalteringly, believing that the masses will never take to the violent method. They will either remain inert or take to non-violent action. Guerrilla warfare can take us nowhere. If it is practised on any large scale, it must lead to disastrous consequences. Non-violent non-co-operation is the most effective substitute for every kind of violent warfare. If the whole nation takes to non-violent action, it can be wholly successful. It could not be quite so against the British because their roots have gone deep into the soil. The Japanese have not even got a foothold. I hope that the forthcoming A.I.C.C. will revert to the non-violent method and give the clearest possible instructions about non-violent non-co-operation. To aid the British effort in the violent way without any official connection and after the failure of the recent negotiations appears to me to court national disgrace.

SEVAGRAM, April 19, 1942

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69. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 19, 1942

CHI. PREMA,

I got all your letters, and have replied to them all. The replies were quite long. You tell me, what am I to do when the Postal Department is irregular? Read *Harijan* and do what you think proper.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10426. Also C.W. 6865. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

70. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, *via* WARDHA,
April 19, 1942

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

A letter from the Maulana arrived today. He writes that I have to go to Allahabad. How can I go? I had said even when I was there that I was not any more fit for travel. And what shall I do by going there? I have the same one thing to offer and I have called three meetings here. One of them has been planned for a long time. I cannot miss any of them. You must therefore excuse me. Write to Maulana to spare me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Janakibehn wrote to you yesterday to hold both the meetings at Wardha. I withheld the letter. Meetings should be held at Wardha when my presence is considered essential.

From the Hindi original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

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71. *DEENBANDHU ANDREWS MEMORIAL*

Deenbandhu Andrews Memorial and Gurudev Memorial are convertible terms. Gurudev had initiated the Deenbandhu Memorial, but before it had fully materialized Gurudev followed Deenbandhu.[1] Therefore Deenbandhu Memorial has become also Gurudev Memorial. The purpose is worthy of the two great souls—the improvement and upkeep of Santiniketan, Visvabharati and Sriniketan. These are all in reality one. It is a matter of great shame and sorrow that the paltry sum of five lacs of rupees has still not come whether from the rich or the students or the labour world. Everybody admits that Gurudev and his institution have brought a name and prestige to India which no one and nothing else have done. It was Santiniketan which stirred Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-shek who gave very handsome contributions. For the work done at Santiniketan, the expense is ridiculously small. The reason is the comparatively low salaries paid where the work done is not purely honorary. The donations so far collected amount to nearly one lac. I hope that the balance will be forthcoming without delay and absolve me from having to venture out on a collection tour. I am in honour bound to finish the collection. When Gurudev was dying the last letter I wrote to him was that, if it was God's will, I would finish the Deenbandhu collection. It was also a trust handed by Andrews in that Santiniketan's financial condition was his daily concern. It is a call from these two servants of India and humanity which I dare not neglect. Let those who revere their memory and who value Gurudev's living creation help me to discharge the self-imposed trust.

SEVAGRAM, April 20, 1942

Harijan, 26-4-1942

[1] Rabindranath Tagore died on August 7, 1941.

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72. EVACUEES FROM BURMA[1]

Much has been written about the hardships of evacuees from Burma. Making allowance for all possible exaggerations, the remainder itself is a horrible tale of woes. Some of them must be inevitable in the circumstances that face us. What has to be dealt with is the avoidable hardships and blatant discrimination said to be in vogue in the treatment of Britishers and Indians. I understand that there are over eight lacs of Indians in Burma yet to be evacuated. Life for them in Burma is impossible. The question is too big to be tackled by any existing organization. It requires a special temporary committee of experienced men whose sole work would be to attend to the orderly and quick evacuation of the eight to nine lacs of men and their disposal after they are on Indian soil. Let us hope that there are enough public-spirited men who will make it their business to form themselves into a committee and see this very humanitarian work through.

SEVAGRAM, April 20, 1942

Harijan, 26-4-1942

73. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

[*April 20, 1942*][2]

IF YOU FEEL LIKE THAT COME AT ONCE.

Bapu's Letters to Mira, p. 334

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

[2] The addressee says: "Just at this time Bapu was writing his leader for *Harijan* entitled 'Foreign Soldiers'. It must have been at practically the same hour when I wrote Bapu a long letter expressing almost exactly the same sentiments, to which I had added that, if Bapu would agree, I should like to go to the A.I.C.C. meeting shortly to be held at Allahabad and plead behind the scenes with leaders for organizing nation-wide non-violent resistance to the Japanese." *Vide* also the following letter.

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74. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM,
April 20, 1942

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. I must let you come here and see what can be done. You are undertaking a job which leaves you no other consideration. I have sent you a wire. I do not know whether it will reach you. Everything has become so uncertain nowadays.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6496. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9891

75. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

April 20, 1942

BHAI JIVANJI,

I have your letter. I did think of sending a wire, but the temptation to save money was stronger. It will be all right if the article appears even this time. Today also a lot of matter is going. From out of it mine has got to be included. The translations of my articles should also appear. Besides that there are Mahadev's articles and one by Kumarappa. See if you can manage by reserving more pages for English. I understand about Urdu. Do I have to send urgently anything more from here? How did you run short of English matter?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9952. Also C.W. 6927. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

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76. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS G. KAPADIA

April 20, 1942

CHI. MADHAVDAS[1],

Why this panic? Illness comes and goes. Men die as they are born; some die early, some die late. What need for him to fear who has faith in God? And why should one who has no fear become panicky? Have courage. Keep me informed. Treat this letter as from Ba also. Krishna[2] should keep calm.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MADHAVDAS GOPALDAS
NAVI KHADAKI
PORBANDAR, KATHIAWAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

77. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

April 21, 1942

CHI. KANTI,

I have corrected in the letter itself what you could not read and am returning the letter. Do you understand now? Ordinarily I would not like to keep a frivolous girl like Saraswati with me, but I showed my willingness to keep her because I understand your difficulty. You alone can manage her. She will stay here only if you are firm and persuade her to do so.

Mascarene is a woman without brains. I feel nothing but pity for her. And then she got Mathew's support. All types of persons have gathered in the Ashram, and they indulge in slander and back-biting. I am glad that you could make her see reason. She does write sweet letters to me. Her case is pathetic. Now that Ramachandran and Thanu Pillay have gone to jail, she has become all the more helpless.

Both the propositions you have cited may be said to be valid. One can say that the validity of a principle does not depend on

[1] Kasturba's brother
[2] Addressee's wife

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its practice, and also that it does. The second statement would be more befitting in the case of a moral principle. What is the use of a principle that nobody puts into practice? What is the test of its validity? What would be the value of ahimsa if nobody observed it?

If Harilal could be legally put in jail, I would have got it done long ago. But there is no such law and he also knows it. That can be done only if one day he himself yields. I do cherish the hope that he will. But the stratagem that he attempted this time has weakened my hope. Devdas continues to do his best.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7367. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

78. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS G. KAPADIA

April 21, 1942

CHI. MADHAVDAS,

You must have got the letter[1] I wrote to you yesterday. Today I got your second letter. You have lost a companion, but Krishna is released from suffering. Rest assured she has attained peace. Have patience. Keep calm. Try to pay off the debts if you owe any, and spend your days in devotion to God. Ba wishes the same.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

79. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
April 21, 1942

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter. It is heart-rending. I am publishing Satis Babu's letter[2] in *Harijan*. Send your scheme about *goseva*. The meeting will be on the 29th. Come if you want to.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1715

[1] *Vide* p. 57.

[2] This was published under the title "Simple Treatment for Cholera" in *Harijan*, 26-4-1942.

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80. LETTER TO PADAMPAT SINGHANIA

SEVAGRAM,
April 21, 1942

BHAI PADAMPATJI,

I deliberately withheld the reply to your letter. Even now I have not met the trustees. I have however sent you the constitution of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. It would facilitate my arriving at a decision if you could let me have your opinion on it. But if you would rather not, I will not insist.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

81. HINDUSTANI PRACHAR SABHA

The Hindustani Prachar Sabha to which I referred in *Harijan Sevak* is about to be formed now. A draft constitution has been prepared. It has been sent to some friends. In a few days the scheme of the Sabha will be put before the public. Many people are under the impression that the Sabha will be a rival of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. How can I knowingly oppose the Sammelan with which I have been associated since 1918? There has to be a solid reason for my doing so. But there is none. Yes, it is true that as far as Urdu is concerned I go a little further than the other members. They think I am going back. Only time will decide who is right.

To make it clear that I am not opposed to the Sammelan, I entered into correspondence with Shri Purushottamdas Tandon, as a result of which the standing committee of the Sammelan passed the following resolution.

> The Hindi Sahitya Sammelan has from its very inception regarded Hindi as the national language and it continues to do so. Urdu is a literary style deriving from Hindi and having an admixture of Arabic and Persian words. The Sammelan propagates Hindi but is not opposed to Urdu.
>
> In the opinion of this Committee, members of Mahatma Gandhi's proposed Hindustani Prachar Sabha can become members of the

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Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and its sub-committees, but from the practical point of view it will be better that the office-bearers of the Rashtrabhasha Prachar Samiti should not become office-bearers of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha.

I could not have expected more generosity than this. I was and still am of opinion that there could have been no question of conflict if the office-bearers could be the same. There is a possibility of conflict in the present arrangement but if both the parties behave with gentlemanliness this can be avoided. If the Hindustani Prachar Sabha succeeds, national language will no longer remain a political issue. In fact it should never have been associated with politics.

SEVAGRAM, April 22, 1942

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 26-4-1942

82. LETTER TO HORACE ALEXANDER

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA (C.P.),
April 22, 1942

MY DEAR HORACE,

I have been wanting to write to you and Agatha all this time but my preoccupations have come in the way. But more than that, the reluctance to send you a cheerless letter has been the cause. It is still there greater than ever. Nevertheless I must write what I feel.

I hope you had my wire about Olive[1]. How well I remember her radiant face in spite of her permanent disability. God gave and He has taken her away. I know it is well with her, for she walked in His light.

Sir Stafford has come and gone. How nice it would have been if he had not come with that dismal mission. He of all people should never have without having at least ascertained Jawaharlal's wishes. How could the British Government, at this critical hour, have behaved as they did? Why should they have sent proposals without discussing them with the principal parties? Not one single party was satisfied. In trying to please all the proposals pleased none.

I talked to him frankly but as a friend, if for nothing else, for Andrews's sake. I told him that I was speaking to him with

[1] Addressee's wife

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Andrews's spirit as my witness. I made suggestions but all to no avail. As usual they were not practical. I had not wanted to go. I had nothing to say being anti-all-wars. I went because he was anxious to see me. All this I mention in order to give you the background. I was not present throughout the negotiations with the W. C. I had come away. You know the result. It was inevitable. The whole thing has left a bad taste in the mouth.

My firm opinion is that the British should leave India now in an orderly manner and not run the risk that they did in Singapore and Malaya and Burma. That act would mean courage of a high order, confession of human limitations and right-doing by India. Britain cannot defend India, much less herself on Indian soil with any strength. The best thing she can do is to leave India to her fate. I feel somehow that India will not do badly then. I must not argue this point if it is not obvious to you.

I am sending a copy of this to Agatha. Of course you are at liberty to share this with anybody else.

Love.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1434

83. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

April 22, 1942

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. Maulana's wire would seem to leave you no choice but to go, though it does not seem to me advisable for you to do so. Be firm. If they do not adopt an unambiguous resolution of non-violent non-co-operation, your duty will be to resign. You must also oppose the scorched-earth policy and any suggestion to invite foreign troops. They are pressing me to attend but I have categorically refused. I have already fixed three or four meetings here at about the same time. The main meeting was fixed long ago. It cannot be shifted now.

Drop in here on your way back from Prayag even if it be only for a day or two. It is a hundred times better here than in Prayag. Bring along Rajendra Babu, too, and Deo[1] also.

[1] Shankarrao Deo

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You have given me no reply to my question regarding Patil.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 274

84. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 23, 1942

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

Your letter[2].

I do not like your answer about Abha. It was with your hearty consent I took Abha. I told you too that I might want to send her to Rajkot. I want to do all for her good. But now I won't send her. Nor will I cross your wife's wishes. Things will take their own course. I have put a ban on their meeting in private but not on Kanu teaching her. That would be unnatural. Abha won't marry without her mother's blessing but she would marry no other person in any case. That is her condition and also Kanu's. You will now instruct me what you would like me to do about Abha.

About your wanting messages, please spare me. You should go on in your own way and on your own responsibility. I can have no notion of the work there.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10338. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", pp. 36-7.

[2] Of April 17, in which the addressee had said that his wife was opposed to Abha being married to Kanu Gandhi

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85. *DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR A.I.C.C.*[1]

[Before *April 24, 1942*][2]

Whereas the British War Cabinet's proposals sponsored by Sir Stafford Cripps have shown up British imperialism in its nakedness as never before, the A.I.C.C. has come to the following conclusions:

The A.I.C.C. is of opinion that Britain is incapable of defending India. It is natural that whatever she does is for her own defence. There is an eternal conflict between Indian and British interests. It follows that their notions of defence would also differ. The British Government has no trust in India's political parties. The Indian army has been maintained up till now mainly to hold India in subjugation. It has been completely segregated from the general population who can in no sense regard it as their own. This policy of mistrust still continues and is the reason why national defence is not entrusted to India's elected representatives.

Japan's quarrel is not with India. She is warring against the British Empire. India's participation in the war has not been with the consent of the representatives of the Indian people. It was purely a British act. If India were freed her first step would probably be to negotiate with Japan. The Congress is of opinion that if the British withdrew from India, India would be able to defend herself in the event of Japanese or any aggressor attacking India.

The A.I.C.C. is, therefore, of opinion that the British should withdraw from India. The plea that they should remain in India for protecting the Indian Princes is wholly untenable. It is additional proof of their determination to maintain their hold over India. The Princes need have no fear from unarmed India.

[1] The A.I.C.C. at its meeting on April 27, took up consideration of the resolution, which Mirabehn carried with her from Wardha to Allahabad since Gandhiji did not attend the meeting, and continued discussion on it till May 1 along with certain amendments proposed by Rajendra Prasad. The text of this revised version is to be found in *The Transfer of Power*, pp. 66-70. Finally on May 1 an alternative resolution proposed by Nehru was passed, for the text of which *vide* Appendix III.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", p. 66.

The question of majority and minority is a creation of the British Government and would disappear on their withdrawal.

For all these reasons the Committee appeals to Britain, for the sake of her own safety, for the sake of India's safety and for the cause of world peace to let go her hold on India even if she does not give up all Asiatic and African possessions.

This Committee desires to assure the Japanese Government and people that India bears no enmity either towards Japan or towards any other nation. India only desires freedom from all alien domination. But in this fight for freedom the Committee is of opinion that India while welcoming universal sympathy does not stand in need of foreign military aid. India will attain her freedom through her non-violent strength and will retain it likewise. Therefore, the Committee hopes that Japan will not have any designs on India. But if Japan attacks India and Britain makes no response to its appeal the Committee would expect all those who look to Congress for guidance to offer complete non-violent non-co-operation to the Japanese forces and not render any assistance to them. It is no part of the duty of those who are attacked to render any assistance to the attacker. It is their duty to offer complete non-co-operation.

It is not difficult to understand the simple principle of non-violent non-co-operation:

1. We may not bend the knee to the aggressor nor obey any of his orders.
2. We may not look to him for any favours nor fall to his bribes. But we may not bear him any malice nor wish him ill.
3. If he wishes to take possession of our fields we will refuse to give them up even if we have to die in the effort to resist him.
4. If he is attacked by disease or is dying of thirst and seeks our aid we may not refuse it.
5. In such places where the British and Japanese forces are fighting our non-co-operation will be fruitless and unnecessary. At present our non-co-operation with the British Government is limited. Were we to offer them complete non-co-operation when they are actually fighting, it would be tantamount to placing our country deliberately in Japanese hands. Therefore not to put any obstacle in the way of the British forces will often be the only way of demonstrating our non-co-operation with the Japanese. Neither may we assist the British in any active manner. If we can judge from their recent attitude, the British Government do not need any help from us beyond our

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non-interference. They desire our help only as slaves—a position we can never accept.[1]

It is necessary for the Committee to make a clear declaration in regard to the scorched-earth policy. If, in spite of our non-violent resistance, any part of the country falls into Japanese hands we may not destroy our crops, water-supply, etc., if only because it will be our endeavour to regain them. The destruction of war material is another matter and may under certain circumstances be a military necessity. But it can never be the Congress policy to destroy what belongs to or is of use to the masses.

Whilst non-co-operation against the Japanese forces will necessarily be limited to a comparatively small number and must succeed if it is complete and genuine, the true building up of swaraj consists in the millions of India whole-heartedly working the constructive programme. Without it the whole nation cannot rise from its age-long torpor. Whether the British remain or not it is our duty always to wipe out unemployment, to bridge the gulf between rich and poor, to banish communal strife, to exorcise the demon of untouchability, to reform dacoits and save the people from them. If crores of people do not take a living interest in this nation-building work, freedom must remain a dream and unattainable by either non-violence or violence.

Foreign Soldiers

The A.I.C.C. is of opinion that it is harmful to India's interests and dangerous to the cause of India's freedom to introduce foreign soldiers in India. It therefore appeals to the British Government to remove these foreign legions and henceforth stop further introduction. It is a crying shame to bring foreign troops in spite of India's inexhaustible manpower and is a proof of the immorality that British Imperialism is.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, pp. 283-5; also *The Transfer of Power, 1942-7*, Vol. II, pp. 66-70

[1] In the version reproduced in *The Transfer of Power* the words "a position we can never accept" form part only of the revised draft.

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86. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 24, 1942

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

Mirabehn agrees that I must take some step and that she will have to make a sacrifice. She wanted to go to Allahabad[1] even if I did not go. I have therefore called her here. I am sending through her my views in the form of a resolution[2]. Maulana Saheb has been urging me to go to Allahabad. I have told him I am helpless. I find travelling difficult these days. What is more, I have called three meetings for the same period. I have therefore asked Maulana Saheb to excuse me and told him that I shall be sending my views in the form of a resolution.

I do not think it necessary to give arguments in support of the resolution. If you do not like my resolution I really cannot insist. The time has come when each of us must choose his own course.

The behaviour of the Government in Feni and other places is simply intolerable. What will such a Government do even if it survives? And today it is only trying to save itself. I am now certain that if this Government goes we shall be well able to deal with Japan. It is another matter that after the Government is removed we may fight among ourselves. Even if that should be so, do we want to save ourselves from internal quarrels through the good offices of this Government?

Acharya Narendra Dev has seen the resolution and liked it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Gandhi–Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* footnote 2, p. 55.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

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87. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 24, 1942

DEAR SISTER,

Bapa wrote about Father's injury. I can understand your grief. It does not matter if you cannot come. Your resolutions will be taken up. But I hope Raja Saheb will recover.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8003. Also C.W. 3101. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

88. FOREWORD TO "DEAD ANIMALS TO TANNED LEATHER"

This very useful pamphlet is in answer to an imperative demand by Sheth Jamnalalji, just a few days before his death. He wanted a booklet of instructions for those who would learn more to treat dead animals, so as to make the best use of the remains. May it serve the purpose for which it is intended.

SEVAGRAM, April 26, 1942

Dead Animals to Tanned Leather

89. QUESTION BOX

ARE YOU NOT INVITING JAPANESE?

Q. It is all very well for you to invite bravery, but are you not inviting the Japanese to attack India by asking the British rulers to withdraw?

A. I am not. I feel convinced that the British presence is the incentive for the Japanese attack. If the British wisely decided to withdraw and leave India to manage her own affairs in the best way she could, the Japanese would be bound to reconsider their plans. The very novelty of the British stroke will confound the Japanese, dissolve the subdued hatred against the British, and the atmosphere will be set up for the ending

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of an unnatural state of things that has dominated and choked Indian life. As far as I can see the Japanese seem to have made their plans independently of Indian opinion. They are not to be affected by any writing of mine. But they will be confounded by the action I have advised the British to take.

Evacuation

Q. You have advised evacuation from the cities of those who are not wanted for service or other reasons.[1] But what are those poor people to do who have no homes to go to and who would be unwelcome wherever they go?

A. This is a real difficulty. They must be provided for by the people of the provinces to which they belong. If we are one nation, we should have no difficulty in providing for every contingency that may arise. If we are to establish a new order of society, we can act from now. I can only speak from the non-violent angle and no other. If the national mind is working in that direction, consciously or unconsciously individuals and institutions will, without fuss, be absorbing all such persons as you mention. I know that the process is going on, but not on a scale large enough to be impressive. No able-bodied person should be put on charity; he should be given work enough to feed him properly. This shifting of the population, if it is wisely done, must result in a silent reorganization of villages.

Sevagram, April 26, 1942

Harijan, 3-5-1942

90. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

Sevagram, Wardha,
April 26, 1942

CHI. VANAMALA,

I do not mind your running away, but you will have to come again. Sushila will come after some time. Her examination has been postponed. Come when she does. Go on doing your exercises, and have faith that your ears will be cured.

Blessings from
Bapu

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5791. Also C.W. 3014. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

[1] *Vide* "Question Box", sub-title, "When Leaders Differ", p. 27.

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91. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

April 26, 1942

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

We can understand Ramakrishnaji's grief. I had sent a telegram. Tell him that Brijkrishna should be released shortly. Mahadev has been promised. If nothing is done, then there is no harm in filing an appeal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1101

92. QUESTION BOX

NO NARROW PROVINCIALISM

Q. There are, in certain places, some people who have come from other provinces but who have practically settled in those places. There is already a feeling in certain provinces that when times were good these people came from outside, earned, and enjoyed themselves, but that when danger is drawing near and when their help and assistance would be needed by the residents of the province, they are thinking of fleeing to their 'homes'. Should you not advise such people to stay where they are and not to give vent to any narrow provincialism?

A. This question has come to me in various forms. It comes from Bengal and Assam. Merchants from other provinces have settled there for generations. Though they went to the respective provinces for their own sakes, they supplied a want, often useful. There is no doubt that their sudden withdrawal must hit hard those who have been hitherto used to make their daily purchases from these merchants. They cannot be easily and suddenly replaced, especially at a critical time like this. Therefore for these merchants to wind up their businesses would certainly amount to desertion of duty, if they do not before leaving, ensure the continuance of their shops by proper substitute. It would be a different thing if the customers themselves evacuated and the merchants had to follow. The situation that faces the country

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is so novel that no opinion or solution can claim infallibility, nor can judgment be pronounced without carefully weighing all the facts. But it seems to me to be the duty of mercantile organizations to examine the situation and give guidance to the merchants affected.

NOT AN INCITEMENT

Q. You have written:

"If the vast majority of Muslims regard themselves as a separate nation . . . no power on earth can compel them to think otherwise. And if they want to partition India on that basis, they must have the partition, unless Hindus want to fight against such a division. So far as I can see such a preparation is silently going on on behalf of both parties."[1]

As far as the Muslims are concerned I can say with better knowledge than you that there is no such preparation. It would be foolish in the midst of the present Armageddon. But since you are apparently aware of the preparation to fight on the part of Hindus, is it not criminal for you not to prevent your co-religionists from this suicidal activity? Your article is both cowardly and mischievous; indeed it is an incitement to the Hindus.

A. This is the mildest indictment I have picked up from many I have received. Even from this much poison has been removed. It is perhaps wise to notice some of the criticism to which I am exposed. I must not mind it. It has been my lot throughout my public career. I suppose it is that of every public servant. But when the criticism is ignorant, as this is, it harms the critic and the cause he espouses. I take notice of it in the hope that sober men will use their influence to restrain ignorant criticism. I have no special knowledge of the preparation on behalf of the Hindus. All the knowledge I have is derived from the speeches of the leaders of both the parties and from the cuttings I receive from correspondents. They are proof positive of the preparations to which I have referred. But if what you say is right, in spite of the writings in the Muslim Press, no preparation on one side alone can possibly provoke strife. It takes two to make a quarrel. You would be right, if I did not do so, in saying that it would be criminal on my part not to prevent my "co-religionists from this suicidal activity". You write about my co-religionists. I recognize none in such matters. Nor do they recognize me. For I claim Indians of all religions as my equal brothers, whether they believe me

[1] *Vide* "That Ill-fated Proposal", pp. 28-9.

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or not. I would, therefore, love to prevent everyone from quarrelling. All I write in these columns is designed to make reason rather than the sword the arbiter between rival parties. Hence the sentence you quote from my writing. I invite you to help me in my mission of peace. You can begin by understanding me and my writings.

SEVAGRAM, April 27, 1942

Harijan, 3-5-1942

93. SCORCHED-EARTH POLICY AGAIN

Thus writes a correspondent:

> The controversy on the scorched-earth policy has had reference to what the people have to do when their fields are touched by the 'enemy'. That may or may not happen. But what about the destruction that is going on of crops, wells, tanks, houses, boats, cycles, etc., in the name of preparation for war? The people are summarily driven out of their villages and houses in cities. If you will suffer this destruction, then how can you oppose destruction to prevent destruction?

This is a very difficult question. The destruction that is going on is certain. The destruction that the enemy may work or which the receding portion of the population affected may have to do is problematical. And, in any case, such destruction would be nothing, even if it overtook us, compared to the crores already drained from the country for warding off a threatened danger. Money taken through taxation has not been felt so keenly as is the direct deprivation of thousands of homesteads as in Feni. No promise of compensation can be any comfort for the dispossession of the present tenements. To the poor people it is like taking away their bodies. The dispossession of the country boats is almost like that of the tenements. To deprive the people in East Bengal of their boats is like cutting off a vital limb. I wrote almost in defence of the procedure adopted by the authorities in Feni. I have polite but angry protests against my endorsement. The correspondents tell me that I know nothing of the conditions of life in East Bengal. I cannot plead guilty to the charge. Only I felt that people must be asked to resign themselves to the inevitable. Later information from Feni compels a revision of the attitude I had adopted. I had assumed considerate action by the authorities in the face of the impending danger. But I must defer final judgement. The authorities are

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reported to be carrying on an investigation. I hope it will be comprehensive.

Certain risks have to be taken even when danger overtakes us. Thus people cannot be asked or advised to starve or die of thirst for fear of the Japanese helping themselves to the people's provisions or water. They may fight them to prevent their use, but they must risk their loss and not die before their death in order to prevent their use by the Japanese forces.

It is time I came to the last and the most vital part of the question. As an out-and-out war-resister, is it my duty to ask the affected people to resist, non-violently of course, the deprivation of their holdings including boats? But my very non-violence has deterred me from offering opposition to the point of embarrassment. Whether embarrassment through opposition in Feni would have been avoidable or not is a question of fact on which I cannot yet pronounce opinion. I would hesitate up to the last moment. I can only hope that the authorities will find a way whereby they can avoid distress such as has been caused in Feni.

SEVAGRAM, April 27, 1942

Harijan, 3-5-1942

94. TO SEVAGRAM WORKERS

April 27, 1942

In the Ashram, let no one from among us eat to please the palate, let us eat to live. Life itself is not for living but for service. Let us not therefore imitate one another. For example, if rice is cooked because someone needs it, let others not demand it. Generally, no one should eat both rice and wheat, but if someone needs both, he or she should be given both. The rule remains the same, no pandering to the palate.

A natural corollary flows from this: Those to whom God has given money, should not tickle the palate as a matter of right. They will miss all the benefit of staying in the Ashram if they purchase anything to pander the palate.

It would be advisable for all to gargle with red water twice a day. Dr. Das will explain how red the water may be. The common standard is that water should take the shade of a rose flower.

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, pp. 387-8

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95. LETTER TO N. S. VARADACHARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
April 27, 1942

MY DEAR VARADACHARI,

I was glad to have your letter. There is no doubt about Rajaji's intense earnestness. But I cannot help thinking that he is wholly wrong even if the Congress adopted violence. You are right but I go much further than you go. You will see what I mean from the current number of *Harijan*.[1] If you have doubts even then, you will write to me.

Love.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10941. Courtesy: N. S. Varadachari

96. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEVAGRAM,
April 27, 1942

CHI. KAKA,

Though I had no time I went through your note. Send the accompanying letter and your note as it is or get it rewritten by Nanavati and send it. Keep copies. Send one to me also.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10956

97. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

April 27, 1942

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your long letter. It makes only one point. I have already given you my firm opinion that there has been no organization

[1] *Vide* "Question Box", sub-title, "Guerrilla War", pp. 51-2.

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anywhere in the world in which in each section one person does not exercise supreme authority. Even in a small kitchen one person's instructions are followed. Who this person should be is a separate question. Only one person looks after a well and only one person supervises the construction of a building. A managing committee does not supervise everything. It also has one person to do that on its behalf and appoints heads for the different sections. No work can be done in any other manner. All this is in reply to your letter. Do what you yourself wish. One day you will see your error, or will be able to convince me of mine.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8473. Also C.W. 7170. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

98. "HARIJAN" IN URDU

Dr. Gopichand Bhargava is bringing out *Harijan* weekly in Urdu from Lahore. Articles from *Harijan* have for long been published in *Hindustan* of Lucknow. Arrangements are being made to publish an authentic edition at the Navajivan Press. The latter will be possible only when I can get an Urdu scholar who can throw in his lot with me. The two have their own individuality. And if the Navajivan Press succeeds in the venture, there will be a third with its own individuality. With the impetus that is being given to Urdu learning through the proposed Hindustani Prachar Sabha such a venture has become a possibility.

SEVAGRAM, April 28, 1942

Harijan, 3-5-1942

99. TRAVANCORE

In spite of the high percentage of education among men and women in Travancore, there is no such thing as real liberty in that unhappy land. Shri Thanu Pillai, the President of the State Congress, and Shri Ramachandran, a member of the Executive of the Travancore State Congress, have been sentenced to six months' rigorous imprisonment for defying the ban

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on meetings of the Congress. If bans are imposed on public meetings because they are held under the auspices of certain organizations which ask for responsible government, they have to be defied. The leaders of such movements cannot stultify themselves by entirely gagging themselves. It is too great a price to pay for nominal liberty. Shri T. Pillai and Shri Ramachandran will serve the cause better through their imprisonment than they will by submitting to gagging orders. Here is Shri Ramachandran's statement before the Magistrate:

> There was first of all a communique issued by the Chief Secretary to the Government of Travancore, in which he had said that the celebration of the All-India States' Peoples' Day would not be permitted. This was followed by an order of the District Magistrate, Trivandrum, served on some of us prohibiting the celebration of the States' Peoples' Day. My offence relates to this order of the District Magistrate. In that order it was made out that, if such a meeting was held and speeches made, there was the likelihood of a breach of the peace in Trivandrum. It further stated that, if the meeting was held and speeches made, there would come about an estrangement between the people and the Government. Immediately on receipt of this prohibitory order Shri Pattom Thanu Pillai and myself wrote a letter to the District Magistrate, in which we made it clear that this meeting was to be held not for the purpose of initiating an agitation but that it was just in response to an all-India observance. The meeting was to be held not in a public place but inside the Congress House premises. We made it clear also that the apprehension of a breach of the peace was absolutely unfounded. We had said that, if in spite of this clarification the meeting was prohibited, we would be violating the order. This explanatory letter did not elicit any reply from the District Magistrate. So the meeting was held. After Shri Thanu Pillai's arrest I took charge of the meeting and spoke for an hour. I must observe here that I had never seen a quieter meeting in my life. The position we took, therefore, viz., that there would be absolutely no breach of the peace, was confirmed by the meeting itself. The second point in the District Magistrate's order was that the meeting would bring about estrangement between the Government and the people. In my view this certainly was not one of the results of the meeting. It was, therefore, proved beyond any shadow of doubt that the District Magistrate's apprehensions were absolutely unfounded. Therefore, though I am technically guilty—because I certainly did violate the District Magistrate's order—the District Magistrate and not I was in the wrong. I am entitled, therefore, to an honourable acquittal. This technical guilt I had to take upon myself for the simple reason that I was not going to be persuaded not to do a

thing which I considered wholly right and which my self-respect dictated that I should do.

SEVAGRAM, April 28, 1942

Harijan, 3-5-1942

100. AHIMSAK VYAYAM SANGH

As the readers are aware, an Ahimsak Vyayam Sangh was inaugurated at Malad a few days ago. Sardar Prithvi Singh is the soul of the Association. Shriyuts Rameshwardas Birla, Purshottam Kanji and Keshavadev Nevatia are its Trustees. Prithvi Singh is imparting training to young men and women selected by himself. But the Association will fulfil its real mission when Provincial Congress Committees send their selected workers for training. The programme of the Association is unique. Sardar Prithvi Singh is himself experimenting with the practicability of non-violence along with the building of a strong and vigorous body. He has devoted the first half of his life to the belief that India could be liberated through violence alone; and now he himself has become a convert to non-violence. I am convinced that his is an honest experiment. It is a difficult undertaking. To believe in a theory is one thing; to translate it into action is another. And then, the attempt is to be made through means with which one is habitually acquainted and which are today associated with diametrically opposite ends. Those who are assigned to Sardar Prithvi Singh for training should have at least a working faith in non-violence.

SEVAGRAM, April 28, 1942

[From Marathi]

Marathi Harijan, 3-5-1942

101. A NOTE

April 28, 1942

This means "No". That is why I had asked you to consult Balvantsinha and Parnerkar and said that if they agreed, I would have no objection. They have not understood your point. Talk to them.

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 303

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102. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

April 29, 1942

BHAI HARIBHAU,

Please convey my blessings to Chi. Brihaspati and Chi. Ramkunwar. I do hope they will both render service to the country.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA
P.O. RAJKOT, *via* VADNAGAR
MARWAR

From the Hindi original: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

103. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

May 1, 1942

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. It is good that you left. It is also good that the tumour has disappeared. I am sure Anand[1] will not get cough. It is good news for me that you have regained your health. It will be desirable to go to Hajira for a week at least. The heat has gone up here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of Gujarati: C.W. 10043. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

[1] Addressee's son

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104. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

May 1, 1942

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I had got your letter. You can eat only *paraval* and cucumber. You must not harm your health. Do not worry about Father. Ba is quite well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3375

105. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

May 1, 1942

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have read through your article. I feel pained. It is ignorance to invoke the name of God here. Your article shows egotism. What had I to settle by sending for you? If the Goseva Sangh takes up all our work we should feel happy. None of them are selfish, yet you smell selfishness in them. Where was the question of offering you threats? Poor . . .[1] had been sent by me. She had gone to plead with you. I had also said she should plead with you. Do what seems proper to you. I would still say that you should do what the Sangh says. That will become you. If there is anything you want to explain to me, explain it. They themselves will be doing anything they want to do only after consulting me. They are also workers like you. They worship the same God as you worship. The only difference is that although you invoke God's name you want to do as you please. There is so much egotism in you that you cannot work with anyone. Come down a little and try to understand.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]
Bapuki Chhayamen, pp. 306-7

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

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106. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHASTRI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 2, 1942

BHAI HIRALAL SHASTRI,

I have your letter. It will not be hypocritical if the parents, knowing that the couple will not be wearing khadi after marriage, still dress them for the wedding only in khadi.

Herewith Dugarji's letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Hiralal Shastri Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

107. LETTER TO SOHANLAL DUGAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 2, 1942

BHAI SOHANLAL,

My blessings to the couple on the occasion of your son's wedding. I hope they will both render true service.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Hiralal Shastri Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

108. STATEMENT ON HINDUSTANI[1]

May 2, 1942

The work for the propagation of the national language among the people has brought the realization that what the Congress calls 'Hindustani' is a simplified blend of Urdu and Hindi. This is the language that is spoken and understood in North India and is understood and used in a large measure in other parts of India too.

[1] This was signed by Gandhiji, Rajendra Prasad and others.

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Hindi and Urdu, which are the literary forms of this language, are drifting apart more and more. The need is for these two forms to be brought closer to each other and to propagate Hindustani as the national language in those parts of the country where other languages are spoken. We therefore propose to establish an association which will simultaneously propagate both simple Hindi and simple Urdu and every member of which shall know both these forms as well as both the scripts of Hindustani and be able to employ either whenever the need arises. This will lead, first, to an easy and clear language coming into use all over the country and, secondly, to a literature being developed in the same simple language, capable of giving expression to sophisticated thoughts and sentiments. In pursuance of this objective we are this day, the 2nd May, 1942, convening an association to be called the Hindustani Prachar Sabha.[1]

[From Hindi]

Rashtrabhasha Hindustani, Part I, pp. 151-2

109. HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH

The Harijan Sevak Sangh met in Wardha on 28th and 29th April. Sheth G. D. Birla was considerate and took very little of my time. I have developed a dislike for making speeches, but I consented to answer some of the questions the members had brought with them to Sevagram on the 29th morning. The answers to these will be of use to all Harijan workers. Most were in Hindustani, some in English, and one in Gujarati. I suggested that in future all questions should be in Hindustani. Those who do not know either Hindi or Urdu should make it a point to learn the national language, and until such time as they are unable to write in Hindustani themselves, they must get someone to do so for them.

Q. The Harijan Sevak Sangh is looked upon as a part of the Congress. But very few Congressmen are Harijan workers. Why?

A. The Sangh is not a part of the Congress. It was the outcome of the fast I undertook in 1932 when I was in jail.[2] The meeting of Hindus drawn from every class, which was held under the presidentship of Pandit Malaviyaji and which gave birth to the Sangh, deliberately decided to keep the organization separate from

[1] For the aims and objects of Hindustani Prachar Sabha, *vide* Appendix IV.
[2] *Vide* Vol. LI, pp. 116-20.

the Congress and non-political. It was this quality of the Sangh that enabled Sheth G. D. Birla to become its President and Shri Thakkar Bapa its Secretary. Nevertheless there are and ought to be many Congressmen in the Sangh, because practically all reformers are drawn into the Congress fold. But it is true that there are plenty of non-Congress persons in the Sangh. It is also true that those Congressmen who are only interested in politics do not come into it. It is, therefore, sometimes wrongly thought that Congressmen do not take an interest in the Sangh. It is the duty of every Congressman to remove untouchability, root and branch, from his life.

Q. Harijan service has really developed into mere Harijan uplift. Practically no work is done among caste Hindus for the removal of untouchability. What is the remedy for this?

A. Experience shows that propaganda among caste Hindus can only be successfully carried out by influential persons whose word carried weight with the general public. Such persons are hard to find. But it is within the capacity of every Harijan worker to carry on mute propaganda. Our caste-Hindu workers are often satisfied with mere uplift work among the Harijans, which is not sufficient. Many workers, while they do not observe untouchability themselves, are unable even to convert their own families. How then can they influence the outside world? Moreover it is my confirmed opinion that every Harijan worker has to make it a point to beg for even one pice for Harijans from those caste Hindus with whom he comes in contact. If all devoted themselves, heart and soul, to this task, very good results would ensue.

Q. Should not the Sangh take upon itself the service of those Harijans who have been converted to Christianity or Islam and are yet treated as untouchables? Are we not out to remove untouchability root and branch and therefore help all who come under its sway?

A. This question has already been answered in the columns of *Harijan* but must bear repetition so long as it is raised. The moment untouchability is utterly banished from Hindu society it will, *ipso facto*, disappear from elsewhere too. Whatever the merits or demerits of the case, it is clear that our interference with converts will be the cause of strife with Muslims and Christians. Such converts have either broken off all contacts with, or they have been in their turn boycotted by, Hindus. They have thrown in their lot with other sects whose leaders will not allow them to maintain their old contacts. Hence the H. S. S. quite rightly decided from its inception to confine its area of work to Harijans who had

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not left the Hindu fold. A convert, having left his original fold, is no longer guided or controlled by it.

Q. What should be the attitude of the Sangh if Harijan boys wish to enlist in the army?

A. They should be allowed to do so. They may not be controlled by the Congress policy or ahimsa. They must be given absolute freedom of choice.

Q. Harijans are of opinion that caste Hindus who are sympathetic to their cause should not use those temples where they are not allowed entry.

A. They are right. It is the bounden duty of Harijan workers not to go where Harijans are not allowed and likewise to dissuade caste Hindus.

Q. Harijans are legally entitled to send their children to many educational institutions as also to draw water from public wells. But public sentiment still militates against this being put into practice. Should Harijans resort to the law courts for justice in these matters or wait patiently until the caste Hindus are converted?

A. Where there is no danger of violence being done to them, the Harijans should exercise their legal right and where necessary resort to law courts. Harijan workers must continue agitation among caste Hindus and not rest content with mere legal rights.

Q. Is it not essential to reform the insanitary methods employed by sweepers for cleaning latrines and scavenging?

A. It is most necessary. What is more, until this is done the condition of sweepers will remain pitiable. To this end it is the duty of Harijan workers and caste Hindus to do sweepers' work themselves. No caste Hindu will employ the methods used by sweepers. He will do the work scientifically. For example, he will never remove excreta in a basket or carry it on his head; he will cover excreta with dry earth and remove it in a metal vessel. He will avoid touching dirt with his hands as far as possible; he will clean the vessels with water and a rod; he will bathe immediately after doing the work; he will wear special clothes when scavenging. These reforms do not cost much. They require intelligence, hard work and love of an ideal. We may not relegate sweepers' work to one particular class. Therefore all should learn it in the same way as cooking. Each person should be his own sweeper. If this ideal were to be put into practice in society, the miserable condition of sweepers would at once be rectified.

SEVAGRAM, May 3, 1942

Harijan, 10-5-1942

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110. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

May 3, 1942

CHI. KAKA,

You did not seem sufficiently interested yesterday. I do forget small details. I suggested your name but kept quiet when you declined. You yourself should have suggested someone for Vice-President[1]. All that, however, can be rectified. All that we wanted was to put the ship to sea. We shall do something for the Sammelan Committee. But only when Shriman comes. Won't he? Carry on the correspondence. Ask Amritlal to send yesterday's report.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10957

111. LETTER TO INDUMATI N. GUNAJI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
May 3, 1942

CHI. INDU,

I have your letter. Bharatanandji's[2] plan is only an idea. Nothing has yet materialized. It will be all right if you take something from what I have written in *Harijan.*

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10945. Courtesy: Indumati Tendulkar

112. NOTES

STATES AND THEIR PEOPLE

I have suggested in these columns that the people of the States should remain calm and so far as possible not precipitate a clash,[3]

[1] Of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha
[2] Maurice Frydman, a Polish engineer, who became a follower of Gandhiji
[3] *Vide* Vol. LXXV, p. 376.

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as events are shaping themselves in spite of us. But there is a limit to every such proposal. In Travancore, Mysore and Jodhpur things seem to have gone beyond endurance.

I have already referred to Travancore where two of its best workers[1] have been cast into prison for the simple reason that they are too public-spirited to submit to autocracy.

The same thing is happening in Mysore though in a slightly different manner. The cause is identical. The Mysore State Congress must not be tolerated. I know how the members have tried to placate authority. They have refrained from raising large issues save that they must keep the goal of liberty before the Mysoreans.

And now comes serious news from Jodhpur. There, as in the other States, the local Parishad people have tried to work in co-operation with authority. They have raised no awkward questions. But the Rajputana States, like many others, have many jagirdars who are co-sharers with the Princes and derive authority from them. They may be termed States within States. These have no law governing them. The British Power has no direct control over them. The Princes are ever afraid of them. They dare not interfere with the exercise of the jagirdars' authority over the people within their jurisdiction. The result is that the people within these *jagirdaris* are the worst off in the Indian hierarchy. There was a clash, as far as my information goes, between the people and one of the jagirdars. This incident promises to lead to a major issue. Associations favoured by authority as in British India are, it is said, being set up against the popular Parishad. If a deliberate attempt is being made to suppress the local associations, the latter must accept the challenge and risk the worst in the full faith that liberty and truth cannot be suppressed for ever. But I would fain hope that the Princes and their advisers will, for their own sakes and for the good of India, curb the tendency in many States which cannot be described by any other adjective than lawless.

Opium Addicts

A correspondent writes as follows:

> I do not know whether you are aware that in Rajputana (Marwar) the inhabitants are terrible opium addicts. A wedding or death or any ceremonial occasion necessitates the offering of opium to the visitors.

[1] Pattom Thanu Pillai, President of the State Congress and G. Rama-Member of the Executive Committee; *vide* "Travancore", pp. 74-6.

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It may even mean the pawning of goods or mortgaging of property, but the opium has to be offered. It is quite an ordinary matter for a person to take 1½ or 2 *tolas* of opium per day and sometimes even more. I know of some who can swallow as much as five. When my father died I went home. A Brahmin friend came to condole. The first thing was to offer him opium which is generally kept in a special box. There were three *tolas* in it. The Brahmin said he would help himself. To my astonishment he emptied the entire contents on the palm of his hand and swallowed them. Having done so he said he was not satisfied. When I asked him how much was sufficient he replied 'four *tolas*'! And of course, if opium-eaters do not get their dope at the proper time, they are no better than useless lumps of flesh. This drug habit is eating as a canker into our society.

Deenbandhu Andrews and Pearson[1] laboured on behalf of these addicts. We have not cared for them half as much as we have for the drink addicts. The effects of opium are not so patent as of drink so far as society is concerned. But both the vices have nothing between them to choose. Slaves of opium have their reasons atrophied. They become living automata, having no interest in anything but their opium. How to deal with them is a tremendous question. Not until we have an unlimited band of workers, well trained and seasoned, will it be possible to produce an effect on these helpless members of society. The medical profession can render valuable assistance by carrying on researches and discovering remedies for dealing with this social disease.

SEVAGRAM, May 4, 1942
Harijan, 10-5-1942

113. ONE THING NEEDFUL

To those of us who love India and Indians and have tried to serve her people faithfully, the fact that in our hour of distress the hatred against us is growing is a matter of infinite sorrow. I admit we have not played and are still not playing fair by India; but can two wrongs make a right? When even the 'enemy' is in dire distress should he not be given some quarter? In asking us to withdraw are you not inviting your own people to bend the knee to Japan, knowing full well that you have not the non-violent strength as a country to resist any foreign aggression or domination? If you had had it, we could never have

[1] W. W. Pearson, a British Missionary, who worked in Bengal was for sometime a teacher in Santiniketan.

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kept our hold on you. Will you not forgive past sins and rely on the goodwill of the new generation of Englishmen and women who can no longer think in terms of empire? Barring you, among the Congress leaders, is there anyone who believes whole-heartedly in non-violence? Yours is the only logical position, and you alone are a real friend of Britain.

This is an epitome of a pathetic English letter. I can but repeat what I felt and said in my letter[1] to Lord Linlithgow recording my impressions of the first interview with him after the declaration of war. I have nothing to withdraw, nothing to repent of. I remain the same friend today of the British that I was then. I have not a trace of hatred in me towards them. But I have never been blind to their limitations as I have not been to their great virtues.

I do not deny the existence of hatred among the people at large, nor its increase with the march of events. But I claim that my national prescription has kept it under subjection and even sterilized it to an extent.

I am convinced, therefore, that the time has come during the war, not after it, for the British and the Indians to be reconciled to complete separation from each other. That way and that way alone lies the safety of both and, shall I say, the world. I see with the naked eye that the estrangement is growing. Every act of the British Government is being interpreted, and I think rightly, as being in its own interest and for its own safety. There is no such thing as joint common interest. To take the extreme case, a British victory over the Japanese will not mean a victory for India. But that is not a near event. Meanwhile the introduction of foreign soldiers, the admitted inequalities of treatment of Indian and European evacuees, and the manifestly overbearing behaviour of the troops are adding to the distrust of British intentions and declarations. I feel that they cannot all of a sudden change their traditional nature. Racial superiority is treated not as a vice but as a virtue. This is true not only in India; it is equally true in Africa, it is true in Burma and Ceylon. These countries could not be held otherwise than by assertion of race superiority.

This is a drastic disease requiring a drastic remedy. I have pointed the remedy—complete and immediate orderly withdrawal of the British from India at least, in reality and properly from all non-European possessions. It will be the bravest and the cleanest act of the British people. It will at once put the Allied cause on a completely moral basis and may even lead to a most

[1] Presumably the article, "The Simla Visit", 5-9-1939, which Gandhiji had sent to the Viceroy; *vide* Vol. LXX, pp. 161-2.

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honourable peace between the warring nations. And the clean end of imperialism is likely to be the end of Fascism and Nazism. The suggested action will certainly blunt the edge of Fascism and Nazism which are an offshoot of imperialism.

British distress cannot be relieved by nationalist India's aid in the manner suggested by the writer. It is ill-equipped for the purpose, even if it can be made enthusiastic about it. And what is there to enthuse nationalistic India? Just as a person cannot feel the glow of the sun's heat in its absence, even so India cannot feel the glow of freedom without the actual experience of it. Many of us simply cannot contemplate an utterly free India with calmness and equanimity. The first experience is likely to be a shock before the glow comes. That shock is a necessity. India is a mighty nation. No one can tell how she will act and with what effect when the shock is delivered.

I feel, therefore, that I must devote the whole of my energy to the realization of the supreme act. The writer of the letter admits the wrong done to India by the British. I suggest to the writer that the first condition of British success is the present undoing of the wrong. It should precede, not follow, victory. The presence of the British in India is an invitation to Japan to invade India. Their withdrawal removes the bait. Assume, however, that it does not; free India will be better able to cope with the invasion. Unadulterated non-co-operation will then have full sway.

SEVAGRAM, May 4, 1942

Harijan, 10-5-1942

114. QUESTION BOX

BARREN COWS

Q. Why may not work such as ploughing or grinding corn be taken from barren cows? Would that not be one way of preventing their going to the slaughter-house?

A. This question used to be much discussed at one time owing to the enthusiasm of a Punjabi who used to advocate the use even of milch cows for draft purposes. He used to claim that they would yield more and richer milk for the exercise given to them. Anyway my devotion to the cow does not preclude me from taking such labour as she can perform without the slightest detriment to her body. The fact is that our treatment of draft animals leaves much to be desired. I would welcome the use

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of barren cows for gentle labour, if only it would make people more considerate than they are towards the other animals.

From the Frying-pan?

Q. You advise evacuation[1] of cities likely to be bombed and migration to the villages. Do you imagine the villages to be safe? As a matter of fact the villagers are more panic-stricken than the city-dwellers. There is inadequate police protection, and villagers live in hourly terror of dacoits and robbers. Is it not a matter of jumping from the frying-pan into the fire?

A. I have not suggested migration to the villages for the soft life they will provide. Fright was no ingredient of my plan. It was and still is good even from a military point of view as has now been made abundantly clear. All the danger you present is undoubtedly bound up with the migration to the villages. But that to my mind is an additional reason for it. Who will put heart into the villagers and dispel panic, if it is not the right type of experienced city people? They will cover not only the aged and the infirm who may migrate to the villages, but they will also help and serve the villagers in the many ways I have pointed out in these columns. Courage is indispensable in these times for every true act.

Rotatory Government

Q. In order to solve the communal tangle, why not divide India into two sections as far as population goes, e.g., Mussalmans, Christians and Parsis in one, and Hindus, Sikhs and Depressed Classes in the other. Let the first section rule for a period of five years by means of elected representatives and the second section come in similarly later. Would this not allay the present mistrust? As for Princes' India, could a Committee of elected Princes be entrusted with the work of governing all the States?

A. Your question reads well on paper; but your suggestion, if acted upon, must break down in practice. The act of government is not the simple thing you seem to imagine. What you suggest may work as a toy when the strings are pulled by armed authority. It won't be our government. The puller of the strings will govern. That is the old way. I have presented the better way—the non-violent method. In either case the first condition is that every trace of foreign authority should be removed from the land. Then and then only shall we know our real selves—our strength as well as our weaknesses. When we

[1] *Vide* pp. 27 and 68.

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are untrammelled by foreign or other authority and free, we shall know how to deal with the day-to-day problems. We won't then be governed in the neat way mentioned by you. The arbiter then will be either the sword or reason.

SEVAGRAM, May 4, 1942
Harijan, 10-5-1942

115. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

May 7, 1942

CHI. MAGAN,

I did not like your letter. It is not right for you to find your own brother a burden to you. But in this respect, I cannot put pressure on you. I am sure that Ratilal[1] will improve if he can be bathed in love. That love he cannot have from anybody but you. I cannot arrange for his separate stay. I have no doubt that he will be ruined if he leaves this place. How can Champa[2] live with him? You may therefore do what you think best.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 1028. Courtesy: Manjula M. Mehta

116. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 7, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have told Mathuranath that he can work in the goshala only if you permit him. Even if he works there how can he live in the Ashram? I also believe that those who do not contribute to the work in the Ashram should not live in the Ashram. This is the correct policy.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Do ask me whatever you want to. Nothing is settled about my going.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4423

[1] Addressee's brother
[2] Ratilal's wife

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117. TELEGRAM TO CHUNILAL SEN[1]

[On or after *May 7, 1942*][2]

THUMB IMPRESSION MUST BE GIVEN.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

118. LETTER TO PARACHURE SHASTRI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
May 8, 1942

SHASTRIJI,

I had your letter. Manharji has told me everything. Janakibehn will send the money. I am doing all the rest.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10670

119. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 9, 1942

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

I have been awaiting your letter every day. It has arrived today. You do need a little rest. Many people have given me reports of Indu's work. She will become perfectly fit if she always maintains good health.

They tell me also that Feroze too is doing good work.

Everything possible is being done for Chandra Singh. Madhavi has got whooping cough. I visit her every day. Chandra

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of May 4, 1942 saying: "Satin Sen convicted six months. Authorities insist thumb impression under Defence of India Rules. Wire instructions."

[2] The addressee's telegram was received at Wardha on May 7.

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Singh and Bhagirathi appear happy. They do not complain much about the heat now. The problem of Chandra Singh's education is difficult. I am going to Bombay for eight days in connection with the Deenbandhu Memorial. I shall do whatever I can on my return. You should not worry.

Maulana's letters come regularly. He too is unwell. He writes to say that he will be coming to Wardha towards the end of this month. Perhaps you too will be coming along with him?

Ba is well.

Blessings to both from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Gandhi–Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

120. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 9, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

About Dhiren and Pratap, whatever is proper should be done. Chandra Singh's case is different. Go slow with him. Such an exception will have to be made. The true remedy is to take people who are compatible, otherwise the Ashram will lose its homeliness.

Do not worry about non-indulgence of the palate. Let each one go as far as he can. Only go on reminding. Consider that the Ashram is not an Ashram, but we are going to try and become Ashramites a little bit. Here understanding alone can help. About milk and ghee we can do nothing. We should be satisfied with what little we can get.

Tooth-picks should not be used everywhere.

Do whatever you can about water. Let me know on my return.

No more today. I hope to leave on the 18th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4425; also S.N. 24479

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121. MYSORE

Reference has already been made in these columns about the Mysore Government's repressive measures against the State Congress.[1] Now comes the news of a worse tragedy in the shape of a police charge at Bhadravati resulting in three deaths including a child three years old, from firing by the police on an unarmed crowd. I do not wish to enter into the details. According to the Congress version the whole tragedy arose out of a peaceful labour demonstration. There is a suggestion on the Government side that the firing had to be resorted to because the crowd had attacked the police station in Bhadravati. The President of the Congress denies the charge and demands an inquiry. It will be worthless unless it is admittedly impartial. If the crowd had attacked the police station, what was the cause? If the crowd was non-violent, was the firing a mere wanton awe-inspiring process? In either case the people must learn the art of being killed, and if they are non-violent, without any reason therefor save for their love of liberty. It is a duty then to face death as cheerfully as we face imprisonment. Indeed, I do not know that such a swift ending is not more welcome than the prolonged agony that jail life sometimes becomes. As the struggle becomes wider and more earnest and more real, imprisonment is bound to be, as past experience teaches, increasingly hard to bear. Death for a brave and strong-willed man will then be a welcome relief.

ON THE WAY TO BOMBAY, May 10, 1942
Harijan, 17-5-1942

[1] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title, "States and Their People", pp. 83-4.

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122. *QUESTION BOX*

Congress and League

Q. Maulana Saheb has made what I consider a very wise and patriotic suggestion that the Congress Working Committee will nominate five representatives to meet the representatives of the Muslim League when the latter so desire to do. I trust it will commend itself to you. If it does, I should like you publicly to support it. It will go a long way to bring the Hindus and the Muslims together.

A. I have no hesitation in endorsing Maulana Saheb's suggestion. No one would be more glad than I if, with or without my endorsement, the two can come together. I have always felt that there is something radically wrong with both that the most obvious thing, viz., the coming together of the wise men of both with a will to find a solution of the deadlock, has not happened.

Ingenious Method

Q. Your advocacy of the learning of Urdu as part of the national language which you have called Hindustani is all very well. What do you say to the propaganda that is being carried on in the Nizam's Dominions on behalf of Urdu? Here is the first question in a Telugu examination paper:

> "If for the purposes of Federation a common language for India is indispensable and the case of Hindustani is strong enough, then it seems to me that as far as this University is concerned it should immediately make Urdu its medium of instruction especially when it happens to be the mother tongue of this province. Those who would wait till it grows richer are sadly mistaken and argue in a circle. It will remain poor as long as the universities make no use of it in teaching all branches of knowledge."

Remember that Telugu and not Urdu is the mother tongue of the majority of the people in this part of the country. What do you say to the ingenious method adopted of carrying on pro-Urdu propaganda through examination papers?

A. I admit that the method adopted is both ingenious and strange. An examination paper is hardly a vehicle for propaganda on a question on which sharp division of opinion prevails. I agree that Urdu is not the mother tongue of the people of

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H.E.H. the Nizam's Dominions. What proportion of the population knows Telugu I do not know. My notion of an all-India speech does not involve the displacement of the great provincial languages, but its knowledge is meant to be an addition to that of the provincial speech. Nor do I expect that the millions will ever learn the all-India speech. It will be learnt by the politically-minded and those who have inter-provincial connections. Indeed a correspondent suggests that in the place of an all-India speech I should advocate the learning of the languages of neighbouring provinces. Thus he says:

> It is far more useful for the Assamese to know Bengali than Hindi or Urdu and now according to you Hindi and Urdu.

If we had not the intolerable burden of learning English not merely as a second language but as a language through which all higher instruction is imparted to us, we should find it child's play to learn our neighbours' speech and certainly learn the all-India speech for all-India contacts. In my opinion a boy or girl lacks culture and accomplishment, if he or she does not know half a dozen languages of India. It is a sure sign of brain fag on the part of English-knowing Indians when they tremble at the very thought of learning a language other than English, not excluding even their mother's speech. For the majority of objectors are English-knowing Indians. I have found no difficulty about the Ashram inmates learning Urdu in addition to Hindi. And I know that in South Africa the Tamil labourers could speak Telugu and *vice versa*, and they had a working knowledge of Hindi. No one had told them that they should learn Hindi. Somehow or other they knew intuitively that they should know Hindi. Of course they were no scholars, but for mutual intercourse they picked up what was necessary. They picked up also the speech of their neighbours, the Zulus. They could not carry on their business, if they did not. Thus most Indians knew besides their mother tongues two more Indian languages, Zulu, and a smattering of even English. Needless to say many of them wrote no language, and most could write only ungrammatically their own mother tongues. The moral of this is obvious.

If you dispense with the script, you pick up your neighbour's language without effort and without difficulty, and if you are fresh and the brain is not wearied, you can learn as many scripts as you wish without any difficulty. The study is any day

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interesting and stimulating. The study of languages is an art and valuable at that.

ON THE WAY TO BOMBAY, May 10, 1942

Harijan, 17-5-1942

123. QUESTION BOX

INTELLECTUAL CONVICTION

Q. Intellectually I am convinced that non-violence is the only solution of quarrels between man and man. But by nature I cannot but react violently to acts of hostility to my country or myself. So I am unable to be content with non-violent resistance only against the Japanese. I feel that, in addition to whatever I may be able to do by way of non-violent resistance, I should also do my utmost to help the war effort against them. They have no right to invade my country even though it is in British hands and not ours. But when I think of helping the war effort, my intellectual conviction of non-violence does not allow me to do so with peace of mind.

A. Your difficulty is a common difficulty. But if you have real intellectual *conviction*, it will overcome your nature which is nothing but habit. Your conviction should tell you that non-violence is a force infinitely superior to violence. Hence you do not need to rely upon violent assistance. Moreover you are labouring under a fallacy. Why do you say that the Japanese have no right to invade your country although it is in foreigners' hands? In the first place, the country is not yours while it is in others' hands. You cannot do what you like with it. The foreigners can and do. Secondly, if the Japanese have enmity against your master, they have every right to attack what your master possesses. We are not examining here the correctness of Japan's conduct in going to war against Great Britain. I am simply pointing out what seems to me to be your mental confusion. The proper course for you is to ask the wrongful possessor to vacate your country. When he has done it you will have the choice between violence and non-violence against the Japanese attack, if it comes. But the thing is not so simple as I have put it. Your difficulty is real. You feel that you cannot defend your country. You have lost it. The English can, if you help them. If the English vacate the country, the Japanese are much more likely to attack undefended India if only for strategic purposes, and you will be utterly helpless against the invading host. Therefore, seeing that the

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English are in India and they can defend, why not make common cause with them and answer the impending attack? After victory, have they not said, they would go away if they are not wanted? This, I expect, is your argument. In my opinion it is only plausible. The British do not want your help on your terms, as witness the failure of the Cripps mission. They want it on their terms. If, therefore, victory is achieved, the British hold will be ever so much stronger than before. If they will not trust you now, there is no warrant for supposing that they will after victory. They will then ask you with greater force than now to produce the unity which cannot be produced whilst they are here. You get out of all this tangle, if you adopt my method. If you have intellectual conviction, you can approach the problem with the utmost confidence. You are friend to all. You say to the British with the greatest goodwill that, if they leave India, she will take care of herself and will probably escape Japanese attention, and if she cannot, she will answer it with non-violence. Then by that simple act of justice they gain your eternal friendship. It may stand them in good stead even during the present war. For India will then of her own free will help China, Russia and others. If India sets her own house in order, as I have no doubt she will, India can work wonders.

BOMBAY, May 10, 1942
Harijan, 17-5-1942

124. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
May 10, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Yesterday the train arrived after ten. Got seats comfortably. Rangaswami had much to do with our getting the seats. We arrived safe here at 1 p.m. Now I am writing this after beginning my silence. It is 2.35 p.m. I hope it will not be necessary to stay here for more than 8 days. Ba and other patients, I hope, are well and Balvantsinha is quiet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4270. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7902

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125. QUESTION BOX

If "Harijan" Is Prohibited

Q. You are going strong. You should know that if the people follow you it must hinder the present war effort. The Government cannot allow it. If they do, you will admit that only the British Government can show such generosity. And what will you do if they suppress it?

A. No Government can afford to be generous. A man is generous when he does something at his own expense. Governments can do nothing at their own expense. But they always succeed in making people believe that they are generous even when they are barely or less than just. Justice is like a debt which has to be discharged. Therefore, if the Government permit *Harijan* to continue its even course, they will do so because it is proper from their point of view. They will not hesitate to suppress it when they think it is improper not to do so. I stated at the time of the resumption of publication that it was no part of my plan to persist in publication in spite of prohibition. I will, therefore, again suspend publication when the Government desire it. If they do, it will be a loss to the public. For, apart from the three weeklies, its articles appear by special permission in Urdu *Hindustan*—Lucknow, *Urdu Harijan*—Lahore, *Marathi Harijan*—Wardha. It is also published in Telugu and Oriya. Articles are sent to them in advance. Numerous other newspapers copy or translate articles from it week by week. There is no generosity in tolerating the publication of such a popular weekly. And my writings will not hinder war effort, if it is voluntary. If they influence the people, surely there is something wrong somewhere. It is not *Harijan* that should be stopped, but the wrong it exposes should be undone. I look upon my writings as a solid contribution to war effort, for he serves a cause best who exposes its weaknesses or those of its representatives.

You ask what I would do if they suppress *Harijan*. I must frankly confess I do not know. I have cultivated the habit of not anticipating evil. I am able to know the remedy instinctively when I am face to face with an evil. That is how a god-fearing man acts. The fear of God disposes of every other fear.

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But I can give you this assurance that suppression of *Harijan* can never mean suppression of me.

BOMBAY, May 11, 1942
Harijan, 17-5-1942

126. TO EVERY BRITON

When I had just begun my public career in South Africa I wrote "An Open Letter to Every Briton in South Africa"[1]. It had its effect. I feel that I should repeat the example at this critical juncture in the history of the world. This time my appeal must be to every Briton in the world. He may be nobody in the counsels of his nation. But in the empire of non-violence every true thought counts, every true voice has its full value. *Vox populi vox dei* is not a copy-book maxim. It is an expression of the solid experience of mankind. But it has one qualification. Its truth is confined to the field of non-violence. Violence can for the moment completely frustrate a people's voice. But since I work on the field of non-violence only, every true thought expressed or unexpressed counts for me.

I ask every Briton to support me in my appeal to the British at this very hour to retire from every Asiatic and African possession and at least from India. That step is essential for the safety of the world and for the destruction of Nazism and Fascism. In this I include Japan's 'ism' also. It is a good copy of the two. Acceptance of my appeal will confound all the military plans of all the Axis Powers and even of the military advisers of Great Britain.

If my appeal goes home, I am sure the cost of British interests in India and Africa would be nothing compared to the present ever-growing cost of the war to Britain. And when one puts morals in the scales, there is nothing but gain to Britain, India and the world.

Though I ask for their withdrawal from Asia and Africa, let me confine myself for the moment to India. British statesmen talk glibly of India's participation in the war. Now India was never even formally consulted on the declaration of war. Why should it be? India does not belong to Indians. It belongs to the British. It has been even called a British possession. The British practically do with it as they like. They make me—

[1] The title in fact was "Open Letter", *vide* Vol. I, pp. 170-88.

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an all-war resister—pay a war tax in a variety of ways. Thus I pay two pice as war tax on every letter I post, one pice on every postcard, and two annas on every wire I send. This is the lightest side of the dismal picture. But it shows British ingenuity. If I was a student of economics, I could produce startling figures as to what India has been made to pay towards the war apart from what are miscalled voluntary contributions. No contribution made to a conqueror can be truly described as voluntary. What a conqueror the Briton makes! He is well saddled in his seat. I do not exaggerate when I say that a whisper of his wish is promptly answered in India. Britain may, therefore, be said to be at perpetual war with India which she holds by right of conquest and through an army of occupation. How does India profit by this enforced participation in Britain's war? The bravery of Indian soldiers profits India nothing.

Before the Japanese menace overtakes India, India's homesteads are being occupied by British troops—Indian and non-Indian. The dwellers are summarily ejected and expected to shift for themselves. They are paid a paltry vacating expense which carries them nowhere. Their occupation is gone. They have to build their cottages and search for their livelihood. These people do not vacate out of a spirit of patriotism. When this incident was referred to me a few days ago, I wrote[1] in these columns that the dispossessed people should be asked to bear their lot with resignation. But my co-workers protested and invited me to go to the evacuees and console them myself or send someone to perform the impossible task. They were right. These poor people should never have been treated as they were. They should have been lodged suitably at the same time that they were asked to vacate.

People in East Bengal may almost be regarded as amphibious. They live partly on land and partly on the waters of the rivers. They have light canoes which enable them to go from place to place. For fear of the Japanese using the canoes the people have been called upon to surrender them. For a Bengali to part with his canoe is almost like parting with his life. So those who take away his canoe he regards as his enemy.

Great Britain has to win the war. Need she do so at India's expense? Should she do so?

But I have something more to add to this sad chapter. The falsity that envelopes Indian life is suffocating. Almost every

[1] *Vide* "Scorched-earth Policy Again", pp. 71-2.

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Indian you meet is discontented. But he will not own it publicly. The Government employees, high and low, are no exception. I am not giving hearsay evidence. Many British officials know this. But they have evolved the art of taking work from such elements. This all-pervading distrust and falsity make life worthless unless one resists it with one's whole soul.

You may refuse to believe all I say. Of course I shall be contradicted. I shall survive the contradictions.

I have stated what I believe to be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

My people may or may not approve of this loud thinking. I have consulted nobody. This appeal is being written during my silence day. I am just now concerned with Britain's action. When slavery was abolished in America many slaves protested, some even wept. But protests and tears notwithstanding, slavery was abolished in law. But the abolition was the result of a bloody war between the South and the North; and so though the Negro's lot is considerably better than before, he still remains the outcaste of high society. I am asking for something much higher. I ask for a bloodless end of an unnatural domination and for a new era, even though there may be protests and wailings from some of us.

BOMBAY, May 11, 1942

Harijan, 17-5-1942

127. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

BOMBAY,
May 11, 1942

BA,

I am well. Here it cannot be as hot as it is there. But it is certainly sultry. The night was sufficiently cool. Everyone remembers you. But I do feel that you are better there. You would soon fall ill here, and once you fell ill you would be compelled to stay back, to say nothing of other people having to serve you.

Take plenty of rest. Varma has not yet met me. Today is silence day. Look after Ratilal. You may take it that I will return on the 18th. For the rest, God alone knows.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

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128. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BOMBAY,
May 11, 1942

CHI. NARANDAS,

I had just taken up the pen to write a letter to Jamna[1] when I saw your article. I do not see any point in publishing it. So I am not doing so. Write to me.

Kanaiyo[2] is quite well.

Since I have no time, I stop here.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

We are returning on Sunday.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8604. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

129. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

BOMBAY,
May 11, 1942

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have got your loving gift which I am crediting to the Deenbandhu Memorial Fund. May you live long and fill the purses of many deserving beggars.

Why do you write in Gujarati to me alone and to Mahadev in English? The practice of writing in Gujarati will improve both your handwriting and language. When you are in great hurry, you can dictate to a Gujarati amanuensis. You should make a determined effort to overcome your deficiency.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4738. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] Addressee's son

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130. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[1]

BOMBAY,
May 11, 1942

It was a pity I could not see you, though I passed through Nasik[2]. But such is my condition. I am now arranging to send someone there. I read your letter. I had thought that you had already crossed the Sahara, but it seems you have not.[3] Who knows how many deserts you will still have to cross. Do not lose heart. Many others like you have risen from the sick-bed. Am I also not one such? I am not, therefore, giving up hope. The only thing which makes me unhappy is that I cannot keep you with me at this time. But why should I be unhappy even for that reason? You have given a great deal, and if God wills, you will give more.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 182

131. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
May 11, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I wrote to you yesterday.[4] I hope you got the letter.

Today I am writing during the silence. The silence will end at 2.35 p.m. I finished *Harijan* matter at 12 o'clock. Wrote a lot.

I hope all the patients are well.

Manjula will have gone to Maganwadi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4263. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7895

[1] Gandhiji's nephew

[2] Gandhiji had passed through Nasik on his way to Bombay for collecting funds for the Andrews Memorial.

[3] The addressee was suffering from tuberculosis and his condition at this time was very bad.

[4] *Vide* p. 96.

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132. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 11, 1942

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

Bari Khan often rings me up to say I should let you come. He says you have been asking him to obtain my permission for you to come. This does not seem right. You have been staying there because it is your duty to do so. How then do you say that you want my permission to come? Mother is going to Patiala. If you want to see her you can do so at a wayside station. I have suggested that she should go *via* Wardha and stay there for a few days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 473

133. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

May 11, 1942

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I hope you have calmed down. What happened is really to be laughed over; not lamented. There was no question of any insult.

Aren't you laughing?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1943

134. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

BOMBAY,
May 12, 1942

CHI. BABUDI,

There is no other medicine for Anand but patience. Children suffering from a cough like his do improve. You alone should

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not sacrifice sleep. The less Anand eats the better. He should take more of hot water with either honey or glucose. He should drink milk, only in small quantities. If you give him mango juice it should be wholly sweet. Put soda bicarb in it. I shall leave for Wardha on Sunday.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10044. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

135. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
[*May 12, 1942*][1]

CHI. AMRIT,

Ashadevi has arrived, also the post. It is difficult to write today. I am collecting money. Everything is going on well. Arrange about Balkrishna in Delhi. You must leave on the 28th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4262. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7894

136. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

BOMBAY,
May 14, 1942

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. Your complaint about my letters is not justified. What can I do if the letters are lost in transit?

As for Sucheta's[2] suggestion, you may accept it[3] if you think you can shoulder the burden. But first ascertain in detail what work you have to do. You should also consider what will be its place in my preparations. Shankarrao alone should mostly guide you in this respect, for it is he who will have to carry the

[1]The source has April, which is obviously a slip as the postal stamp bears the date 12-5-1942.

[2] Sucheta Kripalani. She was in charge of the Women's Department of All-India Congress Committee.

[3] Charge of the Women's Department of Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee

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burden of activities there. I cannot say right now what I shall do. But whatever I decide to do will have to be done immediately.

It is too much to say that I am eager to assume the leadership myself.

I expect to leave this place on Saturday. My health can be said to be good.

I do not even know that Sushila is here, then how could she have come to see me?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev, Pyarelal and Kanaiyo are with me. Pyarelal has gone to Nasik to see Mathuradas.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10427. Also C.W. 6866. Courtesy:Prema Kantak

137. INTERVIEW TO "THE NEWS CHRONICLE"

BOMBAY,
May 14, 1942

Q. You have recently asked the British to withdraw from India. Do you think it possible in the present circumstances for them to withdraw all at once? To whom are they to entrust the administration?

A. It has cost me much to come to the conclusion that the British should withdraw from India, and it is costing me still more to work out that conclusion. It is like asking loved ones to part, but it has become a paramount duty. And the beauty [of] and the necessity for withdrawal lie in its being immediate. They and we are both in the midst of fire. If they go, there is a likelihood of both of us being safe. If they do not, Heaven only knows what will happen. I have said in the plainest terms that in my proposal there is no question of entrusting the administration to any person or party. That would be a necessary consideration if the withdrawal was part of a settlement. Under my proposal, they have to leave India in God's hands, but in modern parlance to anarchy, and that anarchy may lead to internecine warfare for a time or to unrestrained dacoities. From these a true India will rise in the place of the false one we see.

Q. How is your policy of non-embarrassment reconcilable with this advice?

A. My policy of non-embarrassment remains intact in terms in which I have described it. If the British withdraw, surely

there is no embarrassment; not only so, they become eased of a tremendous burden, if they would calmly consider the meaning of the enslavement of a whole people. But if they persist, well knowing that they are surrounded by hatred, they invite embarrassment. I do not produce it by stating the truth, however unpalatable it may appear for the moment.

Q. Already there are signs of civil insecurity, and would not life be even more insecure, were the present administration suddenly to withdraw?

A. Of course, there is civil insecurity, and I have already confessed that insecurity is likely to increase very much only to give place to real security. The present insecurity is chronic and therefore not so much felt. But a disease that is not felt is worse than one that is felt.

Q. Were the Japanese to invade India, what would your advice be to the Indian people?

A. I have already said in my articles that it is just likely that the Japanese will not want to invade India, their prey having gone. But it is equally likely that they will want to invade India in order to use her ports for strategic purposes. Then, I would advise the people to do the same thing that I have advised them to do now, *viz.*, offer stubborn non-violent non-co-operation, and I make bold to say that, if the British withdraw and people here follow my advice, then non-co-operation will be infinitely more effective than it can be today, when it cannot be appreciated for the violent British action going on side by side.

Harijan, 24-5-1942

138. INTERVIEW TO BOMBAY SUBURBAN AND GUJARAT CONGRESSMEN[1]

May 15, 1942

Q. It is said that you are going to advise the British to leave India. Is this true? And if they do not listen to your advice, do you intend to non-co-operate with them?

[1] According to the source those present at the interview which lasted for about 85 minutes, were Vallabhbhai Patel, Bhulabhai Desai, B. G. Kher, Morarji Desai and other prominent Congressmen. The report of the interview, sent by Sharaf Athar Ali, a Communist worker, to P. C. Joshi, was intercepted. It is not possible to vouch for its authenticity, but the Government placed a high degree of reliance on it and the Viceroy cabled a summary of it to Amery on May 27.

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GANDHIJI: Usually an advice is given with the idea that it will be followed. But it may also not be heeded. The advice has, therefore, to be prepared for both contingencies. I do advise the British to leave India. I tell them to go away. And why do I say so? Because they will have to go anyway. They have been suffering defeats right from Singapore, through Burma and now even at the gates of India. Their continuation will therefore mean suffering for India. Yes, I ask them to go. And if they will not? Then I shall have to see. If my advice is not heeded by them, I shall have to force them to go, by non-co-operation or by civil disobedience. Or it may be by both. Of course, you may ask that in the beginning of the war I was for non-embarrassing the British and you may say: What is that policy now? Is this consistent with it? Let me tell you here that I think this is perfectly consistent with it. For the British need my advice. There will be no embarrassment for them; on the contrary. For I say that at present the war is far from their shores. On the Indian front they lack material. At home they have plenty. Let them therefore go back home. That will enable them to fight the Japs better. So, my policy is consistent. Of course, if they do not listen, I must cause them embarrassment. I am helpless. And I do not think it can be individual satyagraha this time. No, it will be mass satyagraha—an all-out satyagraha against the British demanding their withdrawal forthwith. Mind, I am not pro-Japanese. Indeed, Japan is too much of an aggressor for me to be that. But I emphatically differ from Rajaji. For, with what can I fight the Japs? The British are the immediate aggressors. Indeed I believe that the entire danger to India would be less if the British withdraw from here. I do not think Japan will invade India then. She wants to fight Britain. She has no concern whatsoever with India. What has India done to incur her wrath? It is Britain who has fought Japan and crossed her path. Therefore Japan wants to fight it. And therefore it is possible that when the British withdraw we shall be able to come to terms with Japan. And if even then she does not listen, then I have the same weapon against Japan that I have against Britain. Japan will not get a drop of water in India. We shall see to that. But resistance to the Japanese by whom? By a free India, not by an India who is not asked whether she would enter the war or not. Here I may point out that I disagree with Rajaji. Rajaji is an old colleague of mine, and my love for him remains as strong as ever. But I do no feel like Rajaji that of the two Britain is better and can be dealt with later—now, Japan. For me an

exploiter of other nations is an exploiter, whether he be imperialist or a totalitarian. Names do not matter. Besides, who says the British are better? I do not want to say for a moment that Rajaji will accept National Government outside the Congress, i.e., without its sanction. But have the British offered it? Rajaji is prepared to help them in every way against the Japanese. Then why the hitch? Simply because they do not want us to get the power.

They will not give it. They are what they are and nothing will change them. Yes, Cripps has gone back. But why do not they negotiate again? Through Sapru or Jayakar or even Rajaji? Because, as I said, they do not want to. Their time to go has come. Rajaji concedes Pakistan. But has Jinnah even moved an inch to discuss matters with him? No. For Jinnah's game is to bring Government pressure on the Congress, and Congress pressure on the Government, or both. Rajaji says, let India be split up. But I cannot agree. I cannot swallow the splitting of India. I alone know what pain the thought has caused me. Rajaji is an old friend and an astute politician. And only I know what I suffered to let him go. But he is strong-willed. He believes that he will achieve Hindu-Muslim unity. But what, after all, is Pakistan ? What does it mean ? Besides, when Cripps came Rajaji was for acceptance. Jawaharlal tried his utmost to get the demand conceded. You know what Jawahar is: a straightforward man. But nothing doing. And that is what I had said all along with terrible suffering of mind. And that is what people—the millions of India—told me at the station. No settlement. Don't settle! Even in Calcutta, some Muslims—quite good fellows you know—said: "You haven't accepted, have you?" That is what Indians felt. And how can the Government deny it ? They go as far as to say: not a single Burman helped the Japs (laughter). But Rajaji still hopes to achieve that which the British have determined will not be achieved: Hindu-Muslim unity. What really is Pakistan? Jinnah has never really explained. Can you tell me? Yes, yes, who denies that?[1] But what is the demand? The masses are duped. Good Mussalmans have failed to explain it to me. Indeed, when I am asked to solve the deadlock, I admit I can't do anything about it. The British make us fight, although I don't hide for a moment that we too want to fight. Else, we would never fight. But the only way to achieve unity is by getting India to ourselves and

[1] Someone had said it was the demand of the Muslim masses.

achieving it. Rajaji talks of the Lahore Resolution[1]. But the resolution is out of consideration. For where is Independence? Anarchy is the only way. Someone asked me if there would be anarchy if the British go. Yes, it will be there. But I tell the British: give us chaos. I say, in other words, leave India to God. But that is putting it in my language, in a language that the masses will not understand. Therefore, I say, leave India to anarchy. We shall have to face it. Better face it than the present state. The Congress mind is neither Hindu nor Muslim nor Christian nor Parsi. It is this Congress mind—a live reality—that will have to take charge of the anarchy and fashion it into Hindustan. I therefore ask the British to give us the gift of anarchy. If the British withdraw it will be given automatically. If not, then we will create anarchy, by launching satyagraha. I know the general confusion. You find Maulana says one thing. Jawahar another, Rajaji a third and now I a fourth thing. What are we to do? My advice to you is to weigh all the four and decide which to accept for yourself. I have not yet met Jawahar nor Maulana. But as you know well, although Jawahar and myself have differed quite often, he has always been with me as far as action goes. And I hope to win him to me. As for Maulana, we have always stood together since years. So I hope to reduce the four different notes to two. Then there will be only my voice and the voice of Rajaji and you can decide which of the two to follow. I cannot say. But I can only say that in this decision do not be influenced by a Bhulabhai here or a Khersaheb there. Decide for yourself. But decide with your reason, for if you just come my way then you will become an obstacle to me. And as for yourself, you will find yourself no more.

B. G. KHER: But will such a mass civil disobedience not mean direct help to the Japanese?

A. Oh, no! We are driving the British. We do not invite the Japanese. No, I disagree with those who think them liberators. Chinese history points that out. In fact I advised Chiang Kai-shek when he came here to fight the Japs my way. In fact I believe that Subhas Bose will have to be resisted by us. I have no proof, but I have an idea that the Forward Bloc has a tremendous organization in India. Well, Subhas has risked much for us; but if he means to set up a Government in India, under the

[1] Passed by the 44th session of the Indian National Congress on December 31, 1929 declaring that the aim of the Congress was complete independence for India

Japanese, he will be resisted by us. And I fear the Forward Bloc people will try their utmost to do so. And again, as I said, we launch our movement only against the British. The Japs can expect us to sign a neutrality pact with them. And why not? Why should they invade us? But if they do we shall resist.

Q. I am in charge of a public trust building. Soldiers want it. They say I should sign a paper saying I gave the building willingly and give it or they will take it by force. Have I to resist them?

A. Not at all, unless of course you want to start satyagraha on your own. For the fight has not begun yet. It will take two months yet for me to launch it. And that is why I wish this talk with all of you today to be kept secret. Please see it does not get into the Press. This language is too high for the Press to grasp. As far as possible, do not let even your friends know.

Q. I want to ask just this: A man is strangling me. Meanwhile another man comes to strangle him. Should I not help the other fellow to strangle my strangler?

A. I am a non-violent person, and I say by all means struggle for your freedom but then stop. My self-esteem will not allow me to help in strangling my strangler. No, I cannot help the Japanese. Having earned my freedom I remain neutral. But that is a non-violent man like me. The ethics of the violent, as many of you are, are different. Indeed, Russia, erstwhile hater of Britain, can take her aid, and Britain, similar hater, give it to her because both have violence-favouring mind. So to those of you to whom non-violence is not a belief but only a weapon, I say you needn't desist from helping Japan. Nay, to be true to yourselves, you should help it by every means, by even violent means, if possible.

G. P. HUTHEESING: But Bapu . . .

GANDHIJI: Sorry, I didn't know you were here (loud laughter).

G. P. HUTHEESING: But Bapu, some people say that one's outlook should be wider. That India should not think of her own freedom, but should stand by the international forces of freedom. For example, the Communists: they say that this is a people's war and India should fight Japan as China does. Needless to say, I don't agree with them. But what is your opinion?

A. None could be greater fools (loud laughter). But where is India? India as India does not exist. It is in Britain's pocket. How can such India help? And why? The British give us nothing while they demand everything. And after all what help are

we not giving? I do not devour the newspapers like you but I have got the information that 1,50,000 recruits are recruited monthly out of which 50,000 are selected. That's not a small matter. Besides Britain gets financial help. Who is going to resist its taxes? The postcard has risen from six pies. But even if it rises to a rupee, am I going to stop writing letters? Then why this clamour for our help? Besides, it is different with China. Her manpower is immense and her armies, unlike ours, are not mercenaries. And most of all her people are military-minded. And what is all this talk of a new mode of life and of international freedom? Can we depend upon Britain and America, both whose hands are stained with blood? India's name can be found nowhere on the Atlantic Charter. Even before the Communists ever said it, I have been thinking of a new mode of life. But it is impossible unless Britain withdraws to let the Indians and the Negroes be free. Then talk to me of a new mode of life. For I believe that such an India will then really serve as an ideal nation in the world and render it service.

The Transfer of Power, 1942-7, Vol. II, pp. 128-32

139. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

BOMBAY,
May 16, 1942[2]

Q. Would you review the situation created by the Allahabad A.I.C.C. meeting? What would you say regarding Rajaji's quoting your words regarding Pakistan in support of his latest move?

A. I would leave the Allahabad resolutions to themselves. C. R. has quoted me correctly, and I repeat that, if Muslims want anything—no matter what it is—no power on earth can prevent them from having it. For the condition of refusal will be to fight. Supposing Muslims ask for something which non-Muslims do not want to give or could not give, it means a fight. This applies to both the communities. If the Hindus want a thing and if they are all united in the demand, no non-Hindus can resist them, unless they want to fight. But my hope is that some day or other all parties will come to their senses and not

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "The Bombay Interview". According to *The Hindu*, 18-5-1942, the interview lasted for an hour and some sixty Press representatives were present.

[2] From *The Hindu*

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insist on their demands being accepted, and consent to go to arbitration. It is an age-long method and a civilized method, and I hope it will be accepted.

But it is from the frustration of every effort made to bring about unity by me, among many others, that has arisen the, for me, logical step that not until British power is wholly withdrawn from India can there be any real unity, because all parties will be looking to the foreign power. For the time being it is British but it may be French, Russian, Chinese, even then it would be the same thing. I have, therefore, come to the conclusion that real heart-unity, genuine unity, is almost an impossibility unless and until British power is withdrawn and no other power takes its place, that is to say, when India not only feels but is actually independent without a master in any shape or form. Nevertheless I shall try and welcome every effort for peace, well knowing that it is likely to be fruitless.

Q. There is a report about some new scheme that you want to propound in one of your *Harijan* articles about non-violent non-co-operation if any invader came to India. Could you give us an idea?

A. It is wrong. I have no plan in mind. If I had, I should give it to you. But I think nothing more need be added when I have said that there should be unadulterated non-violent non-co-operation, and if the whole of India responded and unanimously offered it, I should show that without shedding a single drop of blood Japanese arms—or any combination of arms—can be sterilized. That involves the determination of India not to give quarter on any point whatsoever and to be ready to risk loss of several million lives. But I would consider that cost very cheap and victory won at that cost glorious. That India may not be ready to pay that price may be true. I hope it is not true, but some such price must be paid by any country that wants to retain its independence. After all, the sacrifice made by the Russians and the Chinese is enormous, and they are ready to risk all. The same could be said of the other countries also, whether aggressors or defenders. The cost is enormous. Therefore, in the non-violent technique I am asking India to risk no more than other countries are risking and which India would have to risk even if she offered armed resistance.

Q. But, unadulterated non-violent non-co-operation has not been successful against Great Britain. How will it succeed against a new aggressor?

A. I combat the statement altogether. Nobody has yet told me that non-violent non-co-operation, unadulterated, has not

succeeded. It has not been offered, it is true. Therefore, you can say that what has not been offered hitherto is not likely to be offered suddenly when India faces the Japanese arms. I can only hope that, in the face of danger, India would be readier to offer non-violent non-co-operation. Perhaps India is accustomed to British rule for so many years that the Indian mind or India's masses do not feel the pinch so much as the advent of a new power would be felt. But your question is well put. It is possible that India may not be able to offer non-violent non-co-operation. But a similar question may be put regarding armed resistance. Several attempts have been made and they have not succeeded. Therefore, it will not succeed against the Japanese. That leads us to the absurd conclusion that India will never be ready for gaining independence, and seeing that I cannot subscribe to any such proposition, I must try again and again till India is ready to respond to the call of non-violent non-co-operation. But if India does not respond to that call, then India must respond to the call of some leader or some organization wedded to violence. For instance, the Hindu Mahasabha is trying to rouse the Hindu mind for an armed conflict. It remains to be seen whether that attempt succeeds. I for one do not believe it will succeed.

Q. Would you advise non-violent non-co-operation against scorched-earth policy? Would you resist the attempt to destroy sources of food and water?

A. Yes. A time may come when I would certainly advise it, for I think it is ruinous, suicidal, and unnecessary—whether India believes in non-violent non-co-operation or in violence. And the Russian and Chinese examples make no appeal to me. If some other country resorts to methods which I consider to be inhuman, I may not follow them. If the enemy comes and helps himself to crops, I may be obliged to leave, because I cannot or care not to defend them. I must resign myself to it. And there is a good example for us. A passage was quoted to me from the Islamic literature. The Caliph issued definite instructions to the armies of Islam that they should not destroy the utility services, they should not harass the aged and women and children; and I do not know that the arms of Islam suffered any disaster because the armies obeyed those instructions.

Q. But what about factories—especially factories for the manufacture of munitions?

A. Suppose there are factories for grinding wheat or pressing oil-seeds. I should not destroy them. But munitions factories, yes; for I would not tolerate munitions factories in a free India if I had my way. Textile factories I would not destroy and I would resist all such destruction. However, it is a question of prudence. I have not suggested immediate enforcement of the whole programme in pursuance of the demand for British withdrawal. It is there of course. But I am trying, if I am allowed to continue to cultivate and educate public opinion, to show that behind this demand of mine there is no ill-will, no malice. It is the most logical thing that I have suggested. It is in the interests of all, and since it is an entirely friendly act, I am moving cautiously, watching myself at every step. I will do nothing in haste, but there is the fixed determination behind every act of mine that the British must withdraw.

I have mentioned anarchy. I am convinced that we are living today in a state of ordered anarchy. It is a misnomer to call such rule as is established in India a rule which promotes the welfare of India. Therefore, this ordered disciplined anarchy should go, and if there is complete lawlessness in India, as a result, I would risk it, though I believe, and should like to believe, that 22 years of continuous effort at educating India along the lines of non-violence will not have gone in vain, and people will evolve real popular order out of chaos. Therefore, if I find that all the best effort fails, I would certainly invite people to resist destruction of their property.

Q. Can India give her moral sympathy or support to either of the parties to the war?

A. My own personal view is well known. And if I can convert India to my view, there would be no aid to either side; but my sympathies are undoubtedly in favour of China and Russia.

Q. But what about Britain?

A. I used to say that my moral support was entirely with Britain. I am very sorry to have to confess that today my mind refuses to give that moral support. British behaviour towards India has filled me with great pain. I was not quite prepared for Mr. Amery's performances or Sir Stafford Cripps's Mission. These have, in my estimation, put Britain morally in the wrong. And, therefore, though I do not wish any humiliation to Britain—and therefore no defeat—my mind refuses to give her any moral support.

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Q. What about America?

A. I expressed my opinion some time ago that it was a wrong thing for America and unfortunate for the world peace that America, instead of working, as she could have worked, for world peace, identified herself with war.

Q. But was there any alternative for her?

A. I am sure she would have, if she had intended, brought about peace. But it is my firm opinion that she did not use her opportunity. I know that I have no right to criticize such a big nation. I do not know all the facts that determined America to throw herself into the cauldron. But somehow or other, opinion has forced itself upon me that America could have remained out, and even now it can do so if she divests herself of the intoxication that her immense wealth has produced. And I would like to repeat what I have said about the withdrawal of British power from India. Both America and Britain lack the moral basis for engaging in this war, unless they put their own houses in order, while making a fixed determination to withdraw their influence and power both from Africa and Asia, and remove the colour-bar. They have no right to talk about protecting democracies and protecting civilization and human freedom until the canker of white superiority is destroyed in its entirety.

Q. Would you advocate arbitration for the Indo-British problem? And if so, of what sort?

A. Any day. I suggested long ago that this question could be decided by arbitration. How to bring that arbitration about, I do not know. But if the British rulers will accept the principle, it should not be impossible to find impartial arbitrators though I admit it is a tremendously difficult problem to find impartial arbitrators in this case.

Q. But you may say the same thing about finding arbitrators on the domestic question too?

A. No. It is a comparatively simpler thing. Where British power is concerned it has such great influence and power—and rightly so—it would be difficult to get hold of arbitrators who would not be biased in favour of Great Britain and deliver a fearless and just award.

Q. Cannot there be any arbitration on the question of independence?

A. No, not on the question of independence. It is possible only on questions on which sides may be taken. The outstanding

question of independence should be treated as common cause. It is only then that I can conceive possibility of arbitration on the Indo-British question. But, as I have said, it is a most difficult question. If ever there is a real adjustment, it will come only when Britain feels that it is wrong to rule over another nation. But when that conviction goes home, they won't need arbitration—we in India won't. But if there is to be any arbitration—and I cannot logically say there should not, for if I did, it would be an arrogation of complete justice on my side —it can be done only if India's independence is recognized.

Q. Why did you not go to America in 1931, even though you were pressingly invited by Bishop Fisher?

A. Because I had no faith in myself. The invitation was very pressing indeed, and the offer was sincere, and I could easily have spared a fortnight, but I had no faith that I would be able to do any good to India. It would have been a nine days' wonder. I would be lionized and torn to pieces. The American people would listen to you, lionize you, but would go their own way. Gurudev had been there, Vivekanand had been there, and his followers are still there. But the soul of America is untouched because of her worship of 'the golden calf'. As a people they are, after all is said and done, worshippers of Mammon.

Q. Does not America send her troops to India for a personal and selfish motive?

A. I suggest a better way of putting the question: "Is it not disastrous for foreign armies to come to India when India has sufficient man-power?" If you put the question like that, my answer is: "Decidedly so."

BOMBAY, May 18, 1942

Harijan, 24-5-1942

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140. TALK TO DONORS[1]

BOMBAY,
[Before *May 17, 1942*][2]

I am not exaggerating when I say that Santiniketan is worthy of greater support than the Bangalore Research Institute for which Tata gave Rs. 30 lakhs. I wonder if the Research Institute is known anywhere outside India. But Santiniketan is known wherever the Poet's name is known, and known as an institution that inspired the Poet's great poetry. The Poet used to call it his toy or plaything, but his poesy would have been barren without the plaything. Santiniketan, whose school of art and culture attracts students from far and near, has produced painters and poets and scholars. There are among those who humbly serve it a scholar like Kshiti Babu and an artist like Nanda Babu, who are both unrivalled in their respective domains. And no institution of this type in India is managed with so little finance.

Our devotion to the Poet will remain as long as we live. But how can we have the same devotion for Santiniketan? How long will it last?

The institution which inspired the Poet received in its turn inspiration from the Poet, and you may be sure that there are people there who will devote their lifetime to its service. Santiniketan is a romance. It grew out of the Poet's father's idea to found a home of peace and culture. It is a tragedy that monied men, who have gained so much from Santiniketan, do not appreciate its full worth. The Poet is an asset for India and for the world for all time, and it is the duty of monied men to put his institution on a sound basis. . . .

You can never give too much to Santiniketan.

Q. But we are in the midst of turmoil. These are not times for money collection. Can't we wait until we have won our freedom?

A. Rabindranath could not wait to come to the world until freedom was won.

Harijan, 24-5-1942

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's report "Bombay Responds Generously"
[2] Gandhiji left Bombay for Sevagram on May 17, 1942.

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141. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

[*May 17, 1942*][1]

CHI. AMRIT,

All well. Off to the station. Collections finished.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4122. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7431

142. NOTES

DEENBANDHU MEMORIAL

I am glad to be able to inform the readers of *Harijan* that the efforts of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Sheth Ghanshyamdas Birla, who had asked me to go to Bombay for eight days for the purpose of finishing the Deenbandhu Memorial collections, have been crowned with full success. Only over Rs. 60,000 were collected in response to the appeal through the papers. The whole of the balance of five lacs was collected during the eight days' strenuous labour. Bombay has never disappointed me whenever I have gone there for collections. I am most grateful to the donors for their generosity. They have taken a great load off my mind. I am quite clear that they have never given to a better cause. The memorial to Deenbandhu started by and at the wish of Gurudev became on his death memorial to Gurudev, in which the former merged. The object of both could only be identical. Subscriptions were required partly for the discharge of monies due by Santiniketan and largely for the building, etc., mentioned in the original appeal. I may mention that while the donations received included large sums from wealthy men they included also small sums from unknown persons from all over India. They were received from all communities, Parsis, Christians, Jews, Muslims and Hindus. I repeat the thanks on behalf of the fellow signatories and myself to the donors for their generous donations as also to the friends who organized the collection and laboured to make it a success.

[1] From the postmark

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Harijan Collections

If the collections I make at railway stations and at evening prayer when I am out of Sevagram are any index to the progress of the removal of untouchability it must be very substantial, for I notice that the response is more liberal than before. Hardly a bystander at stations or a visitor to the prayer meeting refrains from giving his mite. Much need not be made of the response. But there can be no doubt that if the cause did not make any appeal, the response would be meagre, if any. Whereas it was hearty and willing. It gave me great joy as I studied the smiling faces of those who gave. The Bombay collection for the seven meetings was Rs. 4,000. Each day's collection showed a substantial rise on the previous day. Thus the first day's collection was Rs. 205-5-6 and the last Rs. 1342-10-9.

On the Way to Wardha, May 18, 1942

Harijan, 24-5-1942

143. NOTES

Confusion

There is evidently confusion in some minds about my invitation to the British to withdraw. For a Britisher writes to say that he likes India and her people and would not like willingly to leave India. He likes too my method of non-violence. Evidently the writer has confused the individual as such with the individual as the holder of power. India has no quarrel with the British people. I have hundreds of British friends. Andrews's friendship was enough to tie me to the British people. But both he and I were fixed in our determination that British rule in India in any shape or form must end. Hitherto the rulers have said, "We would gladly retire if we know to whom we should hand over the reins." My answer now is, "Leave India to God. If that is too much, then leave her to anarchy." I invite every Britisher who loves Britain, India and the world to join me in the appeal to the British Power, and if it is rejected, to adopt such non-violent measures as would compel the Power to comply with the appeal.

What Could Have Been Done?

Some Pressmen asked me in Bombay what Sir Stafford could have done in the absence of an agreement between the

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Congress and the League. I gave the answer. I do not know whether it has appeared anywhere.[1] Anyway it is better for the public to know what answer I gave to the question. Sir Stafford could have asked either the Congress or the League to form the cabinet. If he had done so, probably the party they entrusted with responsibility would have succeeded in having the co-operation of the other party. In any event the Government would then have dealt with the real representatives of their party rather than having their own nominees. I do not know that they made any such offer either to the Congress or the League. So far as the public know the negotiations did not break over the want of agreement between the two organizations but over differences with Sir Stafford as to what powers the British Government wanted to part with during the war.

SEVAGRAM, May 18, 1942

Harijan, 24-5-1942

144. QUESTION BOX

THE DIFFERENCE

Q. You have repeated in your interview to the Press in Bombay what you have said often that nothing can prevent the Muslims from having what they want unless the objectors would fight over the issue.[2] What is the difference between you and Shri Rajagopalachari's attitude?

A. Though he has quoted me in his support I see the same difference between him and me that there is between chalk and cheese. He yields the right of secession now to buy unity in the hope of keeping away the Japanese. I consider the vivisection of India to be a sin. My statement amounts to the enunciation of the proposition that I cannot prevent my neighbour from committing a sin. Shri Rajagopalachari would be party in the sin, if the neighbour chooses to commit it. I cannot be party. What is more, I am firmly of opinion that there is no unity whilst the third party is there to prevent it. It created the artificial division and it keeps it up. In its presence both Hindus and Muslims and for that matter all seemingly conflicting or disgruntled interests and elements will look to it for support and will get it. Their interest is greater than the

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", pp. 111-6. This particular question and answer did not, however, appear in the report of the interview as published.

[2] ibid.

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independence of their country. No one need throw my other statement in my face, viz., that there is no independence without unity. I do not withdraw a word of it. It is an obvious truth. From its contemplation I have discovered the formula of inviting the British power to withdraw. Their withdrawal does not by itself bring independence. It may induce unity or it may lead to chaos. There is also the risk of another power filling in the vacancy if it is there. If, however, the withdrawal is orderly and voluntary the British not only gain a moral height but secure the ungrudging friendship of a great nation. I wish all conflicting elements and interests will make a combined effort to rid India of foreign domination. If they do not, any understanding with them will be like a house built on sand. Fear of the Japanese occupation of India has blinded C. R. to the obvious truth. Independence sheds all fear—fear of the Japanese, of anarchy, and of the wrath of the British lion.

SEVAGRAM, May 18, 1942

Harijan, 24-5-1942

145. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 18, 1942

CHI. MIRA,

Your first letter was received in Bombay. You will keep me posted. Things moving well. Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN
CONGRESS HOUSE
CUTTACK
ORISSA

From the original: C.W. 6497. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9892

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146. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

May 18, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

It is the *Harijan* day today. Where is the time for writing letters? It is warm no doubt but I do not feel it much. Everyone is well. Mathew is ill. I brought along Jaisukhlal's little daughter[1].

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4264. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7806

147. LAWLESSNESS IN SINDH

Prof. Ghanshyam, assisted by Shri Assandas, a worker in Thar Parkar, has recently visited the area affected by the Hurs' rebellion.[2] He has prepared an elaborate report of which he has sent me a copy. The following is a condensed summary of the report in the Professor's own language:

> Not many people in Sindh realize the grave situation that has arisen owing to the activities of the Hurs. Hurs are followers of the Pir of Pagaro who has been arrested by Government and is said to be under detention in Nagpur. All his followers are not Hurs. His following is said to run in lacs. The Hurs are mostly concentrated in Sanghar, Sinjhoro and Shahdadpur Talukas. They are considered to be a criminal tribe and several of them were kept in criminal settlements. These were abolished some years ago. But they were still under orders to report themselves regularly to the police. The Hurs believe that their Pir has been arrested on the false reports of the police against him. They nurse the grievance that none of them is allowed to interview him.

[1] Manu Gandhi

[2] On April 1, 1942, Martial Law had been proclaimed in the area. An official communique said, "Over a period covering more than six months the Hurs have by wholesale murder, sabotage and dacoity terrorized whole district . . ." On May 13, 1941, the Government of Sindh had issued orders under the Arms Act and under the Defence of India Rules, suspending all gun, rifle and revolver licenses held by individual non-officials. (*The Indian Annual Register, 1942*, Vol. I, pp. 65 and 83-4)

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They are said to complain of police oppression in having to report themselves daily at police stations.

After the arrest of the Pir of Pagaro, search of his house near Sanghar and destruction by fire of the huts attached to the bungalow where the Pir's followers used to gather, have so enraged the Hurs that they have started on a fierce campaign, as a challenge to Government, of murders, dacoities, attacks on railway stations, destruction of property in P. W. D. bungalows, cutting of telephone and telegraph wires, making breaches in canals, etc. There is not a day when reports of these criminal activities are not received. They were in the beginning mostly confined to Sanghar, Sinjhoro and Shahdadpur Talukas, but have now spread to other parts of Sindh also, specially the Khipro Taluka which adjoins Sanghar Taluka. The Hurs may be said to have risen in rebellion against the Government with a view to get the Pir of Pagaro released. They have such an intense faith in him that they are prepared to sacrifice their all and even their lives for his sake. It is now more than six months since the Pir of Pagaro was arrested. In the beginning of this period the frequency of the criminal activities of the Hurs was not as great as now. With the passage of time their activities have assumed not only greater frequency but have extended to other talukas than the original three. The Hurs have started their own Government. Not only have they appointed a leader whom they call their King but have appointed commanders, captains, etc. They are said to have divided themselves into groups, and assigned separate jurisdiction to each group. Their activities were in the beginning directed against Government and those whom they considered as enemies of the Pir of Pagaro or who in any way aided Government against them. But it appears they have changed their tactics and are now attacking all and sundry. No one seems to be free from their attacks, whether he be a zamindar or a *sethia*, Hindu or Muslim, a high-paid official or a petty *kotar* or *beldar*, rich or poor, innocent or guilty. Even women are not spared. There is a tradition that Hurs do not attack women or innocent persons. But it is said latterly young and mischievous elements among them have thrown the old traditions to the winds and spare no one. With a view to make their activities more effective, they have started a deliberate move for collecting rifles, guns, ammunitions, clothes, and money. Latterly their attacks in many cases have been directed against those who are in possession of these things. In this way they are said to have collected many guns and a large amount of money—cash or ornaments. They organize their attacks in military fashion and are on occasions dressed in khaki shirts and shorts. When the Khipro-Sanghar bus was attacked on the 16th April, the commander of the groups was not only dressed in khaki

but wore a hat also. Those who attacked ex-military zamindar Beantsing near Shahpur Chakar were also clad in military dress. This put Khalsa Beantsing off guard. He approached to greet them thinking they were some military soldiers. They attack and shoot under orders. They are also said to be levying taxes from zamindars and merchants. Threats are given to them that their 'Kharas' of wheat would be burnt or they would be dealt with in some other way if they did not pay taxes to them, as they declare themselves to be the Government in those areas. It is said that many people do yield to their threats as otherwise not only their property but even their lives are at stake. There is a general belief in the affected areas that Government are powerless to protect those who render aid to the authorities or who refuse to submit to the dictates of the Hurs. Several persons who have acted thus have been murdered or been targets of other attacks. People are in a state of sheer helplessness. It must not be supposed that Hurs are responsible for all the crimes that are now being committed in Sindh or even in the above talukas. Taking advantage of the situation created by the Hurs several unsocial and criminal elements, of which there is an abundance in Sindh, have let themselves loose, thinking either that the suspicion of their crimes would fall on the Hurs or the police would not take effective steps against them being preoccupied with the Hur menace. The two main streams of criminal activities: one of the Hurs and the other of non-Hur criminals, have combined into a mighty current which has now flooded the whole of Sindh in general and the above talukas in particular. The enormity of the situation can be realized from the fact that normal functioning of the Government machinery in this area has ceased. In the Sanghar Taluka all the police posts are said to have been abolished and only one police station has been retained in the Taluka Headquarters, for fear of their being attacked and overpowered by the Hurs and their rifles being taken away. The police parties that go out for investigation of crimes return to the headquarters before sunset. Being afraid of attack at night, they do not venture to do their normal work after sunset. The withdrawals of police posts and the return of police parties to Taluka Headquarters before sunset have so emboldened the Hurs and other elements that they think the British Government has ceased to exist for them. Like the police, the normal functioning of the Revenue Department has also to some extent ceased. The *tapadars*, I was informed, find it very hazardous to move out in 'Tapas' and so they are working in Taluka Headquarters. All revenue collection is done at the Taluka Headquarters and not at the *tapadar's deras*, as is normally done. One *tapadar* was robbed of his revenue collection; two *kotars* were killed. It was said that one Mukhtiarkar had to go under

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police escort for remission work and had to change his dress for that of an ordinary rustic to escape detection as an official. Officials and subordinates are so terror-stricken that they do not function as they would normally do. Even the District Magistrate has to guard himself very strongly during his movements. It was said that trees have been cut off from near his bungalow lest dacoits under cover of these make an attack on him. Even when he goes to play tennis in the club near his bungalow, he has to go heavily protected. Armed police men are stationed near the tennis-court and round about the club. Camel-men who carried the kit of Deputy Collector were threatened with dire consequences. They reported the matter and were given strong armed escort. Similar is the fate of the Public Works Department in the affected area. P.W.D. bungalows have been attacked. There is no safety even for zamindars who keep themselves protected with arms as they are being now selected for attacks with a view to rob them of their guns and ammunition.

The Government have taken some measures to bring the situation under control. Special police has been stationed in hundreds in the affected areas. A special District Magistrate and a special District Superintendent of Police have been put on duty to suppress the Hur menace, with jurisdiction over both the Thar Parkar and Nawabshah Districts, as the area affected forms part of both these districts. Military has been sent to aid the police. The Sindh Assembly passed a special Hur Menace Act in secret session to meet the situation, setting aside ordinary procedure of criminal law in the matter of security proceedings and trials for scheduled offences against Hurs and those who aid them. All these measures have so far proved ineffective in bringing the situation under control. The things are going from bad to worse. The police is concentrated in Taluka Headquarters and a large portion of it is used in guarding Government offices and officers. It was complained that it was not sufficient for the task before it. The offences are so many that it is not possible for it to trace each one. The military simply gives patrol rounds at times. These have ceased to create any awe among the Hurs and so have become ineffective in suppressing their rising. The public will be surprised to learn that up to this time, most of the arrests in connection with specific offences in the affected area are those of 'non-*murids*', that is those who do not follow the Pir of Pagaro. I have stated above that some unsocial and criminal elements other than Hurs have, taking advantage of the situation, started indulging in crime. Some of these elements have been arrested, but so far as the Hurs are concerned, who are directly connected with any specific offence, there has been almost no arrest, compared to the long list of the offences committed. It is

true a large number of Hurs, which is estimated to be over fifteen hundred, have been roped in, but they have been arrested not as a result of pursuit in specific offences, but were rounded up with a set plan of which they were not aware, on the occasion of their reporting their presence to police as most of them are required to do.

None, or almost none, of those who are absconding and who are said to be responsible for murders, dacoities, robberies, etc., have been arrested.

The Government machinery has evidently broken down. The real remedy is for Congress members to withdraw from the Assembly and Khan Bahadur Allabux and his fellow-ministers to resign. These should form a peace brigade and fearlessly settle down among the Hurs and risk their lives in persuading these erring countrymen to desist from the crimes. A deputation known to Pir Pagaro should visit him and induce him to issue unequivocal instructions to his followers to stop their murderous activities. This should not be on condition of release. If he is aggrieved he is entitled to an inquiry. The Government should take the public into their confidence. All this can be done without the resignation of Congressmen and the ministers, it may be urged. My answer would be that the resignations are necessary as proof of the earnestness of the members and the Khan Bahadur and his co-ministers. If they remain in the Assembly they cannot give undivided attention to their task. The decisive reason, however, for my recommendation is that there should be an admission of their helplessness to do anything effective through the Assembly to put a stop to these rebellious activities. That should be an earnest of their desire to make room for those who think they can deal with the grave situation with better effect. The resignations must produce a healthy effect among the people. The selflessness and courage of resigners is likely to prove infectious and induce others to join them. The murder of Sheth Sitaldas, a member of the Assembly, regrettable though it is in every respect, pales into insignificance in face of Prof. Ghanshyam's gruesome report. Let the murder serve as a spur to the other members to go among the Hurs and court murder in the act of weaning them from their unlawful and inhuman activities.

ON THE WAY TO WARDHA, May 18, 1942

[PS.]

Since writing the above, I have beard about the terrible railway accident resulting in several deaths including that of

Sir Gulam Hussain Hidayatulla's son. The shooting by the Hurs thereafter shows the state of desperation they have reached. This emphasizes the recommendation I have made. Nothing short of such heroic action will bring the Hurs to their senses. Frightfulness will only make matters worse. I hope that all parties will join in the attempt to rid Sindh of the spreading rebellion.

SEVAGRAM, May 19, 1942

Harijan, 24-5-1942

148. LETTER TO TAYYABULLA

May 19, 1942

DEAR TAYYABULLA,

I am helpless. You should approach the President.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 63

149. WHAT SHOULD BE THE MAXIMUM DEDUCTIONS FROM THE SPINNERS' WAGES[1]

Q. There are many opinions on what should be the percentage to be deducted from the spinners' wages, for providing khadi to them. . . . I request you to guide the khadi workers by explaining through *Khadi Jagat* what the policy is and how the percentage of deduction should be determined.

A. In fact in raising the wages of the spinners the Charkha Sangh was guided by only one consideration: namely, that it was its duty as a philanthropic organization to give adequate wages to those who had never got them. The Charkha Sangh came into existence neither for those who wear khadi nor for those who want to be self-sufficient in clothes but for those who produce khadi by their labour, particularly the spinners. The idea behind it is that spinning is a source of livelihood for crores of people and if they get sufficient work, starvation can be mitigated to some extent.

Now if we want to raise the wages of the spinners we can do so only if all the people wear khadi, otherwise all the spinners cannot get enough work. There is no need for an organization

[1] This was originally published in *Khadi Jagat*.

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like the Charkha Sangh for helping only a few persons. If it is obligatory for all the persons to wear khadi, then certainly the spinners must also wear it. It will be as good as giving them a dole if the spinners do not wear khadi and we go on giving them higher wages than they demand. To give such a dole was never the aim of the Charkha Sangh. So on the one hand it was our duty to give more wages to the spinners, on the other it was our duty to make them and their families wear khadi. For the observance of the latter dharma we can certainly tell the spinners to utilize the extra wages they are getting in meeting the expenses on khadi.

But we would not have succeeded in doing that and so we adopted the middle path. We made whatever progress we could. We had no means of forcing others, have none and shall have none. The Charkha Sangh is a symbol of ahimsa and at the same time a great experiment in it. It is based purely on a sense of justice. It endeavours to do justice to those who have long been denied it. All of our decisions should therefore be guided purely by a sense of justice.

It must be remembered that our aim is to give to all the spinners an anna for an hour. But we have fallen short of it. We do not have the means to reach that rate. Our tools are not such that they would enable the spinners to earn an anna for an hour's work.

It is our duty to give higher wages to the spinners if we can in these days of rising prices. Only the experts on charkha and those experienced in this field can decide about it.

One has to use one's discretion while arriving at a decision. If common sense suggests that from the increased wages of the spinners we should not make a deduction in order to make them khadi-wearers, then we should under no circumstances make any deduction. We should never make deductions by which the spinners are compelled to buy more than their family requirements. In other words we have to regard the spinners as members of our family and collect money from them accordingly. We should never take undue advantage of their ignorance. We should realize their requirements and take the necessary steps.

SEVAGRAM, May 20, 1942

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 31-5-1942

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150. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
May 20, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I had all your letters. No difficulty in deciphering your Hindi. As easy as your English. This I write in English for your pleasure. It is being written with the cent per cent swadeshi pen. It is giving good work.

I note the questions you have raised. I must try to answer them next week.

Ba is keeping well.

The weather is not too trying. The nights are quite pleasant. On my return I found I was reduced to 98½. I was bound to lose that much. The work was strenuous. There is no cause for worry for I am otherwise quite well.

Here is a letter received today as also one from Badshah Khan. I should not wonder if some Hindu girls are kidnapped or Hindus murdered. I do not know how much truth there is in the charge against the official world. However, we must wait, watch and pray.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3687. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6496

151. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

May 20, 1942

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

I have your answer at last.

I won't argue with you about Abha. You had consented to her betrothal. It was I who because of her fault had suggested the suspension. At the time of the betrothal you were sure of securing your wife's consent. I do not know what has happened now. But that is your concern. It is news to me that in Bengal people are averse to their girls going out of Bengal or out of so-called caste. I know many Bengali girls who are married

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out of Bengal and are perfectly happy. You have yourself contemplated Veena's marriage anywhere. You want her to make her own choice. And she is likely to do so, if she lights upon a young man to her liking.

In any case I propose to send Abha to Rajkot. People here won't believe that Abha's marriage with Kanu is an uncertainty. Naturally neither Abha nor Kanu like such talk. Abha will have Veena's company and Narandas's personal attention.

So far as *Harijan* articles are concerned, you may take any you like so long as the translation is accurate and you do not mention my name. I should not be understood to have in any way identified myself with your activity. But of course you have my blessing in the performance of any worthy service.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10340. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

152. LETTER TO LAKSHMI GANDHI

May 20, 1942

CHI. LAKSHMI,

You have passed in the first division. I am glad. Keep up the progress.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1994

153. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 21, 1942

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. From my writings my opinion must be clear to you. For yourself I can say quite clearly, if your heart tells you that you should take the sword you will not hesitate to do so. In these times everyone must be left to himself to do what impels him to [*sic*]. If the Congress discipline comes in the way you should resign even as I advised Munshi[1] to do. The country should get your full service.

[1] K. M. Munshi

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Dr. Gopichand saw me after his return from Sindh. Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 949

154. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

May 21, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I got your two letters together. I simply can't write letters. Mahadev explains everything. I will not be hasty. You will have to go to Delhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4265. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7897

155. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHASTRI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 21, 1942

BHAI HIRALAL SHASTRI,

Your lamenting is needless. Let us be vigilant. Everyone makes mistakes. Sohanlalji is well. I expect.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Hiralal Shastri Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

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156. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
May 21, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I seem to recollect that I had answered your previous letter. The present one is easy to answer. Your wishes should prevail in the work that has been entrusted to you.

But in a non-violent constitution law as law vanishes and we never feel its stress. So when someone violates a law we are charitable towards him. Have you understood this?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4426; also S.N. 24480

157. QUESTION BOX

The six[1] questions that follow are from workers who endorse my plan for the withdrawal of the British Power. The answers have to be read in the light of the plan. The workers should know that no plan, however wise it may be, can produce the intended effect if it does not commend itself to those for whose benefit it is presented, or if they are too weak to follow it out. Now for my answers:

NOT RIGHT

Q. Are we right in believing that you wish the Congress and the people to become capable as soon as possible of taking over the administration and to do so on the first opportunity?

A. You are not right. I cannot speak for the Congress. But I want no organization or individual to become capable of taking over the administration. In non-violent technique, it is unthinkable. You do not take over power. It may descend to you being given by the people. In an anarchical state, all turbulent elements will make a bid for power. Those who will

[1] The answer to the sixth question was written on May 23, 1942, and hence appears under that date under the heading "Question Box".

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serve the people and will evolve order out of chaos will spend themselves in removing chaos. If they survive, the popular will may put them in as administrators. This is wholly different from what you have imagined. People who make a bid for power generally fail to achieve it.

Q. In resisting unjust military or civil orders, is the primary motive (a) protest against the Government action, (b) alleviation of the peoples' sufferings, or (c) a preliminary step towards the capture of power?

A. The central point of my conception is non-violence. In trying to educate the people to be without the British or any power, the chief thing is to resist all injustice, no matter how or by whom it is perpetrated. Here resistance is not by way of protest, certainly not a preliminary step towards gaining power. I want thousands of people to resist injustice. If they all were to do so to seize power, they will never succeed. It is surely enough for them to resist the injustice they feel. It is in itself a duty.

Q. Do you expect individual Congressmen to offer resistance in cases where the villagers or general public are not prepared to come forward?

A. If I can speak for Congressmen I would say most emphatically "yes". People who are terror-struck have no gumption. Those who have, have to intercede even at the cost of their lives.

SELF-PROTECTION

Q. Shall we go to reason with the officials who refuse to allow the organization of self-protective units? And if they do not listen, shall we still go on?

A. People have to protect themselves against officials, against dacoits and possibly Japanese. If they do not, they are doomed. Therefore they may not brook any interference with their preparation. But they may not bear arms without licence. What I have in mind is gymnastics, drill, lathi play and the like. The authorities are not likely to interfere with these practices. But if they do, the people affected may disregard prohibition and take the consequences.

SALT

Q. Villagers here are much troubled for want of salt which they used to get largely from Calcutta. If they defy the Salt Laws they can easily make sufficient stocks for the needs of the Province. Cattle in these parts are given no salt. If salt became free this serious defect could also be removed. May we advise the people to make all the salt they need for the Province? After the rains begin they will not be able to make salt.

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A. Manufacture of salt for home consumption is covered by the Irwin-Gandhi Pact. The ten-mile radius at present is unworkable. I do think that in these hard times the restriction should be relaxed and as far as possible the people should be left to help themselves. The main revenue from salt is not likely to be affected by the laxity of administration in favour of the poor people. I would advise local adjustment with the authorities.

The idea underlying my plan, however visionary or even mischievous it may appear to be, is that if the setting given is non-violent and the workers understand and carry it out, the withdrawal of British authority can take place without much disturbance and certainly without the Japanese replacing that authority unless, as has been suggested, the popular mind is in favour of the Japanese.

While I was preparing this note, I received a letter from Rajen Babu who writes as follows about salt:

> During my tour I have made it a point to meet representatives of merchants and traders at every place I visit, with a view to ascertaining the position of stock of food-stuffs, kerosine oil and salt and other necessary articles of daily consumption. At every place it has been impressed on me, both by merchants and members of public, that a most serious situation is developing with regard to supply of salt. A big shortage in salt is apprehended at almost every place that I have visited and unless immediate steps are taken it may cause great hardships and sufferings to the people, particularly to the poor who very often have to depend only on salt to enable them to gulp the coarse food they can somehow manage to get. The steps to control the price of salt are ineffective. It is worse than useless to control the price of an article of vital necessity, without ensuring a regular supply of it. The price fixed remains only on paper and cannot be enforced unless there is arrangement to ensure a supply of the commodity. Despite the price fixed by the Government, salt sells at higher prices at many places particularly in mofussil. But what is feared is much more serious than mere high prices, viz., more or less total disappearance of salt from the market and grocers' shops. I am told that orders placed by the merchants are not executed by the people at the centres like Khewra and Shambhar. There is nothing like price control there and a lot more than the apparent price has to be paid by the merchants if they want to get a supply. It is said that this extra cost comes to something like Rs. 300 to Rs. 400 or even more per waggon in addition to the standard price of Rs. 1,075 for 550 maunds. At Calcutta although the price control has fixed Rs. 170 for 100 maunds the actual price paid by the buyers is Rs. 270. This is the state of price control. The difficulty in

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securing a waggon is not the least of the difficulties that has to be encountered. With increasing difficulty in supply of waggons the prospect is dismal. The Government should take immediate steps to ensure a regular supply of salt: (a) by securing a regular supply of waggons, (b) by ensuring a just and fair distribution of the available stock among dealers, (c) by opening new sources of supply of salt, and (d) by removing all restrictions on the manufacture of salt from sea-water at seacoast and from earth in the interior. It must be realized that dislocation of transport may make it impossible for salt to be carried from long distances and efforts should be made to make it available within manageable distances so that ordinary means of country transport like bullock-carts, boats, pack bullocks, horses and mules may be employed for transporting it. With the monsoon already in sight it is already very late and any further delay in taking effective steps may mean untold sufferings.

I wish the authorities will listen to Rajen Babu and relax the restrictions before it is too late and people suffer before actual war overtakes the land.

In Case of Requisition

Q. Land is being requisitioned for military aerodromes and villagers are being ordered to vacate. If no reasonable arrangements are being made for the villagers should the orders be resisted? Or should we resist in any case as we do not want the aerodromes which are in themselves a danger, not a protection, and no arrangements can ever adequately compensate a peasant for his house and fields?

A. No resistance on the ground of all war resistance is contemplated in the present plan. Resistance is permissible only if villagers do not get equal facilities elsewhere in the shape of land and cottages. No monetary compensation can give evacuated people the land they will need. High-handedness should be resisted.

Sevagram, May 22, 1942

Harijan, 31-5-1942

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158. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 22, 1942

CHI. MIRA,

You must have received my p.c.s or letters, I forget which. If you get *Harijan*, it is more than my weekly letter.

I have fully discussed your questions with Gope Bapu. Nevertheless I am answering all your important questions in *Harijan*. Herewith is an advance copy. The answers should not be published before they appear in *Harijan*.

I have shared your letter with Asha, Mahadev and Kishorelal. Your power of description is of a high order. It makes your letters delightful reading.

From my answers you will see that I want to hasten slowly. I do not want to precipitate matters. Our steps must be firm but gradual so that people may understand them so far as it is possible. A time must come when the thing may become beyond control. We may not purposely let it go out of control. Is this clear ?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6498. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9893

159. LETTER TO KRISHNA VARMA

May 22, 1942

BHAI KRISHNA VARMA,

Kakasaheb has been suffering from an itch for the past one year. Please examine him and if you can diagnose the disease, treat him. Kakasaheb is addicted to work and, therefore, will not be able to spare much time to stay there. See what you can do. Please write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10992

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160. WHY THE DIFFERENCE?[1]

A professor writes:

> You have advised the British to withdraw. About the Princes you say, "But I would fain hope that the Princes and their advisers will, for their own sakes and for the good of India, curb the tendency in many States which cannot be described by any other adjective than lawless." Why not ask the Princes whose tyranny is older and perhaps more deep-rooted than that of the British to abdicate immediately?

I am surprised that the professor has failed to see the distinction between the Princes and the Paramount Power. The Princes (present) are a creation of the Paramount Power. They derive their authority from it. Their abdication will not end the Princely rule. Another will immediately take the vacant place and in the absence of one the State will be under British administration. Thus, whichever way you look, you will find the British power by its very nature blocking the way to Truth.

SEVAGRAM, May 23, 1942

Harijan, 31-5-1942

161. FRIENDLY ADVICE

Thus reasons a friend:

> Most people will agree with you that Britain's inability to play fair by India deprives them of the right to expect even our moral support. Ideologically also most people will agree with you that their only honourable course would be to withdraw from India. But inevitably the withdrawal will confront us with immense difficulties which you yourself have admitted. You say you are willing to take all risks. Every brave man is. At the same time is it not your duty to prepare the ground up to a point so as to minimize the risks as far as possible? The people must, for instance, be made to shed cowardice and feel that it is possible for us to stand on our own legs. They must not desire, as so many do, Japanese help or even submit to Japanese domination as they would have to if that help were taken. They must be

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

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weaned, as far as possible, from hatred of the British. And then every effort must be made to secure Muslim support. This is your last and supreme effort to bring freedom to India. Let no step be taken in haste or without due preparation. The time is too critical to bear failure.

As these columns show, with the overwhelming sense of the truth as it appears to me, I am taking every care humanly possible to prepare the ground. I know that the novelty of the idea, and that too at this juncture, has caused a shock to many people. But I could not help myself. Even at the risk of being called mad, I had to tell the truth if I was to be true to myself. I regard it as my solid contribution to the War and to India's deliverance from the peril that is and the peril that is threatening. It is too my real contribution to communal unity. No one can visualize what it will be like. Only it will not be the sham we have had up to now. It has touched only the few politically minded people. The masses have remained unaffected by it.

Whilst therefore I will take every imaginable care consistent with the urgency, I cannot guarantee freedom from cowardice before taking any forward step. The cowardice will probably not be shed without much travail. Nor is waiting possible, till hatred abates. Withdrawal of the hated power is the only way to rid the land of the debasing hatred. The cause gone, hatred must cease.

Of course the people must not, on any account, lean on the Japanese to get rid of the British power. That were a remedy worse than the disease. But as I have already said, in this struggle every risk has to be run in order to cure ourselves of the biggest disease—a disease which has sapped our manhood and almost made us feel as if we must for ever be slaves. It is an insufferable thing. The cost of the cure, I know, will be heavy. No price is too heavy to pay for the deliverance.

SEVAGRAM, May 23, 1942

Harijan, 31-5-1942

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162. QUESTION BOX

Out of Touch

Q. Do you know, being confined in Sevagram, how much you are out of touch with the public? If you were not you would not talk of resisting the Japanese as you do. For the dislike of the British is so great that the man in the street is ready to welcome the Japanese.

A. I cannot endorse your proposition that I am out of touch with the public. Though I am confined in Sevagram I see all sorts of people and receive correspondence from every nook and corner of India. Probably, therefore, I am more in touch with the people than you can be though living in a big town. You have not the opportunity that I have of gauging the public mind. But let us grant that what you say is right—I believe you are partially right,—my suppressing the true remedy will not alter the public mind. On the contrary, I am showing the futility of hatred. I am showing that hatred injures the hater never the hated. An Imperial power cannot act otherwise than it has been doing. If we are strong the British becomes powerless. I am therefore trying to wean the people from their hatred by asking them to develop the strength of mind to invite the British to withdraw and at the same time to resist the Japanese. With the British withdrawal the incentive to welcome the Japanese goes and the strength felt in securing British withdrawal will be used for stemming the Japanese inroad. I endorse C. R.'s proposition that the millions of India can resist the Japanese even without the possession of arms, modern and ancient, if they are properly organized. I differ from him when he says that this can be done even when the British arms are operating without co-ordination when you force yourself on the British power. Experience teaches us that hearty co-ordination and co-operation is impossible where mutual trust and respect are wanting. British presence invites the Japanese, it promotes communal disunion and other discords, and what is perhaps the worst of all, deepens the hatred born of impotence. Orderly British withdrawal will turn the hatred into affection and will automatically remove communal distemper. So far as I can see the two communities are unable to think or see things in their proper perspective as

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long as they are under the influence of the third power.

SEVAGRAM, May 23, 1942

Harijan, 31-5-1942

163. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 23, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

So Laxmi has passed first class![1] This is mere introduction.

Though we differ as poles asunder, my heart goes out to you in your stand against hooliganism at your meetings.

I found in Bombay it was no use my making any attempt to see Q. A.[2] Moreover he was not there.

You know you are to come here almost monthly to rest here and be free from the care of attending meetings.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Kamalnayan asks me whether the house you are in may be transferred to you or any of the family.

From a photostat: G.N. 2086

164. LETTER TO RATHINDRANATH TAGORE

May 23, 1942

DEAR RATHI[3],

I finished the collection last Sunday. It was a sight to see the subscribers coming in. There were some complaints which I must discuss with you when I have a bit of time.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI RATHINDRA NATH TAGORE
SANTINIKETAN
EAST BENGAL

From C.W. 10352. Courtesy: Visvabharati, Santiniketan

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lakshmi Gandhi", p. 130.
[2] Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah
[3] Rabindranath Tagore's son

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165. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
May 23, 1942

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Since Prithvi Singh has lost faith in me,[1] our relations have come to an end. Gopalrao[2] will leave that work. I think Nathji[3] and Kishorelal[4] will end their connection with the Sangh. What Prithvi Singh does we shall know by and by.

Give me news from there. Something must happen soon.

I have suggested to Prithvi Singh that he will himself have to announce his loss of faith in me. If he does nothing, I shall have to say something ultimately. You may tell our people about the break in our relationship. I suppose it would be best to keep silent about Limdi for the present.[5]

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE
BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 275

[1] Prithvi Singh was of the opinion that India should co-operate with the British in the war against Japan.

[2] Gopalrao Kulkarni, an instructor in the Ahimsak Vyayam Sangh which was started by Prithvi Singh

[3] Kedarnath, Vice-President of the Ahimsak Vyayam Sangh

[4] Kishorelal Mashruwala

[5] A large number of people had left the State because of harassment by the State Government. *Vide* Vol. LXVIII, pp. 434-7 and Vol. LXX, pp. 144-5.

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166. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

May 23, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I have your letter. You are right. You have been writing every day. Continue writing in the same way.

I was to reach Sevagram on the 18th. Quaid-e-Azam was not in Bombay. I also learnt that it would be no use seeing him. There is no occasion to go to Bombay again.

You should take rest, lots of rest and improve your health.

I have a letter from Balkrishna saying he has arrived at Dalhousie. Lala Hansraj should not be troubled. I am sending Balkrishna's letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4266. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7898

167. FOR RAJAJI

There is no doubt that Rajaji is handling a cause which has isolated him from his colleagues. But his worst enemy will not accuse him of any selfish motive behind the extraordinary energy with which he has thrown himself into the controversy of which he is the author. It reflects the greatest credit on him. He is entitled to a respectful hearing. His motive is lofty. It is a noble thing to strive for Hindu-Muslim unity, equally noble to strive to ward off the Japanese intrusion. In his opinion the two are intertwined.

Hooliganism is no answer to his argument. The disturbances at his meetings are a sign of great intolerance. Evolution of democracy is not possible if we are not prepared to hear the other side. We shut the doors of reason when we refuse to listen to our opponents or having listened make fun of them. If intolerance becomes a habit, we run the risk of missing the truth. Whilst with the limits that nature has put upon our understanding we must act fearlessly according to the light vouchsafed

to us, we must always keep an open mind and be ever ready to find that what we believed to be truth was, after all, untruth. This openness of mind strengthens the truth in us and removes the dross from it, if there is any. I plead therefore with all who are disturbing Rajaji's meetings not to do so but to give him a patient and respectful hearing to which he is entitled.

The reader knows that I hold Rajaji to be in the wrong. He is creating a false atmosphere. He does not believe in Pakistan nor do the nationalist Muslims and others who concede the right of separation or secession. They and Rajaji say that that is the way to wean the Muslim League from the demand for separation. I am surprised that many Muslims rejoice over a concession of doubtful value. I see nothing but seeds of further quarrel in it. It should be enough to state the proposition that nothing can prevent the Muslim League from having it if the Muslims really want it. They will take it by the vote or the sword unless they will submit to arbitration. But all this can only happen when the British Power is entirely withdrawn and the Japanese menace has abated. Till then there is neither Pakistan nor Hindustan or any other 'stan'. It is today Englishtan and may be tomorrow Japanistan, if we do not take care. If all who consider India to be their home now and for ever will pull their full weight to deliver it from the present and the impending peril, and when both the perils are finally removed, it will be time to talk of Pakistan and other 'stan's and to come to an amicable decision or fight. No third party will or should decide our fate. It should be reason or the sword. Rajaji's method leads us to the blind alley unless his admirable and patriotic persistence opens a way unknown to him or any of us. Whatever the fate of different opinions, my plea is for mutual toleration and respect.

SEVAGRAM, May 24, 1942

Harijan, 31-5-1942

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168. LETTER TO TOFAIL AHMAD[1]

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 24, 1942

MY DEAR TOFAIL AHMAD,

Though your argument is good I am afraid no good will come out of publishing it at the present juncture.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 11395

169. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

May 24, 1942

MY DEAR KU,

Strange I was counting the days to see when you were coming. Since you promise to labour you will be deemed worthy of your hire.

I am glad B.[2] has returned. It is good Sita has not returned. June is the month when the hot winds stop. She is too frail to take kindly to this heat.

It will be time before I can deal with your speech. I need much peace for developing my theme.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10165

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated May 19, 1942, enclosing an article on joint electorates for publication in *Harijan*.

[2] Bharatan Kumarappa

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170. LETTER TO PRATAPRAI M. MODI

May 24, 1942

BHAI PRATAPRAI,

I have received your book[1]. I would like to read it, but I cannot spare a single moment to read such books. You will please, therefore, excuse me.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

PROF. PRATAPRAI MODI
'PARIMAL'
TAKHTESHWAR PLOT
BHAVNAGAR (KATHIAWAR)

From Gujarati: C.W. 1637. Courtesy: Prataprai M. Modi

171. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

May 24, 1942

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I feel that it would be desirable to give some formal position to Krishnachandra. We may call him Assistant Manager and define his field of work. If you approve, you may, if you like, put the suggestion before the Executive Committee. You are the best judge of what would be the proper thing to do. I do not remember the rules.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10609

[1] *Hindu Dharmana Mul Tatvo*

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172. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 24, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

We have so arranged it here that anyone who needs anything should ask for it. The designation may be Assistant Manager and the sphere of work may be defined. My suggestion did not mean that you were to make the announcement. That will be done by Chimanlal or me. I merely suggested the remedy.

The next step can be taken after I have received your suggestion. I shall see about it now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4428

173. A NOTE[1]

May 24, 1942

The solution is simple. Everyone should be told what each one's field of work is.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4427

174. LETTER TO PARACHURE SHASTRI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 24, 1942

SHASTRIJI,

I have your letter. Yes, what you write about mother cow is right. Janakibehn lives here. She is happy. I am in good health. We shall meet some day.

Get well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10669

[1] This was written on a letter received from Krishnachandra.

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175. TERRIBLE IF TRUE[1]

A terrible tale of ordered anarchy comes from Khurja. A correspondent writes to say that, for no cause he can understand, practically all normal activities have been stopped.[2] Even the sale of bamboos and mats for biers was prohibited. Even building activities have been stopped causing the greatest inconvenience and damage. Money is taken from the people on the slightest pretext and a reign of terror prevails. I have given here the barest outline of the doings in Khurja in the hope that there will be full investigation and if the facts are true further damage will be prevented.

SEVAGRAM, May 25, 1942

Harijan, 31-5-1942

176. INDIAN SOLDIERS RUN AMUCK?

I take the following from the report of the Secretary, B.P.C.C., on the shooting alleged to have taken place by soldiers of Indian Signal Corps on 17th and 18th instant at Nivodhai near Duttaparkar in Barasat sub-division, Bengal:

> A batch of Indian troops about 7 or 8, while engaged in sinking telephone posts entered the garden of Rabindranath Bose at about 1 p.m. on the 17th May, plucked fruits and wilfully damaged green mangoes and jack-fruits, etc., whereupon Rabindra and Shashindra protested against their conduct. The soldiers thereupon assaulted them and kicked Shashindra when he fell down. Shashindra was attended by Dr. Tulsidas Sarkar, a local medical man. The soldiers also raided the house of Hari Charan Das and Sashanka Das and damaged the cooking and other utensils and threatened the local people with dire consequences.
>
> . . . Pachu Gopal Mookherjee, President, Union Board, Suresh Chandra Dey (Honorary Magistrate) and Dr. Tulsidas Sarkar lodged the first information at Barasat Thana at about 5.30 p.m. and reported the matter to the S.D.O., Barasat and sought his protection. The S.D.O., thereupon, directed the Thana officer to post four constables

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".
[2] *Vide* "Letter to H. L. Sharma", p. 151.

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at Nivodhai village in the morning of the 18th and 19th May. The complainants carried written instructions from the S.D.O. to the Thana officer, but unfortunately no police constable was found in the village on the 18th morning, when that unfortunate firing took place. . . . Next day on the 18th May, the soldiers numbering about 25 came to the scene of occurrence with arms at about 7 a.m. Out of these men about 12 or 13 entered the Nivodhai village at 8.30 a.m. and started patrolling the streets using abusive language to the villagers and women-folk and threatened them with their rifles and bullets. They, then entered the tailoring shop of Ratan Das and assaulted him. After assaulting Ratan Das they again entered the garden of Robin Bose, knocked at the door and threatened to assault the female members of the house. The panic-stricken inmates having raised a hue and cry, a large number of villagers (40 to 50) assembled there to rescue them. Thereupon, the troops gave a signal to the other members of the corps who were waiting in the neighbourhood, when they also ran to the place of occurrence.

Four or five local young men, namely, Sushil Kanjilal, Bejoy Kumar Mukherjee, Sambhu Nath Dutta and Santosh Nath approached the soldiers and requested them not to intimidate the innocent people and asked them to leave the place, whereupon they got enraged and assaulted Sushil Kanjilal on the head with the butt end of a gun (he has since been removed to Calcutta Medical School Hospital for treatment). At this the villagers got frightened and tried to run away when Bejoy Mukherjee was pushed down by the soldiers and a tussle ensued between them, then he fell into the adjacent tank and the soldiers got hold of him and ducked him in water. The villagers, thereupon, being exasperated ran to his rescue and some of them pelted stones at the soldiers. They then left Bejoy in the tank and opened six rounds of shot as a result of which Bejoy was wounded and fell down. Santosh Nath and Sambhu Dutta also received gun-shot wounds and have subsequently been removed to Calcutta Medical School for treatment. The condition of Santosh Nath is reported to be very serious. Immediately after firing the signallers left the place dragging the body of Bejoy towards the place where the military lorry was standing. After the soldiers had gone away, villagers began to search for the victim when Sudarshan Mukherji, Sripada Mukherji, Bojomohan Bose and others found Bejoy in a dying condition with intestines ripped open and groaning under the bush, near the Railway Home Signal in a ditch close to Rabindra's garden. He was carried to the nearest Kalibari where he died saying that he was dragged in and trampled upon by the booted-soldiers on his chest and other parts of the body and was also bayonetted. He could say no more and he succumbed immediately.

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It was a deliberate and cold-blooded murder. The whole village seems to be exceedingly panic-stricken. The police did not arrive on the 18th morning although the S.D.O., Barasat, apprehending some trouble directed them to post constables at Nivodhai from the 18th morning. If the police authorities had been a bit more vigilant the catastrophe could have been averted.

Santosh Nath who had since been lying in a precarious condition died on the 20th morning at Calcutta Medical School Hospital.

No comment is necessary on this wantonness on the part of the so-called defenders of India, assuming the truth of the statement.

SEVAGRAM, May 25, 1942

Harijan, 31-5-1942

177. LETTER TO GOPARAJU SATYANARAYANA MURTI

May 25, 1942

DEAR MURTI,

If you and your wife can put up with the hard life here, live separately and your wife can undergo the Ashram discipline, you can come.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6089

178. LETTER TO PURATAN J. BUCH

May 25, 1942

CHI. PURATAN,

I have your letter. You should tell him what you have told me. If you wish me to tell him on your behalf, I can do so. Constructive work should not produce such effect. All our activities have swaraj as their aim. We may give them up whenever it becomes necessary to do so. It would be better for you to discuss your views with Naraharibhai.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9185

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179. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

May 25, 1942

CHI. NARAHARI,

There is a report in the newspapers that burglars broke into the Ashram and made away with some things. How far is it true? I would not be surprised if something like this had really happened. Do you remember the remedy I had suggested? I hope you do. We have not been able to employ it fully. No time would be inopportune for making a start.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9127

180. LETTER TO MULJIBHAI T. SHARMA

May 25, 1942

BHAI MULJIBHAI,

You are unduly sensitive. We should not resent harmless popular sayings. Why should a Baniya take the saying, 'I see you are after all a Baniya', to be a reflection on himself? What if cowardice is attributed to a Baniya? Or if a Brahmin is believed to get wise after the event? As for me, I look upon the barber's occupation as an honourable one, for barbers have some knowledge of home remedies too.

Blessings from
BAPU

BHAI MULJIBHAI TULSIDAS SHARMA
NAYEE HIND SABHA
DANDIA BAZAAR
BARODA, B.B.& C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of Gujarati: G.N. 3966; also C.W. 1

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181. LETTER TO ABDUL HUQ

SEVAGRAM,
May 25, 1942

BHAI SAHEB,

You had promised to send me your scheme concerning Hindustani. It is yet to come. Do please send it.

An Association has already been formed at Wardha. I enclose a copy of its rules. May I hope you will be a member? A number of posts on the executive have been left vacant with a view to accommodating persons like you.

Dr. Tara Chand has agreed to join the Association provided Abid Saheb also joins it. It would be good if you could join it.

From Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

182. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM,
May 25, 1942

CHI. SHARMA,

I received your two letters. They are distressing. I am sending a small note[1] for *Harijan*. Let us see what happens. Your duty on such occasions is to fight to the death. I cannot tell you from here how. Bamboo should be made available for biers to carry corpses and building activities should go on. You have however stopped building the house. If the order is still in force, you can resume construction after giving notice. You should not depend on my advice for everything. Do you read what I write in *Harijan* these days?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

From a facsimile: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 310 and 311

[1] *Vide* "Terrible If True", p. 147.

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183. LETTER TO DR. A. U. KAZI

May 25, 1942

BHAI KAZI,

I have your letter. I remember you quite well. I can certainly take work from you but, I suppose, your requirements would be considerable.[1] Please let me know what they are. Can you stay in Ahmedabad or would you like to be with me at Sevagram?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Urdu original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

184. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 26, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

You have given me a graphic account of the interview.[2] It was a good thing you wrote and you got an appointment. Of course, he was sweet and friendly and will always remain so. But that makes no difference to the plan. It will mature slowly. You therefore need not be in a hurry to come away. The weather is much too hot for you.

Love.

BAPU

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA W.

From the original: C.W. 4123. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7432

[1] The addressee had expressed a wish to work for the *Urdu Harijan.*

[2] The addressee had met the Viceroy on May 23 and, according to the report sent by the latter to Amery, pleaded "that first the Americans and then the British should vacate India bag and baggage". *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II p. 134

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185. LETTER TO VITHALDAS V. JERAJANI

May 26, 1942

BHAI VITHALDAS,

I am thinking over your letter of the 12th. Who can predict what will happen if there is a conflagration? But, without worrying about it, we have to think of what we can do. We will discuss that at the forthcoming meeting.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of Gujarati: S.N. 9803

186. LETTER TO HANUMANTHA RAO

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 26, 1942

BHAI HANUMANTHA RAO,

I have only now been able to reach your letter of May 2. I feel you ought to have written with greater frankness. If your heart is fully cleansed, I think you should clearly say something like "For a lapse in the performance of public duty I have decided to . . ."[1] I think it is your duty to make some such statement. You can still make amends even by issuing a simple statement.

I hope you will be able to read my handwriting.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The words within quotes are in English.

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187. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 26, 1942

BHAI MOTI BABU,

I hope you can read Devanagari. I am glad you like my articles.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 11057

188. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 27, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

J. L.[1] has passed the whole day here. We have had a heart to heart talk. It is all to the good. We shall meet again. He has got to go for the Lucknow meeting.

Your letter. I told J. L. about your anxiety to meet him, but Shummy's boil prevented you. He thought it was your visit to the V.[2] I hope he is better for the lancet cut.

The heat is on the increase. It increases but to decrease. I don't want you to witness the process.

Ba is flourishing. Did I tell you I had gone up to 101 lb.? I think I have.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA W.

From the original: C.W. 4124. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7433

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru
[2] Viceroy

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189. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 27, 1942

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I had talks with Jawaharlal all day long. They were cordial and we understood each other perfectly. Choithram[1] leaves things to you. You should be firm. If you go by my opinion, you should write a letter. I asked Jawaharlal. He says that the Congress member should quit and so should Allabuksh. This is the position. If, however, you yourself think differently, I have nothing to say.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

It is surprising that there is no improvement in your health. The cold must go. Do you clean the nose by taking in soda and salt through it? If there is no improvement you should come and stay here.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 276

190. CONVERSATION WITH MEMBERS OF THE RASHTRIYA YUVAK SANGH[3]

May 28, 1942

Commenting on the poor physique of the members Gandhiji said:

These days our bodies are completely devoid of muscles. The bodies of the boys sitting opposite me, just like my body, are

[1] Dr. Choithram Gidwani, President of the Sindh Provincial Congress Committee

[2] *Vide* also "Lawlessness in Sindh", pp. 122-7.

[3] About a hundred members of the Rashtriya Yuvak Sangh, C. P., called on Gandhiji at Sevagram after their annual training camp at Wardha was over. They spent half an hour with Gandhiji during his morning walk. A brief report of the interview was also published in *Harijan*, 7-6-1942, under the heading "To Resist the Slave Drivers".

without muscles. What message should I give them? I can tell them only one thing: have good bodies and be healthy. . . .

Instead of repeating what I have said so often it would be better that you should ask me questions and I should answer them.

Q. How can we drive away the British from here?

GANDHIJI (humorously): You do learn how to wield the lathi. Drive them away with its help.

Q. We can do that provided we have lathis.

G. In that case you belong to my creed. I have given up the lathi. You too have given it up. You people learn how to wield the lathi. I too keep this with me. But I do not strike anyone with it. It is only meant for giving me support. You should put the lathi to similar use. Your lathis are not meant for striking others.

Two questions are implied in your question. 'Do we want to drive away the British or do we want to put an end to their domination?'

Members with one voice: We want to end their domination.

G. That is the correct attitude. I have many friends among Englishmen. But I cannot say that about all Englishmen, though I would like to be friends with all of them. There should not be a single Englishman who is not my friend. I want to be friendly with all the peoples of the world, not only Englishmen. But I want to be friendly particularly with Englishmen because I have been associated with them for the last many years. It is immaterial what kind of association it was—let it be that they were masters and I was a slave—but we were associated. That is the reason I want to be friendly with the British particularly. But it is British domination and British imperialism which I want to banish from this land. I am telling the British rulers to withdraw quietly. It is the British domination that we want to end altogether because it is a poison which corrupts everything it touches. This rule is an obstacle to all progress.

There are two ways of getting rid of imperialism: either we wipe out the Empire or we quit it. I have suggested a method of quitting it. For that we do not require lathis; the two things required are the knowledge that the domination is a greater evil than any other evil and that we have to get rid of it no matter what it may cost. We have to be masters of our own mind. Take me for an example. I do not feel that I am a slave of

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anyone. Even if the whole world tries to make me a slave, it will fail. It cannot make me a slave, that is to say, it cannot become the master of my mind. It can do whatever it may like with my body. Suppose someone asks me to pick this stick and keep it there. No doubt I have the strength to lift the stick but I do not want to submit to his bidding. He would instruct the police to beat me to death. I will submit to his beating but not to his bidding. I am the master of my mind. A man is not a slave as long as he does not submit to others. I would have done my work if I was beaten to death. That would be my complete victory because he would not have made me do what he wanted. He could very well have my dead body. Whoever came to know about my death would at least say that here was a brave man who did not submit to anyone's bidding even though he was beaten to death.

Similarly we have to withdraw ourselves from the British Empire. It is better if they leave. I am trying to persuade them to do so. I am trying to persuade the world also. How can we dislodge them if they refuse to listen to us? We can remove their domination if not them, that is to say, we have to withdraw ourselves from their Empire. We can refuse to submit to their orders. I have explained this thing to you by giving a trivial example about removing a stick. We have to make up our minds to throw off our yoke. We have to intensify our determination about not submitting to the rulers' bidding. Is that very difficult? How can one compel others to become one's slaves?

The authority of the Empire is exercised on us in a very subtle way—it is so subtle that we hardly know that the Empire exists. What proof do the Sevagram peasants have about the existence of the Government except the presence of the local Patel. There won't be any proof if there was no Patel armed with administrative authority. Peasants are afraid of the Patel. To them the Empire is an invisible power. The means of exercising this power are very subtle. We cannot get out of it with the help of the lathi. We can be victorious if we do not submit to the lathis of others.

Two forces of the same type are ranged against each other at present. Violence is being practised between England, America, China and Russia on one side and Germany, Italy and Japan on the other side. All these nations are intelligent, powerful and prosperous. A dangerous war is being fought between them. No one knows who will win. At the present moment there is mutual destruction of life and property. The worst

of it is that it is not only the combatants who are being killed but innocent children, old men and women too. I am not interested in such war. It is the grace of God that we do not have such strength. I do not even want such favour from Him. I do not want to become either a Hitler or a Churchill. I for my part would like to become an independent peasant of India but I have not succeeded so far. I need milk while he cannot get milk. My body cannot subsist without milk. I wish I could compete with him. I envy him.

But the peasant of India is a peasant by force of circumstances. He for his part would like to become a king. But by force of circumstances he has remained a peasant. I wish to become a peasant and a labourer by choice. The only difference between him and me would be that I would be satisfied with my lot while he is not. I do not wish to become a dissatisfied beggar like him. I would be master of myself. I would be happy with that life. That is my ideal.

On the day I am able to teach him to become a peasant and a labourer by choice I would have taught him to throw off the shackles that now keep him bound and that compel him to do the masters' bidding.

I have just pointed the way. You will get guidance from that. Try to follow my ideals as far as you can. For that we should have a good physique. We have to build up our muscles by regular exercise. But that should not be done to indulge in violence. We will not be fit for agriculture and labour if we develop our physique for indulging in violence. To become a Sandow is not our ideal. If he were asked to carry a load from here to Wardha in the sun, he would break down. On the other hand a labourer will carry that much load on his head in the hot sun for the sake of only five or six paise. Our ideal is to become such tough labourers and our exercises should be towards that end. We should be impervious to day and night, heat and cold. To us heat or cold should not make any difference.

We should learn to hop and jump not for beating others but to save them. Suppose a man has become unconscious on the other side of a ditch or a wall and in order to rescue him, we have to jump across. We should have all these abilities. That is what non-violent exercises teach. However, we do not want to be strong only in body. We have to cultivate resistance. And for that we have to develop our intellect and will-power. If you have imbibed this kind of strength then there is no doubt that you will become very good workers.

Q. When are you going to start a new movement?

G. On the one hand I am in a hurry to start it but on the other I am not. I am creating the necessary atmosphere for it. I know my limitations as well as those of others. It is necessary to explain to the people. As long as I can write I will go on explaining. I know that neither the people nor the government realizes the full implications of my plan and therefore whatever I do, I shall do keeping in mind these limitations.

Q. Would it be violence if instead of killing a tyrant we were to tie him up tightly with a rope?

G. It is not violence if you tie up a mad person. But it is certainly violence if you tie up others. We cannot make progress in non-violence by asking such a question. Non-violence teaches us to love a tyrant. A non-violent person is not afraid of a tyrant but is kind to him. The law of compassion tells us that we cannot be kind to those of whom we are afraid. Forgiveness is the virtue of the brave.

We are not non-violent when we ask such questions. We want to curb the violence of the tyrant, and therefore the question of tying him up arises. Under such circumstances I will advise you to oppose him in whatever way you can, because the only other alternative would be to run away. I can never think of running away. He who is non-violent has love and kindness for others. He is not afraid of anyone. God gives him strength.

Q. But our efforts to end the British rule would result in anarchy. All the people are not non-violent and therefore there will be clashes, violence and oppression. Won't this anarchy be worse than the existing ordered anarchy? Won't the remedy be worse? How can we deal with it? Or is there no need to take any steps in advance?

G. Your question is very apt and important. That is the consideration that has weighed with me all these twenty-two or twenty-three years. I always thought that I would have to wait till the country was ready for a non-violent struggle. But my attitude has undergone a change. I feel that if I continue to wait I might have to wait till doomsday. For the preparation that I have prayed and worked for may never come, and in the mean time I may be enveloped and overwhelmed by the flames of violence that are spreading all around. I have noticed this shortcoming in my ahimsa. However, in spite of that the results of the experiments I have conducted have always been good. I do not feel sorry for these.

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But today we have to go a step further. We have to take the risk of violence to shake off the great calamity of slavery. But even for resort to violence one requires the unflinching faith of a non-violent man. There cannot be any trace of violence either in my plans or in my thoughts. A non-violent person has complete faith in God. My ahimsa was always imperfect and therefore it was ineffective to that extent. But I have faith in God. In this context I say: "Rama is the strength of the weak." There is no trace of violence in my consciousness or in the remotest corner of my being. My very being is full of consciousness. How can a man who has consciously pursued ahimsa for the last fifty years change all of a sudden? So it is not that I have become violent.

The people do not have my ahimsa. And therefore I have to take a risk, if I cannot curb their violence. I cannot remain inactive. I will certainly launch a non-violent movement. But if people do not understand it and there is violence, how can I stop it? I will prefer anarchy to the present system of administration because this ordered anarchy is worse than real anarchy. I am sure that the anarchy created by our efforts to mitigate this dangerous anarchy will be less dangerous. The violence exerted then would be just a trifle compared to the existing violence. Violence which is due to the weakness of human nature, is bound to be there. Crores of people in the country have no weapons. Even if they indulge in violence among themselves how long can they do it? Ultimately they will have to listen to me even if some of them die in mutual violence. We have to take the risk of anarchy if God wills it. However, we shall try our best to prevent violence. If in spite of that there is violence then it is His wish. I am not responsible for that. But if I enjoy my milk and remain inactive and unconcerned about the terrible violence that is going on in the name of resisting a possible foreign aggression and about the prevalent, dangerous, orderly anarchy in the name of administration, I will be proved guilty. My ahimsa will not be effective at all then. For me such a situation will be intolerable. I will be ashamed of such ahimsa. Ahimsa is not such a useless thing. I hope that pure ahimsa will arise out of such anarchy.

Your question is very pertinent and thought-provoking. It arises from my writings. I have dealt with it in my writings also. But it is not easy to understand. Language is but a poor and an imperfect vehicle for one's thoughts. I could write less than what I have in mind—that is the limitation of language. But if you ponder over what I have written you will be able to understand

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me. Read it in Hindi, Marathi and Gujarati. If you read in English you will not be able to understand it. Think over it. I am putting before the country a great idea in my imperfect language. I am also sure that those who cannot or will not understand me will do so in the light of experience—if they survive the present catastrophe.

[From Hindi]

Sarvodaya, June 1942

191. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 28, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I hope you have been having my letters regularly. They are posted all right.

Maulana Saheb is definitely leaving tomorrow and reaching here the day after. Khurshed is coming with him. Mira is still in Orissa.

I am really keeping very well. What I am eating is enough.

I hope Shummy is better and that you are putting on weight.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Here is a letter from Sarup[1]. You should attend after you descend.

From the original: C.W. 4125. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7434

192. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

May 28, 1942

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I was thinking of writing to you at the Rishikesh Naka, but in the mean time I got your letter. I wanted to tell you that there should be some limit even to one's roaming about. Identifying of plants for its own sake is no part of dharma. Therefore

[1] Vijayalakshmi Pandit

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render what service you can through such knowledge as you already possess and acquire proficiency in the course of service. You should show, if you can, that indigenous medicine is simple, inexpensive and capable of giving relief to 99 patients out of a hundred. If you feel that this cannot be done, then you should give up the profession.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2918. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

193. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

May 28, 1942[1]

Answering the question of a Press correspondent whether his present policy as revealed by his writings did not vitiate his own declaration that he was a friend of China, Gandhiji said:

My answer is an emphatic 'no'. I remain the passionate friend of China that I have always claimed to be. I know what loss of freedom means. Therefore, I could not but be in sympathy with China which is my next-door neighbour in distress. And, if I believed in violence and if I could influence India, I would put in motion every force at my command on behalf of China to save her liberty. In making, therefore, the suggestion which I have made about withdrawal of British power, I have not lost sight of China. But because I have China in mind, I feel that the only effective way for India to help China is to persuade Great Britain to free India and let a free India make her full contribution to the war effort. Instead of being sullen and discontented, India free will be a mighty force for the good of mankind in general. It is true that the solution I have presented is a heroic solution beyond the ken of Englishmen. But being a true friend of Britain and China and Russia, I must not suppress the solution which I believe to be eminently practical and probably the only one in order to save the situation and in order to convert the war into a power for good instead of being what it is, a peril to humanity.

Pandit Nehru told me yesterday that he heard people in Lahore and Delhi saying that I have turned pro-Japanese. I could only laugh at the suggestion, for, if I am sincere in my passion

[1] The date is from *The Hindu*.

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for freedom, I could not consciously or unconsciously take a step which will involve India in the position of merely changing masters. If, in spite of my resistance to the Japanese menace with my whole soul the mishap occurs, of which I have never denied the possibility, then the blame would rest wholly on British shoulders. I have no shadow of doubt about it. I have made no suggestion which, even from the military standpoint, is fraught with the slightest danger to British power or to Chinese. It is obvious that India is not allowed to pull her weight in favour of China. If British power is withdrawn from India in an orderly manner, Britain will be relieved of the burden of keeping the peace in India and at the same time gain in a free India an ally not in the cause of Empire—because she would have renounced *in toto* all her imperial designs, but in a defence, not pretended but wholly real, of human freedom. That I assert and that only is the burden of my recent writings and I shall continue to do so so long as I am allowed by the British power.

Q. Now what about your plan—you are reported to have matured plans for launching some big offensive?

Well, I have never believed in secrecy nor do I do so now. There are certainly many plans floating in my brain. But just now I merely allow them to float in my brain. My first task is to educate the public mind in India and world opinion, in so far as I am allowed to do so. And when I have finished that process to my satisfaction, I may have to do something. That something may be very big, if the Congress is with me and the people are with me. But British authority will have a full knowledge of anything I may wish to do before I enforce it. Remember I have yet to see the Maulana Saheb. My talks with Pandit Nehru are yet unfinished. I may say that they were wholly of a friendly nature and we have come nearer to each other even with the unfinished talk of yesterday. Naturally I want to carry the whole of the Congress with me if I can, as I want to carry the whole of India with me. For my conception of freedom is no narrow conception. It is co-extensive with the freedom of man in all his majesty. I shall, therefore, take no step without the fullest deliberation.

Asked about the situation in Sind and the Hur menace Gandhiji said:

I have a telegram from Hyderabad pressing me either to go to Sind or to see Pir Pagaro. I am afraid I can't go to Sind. I have pointed out the way which, if adopted, must succeed. So

far as seeing Pir Pagaro is concerned, I would gladly see him, if I received proper authority enabling me to do so.

Harijan, 7-6-1942, and *The Hindu*, 30-5-1942

194. CABLE TO "THE SUNDAY DESPATCH"[1]

[On or before *May 29, 1942*]

CABLE JUST RECEIVED. EVIDENTLY YOU HAVE NOT MY FULL STATEMENT. PART RELATING TO AMERICA RUNS THUS: 'I KNOW THAT I HAVE NO RIGHT TO CRITICIZE SUCH A BIG NATION. I DON'T KNOW ALL THE FACTS WHICH HAVE DETERMINED AMERICA TO THROW HERSELF INTO THE CAULDRON. BUT SOMEHOW OR OTHER OPINION HAS FORCED ITSELF ON ME THAT AMERICA COULD HAVE REMAINED OUT AND EVEN NOW SHE CAN DO SO IF SHE DIVESTS HERSELF OF INTOXICATION THAT HER IMMENSE WEALTH HAS PRODUCED. AND THERE I WOULD LIKE TO REPEAT WHAT I HAVE SAID ABOUT THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE BRITISH POWER FROM INDIA. BOTH AMERICA AND BRITAIN LACK THE MORAL BASIS FOR ENGAGING IN THIS WAR UNLESS THEY PUT THEIR OWN HOUSES IN ORDER BY MAKING IT THEIR FIXED DETERMINATION TO WITHDRAW THEIR INFLUENCE AND POWER BOTH FROM AFRICA AND ASIA AND REMOVED THE COLOUR BAR. THEY HAVE NO RIGHT TO TALK OF PROTECTING DEMOCRACY AND PROTECTING CIVILIZATION AND HUMAN FREEDOM UNTIL THE CANKER OF WHITE SUPERIORITY IS DESTROYED IN ITS ENTIRETY.'[2] I ADHERE TO THAT STATEMENT. HOW AMERICA COULD HAVE AVOIDED WAR I CANNOT ANSWER EXCEPT BY RECOMMENDING NON-VIOLENT METHOD. MY AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP HAD LED ME TO BUILD HIGH HOPE ON AMERICAN CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE. AMERICA IS TOO BIG, FINANCIALLY, INTELLECTUALLY, AND IN SCIENTIFIC SKILL, TO BE SUBDUED BY ANY NATION OR EVEN COMBINATION. HENCE MY TEARS OVER HER THROWING HERSELF IN CAULDRON.

Harijan, 7-6-1942

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's article "Unfair to America ?", 29-5-1942. This was in reply to a cable from *The Sunday Despatch* which read: "You are reported as saying that America could have kept out of the war if she had wished. How can you justify such a statement in view of the fact that while at peace America was attacked by the Japanese who simultaneously declared war on her?"

[2] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", pp. 111-6.

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195. SARDAR PRITHVI SINGH[1]

I am sorry that after association with me since his discovering himself and allowing himself to be arrested, Sardar Prithvi Singh has parted company with me, having lost all faith in me all of a sudden and as a result of a single talk with me.[2] This naturally led him to tender his resignation from the Ahimsak Vyayam Sangh. As a natural corollary to this step, the trustees of the Sangh have decided to wind up the Sangh and close the Vyayam Shala, which was established by the Sangh, purely to let him make an experiment and find out, under guidance, the scope and quality of non-violent Vyayam.[3] I am hoping that, though he has lost faith in me, he has not lost it in ahimsa to which he was led after close and careful self-examination during years of secrecy.

SEVAGRAM, May 29, 1942

Harijan, 7-6-1942

196. DIFFERENCES VERY REAL

Your latest advice to the British to withdraw from all Asiatic possessions or at least India[4] is in accord with a general but undefined wish of a good section of the Indian public. Rightly or wrongly that wish is based upon the feeling that but for the Britisher making India the arsenal of his fight against the Axis, Japan may not have good cause for attacking India and will not do so. Even supposing Britain were to accede to this position, you do not suppose that Japan will on no account attack us. Very probably they may, and I am sure they will if only to get control of the vast material resources we have and use the same against their enemy. In which event you have advised non-violent resistance by us, but the Britisher will still carry the war against his enemy into our country (as is now done over the air in Burma, Siam, Indo-China, and occupied Europe) dictated, so they will say, solely by military considerations. None of these troubles may arise if the belligerents accept your method of settling disputes. But I see no near

[1] This had appeared under the heading "Notes".
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", p. 141.
[3] *Vide* "Ahimsak Vyayam Sangh", p. 76.
[4] *Vide* "To Every Briton", pp. 98-100.

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prospect of it nor do you. Meanwhile we may still have war in our midst each side saying that it is absolutely necessary to prevent the other from getting support for his operations. The resultant suffering will be ours and even if we hold on non-violently against the invader, it will not prevent the erstwhile possessor, from showering death and destruction on account of the enemy but all in our land and exactly over our heads. Perhaps Rajaji's attempt to organize a nation-wide resistance to the invader even at the cost of co-operating with the British arms is aimed at avoiding this futility of suffering. Even his method involves suffering, but is it not likely to be accepted more readily and with enthusiasm as being connected with the sole desire of preserving freedom and independence from aggression? It may also be that he feels that during and by that actual operation of mutual co-operation there may arise on our side a greater strength to achieve our independence and on their side a real appreciation of that strength and induce a feeling that it would serve no purpose to refuse the Indian demand any longer.... I should entreat you to let me know if I am correct in the above analysis and if so it does not reveal a fundamental difference between you and Rajaji in this critical hour of our history. In which event, you alone can show us the good and real way out, without futile suffering.

This is a very cogent letter from a friend who is most anxious to bridge the political gulf between Rajaji and me. But it cannot be by any make-believe. On the contrary any make-believe will mislead the country and serve neither his immediate purpose nor mine. We love the country with an equal passion. But our modes of service for the time being are diametrically opposite. He believes in resisting the threatened Japanese attack with the British aid. I regard this as impossible in the long end. India is not the home of the British people. If they are overwhelmed they will retire from India every man and woman and child, if they have facilities enough to carry them, even as they retired from Singapore, Malaya and Rangoon. This is no reflection on them or their bravery. Every army would have done likewise. But most probably from India they will not take with them the Indian army. They will perhaps expect them to carry on the battle by themselves. No doubt they would try to harass the Japanese army if they can from outside. So there would be no difference in the position imagined by my correspondent and what I have adumbrated. Only under my plan what is contemplated is an orderly withdrawal by the British as if it was a premeditated military movement which will, let us assume, please millions of Indians. Then the hated British will become esteemed friends and allies. They will operate in concert with their allies the

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Indians even as they would, say, with the Chinese. The whole thing becomes natural and a mighty force is voluntarily available to the British and to us. Add to this the moral height which Britain will occupy.

As for communal unity, the third party being removed unity will follow as day follows night. Unity will not precede but will succeed freedom. Today we do not even know that the goal of the Congress and the League is one. And you cannot bribe the League to co-operate for independence. Either the League believes that India is as much the home of Muslims as of non-Muslims, or it does not. If it does, it must first free the home from bondage before partitioning it. Today there is nothing to partition. After ridding the home of the foreign occupant, it can demand partition if it wishes and get it by negotiation or force. However, if it does not believe in India being the home of the Muslims, there is no question of negotiations for freeing India from bondage.

Rajaji's plan is, in my opinion, wholly unnatural. He wants to thrust himself on the British power which does not want him, for as the possessor by right of conquest it gets all it wants. In order to thrust himself on the British he gives the League the right of self-determination which every single individual has whether the others recognize it or not. Rajaji does not like partition and hugs the belief that his superfluous recognition of the inherent right will enable him to avoid partition.

I advise my correspondent not to worry over our differences. We know and love each other enough to let time correct the error, whether it lies on my side or his. Meanwhile a frank and bold admission of differences and their exact nature makes for healthy education of public opinion. What is needed is avoidance of anger and intolerance, the twin enemies of correct understanding.

SEVAGRAM, May 29, 1942

Harijan, 7-6-1942

197. JODHPUR[1]

From Jodhpur comes the news that Shri Jainarayan Vyas has been arrested for daring to seek an interview with the Maharaja and for proposing to carry on the movement for responsible government in Jodhpur.[2]

Evidently Shri Jainarayan Vyas had no other choice. I wish to Jodhpur workers all success. But I hope they have realized that they have to plough the lonely furrow. They will have abundant sympathy from all over India, but dry sympathy will give them no help. Help must come from their own resolute will and unflinching courage.

SEVAGRAM, May 30, 1942

Harijan, 7-6-1942

198. QUESTION BOX

Q. Is it a fact that your present attitude towards England and Japan is influenced by the belief that you think the British and the allies are going to be defeated in this War? It is necessary that you clear the position in this respect. A very important leader in the Congress thinks like that and he says that he is sure because he had this knowledge from his personal talks with you.

A. I wish you could have given the name of the leader. Whoever he is, I have no hesitation in saying that it is not true. On the contrary I said only the other day in *Harijan* that the Britisher was hard to beat. He has not known what it is to be defeated. Of the Americans in this very issue you will see my answer to *The Sunday Despatch*.[3] It contradicts the "leader's" statements. He has therefore either misunderstood me or you have misunderstood him. But I have said in my talk for the past twelve months and more that this war is not likely to end in a decisive victory for any party. There will be peace when the

[1] This had appeared under the heading "Notes".
[2] *Vide* pp. 83-4.
[3] *Vide* "Cable to *The Sunday Despatch*", p. 164.

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exhaustion point is reached. This is mere speculation. Britain may be favoured by nature. She has nothing to lose by waiting. And with America as her ally she has inexhaustible material resources and scientific skill. This advantage is not available to any of the Axis powers. Thus I have no decisive opinion about the result of the War. But what is decisive with me is that I am made by nature to side with weak parties. My policy of non-embarrassment is based upon that nature and it persists. My proposal for British withdrawal is as much in Britain's interest as India's. Your difficulty arises from your disinclination to believe that Britain can ever do justice voluntarily. My belief in the capacity of non-violence rejects the theory of permanent inelasticity of human nature.

SEVAGRAM, May 30, 1942

Harijan, 7-6-1942

199. ALCHEMY OF PRODUCING FOOD

Below will be found an extract from a letter of the Hon. Secretary of Marwari Relief Society's Social Service Department:

> We are on the threshold of an acute food shortage crisis today. A good deal is being heard of the "grow more food" campaign, and it is no doubt a move in the right direction. But in my humble opinion, our leaders have not given due consideration to one considerable potential source of food supply in our country, which if successfully tapped, would feed at least 50 lakhs of our starving fellowmen. I refer to the tremendous waste of food that every one of us in this country indulges in, when taking our meals morning and evening and also the disgraceful waste that is usually seen on festive occasions. The aggregate amount thus thrown into the dust-bins could easily keep 5 millions of our countrymen from a perpetual state of semi-starvation. While passing along the streets of Calcutta, I have been shocked to find my own brothers and sisters picking up rotten food from the dust-bins and eating it. The thought of such a ghastly scene which can be described as nothing short of a national disgrace has haunted me day and night and I have felt ashamed to take my food at home.

The Secretary further asks me to suggest ways and means of organizing a campaign popularizing the plan suggested in the letter. The plan I can heartily recommend. All the belligerent countries have been forced to cut food supplies all round. There is naturally therefore not much scope for wastage in these

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countries. In our country seemingly we are not reduced to the straits to which the belligerent countries are reduced. In reality, however, the wastage which is truly enormous is confined to the few within the cities. The millions are living in a state of perpetual semi-starvation. For them it is like living in a chronic state of war. Day in and day out they know not what a square meal is. For them who have no margin the pressure of the present war can better be imagined than described.

What the Secretary suggests is worthy of consideration. A campaign against waste can be easily organized in all the cities. No householder should be without the knowledge of how he or she can avoid waste. There is here no question of denial. The question is only one of consideration for the poor. All saving thus made will be equal to so much food production without effort. There will have to be literature on the subject. It should not be elaborate. Leaflets should suffice. They must not be argumentative. By facts and figures they should tell the citizens how much waste they are responsible for and how they can avoid it. The horrible superstition that the dishes of the rich should always be over-full so as to leave an ample margin for leavings should be banished forthwith. It should be considered a sign of bad breeding to leave one's plate with a heap of uneaten things, whether at home or in a hotel. One should regulate the helpings with strict regard to wants. If all who are given to the evil habit of having plates piled up and merely sampling the courses served out were to follow the healthy rule here recommended much food can be saved for distribution among those who are in daily want. I think the Marwari Relief Society which has had rich and varied experience in social service is perhaps the fittest body to take the initiative in organizing the work. Though the problem will be much the same in all the cities, with every city there will be variations according to people's habits. I suggest, therefore, that the work is begun in Calcutta. The experience gained there could be utilized in extending the scope of service. It ought not to take more than a week to organize the work in Calcutta. Naturally great concentration of energy and a large body of willing workers will be required for this essential and urgent service.

SEVAGRAM, May 30, 1942

Harijan, 7-6-1942

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200. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

May 30, 1942

CHI. SUSHILA AND MANILAL,

You two seem to have been left alone there. That is good. It is enough if you are happy in that state. Frequently the joy we find in following a lonely path is not to be found in travelling in the company of many, because in the latter case there is the danger of one's being dragged in a certain direction against one's wishes. I shall be content if all of you keep good health and are happy.

All are well here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4930

201. LETTER TO VIJAYA M. PANCHOLI

May 30, 1942

CHI. VIJAYA,

I am not at all responsible for your not getting my letters. You should either fight with the Postal Department or put up with it. I did write several letters to you. I see no harm at all in eating mangoes. You can take fresh milk of a healthy cow or sweet (in the natural way) curd. You should eat butter in moderate quantities. During pregnancy a woman must drink milk and eat butter, vegetables, fruit, etc. She should eat mangoes when they are in season. It does not matter if they are a little sour. Take 20 grains of soda bicarb in some way or other. Running about is not advisable. Walking is essential.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VIJAYABEHN
GRAM DAKSHINAMURTI
AMBALA, *via* SONGARH
KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7147. Also C.W. 4639. Courtesy: Vijaya M. Pancholi

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202. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
May 30, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Why such impatience? I am so burdened with work! Your letters confuse me. The root of your unhappiness and agitation is your lack of respect for Chi. It is not going to be cured by anything I may write. The remedy for it is entirely in your own hands. If Chi. is a fool—and in your opinion he is—then you will tolerate anything he does. What is one to do in such a case? Tell me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4429

203. A TRIPLE TRAGEDY[1]

The National Herald is an institution. It has a directorate which has no personal or financial interest in it. It is founded by Jawaharlal Nehru. It is only in India that the security of such a paper can be forfeited. In fact why any security[2] at all from it? And they need the greatest assistance possible from him in the war effort. They have exploited his stray sayings torn from their context. In any case, what do the Government expect from their repressive policy? Consider this forfeiture of security in conjunction with the arrest and detention of Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, ex-Minister, the organizer of the Congress in U. P. and a Director of *The National Herald*. Put these two acts side by side with the wanton and almost indecent search of the A. I. C. C. Office, and the tragedy is complete. This triple act is in my opinion a great hindrance to national war effort. It is so mad as to amount to an invitation to the Japanese to walk into India. It is a justification for my friendly invitation to the foreign Government to abdicate in favour of the nation whatever it may be. It is bold,

[1] This had appeared under the heading "Notes".

[2] The Printer and Publisher of *The National Herald* was asked to furnish a cash security of Rs. 6,000 by the District Magistrate of Lucknow.

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it is hazardous. The British are capable of taking risks such as very few are. Let them take the risk I have suggested and it will be their greatest war effort. It alone can save the situation, if anything can, so far as India is concerned. As a first step let them revoke the forfeiture order, discharge Rafi Saheb, and return the papers seized from the A. I. C. C.

SEVAGRAM, May 31, 1942

Harijan, 7-6-1942

204. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA, C. P.,
May 31, 1942

CHI. MIRA,

I have your very complete illuminating letter. The report of the interview[1] is perfect, your answers were straight, unequivocal and courageous. I have no criticism to make. I can only say, 'Go on as you are doing.' I can quite clearly see that you have gone to the right place at the right time. I therefore need do nothing more than come straight to your questions which are all good and relevant.

(1) I think we must tell the people what they should do. They will act according to their capacity. If we begin to judge their capacity and give directions accordingly, our directions will be halting and even compromising which they should never be. You will therefore read my instructions in that light. Remember that our attitude is that of complete non-co-operation with Japanese army, therefore we may not help them in any way, nor may we profit by any dealings with them. Therefore we cannot sell anything to them. If people are not able to face the Japanese army, they will do as armed soldiers do, i.e., retire when

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira* the addressee, who was then in Orissa, says: "I had had an interview with two English officials of the then Advisory regime. Since we were in possession of the fact that the Government officials were to retire to the hills, forty or fifty miles inland, the moment there was news of the Japanese coming and such files as they could not take in their motor-cars were to be burnt and all bridges were to be blown up, my object at the interview was to request them to retire in an orderly fashion, leaving the administrative machinery in our hands. I specially pleaded with them to hand us over the keys of the jails and also not to take away the doctors and medical supplies of the civil hospitals."

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they are overwhelmed. And if they do so the question of having any dealings with Japanese does not and should not arise. If, however, the people have not the courage to resist Japanese unto death and not the courage and capacity to evacuate the portion invaded by the Japanese, they will do the best they can in the light of instructions. One thing they should never do—to yield willing submission to the Japanese. That will be a cowardly act, and unworthy of freedom-loving people. They must not escape from one fire only to fall into another and probably more terrible. Their attitude therefore must always be of resistance to the Japanese. No question, therefore, arises of accepting British currency notes or Japanese coins. They will handle nothing from Japanese hands. So far as dealings with our own people are concerned they will either resort to barter or make use of such British currency that they have, in the hope that the National Government that may take the place of British Government will take up from the people all the British currency in accordance with its capacity.

(2) Question about co-operation in bridge-building is covered by the above. There can be no question of this co-operation.

(3) If Indian soldiers come in contact with our people, we must fraternize with them if they are well disposed, and invite them, if they can, to join the nation. Probably they have been brought under promise that they will deliver the country from foreign yoke. There will be no foreign yoke and they will be expected to befriend people and obey National Government that might have been set up in place of British Government. If the British have retired in an orderly manner leaving things in Indian hands, the whole thing can work splendidly and it might even be made difficult for Japanese to settle down in India or any part of it in peace, because they will have to deal with a population which will be sullen and resistant. It is difficult to say what can happen. It is enough if people are trained to cultivate the power of resistance, no matter which power is operating—the Japanese or the British.

(4)[1] Covered by (1) above.

(5)[2] The occasion may not come, but if it does, co-operation will be permissible and even necessary.

[1] The question was what should be done about currency after the British retreated.

[2] The question was whether it would be permissible to co-operate with the Japanese in attending to the dead and wounded after a battle.

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(6) Your answer about the arms found on the wayside is most tempting and perfectly logical.[1] It may be followed but I would not rule out the idea of worthy people finding them and storing them in a safe place if they can. If it is impossible to store them and keep them from mischievous people yours is an ideal plan.

Love.

BAPU

Bapu's Letters to Mira, pp. 341-2; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44*, pp. 250-1

205. NOTE TO PERIN CAPTAIN[2]

May, 1942

I cannot come soon. If notwithstanding my continuing to work for Hindustani they will still have me and if their policy is not anti-Hindustani I shall stay on. I have been contending for years, that is, ever since the Indore convention, that Hindi is incomplete without Urdu. At my instance a resolution to this effect was also passed[3] but I believe their policy has since undergone a change. Now I want to work simultaneously for both if possible. If not I propose to opt out in order to do it. If Urdu is only a style of Hindi it does not deserve to be rejected.

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: Kulsum Sayani Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

206. WATER FOR HARIJANS IN GUJARAT[4]

The ghastly form of untouchability which we find in Gujarat is not found anywhere else. How frightening can be the cruelty where Harijans are deprived of water! Bhai Parikshitlal has sent me a brief report of whatever little the Harijan Sevak Sangh is doing to soften the cruelty, which I give below.[5]

[1] The addressee had said her instinct was to take them out to sea and drown them.

[2] This appeared in a pamphlet issued on 1-8-1949 in the name of the addressee, who was then Hon. Secretary of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha.

[3] *Vide* Vol. XIV, pp. 300-1.

[4] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

[5] Not translated here. The correspondent had written that till the end of 1941 the Harijan Sevak Sangh had spent about Rs. 1,70,000 on sinking new wells and repairing old ones. But that had not solved the problem of the Harijans.

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In fact this work should not be limited to a handful of Harijan workers. It is humanitarian work. The rich people can dip their hands into their pockets and get wells sunk at various places and thus bring solace to the poor people. I know that the pace of dharma is slow but in this case it seems slower than usual. How can I tell you how slow it is!

SEVAGRAM, June 1, 1942

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 7-6-1942

207. KHADI PRODUCTION AND EDUCATION IN KARADI

For the last many years Bhai Dilkhush Diwanji has been silently doing khadi work in Karadi and imparting education through it. He has sent me an interesting account of his work which I give below.[1]

The description does not require any criticism or appreciation. Readers should study it and emulate the example.

SEVAGRAM, June 1, 1942

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 7-6-1942

208. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
June 1, 1942

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

Your letter is clear. I am now sending Abha to Rajkot. If they are constant to each other they will marry when Abha is of age. I think she will be happier in Rajkot than here. Anyhow I shall be free from care. And Veena will have Bengali company.

I hope you are giving a good account of yourself in these stirring times.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10341. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] Not translated here. The report mentioned the contribution of the students in the successful working of the Karadi Khadi Production Centre. Many students met their education expenses from the spinning wages they received, and those belonging to poorer families helped their parents to augment their family income.

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209. LETTER TO VITHALDAS V. JERAJANI

June 1, 1942

BHAI VITHALDAS,

May your new enterprise bear fruit and may you live long to carry it through.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9802

210. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 1, 1942

CHI. PRABHA,

I am not in a position these days to write to you or to anyone who does not write to me. I am hard pressed for time.

I get letters from Jayaprakash regularly. I learn from his last letter that he is improving. I have not made any new suggestion and hence I did not write to you. Narendra Dev is still here. He is very calm. He takes regular treatment. He has shown some improvement, too. He is weak, but is gradually gaining strength. He goes out for a walk twice daily. He gets sound sleep. He will not be in a hurry to leave.

You should take care of your health. You should now find no difficulty in getting the money from there. You may come when you can do so without inconvenience. You can certainly come to improve your health. You should come. You should not worry at all.

Is it not time now for the weather there to become cooler? It is still hot here. Hot winds are blowing.

Rajkumari is in Simla. She will stay there for the time being. Amtussalaam is here. She is all right. Ba is fine. Vasumati is here.

Sushila's examination is over. Most probably she will get through. She is expected here in a few days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3575

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211. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 1, 1942

CHI. PRABHA,

Here is a letter from an unhappy woman. I have advised her to see you. If she comes to you, please guide her. Ask for the letter which I have given to her. Mridula[1] is coming tomorrow. Khurshedbehn is here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3576

212. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 2, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Today seems to be *dies non* for you. No letter for the first time.

This is to tell you that Sushila has passed her examination. Thank God! She deserved to pass.

Mridula and Dhebarbhai[2] are here. So.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4126. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7435

213. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
June 2, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

Yours. Nothing will delight me more than to come near to you [rather] than you to me. It seems to me that the time has come for

[1] Mridula Sarabhai
[2] U. N. Dhebar, Congress leader of Saurashtra

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you to come here and convert me before you go on further with your propaganda. It is ugly to find ourselves talking at each other. I suggest that we talk to each other. It would be a great tragedy if you cannot convert your best friend whose love you do not doubt.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10915. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

214. LETTER TO NAGJIBHAI

SEVAGRAM,
June 2, 1942

BHAI NAGJI,

You have made a handsome gift. The Sangh was in need of such a building. But I want a much greater contribution from you. My appetite, therefore, is not likely to be satisfied with this building. I hope your business is flourishing.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6252

215. QUESTION BOX

IF THEY COME

Q. (1) If the Japs come, how are we to resist them non-violently?
(2) What are we to do if we fall into their hands?

A. (1) These questions come from Andhradesh where the people rightly or wrongly feel that the attack is imminent. My answer has already been given in these columns. Neither food nor shelter is to be given nor are any dealings to be established with them. They should be made to feel that they are not wanted. But of course things are not going to happen quite so smoothly as the question implies. It is a superstition to think that they will come as friends. No attacking party has ever done so. It spreads fire and brimstone among the populace. It forces things from people. If the people cannot resist fierce attack and are afraid of death, they should evacuate the infested place in order to deny compulsory service to the enemy.

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(2) If unfortunately some people are captured or fall into the enemy's hands, they are likely to be shot if they do not obey orders, e.g., render forced labour. If the captives face death cheerfully, their task is done. They have saved their own and their country's honour. They could have done nothing more if they had offered violent resistance, save perhaps taking a few Japanese lives and inviting terrible reprisals.

The thing becomes complicated when you are captured alive and subjected to unthinkable tortures to compel submission. You will neither submit to torture nor to the orders of the enemy. In the act of resistance you will probably die and escape humiliation. But it is said that death is prevented to let the victim go through the agony of tortures and to serve as an example to others. I however think that a person who would die rather than go through inhuman tortures would find honourable means of dying.

SEVAGRAM, June 3, 1942

Harijan, 14-6-1942

216. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 3, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Your two letters today.

I do take note of things that go on. Of course many things will happen. A big system will not die without much effort.

It is still terribly hot here. There is no sign of the wind changing. I am not likely to call you before the end of this month. There is no need for you to worry about anything at this end.

Abha is going to Rajkot, Laxmi to her husband and Vasumati to Ahmedabad.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4127. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7436

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217. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
June 3, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

I see you have answered me by quoting me against me.[1] I hope you got my letter of yesterday. If you are yielding nothing more than I have, why was not my statement acclaimed? But if we have both meant cheese, why don't you get a statement from the League? Why don't you now go to Q. A. and discuss the whole thing with him? And think over my proposal of yesterday. Anyway, no more wordy warfare with you by me in the Press.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2087

218. LETTER TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

June 3, 1942

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. I have accordingly written to Rameshwardasji to accept your cheque. There really never was any misunderstanding between us. Whatever little had arisen was from our employing English. The first part of your letter of May 22, 1942 is quite all right. The Tagore Memorial should be what the Andrews Memorial is. Later on you state that it should be different from the Andrews Memorial, that it should be worthy of Tagore and that I should see about it. How can the entire Memorial be got ready with just Rs. 5,000? How can I do it? The Andrews Memorial means improvements and innovations in Santiniketan. And that will be a memorial to Tagore. This is one thing and what you ask

[1] The addressee had said at Coimbatore in a speech that the Cripps proposal failed not because of defence but because of the other points. The speech was presumably in reply to Gandhiji's article "For Rajaji", pp. 142-3.

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for is another. It is possible that what you had in mind was the same thing that I said. In that case it has not come out in English. If the portion that I have referred to from your English letter should mean—and it does mean—what I understand it to mean, then it is wholly inconsistent with the talk we had.

It was necessary to write all this to have things clarified.

Rathi Babu writes to say that he has already made some changes and he is willing to make more if they are found to be necessary. He keeps regular accounts of course.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

219. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 3, 1942

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have had a long talk with Dhebarbhai. I think the Limdi State had never accepted the settlement. But Bhagwandas[1] did believe that it had. When the emigrants returned, they found no sign of the settlement.[2] Your statement, therefore, should be revised accordingly.

But before it is published, there remains something to be done. Dhebarbhai has come to understand that Fatehsinhji[3] seems desirous of meeting you. If that is true and if he wishes to arrive at a settlement, you should show readiness to meet him. You should think about your statement only after that.

The existing situation is satisfactory.

Emigrants who are outside may well stay outside. The boycott of cotton continues and it should. There seems, therefore, no immediate necessity for your issuing the statement. If you think I should write something, please send me a wire and I will do it. There will be time for the next week's issue of *Harijan.*

[1] A worker of the Praja Mandal

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", p. 141 and "Letter to Bhagwandas Harakhchand", 30-6-1942.

[3] Member of the Regency Council and son of the Limdi ruler

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Observe one point very strictly regarding your health. You should spend the minimum time on the commode and should not strain in the least. Observe it as an inviolable rule.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE
BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 276-7

220. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SEVAGRAM,
June 3, 1942

BHAI MALKANI,

Jajuji has sent me your letter about money. He says:

> In my opinion this expenditure was not necessary. I had advised against it. Even so it has been incurred.

His advising against it has hurt me a little. What is all this and how did it happen?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 942

221. QUESTION BOX

THE PRINCES' DETERMINATION

Q. The Princes seem to be determined to maintain their privileges even after the departure of the British. Therefore there is need for a plain declaration that they would have no place in a Free India. My feeling is that you have so far shown them more consideration than they deserve.

A. If you are right in your judgment, the privileges themselves will destroy the Princes. Privileges that service of the people bestows will always persist. But most of the paraphernalia that 'pomp and circumstance' account for will most certainly go.

But I cannot make the declaration you will have me to make. It is contrary to the spirit of non-violence which seeks

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not to destroy but to purify. That which is beyond purification dies without any outside effort even as a body which has become wholly diseased dies.

If after the total withdrawal of the British power, there is found to be no awakening among the masses India will be split up into so many feudal strongholds each striving to swallow the small fry and some bidding for overlordship. What I am hoping and striving for is an irresistible mass urge on the part of the people and an intelligent response on the part of all privileged classes to the popular demand. But because I know that this picture is for the time being imaginary, I am quite prepared for the worst. Hence my statement that I would end the present state of things even at the risk of anarchy reigning supreme in the land.[1]

SEVAGRAM, June 5, 1942

Harijan, 14-6-1942

222. *YARN CURRENCY*[2]

The above note[3] has been sent by Shri Kanubhai Joshi. It is a very good beginning. I on my part would like that in every home men and women should spin and send the yarn to the bhandars not for the sake of money but to reduce the scarcity of cloth. But I must warn the spinners that it is a bad habit to use ready-made slivers. That will ultimately be injurious to khadi. Now with the development of hand-carding it has become very easy to make slivers. Everyone should learn how to do it.

SEVAGRAM, June 5, 1942

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 14-6-1942

[1] *Vide* "Interview to *The News Chronicle*", pp. 105-6.

[2] This was published under the heading "Notes".

[3] Not translated here. It stated that in Bombay yarn was being used as currency and that the local sales depot of the All-India Charkha Sangh gave khadi or money in exchange for yarn.

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223. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 5, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I have your English letter.

J.'s letter was received today. He says he is ready to come when Maulana comes. There is nothing from Maulana.

I have told Rajaji[1] I am not going to engage in a public controversy with him.

Hot wind is blowing. I had expected the weather to cool down by this time. Having had the expectation, it is disconcerting to find the expectation unfulfilled. "Blessed are they that expect nothing."

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4128. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7437

224. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 5, 1942

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

I received your letter.

There is nothing from Maulana. In one letter he had said that he would be accompanying you here.

Fischer[2] has arrived. I do manage to give him an hour every day. He is staying at the Ashram.

Hot winds are blowing here.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Gandhi-Nehru Correspondence. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", p. 181.

[2] Louis Fischer. For an account of his talks with Gandhiji, *vide* Appendix V.

225. *IMPORTANT QUESTIONS*

[*June 6, 1942*][1]

A friend[2] was discussing with me the implications of the new proposal. As the discussion was naturally desultory, I asked him to frame his questions which I would answer through *Harijan*. He agreed and gave me the following:

Q. You ask the British Government to withdraw immediately from India. Would Indians thereupon form a national government, and what groups or parties would participate in such an Indian Government?

A. My proposal is one-sided, i.e., for the British Government to act upon, wholly irrespective of what Indians would do or would not do. I have even assumed temporary chaos on their withdrawal. But if the withdrawal takes place in an orderly manner, it is likely that on their withdrawal a provisional government will be set up by and from among the present leaders. But another thing may also happen. All those who have no thought of the nation but only of themselves may make a bid for power and get together the turbulent forces with which they would seek to gain control somewhere and somehow. I should hope that with the complete, final and honest withdrawal of the British power, the wise leaders will realize their responsibility, forget their differences for the moment and set up a provisional government out of the material left by the British power. As there would be no power regulating the admission or rejection of parties or persons to or from the council board, restraint alone will be the guide. If that happens probably the Congress, the League and the States' representatives will be allowed to function and they will come to a loose understanding on the formation of a provisional national Government. All this is necessarily guesswork and nothing more.

Q. Would that Indian national government permit the United Nations to use Indian territory as a base of military operations against Japan and other Axis powers?

A. Assuming that the national government is formed and if it answers my expectations, its first act would be to enter

[1] From *A Week with Gandhi*
[2] Louis Fischer

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into a treaty with the United Nations for defensive operations against aggressive powers, it being common cause that India will have nothing to do with any of the Fascist powers and India would be morally bound to help the United Nations.

Q. What further assistance would this Indian national government be ready to render the United Nations in the course of the present war against the Fascist aggressors?

A. If I have any hand in guiding the imagined national Government, there would be no further assistance save the toleration of the United Nations on the Indian soil under well-defined conditions. Naturally there will be no prohibition against any Indian giving his own personal help by way of being a recruit or/and of giving financial aid. It should be understood that the Indian army has been disbanded with the withdrawal of British power. Again if I have any say in the councils of the national government, all its power, prestige and resources would be used towards bringing about world peace. But of course after the formation of the national government my voice may be a voice in the wilderness and nationalist India may go war-mad.

Q. Do you believe this collaboration between India and the Allied powers might or should be formulated in a treaty of alliance or an agreement for mutual aid?

A. I think the question is altogether premature and in any case it will not much matter whether the relations are regulated by treaty or agreement. I do not even see any difference.

Let me sum up my attitude. One thing and only one thing for me is solid and certain. This unnatural prostration of a great nation—it is neither 'nations' nor 'peoples'—must cease if the victory of the Allies is to be ensured. They lack the moral basis. I see no difference between the Fascist or Nazi powers and the Allies. All are exploiters, all resort to ruthlessness to the extent required to compass their end. America and Britain are very great nations, but their greatness will count as dust before the bar of dumb humanity, whether African or Asiatic. They and they alone have the power to undo the wrong. They have no right to talk of human liberty and all else unless they have washed their hands clean of the pollution. That necessary wash will be their surest insurance of success, for they will have the good wishes—unexpressed but no less certain—of millions of dumb Asiatics and Africans. Then, but not till then, will they be fighting for a new order. This is the reality. All else is speculation. I have allowed myself, however, to indulge in it

as a test of my *bona fides* and for the sake of explaining in a concrete manner what I mean by my proposal.

Harijan, 14-6-1942

226. DR. TARACHAND AND HINDUSTANI

The following was sent for the question box by Shri Murlidhar Srivastava, M. A.:

> When prejudices come in, one is led to distort history. Dr. Tarachand is an ardent advocate of Hindustani as you are. He has every right to hold his view as you or I have to hold my own, but in his zeal he has grossly misrepresented the history of Brajbhasha by declaring that no writing in Braj is known to have appeared before the 16th century, in an attempt to prove that Hindustani ('Khari Boli') has older literature than Brajbhasha.[1] According to him Surdas was the first poet to write in Braj in the 16th century. As the learned Doctor has been quoted by you in the *Harijan*, dated 29-3-42, which commands wide publicity and authority, the mistake must be pointed out. For literature prior to Surdas, you have only to read the poems of Kabir, not to speak of Amir Khusru, some of whose verses are also in Brajbhasha. Several small pieces of poems are attributed to several *santas* and *bhaktas* prior to Surdas and they can be looked into any standard history of Hindi literature.

I have removed the portion that had no bearing on the question at issue. I sent the letter to Kakasaheb Kalelkar who made it over to Dr. Tarachand who has now sent the following reply[2] which speaks for itself:

> My view that the literature of Brajbhasha is not older than the sixteenth century is based on the following considerations:
>
> 1. Brajbhasha is a modern language which belongs to the group named tertiary Prakrits or New Indo-Aryan. This group developed from the secondary Prakrits or Middle Indo-Aryan. . . . But most scholars are agreed that secondary Prakrit stage lasted from 600 B.C. to 1000 A.D.
>
> 2. The secondary Prakrits which were spoken dialects received the impetus towards literary development from the religious movements inaugurated by Mahavira and Buddha. Of these Prakrits, Pali became the most important. . . .

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXV, "Hindustani", pp. 398-9.
[2] Only extracts are reproduced here.

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3. By the sixth century A.D. the Prakrits had become fixed and dead languages.... In that century the languages of common speech, from which literary Prakrits had diverged, began to be used for literary purposes. This phase of literary growths of the Prakrits is given the name Apabhramsha. It lasted from 600 to 1,000 A.D. Among the Apabhramshas one acquired a position of eminence, namely, Nagara. The varieties of Nagara were used as vehicles of literary expression in the greater part of northern India. But besides Nagara and its varieties, there had developed Apabhramshas of the other Prakrits, like Saurseni, also.

4. The modern Indian languages or the tertiary Prakrits developed from these Apabhramshas. Nagara became the parent of Rajasthani and Gujarati languages, through a variety to which Tessitori gave the name old Western Rajasthani.

Saurseni Apabhramsha is represented in the Prakrit grammar of Hemchandra (d. 1172 A.D.). But it is difficult to determine the relationship of Saurseni Apabhramsha with Nagara. It seems that the Saurseni Apabhramsha underwent a further change, which has been variously called old Western Hindi, Avahattha, Kavyabhasha.

5. With the arrival upon the scene of this language the stage of secondary Prakrits comes to an end, and the stage of new Indo-Aryan speech begins. The old Western Hindi which is the earliest form of the new midland speech appears to have become established in the eleventh century. From the old Western Hindi branched out Hindustani ('Khari') of the North midland, Braj of the middle region and Bundeli of the southern parts. In the twelfth century they were all spoken dialects. In the course of the following centuries they assumed literary form.

6. From a study of the development of these languages I have arrived at the conclusion that Hindustani ('Khari') was the first to develop into a literary language. We have a continuous history of Hindustani (Deccani Urdu) from the last quarter of the 14th century onwards. On the other hand the history of Braj literature before the 16th century is very doubtful.

SEVAGRAM, June 6, 1942

Harijan, 14-6-1942

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227. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 6, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

It seems that there is no more now of the other pads. One rupee was paid to Nanavati before your letter came. There is nothing wrong with Mahadev's spectacles. The terrific heat is responsible for all the mischief. It will go some day and the cool air will be all the more appreciated.

You will have to prove your proposition about the balances. Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I think I have told you about Sushila having passed.

From the original: C.W. 4129. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7438

228. LETTER TO BAQER ALI MIRZA

June 6, 1942

BHAI BAQERALI MIRZA SAHEB,

I have your letter and also your book. I have glanced through it. I could hardly have done more.

I think no one could have offered to the country a loftier goal (i. e., Urdu) than I have.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

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229. LETTER TO JAGANNATH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
June 6, 1942

BHAI JAGANNATH,

I have your letter. I can understand your condition. May God give you such strength that the sentiments you have cherished these twenty years do not disappear.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 996. Courtesy: Jagannath

230. LETTER TO PARACHURE SHASTRI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 6, 1942

SHASTRIJI,

I have your letter. I had to bear your expense. But I had hoped that you would keep a check on the expenses and would spend only what was necessary.

It is enough if you are careful. If the occasion should arise I can sacrifice you too.

We are all in the hands of God.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10671

231. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SEVAGRAM,
June 6, 1942

BHAI SATIS BABU,

How can I go to Bengal? I have clearly expressed my view. Those who are asked to move in this manner should flatly refuse and should not budge from their places even if

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they have to be shot unless and until they have been provided with alternative accommodation and all the amenities. There is no other course open. If in offering resistance thus some of us have to die, it can't be helped. They ought to give prior notice.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

232. INTERVIEW TO AMERICAN JOURNALISTS[1]

SEVAGRAM,
[*June 6, 1942*][2]

GANDHIJI: You came in an air-conditioned coach?

THE JOURNALISTS: No, but we had armed ourselves with some ice.

G. One American[3] has been vivisecting me. I am now at your disposal.

Q. Why non-violent non-co-operation rather than honest straightforward resistance against the Japanese? Far from preventing the Japanese, non-violent non-co-operation might prove an invitation to them, and would not that be flying from the frying pan into the fire?

A. Supposing England retires from India for strategic purposes, and apart from my proposal—as they had to do in Burma —what would happen? What would India do?

Q. That is exactly what we have come to learn from you. We would certainly like to know that.

A. Well, therein comes my non-violence. For we have no weapons. Mind you, we have assumed that the Commander-in-Chief of the united American and British Armies has decided that India is no good as a base and that they should withdraw to some other base and concentrate the Allied forces there. We can't help it. We have then to depend on what strength we have. We have no army, no military resources, no military skill either, worth the name, and non-violence is the only thing we can fall back upon. Now in theory I can prove to you that

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "An Important Interview". The journalists were Chaplin of the International News Service and Belldon of *Life* and *Time*.

[2] The date is from *Gandhi—1915–1948*.

[3] Louis Fischer

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our non-violent resistance can be wholly successful. We need not kill a single Japanese, we simply give them no quarter.

Q. But that non-violence can't prevent an invasion?

A. In non-violent technique, of course, there can be nothing like preventing an invasion. They will land, but they will land on an inhospitable shore. They may be ruthless and wipe out all the 400 millions. That would be complete victory. I know you will laugh at it, saying all this is superhuman, if not absurd. I would say you are right; we may not be able to stand that terror and we may have to go through a course of subjection worse than our present state. But we are discussing the theory.

Q. But if the British don't withdraw?

A. I do not want them to withdraw under Indian pressure, nor driven by force of circumstances. I want them to withdraw in their own interest, for their own good name.

Q. But what happens to your movement, if you are arrested, as we heard you might be? Or if Mr. Nehru is arrested? Would not the movement go to pieces?

A. No, not if we have worked among the people. Our arrests would work up the movement, they would stir everyone in India to do his little bit.

Q. Supposing Britain decides to fight to the last man in India, would not your non-violent non-co-operation help the Japanese?

A. If you mean non-co-operation with the British, you would be right. We have not come to that stage. I do not want to help the Japanese—not even for freeing India. India during the past fifty or more years of her struggle for freedom has learnt the lesson of patriotism and of not bowing to *any* foreign power. But when the British are offering violent battle, our non-violent battle—our non-violent activity—would be neutralized. Those who believe in armed resistance and in helping the British militarily are and will be helping them. Mr. Amery says he is getting all the men and money they need, and he is right. For the Congress—a poor organization representing the millions of the poor of India—has not been able to collect in years what they have collected in a day by way of what I would say 'so-called' voluntary subscription. This Congress can only render non-violent assistance. But let me tell you, if you do not know it, that the British do not want it, they don't set

any store by it. But whether they do it or not, violent and non-violent resistance cannot go together. So India's non-violence can at best take the form of silence—not obstructing the British forces, certainly not helping the Japanese.

Q. But not helping the British?

A. Don't you see non-violence cannot give any other aid?

Q. But the railways, I hope, won't stop; the services, too, will be, I hope, allowed to function.

A. They will be allowed to function, as they are being allowed today.

Q. Aren't you then helping the British by leaving the services and the railways alone?

A. We are indeed. That is our non-embarrassment policy.

Q. But what about the presence of American troops here? Every American feels that we should help India to win her freedom.

A. It's a bad job.

Q. Because it is said we are here really to help Britain and not India?

A. I say it is a bad job, because it is an imposition on India. It is not at India's request or with India's consent that they are here. It is enough irritation that we were not consulted before being dragged into this war—I am not sure that the Viceroy even consulted his Executive Council. That is our original complaint. To have brought the American forces is, in my opinion, to have made the stranglehold on us all the tighter.

You do not know what is happening in India—it is naturally not your business to go into those things. But let me give you some facts. Thousands of villagers are being summarily asked to vacate their homes and go elsewhere, for the site of their homesteads is needed by the military. Now I ask, where are they to go? Thousands of poor labourers in a certain place, I have heard today, have been asked to evacuate. Paltry compensations are offered them, and they are not even given sufficient notice. This kind of thing will not happen in an independent country. The Sappers and Miners there would first build homes for these people, transport would be provided for them, they would be given at least six months' maintenance allowance before they would be uprooted from their surroundings. Are these things to happen, even before the Japanese

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have come here? There is no other way, but saying to them, 'you must go', and if British rule ends, that moral act will save America and Britain. If they choose to remain here, they should remain as friends, not as proprietors of India. The American and British soldiers may remain here, if at all, by virtue of a compact with free India.

Q. Don't you think Indian people and leaders have some duty to help accelerate the process?

A. You mean by dotting India with rebellions everywhere? No, my invitation to the British to withdraw is not an idle one. It has to be made good by the sacrifice of the invitors. Public opinion has got to act, and it can act only non-violently.

Q. Is the possibility of strikes precluded?

A. No, strikes can be and have been non-violent. If railways are worked only to strengthen the British hold on India, they need not be assisted. But before I decide to take any energetic measures I must endeavour to show the reasonableness of my demand. The moment it is complied with, India instead of being sullen becomes an ally. Remember I am more interested than the British in keeping the Japanese out. For Britain's defeat in Indian waters may mean *only the loss of India*, but if Japan wins India loses *everything.*

Q. If you regard the American troops as an imposition, would you regard the American Technical Mission also in the same light?

A. A tree is judged by its fruit. I have met Dr. Grady[1], we have had cordial talks. I have no prejudice against Americans. I have hundreds, if not thousands of friends, in America. The Technical Mission may have nothing but goodwill for India. But my point is that all the things that are happening are not happening at the invitation or wish of India. Therefore they are all suspect. We cannot look upon them with philosophic calmness, for the simple reason that we cannot close our eyes, as I have said, to the things that are daily happening in front of our eyes. Areas are being vacated and turned into military camps, people being thrown on their own resources. Hundreds, if not thousands, on their way from Burma perished without food and drink, and the wretched discrimination stared even these miserable people in the face. One route for the whites,

[1] Dr. Henry Grady, head of the American Technical Mission then in India

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another for the blacks! Provision of food and shelter for the whites, none for the blacks! And discrimination even on their arrival in India! India is being ground down to dust and humiliated, even before the Japanese advent, not for India's defence —and no one knows for whose defence. And so one fine morning I came to the decision to make this honest demand: 'For Heaven's sake leave India alone. Let us breathe the air of freedom. It may choke us, suffocate us, as it did the slaves on their emancipation. But I want the present sham to end.'

Q. But it is the British troops you have in mind, not the American?

A. It does not make for me the slightest difference, the whole policy is one and indivisible.

Q. Is there any hope of Britain listening?

A. I will not die without that hope. And if there is a long lease of life for me, I may even see it fulfilled. For there is nothing unpractical in the proposal, no insuperable difficulties about it. Let me add that if Britain is not willing to do so whole-heartedly Britain does not deserve to win.

Q. Would a free India declare war against Japan?

A. Free India need not do so. It simply becomes the ally of the Allied Powers, simply out of gratefulness for the payment of a debt, however overdue. Human nature thanks the debtor when he discharges the debt.

Q. How then would this alliance fit in with India's non-violence?

A. It is a good question. The *whole* of India is not non-violent. If the whole of India had been non-violent, there would have been no need for my appeal to Britain, nor would there be any fear of a Japanese invasion. But my non-violence is represented possibly by a hopeless minority, or perhaps by India's dumb millions who are temperamentally non-violent. But there too the question may be asked: 'What have they done?' They have done nothing, I agree; but they may act when the supreme test comes, and they may not. I have no non-violence of millions to present to Britain, and what we have has been discounted by the British as non-violence of the weak. And so all I have done is to make this appeal on the strength of bare inherent justice, so that it might find an echo in the British heart. It is made from a moral plane, and even as they do not hesitate to act desperately in the physical field and take grave risks, let them for once act desperately on the moral field and declare that India is independent today, irrespective of India's demand.

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Q. But what does a free India mean, if, as Mr. Jinnah said, Muslims will not accept Hindu rule?

A. I have not asked the British to hand over India to the Congress or to the Hindus. Let them entrust India to God or in modern parlance to anarchy. Then all the parties will fight one another like dogs, or will, when real responsibility faces them, come to a reasonable agreement. I shall expect non-violence to arise out of that chaos.

Q. But to *whom* are the British to say—'India is free'?

A. To the world. Automatically the Indian army is disbanded from that moment, and they decide to pack up as soon as they can. Or they may declare they would pack up only after the war is over, but that they would expect no help from India, impose no taxes, raise no recruits—beyond what help India chooses to give voluntarily. British rule will cease from that moment, no matter what happens to India afterwards. Today it is all a hypocrisy, unreality. I want that to end. The new order will come only when that falsity ends.

It is an unwarranted claim Britain and America are making, the claim of saving democracy and freedom. It is a wrong thing to make that claim when there is this terrible tragedy of holding a whole nation in bondage.

Q. What can America do to have your demand implemented?

A. If my demand is admitted to be just beyond cavil, America can insist on the implementing of the Indian demand as a condition of her financing Britain and supplying her with her matchless skill in making war machines. He who pays the piper has the right to call the tune. Since America has become the predominant partner in the Allied cause she is partner also in Britain's guilt. The Allies have no right to call their cause to be morally superior to the Nazi cause so long as they hold in custody the fairest part and one of the most ancient nations of the earth.

Harijan, 14-6-1942

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233. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C.P.,
June 6/7, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

Here is a typical letter[1] from Satyamurti—you will know what weight to give to it.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

June 7[2], *1942*

This was overlooked yesterday. Meanwhile I have your two letters. You will come when you can. Your argument makes no appeal to any of us. Surely they are not all blinded by my reactions. Anyway you have to reason with them. I am glad the depression is leaving you.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10917. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

234. KHADI IN KATHIAWAD

Readers must be aware that in order to make the khadi activity more extensive and more popular a Committee has been set up. Shri Nanabhai has been appointed its President and Shri Nagardas Doshi is its Secretary. The money which was collected on the occasion of the *Rentia Jayanti*[3] and which I had deposited with Shri Narandas Gandhi has been given to the Committee.[4] I have received a report of this khadi activity for the period 1938 to 1941 entitled *Kathiawadna Khadikamno Heval*, published by Pandya Khadi Karyalaya, Chalala. The following paragraphs[5] from that will give some idea of the khadi activity.

[1] This is not traceable.

[2] The source, however, has "6".

[3] Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram Calendar

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 30-6-1942.

[5] Not translated here. The report stated that the Chalala Khadi Karyalaya had become the headquarters for khadi production and sales centres in Kathiawar. There was no paid worker to carry on the routine office work, which was done by workers over and above their other activities.

The number of spinners in 1938 was 150 which rose to 600 in 1941. In 1941 there were 500 caste Hindus, 18 Muslims and 12 Harijan spinners. In 1938 the wages given came to Rs. 3,481 while in 1941 the amount was Rs. 18,948. The monthly income of a spinner in 1938 was Rs. 4-12 while in 1941 it rose to Rs. 10. The weavers' wages increased from Rs. 12 to Rs. 30 and that of carders to Rs. 18 from Rs. 7.

The report is good. There is scope for raising the figures. The progress of the work is satisfactory. We can easily gauge the efforts of Shri Nagardas. But Kathiawad is a small province with a population of 26 lakhs. There is scope for much work. How can we increase the number of workers? In other words how can we make the work more interesting and attractive?

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 7-6-1942

235. RAJAJI

Although I retain the opinion I have expressed about my differences with Rajaji, and although I adhere to every word I have said and he has quoted, and although I reaffirm my opinion that my language taken in its context does not bear the interpretation Rajaji puts upon it, I do not propose henceforth to enter into any public controversy with him. I join him in hoping that some day I shall see the error of my views which he sees so clearly. But public controversy with close companions like Rajaji repels me. He has a new mission and he has need to speak.

SEVAGRAM, June 7, 1942

Harijan, 14-6-1942

236. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

June 7, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

Nonsense. You are not fallen. These differences mean nothing. I have already written a note[1] for *H*[*arijan*] that I shall no longer enter into controversy with you. You must not feel dejected either. Therefore you should come here for rest, jokes and a renewal of strength and joy.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

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Your argument I do not understand. Come here and explain.

Tell me in whose name the houses should go. Better write to Kamalnayan.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2088

237. NO SALVATION WITHOUT SACRIFICE

Accounts pour in upon me from all quarters about the action of the authorities demanding evacuation without notice. Sometimes it is a zamindar who is to surrender his bungalow and sometimes it is a middle-class man who has to surrender his house with fans and furniture for the use of the military. More often it is villagers or labourers who are called upon under promise of compensation to vacate their quarters. The condition of these people is piteous. They do not know where to go. To these I can only say, 'Do not move—and take the consequences. They cannot be forcibly ejected. Even if they are, their cry will be heard whereas newspaper articles will be of little avail.

SEVAGRAM, June 8, 1942

Harijan, 14-6-1942

238. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 8, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter.

Sushila comes here on 18th for a week. I think she has come first—nothing much among five candidates. Sushila says nothing about the place she has got.

I hope there is nothing serious with S.'s eyes.

J. L. came in yesterday. He slept in Sevagram. Maulana comes tomorrow.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4130. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7439

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239. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

June 8, 1942

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter. Since there is already an agreement between us made long ago that you should consult me before taking up anything new, where is the need of a fresh one? You have assumed heavy responsibilities, and the work about Hindustani is not an easy one either. However, you must fulfil this responsibility. Do it as well as you can. You must categorically refuse to go anywhere else, whether it is to Vanasthali or Vedchhi or Ambala. If you cannot remember the decisions taken by you, you should ask either Amritlal or Saroj to remind you and to get them implemented.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10958

240. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

SEVAGRAM,
June 8[1], *1942*

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I could read the whole of your letter only today. It did help me to understand your mind but it did not satisfy me. That is because the task which you seek to accomplish cannot be accomplished with what you intend doing. Many vaidyas have raised farms of the kind you want. No doubt you can improve upon them, but you cannot reform the vaidyas.

I offered to entrust my entire treatment to the vaidyas but I was disappointed. Lakshmipati wanted to settle here and made all the preparations but never turned up. I sent a patient to him whom he dismissed telling him that he was all right. The patient came back as ill as ever. I tried to lure you to come and settle down here and conduct experiments but there were difficulties in your way.

[1] Pyarelal Papers has "9".

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Although I have said all this my blessings are with you. Your intentions are pure; may they bear fruit.

At present it is allopathy that commands enterprise, industry and knowledge. It is a developing science. It has many defects. Its pharmacopoeia is vast and yet very restricted. But it is systematic and so can draw upon whatever is special in Ayurveda. However, it is worth reflecting upon that if Ayurveda were to take what is special in allopathy the latter would be left with nothing but a few drugs.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VALLABHRAM VAIDYA
23 SAURASHTRA SOCIETY
AHMEDABAD

From Gujarati: C.W. 2921. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

241. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 8, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

What you say about Ram Prakashji is true, but we should have the strength to assimilate such persons. Some work should be found for them. And if they cannot do it they should be clearly told that they cannot live in the Ashram. As to your first letter all I can say is that you should continue to do the work that you have been doing. I will write whenever you say. So long as you do not have confidence in Chi. it is better to keep quiet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4430; also S.N. 24481

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242. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 9, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I am having long and pleasant chats with J. L. I have a journalist with me recommended by J. L. He leaves tomorrow. L. Fischer is his name.

Khurshedbehn is still here. She has been looking after the guests. Maulana comes tonight.

Here is a letter from Benares. Perhaps you remember the thing.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4131. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7440

243. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

SEVAGRAM,
June 9, 1942

BABUJI,

I was delighted to have your letter. I had also received your book. I have even glanced through it.

I think what I am doing these days is the thing you want. Be it as it may, I feel overwhelmed by your great effort. May God keep you with us for many many years for the sake of India, for the sake of the world.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

BABUJI DR. BHAGWANDAS
SEVASHRAM
BANARAS

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

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244. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 9, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

What kind of a letter have you sent me? I had thought that I could fearlessly write to you whatever I felt and you would read the right meaning in it. I did not write what I did because I had lost faith in you. I only feel that so long as you have no confidence in Chi. as manager you should dedicate to God whatever work you do and thus you will continue to be happy. In my view this is quite easy to see. But if you do not see it this way, you should tell me. There is no cause for you to feel unhappy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4424; also S.N. 24478

245. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

June 10, 1942

CHI. KAKA,

I got your note yesterday evening after prayer. I feel that sending for Krishna Varma[1] here will not help. It would be better to give him fifteen days. That will pay. You will soon be able to judge whether there was any improvement. If no improvement is observed, you need not stay. But it does appear that you will not be able to judge before fifteen days. The earlier you go the better. Go today if you can. You will have returned by the time Shriman arrives.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

A letter[2] for Varma is enclosed.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10959

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Krishna Varma", p. 136.
[2] Not traceable

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246. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

June 10, 1942

CHI. KAKA,

It is good that you are leaving for Bombay. Remember that you are going to Varma not only to gain something from him, if possible, but also to give him the benefit of your company. Restrain his bad habits. He talks too much. His language also is not always pure. Pull him up. He listens to criticism lovingly made and reforms himself too. Understand his remedies. If you do not like any of them, leave them alone.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10960

247. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA (C. P.),
June 10, 1942

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. I had a long talk with Dhebarbhai. I do not think that that gingili will yield any oil. There is no sense in your meeting him[1] not as a Congressman, not as a representative of the Prajamandal, but only as an old friend. You should not meet him.

You should issue no statement. We need not go into the question whether or not there was a settlement. Those who can stand on their own feet may do so and fight on. Let the Rulers, if they desire, carry on business among themselves. But the boycott committee should continue and keep up the boycott. Even if one single person remains firm, he will be looked upon as a symbol of the struggle, and it can well be said that it is still carried on although it should not be worth even a pice.

[1] Fatehsinh, the *durbar* of Limdi; *vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", pp. 182-3.

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I am going (to Wardha) to see Maulana Saheb. He has really become weak. I hope you are all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE
BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 278

248. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
June 10, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Why do you feel tired? You are right in saying that you can have no cause for enmity or malice towards Chi. or anyone else. You should therefore cheerfully do what work you have agreed to do. It should not be hampered. You have my co-operation and my blessings.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4431

249. LETTER TO TARACHAND

SEVAGRAM,
June 10, 1942

BHAI TARACHANDJI,

I had your letter. I have sent your reply as it was for being published in *Harijan*.[1]

You of course have to be in the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. I am trying my best to rope in Maulvi Abdul Huq Saheb. Enclosed is Maulvi Saheb's reply. Please do what you yourself can.

Kindly return the letter.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Dr. Tarachand and Hindustani", pp. 188-9.

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250. INTERVIEW TO PRESTON GROVER[1]

WARDHA,
[*June 10, 1942*][2]

Q. There has been a great deal of questioning in America and India as to the nature of your activities during the balance of the War. I should like to know what it will be like.

GANDHIJI: But can you tell me when the War will end?

Q. There is a good deal of speculation that you are planning some new movement. What is the nature of it?

A. It depends on the response made by the Government and the people. I am trying to find out public opinion here and also the reaction on the world outside.

Q. When you speak of the response, you mean response to your new proposal?

A. Oh yes, I mean response to the proposal that the British Government in India should end today. Are you startled?

Q. I am not. You have been asking for it and working for it.

A. That's right. I have been working for it for years. But now it has taken definite shape and I say that the British power in India should go today for the world peace, for China, for Russia and for the Allied cause. I shall explain to you how it advances the Allied cause. Complete independence frees India's energies, frees her to make her contribution to the world crisis. Today the Allies are carrying the burden of a huge corpse—a huge nation lying prostrate at the feet of Britain, I would even say at the feet of the Allies. For America is the predominant partner, financing the war, giving her mechanical ability and her resources which are inexhaustible. America is thus a partner in the guilt.

Q. Do you see a situation when after full independence is granted American and Allied troops can operate from India?

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Throw Away the Carcass". Preston Grover of the Associated Press of America had especially come over from New Delhi for the interview.

[2] From *Gandhi—1915–1948*

A. I do. It will be only then that you will see real co-operation. Otherwise all the effort you put up may fail. Just now Britain is having India's resources because India is her possession. Tomorrow whatever the help, it will be real help from a *free* India.

Q. You think India in control interferes with Allied action to meet Japan's aggression?

A. It does.

Q. When I mentioned Allied troops operating I wanted to know whether you contemplated complete shifting of the present troops from India?

A. Not necessarily.

Q. It is on this that there is a lot of misconception.

A. You have to study all I am writing. I have discussed the whole question in the current issue of *Harijan*.[1] I do not want them to go, on condition that India becomes entirely free. I cannot then insist on their withdrawal, because I want to resist with all my might the charge of inviting Japan to India.

Q. But suppose your proposal is rejected, what will be your next move?

A. It will be a move which will be felt by the whole world. It may not interfere with the movement of British troops, but it is sure to engage British attention. It would be wrong of them to reject my proposal and say India should remain a slave in order that Britain may win or be able to defend China. I cannot accept that degrading position. India free and independent will play a prominent part in defending China. Today I do not think she is rendering any real help to China. We have followed the non-embarrassment policy so far. We will follow it even now. But we cannot allow the British Government to exploit it in order to strengthen the stranglehold on India. And today it amounts to that. The way, for instance, in which thousands are being asked to vacate their homes with nowhere to go to, no land to cultivate, no resources to fall back upon, is the reward of our non-embarrassment. This should be impossible in any free country. I cannot tolerate India submitting to this kind of treatment. It means greater degradation and servility, and when a whole nation accepts servility it means good-bye for ever to freedom.

Q. All you want is the civil grip relaxed. You won't then hinder military activity?

[1] *Vide* "Question Box", pp. 215-6.

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A. I do not know. I want unadulterated independence. If the military activity serves but to strengthen the stranglehold, I must resist that too. I am no philanthropist to go on helping at the expense of my freedom. And what I want you to see is that a corpse cannot give any help to a living body. The Allies have no moral cause for which they are fighting, so long as they are carrying this double sin on their shoulders, the sin of India's subjection and the subjection of the Negroes and African races.

Mr. Grover tried to draw a picture of a free India *after* an Allied victory. Why not wait for the boons of victory? Gandhiji mentioned as the boons of the last World War the Rowlatt Act and martial law and Amritsar. Mr. Grover mentioned more economic and industrial prosperity—by no means due to the grace of the Government, but by the force of circumstances, and economic prosperity was a step further forward to swaraj. Gandhiji said the few industrial gains were wrung out of unwilling hands, he set no store by such gains after this war, those gains may be further shackles, and it was a doubtful proposition whether there would be any gains—when one had in mind the industrial policy that was being followed during the war. Mr. Grover did not seriously press the point.

Q. You don't expect any assistance from America in persuading Britain to relinquish her hold on India.

A. I do indeed.

Q. With any possibility of success?

A. There is every possibility, I should think. I have every right to expect America to throw her full weight on the side of justice, if she is convinced of the justice of the Indian cause.

Q. You don't think the American Government is committed to the British remaining in India?

A. I hope not. But British diplomacy is so clever that America, even though it may not be committed, and in spite of the desire of President Roosevelt and the people to help India, it may not succeed. British propaganda is so well organized in America against the Indian cause that the few friends India has there have no chance of being effectively heard. And the political system is so rigid that public opinion does not affect the administration.

Q. It may, slowly.

A. Slowly? I have waited long, and I can wait no longer. It is a terrible tragedy that 40 crores of people should have no say

in this war. If we have the freedom to play our part we can arrest the march of Japan and save China.

Mr. Grover, having made himself sure that Gandhiji did not insist on the literal withdrawal of either the British or the troops, now placing himself in the position of the Allies, began to calculate the gains of the bargain. Gandhiji of course does not want independence as a reward of any services, but as a right and in discharge of a debt long overdue.

Q. What specific things would be done by India to save China, if India is declared independent?

A. Great things, I can say at once, though I may not be able to specify them today. For I do not know what government we shall have. We have various political organizations here which I expect would be able to work out a proper national solution. Just now they are not solid parties, they are often acted upon by the British power, they look up to it and its frown or favour means much to them. The whole atmosphere is corrupt and rotten. Who can foresee the possibilities of a corpse coming to life? At present India is a dead weight to the Allies.

Q. By dead weight you mean a menace to Britain and to American interests here?

A. I do. It is a menace in that you never know what sullen India will do at a given moment.

Q. No, but I want to make myself sure that if genuine pressure was brought to bear on Britain by America, there would be solid support from yourself ?

A. Myself ? I do not count—with the weight of 73 years on my shoulders. But you get the co-operation—whatever it can give willingly—of a free and mighty nation. My co-operation is of course there. I exercise what influence I can by my writings from week to week. But India's is an infinitely greater influence. Today because of widespread discontent there is not that active hostility to Japanese advance. The moment we are free, we are transformed into a nation prizing its liberty and defending it with all its might and therefore helping the Allied cause.

Q. May I concretely ask—will the difference be the difference that there is between what Burma did and what, say, Russia is doing?

A. You might put it that way. They might have given Burma independence after separating it from India. But they did nothing of the kind. They stuck to the same old policy of

exploiting her. There was little co-operation from Burmans; on the contrary there was hostility or inertia. They fought neither for their own cause nor for the Allied cause. Now take a possible contingency. If the Japanese compel the Allies to retire from India to a safer base, I cannot say *today* that the whole of India will be up in arms against the Japanese. I have a fear that they may degrade themselves as some Burmans did. I want India to oppose Japan to a man. If India was free she would do it, it would be a new experience to her, in twenty-four hours her mind would be changed. All parties would then act as one man. If this live independence is declared today I have no doubt India becomes a powerful ally.

Mr. Grover raised the question of communal disunion as a handicap, and himself added that before the American Independence there was not much unity in the States.

G. I can only say that as soon as the vicious influence of the third party is withdrawn, the parties will be face to face with reality and close up ranks. Ten to one my conviction is that the communal quarrels will disappear as soon as the British power that keeps us apart disappears.

Q. Would not Dominion Status declared today do equally well?

A. No good. We will have no half measures, no tinkering with independence. It is not independence that they will give to this party or that party, but to an indefinable India. It was wrong, I say, to possess India. The wrong should be righted by leaving India to herself.

Q. May I finally ask you about your attitude to Rajaji's move?

A. I have declared that I will not discuss Rajaji in public. It is ugly to be talking *at* valued colleagues. My differences with him stand, but there are some things which are too sacred to be discussed in public.

But Mr. Grover had not so much in mind the Pakistan controversy as C. R.'s crusade for the formation of a national government. Mr. Grover had the discernment to make it clear that C.R. "could not be motivated by British Government. His position happens to harmonize with them".

G. You are right. It is fear of the Japanese that makes him tolerate the British rule. He would postpone the question of freedom until after the war. On the contrary I say that if the war is to be decisively won, India must be freed to play her part today. I find no flaw in my position. I have arrived

at it after considerable debating within myself; I am doing nothing in hurry or anger. There is not the slightest room in me for accommodating the Japanese. No, I am sure that India's independence is not only essential for India, but for China and the Allied cause.

Q. What are the exact steps by which you will save China?

A. The whole of India's mind would be turned away from Japan. Today it is not. C. R. knows it, and it worries him as it should worry any sane patriot. It worried me no less, but it drives me to a contrary conclusion. India lying at the feet of Great Britain may mean China lying at the feet of Japan. I cannot help using this language. I feel it. You may think it startling and big. But why should it be startling? Think of 400 million people hungering for freedom. They want to be left alone. They are not savages. They have an ancient culture, ancient civilization, such variety and richness of languages. Britain should be ashamed of holding these people as slaves. You may say: 'You deserve it!' If you do, I will simply say it is not right for any nation to hold another in bondage.

P. G. I agree.

G. I say even if a nation should want to be in bondage it should be derogatory to one's dignity to keep it in bondage. But you have your own difficulties. You have yet to abolish slavery!

Q. In United States, you mean?

A. Yes, your racial discrimination, your lynch law and so on. But you don't want me to remind you of these things.

Harijan, 21-6-1942

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251. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"[1]

[Before *June 11, 1942*][2]

Q. Till the last day you said there can be no swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity. Now why is it that you say that there will be no unity until India has achieved independence?

A. Time is a merciless enemy, if it is also a merciful friend and healer. I claim to be amongst the oldest lovers of Hindu-Muslim unity and I remain one even today. I have been asking myself why every whole-hearted attempt made by all including myself to reach unity has failed, and failed so completely that I have entirely fallen from grace and am described by some Muslim papers as the greatest enemy of Islam in India. It is a phenomenon I can only account for by the fact that the third power, even without deliberately wishing it, will not allow real unity to take place. Therefore I have come to the reluctant conclusion that the two communities will come together almost immediately after the British power comes to a final end in India. If independence is the immediate goal of the Congress and the League then, without needing to come to any terms, all will fight together to be free from bondage. When the bondage is done with, not merely the two organizations but all parties will find it to their interest to come together and make the fullest use of the liberty in order to evolve a national government suited to the genius of India. I do not care what it is called. Whatever it is, in order to be stable, it has to represent the masses in the fullest sense of the term. And, if it is to be broad-based upon the will of the people, it must be predominently non-violent. Anyway, up to my last breath, I hope I shall be found working to that end, for I see no hope for humanity without the acceptance of non-violence. We are witnessing the bankruptcy of violence from day to day. There is no hope for humanity if the senseless fierce mutual slaughter is to continue.

Harijan, 21-6-1942

[1] & [2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Only If They Withdraw", 11-6-1942

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252. EDUCATION THROUGH HANDICRAFTS[1]

[On or before *June 11, 1942*][2]

Shrimati Ashadevi sends the following interesting figures:

> The 27 basic schools in the small compact area in the Bettiah Thana, Dist. Champaran, Bihar, completed three years of work in April 1942. The annual economic chart of Grade I, II and III of these schools for the year 1941-42 makes encouraging study for all workers of basic education. The chart will be published in detail in '*Nai Talim*', the monthly organ of basic education. Here we give a brief summary of the principal facts for all who are interested in the progress of basic education. The average attendance for these 27 schools is 70% in Grade I, 76% in Grade II and 79% in Grade III; the average individual earning is 0-11-0 in Grade I, Rs. 2-4-2 in Grade II and Rs. 6-1-1 in Grade III. The total earning of 390 (number based on average attendance) children of 10,264 total hours of work in all the schools is Rs. 267-8-6 in Grade I, of 356 (number based on average attendance) children of 14,082 total hours of work in all the schools is Rs. 804-13-8 in Grade II, and of 319 (number based on average attendance) children of 14,362 total hours of work in all the schools is Rs. 1,935-14-11 in Grade III, i.e., the total earning of 1,065 children is Rs. 3,008-2-1 for the whole year. The average maximum individual earning of these schools is Rs. 15-12-0 in Grade III, Rs. 6-2-0 in Grade II and Rs. 2-10-1 in Grade I. The average maximum speed is 480 rounds per hour on the charkha and 281 rounds per hour on the *takli* for Grade III; 350 rounds per hour on the charkha and 242 rounds per hour on the *takli* for Grade II; and 164 rounds per hour on the *takli* for Grade I.

These figures are not given to show the output and the income, important as they are in their place. The output and the income have a secondary place in an education chart. But they are given to demonstrate the high educational value of handicrafts as a means of training the youth. It is clear that without industry, care and attention to detail the work could not have been done.

Harijan, 21-6-1942

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

[2] The Hindi translation of this which appeared in *Harijan Sevak* is dated June 11.

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253. QUESTION BOX

Its Meaning

Q. What is the meaning of your appeal to the British power to withdraw from India? You have written much recently on the subject. But there seems to be confusion in the public mind about your meaning.

A. So far as my own opinion is concerned, British authority should end completely irrespective of the wishes or demand of various parties. But I would recognize their own military necessity. They may need to remain in India for preventing Japanese occupation. That prevention is common cause between them and us. It may be necessary for the sake also of China. Therefore I would tolerate their presence in India not in any sense as rulers but as allies of free India. This of course assumes that after the British declaration of withdrawal there will be a stable government established in India. Immediately the hindrance in the shape of a foreign power is altogether removed the union of parties should be an easy matter. The terms on which the Allied powers may operate will be purely for the Government of the free State to determine. The existing parties will have dissolved into the National Government. If they survive they will do so for party purposes and not for dealings with the external world.

What about Non-violence?

Q. But what about your non-violence? To what extent will you carry out your policy after freedom is gained?

A. The question hardly arises. I am using the first personal pronoun for brevity, but I am trying to represent the spirit of India as I conceive it. It is and will be a mixture. What policy the National Government will adopt I cannot say. I may not even survive it much as I would love to. If I do, I would advise the adoption of non-violence to the utmost extent possible and that will be India's great contribution to the peace of the world and the establishment of a new world order. I expect that with the existence of so many martial races in India, all of whom will have a voice in the government of the day, the national policy will incline towards militarism of a modified character. I shall certainly hope that all the effort for the last twenty-two

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years to show the efficiency of non-violence as a political force will not have gone in vain and a strong party representing true non-violence will exist in the country. In every case a free India in alliance with the Allied powers must be of great help to their cause, whereas India held in bondage as she is today must be a drag upon the war-chariot and may prove a source of real danger at the most critical moment.

What about Radio Messages?

Q. You do not hear the radio messages. I do most assiduously. They interpret your writings as if your leanings were in favour of the Axis powers and you had now veered round to Subhas Babu's views about receiving outside help to overthrow the British rule. I would like you to clear your position in this matter. Misinterpretation of your known views has reached a dangerous point.

A. I am glad you have asked the question. I have no desire whatsoever to woo any power to help India in her endeavour to free herself from the foreign yoke. I have no desire to exchange the British for any other rule. Better the enemy I know than the one I do not. I have never attached the slightest importance or weight to the friendly professions of the Axis powers. If they come to India they will come not as deliverers but as sharers in the spoil. There can therefore be no question of my approval of Subhas Babu's policy. The old difference of opinion between us persists. This does not mean that I doubt his sacrifice or his patriotism. But my appreciation of his patriotism and sacrifice cannot blind me to the fact that he is misguided and that his way can never lead to India's deliverance. If I am impatient of the British yoke I am so because India's sullenness and suppressed delight of the man in the street over British reverses are dangerous symptoms which may lead to the success of Japanese designs upon India, if they are not dealt with in the proper manner; whereas India finding herself in possession of complete freedom will never want the Japanese to enter India. India's sullenness and discontent will be changed as if by magic into joyful and hearty co-operation with the Allies in consolidating and preserving her liberty from any and every evil design.

Sevagram, June 12, 1942

Harijan, 21-6-1942

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254. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

[*June*][1] *12, 1942*

CHI. AMRIT,

I am writing this in Gujarati. I got your letter. The discussions with the Maulana and Jawaharlal take up a good deal of my time. They will continue for one or two days more. They are carried on peacefully. The weather seems to have changed somewhat today. A hot wind is still blowing.

I am keeping good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7899. Also C.W. 4267. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur

255. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

June 12, 1942

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

You have volunteered to shoulder the responsibility for Lilavati[2]. Her college reopens on the 20th. I am trying to spare you. But if I fail, will you please see, or have someone see, about her boarding and lodging?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4739. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

[1] The source has the date 12-2-42, which is obviously an error, as the date of the postmark is June 12.

[2] Lilavati Asar

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256. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 12, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Mill sugar should not be bought. But so long as Ba is there it will have to continue. And if it comes others may also take it. Try to prevent this.

If rice is cooked for Ba and a guest wants it, it is difficult not to serve it to him also. I explained about this. But who listens?

Asha's sari is nothing when we have to put up with so many other things.

I understand the utility of Parnerkar's septic tank. It is all right.

Lilavati has committed a heinous crime. I consider it unforgivable. I shall write to her.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4432

257. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

June 13, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

Your letters. The big people will be going in a day or two. You must come and have a little rest before you embark on another tour. I want you to come for a little rest, a little fun. But you should try to let me see my error which you see so clearly.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2090

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258. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

June 13, 1942

CHI. VALJI,

I have got your articles. I am returning them. You will get them back safe. It is not advisable to publish such articles at present. They forget every time to send you the money. I am sending you the amount on condition that you will use it only for your family needs and not for helping Gopalan or others like him.

From among the articles that you wanted, one seems to be still missing. I will send it when I find it.

I hope all of you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7498. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

259. QUESTION BOX

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

Q. What will you do if in response to your invitation the British Government withdraws from India and as you predict there is chaos in the country? What advice will you give to the workers who follow you? What non-violent steps will you take to put an end to the chaos?

A. If such a situation arises I myself and my co-workers will take such steps as are necessary to overcome the chaos. That is to say, we shall plead with those who are responsible for creating the chaos and dissuade them. If in doing so we have to die we shall die. If we have enough co-workers with the spirit of non-violence in them the chaos will soon come to an end. Here one must bear in mind that there is no place for the non-violence of the weak once the British Government withdraws. Those who want to plunder and loot are neither going to arrest anyone nor show mercy to anyone. Because they themselves are weak they will not have any other slogan except "kill, kill" and it will

not be easy to arouse in them feelings of kindness or to appeal to their reason. In other words we shall have to sacrifice many lives to awaken the humanity of such men.

I am afraid when there is chaos non-violence alone will not operate. Some other agencies will have appeared which will be engaging themselves in subduing by force those who indulge in looting and plundering. When there is chaos it will be a test for everyone.

If You Are Arrested

Q. What will you do if the Government arrests you because of your strong writings appearing in the *Harijan*? And what will happen if all the other leading Congressmen are also arrested?

A. I can't say at the moment what we shall do in the jail if the Government arrests me and others because I myself do not know. I shall have to do what occurs to me at the time. What is more important is what those who stay behind will do. The conditions which are imposed every time will not be there this time. There will be only one condition, that of ahimsa, and that is indispensable. This should not be interpreted to mean that people will be exempted from constructive work. Those who know its value will never give it up. But when masses are called upon to sacrifice themselves on the altar of independence some specified conditions will be relaxed as had been done in the earlier mass movements. So when the leaders are arrested every Indian will consider himself a leader and will sacrifice himself, and will not worry if his action results in anarchy. The blame for the anarchy will go to the Government which under the pretext of anarchy or under some other pretext goes on consolidating its own anarchy. Our ahimsa will remain lame as long as we do not get rid of the fear of anarchy. This is the time to prove that there is no power stronger than ahimsa in this world.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 14-6-1942

260. JODHPUR TRAGEDY

As I had feared, Jodhpur satyagraha has taken a serious and ugly turn. Heaps of papers have come in. From these I gather that arrests are multiplying. Lathi charges are a daily occurrence. Official circulars have been issued prohibiting the use of private

premises by satyagrahis. In fact all the worst things that were experienced during the satyagraha campaigns in British India are being repeated in Jodhpur. Only in Jodhpur they are being done far from the public gaze and a first-class tragedy may pass unnoticed and may be buried like many such that have been buried and are being buried even today. The cause of all these troubles is one and so is the remedy. Till it is successfully applied, the painful drama will continue in some shape or form. The British Government cannot escape blame and responsibility for every such happening in the States. It is bound by treaty obligation to protect the people of the States from inhumanities such as those going on in Jodhpur in the name of law and order. The prisoners have no respite even behind the prison bars. The food is bad, usual facilities are denied to them. By way of protest Shri Jai Narayan Vyas has undertaken hunger-strike till the grievances are redressed or unto death. If he has to die, the death will be upon those who are primarily responsible for the grievances which compel hunger-strikes unto death. Dr. Dwarkanath Kachru[1] has sent an instructive note on Jodhpur from which I take the following for public information:

> The direct authority of the Jodhpur Government extends over 17% of the total area of the State; the remaining area—about 83%—is owned by the Jagirdars, about 1,300 in number. These Jagirdars are mostly autonomous internally and pay fixed tributes to the Maharaja.
>
> For a long time now the Political Department has been controlling the affairs in Jodhpur. Thrice during this century the State passed under the direct control and supervision of the Political Department. At present Englishmen—a large number of them—occupy prominent positions in the State. The Prime Minister is also a retired British official.
>
> Apart from the British officials, other non-State subject elements also predominate in the State administration. There is thus a "Mulki Movement" which is becoming stronger day by day. There is also a very strong rivalry between the different castes, Rajputs, Brahmins, etc., which is very often exploited by the government to play one against the other or to prevent the Lok Parishad from growing stronger.
>
> The Marwar Lok Parishad, formed in 1938, became, during the course of these four years, a tremendous force in Jodhpur. Because of the general political backwardness of the Rajputana States, a more

[1] He was not a "Dr."; *vide* "Jodhpur", 29-6-1942.

advanced mass movement in Jodhpur was destined to lead the vanguard of the popular movement in the whole of Rajputana. An All-Rajputana Political Conference was also announced to be held in Jodhpur in March 1940. The mass awakening in Rajputana caused grave anxiety to the Political Department and the Jodhpur Government was instructed to act promptly. The Jodhpur Government therefore declared the Lok Parishad illegal and put all its prominent men in jails. Mass arrests, followed by terrible repression, ended in a compromise with the Government. Marwar Lok Parishad began its constructive work once again and soon came to be recognized by all the people in Marwar, both in the *khalsa* and *jagiri* territories. The Parishad contested the Municipal elections and emerged as the majority party in the Board. Its leader became the chairman.

Since the war began the governments of Indian States have changed their attitude towards popular movements. The war had in fact provided an excuse to suppress civil liberties and check the growth of popular forces. In Jodhpur, where the Political Department has a hand in shaping the policy of the government, Prime Minister Sir Donald Field set to work according to the instructions from above. Funds had to be procured for war and the whole State had to be put on war footing. Money had largely to be procured from the Jagirdars, who must in turn be protected against the popular movement in the Jagirs led by the Lok Parishad. The State Government thus assumed an attitude of neutrality towards the Jagirs and allowed the Jagirdars to squeeze even the last drop of blood from their subjects.

But the Lok Parishad could not ignore the grievances and demands of the masses of Marwar living in Jagirs. The Parishad did not want the abolition of the Jagirs, but it certainly wanted the betterment of the people of Jagirs. Repeated requests were made to the Government to intervene and secure a just and a humane treatment for the tenants in Jagirs, but unfortunately the Government chose to act differently. They encouraged the Jagirdars and suppressed the Lok Parishad workers. Briefly stated the conditions in Jagirs are: (a) the tenants demand regular *latai* (allocation of the shares of the Jagirdars and their tenants). But the Jagirdars would not arrange to do it regularly and often evaded with the result that the tenants suffered, (b) the tenants also want the abolition of such cesses which have been declared illegal in the courts of the States.

The Government of Jodhpur repeatedly refused to come to the help of the tenants and even refused to stop the exaction of such cesses which were declared illegal in their own courts of law. The Government went a step further and encouraged the Jagirdars themselves to take up cudgels against the Lok Parishad. Thus when the Jagirdars

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beat and victimized and even burnt the houses of the Parishad workers the government refused to intervene.

SEVAGRAM, June 14, 1942

Harijan, 21-6-1942

261. LETTER TO CHIANG KAI-SHEK

SEVAGRAM,
June 14, 1942

DEAR GENERALISSIMO,

I can never forget the five hours' close contact I had with you and your noble wife in Calcutta.[1] I had always felt drawn towards you in your fight for freedom, and that contact and our conversation brought China and her problems still nearer to me. Long ago, between 1905 and 1913, when I was in South Africa, I was in constant touch with the small Chinese colony in Johannesburg. I knew them first as clients and then as comrades in the Indian passive resistance struggle in South Africa. I came in touch with them in Mauritius also. I learnt then to admire their thrift, industry, resourcefulness and internal unity. Later in India I had a very fine Chinese friend living with me for a few years and we all learnt to like him.

I have thus felt greatly attracted towards your great country and, in common with my countrymen, our sympathy has gone out to you in your terrible struggle. Our mutual friend, Jawaharlal Nehru, whose love of China is only excelled, if at all, by his love of his own country, has kept us in intimate touch with the developments of the Chinese struggle.

Because of this feeling I have towards China and my earnest desire that our two great countries should come closer to one another and co-operate to their mutual advantage, I am anxious to explain to you that my appeal to the British power to withdraw from India is not meant in any shape or form to weaken India's defence against the Japanese or embarrass you in your struggle. India must not submit to any aggressor or invader and must resist him. I would not be guilty of purchasing the freedom of my country at the cost of your country's freedom. That problem does not arise before me as I am clear that India cannot gain her freedom in this way, and a

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXV, pp. 333-4.

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Japanese domination of either India or China would be equally injurious to the other country and to world peace. That domination must therefore be prevented and I should like India to play her natural and rightful part in this.

I feel India cannot do so while she is in bondage. India has been a helpless witness of the withdrawals from Malaya, Singapore and Burma. We must learn the lesson from these tragic events and prevent by all means at our disposal a repetition of what befell these unfortunate countries. But unless we are free we can do nothing to prevent it, and the same process might well occur again, crippling India and China disastrously. I do not want a repetition of this tragic tale of woe.

Our proffered help has repeatedly been rejected by the British Government and the recent failure of the Cripps Mission has left a deep wound which is still running. Out of that anguish has come the cry for immediate withdrawal of British power so that India can look after herself and help China to the best of her ability.

I have told you of my faith in non-violence and of my belief in the effectiveness of this method if the whole nation could turn to it. That faith in it is as firm as ever. But I realize that India today as a whole has not that faith and belief, and the Government in free India would be formed from the various elements composing the nation.

Today the whole of India is impotent and feels frustrated. The Indian Army consists largely of people who have joined up because of economic pressure. They have no feeling of a cause to fight for, and in no sense are they a national army. Those of us who would fight for a cause, for India and China, with armed forces or with non-violence, cannot under the foreign heel, function as they want to. And yet our people know for certain that India free can play even a decisive part not only on her own behalf, but also on behalf of China and world peace. Many like me feel that it is not proper or manly to remain in this helpless state and allow events to overwhelm us when a way to effective action can be opened to us. They feel, therefore, that every possible effort should be made to ensure independence and that freedom of action which is so urgently needed. This is the origin of my appeal to the British power to end immediately the unnatural connection between Britain and India.

Unless we make the effort there is a grave danger of public feeling in India going into wrong and harmful channels. There

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is every likelihood of subterranean sympathy for Japan growing simply in order to weaken and oust British authority in India. This feeling may take the place of robust confidence in our ability never to look to outsiders for help in winning our freedom. We have to learn self-reliance and develop the strength to work out our own salvation. This is only possible if we make a determined effort to free ourselves from bondage. That freedom has become a present necessity to enable us to take our due place among the free nations of the world.

To make it perfectly clear that we want to prevent in every way Japanese aggression, I would personally agree that the Allied Powers might, under treaty with us, keep their armed forces in India and use the country as a base for operations against the threatened Japanese attack.

I need hardly give you my assurance that, as the author of the new move in India, I shall take no hasty action. And whatever action I may recommend will be governed by the consideration that it should not injure China, or encourage Japanese aggression in India or China. I am trying to enlist world opinion in favour of a proposition which to me appears self-proved and which must lead to the strengthening of India's and China's defence. I am also educating public opinion in India and conferring with my colleagues. Needless to say, any movement against the British Government with which I may be connected will be essentially non-violent. I am straining every nerve to avoid a conflict with British authority. But if in the vindication of the freedom which has become an immediate desideratum, this becomes inevitable, I shall not hesitate to run any risk however great.

Very soon you will have completed five years of war against Japanese aggression and invasion and all the sorrow and misery that these have brought to China. My heart goes out to the people of China in deep sympathy and in admiration for their heroic struggle and endless sacrifices in the cause of their country's freedom and integrity against tremendous odds. I am convinced that this heroism and sacrifice cannot be in vain; they must bear fruit. To you, to Madame Chiang and to the great people of China, I send my earnest and sincere wishes for your success. I look forward to the day when a free India and a free China will co-operate together in friendship and brotherhood for their own good and for the good of Asia and the world.

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In anticipation of your permission, I am taking liberty of publishing this letter in *Harijan*.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Non-violence in Peace and War, Vol. I. Also C.W. 10367. Courtesy: India Office Library, London. Also *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II, pp. 346-8

262. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

June 14, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

I have yours about Ramanathan. He has written. I am giving it immediate attention.[2] When you come, you will discuss the thing with me.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2089

263. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
June 14, 1942

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

We had long talks. Mahadev will write about that. Somebody should go to Jodhpur.[3] If Sri Prakasa is willing I will ask him to go. Otherwise Munshi, if his health permits it. Discuss it with Jawaharlal.

But my aim in writing this letter is different. Cases of robbery are on the increase in Gujarat. We must find some means to cope with that. I do not mind if the people get ready

[1] It was not published. On July 8, H. Seymour reported to Eden that in answer to this letter Chiang Kai-shek had sent to Gandhiji a message to the following effect: "Situation in Egypt appears to be at critical stage and Chiang Kai-shek's fervent wish is that nothing should take place in India to harm prosecution of the war and which would also harm India in those countries sympathetic to her." *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II, pp. 351-2

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Ramanathan", p. 233.

[3] *Vide* "Jodhpur Tragedy", pp. 220-3.

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to defend themselves with lathis. But they must get ready. Think over this.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 279

264. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 14, 1942

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. You have given me good news about Jayaprakash. I have to send him a book, which I will after getting it from Acharya. You may come here when you can, and I will set you right. Sushila is expected tomorrow. Ba's health is fine. Sushila will stay here for ten days. She will be free in July.

I am sending this letter with Ramananda[1].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3577

265. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 15, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I was unable to send you anything yesterday. M.[2] left this morning and J. L. will leave for Bombay this evening. He is passing the day here and dining with Mahadeo. In one sentence, M. is not satisfied with my demand or the manner of enforcement; he needs time for thought. J. L. not quite so dissatisfied as M. but not quite convinced either. The W. C. will meet early July.

The weather is better but still oppressive. No sign of a downpour.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I have just got today's post. Your knee has got to be right soon.

From the original: C.W. 3688. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6497

[1] A worker in Gandhiji's office
[2] Maulana Azad

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266. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 15, 1942

I am glad I have been opening your post. I have dealt with Madalasa, I have advised you about Prema. Now this extraordinary letter[1]. You should reply. It is easy. Unity must come. Without it there will be no real independence. But with the third party in possession, no unity—cultural, political or other—is possible. That is why withdrawal is a necessary preliminary to unity. But you will deal with the letter as you like.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4133. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7442

267. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

[*June 15, 1942*][2]

CHI. PRABHA,

I am sending your report with this letter, but by separate book post. I read it. It is good. My note is enclosed. You will like it.

Heavy rains have started here. No more today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3571

[1] This was Atulanand's letter to Amrit Kaur, on which Gandhiji was writing the note.

[2] From *Bapuna Patro–10: Shri Prabhavatibehnne*

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268. LETTER TO MADALASA

June 15, 1942

CHI. MADALASA,

I was sorry to learn about Surendra Narayan[1]. Let him be on a simple diet for the present. He may take milk, curds, fruit juice and vegetable juice. He must see that he does not swallow seed or shell. Mud-pack on the abdomen will help. He should not groan. If he cannot pass stools without straining he should take light enema. He should take the earliest opportunity to go to Bombay and do as the doctors there advise. There is every chance that with the diet I have prescribed the pain will cease if it is only due to inflammation. He can take chapatis provided he masticates them well. Pulses should be eschewed. Strenuous exercise should be avoided. Hip-baths can help a lot. Also friction-baths.

Do not give any medicine to the baby. Vegetable soups and fruit juice will be as good as medicine to him. Exercise is of course necessary. The rest when you come. Shriman should go to Allahabad and settle everything there.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 473-4

269. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 15, 1942

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

It is good that the ashes have been consigned to the Ganga. Mother will now have peace of mind. Stay in Hardwar as long as you wish.

There is no harm in sending Madan here. If he wants to come, he may.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3057

[1] Addressee's brother-in-law

270. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
June 14/16, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Yours. What is wrong with your knee? Why should you have anything wrong with you there unless you are erring about your diet?

June 16, 1942

The foregoing was begun on 14th and then the whole pad was forgotten.

Did I suggest your writing to Mayurbhanj[1]? The authorities are molesting people for building a bund. If you feel like it you may write to them.

Sushila came in yesterday with a bad wound on the skull. A lot of luggage fell on her head leaving a fairly deep cut. She lay in that condition for six hours. The wound was dressed and stitched in Wardha. Brijkrishna has come in. Shri Prakasa has also come for a few days.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4132. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7441

271. A CHALLENGE

I have before me three letters rebuking me for not going to Sind to face the Hurs personally. Two are friendly. The third comes from a critic who has no faith in non-violence. His letter demands an answer. Its main part runs as follows:

> I am deeply interested in your writings and in the effect that they make upon the minds of the ignorant masses and your blind followers. I would therefore feel obliged if you enlighten me on the following points, especially because points nos. 3 & 4 raise novel and fundamental issues about non-violence.

[1] A princely State in Orissa

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You have been training a number of satyagrahis in your Ashram and they must have had the advantage of your supervision and instruction. You have been proclaiming that violence could be effectively met by non-violent means. Japan is now attacking India in the East and Hurs are creating trouble in the West. Is this not then the long-awaited opportunity when you can practise what you have so long preached?

Instead of doing that, you are contenting yourself by writing articles in the *Harijan*. Imagine Hitler or Stalin, without sending their armies to the front line, writing such articles in *Pravda* or such other paper. Instead of asking the Sind M.L.A.s to resign and go to Hurs, why should you not send a 'company' of your trained satyagrahis and try the luck of your doctrine?

Is it not the duty and business of a satyagrahi to go and meet the danger where it exists and threatens the country? Or is it your case that your satyagrahis will meet it only when it reaches the Ashram and not before? If so, is not your doctrine a doctrine of inaction?

I have no doubt that if I could have gone to Sind, I might have been able to do something. I have done such things before, not without success. But I am too old for such missions. What little energy I have, I am storing up for what promises to be the last fight of my life.

I have not conceived my mission to be that of a knight-errant wandering everywhere to deliver people from difficult situations. My humble occupation has been to show people how they can solve their own difficulties. So far as Sind is concerned, I maintain that my advice was perfect. It was clearly Congressmen's duty to proceed to the infested areas and spend themselves in the effort to convert the Hurs to the way of peace. Indeed they could have used arms if they had no faith in non-violence. They should have resigned from the Congress to free themselves from the obligation to observe non-violence. If we are to be fit for independence, we have to learn the art of self-defence either non-violently or violently. Every citizen should consider himself liable to render help to his neighbour in distress.

If I had adopted the role my critic has suggested, I would have helped people to become parasites. Therefore it is well that I have not trained myself to defend others. I shall be satisfied if at my death it could be said of me that I had devoted the best part of my life to showing the way to become self-reliant and cultivate the capacity to defend oneself under every conceivable circumstance.

My correspondent has committed the grave error of thinking that my mission is to deliver people from calamities. That is an

arrogation only claimed by dictators. But no dictator has ever succeeded in proving the claim.

Indeed if I could say, as the correspondent thinks I could, that if the menaces of the kind described by him face the Ashram, it will give a good account of itself, I should be quite content and feel that my mission was wholly successful. But I can lay no such claim. The Ashram at Sevagram is only so called. The visitors gave it the name and it has passed current. The Ashram is a medley of people come together for different purposes. There are hardly half a dozen permanent residents having a common ideal. How these few will discharge themselves when the test comes remains to be seen.

The fact is that non-violence does not work in the same way as violence. It works in the opposite way. An armed man naturally relies upon his arms. A man who is intentionally unarmed relies upon the unseen force called God by poets, but called the unknown by scientists. But that which is unknown is not necessarily non-existent. God is the Force among all forces known and unknown. Non-violence without reliance upon that Force is poor stuff to be thrown in the dust.

I hope now my critic realizes the error underlying his question and that he sees also that the doctrine that has guided my life is not one of inaction but of the highest action. His question should really have been put thus:

How is it that, in spite of your work in India for over 22 years, there are not sufficient satyagrahis who can cope with external and internal menaces? My answer then would be that twenty-two years are nothing in the training of a nation for the development of non-violent strength. That is not to say that a large number of persons will not show that strength on due occasion. That occasion seems to have come now. This war puts the civilian on his mettle no less than the military man, non-violent no less than the violent.

SEVAGRAM, June 18, 1942

Harijan, 28-6-1942

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272. LETTER TO RAMANATHAN

June 18, 1942

MY DEAR RAMANATHAN,

I have now had an hour's chat with Jajuji. I have gone through the correspondence that has passed between you and him. Perhaps I read more into Jajuji's complaint than was warranted by the word. Your letters betray irritation. I want you to be patient with Jajuji. We shall never get a more careful and painstaking Secretary[1].

It is nonsensical to think of resigning. We are all members of a family having to bear with one another. We must straighten out everything when we meet at the end of the month.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 9259; also C.W. 3076

273. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 19, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I have your letters. Rajaji has just come. He should be in the Ashram any moment.

Later

He has come.

J. L.'s statement[2] you must have seen. That is his latest. Let us see what God has in store for us. I am satisfied with things as they are shaping themselves. Difficult of course everything is.

[1] Of A.I.V.I.A.; *vide* Vol. LXXV, p. 301.

[2] In an interview to the Press on June 17, Jawaharlal Nehru had reaffirmed his and Gandhiji's opposition to Fascism and Nazism but said that the defence of India was primarily an Indian concern and free India would defend herself to the utmost.

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There's the bell.

Later

The day passed in discussions with C. R.
Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3689. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6498

274. LETTER TO K. SUBBA RAO

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
June 19, 1942

DEAR SUBBA RAO,

Do let me know if you had further development over that Press correspondence.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI K. SUBBA RAO
FREE PRESS
P.O.B. 400
MADRAS

From a photostat: G.N. 5665. Also C.W. 2977. Courtesy: K. Subba Rao

275. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 19, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

My true help is in my good wishes. The eyes should either be fixed on the ground, or on the work which is to be done. The image of the monkey should be engraved on the heart. Every woman is either a sister or a mother. There should never be any other feeling. Ramanama should be uttered every moment. Forget whatever has happened. Take care of the present. Do not be unhappy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4433; also S.N. 24482

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276. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 19, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your unhappiness is understandable, but there is no cause to be disheartened. If you make the effort success will be yours. Yes, there is a lesson of humility, which you should learn. There is no need to give up work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4434; also S.N. 24483

277. INTERVIEW TO THE UNITED PRESS

June 19, 1942

In an interview by the representative of the United Press of London regarding Sir Stafford Cripps' statement[1] published in the Press Gandhiji said:

I have read Sir Stafford Cripps' statement to the United Press representative in London. It is not conducive to the proper understanding between different parties, if ascertainable facts are not admitted by all. Sir Stafford knows that I was disinclined to proceed to New Delhi. Having gone there, I intended to return the same day that I reached there. But Maulana Saheb would not let me go. I wish that I could have induced the Working Committee to take up its stand on pure non-violence. But it did not and could not. With it, rightly, politics were all important and it could not, not having the conviction, allow its deliberations to be affected by the issue of non-violence. The deliberations, therefore, of the Working Committee at New Delhi were carried on without any interference or guidance on my part. Therefore, the negotiations had nothing to do at any stage with the question of non-violence. I would not have brought out this

[1] On June 16, 1942, Sir Stafford Cripps referring to Gandhiji's repeated demand for British withdrawal from India had observed: "We are not going to walk out of India right in the middle of the war though we have no wish to remain there for any imperialistic reasons."

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fact, if it was not relevant to a calm consideration of the situation that faces British and Indian statesmen.

Nor do I like Sir Stafford's description of my appeal for withdrawal of the British power as a walk-out. The appeal has been made in no offensive mood. It is the friendliest thing that I could do. It is conceived in the interest of the Allied cause. I have made it in a purely non-violent spirit and as a non-violent step. But this is merely personal to me. It is necessary to remember in considering my proposal that it is essentially a non-violent gesture. Such non-violence as India has or may have becomes impotent without the withdrawal of the British power—even as that part of India which will put up an armed fight becomes impotent. The step that I have conceived overcomes all difficulties, shuts all controversy about violence and non-violence and immediately frees India to offer her best help to the Allied cause and more especially to China which is in imminent danger. I am convinced that the independence of India, which the withdrawal of the British power involves, would ensure China's freedom and put the Allied cause on an unassailable basis.

Harijan, 28-6-1942

278. INTERVIEW TO REUTER[1]

[Before *June 21, 1942*]

Asked by Reuter's London representative to amplify his statement about the possibility of Free India entering into a treaty with the United Nations, Gandhiji said:

There can be no limit to what friendly Independent India can do. I had in mind a treaty between United Nations and India for defence of China against Japanese aggression. But given mutual goodwill and trust, the treaty should cover protection of human dignity and rights by means other than resort to armament. For this involves competition in capacity for greatest slaughter. I wish British opinion could realize that Independence of India changes character of Allied cause and ensures speedier victory.

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes", dated Sevagram May 21, 1942. The source does not mention where and when Reuter interviewed Gandhiji, but May 21 could be a misprint for June 21 for it is unlikely that the item would have been kept for five weeks before it was published. Besides, Gandhiji first mentions a treaty with the United Nations in answer to a question on June 6; *vide* "Important Questions", pp. 186-8.

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Replying to the criticism of the London *Times* on his latest proposal Gandhiji said:

Every time nationalists have suggested solutions, however sound intrinsically, there has been distortion of their speeches and writings, followed later by persecution. My latest proposal, conceived in the friendliest spirit and in my opinion intrinsically sound, has already begun to be distorted. I regard my proposal as foolproof. The operations of the Allied forces against Japanese aggression have been left intact under my proposal which amounts to this that Britain should become true to her declaration, withdraw from India as conqueror and therefore controller of her destiny, and leave India to shape her own destiny without the slightest interference. This, as I can see, puts her case on a moral basis and gives her in India a great ally not in the cause of Imperialism but in the cause of human freedom. If there is anarchy in India, Britain alone will be responsible, *not* I. What I have said is that I would prefer anarchy to the present slavery and consequent impotence of India. Any person, however great he may be, who distorts the proposals I have made will be condemned by history as an enemy of the Allied cause. Sir Stafford Cripps' proposals have been weighed by India and after great deliberation rejected by all parties. It is an insult to India to repeat those proposals as the final word of British statesmanship.

Harijan, 28-6-1942

279. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 21, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Here the monsoon has set in in right earnest. So the heat of May is over. However, I do not advise you to come just yet. It would be better to rest there for some time. The knee must be put right.[1]

Our course is absolutely clear. Risk there is. But attainment of freedom without risk is not worth looking at.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4268. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7900

[1] This paragraph is in Gujarati. What follows is in English.

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280. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

June 21, 1942

I have not been writing to you of late thinking that you were now out of danger. Today's postcard is alarming. Let it be as it will. Should we not, while we strive to live, always be prepared for death?

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 183

281. A POSER

A correspondent writes to Mahadev Desai:

> Referring to Gandhiji's demand for an orderly withdrawal of the British from India or for a complete and immediate ending of the British rule in this country, some friends here want to clearly understand the implications of the suggestion that on free India becoming an ally of the United Nations, British and American troops may remain on Indian soil and operate from here under a treaty with free India, because defence of India will be then our 'common cause'. *Theoretically* from the standpoint of India's independence the position is no doubt quite clear. But some questions arise as to its practical implications. It is of course understood that Gandhiji here is not stating his personal non-violent position but is visualizing one of the possibilities, namely, that of a free nationalist India going in for a policy of armed resistance or of collaboration of some kind with foreign troops in armed resistance, to aggression. But what about the British position? A cordial acceptance of Gandhiji's demand by the British will not only completely change the moral basis of the war but will in fact negative, for them, its political and economic *sine-que-non*. If the British are not driven out of India by force of circumstances, but they give up their hold on India as a voluntary repayment of a debt long overdue, this moral act cannot, by its very nature, be an isolated one, but should fundamentally affect Britain's relations with her other Asiatic and African possessions also. If Britain is *forced* to leave India to God or to the Japanese she will go on fighting to save her other possessions on Asia and Africa and to regain those already lost; but if she voluntarily dispossesses herself of her ill-gotten properties, her *material* reasons for prosecuting the war will practically

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vanish. From the economic point of view, Britain could never inflict upon herself this terrible costly war if she did not hope afterwards to reimburse herself somehow out of the possessions she was fighting to retain. It will be absolutely beyond the resources of Britain, divested of her foreign possessions, to carry on the war on anything like its present scale. To try to do that would be a most senseless and inhuman infliction on the British people themselves.

As regards *ideal* reasons, these have no substance now, because so long as Britain is holding millions upon millions of human beings in subjugation she has no right to speak for democracy, etc. But the *ideal* reasons will gain substantiality on Britain responding to Gandhiji's appeal. And then it is true Britain may look forward to the sympathy and co-operation of the peoples she will have freed and may to some extent rely on their resources too. But just here we are brought face to face with the old question of means and ends, namely, whether war can be a proper and effective instrument of policy for the attainment of the democratic ends of justice and human freedom. It would be a disaster if anything were said or done that would give rise to a misunderstanding on this issue so as to jeopardize or prejudice the historic lead which Gandhiji has given in this matter to the world at this unprecedented crisis in human affairs. On no account can that moral world leadership be endangered. Why does not Gandhiji persist in the line which he enunciated sometime ago, namely, that the voluntary abdication of the British power in respect of her imperial possessions is sure to bring about a moral situation in the world that will baffle Hitler and Mussolini and their war machines? The voluntary liquidation of British Imperialism in India, if it comes about, will be a tremendous act of non-violence on the part of the British. When we are visualizing its effect, why should we not think in terms of non-violence also? If the tree is non-violence the fruit also should be non-violence.

There are so many side issues arising from the question of allowing foreign troops on Indian soil. Foreign troops cannot at all function in this part of the world without India being made a vast arsenal and supply-base for the United Nations. Any suggestion, however tentative and hypothetical, in this direction is fraught with danger.

While Gandhiji is desperately anxious to prove his *bona fides* as to his determination to keep the Japanese out, his utterances regarding the future position of foreign troops in India are likely to be misunderstood by the other party who may be already seeking an opening for bargaining. Not that negotiations as such are objectionable, but if the other party's approach is vitiated by the spirit of bargaining, that will not only detract from the value of the British action, if any, but will also introduce unwanted complications on the Indian side. The

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effect on the mind of the Indian masses has to betaken into consideration. At this stage of the new movement it is most essential to attune the public mind to the thought and conviction that India must get ready to fall back exclusively upon her own resources, moral and material. Can we at this psychological moment emphasize a possibility which will suggest to the man in the street that 'after all they will be here'? The mind of the man in the street will hardly be able to juxtapose national freedom and the presence of thousands and thousands of foreign troops in the country.

This letter demands an answer. The difficulty about the confusion in the public mind by the contemplated stay of the Allied troops in the country is very real. Neither the masses nor even the classes will appreciate the necessity of the military operations of the Allied powers after the declaration of withdrawal. But if the necessity is proved, the public may be expected to reconcile themselves to the inevitable.

There was obviously a gap in my first writing. I filled it in as soon as it was discovered by one of my numerous interviewers. Non-violence demands the strictest honesty, cost what it may. The public have therefore to suffer my weakness, if weakness it may be called. I could not be guilty of asking the Allies to take a step which would involve certain defeat. I could not guarantee foolproof non-violent action to keep the Japanese at bay. Abrupt withdrawal of the Allied troops might result in Japan's occupation of India and China's sure fall. I had not the remotest idea of any such catastrophe resulting from my action. Therefore I feel that if in spite of the acceptance of my proposal, it is deemed necessary by the Allies to remain in India to prevent Japanese occupation, they should do so, subject to such conditions as may be prescribed by the national government that may be set up after the British withdrawal.

The writer's argument about Britain having no cause left for pursuing the war, if she accepts my proposal and logically follows it in Africa, is sound. But that is the acid test proposed. India has every right to examine the implications of high-sounding declarations about justice, preservation of democracy and freedom of speech and individual liberty. If a band of robbers have among themselves a democratic constitution in order to enable them to carry on their robbing operations more effectively, they do not deserve to be called a democracy. Is India a democracy? Are the States a democracy? Britain does not deserve to win the war on the ground of justice if she is fighting to keep her Asiatic and African possessions. I am not unaware of the tremendous

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change in Britain's economic policy that the acceptance of my proposal involves. But that change is a vital necessity if this war is to have a satisfactory ending.

Who knows if Britain's acceptance of my proposal will not by itself mean an honourable end of the war resulting in a change even in the mentality of the Axis powers?

The writer is afraid that my reconciliation to the presence of the British troops would mean a descent on my part from my non-violent position. I hold that my non-violence dictates a recognition of the vital necessity. Neither Britain nor America share my faith in non-violence. I am unable to state that the non-violent effort will make India proof against Japanese or any other aggression. I am not able even to claim that the whole of India is non-violent in the sense required. In the circumstances it would be hypocritical on my part to insist on the immediate withdrawal of the Allied troops as an indispensable part of my proposal. It is sufficient for me to declare that so far as India is concerned, she does not need troops to defend herself, having no quarrel with Japan. But India must not by any act of hers short of national suicide let China down or put the Allied powers in jeopardy. So long therefore as India lacks faith in the capacity of non-violence to protect her against aggression from without, the demand for the withdrawal of the Allied troops during the pendency of the war would itself be an act of violence, if the controllers of the troops hold it to be necessary for their defence to keep them in India for that purpose and that alone.

SEVAGRAM, June 22, 1942

Harijan, 28-6-1942

282. TWO ACTIONS

My proposal for the withdrawal of the British power involves two actions. One is to deal with the present emergency, and the other to secure freedom from British supremacy. The second admits of delay. There is a lot of confusion about its implications. I am trying to the best of my ability to deal with the questions as they arise from time to time.

The first admits of no delay and demands specific action irrespective of the proposal for British withdrawal. This is in connection with (1) the behaviour of troops, (2) the impending salt famine, (3) control of food grains, (4) evacuation for the sake of the military, (5) discrimination between Europeans and Anglo-Indians

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and Anglo-Burmans on the one hand and Indians on the other.

On the first item the people have the law and public opinion wholly on their side. The Government machinery is always slow to move, more so now, when it is all pre-mortgaged for military preparations. People must everywhere learn to defend themselves against misbehaving individuals, no matter who they are. The question of non-violence and violence does not arise. No doubt the non-violent way is always the best, but where that does not come naturally the violent way is both necessary and honourable. Inaction here is rank cowardice and unmanly. It must be shunned at all cost. Pandit Nehru told me that at the stations in the north, platform hawkers have banded themselves for self-defence, so the troops are careful at those stations.

As to salt famine, the law is not quite on the people's side but right is wholly on their side. I am hoping that the Government will put the widest construction on the clause referring to salt in Gandhi-Irwin pact and allow people to manufacture salt wherever they can. And I would advise them to manufacture salt even at the risk of prosecution. Necessity knows no law. A starving man will help himself to food wherever he finds it. Rishi Vishwamitra did so.

Number three is difficult to deal with. But the same rule applies as to the second. Food cannot be manufactured as easily as salt. It is up to the merchants to band themselves to do what they can and force the hands of the Government to do the right thing by suggesting wise rules for the supply of food to the poor people at fixed prices. If this is not done in time looting shops is sure to be a daily event.

As to four, I have no doubt that the authorities may not ask people to vacate except where they are ready to offer equivalent land and buildings and cart the people and their belongings to the places prepared for them and pay them a living wage till they find suitable occupation. The people, if they have nowhere to move to, should simply refuse to vacate and suffer the consequences.

As to the fifth, the people should refuse to submit to discrimination and it will break down. Most of these difficulties take place because we have cultivated the habit of submitting to them. In the words of the late Lord Willingdon, we must learn resolutely to say 'no', when that is the real answer possible and take the consequences.

SEVAGRAM, June 22, 1942

Harijan, 28-6-1942

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283. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 22, 1942

CHI. NARANDAS,

I hope what I have written in *Harijanbandhu* is all right.[1] Abha must now be a familiar figure there. I hope all of you like her. Is it necessary to give some more help to Gokibehn[2]. Send arrears of the money that goes to Pyarelal's home from the day it became due to the present day, to Mohanlal Nayyar, Arya Samaj Mandir Building, Hanuman Road, New Delhi.

Here the monsoon has started very well indeed. Kanaiyo[3] is fine. Kusum must be well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8605. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

284. THE LATE DR. DATTA

In Dr. Datta, Principal of Forman Christian College, the country has lost a staunch Christian nationalist. I had the privilege of knowing him intimately soon after my return from South Africa. He was an intimate friend of the late Deenabandhu Andrews and he would not be satisfied until he had brought me in touch with every one of his friends. Dr. Datta worked whole-heartedly day and night at the Unity Conference during the anxious time of my 21 days' fast in 1924 in Delhi. I saw him again equally earnestly at work at the time of the Second Round Table Conference. His loss at this critical juncture in the country's history would be doubly felt. I tender my condolences to Mrs. Datta. His numerous friends will share her sorrow.

SEVAGRAM, June 23, 1942

Harijan, 28-6-1942

[1] *Vide* "Yarn Currency", p. 184.
[2] Raliatbehn, Gandhiji's sister
[3] Addressee's son, Kanu Gandhi

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285. TALK WITH HORACE ALEXANDER[1]

SEVAGRAM,
[On or after *June 23, 1942*][2]

HORACE ALEXANDER: We were wondering if it was auspicious for an English party to arrive in India, when you were asking the British to withdraw. Agatha suggested that we might have a party from India to work with us, and make of our party a mixed party.

GANDHIJI: My first writing did, I am afraid, give rise to that kind of fear. That was because I had not given expression to the whole idea in my mind. It is not my nature to work out and produce a finished thing all at once. The moment a question was asked me, I made clear that no physical withdrawal of every Englishman was meant, I meant the withdrawal of the British domination. And so every Englishman in India can convert himself into a friend—as you have come as Friends—and remain here. The condition is that every Englishman has to dismount from the horse he is riding and cease to be monarch of all he surveys and identify himself with the humblest of us. The moment he does it, he will be recognized as a member of the family. His role as a member of the ruling caste must end for ever. And so when I said 'withdraw', I meant 'withdraw as masters'. The demand for withdrawal had another implication. You have to withdraw, irrespective of the wishes of anybody here. You do not need the consent of a slave to give him freedom. The slave often hugs the chains of slavery. They become part of his flesh. You have to tear them asunder and throw them away. You must withdraw because it is your duty to do so, and not wait for the unanimous consent of all the sections or groups in India.

There is thus no question of the moment being inauspicious for you. On the contrary, if you can assimilate my proposal, it is the most auspicious moment for you to arrive in India.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Friends' Ambulance Unit in India". Some of the members of the Unit felt that their experience in the bombed areas of Britain might prove of value in India and so a band of eight workers was sent to work in co-operation with the volunteer agencies in India. Horace Alexander, who arrived a little earlier with Richard Symonds, was the leader of the party.

[2] Horace Alexander arrived in Sevagram on June 23.

You will meet many Englishmen here. They may have entirely misunderstood what I have said, and you have to explain to them what exactly I want them to do.

Really speaking, therefore, this should become the major part of your mission, and even the India Office who facilitated your coming here cannot possibly misunderstand you. You have, therefore, not only the humanitarian mission—there may not be any bombing here, and in this vast country even if there is bombing you may not be able to reach everywhere—but you have also this peculiar mission of interpretation and reconciliation. And it is well perhaps that your mission begins with me. Begin it with finding out what exactly is at the back of my mind by putting to me all the questions that may be agitating you.

You will see that I have used the words 'orderly withdrawal'. I had, when I used the phrase, Burma and Singapore in mind. It was a disorderly withdrawal from there. For they left Burma and Malaya neither to God, nor to anarchy, but to the Japanese. Here I say: 'Don't repeat that story here. Don't leave India to Japan, but leave India to Indians in an orderly manner. . . . So you have now to do what Andrews did—understand me, pitilessly cross-examine me, and then if you are convinced be my messenger.

H. A. We dare not assume his mantle. We can but try.

Harijan, 5-7-1942

286. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 24, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter.

The weather is oppressive. I am not going to ask you to come here before August or even later. If there is anything serious I will tell you.

Khurshedbehn comes on 28th.

Horace Alexander and his friend Symonds are here for 3 days.

The train incident is startling. Has it any significance?

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

If Richardson writes, I shall let him come.

From the original: C.W. 4134. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7443

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287. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

June 24, 1942

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

As Swami is going, I am sending this with him.

I feel this meeting of Goseva Sangh was inevitable. The land and other things given to us are in two parts. One is that which Jamnalalji gave and the other that for which the Ashram has paid. This money was given for both immovable and movable property. What the Ashram has paid now was from the money mostly given by you brothers. That means it was your donation. We shall now do what you consider best. If you want to draw the amount from the Goseva Sangh, you will save that much money; otherwise that will be your additional donation to Goseva Sangh. I on my part can neither make donation out of a donation nor earn any merit from it. I hope I have been able to make myself clear. Now do whatever you think best.

My mind is working fast on what I have undertaken. The Empire's wickedness is terrible. I feel unhappy and also angry at what is said against me. But one should not feel either unhappy or angry—all these things are transitory.

I have almost finalized the strategy for the struggle. I am waiting for the Working Committee meeting. As far as I am concerned, I am fully prepared. The rest when we meet. I hope you are in good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8059. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

288. LETTER TO ABDUL WADOOD SARHADI

June 24, 1942

SAHEBZADA SAHEB,

I thank you for your letter. I sincerely want unity among Hindus and Muslims, but I do not know how it is to be brought about.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

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289. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

June 25, 1942

CHI. KANCHAN,

I got your letter. It is good that you wrote. I am pleased that you saw your error. Improve now.

I believe that your good lies in living with Munnalal, but only after Munnalal is more properly settled. Then also you must watch what happens to me. You should, therefore, work with Manjubehn for the present, and become proficient in work. If you engross yourself in work, no matter what it is, it will do you good. It will be desirable for you to spend at least a year there. Keep writing to me from time to time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8269. Also C.W. 7171. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

290. FOR THE SIKH FRIENDS

Thus writes Sardar Mangal Singh:

I wish to bring to your notice the objections raised against the Congress and against your personal attitude towards the Sikhs. I hope you will deal with them in a proper way in *Harijan.*

(1) The first and the great point made against the Congress is that the Congress does not care for the Sikhs. No Sikh has been taken on the Working Committee or even specially invited to attend the Working Committee meetings during the last 7 years. We tell them that Working Committee is not constituted on a communal basis, but this does not carry conviction with the general Sikh masses.

(2) Several years ago while discussing the thesis of non-violence in *Young India* you said that 'Guru Govind Singh was a misguided patriot' or words to that effect.[1] When fiery speakers mention this it makes a great sentimental appeal to the Sikhs. I think you should explain your point of view.

(3) That you are against the bearing of *kirpan* by the Sikhs.

[1] *Vide* also "Guru Govind Singh", pp. 268-71.

(4) That you said to certain Sikhs that they should either follow Guru Govind Singh or yourself.

I personally know that the last two allegations have no foundation, but lies when repeated do acquire some importance. I hope you will agree with me that some elucidation is necessary from you. This will help the nationalist Sikhs and the Congress in the Punjab.

It is painful for me to have to write on this subject. Some of the points have been discussed threadbare. When however suspicion usurps the place of reason, it becomes most difficult to remove it. But I cannot resist the inquiry of a fellow worker especially when he makes it to smooth his way.

The first question is really for the Congress Secretary to answer. But I can say that for years Sardar Shardul Singh Caveeshar was a member of the Working Committee. It is not always possible to provide for communal representation on the Working Committee. The policy should be and is to get the best men. The fact is that the Congress has always given the greatest consideration to the Sikh sentiment. It was for them that a special committee was appointed on the question of the colour of the National Flag. It was for them that the famous Lahore resolution[1] on the communal question was framed. They have therefore the least cause for complaint against the Congress.

As to what I am supposed to have said about Guru Govind Singh, I can only repeat what I have said about the charge that I have no recollection whatsoever of having made the remark attributed to me. Whoever brings the charge should at least refer me to the passage in question in my writings. I have searched in vain. What is however more to the point is to know what I think about Guru Govind Singh. I have the highest regard for him. The popular belief is that it was he who gave the sword to the Khalsa. I have believed that to the extent that he did so he departed from the non-violence of his predecessors. This is not the place to examine or question the justification for the great Guru's step. A learned Sikh friend tells me that he could show that Guru Govind Singh never departed from the teachings of the preceding Gurus on non-violence. But such proof may have an academic value. The common belief as I have understood it among the Sikhs is that

[1] In December 1929. This assured the Sikhs, Muslims and other minorities that no solution of the communal question in any future constitution "would be acceptable to the Congress that did not give full satisfaction to the parties concerned".

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Guru Govind Singh accepted resort to the sword in well-defined circumstances as quite valid. Be that as it may, there never was the slightest disrespect on my part for the great Guru or the Sikh *Panth*. Indeed among the *bhajans* sung at the Ashram prayers there are several of Guru Nanak's.

As to *kirpans* I am afraid I must say that I do not like the wearing of *kirpan* or the like by human beings as part of their religion. But my likes or dislikes can produce no effect on the Sikh practice. If by the question is meant whether I should vote for legislation prohibiting the wearing of *kirpans* by the Sikhs, I can unhesitatingly say 'no' for the simple reason that I do not believe in making people non-violent by legislation.

The suggestion made in the fourth question is ridiculous. I have never considered myself as a religious teacher. I have never asked anyone to disown his own faith, in order to accept non-violence or my teaching. I have not known any religion to make violence obligatory. Most religions have permitted it where non-violence is not possible. But I have no right to judge other religions. I entertain equal respect for all religions. I must if I expect others to respect mine.

SEVAGRAM, June 26, 1942

Harijan, 5-7-1942

291. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

June 26, 1942

. . .[1] it is good that you wrote, but stop worrying about it. . . .[2] If I am alive by then, I will definitely see about the selection of a husband for her.[3] However, today's children will make the selection for themselves and they should be allowed to do so. . . .[4]

Why do you despair? Death is not an enemy but a friend. Nobody can live outside His realm and those who submit themselves to His rule are always happy. I will keep you with me if you come over here. I cannot offer you cool air, but everything else is there. If, however, it is not possible for you to come, bear in mind that you are getting more than what millions get and be content. Why should you worry about

[1], [2] & [4] Omission as in the source

[3] The addressee was worried about the marriage of his daughter Jyotsna.

what will happen when you are no more. Leave that to God. Anyone to whom you may entrust the charge is in the same battered boat. What will you gain by relying on them?

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 183-4

292. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 26, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Chandra Singh will leave in a few days. Till then it is your duty to put up with his tantrums. You should not even notice his insults.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4435; also S.N. 24484

293. SPEECH TO THE STUDENTS OF KHADI VIDYALAYA[1]

June 26, 1942

These examinations are unlike the orthodox university examinations which are at best a test of book-knowledge and depend on the whims of examiners. Here even if you do not pass in your examinations what you have learnt is not lost; it has profited the country. Failure means inadequate practice or work, and the next year you will increase your knowledge and production. Then the orthodox examinations prepare the examinees at best for clerkships, and those who pass have no illusions about adding anything to the wealth of the country, while even the failures amongst you have added something to the wealth of the country, if not quite as much as those who have passed. Then there is another very vital difference. The boys in the schools and colleges pay heavy fees, but far heavier than their fees are the expenses incurred by Government on their education. The country gets nothing by way of return for this enormous expenditure; if there is any little gain it belongs to an alien government. Then the system of examinations is

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "With Khadi Workers". The occasion was the distribution of certificates.

most mechanical and tiring and calculated to add little to the examinees' intellectual calibre. Here the end in view is to qualify students to add more and more to the country's wealth, to stimulate originality and, apart from giving them a living, render service of the country. One last point which if you have not grasped I want you to grasp today. Inasmuch as service of the country is the final aim, the failures have no cause for disappointment, the passes have no reason to look down upon the failures, and there is little scope for unhealthy rivalry. The students in the ordinary schools and colleges throw away their books after they have passed their examinations, for they think they are no longer going to be of use to them. Here you cannot afford to throw away your books or tools, for they are always of value, and once a khadi student is always a khadi student, he goes on adding to his knowledge and fitness as a khadi worker.

Gandhiji next addressed himself to a vital difference between spinning as practised in ancient times and as it is being taught and practised now. It is a thing which has to be borne in mind by both the taught and the teachers and the examiners, for the latter not only teach the students but teach themselves in the process.

The distinction I desire to invite your attention to is fundamental. Our ancestors did spin and weave and produce their own cloth, but they were just spinners and weavers, toiling either for their bread or for their employers, e. g., the East India Company. There was little joy about their work, and no spirit of service or knowledge. They toiled because they could not help it, and often it was such irksome drudgery that it drove them to cut off their own fingers in order that the slave-drivers may drive them no more. Their toil was their slavery. They have left nothing for us to emulate. We have to do penance for and wipe out that slavery. Their toil would have been perfectly honourable, if there had been knowledge at the back of it, as also the desire for the country's freedom, the determination not to bend the knee to the slave-driver, and a sense of art. A revival of the industry means adoption of all these life-giving virtues, it means infusing new life into the dead bones of the old industry.

Harijan, 5-7-1942

294. DISCUSSION WITH KHADI WORKERS[1]

SEVAGRAM,
June 26, 1942

The first question discussed was about adding to the capital by making collections and raising loans. The collections could, it was explained, be made by every one of the branches, but they should be made on behalf of the A.I.S.A., which must determine the way of their disposal. Gandhiji had no objection to raising loans, but those who advanced loans must be told, in this uncertain time of war, they were taking obvious risks, though perhaps no more than deposits in banks. If we survive the war and the terrible struggle ahead, we should repay every pie, but if we don't survive, they stand every risk of losing their money. It is likely that no one would care to advance loans. It was better therefore to concentrate on self and sacrificial spinning, and on getting gifts of yarn and cotton.

"But those who advance loans to us may have another fear," someone asked. "Even as it is, there is the obvious risk of war, but by advancing loans to *us* they may feel that they add to their risk."

GANDHIJI: Then let them know they will have earned the merit of having lost money in a good cause.

Q. Would the struggle involve the khadi workers?

A. I am not going to make a call to the khadi workers. But if there is a general conflagration khadi workers cannot escape it, *should* not escape it. You must know the full implications of that beautiful phrase, 'livery of freedom' applied to khadi by Jawaharlal. Khadi must not fetter us. You must also understand that I am not thinking of civil disobedience or non-co-operation of old. But there may be quixotic and arbitrary orders given to the people in the midst of whom we are working. We could reason with the authorities, but if they do not listen, we might be involved in spite of ourselves. Therefore no hard and fast rules can be laid down this time. Let us go on as usual unmindful of risks. Our inflexible rule is not to take part in politics, not to meddle with them.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "With Khadi Workers". The khadi workers were those who had come to attend the annual meeting of the A. I. S. A.

There were a number of administrative questions asked and discussed. Summing up Gandhiji said:

All these may well prove irrelevant before the crisis that faces us. You must make no mistake about it. A conflagration is imminent and let us not have the slightest thought of saving our skins. If we do, we shall have plied our wheels and worn khadi in vain. Let it never be said the A.I.S.A. was an institution which would run no risk.

And with this he invited the workers to vivisect him regarding his new move.

If you feel it is mid-summer madness you must unhesitatingly tell me so. If you think anything I am doing is prompted by anger or passion you must not spare me. I think all that I am doing is prompted by the highest sense of non-violence and therefore for universal good. My readiness to allow foreign armies to stay in India for their own self-protection and for saving China should be enough proof of this.

Harijan, 5-7-1942

295. OH! THE TROOPS

I have to pay a heavy price for having drawn up an entrancing picture of a free India without a single British soldier. Friends are confounded now to discover that my proposal admits of the presence of British and even American troops under any circumstance at all. In vain do I argue that the Allied troops, if they remain, will do so not to exercise authority over the people, or at India's expense, but they will remain under treaty with the Government of free India at the United Nations' expense for the sole purpose of repelling Japanese attack and helping China.

It has been pointed out that not to consent to the Allied troops remaining in India during the period of the war is to hand over India and China to Japan, and to ensure the defeat of the Allied powers. This could never have been contemplated by me. The only answer, therefore, to give was to suffer the presence of the troops but under circumstance the reverse of the existing. They will remain under permission of free India and not at all in the role of masters but of friends. My proposal presupposes shedding of all fear and distrust. If we have confidence in ourselves, we need neither fear nor suspect the presence of Allied troops.

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May I suggest also that it is altogether premature and wrong to pore over the weakest points of a very difficult project which may not be accepted even with the troops remaining in India? It will be most assuredly an event of the century and may be a turning point in the war if Britain can honestly perform the act of renouncing India with all that the renunciation would mean. The virtue and the value of the renunciation in my opinion will not be affected in the least, because the Allied troops will be operating in India with the sole object of preventing Japanese attack. After all India is as much interested as the Allies in warding off the attack and yet under my proposal India will not have to pay a single pie over the expenses of the troops.

As I have already said in the previous issue of *Harijan*, the British acceptance of my proposal may itself lead to a most honourable peace and hence automatic withdrawal of the troops. I would therefore ask the doubters to concentrate their attention upon the grandeur of the proposed renunciation and help to the utmost of their power the fruition of the great act. Let them not dread the presence of the troops in India for the purpose indicated but regard it as an inevitable part of the proposal so as to make it not only justifiable but foolproof. So far as I can see free India will run no risk by their presence. Her freedom will certainly suffer no diminution thereby.

The implications of my proposal are:

(1) India becomes free of all financial obligation to Britain;

(2) The annual drain to Great Britain stops automatically;

(3) All taxation ceases except what the replacing government imposes or retains;

(4) The dead weight of an all-powerful authority keeping under subjection the tallest in the land is lifted at once;

(5) In short, India begins a new chapter in her national life, as I shall hope to affect the fortunes of the war with non-violence as her predominant sanction. This non-violence will no longer take the shape of non-co-operation and the like. It will express itself in her ambassadors going to the Axis powers not to beg for peace but to show them the futility of war for achieving an honourable end. This can only be done if and when Britain sheds the gains of perhaps the most organized successful violence the world has seen.

All this may not come to pass, I do not mind. It is worth fighting for, it is worth staking all that the nation has.

SEVAGRAM, June 27, 1942

Harijan, 5-7-1942

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296. HOOLIGANISM[1]

The report of hooliganism at Rajaji's meeting in Matunga makes painful reading. Has Rajaji lost every title to respect because he has taken what seems to be an unpopular view? He went to Matunga on invitation. He was entitled to a patient hearing. Those who did not share his views might have abstained from attending the meeting, but having gone there they should have given him a hearing. They might have cross-questioned him. Those who tarred him and created a disturbance have disgraced themselves and have harmed their cause. Their way is neither the way to swaraj nor 'Akhand Hindustan'. It is to be hoped that the hooliganism at Matunga will be the last exhibition of barbarism. The calmness, good humour, presence of mind and determination that Rajaji showed at that trying time were worthy of him. These must bring him many admirers, if not even followers. For people generally do not weigh the pros and cons of a problem. They follow their heroes. And Rajaji has never lacked the qualities that go to make a hero.

SEVAGRAM, June 28, 1942

Harijan, 5-7-1942

297. QUESTION BOX

A FALLACY

Q. You consider it a vital necessity in terms of non-violence to allow the Allied troops to remain in India. You also say that, as you cannot present a foolproof non-violent method to prevent Japanese occupation of India, you cannot throw the Allies over-board. But, don't you consider that the non-violent force created by your action which will be sufficient to force the English to withdraw will be sufficiently strong to prevent Japanese occupation also? And is it not the duty of a non-violent resister to equally consider it a vital necessity to see that his country, his home and his all are not destroyed by allowing two foreign mad bulls to fight a deadly war on his soil?

A. There is an obvious fallacy in the question. I cannot all of a sudden produce in the minds of Britishers, who have

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

been for centuries trained to rely upon their muscle for their protection, a belief which has not made a very visible impression even on the Indian mind. Non-violent force must not act in the same way as violence. The refusal to allow the Allied troops to operate on the Indian soil can only add to the irritation already caused by my proposal. The first is inevitable, the second would be wanton.

Again, if the withdrawal is to take place, it won't be due merely to the non-violent pressure. And in any case what may be enough to affect the old occupant would be wholly different from what would be required to keep off the invader. Thus we can disown the authority of the British rulers by refusing taxes and in a variety of ways. These would be inapplicable to withstand the Japanese onslaught. Therefore, whilst we may be ready to face the Japanese, we may not ask the Britishers to give up their position of vantage merely on the unwarranted supposition that we would succeed by mere non-violent effort in keeping off the Japanese.

Lastly, whilst we must guard ourselves in our own way, our non-violence must preclude us from imposing on the British a strain which must break them. That would be a denial of our whole history for the past twenty-two years.

SEVAGRAM, June 28, 1942

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298. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 28, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

You may not expect long letters from me. I have read both the enclosed.

Sri Prakasa came last night. He did good work in Jodhpur.[1] It is good he went.

Khurshed too came today. Rajen Babu is here. I won't ask you to come down so long as I can help. It is good for you and Shummy that you are there during this season. For the last two days the weather is mild. We are having magnificent rains.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4135. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7444

[1] *Vide* "Jodhpur", pp. 258-9.

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299. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

June 28, 1942

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I have already told you that Ayurveda cannot be saved either by money or by State help. Would the State be able to revive Ayurveda even if it gave thousands of rupees every month to the purveyors of indigenous tonics? Hundreds of people have laid down their lives to spread allopathy. Allopathy by itself is not expensive but the doctors and the chemists have made it so. You have not seen their books giving the formula and cost of each important medicine. The cost price of Bayer's Sarsaparilla is one and a half pice but its market price today is ten rupees. The same is true of the doctors' fees. Ayurvedacharya Gananath Sen charges one thousand rupees for a day when he goes out of station. Without *yajna* there can be no achievement. *Yajna* implies ceaseless intelligent labour to the extent that it makes a person sweat and all that, again, dedicated to the Lord. Ayurveda has not yet become a science. In a science there is always scope for progress. Where is any progress here? Come when you feel like it.

Shankerlal Banker has again gone there. He has again fallen ill. Go and see him. Treat him if you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2919. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

300. QUESTION BOX

A BENGALI MOTHER'S TWO QUESTIONS

Q. Bengal is threatened by the Japanese menace. It is time now the political workers in this province composed their differences. I believe they will readily forget their domestic squabble only if the right person mediates. Would you not exert yourself to that end and save Bengal from the impending disaster?

A. What you say is too true. But I doubt if I am the right person to mediate. A Bengali should tackle the question. I would

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go to Bengal today, if I had the confidence that I could perform the trick. When one comes to think of it, the differences are too trivial to need any mediation.

Q. My husband is a teacher employed in a school of Calcutta. His income is already alarmingly diminished. It is apprehended in a month or so he will have no income at all. He has now seven dependants. Formerly he earned just enough to provide his family with the ordinary necessities of life. He has now nothing to fall back upon. I know my husband is patriotic and Congress-minded. But in order to be able to give us food he finds no alternative but to join war-service. What else can he do? What is your advice to those who are similarly stranded?

A. This is a very serious question. I know that joining the military is the shortest cut to bread-winning. If you and your husband are averse to all war like me, you will face starvation and prove your aversion. God will prevent you from dying of starvation. You might have to revise your way of living. Middle classes have to come down to the level of the peasantry. Then only shall we know real India and the way to deal with growing distress of the millions. But if you have no such aversion, I see no harm in your husband joining military service. He will do no worse then many are doing.

SEVAGRAM, June 29, 1942

Harijan, 5-7-1942

301. JODHPUR[1]

Shri Sri Prakasa who went to Jodhpur at my request to do whatever he could to ease the atmosphere, interview the authorities and know their version of the affair has returned and given me his report which leaves no doubt that free use has been made by the authorities of the lathi in order to repress the people. He nevertheless tells me that some members of the Lok Parishad have not always been discreet in their language. He was told by the authorities that they had no objection to the Lok Parishad holding meetings and asking for responsible government so long as the language was kept within bounds. He also tells me that the Jodhpur Government are anxious to reduce to some kind of order the admitted irresponsibility of Jagirdars, but that the passage from feudalism to legalism must take some time. So

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

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far as the treatment of political prisoners is concerned, Shri Sri Prakasa has hope that it would be better, though he has also hope that, given some accommodation on the part of the local workers, there should be no political prisoners at all. If all his hopes are fulfilled, the visit although brought about accidentally, will have borne ample result and the hunger-strike of the prisoners and the sad death of Balmukund Bisa would not have gone in vain. Shri Sri Prakasa tells me too that though the death was due somewhat, no doubt, to bad prison accommodation, there was no callousness on the part of the prison authorities. Deaths will occur even in the best of circumstances. We may not therefore always blame authorities whenever a death occurs in a prison. Every case has to be examined and judged on merits. I understand that Balmukund Bisa was a very fine worker. He leaves a large family to mourn him. It is hoped that the citizens of Jodhpur will provide for the widow and children to whom I send my condolences.

Shri Sri Prakasa has brought me a leaflet from Beawar, which contains language which a satyagrahi will not use. It is to be hoped that the workers will be careful in the choice of the language they use. I would ask them to keep themselves in touch with Shri (not Dr. as I had called him by mistake)[1] Kachru who will be in Jodhpur till the whole trouble has subsided.

SEVAGRAM, June 29, 1942

Harijan, 5-7-1942

302. LETTER TO H.E.B. CATLEY

SEVAGRAM,
June 29, 1942

DEAR MR. CATLEY,

I wish I could send you an encouraging reply to your effort. Time alone will show which way the right lay.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. B. CATLEY ESQ.
EDITOR, "PIONEER"
LUCKNOW

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* p. 221.

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303. LETTER TO F. A. FAJALBHAI

June 29, 1942

BHAI FAJALBHAI,

The ideal must be what you state. But it is difficult to win over the trustees at once. I have not gone deep into this, nor have I the time for that.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10665

304. LETTER TO GAJANAN T. MADKHOLKAR

June 29, 1942

BHAI MADKHOLKAR[1],

Your letter is lying before me. The thing is I am in a dilemma. I fully endorse the idea of bringing together all the areas of Maharashtra into one province. But I am doubtful about the wisdom of starting a movement for the purpose at the present juncture. I don't know how far it is proper to attach special importance to this one problem when everything is threatened. If in the end India attains independence all such problems will be solved automatically. That being my view, what help can I give you?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Marathi novelist and editor of *Tarun Bharat* of Nagpur

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305. LETTER TO PARACHURE SHASTRI

June 29, 1942

SHASTRIJI,

Prof. Rajwade's opinion is the best. He may come whenever he feels like it. I will try to give him some time, however little it may be.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10672

306. BADSHAH KHAN'S POPULARITY

The Associated Press has circulated the following note about Khan Saheb:

> The Frontier Provincial Congress Committee has released the following statement:
>
> "We warn the public against the false propaganda that is being carried on against Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the undisputed leader of the Pathans and the Khudai Khidmatgar movement, in certain sections of the Press. It has been hinted that the differences have arisen among the workers and party-politics is raising its ugly head. Not a single Khudai Khidmatgar has so far resigned. They are all united like one man under Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's leadership. All talk about parties among them has no foundation whatsoever. All these so-called differences, etc., exist only in the imagination of a few interested people who are craving for offices and think that by encouraging such talk they can gain their end. The Government is at the back of all such propaganda. But these people have no following among the Frontier masses. Every true nationalist in the Frontier clearly realizes that we can have nothing to do with the British Government in India, much less with offices. Whatever attraction the parliamentary programme may have elsewhere in India, it has certainly no place in the Frontier.
>
> "Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's peaceful constructive humanitarian work among the villages for the maintenance of internal security and self-sufficiency in matters of food and cloth has further endeared him to the people especially the poor. He has been hoping to carry his

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message of peace and goodwill even to the neighbouring tribes. He has been devoting all his energy to raise a non-violent and peaceful army who can render true service to the people under difficult days ahead. What the Government has failed to achieve at the cost of millions of rupees he is attempting to do with purely voluntary help. He deserves the sympathy and co-operation of every man, woman and child of the Frontier in this noble work. We hope that the Frontier masses will respond to his call and the Press and journalists of India who have the true interests of the country at heart will take a dispassionate interest in his work."

The Frontier Provincial Congress Committee has done well to pass the resolution and circulate the note. But Badshah Khan's reputation rests on much more solid ground than the resolution of the Frontier Provincial Congress Committee. It rests on the strength of selfless service rendered for nearly a quarter of a century and the affection of the people won through that service. In spite of traducers Khan Saheb has come triumphant through every ordeal so far. And I have little doubt that when the next test comes, he will show the same popularity as he has shown before.

SEVAGRAM, June 30, 1942

Harijan, 5-7-1942

307. LETTER TO SYED JAMIL WASTI

June 30, 1942

DEAR SYED SAHEB,

Many thanks for your letter with enclosure. I have read the letter with interest. Whether social reform has connection with political liberty in the manner you state or not, I agree with you that it must come. I am doing all I can in that direction.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

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308. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS HARAKHCHAND

June 30, 1942

BHAI BHAGWANLAL,

You have not been fair. You are angry. It is not a question of trusting or not trusting. I have not read Dhebarbhai's report at all. It is a question of how one looks at it. The terms which you find satisfactory might be irksome to me.[1] That is why I suggested that you should let a person who could see it with my eyes examine it. Are you and Rasiklal opposed to each other there? You were always together. How come you have suddenly turned adversaries? Under the circumstances how can I have the facts?

I can understand your inability to have one of my men admitted, but I cannot understand your anger.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

309. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 30, 1942

CHI. NARANDAS,

What did you expect?

The whole plan about Jayanti was yours. I do not think it is proper to wind up the work. Let them do what they like in Chalala. You may keep the fund you have collected for Rajkot only. Consult the Association if you want. It would not be proper if you do not. However, I cannot insist if you are not keen.

It is really a sad thing that Abha fell ill soon after arriving there. It would be better to give her a mosquito-net. She should be careful about her chronic constipation. Here we are having welcome rains.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8606. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] The reference is to the compromise over the struggle in the State of Limdi; *vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", pp. 182-3 and 205-6.

310. LETTER TO FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA (INDIA),
July 1, 1942

DEAR FRIEND,

I twice missed coming to your great country. I have the privilege [of] having numerous friends there both known and unknown to me. Many of my countrymen have received and are still receiving higher education in America. I know too that several have taken shelter there. I have profited greatly by the writings of Thoreau and Emerson. I say this to tell you how much I am connected with your country. Of Great Britain I need say nothing beyond mentioning that in spite of my intense dislike of British rule, I have numerous personal friends in England whom I love as dearly as my own people. I had my legal education there. I have therefore nothing but good wishes for your country and Great Britain. You will therefore accept my word that my present proposal, that the British should unreservedly and without reference to the wishes of the people of India immediately withdraw their rule, is prompted by the friendliest intention. I would like to turn into goodwill the ill will which, whatever may be said to the contrary, exists in India towards Great Britain and thus enable the millions of India to play their part in the present war.

My personal position is clear. I hate all war. If, therefore, I could persuade my countrymen, they would make a most effective and decisive contribution in favour of an honourable peace. But I know that all of us have not a living faith in non-violence. Under foreign rule however we can make no effective contribution of any kind in this war, except as helots.

The policy of the Indian National Congress, largely guided by me, has been one of non-embarrassment to Britain, consistently with the honourable working of the Congress, admittedly the largest political organization, of the longest standing in India. The British policy as exposed by the Cripps mission and rejected by almost all parties has opened our eyes and has driven me to the proposal I have made. I hold that the full acceptance of my proposal and that alone can put the Allied cause on an unassailable basis. I venture to think that the Allied declaration that the Allies are fighting to make the world safe for freedom of the

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individual and for democracy sounds hollow so long as India and, for that matter, Africa are exploited by Great Britain and America has the Negro problem in her own home. But in order to avoid all complications, in my proposal I have confined myself only to India. If India becomes free, the rest must follow, if it does not happen simultaneously.

In order to make my proposal foolproof I have suggested that, if the Allies think it necessary, they may keep their troops, at their own expense in India, not for keeping internal order but for preventing Japanese aggression and defending China. So far as India is concerned, we must become free even as America and Great Britain are. The Allied troops will remain in India during the war under treaty with the free Indian Government that may be formed by the people of India without any outside interference, direct or indirect.

It is on behalf of this proposal that I write this to enlist your active sympathy.

I hope that it would commend itself to you.

Mr. Louis Fischer is carrying this letter to you.

If there is any obscurity in my letter, you have but to send me word and I shall try to clear it.

I hope finally that you will not resent this letter as an intrusion but take it as an approach from a friend and well-wisher of the Allies.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

From a photostat: G.N. 873. Also facsimile in *Mahatma*, Vol. VI, between pp. 152 and 153

311. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
July 2, 1942

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I venture to approach you again on a humanitarian matter wholly unconnected with politics.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, who has been touring in Bihar, brings me the news that British and American troops are spread all over Bihar and that numberless cattle are slaughtered for their beef.

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These include milch cows and plough cattle. Though the number of cattle in India is great a vast number, if not the majority, are, as you are aware, a burden upon the land. Now if plough cattle and milch cows are slaughtered the burden increases and ploughing becomes difficult and the milk supply which is already poor suffers further reduction. I wonder if you can use your influence with the Military so as to save milch cows and plough cattle from slaughter.[1]

When you write to them please send my regards to Lady Anne[2] and Southby[3]. I hope they and the baby are getting on well.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Transfer of Power, Vol. II, p. 303

312. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

July 2, 1942

CHI. KRI[SHNA]CH[ANDRA],

Let Sinhraj be there. I will see about Chandrashekhar.

I understand about Mohan Singh. I think it should suffice to put some potassium permanganate in the water but it would be better for those who have any doubt to boil it. Ask them. We shall manage with some other cereal in place of wheat. We shall live on potatoes and other roots if we do not get even *bajra*, *jawar*, rice, etc., or, if the situation worsens still further, on whatever God gives. However, everything should be given by weight.

If you can give facilities to Rajarao without much difficulty, then do so.

Let the Ferozepur people stay.

Whatever is necessary should be done for Ramdas's friends.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4436; also S.N. 24485

[1] For further correspondence on the subject, *vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 27-7-1942.

[2] Lady Anne Hope, eldest daughter of Lord Linlithgow

[3] Patrick H. J. Southby, R.N., Lady Anne Hope's husband

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313. QUESTION BOX

An Omission

At the Goseva Sangh Conference of 1st February last held at Wardha I said:

> Chaunde Maharaj . . . whilst he accepts my facts and even arguments . . . says, 'what about the public sentiment? They somehow want to save the cow from the butcher.'

And again

> But the good Chaunde Maharaj wonders if people can be persuaded to believe that dead cow's hide is sacred.[1]

Shri Chaunde Maharaj of Govardhan Sanstha, who was present at the meeting, came to me and told me that the remark could not be applied to him as he did not favour the purchase of cows from butchers and did not discard the use of dead cattle hide. I told him that I would mention his assurance in *Harijan*. He reminds me that the report has appeared without the mention and it is likely to harm the Institution. I am sorry, I forgot to mention the conversation in *Harijan* and that my omission caused grief to the Maharaj. As to the use of dead cattle hide, I may point out that it is not enough not to discard the use of dead cattle hide, it is necessary to discard the use of slaughter hide and insist on the use of dead cattle hide where slaughter hide was used. Probably that is what his letter means but has failed to convey.

Sevagram, July 3, 1942

Harijan, 12-7-1942

314. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Sevagram, Wardha,
July 3, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

You are too much disturbed about me. There is nothing but fatigue. I shall try to give me as much rest as possible.

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXV, pp. 273-7.

J. L. and Mridula are coming tomorrow. Satyavati comes tonight. Profulla tomorrow.[1] Ku. and Kamla are here. So you see we are a large family. Kher was here about Goseva and several others. They all went yesterday or the day before.

Jodhpur's letter is bad but what more can you expect from these gentlemen. Let us hope that Sri Prakasa's visit will be fruitful.

Ba has a little fever today after a long spell of freedom. I think she will be free tomorrow.

Narendra Dev is splendid. He has 4 lb. of milk and still feels hungry!!!

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4136. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7445

315. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
[About *July 3, 1942*][2]

CHI. AMRIT,

Don't worry about me. The fatigue is due purely to want of rest. You may descend when you wish to but not so as to offend Shummy. Of course I will send for you when necessary. The weather just now is superb.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4269. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7901

316. GURU GOVIND SINGH

At last after diligent search Mahadev Desai and others have traced the writing in which I have referred to Guru Govind Singh.[3] It appears in *Young India* of 9th April, 1925. It is headed 'My Friend the Revolutionary'. I would commend it to my Sikh friends and, for that matter, others the whole of the article. It is

[1] In the margin somebody has written "has come today".

[2] *Vide* the preceding item where too Gandhiji speaks of fatigue.

[3] In the article "For the Sikh Friends", 26-6-42, Gandhiji had said that he could not find the writing in which he was alleged to have said that Guru Govind Singh was a misguided patriot. For the text of the article, *vide* Vol. XXVI, pp. 486-92.

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seasonable and they will profit by it, whether they accept or reject the views propounded in it. Here I must content myself with only relevant extracts from that article. Here they are:

> "One of your objections against the revolutionaries is that their movement is not mass-movement, consequently the mass at large will be very little benefited by the revolution, for which we are preparing. That is indirectly saying that we shall be most benefited by it. Is it really what you mean to say? Do you believe that those persons who are ever ready to die for their country—those mad lovers of their country—I mean the revolutionaries of India in whom the spirit of *Nishkama Karma* reigns, will betray their motherland and secure privileges for a life—this trifling life? It is true that we will not drag the mass just now in the field of action, because we know that it is weak; but when the preparation is complete we shall call them in the open field. We profess to understand the present Indian psychology full well, because we daily get the chance of weighing our brethren along with ourselves. We know the mass of India is after all Indian, it is not weak by itself but there is want of efficient leaders; so when we have begot the number of leaders required by constant propaganda and preaching, and the arms, we shall not shrink from calling, and if necessary, dragging the mass in the open field to prove that they are the descendants of Shivaji, Ranjit, Pratap and Govind Singh. Besides we have been constantly preaching that the mass is not for the revolution but the revolution is for the mass. Is it sufficient to remove your prejudice in this connection?"
>
> I neither say nor imply that the revolutionary benefits if the masses do not. On the contrary, and as a rule, the revolutionary never benefits in the ordinary sense of the word. If the revolutionaries succeed in attracting, not 'dragging', the masses to them, they will find that the murderous campaign is totally unnecessary. It sounds very pleasant and exciting to talk of 'the descendants of Shivaji, Ranjit, Pratap and Govind Singh'. But is it true? Are we all descendants of these heroes in the sense in which the writer understands it? We are their countrymen, but their descendants are the military classes. We may in future be able to obliterate caste, but today it persists, and therefore the claim put up by the writer cannot in my opinion be sustained.
>
> "Last of all, I shall ask you to answer these questions: Was Guru Govind Singh a misguided patriot because he believed in warfare for noble cause? What will you like to say about Washington, Garibaldi and Lenin? What do you think of Kamal Pasha and De Valera? Would you like to call Shivaji and Pratap well-meaning and sacrificing physicians who prescribed arsenic when they should have given fresh grape-juice? Will you like to call Krishna Europeanized because he believed also in the *vinasha of dushkritas*?"

This is a hard or rather awkward question. But I dare not shirk it. In the first instance Guru Govind Singh and the others whose names are mentioned did not believe in secret murder. In the second, these patriots knew their work and their men, whereas the modern Indian revolutionary does not know his work. He has not the men, he has not the atmosphere, that the patriots mentioned had. Though my views are derived from my theory of life I have not put them before the nation on that ground. I have based my opposition to the revolutionaries on the sole ground of expedience. Therefore, to compare their activities with those of Guru Govind Singh or Washington or Garibaldi or Lenin would be most misleading and dangerous. But by test of the theory of non-violence I do not hesitate to say that it is highly likely that, had I lived as their contemporary and in the respective countries, I would have called every one of them a misguided patriot, even though a successful and brave warrior. As it is, I must not judge them. I disbelieve history so far as details of acts of heroes are concerned. I accept broad facts of history and draw my own lessons for my conduct. I do not want to repeat it in so far as the broad facts contradict the highest laws of life. But I positively refuse to judge men from the scanty material furnished to us by history. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum.* Kamal Pasha and De Valera too I cannot judge. But for me as a believer in non-violence out-and-out they cannot be my guides in life in so far as their faith in war is concerned. I believe in Krishna perhaps more than the writer. But my Krishna is the Lord of the Universe, the creator, preserver and destroyer of us all. He may destroy because He creates. But I must not be drawn into a philosophical or religious argument with my friends. I have not the qualifications for teaching my philosophy of life. I have barely qualifications for practising the philosophy I believe. I am but a poor struggling soul yearning to be wholly good—wholly truthful and wholly non-violent in thought, word and deed, but ever failing to reach the ideal which I know to be there. I admit, and assure my revolutionary friends, it is a painful climb, but the pain of it is a positive pleasure for me. Each step upward makes me feel stronger and fit for the next. But all that pain and the pleasure are for me. The revolutionaries are at liberty to reject the whole of my philosophy. To them I merely present my own experiences as a co-worker in the same cause even as I have successfully presented them to the Ali Brothers and many other friends. They can and do applaud whole-heartedly the action of Mustafa Kamal Pasha and possibly De Valera and Lenin. But they realize with me that India is not like Turkey or Ireland or Russia and that revolutionary activity is suicidal at this stage of the country's life at any rate, if not for all time, in a country so vast, so hopelessly divided and with the masses so deeply sunk in pauperism and so fearfully terror-struck.

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I reverted to the same subject in another article written a short time after, from which I need take only the following lines:

> My belief about the Sikh Gurus is that they were all deeply religious teachers and reformers, that they were all Hindus, and that Guru Govind Singh was one of the greatest defenders of Hinduism. I believe too that he drew the sword in its defence. But I cannot judge his actions nor can I use him as my model so far as his resort to the sword is concerned.[1]

It must be clear even to him who runs that I never applied the word 'misguided patriot', to the Great Guru and that I have not written a word in disrespect or of which I have any reason to be ashamed or to repent. I abide by every word I have said in that article. I hope that now that the source of the mischief has been traced it will abate entirely and the Sikhs will count me, though a humble Hindu, as a fellow devotee of the Panth.

SEVAGRAM, July 4, 1942

Harijan, 12-7-1942

317. "SARVODAYA"[2]

Lovers of Hindi already know that the *Sarvodaya* is a monthly published from Wardha. Kaka Kalelkar and Dada Dharmadhikari are its editors. In fact there are three editors because Kishorelal generally contributes to every issue. The aim of this monthly is to conduct a theoretical discussion of the science of satyagraha and to propagate it in its purest form, so that the whole world may be uplifted. This monthly is being published for the last four years but every year there has been a loss of about two to three thousand rupees. The question therefore is whether it should be continued in spite of so much loss. Many friends are of the opinion that *Sarvodaya* should be continued even at a loss. While others ask if it is any use continuing it when it is not worth the cost of its production. Both these views can be defended to some extent. But the middle course would be to consult the subscribers. They do not have a clear picture of the loss. If they think that the publication of *Sarvodaya* is necessary, then each one of them should enroll at least one new subscriber, then alone can we make up the loss. At present there are

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXVIII, p. 263.

[2] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

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about nine hundred subscribers. The loss can be covered if there are two thousand of them. Those who are unable to enroll new subscribers but are rich can themselves pay for one or two subscribers. There are always some people who are curious but would want a free copy. In fact they cannot afford to pay the subscription. So if we have someone to pay their subscription, *Sarvodaya* can be sent to them regularly. The main reason for publishing this in *Harijan Sevak* is that those other than the subscribers of *Sarvodaya* may also know about the loss. The policy of *Sarvodaya* is exactly the same as that of *Harijan*. But in *Sarvodaya* the policy advocated in *Harijan* is discussed theoretically and objectively. However, it is not obligatory on the part of the editors of *Sarvodaya* to follow the policy of *Harijan*. They propagate it as far as they agree with it. There is another temptation in continuing *Sarvodaya*, i. e., since its editors try to keep it away from so-called politics it will remain safe in case *Harijan* is in danger and people will get at least something through it.

SEVAGRAM, July 4, 1942

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 12-7-1942

318. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 4, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

There is nothing wrong with me. What can I report? What was to be reported I did report. The magnificent weather has not brought me strength. It can come only from rest. I am making adjustments.

Your letter to Jodhpur is quite all right; not much is to be expected from these people.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Ba is much better.

From the original: C.W. 4137. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7446

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319. LETTER TO B. M. CHAUNDE

July 4, 1942

It is good you have reminded me. I shall correct the error.[1] You say that you do not refuse to use hides of dead cattle. You should have said that you object to hides of slaughtered animals and use leather got only from dead cattle.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI GORAKSHA SAMSTHA
455 SADASHIV PETH
POONA CITY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

320. QUESTION BOX

THE CONFLAGRATION

Q. What is the difference between Nero and yourself? Nero was fiddling when Rome was burning. Will you be also fiddling in Sevagram after you have ignited the fire which you will not be able to quench?

A. The difference will be known if match, if I have ever to light it, does not prove a 'damp squib'. Instead of fiddling in Sevagram you may expect to find me perishing in the flames of my own starting if I cannot regulate or restrain them. But I have a grouse against you. Why should you shove all the blame on to me for all that may happen by reason of my taking action for the discharge of an overdue debt and that, too, just when the discharge has become the necessary condition of my life?

In their schools the rulers teach us to sing "Britons never shall be slaves." How can the refrain enthuse their slaves? The British are pouring blood like water and squandering gold like dust in order to preserve their liberty. Or, is it their right to enslave India and Africa? Why should Indians do less to free themselves from bondage? It is misuse of language to liken to

[1] *Vide* p. 267.

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the action of Nero that of a man who, in order to escape living death, lights his own funeral pyre to end the agony.

ANDHRA SEPARATION

Q. You have, no doubt unintentionally, rather adversely affected Maharaj Kumar Sir Vijaya Anand's popularity in Andhra by your ridiculing a part of Sir Vijaya's letter on Andhra separation;[1] and do you regard Andhra separation in the same light as Pakistan, as some people in Andhra fear you do?

A. You are right in saying that I ridiculed Sir Vijaya's letter. I could take that liberty with him. But nothing could be further from my thought than to discredit him in any way. What reflection there was was meant for his informants. As his letter showed, he had given me the impressions of his informants. Every one of us is liable to be misled by our informants. He is among the very few zamindars who have taken up the popular cause. It will be a pity if the Andhras, by putting a wrong construction on my letter to him, fail to avail themselves of his services.

As to the second question, there can be no comparison between Pakistan and Andhra separation. The Andhra separation is a redistribution on a linguistic basis. The Andhras do not claim to be a separate nation having nothing in common with the rest of India. Pakistan on the other hand is a demand for carving out of India a portion to be treated as a wholly independent sovereign State. Thus there seems to be nothing common between the two.

SEVAGRAM, July 5, 1942

Harijan, 12-7-1942

321. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 5, 1942

MY DEAR C.R.,

Mahadev was telling me how sad you were over my obstinacy in not appreciating what was so plain to you.[2] All I can

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXV, pp. 414-5.

[2] The addressee was of the opinion that in order to hasten the formation of the National Government, the Congress should acknowledge the Muslim League's claim for separation.

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say is that there is no want of will about me. But I am built that way. Once an idea possesses me I can't easily get rid of the possession. I suppose you are of the same build. Therefore there seems to be no escape but to suffer each other's limitations.

But the reason for writing this is different. Vallabhbhai came today. He is firmly of opinion that in carrying on your propaganda, you are breaking the written word. So long as you remain a member of the Assembly under the Congress ticket, which binds its members to carry out the policy from time to time laid down by the A. I. C. C., you are bound to carry it out. If that is so, it is your duty to resign the membership of the Assembly.[1] You may not discuss at this stage the reasonableness or otherwise of the pledge. I want you to be above board. You should obey Vallabhbhai's ruling. The other members too feel likewise.

And in any case I have told you it will be most becoming for you to sever your connection with the Congress and then carry on your campaign with all the zeal and ability you are capable of.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2091

322. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

SEVAGRAM,
July 5, 1942

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. You have sought my permission to come here. So far as I am concerned, you have it. Deo's permission also is essential. Get your doubts removed when you come. If you use your intelligence, you yourself can solve all your doubts. I assure you that there is no substance in them. There is no time to write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10428. Also C.W. 6867. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

[1] He resigned from the Congress and the Assembly on July 15. *Vide* also "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", p. 293.

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323. TO MUSLIM CORRESPONDENTS

"How can you think of a mass movement for liberation without first closing with Muslims?", ask Muslim correspondents whose letters fill my file. I used at one time to think like my correspondents. But I see that for the moment I cannot reach the Muslim mind. The Muslim League blocks my way. I try to read the League newspapers. They give me a peep into the League mind in so far as they represent it. In their opinion I am thoroughly untrustworthy. Even my services during the Khilafat days wear for them a sinister meaning. I am quite clear in my mind that this is a passing phase. I am not aware of having done a single disservice to any Muslim cause or a Muslim person. Thank God, even today I claim numerous Muslim friends.

I do not know how to get rid of the distrust. "Give Pakistan," say my critics. I answer, "It is not in my giving." If I felt convinced of the rightness of the demand, I should certainly work for it side by side with the League. But I do not. I would like to be convinced. Nobody has yet told me all its implications. Those that are described in the anti-Pakistan Press are too terrible to contemplate. But I cannot take them from the opposition. Only the protagonists know what they want and mean. I plead for such an exposition. Surely Pakistanis want to convert the opposition, not to force them? Has an attempt been ever made to meet the opposition in a friendly manner and to convert them? I am sure the Congress is willing to be converted, let alone me.

But what am I to do meanwhile? I feel that now is the time for India to play an effective part in the fortunes of the war, if she becomes free from British servitude. I am convinced too that nothing stands in the way of that freedom except British unwillingness to give up India as the happy hunting-ground for the British that she has been for three centuries. If she gives up India, she might as well give up fighting, says the imperialist. If such is the case, what is all this war for? The original fighters are Great Britain and Germany. Was India the hidden stake between the two? This is all speculation I know. The truth will be known presently. Thinking Indians cannot idle away their time. I think that even a large number, if not all of us, are prepared to undergo any

sacrifice that may fall to our lot, would impress the British rulers that they can no longer hold India as a British possession. I believe too that such a number is available. Needless to say, their action must be non-violent, irrespective of their belief, as even a military man's has often to be, on behalf of his cause. The fight has been conceived in the interest of the whole of India. The fighters will gain no more than the poorest Indian. They will fight, not to seize power but to end the foreign domination, cost what it may.

What will happen after, if ever we reach that stage, will depend upon how we act when the all-powerful British hand is withdrawn. We may quarrel among ourselves or we may adjust our quarrels and agree to set up ordered rule on behalf of the people. It may be a democratic constitution or unadulterated autocracy or oligarchy. The conception is not that of a settlement with the British Government. That could happen only if there is a settlement between the principal parties, and as a preliminary the Congress and the League. But that so far as I can see is not to be.

Therefore the only settlement with the British Government can be that their rule should end leaving India to her fate. Thus assuming that the British leave, there is no government and no constitution, British or other. Therefore there is no Central Government. Militarily the most powerful party may set up its rule and impose it on India if the people submit. Muslims may declare Pakistan and nobody may resist them. Hindus may do likewise, Sikhs may set up their rule in territories inhabited by them. There is no end to the possibilities. And to all this idle speculation let me suggest one more addition. The Congress and the League being best organized parties in the country may come to terms and set up a provisional government acceptable to all. And this may be followed by a duly elected Constituent Assembly.

The movement has only one aim—that is, of displacing the British Power. If that happy event comes about and if it is followed by a stable government, it will most assuredly decide the fate of the war—I shall hope in a non-violent manner. India can show no other strength during this war at any rate. Why should not Muslims who believe in Pakistan but also believe in independent India join such a struggle? If on the other hand they believe in Pakistan through British aid and under British aegis, it is a different story. I have no place in it.

SEVAGRAM, July 6, 1942

Harijan, 12-7-1942

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324. A. I. S. A. AND KINDRED INSTITUTIONS[1]

The question of the connection with present politics of the members and the staff of the A. I. S. A., A. I. V. I. A., the Hindustani Talimi Sangh and the kindred institutions was raised at the recent meeting of the A. I. S. A. held in Wardha and is being raised by numerous correspondents. It is better therefore for me to give my opinion in sufficient detail for the guidance of the persons concerned. These institutions, though some are creations of the Congress, are wholly autonomous and unconnected with Congress or other politics. Their mission is humanitarian, social, educational, economic or all combined. Their work is wholly constructive and creative. But it is true that most men and women in charge of them are Congressmen or Congress-minded, though they are open to all. There are cases of men unconnected with the Congress being found actively engaged in working or aiding them. These institutions must not lose this non-political character of theirs, if they are to retain their prestige, usefulness, and efficiency such as it is.

This is simple enough. But the question raised is complicated. It is clear that the members and the staff may not take part in any civil resistance movement and be still connected with these organizations. But what are they to do if they see a civil resister belaboured or a general lathi charge takes place in front of them? I say unhesitatingly that the workers in these institutions are bound to render such aid as they can at the moment without considering the consequences. This intervention is itself pure humanitarian work. Persons engaged in these institutions must not be cowards nor may their work be used as a halter round their necks making them useless for service. It is this fear of losing one's job or risking the safety of one's organization that has played a large part in hindering our march to freedom. During the previous struggles all the most scrupulous care to avoid even the remotest suspicion of participation in politics did not save the men and these organizations from the attention of the authorities. Therefore the golden rule is to dare to do the right at any cost. But there should be no camouflage, no secrecy, no make-believe. Those

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

who feel the urge to take part in the coming movement must resign before joining it. In all other respects the organizations should run their even course. Every moment they are building the temple of liberty and when it is won they will all be required as specialists for the numerous nation-building activities. Let them therefore diligently add to their knowledge and usefulness. During all these twenty-two years the true workers have proved their worth, they are responsible for creating and distributing lacs worth of material and lacs of rupees among lacs of poor men and women who, but for the work provided, would have lived in a state of semi-starvation.

SEVAGRAM, July 6, 1942

Harijan, 12-7-1942

325. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 6, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

M. and Sardar came yesterday. The W. C. is sitting today. All have not yet arrived. I have been excused from attendance for today. Maulana and J. L. are coming in at 5 p. m. Mira and Mahtab came last night. Mira is cheerful. Satyavati and Brijkishen went today and Kamala went yesterday. Mridula came with M. Ba is quite well. Khurshed had a scorpion sting on her finger. She is brave about it. This completes the news.

I am well. The weather has given me more energy. I sleep as much as I can—three times in the day and four sometimes. Silence and closed eyes during walks.

Shummy should have nature-cure. He can certainly have a renewed constitution. But that is like preaching to the winds.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4138. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7447

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326. LETTER TO D.

July 6, 1942

MY DEAR D.,

Your letter does not surprise me. But you have to smile over these trifles. You should come here and assist. You know there is always a place for you with me. I am writing this in the midst of work. Come in when you can. Drop a line or a wire in advance.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

327. FOR MIDDLEMEN[1]

I am having pathetic letters from a number of[2] people bitterly complaining about grain merchants. The substance of these letters is, "why should we serve these merchants when they will not sell grain, though they have the stock, unless we pay prices higher than those fixed by the Government and in every case at prices beyond our reach? What is there left for us but to starve or loot?"

The complaint is just and universal. The Government is no doubt most answerable for this state of things. They have sent out grain and they do not know how to deal with the stock there is in the country. Prices must be regulated and there must be grain offices like post offices where people can buy grain like stamps. But people cannot starve while Government are learning wisdom. It is therefore the duty of the whole mercantile community to take the matter into their own hands and ensure a regular supply of grain to the poor at reasonable rates. The Government can't interfere with any such humanitarian effort. It will be a real help to them if the merchants perform what is their obvious duty. This requires voluntary co-operation of the whole mercantile community of India. But the beginning must

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

[2] The source has "from upper poor people".

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be made with the provinces or even districts. The matter brooks no delay. Hunger knows no law and bread—or rather grain—riots are sure to break out all over the country if energetic benevolent measures are not taken in time.

SEVAGRAM, July 7, 1942

Harijan, 12-7-1942

328. LETTER TO JAGDISH AND CHANDRAMUKHI

SEVAGRAM,
July 8, 1942

CHI. JAGDISH AND CHI. CHANDRAMUKHI,

Chi. Kamalnayan has sought my blessings for both of you through Jankibehn. How can I refuse? I hear that money was spent without any restraint on your marriage. As far as I am concerned I do not like all that. Live long, be happy and at the same time have consideration for the poor and serve them in whatever you do.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 345

329. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,
July 9, 1942

RAJKUMARI
MANORVILLE
SIMLA WEST

CONSERVING ENERGY. DON'T WORRY. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4139. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7448

330. LETTER TO HORACE ALEXANDER

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 9, 1942

MY DEAR HORACE,

I have your dear letter. Of course you will do as the spirit moves you. You will come when you like and so will Symonds.

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But when you find anything to criticize you will do so as frankly and fearlessly as Charlie used to do. Of course your primary mission is ambulance work and if you found avoiding of me or Sevagram necessary, you will unhesitatingly avoid me.[1] I shall not misunderstand you in any way whatever.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1435

331. DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR THE CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE[2]

July 9, 1942

Events happening from day to day and the experience that the people of India are passing through confirm the opinion of the Congressmen that British rule must end immediately, not merely because foreign domination, even at its best, is an evil in itself, but because India in bondage can play no effective part in affecting the fortunes of the war that is desolating men and their possessions; that is to say not merely in the interests of India, but for the safety of the world and for the destruction of Nazism, Fascism and whatever other 'ism' Japan stands for. Ever since the outbreak of the war the Congress has studiedly pursued the policy of non-embarrassment. Even at the risk of making its satyagraha ineffective it deliberately gave it a symbolic character, in the hope that this policy of non-embarrassment carried to its extreme limit would be duly appreciated, and that enough real power would be transferred to the popular representatives so as to enable the nation to make its fullest contribution towards the realization of human freedom throughout the world, which is in danger of being crushed. It had also hoped that

[1] The addressee, after a visit to New Delhi, had written to say that he had sensed that his association with Gandhiji was not liked there.

[2] This is the earliest available revised version of the resolution, finally passed by the Congress Working Committee on July 14 (various other intermediate versions of the Resolution are to be found in the *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*). The original draft was by Gandhiji. To Nehru Gandhiji says: "I have read the resolution. I note that you have tried to include some of my points" (p. 293). In a Press interview fie says: " . . . the Working Committee has worked on my draft . . . the Working Committee tried to accommodate me as much as they could . . . (p. 294). To Amrit Kaur again, he writes: "The resolution is my draft. Changes have been made for J. L.'s satisfaction, and of course Maulana's", p. 306. For the text, *vide* Appendix VI.

negatively nothing would be done which was calculated to tighten Britain's stranglehold on India. These hopes have however been dashed to pieces. The abortive Cripps proposals showed in the clearest possible manner that there was no change in the British attitude towards India and that the British hold on India was in no way to be relaxed. It has also been observed that the ill-will against the British is rapidly increasing and people openly wish success to the Japanese arms. The Congress would like to avoid the experience of Singapore, Malaya and Burma and turn ill-will into goodwill and make India a willing partner in their trial and troubles. This is possible only if India feels the glow of freedom from foreign domination.

The Congress is convinced that the only cure for this intolerable state of affairs is that the British rule in India should end forthwith. The Congress representatives tried their utmost to come to a settlement. But this has been made impossible by reason of the presence of the foreign power whose history has been to follow relentlessly the policy of divide and rule. Only after withdrawal of the British power can the wise men and women of the country put their heads together and evolve a scheme whereby a Constituent Assembly can be convened in order to prepare a constitution for the Government of India. When the British power is withdrawn the present unreality will give place to reality *and the prince and the peasant will stand on a par*, the present political parties formed chiefly with an eye to the attention of the British power will probably be dissolved. For the first time in India's history realization will come home that Princes, *jagirdars*, zamindars, propertied and monied classes derive their wealth and property from the workers in the fields or factories to whom alone all power and authority must belong. In making the proposal for withdrawal the Congress has no desire whatsoever to embarrass Great Britain or the Allied powers in their prosecution of the War. The proposed withdrawal therefore should not in any way be interpreted as an invitation to Japan or the other members of the Axis to attack India and thus immediately to suffocate China. Nor does the Congress intend to jeopardize the defensive capacity of the Allied powers. Therefore the Congress would be reconciled, if the Allies regard it to be necessary, to the presence *at their own expense* of their troops in India in order to ward off Japanese or other aggression and to protect and help China.

The proposal of withdrawal was never intended to mean the physical withdrawal of all Britishers from India, certainly not

of those who would make India their home and live there as citizens and as equals with the others.

If the withdrawal takes place with goodwill, it is highly likely that there would be little difficulty in establishing a stable provisional government in India. The Congress however is not unmindful of the possibility of a temporary breakdown of the ordered machinery of government. Anarchy may set in and instead of different parties coming together for the common good they may compete with one another in establishing their own authority. It is a risk which has got to be run in any country in order to achieve freedom. The Congress therefore wishes to take no hasty step but would bespeak the help of the Allies in securing British acceptance of its demand.

Should however the appeal fail, the Congress will be reluctantly compelled to utilize all the non-violent strength it might have gathered since 1920 when it adopted non-violence as part of its policy for the vindication of political rights and liberty. The struggle this time would have to resolve itself into a mass movement on the widest scale possible involving voluntary strikes, voluntary non-co-operation on the part of all those who are in Government employ or in departments connected with Government in any shape or form and it may involve also non-payment of land revenue and taxes.

For the regulation and quick development of the mass movement the Working Committee authorize Gandhiji to take charge of it and regulate it in the manner he may think advisable. In order that adequate time may be given to the Allied powers to consider and respond to the Congress appeal, as also to educate public opinion and to let the A.I.C.C. share the responsibility with the Working Committee for the tremendous step contemplated, the Committee fixes . . .for the meeting of the A. I. C. C. at. . .until which time the resolution should remain suspended.

SEVAGRAM, July 9, 1942

From a typed copy: Jawaharlal Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

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332. CONGRESS AND WAR CONTRACTS[1]

Q. Is it proper for Congressmen, especially members of Congress Committees, to accept war contracts?

A. This question should be properly addressed to the Working Committee. Personally however I think that Congressmen cannot accept war contracts.

SEVAGRAM, July 10, 1942

Harijan, 19-7-1942

333. QUESTION BOX

HONOURABLE MEANS OF DYING

Q. Will you please explain more fully your dictum that "a person who would die rather than go through inhuman tortures would find honourable means of dying"? Do you endorse suicide in such cases? Or do you suggest that mere intense will to die will result in death?

A. I would not rule out suicide in such cases as a means of escape from torture—not for the pain of it, but for showing the tyrant that his torture would not bend the suicide. Tyrants have prevented suicide for the purpose of the pleasure tortures give them. But I do not regard suicide as necessarily an honourable means of dying. Of course, the most honourable means would be the intense longing to die, so intense as to induce death for the mere will. But this is given to one in a billion. What I had in mind when I wrote the paragraph was a variety of struggles of the prisoners with the warders in which resistance through non-violence must end in death. Thus supposing that A compels B to crawl on his belly, resistance can be carried to the breaking point. Every form of such resistance unto death I would count as honourable. This resistance can be offered by the weakest as well as the strongest—by the weakest perhaps more effectively, certainly more expeditiously. The indispensable condition is the possession of a stout heart and an iron will. I am not writing theory. My opinion is based on personal experience and that of

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

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others who have been under my observation. A very weak woman could not be bent under the cruel will of her imperious husband. Youngsters frail in body have successfully defied the orders of hard schoolmasters or heartless parents. The crux of the question is whether there is real readiness, nay, will to die. The will will most assuredly point the way.

Ineffective Sympathy

Q. Why should not the Congress declare that as long as India is herself in bondage, she can be neither a friend nor an enemy of any country? What is the value of her sympathies with China, Russia, etc., when she has no freedom to assist them in her own way? Has Russia thought of India?

A. You are right. India's sympathy can give no effective help as her enmity can do no harm to any person or nation so long as India is herself not free. Nevertheless Pandit Jawaharlal with his international outlook and generosity has accustomed us to express our sympathy to nations in distress without expectation of like return. We lose nothing by expressing sympathy even though we realize that it can cut no ice. If Russia has no thought of India today, in the long run she is bound to recognize the utterly unselfish character of our sympathy. It should not be forgotten that sympathy without ability to render effective help has its own moral value. We receive with appreciation sympathy from those who we know are unable to render us effective help in our struggle.

Your question is itself an additional justification for our demand for the immediate withdrawal of the British power. Having learnt to show sympathy to nations in distress the knowledge of our helplessness and the knowledge that if we are free we can render much effective help makes us or should make us specially anxious and oblige us to realize our ambition even during the war.

Sevagram, July 10, 1942

Harijan, 26-7-1942

334. INTERVIEW TO "THE DAILY EXPRESS"[1]

[Before *July 11, 1942*]

Q. Would you say that your movement will make it more difficult or less difficult for us to keep the Japanese out of India?

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Two Minutes' Interview" dated 11-7-1942

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A. Our movement will make it more difficult for the Japanese to come in. But of course if there is no co-operation from Britain and the Allies, I cannot say.

Q. But think of the war as a whole. Do you think that your new movement will help the Allied nations towards victory, which you have said you also desire?

A. Yes, if my submission is accepted.

Q. What do you mean by your submission—that Britain should offer non-violent battle?

A. No, no. My submission that British rule in India should end. If that is accepted victory for the Allied powers is assured. Then India will become an independent power, and thus a real ally, while now she is only a slave. The result of my movement, if it is sympathetically responded to, is bound to be speedy victory. But if it is misunderstood by the British and they take up the attitude that they would like to crush it, then they would be responsible for the result, not I.

Q. Mr. Gandhi, you have been in London yourself. Have you no comment to make on the heavy bombings which the British people have sustained ?

A. Oh yes. I know every nook and corner of London where I lived for three years so many years ago, and somewhat of Oxford and Cambridge and Manchester too; but it is London I specially feel for. I used to read in the Inner Temple Library, and would often attend Dr. Parker's sermons in the Temple Church. My heart goes out to the people, and when I heard that the Temple Church was bombed I bled. And the bombing of the Westminster Abbey and other ancient edifices affected me deeply.

Q. Then don't you think, it would be wiser to postpone your movement until we have settled with the Germans and the Japanese?

A. No, because I know you will not settle with the Germans without us. If we were free, we could give you cent per cent co-operation in our own manner. It is curious that such a simple thing is not understood. Britain has today no contribution from a free India. Tomorrow as soon as India is free, she gains moral strength and a powerful ally in a free nation—powerful morally. This raises England's power to the *n*th degree. This is surely self-proved.

Harijan, 19-7-1942

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335. IF "HARIJAN" IS SUPPRESSED

Anxious inquiries are being made as to what I would do if *Harijan* was suppressed. Rumours are afloat that orders are on their way. I would ask inquirers not to be agitated if *Harijan* is suppressed. The paper may be suppressed. The manager has been instructed to stop the paper immediately orders are served on him. It is no part of the movement to publish *Harijan* in defiance of orders. But *Harijan* may be suppressed, its message cannot be, so long as I live. Indeed, the spirit will survive the dissolution of the body and somehow speak through the millions. For, with due apologies to Veer Savarkar and Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah, I claim to represent the joint spirit of millions of Hindus and Mussalmans, and other non-Hindus who call themselves children of Hindustan. I am living, and hope to have the strength to die, for the freedom of every inhabitant of this land.

Let us see what *Harijan* is today. It is being published in English, Hindi, Urdu (2 places), Tamil, Telugu (2 places), Ooriya, Marathi, Gujarati, Kanaree (2 places). It is ready to be published in Bengali, only awaiting legal permission. Applications have come from Assam, Kerala and Sind. All but the one edition have a large circulation compared to the other weeklies. I suggest that it is no small matter to suppress such a paper. The loss will be more Government's than the people's. They will incur much ill-will by suppressing a popular paper.

Let it be known too that *Harijan* is a views-paper as distinguished from a newspaper. People buy and read it not for amusement but instruction and regulating their daily conduct. They literally take their weekly lessons in non-violence. It cannot pay the authorities to deprive the people of their weekly food.

And *Harijan* is not an anti-British paper. It is pro-British from head to foot. It wishes well to the British people. It tells them in the friendliest manner where in its opinion they err.

The Anglo-Indian papers I know are Government favourites. They represent a dying Imperialism. Whether Britain wins or loses, Imperialism has to die. It is certainly of no use now to the British people whatever it may have been in the past. In that sense therefore Anglo-Indian papers are really anti-British as *Harijan* is pro-British. The former are disseminating hatred day by day by hiding the reality and bolstering Imperialism which

is ruining Britain. It is in order to arrest the progress of that ruin that, frail as I am, I have put my whole soul into a movement which, if it is designed to free India from the imperial yoke, is equally intended to contribute the mightiest war effort in their behalf. If they suppress *Harijan* let them know what they will seek to suppress.

Let me add too that without needing any pressure from outside, I am using the greatest restraint in the choice of printing matter. Nothing is being consciously published that would give any clue to the 'enemy' as to military objectives or dispositions. Care is being exercised to avoid all exaggeration or sensational matter. Adjectives and adverbs are well-weighed before being used. And they know that I am ever ready to acknowledge errors and mend them.

SEVAGRAM, July 12, 1942

Harijan, 19-7-1942

336. NOTES

IN CASE OF ILLNESS

Someone tells me that B. B. C. have been asking how I can hope to lead the impending non-violent movement if I am ill and bed-ridden. Well, the doctors have not pronounced me such. I am fatigued and they advise rest and a change to a cooler place for a fortnight. I am struggling to give myself rest. But sometimes duty, maybe passion or infatuation, forbids it. But the relevant fact is that so long as the reason is unimpaired, physical illness is no bar to the conduct of a non-violent struggle. The peremptory belief in non-violent conduct is that all urge comes from God—the Unseen, even Unfelt save through unconquerable faith. Nevertheless as a seeker and experimenter I know that even physical illness, even fatigue, is counted as a defect in a non-violent person. *Mens sana in corpore sano* is literally accepted by votaries of truth and non-violence. But that is said of perfect men. Alas I am far from the perfection I am aiming at.

TIMELY ACTION

Numerous inquiries have been made as to what should be done by evacuees and others who find it difficult and even impossible to comply with orders. The comprehensive instructions of the Working Committee in the matter are quite timely. The

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persons affected should know that these instructions are no part of the impending movement. They are necessary in every case for the very existence of the persons affected. Therefore, as the Working Committee very properly say, every precaution should be taken for obtaining relief through negotiation. Disregard of orders should be resorted to only when it becomes peremptory. Needless to say there is no room here for profiteering or exorbitant demand.

SEVAGRAM, July 12, 1942

Harijan, 19-7-1942

337. PERTINENT QUESTIONS

1. If non-violent activity is neutralized by and cannot go along with armed violence in the same area, will there remain any scope for non-violent resistance to aggression in the event of India allowing foreign troops to remain on her soil and operate from here ?

2. If the maintenance of India's freedom is allowed to be made dependent upon arms which, in the existing circumstances, will be led and controlled by Britain and America, can there be a feeling of real freedom experienced by the people of India, at any rate during the duration of the war ?

3. Whatever may be the terms of the 'treaty', if the Anglo-American military machine is allowed to operate for the 'defence' of India, can Indians play any but a minor and subordinate role in the defence of this country?

4. Supposing the British, not from any moral motive but only to gain a political and strategical advantage for the time being, agree to a 'treaty' under which they are allowed to maintain and increase their military forces in India, how can they be dislodged afterwards if they prefer to remain in possession ?

5. Is not the position postulated in the preceding question comparable to the position that would arise if, for instance, Subhas Babu made a treaty with Germany and Japan under which India would be declared 'independent' and the Axis forces would enter India to drive the British out?

6. If the Congress, as Maulana Saheb has just stated, 'considers defence as armed defence only', is there any prospect of real independence for India, in view of the fact that India simply has not got the resources 'independently' to offer effective armed resistance to a formidable aggressor? If we are to think in terms

of armed defence only, can India, to mention only one thing, expect to remain independent with her 4,000 miles of coastline and no navy and ship-building industry?

7. What material aid could India send to China today, even if she were declared 'independent' by the British?

A. (1) The flaw pointed out in the first question cannot be denied. I have admitted it before now. The tolerance of Allied troops by free India is an admission of the nation's limitations. The nation as a whole has never been and never been claimed to be non-violent. What part is cannot be said with any accuracy. And what is decisive is that India has not yet demonstrated non-violence of the strong such as would be required to withstand a powerful army of invasion. If we had developed that strength we would have acquired our freedom long ago and there would be no question of any troops being stationed in India. The novelty of the demand should not be missed. It is a demand not for a transference of power from Great Britain to a free India. For there is no party to which Britain would transfer such power. We lack the unity that gives strength. The demand therefore is not based on our demonstrable strength. It is a demand made upon Britain to do the right irrespective of the capacity of the party wronged to bear the consequences of Britain's right act. Will Britain restore seized property to the victim merely because the seizure was wrong? It is none of her concern to weigh whether the victim will be able to hold possession of the restored property. Hence it is that I have been obliged to make use of the word anarchy in this connection. This great moral act must give Britain moral status which should ensure victory. Whether without India Britain would have any reason to fight is a question I need not consider. If India is the stake and not British honour we should know. My demand then loses force but not justness.

Such being the case my honesty and honour require me to provide for the flaw. If to ask for the withdrawal of the Allied forces means their certain defeat, my demand must be ruled out as dishonest. Force of circumstances has given rise to the demand and also to its limitations. It must be admitted therefore that there will be little scope for non-violent resistance of aggression, with the Allied troops operating in India, as there is practically none now. For the troops are there today enjoying full mastery over us. Under my demand they will operate under the nation's terms.

2. If Britain's declaration is honest I see no reason why the presence of the troops should, in any shape or form, affect the

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feeling of real freedom. Did the French feel differently when during the last war the English troops were operating in France? When my master of yesterday becomes my equal and lives in my house on my terms, surely his presence cannot detract from my freedom. Nay, I may profit by his presence which I have permitted.

3. The conception in my scheme is that we do not want these troops for our defence or protection. If they left these shores we expect to manage somehow. We may put up non-violent defence. If luck favours us, the Japanese may see no reason to hold the country after the Allies have withdrawn, if they discover that they are not wanted. It is all speculation as to what can happen after withdrawal, voluntary and orderly or forced.

4. We assume their or rather British honesty. It would be not a matter of dislodging them, it is one of their fulfilling their plighted word. If they commit breach of faith, we must have strength enough, non-violent or violent, to enforce fulfilment.

5. Surely there is as much difference between the South Pole and the North as there is between the imagined conditions. My demand deals with the possessor; Subhas Babu will bring German troops to oust the possessor. Germany is under no obligation to deliver India from bondage. Therefore Subhas Babu's performance can only fling India from the frying pan into the fire. I hope the distinction is clear.

6. Maulana Saheb, it is well known, does not hold my view that any country can defend itself without force of arms. My demand is based on the view that it is possible to defend one's country non-violently.

7. India at present gives such indifferent and ill-conceived aid as the Allies think desirable. Free India can send men and material that China may need. India has affinities with China being part of Asia which the Allies cannot possibly possess and exploit. Who knows that free India may not even succeed in persuading Japan to do the right by China?

SEVAGRAM, July 12, 1942

Harijan, 19-7-1942

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338. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

July 12, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

I like your letter to the President of your Committee immensely. Of course your resignation adds to your dignity.[1]

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2092

339. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 13, 1942

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

I have read the resolution. I note that you have tried to include some of my points. I do not desire any modification.

But I do desire that, as far as possible, all of us should interpret the appeal in the same way. It will not be good if we speak in different voices.

I stick to the hundred per cent support I gave you in what you said about yourself. I have thought over the matter a great deal and still feel that your capacity for service will increase if you withdraw. And to that extent you will find satisfaction. You may attend the Committee occasionally as I do or as Narendra Dev does. This will ensure your help being available and at the same time your fully retaining your freedom.

This is my plea about Maulana Saheb. I find that the two of us have drifted apart. I do not understand him nor does he understand me. We are drifting apart on the Hindu-Muslim question as well as on other questions. I have also a suspicion that Maulana Saheb does not entirely approve of the proposed action. No one is at fault. We have to face the facts. Therefore I suggest that the Maulana should relinquish Presidentship but remain in the Committee, the Committee should elect an interim President and all should proceed unitedly. This great

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", pp. 274-5.

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struggle cannot be conducted properly without unity and without a President who comes forth with a hundred per cent co-operation.

Please show this letter to Maulana Saheb. At the moment it is intended for you two only. If you do not like either or both of my suggestions, you may reject them. My motive in writing this is only to help. Whether you approve of it or not, it should not cause any unpleasantness.

The date and venue for the A. I. C. C. have not been indicated in your draft.

As far as I am concerned, you are free to issue this appeal to the Press.

It is not necessary to come here for a discussion of the resolution. But it has to be as Maulana Saheb orders.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

340. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

July 14, 1942

To a question whether the Working Committee's resolution met with his approval, Gandhiji said:

It is difficult for me to answer the question. When you are working in a committee you can't have it all your own way. Therefore, you have to compromise. All this has happened in the Committee. If I were an autocrat, undoubtedly the resolution would have been perhaps in somewhat different language. As a matter of fact, the Working Committee has worked on my draft and I must say, too, that the Committee has been most considerate. It was not humanly possible for people, however they may be alike in thought, to agree to the same language. Here the Working Committee tried to accommodate me as much as they could and therefore, I must be entirely satisfied.[2]

[1] Mahadev Desai's report of the interview published in *Harijan* under the heading "The Wardha Interview" has been collated with the report published in *The Hindu*.

[2] This question and answer have been taken from *The Hindu*.

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Q. Is it possible for you to tell us the things you might do after the All-India Congress Committee meets and adopts the W. C. resolution?

A. Is not that question a little premature? Supposing the A. I. C. C. vetoes the resolution, the whole thing wears a different aspect. But you may know that it will be a mass movement of a strictly non-violent character and then you can fill in the details. It will include all that a mass movement can include.

Q. Will you include closing of liquor shops and foreign cloth shops?

A. It will depend on the circumstances. I don't want rioting as a direct result. If in spite of all precautions rioting does take place, it cannot be helped.

Q. Will you court imprisonment?

A. I am not going to court imprisonment. The struggle does not involve courting imprisonment. It is too soft a thing. We had, no doubt, made it a business to court imprisonment up to now, but there will be no such thing this time. My intention is to make the thing as short and swift as possible.

Q. Will you resort to fasting if sent to jail?

A. It is not my desire this time, as I have said, to court imprisonment. But if I am dragged into jail, it is difficult to say what I may do. But I *can* fast, as I have fasted before now, though I should try to avoid such an extreme step so far as possible.

Q. Do you hope that negotiations may be opened by the British Government?

A. They may, but with whom they will do it I do not know. For it is not a question of placating one party or another. For it is the unconditional withdrawal of the British Power without reference to the wishes of any party that is our demand. The demand is therefore based on its justice. Of course it is possible that the British may negotiate a withdrawal. If they do, it will be a feather in their cap. Then it will cease to be a case for withdrawal. If the British see, however late, the wisdom of recognizing the independence of India, without reference to the various parties, all things are possible. But the point I want to stress is this, viz., that there is no room left for negotiations in the proposal for withdrawal. Either they recognize independence or they don't. After that recognition many things can follow. For by that one single act the British representatives will have altered the face of the whole landscape and

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revived the hope of the people which has been frustrated times without number. Therefore whenever that great act is performed, on behalf of the British people, it will be a red letter day in the history of India and the world. And, as I have said, it can materially affect the fortunes of war.

Q. After the recognition of free India it starts to function at once?

A. Yes, from the very next moment. For independence will not be on paper, but in action. But your next legitimate question would be—'How will free India function?' And because there was that knot, I said 'Leave India to God or anarchy'. But in practice what will happen is this—if withdrawal takes place in perfect goodwill, the change will be effected without the slightest disturbance. People would have to come to their own without disturbance. Wise people from among the responsible sections will come together and will evolve a Provisional Government. Then there will be no anarchy, no interruption, and a crowning glory.

Q. Can you visualize the composition of the Provisional Government?

A. I do not need to do so. But I am clear that it won't be a party government. All parties—including the Congress—will automatically dissolve. Of course other parties may come into being afterwards.[1] They may function later and when they do they may function complementary to one another, each looking to the other in order to grow. No party can grow at the expense of another.[2] Then, as I have said, all unreality disappears like mist before the morning sun—we don't know how, though we witness the phenomenon every day.

Q. But looking to all their past record will the British have the sense to come to terms?

A. Why not? They are human beings and I have never discounted the possibility of human nature's upward growth, and no other nation had ever had to face a freedom movement based not principally but wholly on non-violence.

Q. But there is an apparent contradiction in your resolution. The first paragraphs recount the fact that there is no intention on the part of the British to part with power. Then suddenly you postulate such a desire on their part!

A. There is nothing inconsistent. The facts are narrated in order to justify the suddenness of the demand for withdrawal.

[1] This sentence is from *The Hindu*.
[2] This sentence is from *The Hindu*.

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The other paragraphs refer to possibilities. Many things may happen and they may be altogether creditable to the British.

Q. May not your movement hamper the efforts of the Allies in China?

A. No, since the movement is intended to make common cause with the Allies, it should not hamper the Allied effort.

Q. But if there is no withdrawal, then disturbances are bound to happen?

A. You see ill-will is already there. It will grow apace. Immediately the movement is started, the ill-will may be changed into goodwill if the British people respond. But even if they don't respond, when people make an effort to free themselves from a foreign yoke, ill-will needs no other opening. It takes a healthy turn instead of the bad turn that it has today.

Asked if this was the last chance that was being given to the British Government, Gandhiji said:

This is open rebellion of a non-violent character. There is no question of last chance.[1]

Q. But only last week Mr. Amery reminded us that nothing is going to be done?

A. I am very much afraid that we shall have the misfortune to listen to a repetition of that language in stronger terms if possible. But it can't change the will of a group of people who are determined to go their way.

Q. You desire to have India's freedom in order to help the Allies. Will free India carry out total mobilization and adopt methods of total war?

A. That question is legitimate but it is beyond me. I can only say free India will make common cause with the Allies. I cannot say that free India will take part in militarism or choose to go the non-violent way. But I can say without hesitation that if I can turn India to non-violence I will certainly do so. If I succeed in converting 40 crores of people to non-violence, it will be a tremendous thing, a wonderful transformation.

Q. But you won't oppose a militarist effort by civil disobedience?

A. I have no such desire. I cannot oppose free India's will with civil disobedience; it would be wrong.

Harijan, 19-7-1942, and *The Hindu*, 15-7-1942

[1] This paragraph has been taken from *The Hindu*.

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341. A MESSAGE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 15, 1242

This is an occasion when everyone—rich and poor, young and old, men and women—ought to take up spinning for the sake of the country. If the charkha is not there, there is a distinct possibility of a time coming when we shall have to go about naked.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *Sutarne Tantane Swaraj*

342. INTERVIEW TO FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS[1]

WARDHA,
[*July 15, 1942*][2]

STUART EMENY: Could you give me an idea of the plans of your movement? Would it include breach of the Salt Laws, calling out Government servants and labour?

GANDHIJI: As I said yesterday the programme covers every activity of a strictly non-violent character included in a mass movement. Therefore undoubtedly the things you have mentioned are included. But it is not my intention to undertake at once any overwhelming programme. I want to watch and see, because whatever may be said to the contrary, even in conducting the movement I want to guard against a sudden outburst of anarchy or a state of things which may be calculated to invite Japanese aggression. I believe that India's demand is fundamental, it is indispensable for national existence as I conceive it to be. Therefore I shall take every precaution I can to handle the movement gently, but I would not hesitate to go to the extremest limit, if I find that no impression is pro-

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "With Three Press Correspondents". The correspondents were Steele of the *Chicago Daily News*, Stuart Emeny of *The News Chronicle* and Richard Jen of the Central News Agency of China.

[2] According to Mahadev Desai this interview took place the day following the general Press interview, which was on the 14th; *vide* "Interview to the Press", pp. 294-7.

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duced on the British Government or the Allied Powers. I hold it to be legitimate to make the Allied Powers responsible for all that may happen in India, because it is open to them in the interests of the common cause to prevent the happening of anything that might disturb the even course of the war. I think I have sufficiently answered your very pertinent question. I am unable to give you a more detailed answer, not because I want to suppress or shirk it, but I am not ready with a planned programme as yet.

E. It will be your biggest movement?

G. Yes, my biggest movement.

E. But if there is no response, what time limit would you set before launching your campaign?

G. Assuming that the A. I. C. C. confirms the resolution there will be some time—but not very long—taken. As far as I can see just now it may be a week or two.

E. But you will give time?

G. Of course—as I have always done before launching on every struggle.

E. If the Viceroy asks you to go to Delhi, will you accept his invitation?

G. Oh yes. And then you forget that the Viceroy and I have become personal friends, if a public man and a Viceroy may be so called.

E. Will your campaign collapse if Government sent you and thousands of your followers to jail?

G. I hope not, on the contrary it should gain strength if it has any vitality.

E. With the enemy at the gates, what is your objection to calling a truce?

G. This struggle has been conceived in order to avert a catastrophe. At the critical moment an unfree India is likely to become a hindrance rather than a help. The Congress resolution itself hints at the possibility of a large number of Indians going over to the Japanese side—if they effected a landing on the Indian shores—as we now know happened in Burma, Malaya and for aught I know Singapore too. I am of the opinion that this might have been prevented at least so far as Burma is concerned, if she had been made independent. But

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it was not done. We know the result. We are determined so far as it is humanly possible to secure our independence, so that no Indian worth the name would then think of going over to the Japanese side. It would then become as much India's interest as the Allies' interest to resist Japanese aggression with all her might.

E. But with time so short don't you think you have a moral duty to stand beside the Russians and the Chinese?

G. Don't you see if it was a purely personal question, what you say would have been perfectly possible. But even with the combined influence of every member of the Working Committee, it would have been impossible to enthuse the masses in favour of the Allied cause, which they do not understand, cannot understand.

E. But I have the feeling myself that you could, if you would, with your tremendous authority with the masses, do anything. They are sure to listen to you.

G. You credit me with an influence which I wish I had but, I assure you, I do not possess. And in proof of this I shall give you two solid facts. If I had that influence you will agree that we would already have won our independence without causing any trouble to anybody. But, as you know, I have no influence, nor has the Working Committee with the Muslim League and the Princes. That is one solid fact. Then, there is another thing. During the last War as you perhaps know, I had thrown myself heart and soul into it. I had become a voluntary recruiting agent for the British. And I began my agency in the district in which I had just been leading a campaign for agricultural relief with fair success. I should have made great headway there. But I tell you I did not do so. I used to walk miles in the hot burning sun in order to collect recruits and to make an impression on the people about the urgency of it. But I could not. You will see, therefore, that my influence, great as it may appear to outsiders, is strictly limited. I may have considerable influence to conduct a campaign for redress of popular grievances because people are ready and need a helper. But I have no influence to direct people's energy in a channel in which they have no interest.

STEELE: Then, what part of the people, you think, will believe in your movement?

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G. I wish I could tell you definitely. It is all problematical. I simply trade on the absolute purity of the cause and the equal purity of the means which are non-violent.

S. Are you not apprehensive that the Working Committee's resolution will antagonize American opinion?

G. Of course it may. But I have never embarked upon any campaign in the belief that I would have world sympathy at my back. On the contrary, the odds, almost in every case, have been against me. And in the very first satyagraha struggle which started in South Africa, every outward element was hostile to me. I had stated then—though I had no experience of the working of satyagraha that I have now—that a handful though we were in the midst of millions who had no sympathy for us, we had to rely upon our own inner strength and the absolute justice of our cause. And that sustained us through the long-drawn-out agony lasting eight years. I do not know why I should lose the sympathy of the American people, or the British people, for that matter. And why should they fight shy of a just demand for absolute freedom?

S. Speaking as an American, I can say that the reaction of many Americans would be that a movement for freedom may be unwise at this moment for it would lead to complications in India which may be prejudicial to the efficient prosecution of the war.

G. This belief is born of ignorance. What possible internal complication can take place if the British Government declare today that India is absolutely independent? It would be in my opinion the least risk the Allies could take on behalf of the war effort. I am open to conviction. If anybody could convince me that in the midst of war, the British Government cannot declare India free without jeopardizing the war effort, I should like to hear the argument. I have not as yet heard any cogent one.

S. If you were convinced, would you call off the campaign?

G. Of course. My complaint is that all these good critics talk *at* me, swear *at* me, but never condescend to talk *to* me.

RICHARD JEN: You have implicit faith in non-violence. But we have seen that armed resistance alone can succeed against the Japanese.

G. China never tried any experiment in non-violence. That the Chinese remained passive for some time is no proof that it was a non-violent attitude. For the first time in history non-violence instead of being confined to individuals, religious

enthusiasts and mystics, has been brought down to the political field and been experimented on by vast masses of mankind. Just imagine, that instead of a few Indians, or even a million or so, all 400,000,000 Indians were non-violent, would Japan make any headway in India, unless they were intent upon exterminating all the four hundred million?

S. If India were made of four hundred million Gandhis.

G. Here we come to brass tacks. That means India is not sufficiently non-violent. If we had been, there would have been no parties, and there would be no Japanese attack. I know non-violence is limited in both numbers and quality, but deficient as it is in both these respects, it has made a great impression and infused life into the people which was absent before. The awakening that showed itself on April 6, 1919, was a matter of surprise to every Indian. I cannot today account for the response we then had from every nook and corner of the country where no public worker had ever been. We had not then gone among the masses, we did not know we could go and speak to them.

R. J. What can free India do for China?

G. If India were to listen to me, she would give non-violent help to China. But I know that will not be. Free India would want to be militarist. She will then get all the material and men she needs—although it appears that China with her vast populations will not need men. Today unfree India cannot send a single person to China. I go further—free India can even plead with Japan and Japan will have to listen.

R. J. Can you give me an idea who would take the lead in forming a Provisional Government—you, Congress, or the Muslim League?

G. The Muslim League certainly can; the Congress can. If everything went right, it would be a combined leadership. No *one* party would take the lead.

R. J. Would it be within the present constitutional structure?

G. The constitution will be dead. The Government of India Act of 1935 *is* dead. The I. C. S. would have to go and it might be anarchy but there *need* be no anarchy, if the British withdraw with goodwill. Free India Government would set up a constitution suited to Indian genius, evolved without dictation from outside. But whether India would be cut up into autonomous provinces or not, I do not know. The permanent structure may take time—all the time the war may require. But the

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Provisional Government may continue to function. It may be somewhat after the pattern of the present government, but with great modifications. The two communities will certainly work in hearty combination. It would be a combination not superimposed, but brought about by internal effort. The dictating factor will not be an outside one, but wisdom. And I believe there will be abundant wisdom among us.

R. J. Would the Viceroy cease to exist as such?

G. We shall be friends *even* then, but on a par, and I have no doubt that Lord Linlithgow will welcome the day when he will be one of the people.

E. Why can't all this be done today, without the British withdrawal?

G. The answer is simple. Why can't a prisoner do a thing which a free man can do? You may not have been behind prison bars, but I have been and I know. Imprisonment means civil death, and I suggest to you that the whole of India is civilly dead. The very breath is controlled by British power. Then there is another experience that you lack. You have not been a member of a nation that has been under subjection for several centuries. Our *habit* has been that we can never be free. You know the case of Shri Subhas Bose, a man of great self-sacrifice who might have had a distinguished career in the Indian Civil Service, but who is now an exile because he cannot possibly tolerate this helpless condition and feels that he must seek the help of Germany and Japan.

Q.[1] You have said there is no more room for negotiation. Does it mean that you would ignore any conciliatory gesture if it was made?

G. So far as we are concerned, we have closed our hearts. As we have said in our resolution all hopes have been dashed to pieces. The burden is shifted. But it is open to America, to Britain, to China and even to Russia to plead for India which is pining for freedom. And if an acceptable proposal is made, it would certainly be open to the Congress or any other party to entertain and accept it. It would be churlish on our part if we said 'We don't want to talk to anybody and we will by our own strong hearts expel the British.' Then the Congress Committee won't be meeting; there would be no resolutions; and I should not be seeing Press representatives.

Harijan, 26-7-1942

[1] This was from all the three correspondents.

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343. TELEGRAM TO PADAMPAT SINGHANIA

July 16, 1942

TANDONJI WHOM I SHOWED YOUR LETTERS HAS DEMONSTRATED MY ERROR IN READING WRONG MEANING IN THEM. ITS PLAIN MEANING IS THAT YOUR DONATION WAS GIVEN PURELY TO RASHTRABHASHA SAMITI FOR HINDI ONLY. OTHERS TOO READ SAME MEANING. HAVE THEREFORE CREDITED WHOLE AMOUNT SAMITI.[1]

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

344. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 16, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

There is comparative rest today. All the meetings and Press interviews are over. All my fatigue and physical weakness are gone. There is no cause for worry. This change is due I think to the increase in the milk intake. I have dropped bread and butter.

If Shummy wants you there till 15th August you can stay there. Nothing extraordinary is likely to happen meanwhile.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3690. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6499

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Padampat Singhania", pp. 305-6.

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345. LETTER TO RATHINDRANATH TAGORE

SEVAGRAM,
July 16, 1942

MY DEAR RATHI,

I have been long dealing with your letter. I had not a moment to spare. Now I am comparatively free. Either you come to Wardha for a day and we may discuss plans for using the money or you may send me your proposals which I would circulate among the trustees. Better still it would be if you sent me your proposals for my examination and if I approve you can save me the labour by circulating the proposals among the others.

I hope you are keeping well.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

346. LETTER TO PADAMPAT SINGHANIA

SEVAGRAM,
July 16, 1942

BHAI PADAMPATJI,

I deliberately postponed answering your letters. Tandonji was to come here. I wanted to see him first, since he is the spirit behind the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. In regard to questions pertaining to Hindi I always try to take him along with me. I placed all your letters before him with a few introductory remarks. He thought the burden of your letters was that your donation to the Rashtrabhasha [Prachar] Samiti was for the spread of Hindi alone. I showed the letters to other members also. They too were of the same opinion. And later when Tandonji, having examined the Samiti's records, showed me Jamnalalji's note no doubt remained in my mind. It was only out of stupidity that I troubled you. Please excuse me. I am certainly obliged to Tandonji who opened my eyes to my own foolishness. My folly lay in my wanting to know Jamnalalji's wishes, which made me place on your letters an arbitrary construction. I am now crediting all the money to the account of the Rashtrabhasha Prachar [Samiti].

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The second point concerns the inclusion of your name on the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. I had not read the letter you wrote to the Secretary. Tandonji pointed out that the letter showed that you did not want to be a member and had agreed to become one only at my insistence. I have no right to prevail upon you in this manner. Hence if you so wish I shall have your name struck off.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have also sent you a telegram.[1] Enclosed is a copy of it.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

347. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 17, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter.

The A. I. C. C. takes place in Bombay. You may come if you wish. I hope to be there on 4th or may be even 3rd.

P.[2] is down with fever—103. Something wrong with the bladder.

Asaf Ali went because he was indisposed. But he is *against* the resolution. The Maulana's statement you must have seen.

The resolution[3] is my draft. Changes have been made for J. L.'s satisfaction, and of course Maulana's.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3691. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6500

[1] This is not traceable.
[2] Pyarelal
[3] For the draft and the resolution as passed, *vide* pp. 282-4 and Appendix VI.

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348. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

July 17, 1942

MY DEAR KU,

Of course you are coming on Saturday to eat and also talk as little as possible. The limitation does not apply to eating!!!

I am due in Bombay on 4th—may even go a day earlier. Therefore the meeting must be before 2nd or after return from B[om]bay.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

What progress in Hindi and Urdu?

From a photostat: G.N. 10166

349. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

SEVAGRAM,
July 17, 1942

BABUJI,

I have gone through your letter. I am amazed at the amount of work you do at your age. I should be very happy if I could send you a satisfactory reply. But I am helpless. How can I give something I do not possess?

We just cannot have a scheme for swaraj from the Working Committee. I therefore cannot give you what you want. I shall however endeavour to present my own conception through *Harijan*.

As was only to be expected I could not read the whole of the book you so lovingly sent me. But I have acquainted myself with parts of it.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. BHAGWANDAS
SIGRA
KASHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

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350. QUESTION BOX

Village Swaraj

Q. In view of the situation that may arise at any moment in India, would you give an outline or skeleton of a village swaraj committee, which could function in all village matters in the absence of, and without relying upon, an overhead Government or other organization? In particular, how would you ensure that the Committee should be fully representative and that it would act impartially, efficiently and without favour or fear? What should be the scope of authority and the machinery to enforce its commands? And what should be the manner in which a committee or an individual member of it could be removed for corruption, inefficiency or other unfitness?

A. My idea of village swaraj is that it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbours for its own vital wants, and yet interdependent for many others in which dependence is a necessity. Thus every village's first concern will be to grow its own food crops and cotton for its cloth. It should have a reserve for its cattle, recreation and playground for adults and children. Then if there is more land available, it will grow *useful* money crops, thus excluding *ganja*, tobacco, opium and the like. The village will maintain a village theatre, school and public hall. It will have its own waterworks, ensuring clean water supply. This can be done through controlled wells or tanks. Education will be compulsory up to the final basic course. As far as possible every activity will be conducted on the co-operative basis. There will be no castes such as we have today with their graded untouchability. Non-violence with its technique of satyagraha and non-co-operation will be the sanction of the village community. There will be a compulsory service of village guards who will be selected by rotation from the register maintained by the village. The government of the village will be conducted by a Panchayat of five persons annually elected by the adult villagers, male and female, possessing minimum prescribed qualifications. These will have all the authority and jurisdiction required. Since there will be no system of punishments in the accepted sense, this Panchayat will be the legislature, judiciary and executive combined to operate for its year of office. Any village can become such a republic today without much

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interference even from the present Government whose sole effective connection with the villages is the exaction of the village revenue. I have not examined here the question of relations with the neighbouring villages and the centre if any. My purpose is to present an outline of village government. Here there is perfect democracy based upon individual freedom. The individual is the architect of his own government. The law of non-violence rules him and his government. He and his village are able to defy the might of a world. For the law governing every villager is that he will suffer death in the defence of his and his village's honour.

The reader may well ask me—I am asking myself while penning these lines—as to why I have not been able to model Sevagram after the picture here drawn. My answer is: I am making the attempt. I can see dim traces of success though I can show nothing visible. But there is nothing inherently impossible in the picture drawn here. To model such a village may be the work of a lifetime. Any lover of true democracy and village life can take up a village, treat it as his world and sole work, and he will find good results. He begins by being the village scavenger, spinner, watchman, medicine man and schoolmaster all at once. If nobody comes near him, he will be satisfied with scavenging and spinning.

SEVAGRAM, July 18, 1942

Harijan, 26-7-1942

351. TO EVERY JAPANESE[1]

I must confess at the outset that though I have no ill-will against you, I intensely dislike your attack upon China. From your lofty height you have descended to imperial ambition. You will fail to realize that ambition and may become the authors of the dismemberment of Asia, thus unwittingly preventing World Federation and brotherhood without which there can be no hope for humanity.

Ever since I was a lad of eighteen studying in London, over fifty years ago, I learnt, through the writings of the late Sir Edwin Arnold, to prize the many excellent qualities of your nation. I was thrilled when in South Africa I learnt of your

[1] This was published in three Japanese newspapers—*Nichi Nichi*, *Yomiuri*, and *Miyako*.

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brilliant victory over Russian arms. After my return to India from South Africa in 1915, I came in close touch with Japanese monks who lived as members of our Ashram from time to time. One of them became a valuable member of the Ashram in Sevagram, and his application to duty, his dignified bearing, his unfailing devotion to daily worship, affability, unruffledness under varying circumstances and his natural smile, which was positive evidence of his inner peace, had endeared him to all of us. And now that owing to your declaration of war against Great Britain he has been taken away from us, we miss him as a dear co-worker. He has left behind him as a memory his daily prayer and his little drum, to the accompaniment of which we open our morning and evening prayers.

In the background of these pleasant recollections I grieve deeply as I contemplate what appears to me to be your unprovoked attack against China and, if reports are to be believed, your merciless devastation of that great and ancient land.

It was a worthy ambition of yours to take equal rank with the great powers of the world. Your aggression against China and your alliance with the Axis powers was surely an unwarranted excess of the ambition.

I should have thought that you would be proud of the fact that that great and ancient people, whose old classical literature you have adopted as your own, are your neighbours. Your understanding of one another's history, tradition, literature should bind you as friends rather than make you the enemies you are today.

If I was a free man, and if you allowed me to come to your country, frail though I am, I would not mind risking my health, maybe my life, to come to your country to plead with you to desist from the wrong you are doing to China and the world and therefore to yourself.

But I enjoy no such freedom. And we are in the unique position of having to resist an imperialism that we detest no less than yours and Nazism. Our resistance to it does not mean harm to the British people. We seek to convert them. Ours is an unarmed revolt against British rule. An important party in the country is engaged in a deadly but friendly quarrel with the foreign rulers.

But in this they need no aid from foreign powers. You have been gravely misinformed, as I know you are, that we have chosen this particular moment to embarrass the Allies when your attack against India is imminent. If we wanted to turn Britain's

difficulty into our opportunity we should have done it as soon as the war broke out nearly three years ago.

Our movement demanding the withdrawal of the British power from India should in no way be misunderstood. In fact if we are to believe your reported anxiety for the independence of India, a recognition of that independence by Britain should leave you no excuse for any attack on India. Moreover the reported profession sorts ill with your ruthless aggression against China.

I would ask you to make no mistake about the fact that you will be sadly disillusioned if you believe that you will receive a willing welcome from India. The end and aim of the movement for British withdrawal is to prepare India, by making her free for resisting all militarist and imperialist ambition, whether it is called British Imperialism, German Nazism, or your pattern. If we do not, we shall have been ignoble spectators of the militarization of the world in spite of our belief that in non-violence we have the only solvent of the militarist spirit and ambition. Personally I fear that without declaring the independence of India the Allied powers will not be able to beat the Axis combination which has raised violence to the dignity of a religion. The Allies cannot beat you and your partners unless they beat you in your ruthless and skilled warfare. If they copy it their declaration that they will save the world for democracy and individual freedom must come to naught. I feel that they can only gain strength to avoid copying your ruthlessness by declaring and recognizing *now* the freedom of India, and turning sullen India's forced co-operation into freed India's voluntary co-operation.

To Britain and the Allies we have appealed in the name of justice, in proof of their professions, and in their own self-interest. To you I appeal in the name of humanity. It is a marvel to me that you do not see that ruthless warfare is nobody's monopoly. If not the Allies some other power will certainly improve upon your method and beat you with your own weapon. Even if you win you will leave no legacy to your people of which they would feel proud. They cannot take pride in a recital of cruel deeds however skilfully achieved.

Even if you win it will not prove that you were in the right; it will only prove that your power of destruction was greater. This applies obviously to the Allies too, unless they perform *now* the just and righteous act of freeing India as an earnest and promise of similarly freeing all other subject peoples in Asia and Africa.

Our appeal to Britain is coupled with the offer of free India's willingness to let the Allies retain their troops in India. The offer is made in order to prove that we do not in any way mean to harm the Allied cause, and in order to prevent you from being misled into feeling that you have but to step into the country that Britain has vacated. Needless to repeat that if you cherish any such idea and will carry it out, we will not fail in resisting you with all the might that our country can muster. I address this appeal to you in the hope that our movement may even influence you and your partners in the right direction and deflect you and them from the course which is bound to end in your moral ruin and the reduction of human beings to robots.

The hope of your response to my appeal is much fainter than that of response from Britain. I know that the British are not devoid of a sense of justice and they know me. I do not know you enough to be able to judge. All I have read tells me that you listen to no appeal but to the sword. How I wish that you are cruelly misrepresented and that I shall touch the right chord in your heart! Anyway I have an undying faith in the responsiveness of human nature. On the strength of that faith I have conceived the impending movement in India, and it is that faith which has prompted this appeal to you.

I am,
Your friend and well-wisher,
M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, July 18, 1942
Harijan, 26-7-1942

352. TO MY CRITICS

The critics who impute motives to the Working Committee or to me harm the cause they profess to serve. The members of the Working Committee are all seasoned servants of the nation with full sense of their responsibility. It is no use damning me as a dictator like Herr Hitler. He does not argue with his co-workers if he may be said to have any. He merely issues orders which can only be disobeyed on pain of death or worse. I argue with my friends for days. I argued at the last meeting for eight days. The members agreed when their reason was satisfied. My sanction with my friends as well as self-styled enemies has ever been reason and love. It is a travesty of truth therefore to compare me with Hitler or to call me a

dictator in any current sense of the term. It is an equal travesty of truth to abuse the Congress by calling it a Hindu or communal organization. It is national in the fullest sense of the term. It is a purely political organization with which can undoubtedly be compared the Liberal Party which is without the slightest communal taint. Unfortunately today although it has politicians who have a record of distinguished service, it has admittedly little or no following in the country by reason of its members holding unpopular views. Thus the Congress remains the sole representative national organization in India with a mass following. Its gains belong not merely to itself but to the whole nation, irrespective of caste or creed or race. It is mischievous and misleading to discredit this organization in America and Great Britain as a communal or pro-Axis or a purely Hindu organization. If it was a pro-Axis organization, it has courage and influence enough to make a public declaration to that effect in disregard of the consequences that might overtake it. It is not, and has never been, a secret or a violent organization. If it had been either, it would have been suppressed long ago.

So much about some manifest misrepresentations.

Now about suppression of relevant Congress position.

Nobody has contended that the demand for withdrawal of British power is not an inherent right of the nation, irrespective of the demand to the contrary by those who by centuries of habit have lost the sense of freedom. It is said that it is wrong not intrinsically, but because of the Congress declaration of non-embarrassment to ask for such withdrawal at this moment.

The critics conveniently omit to mention the fact that in order to prove its *bona fides* and to prevent the Japanese attack the Congress has agreed that, in spite of the withdrawal of the British, the Allied troops should remain in India, naturally under a treaty with the free India Government to be. So long as that Government, provisional or otherwise, has not come into being, there will be no authority to check their operations save their honour. For by declaring India free they will have absolved themselves from consulting anybody formally as they have to consult today members of their nomination. In this sense the declaration of independence leaves them freer to adopt the military measures they may consider necessary. I know that this is an anomalous position for a free country to be in. But honesty dictates the course. As I have said and repeat here the Congress demand is foolproof. Critics who are anxious to serve the Allies would do well to examine the Congress position

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and point out flaws if there are any. Let me inform them that those who have come to me to understand my demand and who had serious misgivings went away convinced that it was wholly just and that if justice was not done the Congress would be right in taking action to vindicate its position.

SEVAGRAM, July 19, 1942

Harijan, 26-7-1942

353. QUESTION BOX

FIVE QUESTIONS BY A HARIJAN M. L. A.

Q. 1. What will be the position of the Harijans in the future constitution to be framed?

2. Will you advise the Government and the Congress to agree to fix the seats from a Panchayat Board upwards to the State Council on population basis?

3. Will you advise the Congress and the leaders of the various majority parties in the legislatures in the provinces to nominate the cabinet members from among the Scheduled Caste legislators who enjoy the confidence of the majority of Scheduled Caste members?

4. In view of the backwardness of the Harijans will you advise the Government to make a provision in the Act that executive posts in the Local Boards and Municipal Councils be held on communal rotation so as to enable the Harijans to become presidents and chairmen?

5. Why do you not fix some percentage of seats for Harijans from District Congress Committee upwards to the Working Committee of the Congress?

A. 1. The constitution which I could influence would contain a provision making the observance of untouchability in any shape or form an offence. The so-called 'untouchables' would have seats reserved for them in all elected bodies according to their population within the electoral area concerned.

2. You will see that the answer is covered by the foregoing.

3. I cannot. The principle is dangerous. Protection of its neglected classes should not be carried to an extent which will harm them and harm the country. A cabinet minister should be a topmost man commanding universal confidence. A person after he has secured a seat in an elected body should depend upon his intrinsic merit and popularity to secure coveted positions.

4. In the first place I am not interested in the present Act which is as good as dead. But I am opposed to your proposal on the ground already mentioned.

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5. I am opposed for the reasons mentioned. But I should like to compel large elective Congress organizations to ensure the election of Harijan members in proportion to their numbers on the Congress register. If Harijans are not interested enough in the Congress to become 4-anna members, they may not expect to find their names in elective bodies. But I would strongly advise Congress workers to see that they approach Harijans and induce them to become members of the Congress.

SEVAGRAM, July 19, 1942

Harijan, 2-8-1942

354. FOR MUSLIM FRIENDS

I have read with attention Quaid-e-Azam's reply to my article[1] in *Harijan*. "Pakistan," according to him, "in a nutshell," "is a demand for carving out of India a portion to be wholly treated as an independent and sovereign State."[2] This sovereign State can conceivably go to war against the one of which it was but yesterday a part. It can also equally conceivably make treaties with other States. All this can certainly be had, but surely not by the willing consent of the rest.

But it seems he does not want it by consent. For he says:

> Pakistan is an article of faith with Muslim India and we depend upon nobody except ourselves for the achievement of our goal.

How is one to offer one's service in these circumstances?

But later he gives me hope, for he says: "Show your sincerity and frankness for an honourable settlement." In order to show both, I wrote the article to which the Quaid-e-Azam has objected. How else is one to show sincerity and frankness except through one's action and speech or pen?

Let me state my limitations. I cannot speak as a mere Hindu, for my Hinduism includes all religions. I can speak only as an Indian. If Pakistan as defined above is an article of faith with him, indivisible India is equally an article of faith with me. Hence there is a stalemate.

But today there is neither Pakistan nor Hindustan. It is Englistan. So I say to all India, let us first convert it into

[1] *Vide* "To Muslim Correspondents", pp. 276-7.

[2] The words are Gandhiji's (*vide* "Question Box", sub-title, "Andhra Separation", p. 274). Jinnah quoting them had said, "He has himself put the Muslim demand in a nutshell."

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the original Hindustan and then adjust all rival claims. This is surely clear. After the restoration of India to the nation, there will be no Central Government. The representatives will have to construct it. It may be one Hindustan or many Pakistans.

If the Quaid-e-Azam really wants a settlement, I am more than willing and so is the Congress. He will forgive me for suggesting that his reply leaves on one the impression that he does not want a settlement. If he wants one, why not accept the Congress President's offer that Congress and League representatives should put their heads together and never part until they have reached a settlement. Is there any flaw or want of sincerity in this offer?

SEVAGRAM, July 20, 1942

Harijan, 26-7-1942

355. PANDIT KACHRU EXTERNED

Pandit Kachru is a well-known public worker attached to the States People's Conference. When Shri Jainarayan Vyas went on hunger-strike at Jodhpur, he was deputed by the President Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to proceed to Jodhpur and watch events and report to me. For reasons known to the authorities and unknown to Pandit Kachru he was served with an externment order on the 5th instant, at 11.40 p.m., to depart from Jodhpur the next morning by 7.15 a. m. train. He telephoned to me for instructions and Mahadev Desai who answered the phone advised him in the first instance to obey the order and report. He is now in Wardha trying to finish his report to the point he was able to reach in Jodhpur.

Here is the order:

> From information received the Government of Jodhpur is satisfied that Dwarkanath Kachru (name) is acting in a manner prejudicial to the maintenance of public order and the efficient prosecution of war.
>
> With a view to prevent the said Dwarkanath Kachru from so acting, the Government of Jodhpur, in exercise of its powers conferred by Rule 26(I) (a) of the Defence of India Rules as applied to the Jodhpur State territory is pleased to order that the said Dwarkanath Kachru shall remove himself from Marwar in railway train 1 up of 6-7-42 (manner) which leaves Jodhpur at 7.15 a. m. (*via* Marwar Junction) and further that the said Dwarkanath Kachru shall not return to Marwar for a period of one year from the date of this order.

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The Inspector General of Police, Jodhpur, is hereby directed to see that the above order is promptly carried out.

The important question arising is how long will the States regard people from outside their jurisdiction as foreigners and deal with them summarily as the Jodhpur authorities have done? And how long must they allow themselves to be treated as such? The Congress has exercised the greatest self-restraint in this matter. Its men deserve a better treatment. If the authorities have justification for their order, they should publicly state it. It is not a matter that can be forgotten. Pandit Kachru ought to be able to return unless satisfactory explanation is offered for his externment.

SEVAGRAM, July 12, 1942

[PS.]

Since the foregoing was written, much is reported to have happened in Jodhpur. Fortunately the fast has satisfactorily ended. But repression is said to be going on merrily. I refrain from giving the details. I understand that the State has made a generous use of my last note for it contains certain statements crediting them with what appeared to be praiseworthy. Now I have angry letters repudiating principally the admission made by Shri Sri Prakasa that Balmukund Bisa's death was not due to any ill-treatment by the State. My correspondents say that Shri Sri Prakasa having not had much time was misled. I have asked the correspondents for proofs and if I get them I hope to submit them to the authorities, instead of publishing them straightway. I can only hope that the favourable impression created on Shri Sri Prakasa will not be belied by any action of the authorities. I hope next week to deal with the simple demands of the Lok Parishad.

SEVAGRAM, July 20, 1942

Harijan, 26-7-1942

356. FASTING IN NON-VIOLENT ACTION

If the struggle which we are seeking to avoid with all our might has to come, and if it is to remain non-violent as it must in order to succeed, fasting is likely to play an important part in it. It has its place in the tussle with authority and with our own people in the event of wanton acts of violence and obstinate riots for instance.

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There is a natural prejudice against it as part of a political struggle. It has a recognized place in religious practice. But it is considered a vulgar interpolation in politics by the ordinary politician though it has always been resorted to by prisoners in a haphazard way with more or less success. By fasting, however, they have always succeeded in drawing public attention and disturbing the peace of jail authorities.

My own fasts have always, as I hold, been strictly according to the law of satyagraha. Fellow satyagrahis too in South Africa fasted partially or wholly. My fasts have been varied. There was the Hindu-Muslim unity fast of 21 days in 1924 started under the late Maulana Mahomed Ali's roof in Delhi. The indeterminate fast against the MacDonald Award was taken in the Yeravda Prison in 1932. The 21 days' purificatory fast was begun in the Yeravda Prison and was finished at Lady Thakersey's, as the Government would not take the burden of my being in the Prison in that condition. Then followed another fast in the Yeravda Prison in 1933 against the Government refusal to let me carry on anti-untouchability work through *Harijan* (issued from prison) on the same basis as facilities had been allowed me four months before. They would not yield, but they discharged me when their medical advisers thought I could not live many days if the fast was not given up. Then followed the ill-fated Rajkot fast in 1939. A false step taken by me thoughtlessly during that fast thwarted the brilliant result that would otherwise certainly have been achieved. In spite of all these fasts, fasting has not been accepted as a recognized part of satyagraha. It has only been tolerated by the politicians. I have however been driven to the conclusion that fasting unto death is an integral part of satyagraha programme, and it is the greatest and most effective weapon in its armoury under given circumstances. Not everyone is qualified for undertaking it without a proper course of training.

I may not burden this note with an examination of the circumstances under which fasting may be resorted to and the training required for it. Non-violence in its positive aspect as benevolence (I do not use the word love as it has fallen into disrepute) is the greatest force because of the limitless scope it affords for self-suffering without causing or intending any physical or material injury to the wrongdoer. The object always is to evoke the best in him. Self-suffering is an appeal to his better nature, as retaliation is to his baser. Fasting under proper circumstances is such an appeal *par excellence*. If the politician

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does not perceive its propriety in political matters, it is because it is a novel use of this very fine weapon.

To practice non-violence in mundane matters is to know its true value. It is to bring heaven upon earth. There is no such thing as the other world. All worlds are one. There is no 'here' and no 'there'. As Jeans has demonstrated, the whole universe including the most distant stars, invisible even through the most powerful telescope in the world, is compressed in an atom. I hold it therefore to be wrong to limit the use of non-violence to cave-dwellers and for acquiring merit for a favoured position in the other world. All virtue ceases to have use if it serves no purpose in every walk of life. I would therefore plead with the purely political-minded people to study non-violence and fasting as its extreme manifestation with sympathy and understanding.

SEVAGRAM, July 20, 1942

Harijan, 26-7-1942

357. LETTER TO NAZIR AHMAD

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C.P.,
July 20, 1942

DEAR FAKIR SAHEB,

I have your kind letter. There is no question of my or the Congress's changing attitude if doubts are removed. Both are ready at any moment to settle with the League on the usual terms, i. e., arbitration in the absence of agreement.

For myself what I have said is that I would accept Pakistan if I know its contents and if it satisfied my sense of justice. You must have seen Q. A.'s reply to my note. His definition of Pakistan must be unacceptable to you as it is to me.[1]

If an honourable understanding can be effected many things are, no doubt, possible. The best of possibilities is inexhaustible.

The rest of your letter does not call for any answer.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Gandhi–Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta

[1] *Vide* pp. 315-6.

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358. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 20, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I get not a moment for letter-writing. *Harijan* and interviews absorb my time.

I have replied to your repeated question. You can join me in Bombay. But if S[hummy] would be better pleased for you to stay in Simla till 15th August, I should stay on if I were you. You will gain nothing in Bombay. But I leave it entirely to you. You can do whatever pleases you.

Mira is still in Delhi doing good work. P. is better today. Sushila is due today for his sake. I have gained 2 lb. during the week. This increase is solely due to the increase in the milk in-take.

I hope S. is better and that your knee trouble you are going to leave there.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4140. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7449

359. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 20, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

I was about to write to you when your letter[1] came.

Of course I understand and appreciate the exquisite consideration running through your letter. I invite you all four to come here and pour out your love and argument to wean me from what appears to be an error. Anyway your monthly visit is due. You can come any day you like.

[1] The letter expressed misgivings of the addressee and others about the Working Committee's resolution of July 14. For the text, *vide* Appendix VII.

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What I wanted to write to you about was this. Why don't you form a league with Muslim friends to propagate your idea of settlement?[1] Have you seen Q. A.'s reply to my note[2]? Do you accept his definition of Pakistan?

What is the common idea about independence.[3] Surely you should have a common understanding over fundamentals before you come to an agreement.

Let not your fear of the Japs betray you into a worse state of things.

But more of all this when you come.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 10922. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan. Also *The Indian Annual Register, 1942*, Vol. II, p. 207

360. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

July 20, 1942

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

I have your letter. I see that your work is going on well. It is good. Who can say at the moment what is going to happen? We should all be ready and do whatever comes to our lot.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1092

361. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[4]

[On or before *July 21, 1942*]

Q. 1. Whether Gandhiji is willing to see British go while Japanese on the frontier.

A. This question should not occur to anybody who has read my writings, for they contemplate Allied arms operating in India during the war.

[1] *Vide* Appendix VIII.

[2&3] *Vide* "For Muslim Friends", pp. 315-6.

[4] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "If Japanese Come?", 21-7-1942. The questions were cabled by the United Press.

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Q. 2. Whether he would urge non-co-operation with Japanese after Japanese occupation.

A. Japanese occupation is inconceivable while Allied arms are operating on the Indian soil. If Japanese inflict defeat on Allied arms and succeed in occupying India I would most decidedly advise full non-co-operation.

Q. 3. Whether he would persist in urging non-co-operation if Japs shot non-co-operators.

Q. 4. Whether he would rather be shot than co-operate himself.

A. TO 3 & 4 : Non-co-operation worth the name must invite shooting. In any case I would rather be shot than submit to Japanese or any other power.

Harijan, 26-7-1942

362. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C.P.,
July 21, 1942

CHI. MIRA,

You are living up to the certificate I have given you—you a born letter-writer of descriptive character. Your picture of your talk with Laithwaite is true to life.

I can understand and even appreciate the Viceroy's hesitation about seeing you. But your talk with L. will serve the purpose.[1]

[1] The Viceroy, writing to Amery, summarized Mirabehn's talk with Laithwaite on July 17, as follows: (a) She continued to insist on vital necessity for full acceptance of Gandhi's demand for recognition of Indian independence. Nothing else could possibly save a situation which was very rapidly deteriorating. Gandhi was inspired by pure friendship for us. We were loathed through the country by all parties, Congress or non-Congress. Only Congress (subject to the declaration of independence) could remedy the situation. Once the declaration had been made everything would fall properly into its place. Disunity would disappear, etc., etc. (b) Gandhi had on the last occasion taken steps to call off the movement where there had been cases of violence. On this occasion, he would do his very utmost to ensure non-violence. But he would not feel justified in calling the movement off merely because cases of violence occurred. He could not do so without doing greater violence to the ideals for which he was working. (c) Gandhi was greatly moved in his decision to press this policy by the state of moral degradation into which he thought the country had fallen. It must regain its own soul. At the moment it was prepared, while hating the British, to lick their boots.

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Sushila has told me about your meeting Maulana Saheb and J.L. It was good both were in Delhi. Give my love to Maulana Saheb if he is still there and tell him I hope he is completely restored.

I hope you had a good time in Hariana. You will return here or meet me in Bombay as time demands. I expect to leave here on 2nd, reaching Bombay on 3rd. I am keeping well. Pyarelal who was ill is definitely on the mend.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10365. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, p. 343

363. LETTER TO RANVIRSINH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 21, 1942

BHAI RANVIRSINH,

You showed great enthusiasm in bringing the letters of Mirabehn and others. Service should be the aim of everyone.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1221-a

This is an intolerable position and no price was too high to pay to remedy it. (d) On the last occasion Congressmen put in prison had obeyed the rules and been strictly non-violent. That would not be so now. It would be a case of victory or death. Gandhi might be put in prison, etc., but could not be kept there. She hinted definitely that he intended to see the business to a finish, even at the cost of his own life. He would do all he could to guide the movement on non-violent lines, but must be left free to guide it. If he was not left to guide it by word or writing there was nothing left for him but death. (That no doubt may be the meaning of Gandhi's statement to the Press about a short and swift struggle.) She was given no reason to hope that any modification of our attitude could be looked for or that the Congress claim could be entertained. *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II, pp. 407-8

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364. CHARKHA JAYANTI[1]

'Gandhi Jayanti' is just a pretext, the real thing is Charkha Jayanti. Had there been no charkha, there would perhaps have been no Jayanti (Birthday) celebrations, and even if there had been such celebrations, they would have had little importance. There is no point in having birthday celebrations of any person without any definite end in view, otherwise they must be confined to just the innocent rejoicings of relatives and friends. But because Gandhi Jayanti has been turned into Charkha Jayanti—a great and comprehensive end—the celebration has assumed a national importance.[2]

The Charkha Sangh has decided to celebrate the Jayanti by collecting funds for khadi work, by enlisting self-spinners, and making yarn collections. In fixing up its programme it has had before it the example of Shri Narandas Gandhi's annual work in this direction. He and those who associate with him pledge themselves to do a certain amount of work each year, and he has had more and more success every year. There is no reason why such success should not attend the Charkha Sangh's efforts. Only it needs workers with a will to bring the work to fruition. Without khadi there may come a time when people may have to go without any clothing. Only the Charkha Sangh can prevent this catastrophe. I hope that all will co-operate with the Sangh in its noble endeavour.

SEVAGRAM, July 22, 1942

Harijan, 9-8-1942

365. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

July 22, 1942

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

It is surprising that your appetite was not fully restored there. Stay there as long as you can preserve your strength. There is no need at all for you to worry about me. Of course,

[1] This was originally published in Hindi in *Khadi Jagat*.

[2] In the source here are added the words "and comprehensive end in view"—apparently a printer's error.

my weight had gone down. It is now going up. It has reached 103.5. This time even persons like you will be able to sacrifice themselves. Wait and see. If such a time is to come, it will come of itself.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI BALKRISHNA
TUPAROO, DALHOUSIE
PUNJAB

From Gujarati: C.W. 807. Courtesy: Balkrishna Bhave

366. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

July 22, 1942

CHI. PRABHA,

You seem to be somewhat worried. There is no cause for worry. You can come here whenever you can free yourself. In the meantime take care of your health. There has been no letter from Jayaprakash recently, but I assume that he is all right. I am well. I take milk. Sushila has arrived here as Pyarelal had fallen ill. She will be returning on Sunday. Pyarelal has recovered.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3569

367. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

July 23, 1942

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. May your aspirations be fulfilled. Everything is covered by this.

Meet me in Bombay and, if you are not satisfied with that you may accompany me, if at all I come back. "Enjoy yourself today, for who has seen tomorrow?"

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10429. Also C.W. 6868. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

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368. TELEGRAM TO RATHINDRANATH TAGORE

[On or after *July 23, 1942*][1]

RATHINDRANATH TAGORE
SANTINIKETAN

BETTER COME AFTER I RETURN FROM BOMBAY ABOUT 10TH.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

369. THE FIRST VICTIM

Shri Satis Chandra Das Gupta of Khadi Pratishthan has been arrested[2] and sentenced to two years imprisonment for disobedience of an order under 26(1) of the Defence of India Rules. His offence consisted in advising distressed people not to move from their places unless provided with an equivalent. This procedure was in strict accord with my writings in *Harijan* and the recent resolution of the Congress Working Committee.

There is no doubt that Satis Babu's breach was deliberate. It was broken at the dictates of humanity, as will be clear from his letter to the District Magistrate printed elsewhere. Satis Babu and his men have worked for years in these parts and distributed thousands of rupees among the spinners and weavers. Satis Babu's letter shows that the grievance is real. A great war claimed to be for the emancipation of the human mind and human body cannot be won by the suppression of those whose willing association is desired and desirable. The masses of India are undoubtedly steeped in ignorance. They are meek and regarded by historians as the gentlest on earth. They are easily led. They follow the guidance of their leaders. Hence the proper way to deal with them is to deal with the leaders.

Leaders are of two kinds: self-styled, who become leaders to exploit them, and those who become leaders by right of service.

[1] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's letter of July 23, 1942.
[2] He was arrested in Noakhali on July 23.

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They are the trusted ones. It is quite easy to distinguish between the two species. It is wrong to tear these latter from their men.

Satis Babu belongs to the second category. He is no politician, though he knows politics. He is a businessman. He is one of the favourite pupils of Acharya Ray, the distinguished scientist and life-philanthropist, who never earned a pie for himself. Satis Babu is one of the makers of the famous Bengal Chemical Works—one of Acharya Ray's many creations. He gave up the Chemical Works of which he was the manager on a high salary. He took up khadi and became a poor man. His partner in his joys and sorrows followed him heart and soul in his austere life, and so did his brother and promising sons, one of whom died while he was serving. His brother Shri Kshitish Chandra Das Gupta is also a chemist, and has dedicated himself to the Khadi Pratishthan, giving all his time and energy to handicrafts like bee-keeping, paper-making and so on. Satis Babu deprived his sons of the high education he had himself taken. He threw himself into his new work with such great energy that he became an expert in khadi work and built up Khadi Pratishthan, which has become a great centre of philanthropic activities. Satis Babu is one of the truest and gentlest of men I have had the privilege of working with. He tries with all his might to live up to the message of truth and non-violence which he accepted not as a political expedient but as a rule of life. If this country was not ruled by the law of exploitation on behalf of its conquerors but by popular representatives, men like Satis Babu would be much in demand by those in authority in times of need. This is a time of great need. But all the use the authorities have for him is to punish him for the breach of their laws which express not the will of the nation but of one man whose rule is imposed upon them. Satis Babu has kindled a light which will not be extinguished. The law is wrong, Satis Babu the servant of his people is right.

SEVAGRAM, July 24, 1942

Harijan, 2-8-1942

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370. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 24, 1942

CHI. MUNNALAL,

There is nothing in Kanchan's letter which would require a telegram to be sent. Your letter is enough. Let us await her reply.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8472. Also C.W. 7173. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

371. INTERVIEW TO A JOURNALIST[1]

[Before *July 25, 1942*][2]

He talked of the public feeling in his province. "It is more anti-British than pro-Japanese", he said. "There is a vague notion that we have had enough of this rule, and almost anything would be better than the existing state of things. People are happy when Subhas Babu says on the radio that there are no differences between him and you and when he says you are now out to fight for liberty at any cost."

GANDHIJI: But I suppose you know that there he is wrong and I cannot possibly appropriate the compliments he is paying me. 'Liberty at any cost' has a vastly different connotation for me from what it has for him. 'At any cost' does not exist in my dictionary. It does not for instance include bringing in foreigners in order to help us win our liberty. I have no doubt that it means exchanging one form of slavery for another possibly much worse. But of course we have to fight for our liberty and make whatever sacrifice it demands. In spite of all the hypocrisy that you find in all the inspired Press of Britain and America I do not relent. I deliberately use the word hypocrisy, for they are now proving that when they were talking of the freedom of India they did not mean it. So far as I

[1&2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Fire Raging in Me", 25-7-1942. The journalist was present not in his capacity as a journalist "but as one interested in Gandhiji's movement".

am concerned I have no doubt about the righteousness of my step. It seems to me to be axiomatic that the Allies are in for a defeat this time if they will not do this initial act of justice, and thus put their own case on an unassailable basis. If they don't, they must face the opposition of those who cannot tolerate their rule and are prepared to die in order to get rid of it. 'Convert the deepening ill-will into goodwill' is a sound proposition. It is not open to them to say that we must smother our consciences and say or do nothing because there is war. That is why I have made up my mind that it would be a good thing if a million people were shot in a brave and non-violent rebellion against British rule. It may be that it may take us years before we can evolve order out of chaos. But we can then face the world, we cannot face the world today. Avowedly the different nations are fighting for their liberty. Germany, Japan, Russia, China are pouring their blood and money like water. What is *our* record ? You talk of the newspapers doing good business out of the war. It is a shame to be thus bought and to refrain from speaking out at Government's dictation. There is many a way of earning an honest crust of bread. If British money—which is our money—can buy us Heaven help our country!

We are betraying a woeful cowardice. I do not mind the blood-bath in which Europe is plunged. It is bad enough, but there is a great deal of heroism—mothers losing their only children, wives their husbands and so on. Lord Lytton's only son was killed the other day. British history is filled with such heroic sacrifice. It is not the criticism of the British and American Press that worries me, but it is our Press listening to the British censor. If only to resist that awful atmosphere I must gird up my loins.

I do not feel flattered when Subhas Babu says I am right. I am not right in the sense he means. For there he is attributing pro-Japanese feeling to me. If I were to discover that by some strange miscalculation I had not realized the fact that I was helping the entry of the Japanese in this country, I should not hesitate to retrace my steps. As regards the Japanese, I am certain that we should lay down our lives in order to resist them as we would to resist the British.

But it won't be the work of human hands. It will be the work of a Force—incalculable and invisible—which works, often upsetting all our calculations. I rely implicitly on it. Otherwise I should go mad in face of all this torrent of what I must call irritating criticism. They do not know my agony. I cannot express it except perhaps by dying.

Was there the slightest suspicion that he wished victory to the Axis arms in order that the British may be humbled and their power in India may be destroyed? Gandhiji asked the friend to disabuse himself of any such notion.

Destruction of the British Power is not dependent on Japanese or German arms. If it depended on them, there would be nothing to be proud of, apart from the blight that would settle upon the world. But what matters to me is that I cannot be happy or proud if someone comes in and drives away my enemy. Where do I come in there? I cannot possibly enthuse over such a thing. I want to have the pleasure of having offered up my sacrifice for fighting the enemy in my own house. If I have not that strength I cannot prevent the other from coming in. Only I must find a middle path to prevent the new enemy coming in. I am sure God will help me to find the way.

I do not mind honest, strong, healthy criticism. All the manufactured criticism that I find being made today is sheer tomfoolery, meant to overawe me and demoralize the Congress ranks. It is a foul game. They do not know the fire that is raging in my breast. I have no false notions of prestige; no personal considerations would make me take a step that I know is sure to plunge the country into a conflagration.

Harijan, 2-8-1942

372. A PLEA FOR REASON

The chorus of indignation from Great Britain and America with which the Working Committee resolution on the contemplated mass action has been greeted and the veiled or open threats which it has hurled at the Congress will not deter the Congress from its purpose. Hitherto it has thriven on opposition and attempts at suppression. It will not be otherwise this time. The suppression, of which perhaps the hysterical outburst in America and Great Britain is a precursor, may cow down the people for the moment but it will never put out the light of revolt once it has been lighted.

The Daily Herald and the Labour Party[1] have excelled all other critics in exaggeration and abuse. How nice it would have been if they had taken the trouble to understand the Congress demand.

[1] A resolution passed by the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party on July 23 had denounced the "very contemplation" of a civil disobedience movement as "a proof of political irresponsibility". *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II, Note, p. 455*fn*.

The justice of the demand for ending the British Power has never been questioned, the moment chosen for enforcing it is the target of attack. It is clear as crystal in the Working Committee resolution why this moment is chosen. Let me paraphrase it. India is not playing any effective part in the War. Some of us feel ashamed that it is so and, what is more, we feel that if we were free from the foreign yoke, we should play a worthy, nay, a decisive part in the World War which has yet to reach its climax. We know that if India does not become free *now*, the hidden discontent will burst forth into a welcome to the Japanese, should they effect a landing. We feel that such an event would be a calamity of the first magnitude. We can avoid it if India gains her freedom. To distrust this simple, natural and honest declaration is to court disaster.

But the critics say: "To whom are the British rulers to hand the keys on their withdrawal?" It is a good question. Here is what Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, has said:

> The Congress always stands, firstly for sympathy towards democratic countries, secondly, never desires to embarrass Britain and war efforts, and, thirdly, it stands for opposition to the Japanese aggression. The Congress does not desire to take power for itself but for all. If real power is handed over to the Congress, surely it will approach other parties and will persuade them to join.

The Congress President added that he

> had no objection to Britain handing over power to the Muslim League or any other party provided it was real independence. That party will have to approach other parties as no single party can function properly without the co-operation of other parties.

The only thing needful is to hand over complete control without reservation save that during the war period the Allied troops will operate to stem Japanese or Axis attack. But they will have no power of interference with the affairs of India which will be as free as Great Britain herself.

Surely, there is nothing here to cavil at for anyone. That party or a combination which takes over control of India will have to look to the remaining parties for its retention of power. There is no hope of the parties coming together so long as they have to look not to one another but to an outsider for support and sustenance. Not one of the Viceroy's numerous Indian councillors are dependent upon anybody but the Viceroy for the positions they hold. How can the great or small representative parties

operate without mutual support? In a free India even the Congress could not function efficiently for a day without the support of the smallest party. For in a free India, at least for some time to come, even the strongest party will have no military backing. There will be no military to back. There will only be raw police in the first stage unless the existing police will serve the National Government on its terms. But the support, such as it may be, that free India will be able to render to the Allied cause, will be of a sterling character. Its possibilities will be limitless and there will be no motive left for welcoming Japanese arms. On the contrary, they will then look to the Allied arms to repel any Japanese or other attack, unless all India has by then become non-violent. In any case, the Allied arms are there today and tomorrow and till the end of the War whether they are needed for India's protection or not.

If this presentation of the implications of the Congress demand is not appreciated by the Allies' Press or the Allies themselves, Indian public men should be forgiven if they doubt the sincerity of the fierce opposition which is being organized with ominous unanimity. The latter can only stiffen India's suspicion and resistance.

SEVAGRAM, July 26, 1942

Harijan, 2-8-1942

373. MESSAGE TO "THE DAILY HERALD"

July 26, 1942

Amid universal bullying, *The Daily Herald's* is the unkindest cut.[1] This bullying seems inspired, for it has no foundation.

The Hindu, 28-7-1942

[1] *The Daily Herald*, replying the following day, denied having been inspired and said it was merely "interpreting the outlook of Labour men and women. . . ." However, Amery, writing to Linlithgow on July 24, said, "Gandhi's antics have really been too much this time for the Press here and in America. I dare say I may have helped by some very frank talks to the Lobby correspondents. . . . Even *The Daily Herald* and now the official Labour Party have turned against him. . . ." *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II, pp. 454-5

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374. TALK WITH VINOBA BHAVE AND OTHERS

July 26, 1942

I have sent for you here so that I can lay before you what is going on in my mind, and if you find in me impatience or any other fault you may let me know.

I have tried, as I am trying, my best to give up the idea of fasting which has occupied my mind these days. But I find that it has taken firm hold of my mind. So far I have undertaken a number of fasts and I do not think any of them was unsuccessful. Some of these were resorted to for personal or domestic reasons. Their result was also good. The fast undertaken for Hindu-Muslim unity, too, had a good effect though it did not last long. The fast unto death undertaken against the proposed separation of the Harijans had instantaneous effect. People did not come and sit down with me but went into action. Even the president of the Hindu Mahasabha came to me and conceded my point. I liked all that. The twenty-one days' self-purification fast, occasioned by the impurity which had crept into the movement, was intended to be the first of a series of such fasts which was to go on for a year. But co-workers did not like the idea and I had to postpone it. But now I find that I cannot postpone it further. At the moment violence is on the rampage and darkness has descended upon the world. The poison has spread to India also. The Government wants to pit our own people against us and watch the spectacle. How can I tolerate that? I therefore feel that without sacrifice this raging fire cannot be quenched.

There are two kinds of fasts : one which is undertaken of one's own volition and the other which is undertaken in obedience to a general. What happens in a violent war? The soldiers put their faith in the general and plunge into the fire. Why cannot this be done in a non-violent war? This time I have also made a slight change in my concept of non-violence. In 1920 and 1930 I had laid down that observance of ahimsa in thought, word and deed was indispensable. Now I feel that it is not right to expect four hundred million people to accept this view and to wait till they do. Now I only tell them to abstain from violence in word and deed. When I send any satyagrahi to break a law, I merely say: "Leave your lathi here and go and do this work without using

abusive language.'' The success of the work which this will ensure will drive out thoughts of violence from his heart also. Supposing a non-violent struggle has been started at my behest and later on there is an outbreak of violence, I will put up with that too, because eventually it is God who is inspiring me and things will shape as He wills. If He wants to destroy the world through violence using me as His instrument, how can I prevent it? He is so subtle that it is beyond man to know Him. Though electricity is a subtler power, we can certainly find out something about it. But God is still subtler and all-pervading. All that we can say about Him is that it is a Power at whose bidding everything goes on. But it is impossible to find out what that Power is. We can only put our faith in Him and it is that faith which is moving me.

When I hear of the destruction of the Germans, the British and the Japanese, the value of their sacrifices greatly increases in my eyes. How brave must have been the man who sank H. M. S., *Prince of Wales*! He threw himself against the engine and sank the enemy ship. What courage!

We have not shown any courage as yet. After going to jail we have fought for small things. A few like you have studied there. But that has no place in my present programme. If Pyarelal says that he would like to finish the Koran or if you say that you would like to complete the writing of an unfinished book, it will not do. This time we have to finish the entire work in three or four days. Breaking all the laws of the Government includes fasting also. If they put us in jail we will give up food and water and immolate ourselves.

Now the question arises—with whom should the beginning be made? For that I have selected myself because the work won't make any progress without my sacrifice. I want your co-operation. There is no cause for anyone to get alarmed or feel unhappy. It is only a matter of doing one's duty. After all the body has to perish one day. It is therefore better to let it perish in a noble cause.

KISHORELAL: If the general himself should die at the beginning, what would happen to the army? Therefore in my opinion you should choose someone and begin with him. You should first make use of his sacrifice and offer yourself only afterwards, when you think the time has arrived.

GANDHIJI: Who can that be? Suppose Jankibehn says 'My body is not worth much, let me go' or Shastriji says 'I will go!'

KISHORELAL: No, no, I meant those who count.

GANDHIJI: That is what I say. Suppose Shastriji is worth a pice, Jankibehn worth a rupee and I worth a guinea. If we have to pay a guinea for the thing, then I must sacrifice myself. Moreover who will decide that the time to sacrifice myself has come?

KISHORELAL: You yourself will decide.

GANDHIJI: If that is so I decide it right now that first of all I should sacrifice myself. What do you think?[1]

VINOBA BHAVE: I think you are right. But let me repeat what I have understood you to say. To my mind you mean that a fast may be undertaken from one's own choice or in obedience to a general in whom one has faith.

GANDHIJI: That is right. Let me add that to check the violence that is raging there is no other alternative. This therefore has become necessary. I am prepared to find more time for a fuller discussion if it is considered necessary.

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, pp. 335-8

375. FOR THE PRINCES

A kind of nervousness creeps over me as I think of the Princes of India, although I have the privilege of knowing many and some even intimately. My nervousness arises from the painful knowledge that they are a creation of the British rulers. Though some of them pre-existed before the British advent, their existence thereafter depended solely on British goodwill, which in its turn depended upon the price the then incumbents paid for that commodity. The present incumbents are sole creation of the Imperial Power. Its simple frown can undo them.

But they need not feel so helpless if they could consider themselves as an integral part of the nation instead of being, as they are, an integral part of the Imperial machine. If the machine topples they may disappear unless they become part of, and depend upon, the nation.

The Empire is going either by the will of the British people or by the force of circumstances beyond their control. India shall not always be a slave country. Will the Princes march with

[1] Gandhiji here turned to Vinoba Bhave.

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the times or must they remain tied to the Imperial chariot-wheel? If they take their courage in both their hands and make common cause with the nation they can run the risk of dispossession.

This I admit is a heroic step. They can adopt the middle course. They may earn the goodwill of their people by sharing their powers with them. They will never be able to retain their absolutism for all time. But they may certainly hope to retain much if they can secure the contentment and active co-operation of the people within their jurisdiction, in the administration of their own affairs. I think it is wrong of the Princes to let their critics say of their people that they are too backward to deserve freedom. It is a reflection on them. The people in the States belong to the same stock as those outside their borders. The Princes can lose nothing by being liberal. And they can lose everything by holding on to their autocracy.

For my part I desire not abolition, but conversion of their autocracy into trusteeship, not in name but in reality. The arbitrary powers they enjoy should go. The liberty of the people should not depend upon the will of an individual however noble and ancient may be his descent. Nor can any person, whether Prince or a Princely zamindar or merchant, be the sole owner and disposer of possessions hereditary or self-acquired. Every individual must have the fullest liberty to use his talents consistently with equal use by his neighbours but no one is entitled to the arbitrary use of the gains from the talents. He is part of the nation or say the social structure surrounding him. Therefore, he can only use his talents not for self only but for the social structure of which he is but a part and on whose sufferance he lives. The present inequalities are surely due to people's ignorance. With a growing knowledge of their natural strength, the inequalities must disappear. If the revolution is brought about by violence the position will be reversed, but not altered for the better. With non-violence, i.e., conversion, the new era which people hope for must be born. My approach and appeal are in terms of non-violence pure and undefiled. The French have a noble motto in Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. It is a heritage not for the French only but for all mankind.

What the French never realized it is open to us to do. Will the Princes and the Princely landholders and merchants take the lead? It is for them to take the lead, not for the 'have-nots', who have nothing to share with anybody except their pauperism and abjectness. I am addressing weekly appeals to

the British Power. They are made exactly in the same friendly spirit as this is. The British may not respond. If the 'haves', who are in fact the pillars on which the mighty British Power rests, can realize their obvious duty, the British Power must yield. It was because I had despaired of response from the pillars, that I have thought of moving the masses on whom the pillars rest. I may not leave a single stone unturned to avoid, if I can, what is undoubtedly a great risk. Hence this appeal.

SEVAGRAM, July 27, 1942

Harijan, 2-8-1942

376. URDU EXAMINATION[1]

The Hindustani Prachar Sabha has begun its work in right earnest. It is purely a body of workers who believe in the message and mission of the Sabha. The message is that the national language of India is not English but Hindustani, i.e., Hindi plus Urdu. Shri Purushottamdas Tandon, who is the soul of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, was the author of the Congress resolution on Hindustani. It was he who made it crystal clear to me that Hindustani at present must mean Hindi plus Urdu. Everyone who attends Congress meetings realizes this truth, for when a Congressman speaks in Hindi the Urdu-speaking men do not fully understand him, if at all, and the same thing applies to Urdu speakers. Therefore if you wish to be understood by all, you have to speak a combination of the two as I have heard Malaviyaji and Babu Bhagwandas doing. Hence the necessity of Indian nationalists speaking both the varieties of Hindustani speech. No one may be said to speak Hindustani who is not equally at home with both the varieties. Hence the necessity also of their knowing equally well both the scripts. To supply this felt want is one of the main causes of founding the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. Its founders were and are members of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. But their ambition was not satisfied with mere Hindi propaganda. Therefore, with the approval of the Sammelan, they have founded the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. Naturally the Sabha's first act should be to induce all the Hindi-knowing persons to learn Urdu and to provide facilities for them. To this end I am in communication with Maulana Abdul Haq Saheb, the learned secretary of the

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

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Anjuman Taraqui-e-Urdu for help and guidance. The council of the Sabha has decided to hold the first examination in Urdu on the 22nd November. The particulars, including the syllabus, will be published as soon as possible. Those who would appear for this examination are requested to send in their names to Acharya Shriman Narayan Agarwal, Hindustani Prachar Office, Wardha. I hope that all those who have passed the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan examinations will be eager to pass the forthcoming Urdu examination. Of course those who do not know Hindi would also be welcome. A knowledge of any language at any time enriches one's mind and enables one to cultivate closer contact with the people who speak that language. How much more valuable must a knowledge of Urdu be to the one who knows Hindi only, as that of Hindi must be to the one who knows Urdu only? If living Hindustani is to come into being it can only be through a natural and happy fusion of the two. Such a fusion is impossible without a large number of persons having an equal command over both the sister languages.

SEVAGRAM, July 27, 1942

Harijan, 2-8-1942

377. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

July 27, 1942

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

How exceedingly nice of you to have listened to the cry of the dumb cow?[1] May I say, God bless you for your kind act!

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Transfer of Power, Vol. II, p. 469

[1] *Vide* pp. 265-6. The Viceroy, writing on July 25, had said that he had "taken steps which will I hope result in reducing to quite insignificant proportions any future accidents of this kind".

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378. NOTE TO BALVANTSINHA

July 27, 1942

Do not have any anxiety on my account.[1] It is worth considering whether one can undertake a fast for the sake of others. I have discussed it only from a theoretical standpoint.

I keep thinking about you. But I do not worry at all. I do not have any fear about you. Your remaining here and keeping yourself busy with Ashram work is enough for me and you must take it that Goseva work is included in those activities. Meet Swami and others and love them. Your being here is like a fire bucket. You know how powerful a fire bucket is. In case I perish, God will show you the way. In fact you have been in the Ashram from its inception, so you should die here. I shall send for you if I get the time, but it is difficult.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 338

379. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[2]

Q. 1. Will you be satisfied by a joint guarantee by America, China and Soviet Russia?

A. No guarantee is contemplated by the Congress demand, because present delivery of independence is the need of the hour, not because of distrust about future delivery but because India as an independent Power wants to play, if it is at all possible, a decisive part in favour of the Allies. India today is becoming progressively hostile to the Allied Powers notwithstanding their ability to command recruits and the like. What is wanted is an enthusiastic response from a free and willing

[1] The addressee was haunted by the fear that Gandhiji would not live long and had wanted to know what he must do after Gandhiji's death.

[2] The questions were from the United Press, London.

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India. Many of us think that that is the indispensable condition of the success of Allied arms.

Q. 2. What should be the nature of the provisional government and who should be the possible members?

A. It is difficult to foresee what will happen when India is declared free but I imagine that any provisional government to be stable in the absence of outside imposition can only be by the willing consent of different popular parties. This willing consent is impossible so long as the third party is present to look up to for favours. The Congress President has already suggested that the Government may simultaneously with the declaration of independence deliver their power to any of the organized popular parties including the Muslim League and the Congress. It will be up to the deliveree to compose with the remaining parties in order to secure stability, because in free India Government must depend wholly upon the willing consent of the people. It should be remembered that all the time that free India Government is functioning, the Allied troops will carry on their operations without let or hindrance, subject to the treaty that will be negotiated between free India Government and the Allied Powers.

Q. 3. How do you hope to avert anarchy during the transitional period?

A. The anarchy is automatically averted if a provisional Government is formed, which will be the case under the Congress president's suggestion.

Q. 4. Will you accept a joint guarantee by the Socialist and Liberal parties of England for Indian independence?

A. Reply to this is contained in reply to the first.

SEVAGRAM, July 28, 1942

Harijan, 2-8-1942

380. LETTER TO ASAF ALI

July 28, 1942

MY DEAR ASAF ALI,

Many thanks for your letter. The propaganda you refer to is vicious. I am going to notice it in *Harijan*.[1]

[1] *Vide* "Unseemly If True", 9-8-1942.

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As to the charges against me, it has been my lot for the past 50 years to be misunderstood. This last attack is not surprising. I shall, however, see what is to be done. Both the Congress and I will survive the venom.

My love to you both.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 36

381. LETTER TO MAURICE FRYDMAN

SEVAGRAM,
July 28, 1942

MY DEAR BHARATANAND,

I have your letter. You will misunderstand me. I told you that I was at one with you and that I was trying to take the Congress and everybody towards world federation. I also tell you that if it ever comes it will come through Sevagram or Sevagram way. I want free India too for that purpose. If I can get freedom for India now through non-violent means, power of non-violence is firmly established, Empire idea dissolves and world State takes its place, in which all the States of the world are free and equal, no State has its military, there may be a world police to keep order in the absence of universal belief in non-violence.

If this cannot satisfy your ambition, nothing else will. This is not said to tempt you to come back to Sevagram. That you will do when you are tired of being outside your natural surroundings.

But your return to your profession is not necessary to enable you to do federation work. Return to the profession will be a hindrance. You may carry on a whirlwind campaign for the idea, if that satisfies your soul.

Keep your health.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

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382. LETTER TO ABDUL HAQ

DELHI,
July 28, 1942

BHAI SAHEB,

I am sending herewith a copy of the constitution of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. You will find some mistakes of Urdu. I do not have anyone who is proficient in Urdu. I am looking for such a person. Can you help? The person must know Hindi as well.

I have left it to you whether or not you will join the Sabha. I remain hopeful that you will come when you find the right occasion. You will see from the constitution that all the posts on the executive committee have not been filled in the hope that an opportunity will certainly come for you to be included.

And now I come to the main purpose of this letter. In Hindustani Prachar our first step should be to hold an examination for beginners. We have decided to hold one such examination on November 22. Does your Anjuman hold any examination which even those who know no Urdu can take? If so we shall prepare candidates for such an examination provided you open examination centres wherever candidates are available. If you like we are willing to be your agents. If you are not equipped to do this, can you send us some instructions? Can you suggest some books? Will you agree to be the examiner or will you send some names from your office? We shall all be obliged to you for any help you can give.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

383. LETTER TO SYED MAHMOOD

July 28, 1942

BHAI MAHMOOD,

I read the book from the first page to the last. It reflects your mind. It is good but in my opinion it is not worth publishing. All your information does not seem correct. It should be

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such that there is not any scope for two opinions. In the last three chapters there are many things which are not desirable. Your information should be such as both Hindus and Muslims can accept. Let their conclusions be different.

Your duty is to bring the two together. I do not wish that your book should start a controversy.

My last advice is: do what Maulana Saheb says.

I hope you have started learning Hindi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5116

384. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 29, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Nothing from you for the last two days. I must not expect, if I do not write regularly. And I can't. I hope you are well.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4141. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7450

385. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C.P.,
July 29, 1942

DEAR DR. SAPRU,

Nothing from your pen I can possibly disregard. If I had the slightest faith in a Round Table Conference when British authority reigns supreme, I would accept your proposal. You know what happened when Sir Sankaran Nair presided, when I presided in Delhi—was it not?—and in London when I was thrust into the chair. Of course you are at liberty to say that each time the fault was mine. My interpretation is different. The result is the same. I am not the fit person for such a task. But if you have faith and you call it, I shall be at your service. You at least will acquit me of haste or pride. I have seen nothing impossible of acceptance in my or, rather, now, the Congress demand.

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I hope you have got rid of all your illness.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi–Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta. Also G.N. 7578

386. CABLE TO AGATHA HARRISON

WARDHAGANJ,
July 30, 1942

AGATHA HARRISON
2 CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERTBRIDGE ROAD
LONDON SW 11

HAVE NO ANXIETY. ANDREWS WITH ME.[1] TRUST GOD.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1523

387. LETTER TO GLADYS OWEN

July 30, 1942

MY DEAR GLADYS,

Your dear letter just received. Andrews' spirit is ever with me just as it is with you. I have only discussed the possibilities. No fast of the nature you have in mind immediately in view. Be careful for nothing. God's will be done. I shall not act in haste. Do come after my return from Bombay.

Love.

BAPU

MISS GLADYS OWEN
NEW MANZIL
LALBAGH
LUCKNOW, U.P.

From a photostat: G.N. 6198

[1] The addressee has noted: "Shortly before the Quit India resolution was passed in August 1942, I had written or cabled Gandhiji reminding him of his words in 'Andrews' Legacy', (about both sides coming together)."

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388. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

July 30, 1942

CHI. JAISUKHLAL[1],

It is good that you wrote. Chi. Manu[2] is a very sensible and smart girl. She serves Ba devotedly. She has become friendly with all. There is no complaint against her. She is quite good in her studies too. I see that she is happy. She comes every evening to massage my legs. Of course she also accompanies me in my walks. There is no need for you to worry about her. It is enough if you keep yourself mentally ready. There is no need for you to resign. Cultivate self-control as much as possible. But that should not be done out of compulsion. Do not at all worry about me. I am in God's hands and always seek shelter in Him. And so I enjoy supreme peace of mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

389. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

July 30, 1942

CHI. KAKA,

The accompanying letter was left behind here. It was meant for me to see, was it not? I have read it.

Send a note about that dictionary.

We should have a book-store through which we can sell books selected by us.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10961

[1] Gandhiji's nephew
[2] Addressee's daughter

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390. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

July 30, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You are responsible for the conduct of the Ashram inmates all the twenty-four hours. How you can discharge that responsibility is a different thing. This can be possible only when they willingly submit to observation. You should act as if I was not there. Do what you can. See how far your ahimsa goes. If things are thrust on you of which you do not even have any knowledge you should put up with it. By all means take my help whenever it is needed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4437; also S.N. 24486

391. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
July 31, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I was wrong in telling [you] there was nothing from you for two days. M. had no time to give me your letters.

You were wrong in not wanting to tell me of your illness. You do no good by such well-meaning but ill-serving suppression. However, that is past. I hope you are now fully restored.

I am quite clear that it is far better that you miss Bombay to be with S. than that you should cause him grief to come to Bombay. If it turns out (which I hope it won't) as S. imagines, you would never forgive yourself for not being with him as long as you could.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4142. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7451

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392. LETTER TO TEJA SINGH

July 31, 1942

Many thanks for your letter[1]. You will pardon me for not entering into a discussion of the question. I would say the same thing of everyone, including Krishna, as a man who cannot create but can only destroy. But that would not diminish my regard for him or his bravery.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

393. LETTER TO WANDA DYNOWSKA[2]

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 31, 1942

DEAR UMA,

I have your two dear letters. I cannot be offended by what you write. I appreciate your frankness. You do not want me to argue with you.

I hope you are better.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You must not mind the old method of addressing and subscribing. We may differ in opinions but there should be no change in our love.

SHRI UMADEVI
RAMANA ASHRAM
TIRUVANNAMALAI
S. INDIA

From a photostat: G.N. 1205 and 8059. Also C.W. 5100. Courtesy: Wanda Dynowska

[1] The addressee in his letter had taken exception to Gandhiji's description of Guru Govind Singh as "a misguided patriot"; *vide* pp. 268-71.

[2] A Polish admirer of Gandhiji

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394. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

July 31, 1942

CHI. KRI[SHNA]CHA[NDRA],

How can I test you in this way? Why should you take it as a defeat if you cannot keep anyone? No, the question simply was whether you could be naturally generous and tolerant in your dealings with difficult persons or not. For that you yourself will be both the examinee and the examiner.

You gave good news about Ramji.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4438; also S.N. 24487

395. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

July 1942

The discussion that took place yesterday on Kishorelal's instructions[1] was not proper. He had issued those instructions to protect me. This is a dharmashala, but even then there should be some rules. This is also a hospital. Even the patients have to observe rules. However, Bhansali is the best person of us all. Why should he observe any rules? Munnalal is also free. He is a king unto himself. We have ourselves seen, at Kishorelalbhai's house, how much work he does. He too is an exception. Balvantsinha is the best labourer among us all. He cannot remain alive without the cow and farming. But today he is at my service. He is also an exception.

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 334

[1] Kishorelal Mashruwala had issued instructions, in July, 1942, that no one could see Gandhiji without the previous permission of the Managing Committee. Munnalal Shah and Balvantsinha protested against this and spoke about it to other inmates of the Ashram including Kishorelal after the prayers.

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396. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
[*August*][1] *1, 1942*

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter. You must not worry. You have remained for the sake of S. There must be joy in that sacrifice. Why should you doubt the correctness of the step? You will gain more by your restraint than by coming to Bombay and this notwithstanding what happens in Bombay. I hope to be back in Sevagram before 14th and not before 10th. You may leave when you know the date for certain.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3692. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6501

397. INSTRUCTIONS TO THE ASHRAM INMATES

[*August 1, 1942*][2]

I am going to Bombay tomorrow. I cannot say what will happen. But I hope to be back by August 11, and in any case not later than August 13. Those who are in the Ashram should know that anything can befall them. It is possible that Government may even stop the supply of our food. Only those therefore should stay here who are ready to live even on leaves. The rest should leave. It will be a matter of shame for us if they leave after the trouble.

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 339

[1] The source has "1-9-1942" in Hindi in Gandhiji's hand which appears to be a slip for 1-8-1942.

[2] Gandhiji left Sevagram for Bombay on August 2.

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398. SPEECH AT OPENING OF HINDUSTANI TALIMI SANGH BHAWAN

SEVAGRAM,
August 1, 1942

So far, we could not produce better results in the basic education system, which has been introduced in Government-controlled institutions, but we hope to do so in the Hindustani Talimi Sangh Bhawan, as we have free scope here for research, experiments and development in the seven years' course prescribed under what is called the Wardha Education System.

An institution founded on truth is bound to succeed. The world is based on Truth. Truth is better than any other religion. God is Truth and *vice versa*. Truth alone lives even though all things perish. I bless this institution, whose guiding principle is stated to be Truth, and appeal to you all to give your blessings and help it whole-heartedly.

The Hindu, 3-8-1942

399. QUESTION BOX

SEVAGRAM,
[On or before *August 2, 1942*][1]

WORLD FEDERATION

Q. Instead of striving for India's freedom why would you not strive for a far greater and nobler end—world federation? Surely that will automatically include India's freedom as the greater includes the less.

A. There is an obvious fallacy in this question. Federation is undoubtedly a greater and nobler end for free nations. It is a greater and nobler end for them to strive to promote federation than be self-centred, seeking only to preserve their own freedom. They are finding it difficult if not impossible for individuals to retain freedom without a combination. It has become a necessity while the war lasts and it would be

[1]This and the following item were written in Sevagram where Gandhiji remained up to this date.

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good if they voluntarily pledge themselves now, to remain united even after the war. Defeat of any one member should make no difference. The survivors will not rest content till the defeated member is avenged. Still this won't be a world federation. It would be a mere defensive alliance between a certain combination. The very first step to a world federation is to recognize the freedom of conquered and exploited nations. Thus, India and Africa have to be freed. The second step would be to announce to and assure the aggressor powers, in the present instance, the Axis powers, that immediately the war ends, they will be recognized as members of the world federation in the same sense as the Allies. This presupposes an agreement among the members of the world federation as to the irreducible fundamentals. If this is not forthcoming, the federation will fall to pieces under the slightest strain. Therefore it has to come about voluntarily. I suggest that non-violence is the basis of voluntariness. It is because of all the nations of the world India is the one nation which has a message, however limited and crude it may be, in that direction that it must have immediate freedom to enable it to play its part. You may not quote against me Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. I know that they do not hold the view I hold on non-violence. When India gets her freedom the probability is that I shall no longer be wanted by any party and everybody would be war-mad. Nevertheless there will be, I am quite sure, a respectable number of votaries of non-violence who will make their contribution. But this subject is not germane to the question. Moreover, I am discussing that aspect more fully elsewhere. I hope you will agree with me that India, in seeking first to be free, is not retarding federation. It wants her freedom for the sake of the nations in distress, especially China and Russia and for the whole of humanity—in your language world federation. You will also, I hope, see that no universal federation is possible without India becoming free now. It would be an earnest too of the Allied declarations.

What about Nepal?

Q. When India is free will she treat Nepal as an independent country that she is now or will she be annexed to free India?

A. If I know India's mind at all, having tasted the bitter fruit of dependence, she will not want to annex or steal any country. She can have no imperial ambition. Nepal therefore will be an honoured and independent neighbour. I am not

sure that Nepal is as independent as you think it is. But I do not know enough of Nepal to challenge your statement. I hope that you are wholly right.

Harijan, 9-8-1942

400. HINDUSTANI

SEVAGRAM,
[On or before *August 2, 1942*]

Apropos of the work that is now being done by Hindustani Prachar Sabha, Kakasaheb sends me the following excerpt from *Young India*, August 18th, 1921.

> So many Hindi-speaking friends have been anxious for me to make myself responsible for publishing a Hindi edition of the *Navajivan*. . . .
>
> I know that several translations in Hindi appear in different parts of India. But the desire has been to put under one cover an authorized free translation of selected articles from the *Navajivan* and *Young India*. This is now being done. The Hindi of the edition will really be Hindustani, a resultant of Hindi and Urdu—simple words understood by both Hindus and Mussalmans. An attempt will be made to avoid ornamentation. Indeed I would love to give a simultaneous transcript in the Urdu characters. But that cannot be as yet.

It reminds the readers and me that I expressed years ago the views I am now expressing and seeking to emphasize. The way to accomplish the end has been only now found, namely, that a large number of persons should speak and write Hindi and Urdu with equal facility. The forthcoming first examination will show how many have accepted the way.

Harijan, 9-8-1942

401. PRODUCE KHADI[1]

You should apply the slogan "Grow more food" which we hear everywhere to khadi also. If we do not produce khadi crores of people will be compelled to remain naked just as if we do not produce food crores of people will die of starvation —and the number will be much larger than the number of

[1] This was originally published in *Khadi Jagat*.

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those dying in war. The only difference will be that in the war they die knowingly and they are honoured as heroes while no one remembers those who die of starvation. And they die because of our ignorance and lethargy.

We shall not die for want of clothes, but we would not like to remain naked either. If the war is prolonged the mills will cease to function [as at present]. They will produce war material.

How can then khadi be produced? I have already said that at the moment we can get the yarn produced not by hired labour but by plying the charkha voluntarily in every home. If we keep an account of every minute and put that to good use, there will never be a scarcity of cloth. Since the yarn given to us as a gift will definitely be cheaper than that produced by hired labour, the khadi will also be comparatively cheaper.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 2-8-1942

402. 'MAGAN DIPA'

Gram Udyoga Patrika is little known to the general public. It is the organ of the A.I.V.I.A., edited by Dr. Bharatan Kumarappa and published from Maganwadi. It contains solid reading matter for those who are interested in the revival of village industries. The worth of such writings is specially appreciated during these times when we are compelled more and more to rely upon what villages can supply. Thus we may have no paraffin for domestic use. We have very little even now. Maganwadi has produced a lamp which enables one to use the indigenous oils. The experiment that has so far succeeded refers to the use of *sarso*[1] oil. The success is so gratifying that in Maganwadi only that oil is used for lighting purposes. The lantern is an adaptation of the usual hurricane article. Sri Satyan of the Nalwadi Ashram is its inventor. He is adopting these lanterns for dispatch as samples only. The current number of the *Patrika* is devoted solely to the 'Magan Dipa' as the adapted lantern has been named. For the inventive faculty as applied to village tools and products is the special legacy of the late Maganlal Gandhi after whom the institution and the museum are named. For further particulars I must refer the

[1] Mustard

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curious reader to the *Patrika* which can be had on application to the Manager, Maganwadi, Wardha.

SEVAGRAM, August 2, 1942

Harijan, 9-8-1942

403. AN APPROPRIATE QUESTION

[*August 2, 1942*][1]

I take the following from *The Hindu*:

> The *Manchester Guardian*, in an editorial commenting on the Wardha resolution, says that the resolution suggested that if Britain would immediately withdraw, India would help her and the Allies to 'resist aggression'. In India, as here, it is being asked what is meant by 'resistance'. Would it be armed resistance or would it be 'resistance' of the kind which Mr. Gandhi has always advocated—non-violent non-co-operation? The text of the resolution ought to settle the question, but it does not. Pandit Nehru and some other Congress leaders have said that they themselves believe in offering armed resistance, provided that Britain makes the necessary political concessions. But Mr. Gandhi's belief is that Indians would most effectively 'resist' Japan and any other aggressor by pure non-violence. How is Britain to know what sort of 'resistance' the proposed Indian Government would organize, concludes the *Manchester Guardian*.

This is a good question. But who can speak for the proposed Indian Government? It must be clear that it won't be Congress Government; nor will it be Hindu Mahasabha Government, nor Muslim League Government. It will be all-India Government. It will be a government not backed by any military power unless the so-called military classes seize the opportunity and overawe the populace and declare themselves the Government as Franco has done. If they play the game then the proposed government would be a government though provisional in the first instance, broad-based upon the will of the people. Let us assume that the military-minded persons being without the backing of the powerful British arms will think [it] wise not to seize power. The popular Government to be must represent Parsis, Jews, Indian Christians, Muslims and Hindus not as separate religious groups but as Indians. The vast majority won't be believers in non-violence. The Congress

[1] From the Gujarati version published in the *Harijanbandhu*, 9-8-1942

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does not believe in non-violence as a creed. Very few go to the extreme length I do as the *Manchester Guardian* properly puts it. The Maulana and Pandit Nehru believe in offering armed resistance. And, I may add, so do many Congressmen. Therefore, whether in the country as a whole or in the Congress, I shall be in a hopeless minority. But for me even if I find myself in a minority of one my course is clear. My non-violence is on its trial. I hope I shall come out unscathed through the ordeal. My faith in its efficacy is unflinching. If I could turn India, Great Britain, America and the rest of the world, including the Axis Powers, in the direction of non-violence I should do so. But that feat mere human effort cannot accomplish. That is in God's hands. For me, 'I can but do or die.' Surely the *Manchester Guardian* does not fear the real article, genuine non-violence. Nobody does nor need.

Harijan, 9-8-1942

404. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

AT THE STATION,
August 2, 1942

CHI. KAKA,

I got your note. Continue on the Board[1] for the present. If necessary we will consider leaving it when the time comes.

You will have to make a concrete suggestion about the Sammelan. I shall then be able to give my decision. Otherwise my intellect will simply not work. You know its problems better than anybody else, and so you will have to take an active part. You may also make whatever suggestion you like regarding the election of the President. I understand your difficulty. Rest assured that it will be solved.

I understand about the books. Do not neglect your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10962

[1] Hindi Board of the Bombay Government

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405. DEMANDS OF MARWAR LOK PARISHAD

The following are the demands of the Marwar Lok Parishad in Jodhpur as supplied to me:

1. The Government of Jodhpur shall reaffirm the terms of the compromise of 1940 arrived at between the Government and the Marwar Lok Parishad as a result of the last satyagraha movement in Marwar.

2. The Government shall see that rule of law is established in the State and more especially in the jagiri areas and that full civil liberties (in terms of the agreement of 1940) are enjoyed by the Lok Parishad workers without any fear of intimidation or victimization (i.e., physical violence or damage to property, etc.) at the hands of jagirdars or their subordinates.

3. The New Reforms (Advisory Assembly) recently introduced shall immediately be scrapped and the Constitutional Reforms originally passed in the Council and assented to by His Highness the Maharaja shall instead be introduced as an earnest of further constitutional development on the path to full responsible government under the aegis of His Highness the Maharaja Saheb Bahadur.

4. The Municipal Act (passed in 1940 but not yet enforced) shall be revised consistently with the growing needs and aspirations of the people and real local self-government shall be established with the people's representatives enjoying real powers.

5. Government shall make effective and satisfactory arrangements for regular *Latai*.

NOTE: In this connection mention must be made of the circular of the Government to the district officers ordering them to arrange for regular *Latai* at places where it was delayed. The circular was unfortunately withdrawn by the Government in 1941 thereby leaving the district authorities powerless and the cultivators at the mercy of the jagirdars.

6. The exaction of illegal and unlawful cesses and other exactions shall immediately be stopped and proper arrangements shall forthwith be made to see that the practice is not resumed. In addition, the Government shall appoint a commission of inquiry to go into the jagiri problem as a whole to make necessary recommendations regarding the levy of various cesses, taxes and other exactions held lawful at present.

7. The Government shall immediately enforce the Registration of Arms Act in the case of jagirdars also. The present policy of making

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invidious discrimination between the jagirdar class, in whose case the date of registration is being postponed from month to month, and the rest of the people, who have been compelled to register their arms and secure licences for possessing them, is fraught with grave consequences for the internal peace and security of Marwar, especially in these days of grave crisis.

8. An inquiry shall also be held into the following happenings:

(a) The excesses committed by the jagirdars and their men on the Lok Parishad workers in the jagirs of Chandawal, Ladnun, Roru, etc.

(b) Ill-treatment meted out by the jail authorities to the political prisoners.

(c) The lathi charge and other excesses of the 19th June and the subsequent days.

There is nothing in the demands that one can cavil at. There is nothing extravagant in them. They take note of the limitations of Rajputana States whatever the cause thereof. It is for the compliance with these demands that Shri Jainarain Vyas and his companions are in jail and Bisa lost his life.[1] It is for that reason that many Jodhpuris including women—a strange sight in Jodhpur—have resolved to offer civil disobedience. Let me hope that the Jodhpur Durbar will satisfy the moderate demands of the Parishad and let me further hope that the people of Jodhpur having resolved upon achieving their purpose through suffering will not rest till they have reached their immediate goal.

ON WAY TO BOMBAY, August 2, 1942

Harijan, 9-8-1942

406. TO AMERICAN FRIENDS

ON WAY TO BOMBAY,
August 3, 1942

DEAR FRIENDS,

As I am supposed to be the spirit behind the much discussed and equally well abused resolution of the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress on independence, it has become necessary for me to explain my position. For I am not unknown to you. I have in America perhaps the largest number of friends in the West—not even excepting Great Britain.

[1] *Vide* pp. 168, 220-1, 258-9 and 316-7.

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British friends knowing me personally are more discerning than the American. In America I suffer from the well-known malady called hero worship. The good Dr. Holmes, until recently of the Unity Church of New York, without knowing me personally became my advertising agent. Some of the nice things he said about me I never knew myself. So I receive often embarrassing letters from America expecting me to perform miracles. Dr. Holmes was followed much later by the late Bishop Fisher who knew me personally in India. He very nearly dragged me to America but fate had ordained otherwise and I could not visit your vast and great country with its wonderful people.

Moreover, you have given me a teacher in Thoreau, who furnished me through his essay on the 'Duty of Civil Disobedience' scientific confirmation of what I was doing in South Africa. Great Britain gave me Ruskin, whose *Unto This Last* transformed me overnight from a lawyer and city-dweller into a rustic living away from Durban on a farm, three miles from the nearest railway station and Russia gave me in Tolstoi a teacher who furnished a reasoned basis for my non-violence. He blessed my movement in South Africa when it was still in its infancy and of whose wonderful possibilities I had yet to learn. It was he who had prophesied in his letter to me that I was leading a movement which was destined to bring a message of hope to the downtrodden people of the earth. So you will see that I have not approached the present task in any spirit of enmity to Great Britain and the West. After having imbibed and assimilated the message of *Unto This Last*, I could not be guilty of approving of Fascism or Nazism, whose cult is suppression of the individual and his liberty.

I invite you to read my formula of withdrawal or, as it has been popularly called, 'Quit India', with this background. You may not read into it more than the context warrants.

I claim to be a votary of truth from my childhood. It was the most natural thing to me. My prayerful search gave me the revealing maxim 'Truth is God' instead of the usual one 'God is Truth'. That maxim enables me to see God face to face as it were. I feel Him pervade every fibre of my being. With this Truth as witness between you and me, I assert that I would not have asked my country to invite Great Britain to withdraw her rule over India, irrespective of any demand to the contrary, if I had not seen at once that for the sake of Great Britain and the Allied cause it was necessary for Britain

boldly to perform the duty of freeing India from bondage. Without this essential act of tardy justice, Britain could not justify her position before the unmurmuring world conscience, which is there nevertheless. Singapore, Malaya and Burma taught me that the disaster must not be repeated in India. I make bold to say that it cannot be averted unless Britain trusts the people of India to use their liberty in favour of the Allied cause. By that supreme act of justice Britain would have taken away all cause for the seething discontent of India. She will turn the growing ill-will into active goodwill. I submit that it is worth all the battleships and airships that your wonder-working engineers and financial resources can produce.

I know that interested propaganda has filled your ears and eyes with distorted versions of the Congress position. I have been painted as a hypocrite and enemy of Britain under disguise. My demonstrable spirit of accommodation has been described as my inconsistency, proving me to be an utterly unreliable man. I am not going to burden this letter with proof in support of my assertions. If the credit I have enjoyed in America will not stand me in good stead, nothing I may argue in self-defence will carry conviction against the formidable but false propaganda that has poisoned American ears.

You have made common cause with Great Britain. You cannot therefore disown responsibility for anything that her representatives do in India. You will do a grievous wrong to the Allied cause if you do not sift the truth from the chaff whilst there is yet time. Just think of it. Is there anything wrong in the Congress demanding unconditional recognition of India's independence? It is being said, 'But this is not the time.' We say, 'This is the psychological moment for that recognition.' For then and then only can there be irresistible opposition to Japanese aggression. It is of immense value to the Allied cause if it is also of equal value to India. The Congress has anticipated and provided for every possible difficulty in the way of recognition. I want you to look upon the immediate recognition of India's independence as a war measure of first class magnitude.

I am,
Your Friend,
M. K. GANDHI

Harijan, 9-8-1942

407. QUESTION BOX

What Editors Can Do

Q. What do you expect the editors to do in the crisis that has overtaken us?

A. I am proud of the way the Indian Press as a whole has reacted to the Congress resolution. The acid test has yet to come. I hope that the Press will then fearlessly represent the national cause. It is better not to issue newspapers than to issue them under a feeling of suppression. At the same time I do not want them to be blind followers of the Congress and to endorse what their reason or conscience rebels against. The national cause will never suffer by honest criticism of national institutions and national policies. The danger to be guarded against is the inflaming of communal passions. The forthcoming movement will mean nothing if it does not end in bringing communal harmony and honourable peace with the British people. Whatever may be said to the contrary I maintain that the Congress policy has been framed in no hostile spirit against the British people. For the spirit behind the policy is wholly non-violent. I do hope, therefore, that the Press will warn those who have the nation's cause at heart against countenancing violence either against the British people or among ourselves. It must retard our progress towards our goal.

On the Way to Bombay, August 3, 1942

Harijan, 9-8-1942

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408. NOTE ON LETTER FROM HORACE ALEXANDER[1]

[*August 3, 1942*][2]

This is a letter from a well-known English friend, who is also one of the best English friends India has. It demands as gentle and genuine an answer as his letter is gentle and genuine. I believe every word of what he says about British emotion. Agatha Harrison sends me cable after cable revealing her deep pain over what I am doing and the Congress is doing. And Agatha Harrison, weak in body though she is, is wearing herself out in removing the cobwebs of misunderstanding. She sees every responsible English statesman who will see her (and let me admit that they all see her) and pleads for India's cause. But she is up against a blind wall. I seem to have lost the credit that I thought I used to enjoy in those circles. It is most difficult to repair a loss for which there is no accountable reason that the loser can see. For the moment I must content myself with repetition of assurances and protestations of good faith. I would not lose credit even for entrance into heaven. But there are moments when it becomes necessary to risk (not to incur) the loss of credit for the sake of the creditor himself.

I began my experiments in non-co-operation with the members of my family. I had no occasion to regret the adventure, for the risks were run for their sakes as they themselves discovered, some soon and some late. Love and truth are as gentle as they are sometimes hard beyond endurance.

I have passed many sleepless nights to discover the various ways of ending the struggle with the least commotion. But

[1] The source does not identify Horace Alexander as the author of the letter which elicited this note. But it is clear from the contents as also the following item that it was he. In the letter Horace Alexander had conveyed to Gandhiji the strong feelings aroused in England by the 'Quit India' resolution, which had come at a time when England was facing "the greatest ordeal that her population has ever known" and must be seen by even friends of India in England as "a most cruel stab in the back". He had asked Gandhiji to say something "that will show. . . why you have felt driven to open this way to their possible annihilation".

[2] *Vide* the following item, where Gandhiji says he wrote the note in the train.

I saw that some form of conflict was inevitable to bring home the truth to the British mind. I have no doubt that events would show that I was right, that I acted in the spirit of pure friendship. British authority would deal summarily with the movement. The sufferings will be all on the side of the people. True, but in the end Britain will lose in the moral fibre. But to let her continue as she is doing is to make her bankrupt and, perhaps, lose the battle, whereas the movement, which I have advised the Congress to take up, is designed to prevent bankruptcy and enable Great Britain to acquire a moral height which must secure victory for her and her Allies. There is no claim here for philanthropy.

The fact stands and nobody has ever denied it that by this movement India stands to gain her goal of independence. But this is irrelevant here. What is relevant here is the fundamental fact that the movement is designed to help Britain in spite of herself. This is a very big, almost arrogant claim. I am not ashamed to advance it because it comes from an agonized heart. Time alone will show the truth or falsehood of the claim. I have no doubt as to the verdict. For the testimony of reason may be wrong, but of the heart never.

From a photostat : G.N. 1438

409. LETTER TO HORACE ALEXANDER

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
August 3, 1942

MY DEAR HORACE,

I read your touching letter[1] for the second time in the train. And I decided to print it without giving your name and without the prefatory part. If possible I shall enclose a copy of my note on it.[2] I wrote it then and there in the train. I could not do better than that. Often I have found that silence is more eloquent than speech and action the best of all. But as I have been writing and explaining, I thought I must not make an exception in this case. Moreover your letter has invited an answer.

If there is anything more you think I should do, I am ever ready. Do tell me fully and frankly; no stone should be left unturned to remove misunderstandings. My grave misgiving is

[1] *Vide* the preceding item. It was not however published in *Harijan.*
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

that those who are in authority do not want to part with India. With them it seems that to lose India is to lose the battle. It is terrible if it is true. In my opinion to keep India as a possession is to lose the battle. Help me to solve my doubt which I have expressed in the columns of *Harijan.*

Love.

HORACE ALEXANDER
BUCHANAN'S HOTEL
SUDDAR STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat : G.N. 1436; also File No. 3001/41/(p.69) of the Police Commissioner's office, Bombay

410. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
August 3, 1942

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

I am pained over the two brothers' behaviour but much more so over yours.[1] They said definitely to me (Dhiren after reconsideration) that Abha should marry Kanu. You said definitely that she should wait till she was a major and then marry K. if she so wished even if by then her mother's consent could not be received. I informed all parties accordingly. I was disinclined to bring Vina but you persuaded me. I sent her to Rajkot with your consent. Abha, too, I brought out at your wish and sent her to Rajkot with your consent. All this has meant public money. Now you have unsettled everything. Poor Narandas and his wife are disconcerted and so are the girls. I won't spend anything more from public money. If they are to be withdrawn, you should do so immediately. For they cost something to keep them in Rajkot. You may withdraw the boys also. What will they do, if they are so unreliable? The girls are miserable over the prospect of going to Calcutta. But I will send them if you want them and if you send enough money.

[1] The addressee had written to say that, since his wife and his two sons were opposed to the idea of Abha marrying Kanu Gandhi, it might be better to abandon the proposal. He had also asked that his two daughters, who were in Rajkot, be sent back to the family.

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You are proving so hopelessly unreliable that I cannot guide you about the struggle or anything else. I am sorry that false pity moved me to take you to the Ashram. Please disengage me from all this bother.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10345. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

411. DRAFT INSTRUCTIONS FOR CIVIL RESISTERS[1]

Confidential
For Working Committee Members Only

BOMBAY,
August 4, 1942[2]

On the day of the hartal no processions should be taken out nor meetings held in the cities. All the people should observe a twenty-four hours' fast and offer prayers. If the owners of shops approve of our satyagraha struggle, they will all close

[1] In his introduction to this dated Panchgani, 24-7-1944, Gandhiji says: "The following is the literal translation of draft instructions for the guidance of civil resisters. The draft was in Hindustani and copies were prepared in both Devanagari and Persian scripts. It was prepared on 7th August 1942 and was placed before the Working Committee and discussed on the 8th of August. The Working Committee was again to have met on the morning of the 9th August. But that was not to be.

I was to put before the Working Committee my view of the negotiations which I was to carry on with the Government. They were to cover a period of at least three weeks. The instructions were to see the light of day only on failure of the contemplated negotiations.

The object of publishing the draft at present is twofold. It shows how my mind was running at the time. The draft is an additional answer to the adverse suggestions made in the Government indictment about my non-violence. The second and more relevant object is to let Congress workers know how I would have acted at the time.

I have come to know that my name was freely used to justify acts of sabotage and the like. I would like every Congressman and for that matter every Indian to feel that on him and her lies the responsibility of freeing India from the incubus of foreign rule. Non-violent suffering is the only way. Freedom of India means everything for us but it means also much for the world. For, freedom won through non-violence will mean the inauguration of a new order in the world.

There is no hope for mankind in any other way."

[2] Although Gandhiji says in his introduction that this "was prepared on 7th August" the copy of the original Hindi available clearly dates it: "Bombay, 4-8-42".

their shops, but no one should be made to close his shop under coercion. In the villages, however, where there is no fear of violence or disturbance, meetings may be held and processions taken out and responsible Congressmen who believe in mass civil disobedience should explain the meaning of the contemplated satyagraha struggle to the people. The object of our satyagraha is to secure the withdrawal of British rule and the attainment of independence for the whole of India. After the withdrawal of British rule, the constitution of the future government of the country will be settled by the joint deliberation of the whole nation, including all parties. That government will belong not to the Congress nor to any particular group or party, but to the entire 35 crores of the people of India. All Congressmen should make it clear that it will not be the rule of the Hindus or of any particular community. It should also be well explained that this satyagraha is not directed against Englishmen but against British rule only, for we regard no one as our enemy. This should be brought home to villagers.

Local Congress workers should send all reports about the hartal and other activities to their Provincial Congress Committee and the latter to the central Congress office. In case the leader in a particular place is arrested by the Government, another should be chosen in his place. Every province should make necessary arrangements suited to its particular circumstances. In the last resort, every Congressman is his own leader and a servant of the whole nation. A final word: No one should think that those whose names are on the Congress register are the only Congressmen. Let every Indian, who desires the freedom for the whole of India and fully believes in the weapon of truth and non-violence for the purpose of this struggle, regard himself as a Congressman and act as such. If anybody has the spirit of communalism or harbours hatred or ill-will in his heart against any Indian or Englishman, he will best help the struggle by keeping aloof. Such an individual will hinder the cause by joining the struggle.

Every satyagrahi should understand before joining the struggle that he is to ceaselessly carry on the struggle till independence is achieved. He should vow that he will be free or die. Those employed in Government offices, Government factories, railways, post offices, etc., may not participate in the hartal, because our object is to make it clear that we will never tolerate Japanese, Nazi or Fascist invasion, nor British rule. Therefore, we shall not for the present interfere in the above-mentioned Government

departments. But an occasion may certainly arise when we shall ask all those people who are employed in Government offices to give up their positions and join the satyagraha struggle. But all Congress members in the Central and Provincial Assemblies ought to vacate their seats and come out forthwith. In case an attempt is made to fill their places with enemies of the country's freedom, or henchmen of British Government, local Congressmen should be put up to oppose their election. The same applies to the Congress members of the municipalities and other public bodies. As conditions in different provinces are not the same, every Provincial Congress Committee shall make arrangements suited to its special circumstances.

If any government servant is called upon to perpetrate excesses or injustice it will be his clear duty to resign at once, giving the real reasons. Free Indian Government will be under no obligation to continue in its service all those Government functionaries who are at present serving the Empire on huge salaries; nor will it be under an obligation to continue the large pensions which are being drawn at present.

All students reading in institutions conducted or controlled by the Government should come out of these institutions. Those who are above sixteen years of age should join the Satyagraha. Those who so leave these institutions should do so with a clear understanding that they are not to return to them until independence is achieved. There should be no coercion whatsoever in this matter. Only those who of their own free will wish to do so, should come out. No good can come out of coercion.

If excesses are committed in any place by the Government, people should offer resistance and endure the penalty. For instance, if villagers, labourers or householders are ordered to vacate their farms or homes they should flatly refuse to obey such orders. If an adequate compensation is offered or if they are suitably provided for by grant of land, etc., elsewhere, they may vacate their farms or homes. Here there is no question of civil disobedience, but of simply refusing to submit to coercion or injustice. We do not want to hinder military activities, but neither shall we submit to arbitrary high-handedness.

The salt tax causes great hardship to the poor. Therefore, wherever salt can be made, poor people may certainly manufacture it for themselves and risk the penalty.

Land tax is due only to a government which we recognize as our own. It is long since we have mentally ceased to recognize the existing Government as such, but until now we

have not gone to the length of refusing the payment of land tax because we felt that the country was not prepared to go so far. But the time has now come when those who have the courage and are prepared to risk their all, should refuse to pay it. The Congress holds that the land belongs to those who work on it and to no one else. If they part with a share of the produce to anyone, it is for the furtherance of their own interests. There are various systems of collecting land revenue. Where the zamindari system prevails the zamindars pay the tax to the Government and the ryot to the zamindar. In such cases, if the zamindar makes common cause with the ryot, his portion of the revenue, which may be settled by mutual agreement, should be given to him. But if a zamindar wants to side with the Government, no tax should be paid to him. This will, in the immediate present, spell ruin to the ryot. Therefore, only those who are prepared to face utter ruin should refuse payment of land revenue.

Besides these, there are several other items which could be taken up. Directions in regard to these will be issued when the occasion arises.[1]

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, pp. 286-8. Also from Hindi: Nehru Papers. Subject file No. 31 B, Vol. 130, pp. 419-23. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] At the time of the publication of the above instructions Gandhiji added the following postscript dated "Sevagram, 28-6-45": "These would have been issued, if they had been passed by the Working Committee. Now they are a part of historical record only."

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412. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

BOMBAY,
August 4, 1942

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
THYAGARAYANAGAR
MADRAS

YOUR STRANGE WIRE[1]. HOW CAN DISTRUSTED MAN PROFITABLY GO.[2] LOVE.[3]

BAPU

From a photostat : C.W. 10929. Courtesy : C. R. Narasimhan

413. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
August 4, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Everything going on well. J. came yesterday an hour after me. Maulana came today. Prabhavati has come. Doctors pronounce me to be quite fit and better than when they saw me at Sevagram the other day. Of the company now only you

1. Dated August 2 which said: "Jinnah's statement should not upset your decision."

2. Jinnah in his statement on July 31, 1942, to the foreign Press had said: "The latest decision of the Congress Working Committee on July 14, 1942, resolving to launch a mass movement if the British do not withdraw immediately from India is the culminating point in the policy and programme of Mr. Gandhi and his Hindu Congress of blackmailing the British and coercing them to concede a system of Government and transfer power to that Government which would establish a Hindu raj immediately under the aegis of the British bayonet thereby throwing the Muslims and other minorities and interests at the mercy of the Congress raj." *Vide* also p. 369.

3. In reply to this Rajaji wired: "Your telegram. Earnestly plead see remove distrust."

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are missing. For Mira too is here. But the loss here is Shummy's gain. So I am quite satisfied.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 3693. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6502

414. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
August 4, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

How can you expect me to approach Q. A. after his performance?[1] Will he not be right in showing me the door if I dare to go to him? I should certainly refuse to see a person whom I thoroughly distrust and discredit. Supposing he is great and good enough to see me, what am I to say to him? Begin by giving him an explanation of all the charges? I had thought that you would wire to me not to go and that you were disowning him after his performance. The Muslims who had expected me to see him no longer think so. I do not think I shall wire you to come here. This has nothing to do with your wire. There is not the atmosphere.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Of course you must pay your monthly visit.

From a photostat : G. N. 2093

415. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
August 4, 1942

DEAR DR. SAPRU,

I have your kind letter.[2] On the question of C. D. we have differed from the very commencement years ago. Yet its

[1] *Vide* p. 368.

[2] The addressee in his letter to Gandhiji, of August 1, had said: "I fear that if civil disobedience is started at this juncture it may lead to very serious consequences, some of which we do not realize."

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mere mention has brought new hope to the people and set the world athinking. Nevertheless you may depend upon my doing all I can to avert the crisis, if by milder measures I can possibly reach the same result. But I have no faith in my capacity to shoulder the burden[1] you would put upon me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi–Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta. Also G.N. 7577

416. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

August 5, 1942

I want to make a remark or two about the manner in which the Government have got this document.[2] I think that the procedure thus adopted of searching the A.I.C.C. Office and seizing documents was in itself reprehensible. The Congress is not an illegal organization. It is acknowledged to be the oldest representative national organization.

Its representatives have, under the partial autonomy given by the Government of India Act, successfully administered seven large provinces of India, and, so far as I am aware, without a single exception, the Governors of those provinces have nothing but praise for the considerable administrative talent and devotion to duty shown by the Ministers who were Congress representatives.

Such an organization deserves, to say the least, a better treatment than the Government had accorded it by its procedure with the A.I.C.C.

[1] The addressee had suggested that Gandhiji should call an inter-communal conference.

[2] On May 28, the police raided the offices of the All-India Congress Committee at Allahabad and seized certain documents, including what appeared to be a record of discussions in the Congress Working Committee on the "War Resolution" (*vide* pp. 63-5.) and a resolution in which the Committee "noted with dismay that frequent and well-authenticated reports have been received of molestation of women by soldiers in railway trains and evacuated and other places". Publication of the latter had been banned by Government.

On August 1 Linlithgow telegraphed to Amery saying, the Viceroy's Council were arranging for publication of these documents in morning papers of August 5 for they could be "taken as evidence of Gandhi's readiness to surrender to Japan and of which telling use could be made". *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II, pp. 5 and 516.

Their action becomes more reprehensible when they make what I consider illegitimate use of the documents seized. They might have had the courtesy of referring the documents to the A.I.C.C. and heard what the Committee had to say before making public use thereof.

In spite of the effort of the Home Department to discredit the members of the Working Committee, *the reading of the notes*, unauthenticated though they are, will not make any difference, at least in India, in the prestige which the Congress enjoys. There is nothing in it of which any member has any cause to be ashamed.

I do not know what should be the journalistic attitude to such use of documents seized in the manner I have shown and sprung upon an unsuspecting public at a most critical time both for the Government and the people. But I leave the profession to judge for itself.

Q. The whole inference of Pandit Nehru's statements in the documents is that your belief is that Japan and Germany will win the war. Does that represent your considered opinion?

A. You have been good enough to show me Panditji's statement[1] on the document issued by the Government. After his full and frank explanation I hardly think I need answer your questions. I wholly agree with the opinion expressed by him.

That, however, is his own reaction to the draft resolution[2] sent to the Working Committee.

As the language of that draft shows, it had many i's to be dotted and t's to be crossed. It was sent through Mirabehn to whom I had explained the implications of the draft and I said to her or to the friends of the Working Committee who happened to be in Sevagram to whom I had explained the draft, that there was an omission, deliberate, from my draft as to the foreign policy of the Congress and, therefore, any reference to China and Russia.

For as I had said to them, I derived my inspiration and knowledge from Panditji about foreign matters of which he had been a deep student. Therefore, I said that he could fill in that part in the resolution.

But I may add that I have never even in the most unguarded moment expressed the opinion that Japan and Germany

[1] *Vide* Appendix IX.
[2] *Vide* pp. 63–5.

would win the war. Not only that. I have often expressed the opinion that they cannot win the war, if only Great Britain will once for all shed her imperialism. I have given expression to that opinion more than once in the columns of *Harijan* and I repeat here that in spite of all my wish to the contrary and of others, if disaster overtakes Great Britain and the Allied Powers, it will be because even at the critical moment—most critical in her history—she had most obstinately refused to wash herself of the taint of imperialism which she has carried with her for at least a century and a half.

The suppressed races of the earth will never see the fine distinction that Panditji and following him I can see and make between Fascism and imperialism. The difference, if any, discerned by the man in the street will be not of kind but only of degree, and therefore I have pleaded and shall plead even as I am fighting with all the earnestness I command that Britain will shed that taint, and that her great ally America will make her do so, and then be sure of victory, no matter how prolonged the struggle and what cost it requires.

To say the least, then the Allied Powers will earn the blessings of the dumb but countless millions, apart from the gain in men and material that the free association of these peoples will bring to the Allies. I would count their blessings to be of far higher value than every other consideration.

I have, therefore, nothing to withdraw and nothing to be ashamed of about the draft I had the privilege of sending to the Working Committee.

Q. Nehru states that according to your plans after British withdrawal, India would possibly negotiate with Japan and even allow her a large measure of civil control, military bases in India and right of passage for her troops.

A. As to your second question, I can only say that you have put it because, I regret to have to say, you have not studied my writings in *Harijan* before the draft was written and after. Having such confidence—for which many of my friends say I have no warrant—in the efficacy of the weapon of non-violent non-co-operation with all its implications that I have presented to the nation, I maintain that I could not be guilty of harbouring any such thought you have attributed to me. Panditji has explained quite clearly what could be his own meaning and interpretation of my draft.

I add by way of emphasis that I had purposely incorporated the sentence about negotiations with Japan, and if ultimately it

was dropped and I associated myself with the deletion, I did so out of my regard for my co-workers not because I was uncertain as to what I meant to do.

It is the essence of the use of the weapon that you will always give your opponent the opportunity of doing the right thing, and if India became an independent nation tomorrow and I was witness to the grand phenomenon, I would certainly advise and plead with the Provisional Government to send me—old as I am—to Japan and I would plead with her in the first instance, to free China, her great neighbour, from the menace that Japan has become and to tell her that if she does not do this elementary justice, she will have to count upon the stubborn resistance of millions who had at long last found themselves in possession of a thing which every nation prizes before everything else.

That gentle notice—or entreaty it should be called—that entreaty will not be backed at least tomorrow with any military show, because I will not dangle before Japan the show that will still be made by the Allied Powers whose operations will still go on in India with the free consent of India. [India] become free will carry with it the power implied in the use of the matchless moral weapon of non-violent non-co-operation. And I am sure I will make the appeal not without hope of success.

That was the meaning of the sentence the use of which at the present juncture is intended to bring discredit upon my devoted head. I shall take the discredit and so much the better if I can take India's freedom also with it.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-8-1942

417. INTRODUCTION TO GOVERNMENT SECRET CIRCULAR[1]

BOMBAY,
August 6, 1942

I have had the good fortune to have friends who have supplied me with titbits of national importance such as I am

[1] Immediately after the July 14 resolution of the Congress Working Committee, Frederick Puckle, Director-General of Information, Government of India, issued on July 17, a circular to the Chief Secretaries of all the local governments to mobilize public opinion against the Congress resolution, which he described as a party manifesto, opposed by other communities and organizations. He made a number of suggestions for publishing cartoons and posters, among which one was to show Hitler, Mussolini, Tojo, each with microphones saying, "I vote for the Congress Resolution." *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, pp. 374-5

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presenting to the public herewith. Mahadev Desai reminds me that such an occasion occurred some seven years ago when a friend had unearthed the famous Hallett Circular. Such was also an occasion when the late Swami Shraddhanandji was given an important document, though not of the sensational character as the Hallett Circular or Sir Frederick Puckle's very interesting production and that of his lieutenant Shri D. C. Das. The pity of it is that the circulars were secret.

They must thank me for giving the performance as wide a publicity as I can. For it is good for the public to know to what lengths the Government can go in their attempt to suppress national movements, however innocent, open and above board they are. Heaven knows how many such secret instructions have been issued which have never seen the light of day. I suggest an honourable course. Let the Government by all means influence public opinion in an open manner and abide by its verdict. The Congress will be satisfied with a plebiscite or any other reasonable manner of testing public opinion and undertake to accept the verdict. That is real democracy. *Vox populi vox dei.*

Meanwhile, let the public know that these circulars are an additional reason for the cry of "Quit India", which comes not from the lips but the aching hearts of millions. Let the Dases know that there are many other ways of earning a living than betraying national interests. Surely it is not part of their duty to lend themselves to the very questionable methods as evidenced by Sir Frederick Puckle's instructions.

The History of the Indian National Congress, Vol. II, p. 360; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-8-1942

418. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

BOMBAY,
August 6, 1942

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

I got your postcard. There is still time to rope you in. Have patience. When the time comes, you will certainly get the call some way or another. Your *sadhana* lies in improving your health, for the sake of this *yajna* at any rate. But that also without worrying. We may try every remedy we know, and

remain unconcerned with the result. I wrote out this letter in the early morning, having got a few moments to spare.

I hope everybody is well there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 808. Courtesy: Balkrishna Bhave

419. INTERVIEW TO THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BOMBAY,
August 6, 1942

Q. Does the resolution[1] mean peace or war? There is an interpretation particularly among the foreign journalists, that it means declaration of war and that the last three paragraphs of the resolution are the really operative part. Is the emphasis on the first part or the last part of the resolution?

A. The emphasis in any non-violent struggle, projected or in operation, is always on peace. War, when it becomes an absolute necessity.

Q. Do you contemplate the immediate establishment of a provisional government and, if so, how do you expect it to come into being? Do you think that there would be a period of interregnum between the endorsement of the resolution by the A. I. C. C. and the starting of the mass struggle?

A. If independence is ushered in with perfect British goodwill, then I expect an almost simultaneous establishment of a provisional government which, being just now based, as it must be of necessity, on non-violence, will, to command universal confidence, represent the free and voluntary association of all parties.

Q. Do you contemplate any negotiation between the Congress and the British Government before launching a mass struggle?

A. I have definitely contemplated an interval between the passing of the Congress resolution and the starting of the struggle. I do not know that what I contemplate doing according to my wont can be in any way described as being in the nature of negotiation, but a letter will certainly go to the Viceroy, not as an ultimatum but as an earnest pleading for avoidance of a conflict. If there is a favourable response, then my letter can be the basis for negotiation.

[1] *Vide* Appendix X.

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Q. What is the maximum time you are prepared to wait to see if there is any response from the British Government and the United Nations to the 'last-minute appeal' of the A. I. C. C.

A. The object with which the demand for immediate withdrawal is made does not allow of a long interval for the simple reason that the war will not be suspended while, in expectation of something turning up, the interval is contemplated. The Working Committee itself, which is sincerely eager to mobilize the whole of free Indian opinion in favour of the war effort, is impatient to do so, and in view of the terrible suspense created throughout India it is altogether wrong both for the Congress and British Power to prolong the suspense for a day longer than is warranted by force of circumstances beyond control.

The Statesman, 7-8-1942, and *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44*, pp. 54-5

420. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

BOMBAY,
August 7, 1942

RAJAJI
THYAGARAYANAGAR
MADRAS

EVERY EFFORT HAS BEEN AND WILL BE MADE IN DIRECTION INDICATED BY YOU[1] THOUGH NOT IDENTICAL. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat : C.W. 10934. Courtesy : C. R. Narasimhan

[1] The addressee in his telegram of August 6, 1942, had said: "Nothing new in Jinnah's allegations. Feel you should ignore them and definitely offer him such quota of Provisional Government as he wants and ask him to nominate his men. This along with your names on behalf of Congress will rationalize your demand of Britain and force acceptance of proposals." *Vide* also Appendix XI.

421. MESSAGE TO CHINA

August 7, 1942

Let China know that this struggle is as much for her defence as it is for India's liberation, for, in that liberation is involved her ability to give effective assistance whether to China or to Russia or even to Great Britain or America.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-8-1942

422. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING

BOMBAY,
August 7, 1942

Before you discuss the resolution, let me place before you one or two things. I want you to understand two things very clearly and consider them from the same point of view from which I am placing them before you. There are people who ask me whether I am the same man that I was in 1920 or whether there has been any change in me. You are right in asking that question. I may tell you that I am the same man today that I was in 1920. The only difference is that I am much stronger in certain things now than I was in 1920. I may explain it by pointing out that a man goes about heavily clothed in winter but the same man may be found without such clothing in summer. This outward change does not make any difference in the man. There are people who may say that I say one thing today and another thing tomorrow. But I must tell you that there is no change in me. I stick to the principle of non-violence as I did before. If you are tired of it then you need not come with me. It is not necessary or incumbent upon you to pass this resolution. If you want swaraj and independence and if you feel that what I place before you is a good thing and a right thing then only accept it. It is only that way you can give me complete support. If you do not do that I am afraid you will have to rue for what you do. There is not much harm if a man does a wrong thing and repents but in the present case you will be putting the country also in danger. If you

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do not believe fully in what I say then I will request you not to accept it but leave it. But if you accept it and do not understand me properly then there is bound to be friction among us although it may be of a friendly nature.

Another point I want to impress upon you is your responsibility. The members of the All-India Congress Committee are like members of Parliament representing the whole of India. The Congress from its very inception has not been of any particular group or any particular colour or caste or of any particular province. It has claimed ever since its birth to represent the whole nation and on your behalf I have made the claim that you represent not only the registered members of the Congress but the entire nation.

Referring to the Princes, Mahatma Gandhi stated that they were the creation of British power.

Their number may be six hundred or more. They were created by the ruling power as you know to create differences between Indian India and British India. It may be true that there are differences in the conditions obtaining in British and Indian India but according to the people of the Indian States there is no difference as such. The Congress claims to represent them as well. The policy which the Congress has adopted towards States was drawn up at my instance. There has been some change but the basis remains the same. Whatever the Princes may say, their people will acclaim that we have been asking for the very thing that they want. If we carry on this struggle in the way I want it, the Princes will get more through it than they can ever expect [from the British power]. I have met some Princes and they stated their helplessness by saying that we are more free than they are because they can be removed by the paramount power.

I will remind you that you should accept the resolution only if you approve of it from the heart because if you do not you may expose yourself to danger.

We had the opportunity of running the Government at least in seven provinces. We did put in good work which was praised even by the British Government. Your work does not finish with the attainment of freedom. There is no place for dictators in our scheme of things. Our object is to achieve independence and whoever can take up the reins may do so. It may be, you decide to place it in the hands of Parsis. You should not say why the Parsis should be entrusted with power. Maybe that power may be given to those whose names had

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never been heard of in the Congress. It will be for the people to decide. You should not feel that the majority of those who fought for it were Hindus and the number of Muslims and Parsis in the fight was small.[1] Once they got freedom, they should change their whole mentality. If there is the slightest communal taint in your minds, keep off the struggle.

There are people who have hatred in their hearts for the British. I have heard people saying that they were disgusted with them. Common people's mind does not differentiate between British Government and British people. To them both are the same. They are the people who do not mind the advent of the Japanese. To them perhaps it would mean change of masters. But it is a dangerous thing. You must remove it from your mind. This is a crucial hour. If we keep quiet and do not play our part it would not be right on our part. If it is only Britain and the United States who fight this war and if our part, is only to give monetary help, whether given willingly or taken from us unwillingly, it is not a very happy proposition. But we can show our real grit and valour only when it becomes our own fight. Then even a child will be brave. We shall get our freedom by fighting. It cannot fall from the skies. I know fully well that the Britishers will have to give us freedom when we have made sufficient sacrifices and proved our strength. We must remove any hatred for the British from our hearts. At least in my heart there is no such hatred. As a matter of fact, I am a greater friend of the British now than I ever was. The reason for this is that at this moment they are in distress. My friendship demands that I must make them aware of their mistakes. As I am not in the position in which they are, I can point out their mistakes. I know they are on the brink of a ditch and about to fall into it. Therefore, even if they want to cut off my hands, my friendship demands that I should try to pull them out of that ditch.

This is my claim, at which many people may laugh, but all the same I say this is true. At a time when I am about to launch the biggest fight in my life there can be no hatred for the British in my heart. The thought that because they are in difficulties I should give them a push is totally absent from my mind. It never has been there. Maybe that in a moment of anger they might do things which might provoke you. Nevertheless you should not resort to violence and put

[1] The following two sentences have been taken from *The Bombay Chronicle.*

non-violence to shame. When such a thing happens you may take it that you will not find me alive, wherever I may be. My[1] blood will be on your head. If you don't understand this it will be better if you reject this resolution. It will redound to your credit. How can I blame you for things which you may not be able to grasp. There is one principle in the fight which you must adopt. Never believe—as I have never believed—that the British are going to fail. I do not consider them to be a nation of cowards. I know before they accept defeat every soul in Britain will be sacrificed. They may be defeated and they may leave you just as they left the people of Burma, Malaya and other places with the idea of recapturing the lost ground when they can. That may be their military strategy. But supposing they leave us what happens to us? In that case Japan will come here. The coming in of Japan will mean the end of China and perhaps of Russia, too. In these matters Pandit Nehru is my guru (teacher). I do not want to be the instrument of Russia's defeat nor of China's. If that happens I would hate myself.

You know I like to go at a rapid speed. But it may be I am not going as rapidly as you want me to. Sardar Patel is reported to have said that the campaign maybe over in a week. I do not want to be in a hurry. If it ends in a week it will be a miracle and if this happens it would mean melting the British heart. Maybe wisdom will dawn on the British and they will understand that it will be wrong for them to put in jail the very people who want to fight for them. Maybe that a change may come in Mr. Jinnah's mind after all. He will think that those who are fighting are the sons of the soil and if he sits quiet of what use would Pakistan be for him.

Non-violence is a matchless weapon which can help everyone. I know we have not done much by way of non-violence and therefore, if such a change comes about I will take it as the result of our labours during the last twenty-two years and that God has helped us to achieve it. When I raised the slogan 'Quit India' the people in India who were then feeling despondent felt I had placed before them a new thing. If you want real freedom you will have to come together and such coming together will create true democracy—democracy the like of which has not been so far witnessed nor have there been any attempts made for such type of true democracy. I have read

[1] The source has "Their".

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a good deal about the French revolution. Carlyle's works I read while in jail. I have great admiration for the French people. Pandit Jawaharlal has told me all about the Russian revolution. But I hold that though theirs was a fight for the people it was not a fight for real democracy which I envisaged. My democracy means every man is his own master. I have read sufficient history and I did not see such an experiment on so large a scale for the establishment of democracy by non-violence. Once you understand these things you will forget the differences between the Hindus and the Muslims. The resolution that is placed before you says we do not want to remain frogs in a well. We are aiming at a world federation[1] in which India would be a leading unit. It can come only through non-violence. Disarmament is only possible if you use the matchless weapon of non-violence. There are people who may call me a visionary but I tell you I am a real bania and my business is to obtain swaraj.[2] Speaking to you as a practical bania, I say, if you are prepared to pay the full price [of non-violent conduct], pass this resolution, otherwise, do not pass it. If you do not accept this resolution I won't be sorry for it, on the contrary I would dance with joy because you would then relieve me of the tremendous responsibility which you are now going to place on me. I want you to adopt non-violence as a matter of policy. With me it is a creed, but so far as you are concerned I want you to accept it as policy. As disciplined soldiers you must accept it *in toto* and stick to it when you join the struggle.

The Hitavada, 9-8-1942; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-8-1942

423. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

[On or after *August 7, 1942*][3]

MALAVIYAJI

TREASURE YOUR BLESSINGS. THEY WILL ENCOURAGE ME ALONG ARDUOUS JOURNEY.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *The Hindu*, 11-8-1942

[1] The rest of the sentence has been taken from *The Bombay Chronicle*.
[2] The following sentence has been taken from *The Bombay Chronicle*.
[3] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated 7-8-1942.

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424. LETTER TO A MUSLIM[1]

[*August 8, 1942*]

With reference to your letter giving me the purport of your conversation today with the Quaid-e-Azam, I wish to say in as clear language as possible that when in a *Harijan* article I reproduced Maulana Azad's published offer to the Muslim League I meant it to be a serious offer in every sense of the term. Let me explain it again for your edification. Provided the Muslim League co-operated fully with the Congress demand for immediate independence without the slightest reservation, subject, of course, to the proviso that independent India will permit the operations of the Allied armies in order to check Axis aggression and thus to help both China and Russia, the Congress will have no objection to the British Government transferring all the powers it today exercises to the Muslim League on behalf of the whole of India, including the so-called Indian India.[2] And the Congress will not only not obstruct any Government that the Muslim League may form on behalf of the people, but will even join the Government in running the machinery of the free State. This is meant in all seriousness and sincerity. Naturally I cannot give all the implications of the offer and its far-reaching consequences in a hurried reply to your note. You are at liberty to show this to Quaid-e-Azam and to any person who is interested in the question of immediate independence for India and of a free India.

The Hindu, 20-8-1942

[1] The source has quoted the letter from *The Times of India* with the following explanation from 'Candidus': "The writer reproduces below the transcript of notes dictated to him by the late Mr. Mahadev Desai, being extracts from correspondence between a Muslim citizen of Bombay and Mr. Gandhi a few hours before the arrest."

[2] Gandhiji's offer in the letter was taken serious exception to by C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar who called it a "very astute and menacing move" and used it as an occasion for taking "his gloves off and definitely and publicly to arouse the States to a sense of impending danger" (*The Transfer of Power*, p. 759). He resigned from the Viceroy's Executive Council ostensibly on this issue.

425. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

BOMBAY,
August 8, 1942

If the resolution goes through this evening, I shall be the chief actor in the tragedy; it is therefore dreadful if any responsible Englishman considers me to be guilty of hatred of the British and admitted partiality for appeasement. In recent times I have not heard any other Englishman accusing me of hatred of the British. Anyway, I emphatically plead not guilty. My love of the British is equal to that of my own people. I claim no merit for it, for I have equal love for all mankind without exception. It demands no reciprocity. I own no enemy on earth. That is my creed.

I have never admitted any partiality for "appeasement" which has become a term of reproach in the English language. Peace I want among all mankind, but I don't want peace at any cost, and certainly not by placating the aggressor or at the cost of honour. Anyone, therefore, who thinks I am guilty of either vice will do great harm to the immediate purpose.

The resolution is intended to compass the very end which the article in question has at heart. We here feel that Britain cannot be extricated from its critical position unless India's hearty co-operation is secured. That co-operation is impossible without the people realizing that they are independent today. And they have to act swiftly, if they are to retain the independence regained after an insufferable period of foreign domination. No one can change the nature of a whole mass of mankind by promises, when the reality [of freedom] is the indispensable requisite for energizing them.

The resolution has provided for difficulty that the framers could anticipate. They have accounted for every valid criticism and I can say on behalf of the Congress that it would any time be prepared to consider and make allowance for any valid difficulty. No one responsible has even taken the trouble of discussing with the Working Committee of the Congress the difficulty there is about immediate recognition of India's independence. The Congress consent of the military operation of

[1] Gandhiji was replying to a *News Chronicle* editorial.

the Allied arms during pendency of the War surely is sufficient answer to any difficulty that we could conceive. British or the Allies run no risk in recognizing independence.

The risk is all on the side of India, but Congress is prepared to take it. Not only the British run no risk so far as conduct of war is concerned, but they gain by this one act of justice an ally counting 400 millions, and accession of strength that is derived from a consciousness of having done that justice.

By that act alone could Great Britain be distinguished from Nazis and Fascists and by no other.

It therefore passes comprehension that such tremendous fuss is being made over doing a tardy act of simple justice.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-8-1942

426. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING[1]

BOMBAY,
August 8, 1942

I congratulate you on the resolution that you have just passed. I also congratulate the three comrades on the courage they have shown in pressing their amendments to a division, even though they knew that there was an overwhelming majority in favour of the resolution, and I congratulate the thirteen friends who voted against the resolution. In doing so, they had nothing to be ashamed of. For the last twenty years we have tried to learn not to lose courage even when we are in a hopeless minority and are laughed at. We have learned to hold on to our beliefs in the confidence that we are in the right. It behoves us to cultivate this courage of conviction, for it ennobles man and raises his moral stature. I was, therefore, glad to see that these friends had imbibed the principle which I have tried to follow for the last fifty years and more.

Having congratulated them on their courage, let me say that what they asked this Committee to accept through their amendments was not the correct representation of the situation. These friends ought to have pondered over the appeal made to them by the Maulana to withdraw their amendments; they should have carefully followed the explanations given by Jawaharlal. Had they done so, it would have been

[1] Gandhiji spoke first in Hindi and then in English. This is a translation of his Hindi speech. For the English speech, *vide* the following item.

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clear to them that the right which they now want the Congress to concede has already been conceded by the Congress.

Time was when every Mussalman claimed the whole of India as his motherland. During the years that the Ali Brothers were with me, the assumption underlying all their talks and discussions was that India belonged as much to the Mussalmans as to the Hindus. I can testify to the fact that this was their innermost conviction and not a mask; I lived with them for years. I spent days and nights in their company. And I make bold to say that their utterances were the honest expression of their beliefs. I know there are some who say that I take things too readily at their face value, that I am gullible. I do not think I am such a simpleton, nor am I so gullible as these friends take me to be. But their criticism does not hurt me. I should prefer to be considered gullible rather than deceitful.

What these Communist friends proposed through their amendments is nothing new. It has been repeated from thousands of platforms. Thousands of Mussalmans have told me that if the Hindu-Muslim question was to be solved satisfactorily, it must be done in my lifetime. I should feel flattered at this; but how can I agree to a proposal which does not appeal to my reason? Hindu-Muslim unity is not a new thing. Millions of Hindus and Mussalmans have sought after it. I consciously strove for its achievement from my boyhood. While at school, I made it a point to cultivate the friendship of Muslim and Parsi fellow students. I believed even at that tender age that the Hindus in India, if they wished to live in peace and amity with the other communities, should assiduously cultivate the virtue of [good] neighbourliness. It did not matter, I felt, if I made no special effort to cultivate the friendship with Hindus, but I must make friends with at least a few Mussalmans. It was as counsel for a Mussalman merchant that I went to South Africa. I made friends with other Mussalmans there, even with the opponents of my client, and gained a reputation for integrity and good faith. I had among my friends and co-workers Muslims as well as Parsis. I captured their hearts and when I left finally for India, I left them sad and shedding tears of grief at the separation.

In India, too, I continued my efforts and left no stone unturned to achieve that unity. It was my life-long aspiration for it that made me offer my fullest co-operation to the Mussalmans in the Khilafat movement. Muslims throughout the country accepted me as their true friend.

How then is it that I have now come to be regarded as so evil and detestable? Had I any axe to grind in supporting the Khilafat movement? True, I did in my heart of hearts cherish a hope that it might enable me to save the cow. I am a worshipper of the cow. I believe the cow and myself to be the creation of the same God, and I am prepared to sacrifice my life in order to save the cow. But, whatever my philosophy of life and my ultimate hopes, I joined the movement in no spirit of bargain. I co-operated in the struggle for the Khilafat solely in order to discharge my obligation to my neighbour who, I saw, was in distress. The Ali Brothers, had they been alive today, would have testified to the truth of this assertion. And so would many others bear me out in that it was not a bargain on my part for saving the cow. The cow, like the Khilafat, stood on her own merits. As an honest man, a true neighbour and a faithful friend, it was incumbent on me to stand by the Mussalmans in the hour of their trial.

In those days I shocked the Hindus by dining with the Mussalmans, though with the passage of time they have now got used to it. Maulana Bari told me, however, that though he would insist on having me as his guest, he would not allow me to dine with him, lest some day he should be accused of a sinister motive. And so, whenever I had occasion to stay with him, he called a Brahmin cook and made special arrangements for separate cooking. Firangi Mahal, his residence, was an old-styled structure with limited accommodation; yet he cheerfully bore all hardships and carried out his resolve from which I could not dislodge him. It was the spirit of courtesy, dignity and nobility that inspired us in those days. The members of each community vied with one another in accommodating members of sister communities. They respected one another's religious feelings, and considered it a privilege to do so. Not a trace of suspicion lurked in anybody's heart. Where has all that dignity, that nobility of spirit, disappeared now? I should ask all Mussalmans, including Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah, to recall those glorious days and to find out what has brought us to the present impasse. Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah himself was at one time a Congressman. If today the Congress has incurred his wrath, it is because the canker of suspicion has entered his heart. May God bless him with long life, but when I am gone, he will realize and admit that I had no designs on Mussalmans and that I had never betrayed their interests. Where is the escape for me if I injure their cause or betray their interests? My life is entirely at their

disposal. They are free to put an end to it, whenever they wish to do so. Assaults have been made on my life in the past, but God has spared me till now, and the assailants have repented for their action. But if someone were to shoot me in the belief that he was getting rid of a rascal, he would kill not the real Gandhi, but the one that appeared to him a rascal.

To those who have been indulging in a campaign of abuse and vilification I would say, 'Islam enjoins you not to revile even an enemy. The Prophet treated even enemies with kindness and tried to win them over by his fairness and generosity. Are you followers of that Islam or of any other? If you are followers of the true Islam, does it behove you to distrust the words of one who makes a public declaration of his faith? You may take it from me that one day you will regret the fact that you distrusted and killed one who was a true and devoted friend of yours.' It cuts me to the quick to see that the more I appeal and the more the Maulana importunes, the more intense does the campaign of vilification grow. To me, these abuses are like bullets. They can kill me, even as a bullet can put an end to my life. You may kill me. That will not hurt me. But what of those who indulge in abusing? They bring discredit to Islam. For the fair name of Islam, I appeal to you to resist this unceasing campaign of abuse and vilification.

Maulana Saheb is being made a target for the filthiest abuse. Why? Because he refuses to exert on me the pressure of his friendship. He realizes that it is a misuse of friendship to seek to compel a friend to accept as truth what he knows is an untruth.

To the Qaid-e-Azam I would say: 'Whatever is true and valid in the claim for Pakistan is already in your hands. What is wrong and untenable is in nobody's gift, so that it can be made over to you. Even if someone were to succeed in imposing an untruth on others, he would not be able to enjoy for long the fruits of such coercion. God dislikes pride and keeps away from it. God would not tolerate a forcible imposition of an untruth.'

The Qaid-e-Azam says that he is compelled to say bitter things but that he cannot help giving expression to his thoughts and his feelings. Similarly I would say: I consider myself a friend of the Mussalmans. Why should I then not give expression to the things nearest to my heart, even at the cost of displeasing them? How can I conceal my innermost thoughts from them? I should congratulate the Qaid-e-Azam on his frankness in giving

expression to his thoughts and feelings, even if they sound bitter to his hearers. But even so why should the Mussalmans sitting here be reviled, if they do not see eye to eye with him? If millions of Mussalmans are with you, can you not afford to ignore the handful of Mussalmans who may appear to you to be misguided? Why should one with the following of several millions be afraid of a majority community, or of the minority being swamped by the majority? How did the Prophet work among the Arabs and the Mussalmans? How did he propagate Islam? Did he say he would propagate Islam only when he commanded a majority? I, therefore, appeal to you for the sake of Islam to ponder over what I say. There is neither fair play nor justice in saying that the Congress must accept a thing even if it does not believe in it and even if it goes counter to principles it holds dear.

Rajaji said: 'I do not believe in Pakistan. But Mussalmans ask for it, Mr. Jinnah asks for it, and it has become an obsession with them. Why not then say 'yes' to them just now? The same Mr. Jinnah will later on realize the disadvantages of Pakistan and will forgo the demand.' I said: 'It is not fair to accept as true a thing which I hold to be untrue and ask others to do so in the belief that the demand will not be pressed when the time comes for settling it finally. If I hold the demand to be just, I should concede it this very day. I should not agree to it merely in order to placate Jinnah Saheb. Many friends have come and asked me to agree to it for the time being to placate Mr. Jinnah, disarm his suspicions and to see how he reacts to it. But I cannot be party to a course of action with a false promise. At any rate, it is not my method.'

The Congress has no sanction but the moral one for enforcing its decisions. It believes that true democracy can only be the outcome of non-violence. The structure of a world federation can be raised only on a foundation of non-violence, and violence will have to be totally abjured from world affairs. If this is true, the solution of the Hindu-Muslim question, too, cannot be achieved by resort to violence. If the Hindus tyrannize over the Mussalmans, with what face will they talk of a world federation? It is for the same reason that I do not believe in the possibility of establishing world peace through violence as the English and American statesmen propose to do. The Congress has agreed to submitting all the differences to an impartial international tribunal and to abide by its decisions. If even this fairest of proposals is unacceptable, the only course that remains open is that of the sword, of violence. How can I persuade myself to

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agree to an impossibility? To demand the vivisection of a living organism is to ask for its very life. It is a call to war. The Congress cannot be party to such a fratricidal war. Those Hindus who, like Dr. Moonje and Shri Savarkar, believe in the doctrine of the sword may seek to keep the Mussalmans under Hindu domination. I do not represent that section. I represent the Congress. You want to kill the Congress which is the goose that lays golden eggs. If you distrust the Congress, you may rest assured that there is to be a perpetual war between the Hindus and the Mussalmans, and the country will be doomed to continue warfare and bloodshed. If such warfare is to be our lot, I shall not live to witness it.

It is for that reason that I say to Jinnah Saheb, 'You may take it from me that whatever in your demand for Pakistan accords with considerations of justice and equity is lying in your pocket; whatever in the demand is contrary to justice and equity you can take only by the sword and in no other manner.'

There is much in my heart that I would like to pour out before this assembly. One thing which was uppermost in my heart I have already dealt with. You may take it from me that it is with me a matter of life and death. If we Hindus and Mussalmans mean to achieve a heart unity, without the slightest mental reservation on the part of either, we must first unite in the effort to be free from the shackles of this Empire. If Pakistan after all is to be a portion of India, what objection can there be for Mussalmans against joining this struggle for India's freedom? The Hindus and Mussalmans must, therefore, unite in the first instance on the issue of fighting for freedom. Jinnah Saheb thinks the war will last long. I do not agree with him. If the war goes on for six months more, how shall we be able to save China?

I, therefore, want freedom immediately, this very night, before dawn, if it can be had. Freedom cannot now wait for the realization of communal unity. If that unity is not achieved, sacrifices necessary for it will have to be much greater than would have otherwise sufficed. But the Congress must win freedom or be wiped out in the effort. And forget not that the freedom which the Congress is struggling to achieve will not be for the Congressmen alone but for all the forty crores of the Indian people. Congressmen must forever remain humble servants of the people.

The Qaid-e-Azam has said that the Muslim League is prepared to take over the rule from the Britishers if they are prepared to hand it over to the Muslim League, for the British took

over the Empire from the hands of the Muslims. This, however, will be Muslim raj. The offer made by Maulana Saheb and by me does not imply establishment of Muslim raj or Muslim domination. The Congress does not believe in the domination of any group or any community. It believes in democracy which includes in its orbit Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Parsis, Jews—every one of the communities inhabiting this vast country. If Muslim raj is inevitable, then let it be; but how can we give it the stamp of our assent? How can we agree to the domination of one community over the others?

Millions of Mussalmans in this country come from Hindu stock. How can their homeland be any other than India? My eldest son embraced Islam some years back. What would his homeland be—Porbander or the Punjab? I ask the Mussalmans: 'If India is not your homeland, what other country do you belong to? In what separate homeland would you put my son who embraced Islam?' His mother wrote him a letter after his conversion, asking him if he had on embracing Islam given up drinking which Islam forbids to its followers. To those who gloated over the conversion, she wrote to say: 'I do not mind his becoming a Mussalman so much as his drinking. Will you, as pious Mussalmans, tolerate his drinking even after his conversion? He has reduced himself to the state of a rake by drinking. If you are going to make a man of him again, his conversion will have been turned to good account. You will, therefore, please see that he as a Mussalman abjures wine and women. If that change does not come about, his conversion goes in vain and our non-co-operation with him will have to continue.'

India is without doubt the homeland of all the Mussalmans inhabiting this country. Every Mussalman should therefore co-operate in the fight for India's freedom. The Congress does not belong to any one class or community; it belongs to the whole nation. It is open to Mussalmans to take possession of the Congress. They can, if they like, swamp the Congress by their numbers, and can steer it along the course which appeals to them. The Congress is fighting not on behalf of the Hindus but on behalf of the whole nation, including the minorities. It would hurt me to hear of a single instance of a Mussalman being killed by a Congressman. In the coming revolution, Congressmen will sacrifice their lives in order to protect the Mussalman against a Hindu's attack and *vice versa.* It is a part of their creed, and is one of the essentials of non-violence. You will be expected on occasions like these not to lose your heads. Every Congressman,

whether a Hindu or a Mussalman, owes this duty to the organization to which he belongs. The Mussalman who will act in this manner will render a service to Islam. Mutual trust is essential for success in the final nation-wide struggle that is to come.

I have said that much greater sacrifices will have to be made this time in the wake of our struggle because of the opposition from the Muslim League and from Englishmen. You have seen the secret circular issued by Sir Frederick Puckle. It is a suicidal course that he has taken. It contains an open incitement to organizations which crop up like mushrooms to combine to fight the Congress. We have thus to deal with an Empire whose ways are crooked. Ours is a straight path which we can tread even with our eyes closed. That is the beauty of satyagraha.

In satyagraha, there is no place for fraud or falsehood, or any kind of untruth. Fraud and untruth today are stalking the world. I cannot be a helpless witness to such a situation. I have travelled all over India as perhaps nobody in the present age has. The voiceless millions of the land saw in me their friend and representative, and I identified myself with them to an extent it was possible for a human being to do. I saw trust in their eyes, which I now want to turn to good account in fighting this Empire upheld on untruth and violence. However gigantic the preparations that the Empire has made, we must get out of its clutches. How can I remain silent at this supreme hour and hide my light under the bushel? Shall I ask the Japanese to tarry a while? If today I sit quiet and inactive, God will take me to task for not using up the treasure He had given me, in the midst of the conflagration that is enveloping the whole world. Had the condition been different, I should have asked you to wait yet awhile. But the situation now has become intolerable, and the Congress has no other course left for it.

Nevertheless, the actual struggle does not commence this moment. You have only placed all your powers in my hands. I will now wait upon the Viceroy and plead with him for the acceptance of the Congress demand. That process is likely to take two or three weeks. What would you do in the mean while? What is the programme, for the interval, in which all can participate? As you know, the spinning-wheel is the first thing that occurs to me. I made the same answer to the Maulana. He would have none of it, though he understood its import later. The fourteen-fold constructive programme is, of course, there for you to carry out. What more should you do? I will tell you. Every one of

you should, from this moment onwards, consider yourself a free man or woman, and act as if you are free and are no longer under the heel of this imperialism.

It is not a make-believe that I am suggesting to you. It is the very essence of freedom. The bond of the slave is snapped the moment he considers himself to be a free being. He will plainly tell the master: 'I was your bondslave till this moment, but I am a slave no longer. You may kill me if you like, but if you keep me alive, I wish to tell you that if you release me from the bondage of your own accord, I will ask for nothing more from you. You used to feed and clothe me, though I could have provided food and clothing for myself by my labour. I hitherto depended on you instead of on God, for food and raiment. God has now inspired me with an urge for freedom and I am today a free man and will no longer depend on you.'

You may take it from me that I am not going to strike a bargain with the Viceroy for ministries and the like. I am not going to be satisfied with anything short of complete freedom. Maybe, he will propose the abolition of salt tax, the drink evil, etc. But I will say : 'Nothing less than freedom.'

Here is a *mantra*, a short one, that I give you. You may imprint it on your hearts and let every breath of yours give expression to it. The *mantra* is: 'Do or Die.' We shall either free India or die in the attempt; we shall not live to see the perpetuation of our slavery. Every true Congressman or [Congress] woman will join the struggle with an inflexible determination not to remain alive to see the country in bondage and slavery. Let that be your pledge. Keep jails out of your consideration. If the Government keep me free, I will spare you the trouble of filling the jails. I will not put on the Government the strain of maintaining a large number of prisoners at a time when it is in trouble. Let every man and woman live every moment of his or her life hereafter in the consciousness that he or she eats or lives for achieving freedom and will die, if need be, to attain that goal. Take a pledge with God and your own conscience as witness, that you will no longer rest till freedom is achieved and will be prepared to lay down your lives in the attempt to achieve it. He who loses his life will gain it; he who will seek to save it shall lose it. Freedom is not for the coward or the faint-hearted.

A word to the journalists. I congratulate you on the support you have hitherto given to the national demand. I know the restrictions and handicaps under which you have to labour. But I would now ask you to snap the chains that bind you. It should

be the proud privilege of the newspapers to lead and set an example in laying down one's life for freedom. You have the pen which the Government can't suppress. I know you have large properties in the form of printing-presses, etc., and you would be afraid lest the Government should attach them. I do not ask you to invite an attachment of the printing-press voluntarily. For myself, I would not suppress my pen, even if the press was to be attached. As you know my press was attached in the past and returned later on. But I do not ask from you that final sacrifice. I suggest a middle way. You should now wind up your Standing Committee, and you may declare that you will give up writing under the present restrictions and take up the pen only when India has won her freedom. You may tell Sir Frederick Puckle that he can't expect from you a command performance, that his Press notes are full of untruth, and that you will refuse to publish them. You will openly declare that you are whole-heartedly with the Congress. If you do this, you will have changed the atmosphere before the fight actually begins.

From the Princes I ask with all respect due to them a very small thing. I am a well-wisher of the Princes. I was born in a State. My grandfather refused to salute with his right hand any Prince other than his own. But he did not say to the Prince, as I feel he ought to have said, that even his own master could not compel him, his minister, to act against his conscience. I have eaten the Princes' salt and I would not be false to it. As a faithful servant, it is my duty to warn the Princes that if they will act while I am still alive, the Princes may come to occupy an honourable place in free India. In Jawaharlal's scheme of free India, no privileges or the privileged classes have a place. Jawaharlal considers all property to be State-owned. He wants planned economy. He wants to reconstruct India according to plan. He likes to fly; I do not. I have kept a place for the Princes and the zamindars in India that I envisage. I would ask the Princes in all humility to enjoy through renunciation. The Princes may renounce ownership over their properties and become their trustees in the true sense of the term. I visualize God in the assemblage of people. The Princes may say to their people: 'You are the owners and masters of the State and we are your servants.' I would ask the Princes to become servants of the people and render to them an account of their own services. The Empire too bestows power on the Princes, but they should prefer to derive power from their own people; and if they want to indulge in some innocent pleasures, they may seek to do so

as servants of the people. I do not want the Princes to live as paupers. But I would ask them: 'Do you want to remain slaves for all time? Why should you, instead of paying homage to a foreign power, not accept the sovereignty of your own people?' You may write to the Political Department: 'The people are now awake. How are we to withstand an avalanche before which even the large Empires are crumbling? We, therefore, shall belong to the people from today onwards. We shall sink or swim with them.' Believe me, there is nothing unconstitutional in the course I am suggesting. There are, so far as I know, no treaties enabling the Empire to coerce the Princes. The people of the States will also declare that though they are the Princes' subjects, they are part of the Indian nation and that they will accept the leadership of the Princes, if the latter cast their lot with the People, but not otherwise. If this declaration enrages the Princes and they choose to kill the people, the latter will meet death bravely and unflinchingly, but will not go back on their word.

Nothing, however, should be done secretly. This is an open rebellion. In this struggle secrecy is a sin. A free man would not engage in a secret movement. It is likely that when you gain freedom you will have a C.I.D. of your own, in spite of my advice to the contrary. But in the present struggle, we have to work openly and to receive the bullets on our chest, without taking to heels.

I have a word to say to the Government servants also. They may not, if they like, resign their posts yet. The late Justice Ranade did not resign his post, but he openly declared that he belonged to the Congress. He said to the Government that though he was a judge, he was a Congressman and would openly attend the sessions of the Congress, but that at the same time he would not let his political views warp his impartiality on the bench. He held Social Reform Conference in the very pandal of the Congress. I would ask all the Government servants to follow in the footsteps of Ranade and to declare their allegiance to the Congress as an answer to the secret circular issued by Sir Frederick Puckle.

This is all that I ask of you just now. I will now write to the Viceroy. You will be able to read the correspondence not just now but when I publish it with the Viceroy's consent. But you are free to aver that you support the demand to be put forth in my letter. A judge came to me and said: "We get secret circulars from high quarters. What are we to do?" I replied, "If I were in your place, I would ignore the circulars. You may

openly say to the Government: 'I have received your secret circular. I am, however, with the Congress. Though I serve the Government for my livelihood, I am not going to obey these secret circulars or to employ underhand methods.' "

Soldiers too are covered by the present programme. I do not ask them just now to resign their posts and leave the army. Soldiers come to me, Jawaharlal and to the Maulana and say: "We are wholly with you. We are tired of the governmental tyranny." To these soldiers I would say: "You may say to the Government, 'Our hearts are with the Congress. We are not going to leave our posts. We will serve you so long as we receive your salaries. We will obey your just orders, but will refuse to fire on our own people.' "

To those who lack the courage to do this much I have nothing to say. They will go their own way. But if you can do this much, you may take it from me that the whole atmosphere will be electrified. Let the Government then shower bombs, if they like. But no power on earth will then be able to keep you in bondage any longer.

If the students want to join the struggle only to go back to their studies after a while, I would not invite them to it. For the present, however, till the time that I frame a programme for the the struggle, I would ask the students to say to their professors: 'We belong to the Congress. Do you belong to the Congress or to the Government? If you belong to the Congress, you need not vacate your posts. You will remain at your posts but teach us and lead us unto freedom.' In all fights for freedom, the world over, the students have made very large contributions.

If in the interval that is left to us before the actual fight begins, you do even the little I have suggested to you, you will have changed the atmosphere and will have prepared the ground for the next step.

There is much I should yet like to say. But my heart is heavy. I have already taken up much of your time. I have yet to say a few words in English also. I thank you for the patience and attention with which you have listened to me even at this late hour. It is just what true soldiers would do. For the last twenty-two years, I have controlled my speech and pen and have stored up my energy. He is a true *brahmachari* who does not fritter away his energy. He will, therefore, always control his speech. That has been my conscious effort all these years. But today the occasion has come when I had to unburden my heart before you. I have done so, even though it meant putting a

strain on your patience; and I do not regret having done it. I have given you my message and through you I have delivered it to the whole of India.

Mahatma, Vol. VI, pp. 154-64

427. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING

BOMBAY,
[*August 8, 1942*][1]

I have taken such an inordinately long time over pouring out what was agitating my soul to those whom I had just now the privilege of serving. I have been called their leader or, in military language, their commander. But I do not look at my position in that light. I have no weapon but love to wield my authority over anyone. I do sport a stick which you can break into bits without the slightest exertion. It is simply my staff with the help of which I walk. Such a cripple is not elated, when he is called upon to bear the greatest burden. You can share that burden only when I appear before you not as your commander but as a humble servant. And he who serves best is the chief among equals.

Therefore I was bound to share with you, such thoughts as were welling up in my breast and tell you in as summary a manner as I can, what I expect you to do as the first step.

Let me tell you at the outset that the real struggle does not commence today. I have yet to go through much ceremonial as I always do. The burden is almost unbearable and I have got to continue to reason in those circles with whom I have lost my credit for the time being. I know that in the course of the last few weeks I have forfeited my credit with a large number of friends, so much so that some of them have now begun to doubt not only my wisdom but even my honesty. Now, I hold that my wisdom is not such a treasure which I cannot afford to lose; but my honesty is a precious treasure to me and I can ill afford to lose it.

Such occasions arise in the life of a man who is a pure seeker after truth and who would seek to serve humanity and his country to the best of his lights without fear or hypocrisy. For the last fifty years I have known no other way. I have been a

[1] From *The Indian Annual Register 1942*, Vol. II, p. 144

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humble servant of humanity and have rendered on more than one occasion such service as I could to the Empire; and here let me say without fear of challenge that throughout my career never have I asked for any personal favour. I have enjoyed the privilege of friendship, as I enjoy it today, with Lord Linlithgow. It is a friendship which has outgrown official relationship. Whether Lord Linlithgow will bear me out I do not know; but there has sprung up a personal bond between him and myself. He once introduced me to his daughter. His son-in-law, the A.D.C., was drawn towards me. He fell in love with Mahadev more than with me, and Lady Anne and he came to me. She is an obedient and favourite daughter. I take interest in their welfare. I take the liberty to give out these titbits only to give you an earnest view of the personal bond which exists between us. And yet let me declare here that no personal bond will ever interfere with the stubborn struggle which, if it falls to my lot, I may have to launch against Lord Linlithgow, as the representative of the Empire. It seems to me that I will have to resist the might of that Empire with the might of the dumb millions, with no limit but non-violence as policy confined to this struggle. It is a terrible job to have to offer resistance to a Viceroy with whom I enjoy such relations. He has more than once trusted my word, often about my people. I mention this with great pride and pleasure. I mention it as an earnest of my desire to be true to the British nation, to be true to the Empire. I mention it to testify that when that Empire forfeited my trust, the Englishman who was its Viceroy came to know it.

Then there is the sacred memory of Charlie Andrews which wells up within me at this moment. The spirit of Andrews hovers about me. For me he sums up the brightest tradition of English culture. I enjoyed closer relations with him than with most Indians. I enjoyed his confidence. There were no secrets between us. We exchanged our hearts every day. Whatever was in his heart he would blurt out without the slightest hesitation or reservation. It is true he was friend of Gurudev, but he looked upon Gurudev with awe, not that Gurudev wanted it. Andrews had that peculiar humility. But with me he became the closest friend. Years ago he came to South Africa[1] with a note of introduction from the late[2] Gokhale. He is unfortunately gone.[3] He was a fine

[1] The words "to South Africa" were added by Gandhiji.

[2] The words "the late" were added by Gandhiji.

[3] This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had: "Pearson and he are both unfortunately gone."

Englishman.[1] I know that the spirit of Andrews is listening to me.

Then I have received a warm telegram from the Metropolitan (Dr. Westcote[2]) of Calcutta, conveying his blessings, though, I know, he is opposed to my move today. I hold him to be a man of God. I can understand the language of his heart, and I know that his heart is with me.

With this background, I want to declare to the world that, whatever may be said to the contrary, and although I might have forfeited the regard and even the trust of many friends in the West, and I bow my head low, but even for their friendship or their love, I must not suppress the voice within, call it 'conscience', call it the 'prompting of my inner basic nature'. There is something within me impelling me to cry out my agony. I have known humanity. I have studied something of psychology though I have not read many books on it. Such a man knows exactly what it is. That something in me which never deceives me tells me now: 'You have to stand against the whole world although you may have to stand alone. You have to stare the world in the face although the world may look at you with bloodshot eyes. Do not fear. Trust that little thing which resides in the heart.' It says, 'Forsake friends, wife, and all; but testify to that for which you have lived, and for which you have to die.'

Believe me, friends, I am not anxious to die. I want to live my full span of life. According to me, it is 120 years at least. By that time India will be free, the world will be free. Let me tell you, too, that I do not regard England, or for that matter America, as free countries. They are free after their own fashion, free to hold in bondage the coloured races of the earth. Are England and America fighting for the liberty of these races today? You shall not limit my concept of freedom. The English and American teachers, their history and their magnificent poetry have not said you shall not broaden the interpretation of that freedom. And according to my interpretation of that freedom, I am constrained to say, they are strangers to that freedom which their poets and teachers have described. If they will know the real freedom, they should come to India. They have to come not with pride or arrogance but in the spirit of earnest seekers of Truth.

[1] This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had: "They were the finest specimen of Englishmen."

[2] This name was added by Gandhiji.

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It is the[1] fundamental truth with[2] which India has been experimenting for 22 years. Unconsciously, from its very foundations, long ago, the Congress has departed though non-violently from what is known[3] as the constitutional method. Dadabhai and Pherozshah who held the Congress India in the palm of their hands had held on to the latter[4]. They were lovers of the Congress. They were its masters. But above all they were real servants. They never countenanced murder and secrecy and the like. I confess there are many black sheep amongst us Congressmen. But I trust the whole of India to launch upon a non-violent struggle on the widest scale[5]. I trust[6] the innate goodness of human nature which perceives the truth and prevails during a crisis as if by instinct. But even if I am deceived in this, I shall not swerve[7]. From its very inception the Congress based its policy on peaceful methods, and the subsequent generations added non-co-operation. When Dadabhai entered the British Parliament, Salisbury dubbed him as a black man, but the English people defeated Salisbury, and Dadabhai went to Parliament by their vote. India was delirious with joy. These things, however, now India has outgrown.

It is with all these things as the background that I want Englishmen, Europeans and all the United Nations to examine in their heart of hearts what crime India has committed in demanding independence today. I ask: Is it right for you to distrust us? Is it right to distrust such an organization with all its background, tradition and record of over half a century and misrepresent its endeavours before all the world by every means at your command? Is it right, I ask, that by hook or crook, aided by the Foreign Press, aided, I hope not, by the President of the U.S.A. or even by the Generalissimo of China, who has yet to win his laurels, you should present India's stand in shocking lights?

I have met the Generalissimo. I have known him through Madam Chiang who was my interpreter, and though he seemed

[1] This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had "a".

[2] The word "with" was added by Gandhiji.

[3] This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had "been building on non-violence known".

[4] This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had "become rebels".

[5] The words "on the widest scale" were added by Gandhiji.

[6] This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had "because of my nature to rely upon".

[7] This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had "I shall not flinch".

inscrutable to me, not so Madam Chiang. And he allowed me to read his mind through her. He has not as yet said that we were wrong in demanding our independence. There is a chorus of disapproval and protest all over the world against us. They say we are erring, the move is inopportune. I had great regard for the British, but now British diplomacy stinks in[1] my nostrils. Yet others are learning their lessons. They may succeed in getting, through these methods, world opinion on their side for a time; but India will raise her voice against all the organized propaganda. I will speak against it. Even if the whole of the world forsakes me, I will say: 'You are wrong. India will wrench with non-violence her liberty from unwilling hands.'

Even if my eyes close and there is no freedom for India, non-violence will not end. They will be dealing a mortal blow to China and to Russia if they oppose the freedom of non-violent India which today is pleading with bended knees for the fulfilment of a debt long overdue. Does a creditor ever go to the debtor like that? And even when India is met with such angry opposition, she says: 'We won't hit below the belt. We have learnt sufficient gentlemanliness. We are pledged to non-violence.' I have been the author of the non-embarrassment policy of the Congress and yet today you find me talking this strong language. My non-embarrassment plea was always qualified by the proviso 'consistent with our honour and safety'. If a man holds me by the neck and wants to drown me, may I not struggle to free myself directly? There is no inconsistency in our position today.

There are representatives of the Foreign Press assembled here today. Through them I wish to say to the world that United Nations, who say that they have need for India, have the opportunity now to declare India free and prove their *bona fides*. If they miss it, they will be missing opportunity of their lifetime, and history will record that they did not discharge their obligations to India in time and lost the battle. I want the blessing of the whole world, so that I may succeed with them. I do not want the United Powers to go beyond their obvious limitations. I do not want them to accept non-violence and disarm today. There is a fundamental difference between Fascism and even this imperialism which I am fighting. Do the British get from India all they want? What

[1] This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had "into".

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they get today is from the India which they hold in bondage. Think what difference it would make if India was to participate as a free ally. That freedom, if it is to come, must come today. It will have no taste left in it if today you, who have power to help, do not exercise it. If you can exercise it, what seems impossible today will, under the glow of freedom, become possible tomorrow. If India feels that freedom, she will command that freedom for China. The road for running to Russia's help will be opened. Englishmen did not die in Malaya or on the soil of Burma. What shall enable us to retrieve this situation? Where shall I go and where shall I take the forty crores of India? How is this vast mass of humanity to be aflame in the cause of world-deliverance, unless and until it has touched and felt freedom? Today they have no touch of life left. It has been crushed out of them. If lustre is to be put into their eyes, freedom has to come not tomorrow but today. I have, therefore, pledged the Congress and the Congress has pledged herself that she will do or die.

From a typed office copy. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

428. MESSAGE TO KARNATAKA

August 8, 1942

I hope the people of Karnataka will all participate in this *yajna*.

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Mahatma*, Vol. VI, between pp. 224 and 225

429. UNSEEMLY IF TRUE

Asaf Ali Saheb, President of the Delhi P.C.C. writes:

The enclosed complaint was first brought up before the Delhi Provincial Congress Committee. The writer has now secured two supporters. I know the writer personally as a truthful and unbiased nationalist and I believe his word.

I had heard of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and its activities; and I also knew that it was a communal organization. The slogan and the speech complained of have been brought to my notice for the first

time. I can think of no means of counteracting the effect of such slogans and speeches on other communities, except inviting your attention to them. Perhaps you will take notice of it in the *Harijan.*

The complainant's letter is in Urdu. Its purport is that the organization referred to in Asaf Ali Saheb's letter consisting of 3,000 members goes through a daily lathi drill which is followed by reciting the slogan, "Hindustan belongs to Hindus and to nobody else." This recital is followed by a brief discourse in which speakers say: "Drive out the English first and then we shall subjugate the Muslims. If they do not listen, we shall kill them." Taking the evidence at its face value, the slogan is wrong and the central theme of the discourse is worse. I can only hope that the slogan is unauthorized and that the speaker who is reported to have uttered the sentiments ascribed to him was no responsible person. The slogan is wrong and absurd, for Hindustan belongs to all those who are born and bred here and who have no other country to look to. Therefore, it belongs to Parsis, Beni Israels, to Indian Christians, Muslims and other non-Hindus as much as to Hindus. Free India will be no Hindu raj, it will be Indian raj based not on the majority of any religious sect or community but on the representatives of the whole people without distinction of religion. I can conceive a mixed majority putting the Hindus in a minority. They would be elected for their record of service and merits. Religion is a personal matter which should have no place in politics. It is in the unnatural condition of foreign domination that we have unnatural divisions according to religion. Foreign domination going, we shall laugh at our folly in having clung to false ideals and slogans.

The discourse referred to is surely vulgar. There is no question of "driving out" the English. They cannot be driven out except by violence superior to theirs. The idea of killing the Muslims if they do not remain in subjection may have been all right in bygone days; it has no meaning today. There is no force in the cry of driving out the English if the substitute is to be Hindu or any other domination. That will be no swaraj. Self-government necessarily means government by the free and intelligent will of the people. I add the word 'intelligent' because, I hope that India will be predominantly non-violent. Members of society based on non-violence must all be so educated as to be able to think and act for themselves. If their thought and action be one, it will be because they are directed both to a common goal and common result even as the

thought and action of a hundred men pulling a rope in one direction would be one.

I hope that those in charge of the Swayamsevak Sangh will inquire into the complaint and take the necessary steps.

Harijan, 9-8-1942

430. MESSAGE TO THE COUNTRY[1]

BOMBAY,
5 *a.m.*, *August 9, 1942*

Everyone is free to go the fullest length under ahimsa. Complete deadlock by strikes and other non-violent means. Satyagrahis must go out to die not to live. They must seek and face death. It is only when individuals go out to die that the nation will survive.

Karenge ya marenge.[2]

M. K. GANDHI

From the documents in the office of the D. I. G., I. B., West Bengal Government

431. MESSAGE TO THE COUNTRY[3]

August 9, 1942

Let every non-violent soldier of freedom write out the slogan 'do or die' on a piece of paper or cloth and stick it on his clothes, so that in case he died in the course of offering satyagraha, he might be distinguished by that sign from other elements who do not subscribe to non-violence.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, p. 53; also *Mahatma*, Vol. VI, p. 174

[1] On the morning of August 9, Gandhiji, along with the Working Committee and some fifty Congress leaders of Bombay, was taken into custody.

[2] "We will do or die."

[3] This, according to Pyarelal, was the parting message Gandhiji gave the country through him at the time of his arrest.

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432. LETTER TO SIR ROGER LUMLEY

[THE AGA KHAN'S PALACE, POONA,]
August 10, 1942

DEAR SIR ROGER LUMLEY[1],

After the train that carried me and other fellow prisoners reached Chinchwad on Sunday, some of us were ordered to alight. Shrimati Sarojini Devi, Shrimati Mirabai, Shri Mahadev Desai and I were directed to get into a car. There were two lorries lined up alongside the car. I have no doubt that the reservation of the car for us was done out of delicate considerations. I must own too that the officers in charge performed their task with tact and courtesy.

Nevertheless I felt deeply humiliated when the other fellow-prisoners were ordered to occupy the two lorries. I realize that all could not be carried in motor-cars. I have been before now carried in prison vans. And this time too we should have been carried with our comrades. In relating this incident my object is to inform the Government that in the altered conditions and the altered state of my mind, I can no longer accept special privileges which hitherto I have accepted though reluctantly. I propose this time to accept no privileges and comforts which comrades may not receive, except for the special food so long as the Government allow it for my bodily need.

There is another matter to which I must draw your attention. I have told my people that this time our method is not courting imprisonment, that we must prepare for much higher sacrifice and so those who choose may peacefully resist arrest. So a young man[2] who was in the party offered such resistance. He was therefore hauled to the prison van. This was ugly enough.

But it was a painful sight when an impatient English sergeant rough-handled him and shoved him into the lorry as if he was a log of wood. In my opinion the sergeant deserves correction. The struggle has become bitter enough without such scenes.

This temporary jail is commodious enough to take in all who were arrested with me. Among them are Sardar Patel and his daughter. She is his nurse and cook. I have great

[1] Governor of Bombay
[2] G. G. Mehta

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anxiety about the Sardar who never got over the intestinal collapse which he had during his last incarceration. Ever since his release I have been personally regulating his diet, etc. I request that both he and his daughter be placed with me. And so should the other prisoners though not on the same imperative grounds as are applicable in the case of the Sardar and his daughter. I submit that it is not right to separate co-workers arrested for the same cause unless they are dangerous criminals.

I have been told by the Superintendent that I am not to be supplied with newspapers. Now I was given by one of my fellow prisoners on the train a copy of the Sunday edition of the *Evening News*. It contains the Government of India's resolution[1] in justification of their policy in dealing with this crisis. It contains some grossly incorrect statements which I ought to be allowed to correct. This and similar things I cannot do, unless I know what is going on outside the jail.

May I expect an early decision on the points raised herein?

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, pp. 1-2

433. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

August 13, 1942

BAPA,

Look into the accounts of Dharmaprakash and pay him what you think right. I hope you are fully recovered.

BAPU

BAPA
HARIJAN NIWAS
KINGSWAY
DELHI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* Appendix XII.

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434. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

THE AGA KHAN'S PALACE,
August 14, 1942

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

The Government of India were wrong in precipitating the crisis. The Government resolution justifying this step is full of distortions and misrepresentations. That you have the approval of your Indian "colleagues" can have no significance, except this, that in India you can always command such services. That co-operation is an additional justification for the demand of withdrawal irrespective of what people and parties may say.

The Government of India should have waited at least till the time I inaugurated mass action. I had publicly stated that I fully contemplated sending you a letter before taking concrete action. It was to be an appeal to you for an impartial examination of the Congress case. As you know, the Congress has readily filled in every omission that has been discovered in the conception of its demand. So could I have dealt with every difficulty if you had given me the opportunity. The precipitate action of the Government leads one to think that they were afraid that the extreme caution and gradualness with which the Congress was moving towards direct action might make world opinion veer round to the Congress, as it had already begun doing, and expose the hollowness of the grounds for the Government's rejection of the Congress demand. They should surely have waited for an authentic report of my speeches on Friday and on Saturday night after the passing of the resolution by the All-India Congress Committee. You would have found in them that I would not hastily begin action. You should have taken advantage of the interval foreshadowed in them, and explored every possibility of satisfying the Congress demand.

The resolution says:

> The Government of India have waited patiently in the hope that wiser counsels might prevail. They have been disappointed in that hope.

I suppose wiser counsels here means abandonment of its demand by the Congress. Why should the abandonment of the demand

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legitimate at all times be hoped for by a Government pledged to guarantee independence to India? Is it a challenge that could only be met by immediate repression instead of patient reasoning with the demanding party? I venture to suggest that it is a long draft upon the credulity of mankind to say that the acceptance of the demand "would plunge India into confusion". Anyway the summary rejection of the demand *has* plunged the nation and the Government into confusion. The Congress was making every effort to identify India with the Allied cause.

The Government resolution says:

> The Governor-General-in-Council has been aware too for some days past of dangerous preparations by the Congress Party for unlawful and in some cases violent activities, directed among other things to interruption of communications and public utility services, the organization of strikes, tampering with the loyalty of Government servants, and interference with defence measures including recruitment.

This is a gross distortion of the reality. Violence was never contemplated at any stage. A definition of what could be included in non-violent action has been interpreted in a sinister and subtle manner, as if the Congress was preparing for violent action. Everything was openly discussed among Congress circles, for nothing was to be done secretly. And why is it tampering with your loyalty if I ask you to give up a job which is harming the British people?

Instead of publishing behind the backs of principal Congressmen the misleading paragraph the Government, immediately they came to know of the "preparations", should have brought to book the parties concerned with the preparations. That would have been the appropriate course. By their unsupported allegations in the resolution they have laid themselves open to the charge of unfair dealing.

The Congress movement was intended to evoke in the people the measure of sacrifice sufficient to compel attention. It was intended to demonstrate what measure of popular support it had. Was it wise at this time of the day to seek to suppress a popular movement avowedly non-violent?

The Government resolution further says:

> The Congress is not India's mouthpiece. Yet in the interests of securing their own dominance and in pursuit of their totalitarian policy its leaders have consistently impeded the efforts made to bring India to full nationhood.

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It is a gross libel thus to accuse the oldest national organization of India. This language lies ill in the mouth of a Government which has, as can be proved from published records, consistently thwarted every national effort for attaining freedom and sought to suppress the Congress by hook or by crook.

The Government of India have not condescended to consider the Congress offer that if simultaneously with the declaration of the independence of India, they could not trust the Congress to form a stable provisional government, they should ask the Muslim League to do so and that any national government formed by the League would be loyally accepted by the Congress. Such an offer is hardly consistent with the charge of totalitarianism against the Congress.

Let me examine the Government offer:

> It is that as soon as hostilities cease, India shall devise for herself, with full freedom of decision and on a basis embracing all and not only a single party, the form of government which she regards as most suited to her conditions.

Has this offer any reality about it? All parties have not agreed now. Will it be any more possible after the war? And if the parties have to act before independence is in their hands? Parties grow up like mushrooms, for without proving their representative character, the Government will welcome them as they have done in the past and if they, the parties, oppose the Congress and its activities, though they may do lip homage to independence, frustration is inherent in the Government offer. Hence the logical cry of withdrawal first. Only after the end of the British power and a fundamental change in the political status of India from bondage to freedom, will the formation of a truly representative government, whether provisional or permanent, be possible. The living burial of the author of the demand has not resolved the deadlock, it has aggravated it.

Then the resolution proceeds:

> The suggestion put forward by the Congress Party that the millions of India uncertain as to the future are ready, despite the sad lessons of so many martyr countries, to throw themselves into the arms of the invaders, is one that the Government of India cannot accept as a true representation of the feeling of the people of this great country.

I do not know about the millions, but I can give my own evidence in support of the Congress statement. It is open to the Government not to believe the Congress evidence. No

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imperial power likes to be told that it is in peril. It is because the Congress is anxious for Great Britain to avoid the fate that has overtaken other imperial powers that it asks her to shed imperialism voluntarily by declaring India independent. The Congress has not approached the movement with any but the friendliest motives. Congress seeks to kill imperialism as much for the sake of the British people and humanity as for India. Notwithstanding assertions to the contrary, I maintain that the Congress has no interests of its own, apart from that of the whole of India and the world.

The following passage from the peroration in the resolution is interesting:

> But on them lies the task of defending India, of maintaining India's capacity to wage war, of safeguarding India's interests, of holding the balance between the different sections of her people without fear or favour.

All I can say is that it is a mockery of truth after the experience of Malaya, Singapore and Burma. It is sad to find the Government of India claiming to hold the "balance" between the parties for which it is itself demonstrably responsible.

One thing more. The declared cause is common between the Government of India and us. To put it in the most concrete terms, it is the protection of the freedom of China and Russia. The Government of India think that the freedom of India is not necessary for winning the cause. I think exactly the opposite. I have taken Jawaharlal Nehru as my measuring rod. His personal contacts make him feel much more the misery of the impending ruin of China and Russia than I can—and may I say than even you can. In that misery he tried to forget his old quarrel with imperialism. He dreads much more than I do the success of Fascism and Nazism. I have argued with him for days together. He fought against my position with a passion which I have no words to describe. But the logic of facts overwhelmed him. He yielded when he saw clearly that without the freedom of India that of the other two was in great jeopardy. Surely you are wrong in having imprisoned such a powerful friend and ally. If notwithstanding the common cause, the Government's answer to the Congress demand is hasty repression, they will not wonder if I draw the inference that it was not so much the Allied cause that weighed with the British Government, as the unexpressed determination to cling to the possession of India as an indispensable part of the imperial policy. This determination led to the rejection of the Congress

demand and precipitated repression. The present mutual slaughter on a scale never before known to history is suffocating enough. But the slaughter of truth accompanying the butchery and enforced by the falsity of which the resolution is reeking adds strength to the Congress position.

It causes me deep pain to have to send you this long letter. But however much I dislike your action, I remain the same friend you have known me. I would still plead for reconsideration of the Government of India's whole policy. Do not disregard the pleading of one who claims to be a sincere friend of the British people. Heaven guide you![1]

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Transfer of Power, Vol. II, pp. 702-5; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44*, pp. 12-6

435. TELEGRAM TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH[2]

August 15, 1942

CHIMANLAL, ASHRAM
SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

MAHADEV DIED SUDDENLY GAVE NO INDICATION. SLEPT WELL LAST NIGHT HAD BREAKFAST WALKED WITH ME SUSHILA. JAIL DOCTORS DID ALL THEY COULD BUT GOD HAD WILLED OTHERWISE. SUSHILA AND I BATHED BODY. BODY LYING PEACEFULLY COVERED WITH FLOWERS, INCENSE BURNING. SUSHILA AND I RECITING GITA. MAHADEV HAS DIED YOGI'S AND PATRIOT'S DEATH. TELL DURGA, BABLA[3] AND SUSHILA NO SORROW ALLOWED. ONLY JOY OVER SUCH NOBLE DEATH. CREMATION TAKING PLACE FRONT OF ME. SHALL KEEP ASHES. ADVISE DURGA REMAIN ASHRAM, BUT SHE MAY GO TO HER PEOPLE IF SHE MUST.

[1] The Viceroy replying on August 22 said that he feared "it would not be possible for me either to accept the criticism which you advance of the resolution of the Governor-General in Council, or your request that the whole policy of the Government of India should be reconsidered."

[2] The authorities posted this as a letter; *vide* "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bombay", p. 413.

[3] Narayan Desai, Mahadev Desai's son

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HOPE BABLA WILL BE BRAVE AND PREPARE HIMSELF FILL MAHADEV'S PLACE WORTHILY. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: File No. 3/21/42, Vol. I. Courtesy: National Archives of India; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44*, p. 5

436. PREFACE[1]

For the benefit of the readers of *Indian Opinion* (South Africa), I wrote a few articles under the heading "Guide to Health" in or about the year 1906.[2] These were later published in book form. I found that it was known to the Indian public. But copies were not available in India. The late Swami Akhandanand asked for my permission to publish an Indian edition. The enterprise proved very popular. The book was translated into several Indian languages. An English translation also appeared. This reached the West, and was translated into several European languages. The result was that the book became the most popular of all my writings. I have never been able to understand the reason for this popularity. I had written those articles casually, and I did not attach much importance to them. But perhaps the reason for the popularity is to be sought in the fact that I have looked upon the problem of health from a novel point of view, somewhat different from the orthodox methods adopted by doctors and vaidyas. Whether my presumption is correct or not, many friends have been pressing me to publish a new edition, putting forth my views to date. I have never been able to revise the original. I have never had the time for it. The present enforced rest[3] offers me such an opportunity and I am taking advantage of it. I have not even got the original with me. The experience of so many years can-

[1] In "A Word by the Publisher", in the source, Jivanji D. Desai explains: "The original was written in Gujarati and Gandhiji got it translated into Hindustani and English by Dr. Sushila Nayyar under his own guidance. He also went through both the translations to give them the final touches. The reader can therefore take the translation as Gandhiji's own rendering." The item here is placed according to the date on which the last chapter of the book was revised by Gandhiji.

[2] The articles were serialized under the title "General Knowledge about Health" in 1913. They appeared in thirty-three instalments from January 4 to August 16; *vide* Vols. XI and XII.

[3] In the Aga Khan's Palace, Poona

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not but have left its mark upon my thought. But those who have read the original book will notice that there is no fundamental difference between my ideas of today and those of 1906. But my mind is responsive. Therefore whatever change the reader may find will, I hope, be in the nature of a progress.

I am giving a new name: "Key to Health". Anyone who observes the rules of health mentioned in this book will find that he has got in it a real key to unlock the gates leading him to health. He will not need to knock at the doors of doctors or vaidyas from day to day.

M. K. GANDHI

AGA KHAN PALACE, YERAVDA,
August 27, 1942
Key to Health

437. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DETENTION CAMP,
August 27, 1942

TO
THE SECRETARY TO THE BOMBAY GOVERNMENT
HOME DEPARTMENT

DEAR SIR,

With reference to the Government orders about the writing of letters by the security prisoners, it seems that the Government do not know that for over thirty-five years, I have ceased to live family life and have been living what has been called Ashram life in association with persons who have more or less shared my views. Of these Mahadev Desai, whom I have just lost, was an associate beyond compare. His wife and only son have lived with me for years sharing the Ashram life. If I cannot write to the widow and her son or the other members of the deceased's family living in the Ashram, I can have no interest in writing to anyone else. Nor can I be confined to writing about personal and domestic matters. If I am permitted to write at all, I must give instructions about many matters that I had entrusted to the deceased. These have no connection with politics which are the least part of my activities. I am directing the affairs of the A.I.S.A. and kindred associations. Sevagram Ashram itself has many activities of a social, educational and humanitarian character. I should be able to receive

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letters about these activities and write about them. There is the Andrews Memorial Fund. There is a large sum lying at my disposal. I should be able to give instructions about its disposal. To this end I must be in correspondence with the people at Santiniketan. Pyarelal Nayyar who was co-secretary with Mahadev Desai, and whose company as also that of my wife was offered to me at the time of my arrest, has not yet been sent. I have asked the I.G.P. about his whereabouts. I can get no information about him, nor about Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel who was under my care for the control of his intestinal trouble. If I may not correspond with them about their health and welfare, again the permission granted can have no meaning for me.

I hope that even if the Government cannot extend the facilities for correspondence in terms of this letter, they will appreciate my difficulty.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, pp. 3-4

438. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DETENTION CAMP,
September 19, 1942

THE SECRETARY
HOME DEPTT.
BOMBAY GOVT., BOMBAY

SIR,

Khan Bahadur Kateley kindly handed me yesterday the letters written by late Shri Mahadev Desai's wife and son. At the time of handing me the letters, Khan Bahadur told me that he has to explain to me the delay caused in sending my "letter"[1]. He could however give no explanation. I missed even a formal expression of regret for the inordinate delay. There appears to have been in the Bombay Secretariat a disregard of the feelings of a bereaved wife and bereaved son.

From these letters I gather that what was on the face of it a telegram, and was handed to the I.G.P. with the request that it should go as an express telegraphic message was posted as a letter. I should like to be informed why the telegraphic

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Chimanlal N. Shah", pp. 410-1.

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message was posted as a letter. May I remind the Government that I am without any reply to my letter of 27-8-42? The widow and her son are instances in point. They cannot but be comforted to receive letters from my wife and me. But under the prohibitory orders we may not write to them.

I am,
Yours, etc.,
(Security Prisoner)
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, p. 6

439. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

September 23[1]*, 1942*

TO,
THE SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME DEPARTMENT

SIR,

In spite of the chorus of approval sung by the Indian Councillors and others of the present Government policy in dealing with the Congress, I venture to assert that, had the Government but awaited my contemplated letter to His Excellency the Viceroy and the result thereafter, no calamity would have overtaken the country. The reported deplorable destruction would have most certainly been avoided.

In spite of all that has been said to the contrary, I claim that the Congress policy still remains unequivocally non-violent. The wholesale arrest of the Congress leaders seems to have made the people wild with rage to the point of losing self-control. I feel that the Government, not the Congress, are responsible for the destruction that has taken place. The only right course for the Government seems to me to be to release the Congress leaders, withdraw all repressive measures and

[1] In "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 19-1-1943, (Vol. LXXVII) Gandhiji by mistake referred to this letter as of September 21 which led to some confusion in the House of Commons. Amery clarified that it was "referred to in Mr. Gandhi's letter of January 19, though incorrectly, as the letter of September 21 and was consequently so described in the correspondence given to the Press in London". Hence also the error in *The Transfer of Power* which carries the date as September 21.

explore ways and means of conciliation. Surely the Government have ample resources to deal with any overt act of violence. Repression can only breed discontent and bitterness.

Since I am permitted to receive newspapers, I feel that I owe it to the Government to give my reaction to the sad happenings in the country. If the Government think that as a prisoner I have no right to address such communications, they have but to say so and I will not repeat the mistake.[1]

I am,
Yours, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, pp. 16-7; *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II, pp. 1002-3

440. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

September 26[2]*, 1942*

THE SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
HOME DEPARTMENT

SIR,

With reference to your letter[3] of 22nd September, I beg to say that I cannot exercise the privilege extended by the Government since I may not refer in my letters even to non-political

[1] Government did not send any formal reply to this letter, which was acknowledged orally. It was also not included in Gandhiji's correspondence with the Viceroy as released to the Press. This gave rise to a widespread feeling that Government had suppressed the letter expressing Gandhiji's disapproval of acts of violence. Rajagopalachari, in a statement on March 9, 1943, deplored the suppression of this letter and Sorensen, on June 24, 1943, asked in the House of Commons why no reference had been made to it either by the Viceroy or the Secretary of State.

[2] *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government* has September 25. However the photostat has September 26.

[3] In this the addressee had asked Gandhiji to furnish a list of the inmates of the Sevagram Ashram with whom he wished to correspond on personal and domestic matters only. But in response to Gandhiji's request that he should be allowed to write and receive letters on certain other matters he was informed that this could not be allowed.

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matters mentioned in my letter of 27th August, 1942.

I am,
Yours, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : C.W. 10366; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44*, p. 5

441. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DETENTION CAMP,
October 26, 1942

THE SECRETARY
BOMBAY GOVERNMENT
(HOME DEPARTMENT) BOMBAY

SIR,

I beg to enclose herewith a cutting[1] from *The Bombay Chronicle* dated 24th instant. I shall be obliged if I am told whether the fear expressed by the writer of the note in question is justified and if it is, to what extent.

I am,
Yours, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, p. 7

442. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

DETENTION CAMP,
November 5, 1942

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I have just read about the sad but heroic death of Hon'ble Peter Wood[2] in action. Will you please convey to Lord Halifax

[1] It reported the seizure of the Navajivan Press and feared the destruction of the old files of the *Harijan* publications. The Bombay Government replied on 5th of November that the old files had actually been destroyed.

[2] Son of Lord Halifax

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my congratulations as well as condolences on the sad bereavement?[1]

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Transfer of Power, Vol. III, p. 209

443. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

Express *November 24, 1942*

SECRETARY HOME DEPARTMENT
BOMBAY GOVERNMENT

PROFESSOR BHANSALI, ONE TIME FELLOW ELPHINSTONE COLLEGE, LEFT COLLEGE 1920 AND JOINED ASHRAM SABARMATI. HE IS REPORTED BY DAILY PRESS TO BE FASTING[2] WITHOUT WATER NEAR SEVAGRAM ASHRAM WARDHA OVER ALLEGED CHIMUR EXCESSES. WOULD LIKE ESTABLISH DIRECT TELEGRAPHIC CONTACT WITH HIM THROUGH SUPERINTENDENT FOR ASCERTAINING CAUSE FASTING HIS CONDITION. I WOULD LIKE TO DISSUADE HIM IF I FIND HIS FAST MORALLY UNJUSTIFIED. I MAKE THIS REQUEST FOR HUMANITY'S SAKE.[3]

GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, p. 10. Also File No. 3/21/42, Vol. I. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] According to a note in the source Lord Linlithgow acknowledged this letter on November 14, adding that he would at once forward the letter to Lord Halifax. He did this on November 16 when writing to Amery he said: "I have had from Gandhi a manuscript letter forwarding a letter of sympathy to Edward Halifax on his son's death in action and I am sending it so that it can go on to Halifax by this bag. It is characteristic of the Mahatma in more ways than one." *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. III, p. 268

[2] G. P. Bhansali began his fast on or about November 12, demanding inquiry into the outrages committed by British and Indian troops and policemen at the village of Chimur. *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. III, p. 440

[3] The Government refused Gandhiji's request to be allowed to communicate with Bhansali. Linlithgow, in a cable to Amery on January 11, said he had no intention of agreeing to an enquiry and if Bhansali wanted to die, "I am perfectly prepared to let him die." (*The Transfer of Power*, Vol. III, p. 483) Bhansali broke his fast on January 12, 1943.

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444. LETTER TO INSPECTOR GENERAL OF PRISONS

November 25, 1942

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF PRISONS
BOMBAY PRESIDENCY

SIR,

About 8.45 a.m. yesterday I sent you the text of an express telegram to the Secretary, Bombay Government, Home Department, about Professor Bhansali who is reported to be fasting. As the Professor seems to have been fasting since 11th instant according to the report in the *Hindu* of Madras and since last Wednesday according to the *Bombay Chronicle*, I am naturally filled with anxiety. Time in such cases is the greatest factor. I shall therefore be obliged if you could convey by telephone or wire my request to the Bombay Government for an urgent reply in regard to my wire.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, p. 10

445. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DETENTION CAMP,
December 4, 1942

ADDITIONAL SECRETARY TO
THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY (D. H.)

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge your letter[1] of 30th ultimo received by me yesterday afternoon (3rd instant). I note with deep regret that my telegraphic message[2] with regard to a dear co-worker, whose life seems to be in jeopardy, should have been answered

[1] In this the addressee had said, "Government is unable to sanction your request to be allowed to communicate with him. If, however, you desire to advise him, for humanitarian reasons, to abandon his fast, this Government will make arrangements to communicate your advice to him."

[2] *Vide* p. 417.

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by a letter which reached me ten days after the despatch of my message!

I am sorry for the Government rejection of my request. As I believe in the legitimacy and even necessity of fasting under given circumstances, I am unable to advise abandonment of Prof. Bhansali's fast, unless I know that he has no justifying reason for it. If the newspaper report is to be believed, there seems to be legitimate ground for his fast and I must be content to lose my friend, if I must.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, p. 11

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

TALK WITH PYARELAL[1]

[*December 13, 1942*][2]

During the last detention at Poona in 1942, I had the opportunity to discuss at length with Gandhiji various aspects of his ideal of trusteeship . . . In the course of our talk one day he remarked: "The only democratic way of achieving it today is by cultivating opinion in its favour."

I put it to him that perhaps the reason why he had presented trusteeship basis to the owning class was that while non-violence would command many sacrifices from the people, it was not reasonable to expect anyone to present his own head in a charger. "So instead of asking the owning class to do the impossible, you presented them with a reasonable and practicable alternative."

GANDHIJI: I refuse to admit that non-violence knows any limit to the sacrifice that it can demand or command. The doctrine of trusteeship stands on its own merits.

PYARELAL: Surely, you do not mean that the change would depend upon the sufferance of the owning class and we shall have to wait till their conversion is complete? If social transformation is effected by a slow, gradual process, it will kill the revolutionary fervour which an abrupt break with the past creates. That is why our Marxist friends say that a true social revolution can come only through a proletarian dictatorship. . .

G. Perhaps you have the example of Russia in mind. Wholesale expropriation of the owning class and distribution of its assets among the people there did create a tremendous amount of revolutionary fervour. But I claim that ours will be an even bigger revolution. We must not underrate the business talent and know-how which the owning class have acquired through generations of experience and specialization. Free use of it would accrue to the people under my plan. So long as we have no power, conversion is our weapon by necessity, but after we get power, conversion will be our weapon of choice. Conversion must precede legislation. Legislation in the absence of conversion remains a dead letter. As an illustration, we have today the power to enforce rules of sanitation but we can do nothing with it because the public is not ready.

[1] *Vide* "Question Box", pp. 9-10.
[2] The date is from *Harijan*, 25-10-1952.

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P. You say conversion must precede reform. Whose conversion? If you mean the conversion of the people, they are ready even today. If, on the other hand, you mean that of the owning class, we may as well wait till the Greek Calends.

G. I mean the conversion of both. You see, if the owning class does not accept the trusteeship basis voluntarily, its conversion must come under the pressure of public opinion. For that public opinion is not yet sufficiently organized.

P. What do you mean by power?

G. By power I mean voting power for the people so broad-based that the will of the majority can be given effect to.

P. Can the masses at all come into power by parliamentary activity?

G. Not by parliamentary activity *alone*. My reliance ultimately is on the power of non-violent non-co-operation, which I have been trying to build up for the last twenty-two years.

P. Is the capture of power possible through non-violence? Our Socialist friends say . . . they do not see how it can enable to seize power. You also have said the same thing.

G. In a way they are right. By its very nature, non-violence cannot 'seize' power, nor can that be its goal. But non-violence can do more; it can effectively control and guide power without capturing the machinery of Government. That is its beauty. There is an exception of course. If the non-violent non-co-operation of the people is so complete that the administration ceases to function or if the administration crumbles under the impact of a foreign invasion and a vacuum results, the people's representatives will then step in and fill it. Theoretically that is possible.

Moreover, I do not agree that Government cannot be carried on except by the use of violence.

P. Does not the very concept of the State imply the use of power?

G. Yes. But the use of power need not necessarily be violent.

A father wields power over his children; he may even punish but not by inflicting violence. The most effective exercise of power is that which irks least. Power rightly exercised must sit light as a flower; no one should feel the weight of it. The people accepted the authority of the Congress willingly. I was on more than one occasion invested with the absolute power of dictatorship. But everybody knew that my power rested on their willing acceptance. They could set me aside at any time and I would have stepped aside without a murmur. In the Khilafat days my authority, or the authority of the Congress, did not irk anybody. The Ali Brothers used to call me *Sarkar*. Yet they knew they had me in their pocket. What was true about me or the Congress then can be true about the Government also.

I conceded that a non-violent State or even a non-violent minority dictatorship—a dictatorship resting on the moral authority of a few—was possible

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in theory. But it called for a terrible self-discipline, self-denial and penance. . . ."

"Personally I agree", I concluded, "that such a person alone is fit to be a dictator under non-violence. . . ."

Gandhiji confirmed that under non-violence people have to be prepared for heavier sacrifices if only because the goal aimed at is higher. "There is no short-cut to salvation," he said.

"That would mean," interpolated my sister, "that only a Jesus, a Muhammad or a Buddha can be the head of a non-violent State."

G. That is not correct. Prophets and supermen are born only once in an age. But if even a single individual realizes the ideal of ahimsa in its fullness, he covers and redeems the whole society. Once Jesus had blazed the trail, his twelve disciples could carry on his mission without his presence. It needed the perseverance and genius of so many generations of scientists to discover the laws of electricity but today everybody, even children, use electric power in their daily life. Similarly, it will not always need a perfect being to administer an ideal State, once it has come into being. What is needed is a thorough social awakening to begin with. The rest will follow. To take an instance nearer home, I have presented to the working class the truth that true capital is not silver or gold but the labour of their hands and feet and their intelligence. Once labour develops that awareness, it would not need my presence to enable it to make use of the power that it will release.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 630-3

APPENDIX II

BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSAL : NOTE BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DOMINION AFFAIRS[1]

11, Downing Street, S.W.I.,
March 2, 1942

On the 25th February the Prime Minister asked me to preside over a Cabinet Committee to consider the present position in India, and to make recommendations.

I now submit, on behalf of the Committee, for the consideration of the War Cabinet, the draft of a Declaration by His Majesty's Government, regarding the future government of India.

Draft Declaration

His Majesty's Government, having considered the anxieties expressed in this country and in India as to the fulfilment of the promises made in regard

[1] *Vide* "That Ill-fated Proposal", pp. 28-9.

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to the future of India, have decided to lay down in precise and clear terms the steps which they propose shall be taken for the earliest possible realization of self-government in India. The object is the creation of a new Indian Union which shall constitute a Dominion, equal in every respect to the United Kingdom and the other Dominions of the Crown, and free to remain in or to separate itself from the equal partnership of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

His Majesty's Government therefore make the following declaration:

(a) Immediately upon the cessation of hostilities, steps shall be taken to set up in India, in the manner described hereafter, an elected body charged with the task of framing a new Constitution for India.

(b) Provision shall be made, as set out below, for the participation of the Indian States in the constitution-making body.

(c) His Majesty's Government undertake to accept and implement forthwith the Constitution so framed subject only to:

(i) the right of any Province of British India that is not prepared to accept the new Constitution to retain for the time being its present constitutional position, provision being made for subsequent accession.

With such non-acceding Provinces, should they so desire, His Majesty's Government will be prepared to agree upon a new Constitution following the lines laid down above.

(ii) the signing of a treaty which shall be negotiated between His Majesty's Government and the constitution-making body covering all necessary matters relating to the complete transfer of responsibility from British to Indian hands.

Whether or not an Indian State elects to adhere to the Constitution, it will be necessary to negotiate revised Treaty arrangements, so far as this may be required in the new situation.

(d) The constitution-making body shall be composed as follows, unless the leaders of Indian opinion in the principal communities agree upon some other form before the end of hostilities:

Immediately upon the result being known of the Provincial elections which will be necessary at the end of hostilities, the entire membership of the Lower Houses of the Provincial Legislatures shall, as a single electoral college, proceed to the election of the constitution-making body by the system of proportional representation. This new body shall be in number about one-tenth of the number of the electoral college.

Indian States shall be invited to appoint representatives in the same proportion of the total population as the average for British India, and with the same powers as the British Indian members.

(e) While during the critical period which now faces India, and until the new Constitution can be framed, His Majesty's Government must inevitably

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bear the full responsibility for India's defence, they desire and invite the immediate and effective participation of the leaders of the principal sections of the Indian people in the counsels of their country, to give their active and constructive help in the discharge of a task so vital and essential for the future freedom of India.

The Transfer of Power, Vol. I, pp. 291-3

APPENDIX III

RESOLUTION PASSED BY A.I.C.C.[1]

May 1, 1942

In view of the imminent peril of invasion that confronts India and the attitude of the British Government, as shown again in the recent proposals sponsored by Sir Stafford Cripps, the All-India Congress Committee has to declare afresh India's policy and to advise the people in regard to the action to be undertaken in the emergencies that may arise in the immediate future.

The proposals of the British Government and their subsequent elucidation by Sir Stafford Cripps have led to greater bitterness and distrust of that Government and the spirit of non-co-operation with Britain has grown. They have demonstrated that even in this hour of danger, not only to India but to the cause of the United Nations, the British Government functions as an imperialist government and refuses to recognize the independence of India or to part with any real power.

India's participation in the war was a purely British act imposed upon the Indian people without the consent of their representatives. While India has no quarrel with the people of any country, she has repeatedly declared her antipathy to Nazism and Fascism as to imperialism. If India were free she would have determined her own policy and might have kept out of the war, though her sympathies would, in any event, have been with the victims of aggression. If, however, circumstances had led her to join the war, she would have done so as a free country fighting for freedom, and her defence would have been organized on a popular basis with a national army under national control and leadership, and with intimate contacts with the people. A free India would know how to defend herself in the event of any aggressor attacking her. The present Indian Army is in fact an offshoot of the British Army and has been maintained till now mainly to hold India in subjection. It has been completely segregated from the general population, who can in no sense regard it as their own.

[1] *Vide* "Draft Resolution for A.I.C.C.", pp. 63-5.

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The essential difference between the imperialist and the popular conceptions of defence is demonstrated by the fact that while foreign armies are invited to India for that defence, the vast manpower of India herself is not utilized for the purpose. India's past experience teaches her that it is harmful to her interest and dangerous to the cause of her freedom to introduce foreign armies in India. It is significant and extraordinary that India's inexhaustible manpower should remain untapped while India develops into a battle-ground between foreign armies fighting on her soil or on her frontiers, and her defence is not supposed to be a subject fit for popular control. India resents this treatment of her people as chattels to be disposed of by foreign authority.

The All-India Congress Committee is convinced that India will attain her freedom through her own strength and will retain it likewise. The present crisis, as well as the experience of the negotiations with Sir Stafford Cripps, makes it impossible for the Congress to consider any schemes or proposals which retain, even in a partial measure, British control and authority in India. Not only the interests of India but also Britain's safety, and world peace and freedom demand that Britain must abandon her hold on India. It is on the basis of independence alone that India can deal with Britain or other nations.

The Committee repudiates the idea that freedom can come to India through interference or invasion by any foreign nation, whatever the professions of that nation may be. In case an invasion takes place it must be resisted. Such resistance can only take the form of non-violent non-co-operation as the British Government has prevented the organization of national defence by the people in any other way. The Committee would therefore expect the people of India to offer complete non-violent non-co-operation to the invading forces and not to render any assistance to them. We may not bend the knee to the aggressor nor obey any of his orders. We may not look to him for favours nor fall to his bribes. If he wishes to take possession of our homes and our fields we will refuse to give them up even if we have to die in the effort to resist them. In places wherein the British and the invading forces are fighting our non-co-operation will be fruitless and unnecessary. Not to put any obstacle in the way of British forces will often be the only way of demonstrating our non-co-operation with the invader. Judging from their attitude the British Government do not need any help from us beyond our non-interference.

The success of such a policy of non-co-operation and non-violent resistance to the invader will largely depend on the intensive working out of the Congress constructive programme and more especially the programme of self-sufficiency and self-protection in all parts of the country.

The Indian Annual Register, 1942, Vol. II, pp. 205-6; also *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II, pp. 66-70

APPENDIX IV

SECTION IN THE CONSTITUTION OF THE HINDUSTANI PRACHAR SABHA DEFINING ITS AIMS AND FUNCTIONS[1]

3. AIMS: To propagate Hindustani, the national language so that it can meet the social, political, administrative and other requirements of the country as a whole and become the medium of communication and intercourse between the different linguistic regions.

NOTE: Hindustani is that language which in the towns and villages of North India Hindus, Muslims and all other people speak, understand and employ for mutual intercourse, which is written in both the Devanagari and the Persian scripts and the literary styles of which are today known by the names of Hindi and Urdu.

4. FUNCTIONS OF THE SABHA: the Sabha shall conduct the following activities to achieve its aims.

(1) To prepare a dictionary of Hindustani which all can rely upon. To evolve a grammar of Hindustani and prepare similar other reference works for the different provinces.

(2) To prepare Hindustani text-books for use in schools.

(3) To bring out easy-to-understand books in Hindustani.

(4) To conduct examinations in various places in order to propagate Hindustani and to extend help and recognition to associations that conduct such examinations.

(5) To prepare a glossary of technical terms in Hindustani.

(6) To endeavour to have Hindustani accepted as a compulsory subject by provincial governments, municipal and district boards and national educational institutions.

(7) To set up branches of the Sabha, appoint committees, collect contributions, offer aid to publishers of Hindustani books, run schools, libraries, reading-rooms, training schools, nightschools and other institutions of a similar nature with a view to achieving the above mentioned aims and encouraging activities.

(8) To associate with or affiliate to the Sabha such institutions as are capable of co-operating in these activities.

(9) To make all such efforts as will help fulfil the objects of the Sabha.

NOTE: No member of the Sabha shall, in his capacity as a member, derive any personal gain from the Sabha's assets.

Rashtrabhasha Hindustani, pp. 152-3

[1] *Vide* "Statement on Hindustani", pp. 79-80.

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APPENDIX V

INTERVIEW WITH LOUIS FISCHER[1]

June 4, 1942

GANDHIJI: Now I am fully at your disposal.

LOUIS FISCHER: I feel that the Cripps mission was a turning point in Indian history. The country is probably now beginning to grasp the significance of Cripps's failure, and from that understanding big things might flow.

G. When Cripps arrived, he sent me a telegram asking me to come and see him in New Delhi. I did not wish to go, but I went because I thought it would do some good. I had heard rumours about the contents of the British Government's offer he brought to India, but I had not seen the offer. He gave it to me, and after a brief study, I said to him, "Why did you come if this is what you have to offer? If this is your entire proposal to India, I would advise you to take the next plane home." Cripps replied, "I will consider that."

L.F. What is your criticism of the Cripps offer? Didn't it promise you dominion status with the right to secede from the British Commonwealth?

G. C. F. Andrews always used to assert that dominion status is not for India. We have not the same relation to Britain as the dominions which are white and settled, for the most part, by emigrants from Britain or their descendants. We do not wish any status conferred on us. If a status is conferred on us, it means we are not free. As to secession, there are big flaws. One of the chief flaws is the provision in the Cripps proposal regarding the Princes. The British maintain that they must protect the Princes under treaties which they forced on the Princes for Britain's advantage. The Maharaja of Bikaner, and I take him as any X,Y,Z, reigned before the British came and had more power then than now. The second flaw is the recognition of Pakistan. The differences between Hindus and Muslims have been accentuated by British rule. Now they have been given their maximum scope by the Cripps offer. Lord Minto started this when he was Viceroy [1909][2] by establishing separate electorates for the two religious communities, and since then the British have sought to divide us still further. Lord Curzon was a great administrator. I never met him as I have met Chelmsford, Irwin [Halifax][3], and Linlithgow. But he said one thing to one man, another to a second man, and still a third thing to a third man. With Sir Samuel Hoare, I know whom I am talking to. I know where he stands. But not with Curzon. The division of

[1] *Vide* "Important Questions", pp. 186-8. Only extracts from Louis Fischer's book have been reproduced here.

[2] & [3] Square brackets are as in the source.

Bengal, as carried out by Curzon, was a necessary reform. It was a good measure. But it had the effect of dividing the province according to religion. Cripps introduced this same principle in his offer; that is the second big flaw. There can be no unity in India, therefore, as long as the British are here.

L.F. Well, you did not like the outlines of the post-war settlement proposed by Cripps. But was there nothing desirable in the interim or immediate provisions? Did you not think that, irrespective of the plan for the future, there might be some value in the immediate arrangements which would give your people experience in government and earn you the right to demand freedom after the war?

G. Roughly, this was the spirit in which I approached it. But when I saw the text of the Cripps offer, I was certain that there was no room for co-operation. The main issue was defence. In war time, defence is the chief task of government. I have no desire to interfere with the actual conduct of the war. I am incompetent to do so. But Roosevelt has no special training in strategy or, if he has it is partial. Or, let me take Churchill.

L.F. No, you needn't hesitate to take Roosevelt as an example. I understand the point.

G. The point is that in war time there must be civilian control of the military, even though the civilians are not as well trained in strategy as the military. If the British in Burma wish to destroy the golden pagoda because it is a beacon to Japanese airplanes, then I say you cannot destroy it, because when you destroy it, you destroy something in the Burmese soul. When the British come and say, we must remove these peasants to build an aerodrome here, and the peasants must go today, I say, 'Why did you not think of that yesterday and give the poor people time to go, and why don't you find places for them to go to?'

L.F. If these are the matters which you wish Indians to control, I am sure General Wavell would have regarded them as interference in the prosecution of the war.

G. The British offered us war-time tasks like the running of canteens and the printing of stationery, which are of minor significance. Though I am no strategist, there are things we could have done which would have been more conducive to success in the war. The British have fared so badly in the Far East that they could do with help from us.

L.F. Apparently, then, you placed chief stress on defence. He agreed. Did Nehru and other Congress leaders take the same view?

G. I hope so, I hope Nehru takes the same view, and that the Maulana Sahib takes the same view.

L.F. In other words, you found nothing good in the Cripps proposals?

G. I am glad you put this direct and definite question to me. No I found nothing good at all in them.

L.F. Did you tell that to Cripps?

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G. Yes, I said to Cripps, 'You performed a miracle in Russia.'

L.F. Why did you say that? It wasn't Sir Stafford Cripps who brought Russia into the war, but a gentleman named Adolf Hitler.

G. But I and thousands of Indians believed that it was Cripps who performed the miracle.

L.F. Didn't Cripps protest when you said that?

G. No, he took the compliment. We thought Stalin had asked for British aid before the invasion of Russia.

L.F. No, that is not correct. After the invasion, Russia got help and is now obtaining increasing help from America and Britain. But before the attack, Stalin, fearing Hitler, could show no friendship for Britain or for Cripps.

G. In any case, I asked Cripps to perform a miracle here too, but it was not in his power.

L.F. I think there is a vast popular ferment going on in England. I flew to England last summer and stayed nine weeks. The mass of the people are resolved not to be ruled after the war by the sort of people who ruled them before the war and brought on this war. Cripps could become the expression and embodiment of this popular protest. His rise to office is therefore an encouraging phenomenon.

G. Yes, and a discouraging one too, for I wonder whether Cripps has the qualities of a great statesman. It is very discouraging to us that the man who was a friend of Jawaharlal's and had been interested in India should have made himself the bearer of this mission.

Lord Sankey once told me to take care of myself, and I said him, 'Do you think I would have reached this green old age if I hadn't taken care of myself?' This is one of my faults.

L.F. I thought you were perfect.

G. No, I am very imperfect. Before you are gone you will have discovered a hundred of my faults, and if you don't I will help you to see them. Now, I have given you an hour.

L.F. You helped recruit soldiers for the British Army in the first World War. When this war started, you said you wished to do nothing to embarrass the British Government. Now, obviously, your attitude has changed. What has happened?

G. In the first World War I had just returned from South Africa. I hadn't yet found my feet. I wasn't sure of my ground. This did not imply any lack of faith in non-violence. But it had to develop according to circumstances, and I was not sufficiently sure of my ground. There were many experiences between the two wars. Nevertheless, I announced after some talks with the Viceroy in September 1939, that the Congress movement would not obstruct this war. I am not the Congress. In fact, I am not in the Congress. I am neither a member nor an officer of the Party. Congress is more anti-British and anti-war than I am, and I have had to curb its desires to

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interfere with the war effort. Now I have reached certain conclusions. I do not wish to humiliate the British. But the British must go. I do not say that the British are worse than the Japanese.

L.F. Quite the contrary.

G. I would not say quite the contrary. But I do not wish to exchange one master for another. England will benefit morally if she withdraws voluntarily and in good order.

June 5, 1942

Gandhi came in, greeted me and lay down on his bed.

G. I will take your blows lying down.

The Muslim woman gave him a wet mud-pack for his abdomen. He said:

This puts me in touch with my future. I see you missed that one.

L.F. I hadn't missed it but thought he was too young to think about returning to the dust.

G. Why, you and I and all of us, some in a hundred and twenty years, but all sooner or later, will do it.

L.F. When I hear a suggestion about some arrangement for the future I try to imagine how it would look if it were actually adopted. I am sure you have done the same in connection with your proposal that the British withdraw. Then how do you see that withdrawal, step by step?

G. First, there are the Princes who have their own armies. They might make trouble. I am not sure that there will be order when the British go. There could be chaos. I have said, 'Let the British go in an orderly fashion and leave India to God.' You may not like such unrealistic language. Then call it anarchy. That is the worst that can happen. But we will seek to prevent it. There may not be anarchy.

L.F. Could not the Indians immediately organize a government?

G. Yes, There are three elements in the political situation here: the Princes, the Muslims and Congress. They could all form a provisional government.

L.F. In what proportion would power and the posts be divided?

G. I do not know. Congress being the most powerful unit might claim the largest share. But that could be determined amicably.

L.F. It seems to me that the British cannot possibly withdraw altogether. That would mean making a present of India to Japan and England would never consent to that, nor would the United States approve. If you demand that the British pack up and go bag and baggage, you are simply asking the impossible; you are barking up a tree. You do not mean, do you, that they must also withdraw their armies?

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G. You are right. No, Britain and America, and other countries too, can keep their armies here and use Indian territory as a base for military operations. I do not wish Japan to win the war. I do not want the Axis to win. But I am sure that Britain cannot win unless the Indian people become free. Britain is weaker and Britain is morally indefensible while she rules India. I do not wish to humiliate England.

L.F. But if India is to be used as a military base by the United Nations, many other things are involved. Armies do not exist in a vacuum. For instance, the United Nations would need good organization on the railroads.

G. Oh, they could operate the railroads. They would also need order in the ports where they received their supplies. They could not have riots in Bombay and Calcutta. These matters would require co-operation and common effort.

L.F. Could the terms of this collaboration be set forth in a treaty of alliance?

G. Yes, we could have a written agreement with England.

L.F. Or with Britain, America and the others? Why have you never said this? I must confess that when I heard of your proposed civil disobedience movement I was prejudiced against it. I believed that it would impede the prosecution of the war. I think the war has to be fought and won. I see complete darkness for the world if the Axis win. I think we have a chance for a better world if we win.

G. There I cannot quite agree. Britain often cloaks herself in a cloth of hypocrisy, promising what she later doesn't deliver. But I accept the proposition that there is a better chance if the democracies win.

L.F. It depends on the kind of peace we make.

G. It depends on what you do during the war.

L.F. I would like to tell you that American statesmen have great sympathy for the cause of Indian freedom. The United States Government tried to dissuade Churchill from making the speech in which he declared that the Atlantic Charter did not apply to India. Important men in Washington are working on the idea of a Pacific Charter, but they tell me that they have not got very far because the first principle of such a charter would be the end of imperialism, and how can we announce that while Britain holds India?

G. I am not interested in future promises. I am not interested in independence after the war. I want independence now. That will help England win the war.

L.F. Why have you not communicated your plan to the Viceroy? He should be told that you have no objection now to the use of India as a base for Allied military operations.

G. No one has asked me. I have written about my proposed civil disobedience movement in order to prepare the public for it. If you put me some direct questions in writing about this matter, I will answer them in *Harijan*. Only make the questions brief.

L.F. If you knew anything about my writing you would know that I always try to be brief, direct, and squeeze out the water.

G. Jawaharlal told me about you before you came. He said you were honest and had no axe to grind. You don't have several irons in the fire. He said you were a solid man. I can see that by looking at you.

L.F. Yes, solid, at least physically.

G. I have talked freely and frankly to you. I think you are a *sahib loke*.

L.F. Did you say 'sahib bloke'? Is that the English word bloke?

G. No, *loke*. Miss Katherine Mayo came here and I was good to her and then she wrote only filth. You know what I have called her?

L.F. No.

G. Drain inspector.

L.F. I come from a very poor family. I know what it means to be hungry. I have always sympathized with the downtrodden and the poor. Many Americans feel the greatest friendship for India. I think it very unfortunate, therefore, that you have recently uttered some unfriendly words at the expense of America.

G. It was necessary. I wanted to shock. I think many Americans have a soft corner in their hearts for me, and I wished to tell them that if they continue to worship Mammon they will not make a better world. There is a danger that the democracies will defeat the Axis and become just as bad as Japan and Germany.

L.F. Of course there is a danger. But many people said that England would go Fascist if it went to war. Yet in fact England is more democratic now than she was before the war.

G. No. We see in India that this is not so.

L.F. At least in England.

G. It cannot be true in England and not in the Empire. I cannot depend on your future goodness. I have laboured for many decades for Indian national freedom. We cannot wait any longer. But I believe that there is goodwill for us.

England is sitting on an unexploded mine in India and it may explode any day. The hatred and resentment against Britain are so strong here that Britain can get no help for her war effort. Indians enlist in the British Army because they want to eat, but they have no feeling in their hearts which would make them wish to help England.

L.F. If you permit me to summarize the suggestions you have made today about a settlement in India, you have reversed the Cripps offer. Cripps offered you something and kept the rest for England. You are offering England something and keep the rest for India.

G. That is very true. I have turned Cripps around.

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I saw from his watch that the end of the hour was approaching. I said I would not dare ask him to read my book, *Men and Politics*, which Dev had, but I hoped he would page through it. A secretary asked what "paging through" meant.

G. It means looking first at the last page, then at the first page, then at a page in the middle.

L.F. And then throwing the book away and saying it is excellent. Now I have kept you the agreed hour.

G. Yes, you have. Go and sit in the tub.

June 6, 1942

I asked him what was the theory behind his weekly day of silence.

G. What do you mean by theory?

L.F. I mean the principle, the motivation.

G. It happened when I was being torn to pieces. I was working very hard, travelling in hot trains incessantly, speaking at many meetings, and being approached in trains and elsewhere by thousands of people who asked questions, made pleas, and wished to pray with me. I wanted to rest for one day a week. So I instituted the day of silence. Later of course I clothed it with all kinds of virtues and gave it a spiritual cloak. But the motivation was really nothing more than that I wanted to have a day off.

Silence is very relaxing. It is not relaxing in itself. But when you can talk and don't, it gives you great relief—and there is time for thought.

I asked Gandhi about Rajaji's programme.

G. I don't know what his proposals are. I think it unfortunate that he should argue against me and that I should argue with him, so I have given order that, as far as we are concerned, the discussion should be suspended. But the fact is that I do not know what Rajaji proposes.

L.F. Isn't the essence of his scheme that the Hindus and Muslims collaborate and in common work perhaps discover the technique of peaceful co-operation?

G. Yes. But that is impossible. As long as the third power, England, is here, our communal differences will continue to plague us. Far back, Lord Minto, then Viceroy, declared that the British had to keep Muslims and Hindus apart in order to facilitate the domination of India.

I told Gandhi I had seen the Minto quotation.

G. This has been the principle of British rule over since.

L.F. I have been told that when Congress ministries were in office in the province, during 1937, 1938 and 1939, they discriminated against Muslims.

G. The British governors of those provinces have officially testified that is not so.

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L.F. But isn't it a fact that in the United Provinces, Congress and the Muslims entered into an electoral pact because Congress was not sure of winning, that, then, Congress won a sweeping victory and refused to form a coalition with the Muslims?

G. No. There were four Muslim ministers in the United Provinces Government formed by Congress. There were no representatives of the Muslim League, but there were Muslims. No. We have always tried to collaborate with Muslims. It is said that the Maulana is a puppet in our hands. Actually, he is the dictator of Congress. He is its president. But the Cripps proposals have divided Hindus from Muslims more than ever. Thanks to the British Government, the divergence between the two communities has been widened.

L.F. It was sad that Congress leaders and Muslim Leaguers came to New Delhi to talk to Cripps, and talked to Cripps but did not talk to one another.

G. It was not only sad, it was disgraceful. But it was the fault of the Muslim League. Shortly after this war broke out, we were summoned to meet the Viceroy at New Delhi. Rajendra Prasad and I went to speak for Congress, and Mr. Jinnah for the Muslim League. I asked Jinnah to confer with us in advance and face the British Government unitedly. We agreed to meet in New Delhi, but when I suggested that we both demand independence for India he said, 'I do not want independence.' We could not agree. I urged that we at least make the appearance of unity by going to the Viceroy together; I said he could go in my car or I would go in his. He consented to have me go in his car. But we spoke to the Viceroy in different tones and expressed different views.

In actual life, it is impossible to separate us into two nations. We are not two nations. Every Muslim will have a Hindu name if he goes back far enough in his family history. Every Muslim is merely a Hindu who has accepted Islam. That does not create nationality. If some influential Christian divine converted us all to Christianity, we should not become one nation if we really were two nations, and in the same manner the two religions of India do not make two nationalities. Europe is Christian, but Germany and England, so much alike in culture and language, are grimly at one another's throats. We in India have a common culture. In the north, Hindi and Urdu are understood by both Hindus and Muslims. In Madras, Hindus and Muslims speak Tamil, and in Bengal they both speak Bengali and neither Hindi nor Urdu. When communal riots take place, they are always provoked by incidents over cows and by religious processions. That means that it is our superstitions that create the trouble and not our separate nationalities.

L.F. Caroe[1] and Jenkins[2] told me that there were no communal differences in the villages, and I heard from others too that the relations between

[1] Olaf Kirkpatrick Caroe, Secretary, External Affairs Department, who worked for many years as a British official in the Punjab

[2] Sir Evan Jenkins, Secretary, Department of Supplies

the two religious communities are peaceful in the villages. If that is so, that is very important because India is ninety per cent village.

G. It is so, and that of course proves that the people are not divided. It proves that the politicians divide us.

L.F. The Muslim bartender in my hotel in New Delhi said to me—although he is a member of the Muslim League and an advocate of Pakistan that the communal troubles always started where Muslims were a minority and never where the Hindus were a minority.

G. Fischer, you have been here only for a short time. You cannot study everything. But if you make any investigations and find that we are wrong or guilty, please say so in a loud voice.

These are my patients. She is one of my best patients.

L.F. Wouldn't it be better to leave her to the doctor?

G. No, there is much quackery in all this. She is not my patient, she is my relaxation. This baby's father was a sergeant in the British Army [*sic*] stationed at the North-West Frontier. He was ordered to shoot at Indians. He refused and was sentenced to sixteen years' imprisonment. He served six years, but there were so many petitions for his liberation that he was released two years ago. Now he lives here with us.

Fischer, give me your bowl and I will give you some vegetables. You don't like vegetables?

L.F. I don't like the taste of these vegetables.

G. Ah, you must add plenty of salt and lemon.

L.F. You want me to kill the taste.

G. No, enrich the taste.

L.F. You are so non-violent. You wouldn't even kill a taste.

G. If that were the only thing men killed, I wouldn't mind.

I perspired and said: Next time I am in India . . . You either ought to have air-conditioning in Sevagram, or live in the Viceroy's palace.

G. All right.

I began my interview with Gandhi this afternoon by reading this passage[1] to him. I said it confirmed his statement to me this morning that the Muslim people are much less interested in separatism than their leaders.

[1] From the Indian Statutory Commission Report, Vol. I, which read: There is among the Hindu minority in Sind a feeling that the independence of the British Commissioner is too great, while on the Muhammadan side there is a well-known cry for separation from Bombay. This demand has gathered strength not so much in the homes of the people or among the Muhammadan cultivators of Sind, as among the leaders of Muhammadan thought all over India to whom the idea of a new Muslim province, contiguous to the predominantly Muslim areas of Baluchistan, the North-West Frontier Province, and the Punjab, naturally appeals as offering a stronghold against the fear of Hindu domination.

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G. Of course.

L.F. But how real are the fears of the Muslim leaders? Perhaps they understand better than the Muslim masses that the Hindus desire to dominate. Can you say quite objectively that the Hindus have not tried to gain the upper hand?

G. Here and there, individuals may entertain regrettable ideas. But I can say that the Congress movement and the Hindus in general have no desire to control. The provinces must enjoy broad autonomy. I myself am opposed to violence or domination and do not believe in powerful governments which oppress their citizens or other States. So how could I wish for domination? This charge is a cry originated by leaders to obtain a better hold on their people.

L.F. Very highly placed Britishers had told me that Congress was in the hands of big business and that Gandhi was supported by the Bombay mill-owners who gave him as much money as he wanted. What truth is there in these assertions?

G. Unfortunately, they are true. Congress hasn't enough money to conduct its work. We thought in the beginning to collect four annas from each member per year and operate on that. But it hasn't worked.

L.F. What proportion of the Congress budget is covered by rich Indians?

G. Practically all of it. In this ashram, for instance, we could live much more poorly than we do and spend less money. But we do not, and the money comes from our rich friends.

L.F. Doesn't the fact that Congress gets its money from the moneyed interests affect Congress politics? Doesn't it create a kind of moral obligation?

G. It creates a silent debt. But actually we are very little influenced by the thinking of the rich. They are sometimes afraid of our demand for full independence.

L.F. The other day I noticed in *The Hindustan Times* an item to the effect that Mr. Birla had again raised wages in his textile mills to meet the higher cost of living and, the paper continued to say, no other mill-owner had done so much. *The Hindustan Times* is a Congress paper.

G. No, it is completely owned by Birla. I know, because my youngest son is the editor. The facts are true, but it has nothing to do with Congress. You are right, however, that the dependence of Congress on rich sponsors is unfortunate. I use the word 'unfortunate'. It does not pervert our policy.

L.F. Isn't one of the results that there is a concentration on nationalism almost to the exclusion of social and economic problems?

G. No. Congress has from time to time, especially under the influence of Pandit Nehru, adopted advanced social programmes and schemes for economic planning. I will have those collected for you.

L.F. But is it not a fact that all these social changes are projected to a time when independence will have been achieved?

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G. No. When Congress was in office in the provinces (1937-39) the Congress ministries introduced many reforms which have since been cancelled by the British administration. We introduced reforms in the villages, in the schools, and in other fields.

L.F. I have been told, and I read in the Simon report that one of the great curses of India is the village money-lender to whom the peasant is often in debt from birth to death. In European countries, private philanthropy and governments have in similar circumstances created land banks to oust the usurious money-lender. Why could not some of your rich friends start a land bank on a purely business basis except that, instead of getting forty to seventy per cent interest per year, they would get two or three per cent? Their money would be secure, they would earn a small profit, and they would be helping their country.

G. Impossible. It could not be done without Government legislation.

L.F. Why?

G. Because the peasants wouldn't repay the loans.

L.F. But surely the peasant would realize that it was better to repay money which he borrowed at three per cent than to mortgage his life away to the money-lender?

G. Money-lending is an ancient institution and it is deeply rooted in the village. What you advocate cannot be done before we are free.

L.F. What would happen in a free India? What is your programme for the improvement of the lot of the peasantry?

G. The peasants would take the land. We would not have to tell them to take it. They would take it.

L.F. Would the landlords be compensated?

G. No. That would be fiscally impossible. You see, our gratitude to our millionaire friends does not prevent us from saying such things. The village would become a self-governing unit living its own life.

L.F. But there would of course be a national government.

G. No.

L.F. But surely you need a national administration to direct the railroads, the telegraphs, and so on.

G. I would not shed a tear if there were no railroads in India.

L.F. But that would bring suffering to the peasant. He needs city goods, and he must sell his produce in other parts of the country and abroad. The village needs electricity and irrigation. No single village could build a hydro-electric power station or an irrigation system like the Sukkur barrage in Sind.

G. And that has been a big disappointment. It has put the whole Province in debt.

L.F. I know, but it has brought much new land under cultivation, and it is a boon to the people.

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G. I realize that despite my views there will be a central government administration. However, I do not believe in the accepted Western form of democracy with its universal voting for parliamentary representatives.

L.F. What would you have India do?

G. There are seven hundred thousand villages in India. Each would be organized according to the will of its citizens, all of them voting. Then there would be seven hundred thousand votes and not four hundred million. Each village, in other words, would have one vote. The villages would elect their district administrations, and the district administrations would elect the provincial administrations, and these in turn would elect a president who would be the national chief executive.

L.F. That is very much like the Soviet system.

G. I did not know that. I don't mind.

L.F. Now, Mr. Gandhi, I would like to ask you a second question about Congress. Congress has been accused of being an authoritarian organization. There is a new book out by two British authors, Shuster and Wint, called *India and Democracy*, which makes the charge that when the Congress provincial ministries resigned in 1939 they did so not of their own volition but on the orders of the district [*sic*] dictators of Congress.

G. This is nonsense. Do you think all questions are decided in the House of Commons or are decisions taken in party caucuses and in the clubs of London? Congress officers are elected by the members of Congress, and ministers who are members of Congress abide by the principles of Congress. Sir Samuel Hoare has told me a few things about the workings of democracy in Britain.

L.F. He seems to be your favourite British statesman.

This provided much laughter.

G. At least, I always know where he stands. Parliamentary democracy is not immune to corruption, as you who remember Tammany Hall and the Mayor of Chicago should know. I do not think a free India will function like the other countries of the world. We have our own forms to contribute.

I said, I would like to talk to him for a few moments about Subhas Chandra Bose, the Indian leader who had escaped to Axis territory. I told Gandhi that I was rather shocked when I heard that he had sent a telegram of condolence to Bose's mother on the receipt of the report, since proved false, that Bose had died in an airplane accident.

G. Do you mean because I had responded to news that proved to be false?

L.F. No, but that you regretted the passing of a man who went to Fascist Germany and identified himself with it.

G. I did it because I regard Bose as a patriot of patriots. He may be misguided. I think he is misguided. I have often opposed Bose. Twice I kept him from becoming president of Congress. Finally he did become

president, although my views often differed from his. But suppose he had gone to Russia or to America to ask aid for India. Would that have made it better?

L.F. Yes, of course. It does make a difference to whom you go.

G. I do not want help from anybody to make India free. I want India to save herself.

L.F. Throughout history, nations and individuals have helped foreign countries. Lafayette went from France to assist America in winning independence from Britain. Thousands of Americans and other foreigners died in Spain to save the Spanish Republic.

G. Individuals, yes. But America is the ally of England which enslaves us. And I am not yet certain that the democracies will make a better world when they defeat the Fascists. They may become very much like the Fascists themselves.

L.F. This is where, as I told you the other day, we must agree to differ. I find the concentration of Indians on problems of their freedom to the exclusion of social problems a disappointment and a shortcoming. Bose is a young man with a propensity for dramatic action, and were he to succumb in Germany to the lure of Fascism and return to India and make India free but Fascist, I think you would be worse off than under British rule.

G. There are powerful elements of Fascism in British rule, and in India these are the elements which we see and feel every day. If the British wish to document their right to win the war and make the world better, they must purify themselves by surrendering power in India. Your President talks about the Four Freedoms. Do they include the freedom to be free? We are asked to fight for democracy in Germany, Italy and Japan. How can we when we haven't got it ourselves?

June 7, 1942

Gandhi asked me how I had slept. I told him I had slept very well and asked how he had slept. He said he usually sleeps from 9.30 to 4.30.

"Without interruption?", I asked.

G. No, with two or three very brief interruptions. But I have no trouble falling asleep again. And then I have half an hour's sleep every afternoon.

I told him that Churchill did the same.

G. I hear that this is becoming more and more customary in Europe. Especially in old age it is very important.

I told him that it had been reported that Roosevelt falls asleep the moment he gets into bed. Gandhi inquired about Roosevelt's health and then asked me to describe Mrs. Roosevelt to him.

G. Then she has an influence on American politics?

I tried to explain the progress in social legislation, trade union organization, and social thinking which had taken place under the New Deal. I also stressed the fact that the American Government is financing foreign governments and financing domestic war industries. I compared that with the private financing of foreign governments and to American industry during the first World War.

G. What about the Negroes?

I talked about the Negro situation in the North and South. I said I did not, of course, wish to defend the treatment meted out to Negroes, but it seemed to me that it was not so cruel as untouchability in India.

G. As you know, I have fought untouchability for many years. We have many untouchables here in the ashram. Most of the work in the ashram is done by the untouchables, and any Hindu who comes to Sevagram must accept food from untouchables and remain in their proximity.

I asked whether the discrimination against untouchables had been somewhat alleviated.

G. Oh, yes, but it is still very bad.

L.F. Very thoughtful and otherwise progressive people, for instance Varadachariar[1], have tried to justify it in conversation with me; it seems to arise from the belief in the transmigration of the soul which apparently is part of the Hindu religion. Do you believe in the transmigration of the soul?

G. Of course. I cannot admit that the soul dies with the body. When a man's house is blown away, he builds himself another. When his body is taken away, his soul finds another. Nor do I accept the view that when the body is laid in the ground the soul remains suspended somewhere waiting for judgment day when it will be brought to the bar and confronted with its crimes. No, it immediately finds itself a new home.

L.F. This is obviously another form of man's eternal striving for immortality. Does it not all arise from the weak mortal's fear of death? Tolstoy was irreligious until his old age, when he started dreading the end.

G. I have no fear of death. I would regard it with relief and satisfaction. But it is impossible for me to think that that is the end. I have no proof. People have tried to demonstrate that the soul of a dead man finds a new home. I do not think this is capable of proof. But I believe it.

L.F. I think we all seek immortality, only some believe they live in their children or their works and some believe they live in transmuted form in animals, or otherwise. Some men live longer because their works last longer, but I believe that faith in one's immortality, if it is distinct from one's acts, is really fear of death and an attempt to find comfort in an illusion.

[1] A member of the Supreme Court of India who was a high-caste Brahmin

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Gandhi thereupon reiterated his view with much passion and in fine-flowing English prose; he always spoke a rich, fluent English with a British university accent.

I said students had told me that the new generation in India was less inclined to make a distinction between high-caste Hindus and untouchables, or between Hindus and Muslims, and that they were not much interested in religion.

G. The first is correct. But Hinduism is not a religion. The students do not perform religious ceremonies. But Hinduism is life. It is a way of life. Many who do not practise formal religion are nearer to this way of life than some who do.

He added that untouchability pained him deeply and he hoped that India's freedom would hasten the solution of the problem of untouchability. This brought him back to his favourite subject. He spoke of "the challenge, for it is a challenge, which I have flung to the British to go. They will be purified if they go and better equipped for the task of making a new world. Otherwise all their professions are a cloak of hypocrisy."

L.F. Don't you think that in view of the diversities of India you will need here a federation which will satisfy the Princes and the Muslims?

G. I am in no position to say which system would suit us better. First, the British must go. It is a matter of pure speculation what we will do later. The moment the British withdraw, the question of religious minorities disappears. If the British withdraw and there is chaos, I cannot say what form will ultimately rise out of the chaos. If I were asked what I would prefer, I would say federation and not centralization. There is bound to be a federal system of some sort. But you must be satisfied with my answer that I am not disturbed by the problem of whether we are to have a federation or not. Perhaps your cast-iron mind mocks at this. Perhaps you think that with millions unarmed and accustomed to foreign rule for centuries, we will not succeed in the civil disobedience movement which I have decided to launch.

L.F. No. I do not think that. I believe that history is moving fast and that before long you will be an independent country like China. The struggle you began years ago cannot end in any other way.

G. I do not want to be independent like China. China is helpless even now and in spite of Chiang Kai-shek. Notwithstanding China's heroism and her readiness to risk all in this war, China is not yet completely free. China should be able to say to America and England, 'We will fight our battle of independence single-handed, without your aid.' That I would call independence.

I asked him how he got on in his long interview with Chiang.

G. Very well.

L.F. Only you did not understand him, and he did not understand you.

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G. I found him inscrutable. Maybe it was the matter of language. We spoke through Madame Chiang. But I do not think it was only that.

L.F. Of course China is not completely free, but freedom does not come in a day. Through this war, if we win it, China will become free. We may be approaching the Asiatic century. India and China may shape a great deal of history in the coming decades. I see no sign, however, that the British realize this. They will not go as you ask. If they could not save themselves by their arms in Singapore and Malaya, they will not save themselves by their brains in India.

G. I would like you to understand that I am not criticizing China. Only I wanted to emphasize that I do not wish to imitate China. I do not want India to be in the same predicament as China. That is why I am saying I do not want British and American soldiers here. I do not want Japanese or German soldiers here. The Japanese broadcast every day that they do not intend to keep India—they only propose to help us win our freedom. I do not welcome their sympathy or help. I know they are not philanthropists. I want for India a respite from all foreign domination. I have become impatient. I cannot wait any longer. Our condition is worse than China's or Persia's. I may not be able to convince Congress. Men who have held office in Congress may not rise to the occasion. I will go ahead nevertheless and address myself directly to the people. But whatever happens, we are unbendable. We may be able to evolve a new order which will astonish the whole world. I would ask you to cast off your prejudices and enter into this new idea of mine of a civil disobedience campaign and try to find flaws in it if there are any. You will then be able to help our cause and, to put it on a higher plane, you will be able to do justice to yourself as a writer. The literature that is being produced on India is piffling and of no consequence. There is nothing original in most of it. It is all cast-iron. I ask you to struggle out of that groove. I would like you to penetrate through my language to what I am attempting to express. That is difficult, I know; you came here with all the glamour, brilliance, culture and armed strength of American and British civilization. I would understand your refusing to grasp anything that does not fit into your groove or that is not desirable for that groove. But if your mind cannot rise above that beaten track, then your days in Sevagram will have been wasted.

L.F. Yes, but will you help me to see the new order you speak of? I am not so sure of my own new order as to reject yours out of hand. I think India has much to contribute, but how do you see future developments?

G. You see the centre of power now is in New Delhi, or in Calcutta and Bombay, in the big cities. I would have it distributed among the seven hundred thousand villages of India. That will mean that there is no power. In other words, I want the seven hundred thousand dollars now invested in the imperial Bank of England withdrawn and distributed among the seven

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hundred thousand villages. Then each village will have its one dollar which cannot be lost.

The seven hundred thousand dollars invested in the Imperial Bank of India could be swept away by a bomb from a Japanese plane, whereas if they were distributed among the seven hundred thousand shareholders, nobody could deprive them of their assets. There will then be voluntary co-operation between these seven hundred thousand units, voluntary co-operation—not co-operation induced by Nazi methods. Voluntary co-operation will produce real freedom and a new order vastly superior to the new order in Soviet Russia. Some say there is ruthlessness in Russia but that it is exercised for the lowest and the poorest and is good for that reason. For me it has very little good in it. Some day this ruthlessness will create an anarchy worse than we have ever seen. I am sure we will escape that anarchy here. I admit that the future society of India is largely beyond my grasp. But a system like the one I have outlined to you did exist though it undoubtedly had its weakness, else it would not have succumbed before the Moguls and the British. I would like to think that parts of it have survived, and that the roots have survived despite the ravages of British rule. Those roots and the stock are waiting to sprout if a few drops of rain fall in the form of a transfer of British power to Indians. What the plant will be like I do not know. But it will be infinitely superior to anything we have now. Unfortunately, the requisite mood of non-violence does not now exist here, but I refuse to believe that all the strenuous work of the last twenty-five years to evolve a new order has been in vain. The Congress Party will have an effective influence in shaping the new order, and the Muslim League will also have an effective influence.

L.F. I would like you to pursue this idea of the symbolic seven hundred thousand dollars. What will the villages do with the dollar that has come back to them from the imperial Bank of England?

G. One thing will happen. Today the shareholders get no return. Intermediaries take it away. If the peasants are masters of their dollars they will use them as they think best.

L.F. A peasant buries his money in the ground.

G. They will not bury their dollars in the ground because they will have to live. They will go back to the bank, their own bank and utilize it under their direction for purposes they think best. They may then build windmills or produce electricity or whatever they like. A central government will evolve, but it will act according to the wishes of the people and will be broad-based on their will.

L.F. The State, I imagine, will then build more industries and develop the country industrially.

G. You must visualize a central government without the British Army. If it holds together without that army, this will be the new order. That is a goal worth working for. It is not an unearthly goal. It is practicable.

L.F. I agree. Ten years ago I might not have agreed, but after my experiences in Russia and elsewhere I feel that the greatest danger the world faces is the emergence of the all-powerful State which makes individual freedom impossible. Apparently, capitalist economics have made it necessary for the State to intervene more and more in economic affairs. That gives the State more power. The next generation's real problem will be to devise checks and balances on such a State. One question is: Can we safeguard personal liberty in a country where the government is all powerful? Another question is: Will nations co-operate inside an international organization, or will we reject internationalism and have some more wars?

G. My question would be: how to prevent the rise of these gigantic States. That is why I do not want the Allied powers to assume the roles of Fascist States. It is therefore that I ask them to declare that what India says is good. Let them take this jump and give India her freedom, and, if necessary, remain in India on India's terms for the duration. Let us see if we can get a free co-operation among peoples.

L.F. I am absolutely certain that you ought to have your independence. I think it would be good for you and good for all of us. Certainly the British have not shown any startling ability to defend their empire or to win its sympathy.

G. You must say that to America.

L.F. I will say it, but not in those terms. We are now financing all of Britain's purchases of munitions. We are making sixty thousand planes this year, but a hundred and forty thousand in 1943. As far as America's role in India is concerned, the crisis here has matured a bit too early. If we were making one hundred and forty thousand planes per year now and had two million men at the front, our views on India would receive more attention in London. The British do not understand today what is happening in India. With American help they may understand tomorrow.

G. Therefore it is that I come to brass tacks and say that the British will understand not while we are reasoning with them and showing them the great justice and feasibility of our proposal, but when we begin to act. That is British history. They are impressed by action, and it is action that we must take now. For the moment, however, I must popularize the idea of an Indian national government now and demonstrate that there is nothing chimerical or visionary about it. It is based on non-violence although I do not need the idea of non-violence to prove the validity or justice of my aim. The same aim might have evolved even if I were violently inclined. Even if I were violently inclined I might have said, 'Go and do not use India as your military base.' But today I say, 'If you must use India as a base lest someone else appropriate it, use it, and stay here on honourable terms and do no harm.' I would go further and add that if the central government which India evolves is military-minded the British may have its help.

L.F. If the British, under pressure, were to accept your offer, how would you launch your republic of seven hundred thousand villages?

G. I cannot give you a concrete plan. I cannot work it out today. It is all theoretical. It has to come out as a plan drafted by a body of representatives and not out of the brain of one whom many label a dreamer.

L.F. Well, I am not so completely cast-iron as not to understand home-spun cotton.

G. But you do not understand vegetables.

L.F. I do not like the same vegetables every day for lunch and dinner.

June 8, 1942

I started by saying that we had not even mentioned India's biggest problem, the problem most difficult of solution.

G. What's that?

L.F. India's population is increasing by five million each year. British official statistics show that the population of India increased from three hundred and thirty-eight million in 1931 to three hundred and eighty-eight million in 1941. Fifty million more mouths to feed and bodies to clothe and shelter. Fifty million more in ten years. How are you going to deal with that?

G. One of the answers might be birth control. But I am opposed to birth control.

L.F. I am not, but in a backward country like India birth control could not be very effective anyway.

G. Then perhaps we need some good epidemics.

L.F. Or a good civil war. But, Soviet Russia had famines, epidemics, and a civil war and yet her population grew very rapidly, and the Bolsheviks, in 1928, took certain economic measures.

G. You want to force me into an admission that we would need rapid industrialization. I will not be forced into such an admission. Our first problem is to get rid of British rule. Then we will be free, without restraints from the outside, to do what India requires. The British have seen fit to allow us to have some factories and also to prohibit other factories. No! For me the paramount problem is the ending of British domination.

L.F. Well, how do you actually see your impending civil disobedience movement? What shape will it take?

G. In the villages, the peasants will stop paying taxes. They will make salt despite official prohibition. This seems a small matter; the salt tax yields only a paltry sum to the British Government. But refusal to pay it will give the peasants the courage to think that they are capable of independent action. Their next step will be to seize the land.

L.F. With violence?

G. There may be violence, but then again the landlords may co-operate.

L.F. You are an optimist.

G. They might co-operate by fleeing.

Nehru, who had been sitting by my side, said, "They might vote for confiscation with their legs just as you say in your *Men and Politics* that, as Lenin put it, the Russian soldier voted for peace with his legs in 1917—he ran away from the trenches. So also the Indian landowners might vote for the confiscation of their land by running away from the village."

L.F. Or, they might organize violent resistance.

G. There may be fifteen days of chaos, but I think we could soon bring that under control.

L.F. You feel then that it must be confiscation without compensation?

G. Of course. It would be financially impossible for anybody to compensate the landlords.

L.F. That accounts for the villages. But that is not all of India.

G. No. Workingmen in the cities would leave their factories. The railroads would stop running.

L.F. General strike. I know that you have in the past had a large following among the peasants, but your city working-class support is not so big.

G. No, not so big. But this time the workingmen will act too, because, as I sense the mood of the country, everybody wants freedom, Hindus, Muslims, untouchables, Sikhs, workers, peasants, industrialists, Indian Civil Servants and even the Princes. The Princes know that a new wind is blowing. Things cannot go on as they have been. We cannot support a war which may perpetuate British domination. How can we fight for democracy in Japan, Germany and Italy when India is not democratic? I want to save China. I want no harm to come to China. But to collaborate we must be free. Slaves do not fight for freedom.

L.F. Do you think that the Muslims will follow you in your civil disobedience movement?

G. Not perhaps in the beginning. But they will come in when they see that the movement is succeeding.

L.F. Might not the Muslims be used to interfere with or stop the movement?

G. Undoubtedly, their leaders might try or the Government might try, but the Muslim millions do not oppose independence and they could not, therefore, oppose our measures to bring about that independence. The Muslim masses sympathize with the one overall goal of Congress: freedom for India. That is the solid rock on which Hindu-Muslim unity can be built.

June 9, 1942

L.F. I have found you so objective about your work and the world that I want to ask you to be objective about yourself. This isn't a per-

sonal question but a political question: how do you account for your influence over so many people?

G. I can see the spirit in which you ask this. I think my influence is due to the fact that I pursue the truth. That is my goal.

L.F. I do not underestimate the power of truth. But this explanation seems to me inadequate. Leaders like Hitler have achieved power by telling lies. That doesn't mean that you cannot become influential by telling the truth. But truth in itself has not always availed others in this country or elsewhere. Why is it that you, without any of the paraphernalia of power, without a government or police behind you, without ceremonies or even tightly-knit organization—for I understand that Congress is in no sense a disciplined, tightly-co-ordinated body—how is it that you have been able to sway so many millions and get them to sacrifice their comforts and time and even their lives?

G. Truth is not merely a matter of words. It is really a matter of living the truth. It is true, I have not much equipment. My education is not great. I do not read much.

L.F. Isn't it that when you advocate independence you strike a chord in many Indians? A musician does something to the members of his audience. You play a note which Indians are waiting to hear. I have noticed that people applaud most the arias they have heard often and liked. A lecture audience applauds views it agrees with. Is it that you say and do what your people want you to say and do?

G. Yes, maybe that is it. I was a loyalist in respect to the British, and then I became a rebel. I was a loyalist until 1896.

L.F. Weren't you also a loyalist between 1914 and 1918?

G. Yes, in a way, but not really. By 1918 I had already said that British rule in India is an alien rule and must end.

I will tell you how it happened that I decided to urge the departure of the British. It was in 1916. I was in Lucknow working for Congress. A peasant came up to me looking like any other peasant of India, poor and emaciated. He said, 'My name is Rajkumar Shukla. I am from Champaran, and I want you to come to my district.' He described the misery of his fellow agriculturists and prayed me to let him take me to Champaran, which was hundreds of miles from Lucknow. He begged so insistently and persuasively that I promised. But he wanted me to fix the date. I could not do that. For weeks and weeks Rajkumar Shukla followed me wherever I went over the face of India. He stayed wherever I stayed. At length, early in 1917, I had to be in Calcutta. Rajkumar followed me and ultimately persuaded me to take the train with him from Calcutta to Champaran. Champaran is a district where indigo is planted. I decided that I would talk to thousands of peasants but, in order to get the other side of the question, I would also interview the British Commissioner of the area. When I called on the Commis-

sioner he bullied me and advised me to leave immediately, I did not accept his advice and proceeded on the back of an elephant to one of the villages. A police messenger overtook us and served notice on me to leave Champaran. I allowed the police to escort me back to the house where I was staying and then I decided to offer civil resistance. I would not leave district. Huge crowds gathered around the house. I co-operated with the police in regulating the crowds. A kind of friendly relationship sprang up between me and the police. That day in Champaran became a red-letter day in my life. I was put on trial. The Government attorney pleaded with the magistrate to postpone the case but I asked him to go on with it. I wanted to announce publicly that I had disobeyed the order to leave Champaran. I told him that I had come to collect information about local conditions and that I therefore had to disobey the British law because I was acting in obedience with a higher law, with the voice of my conscience. This was my first act of civil disobedience against the British. My desire was to establish the principle that no Englishman had the right to tell me to leave any part of my country where I had gone for a peaceful pursuit. The Government begged me repeatedly to drop my plea of guilty. Finally the magistrate closed the case. Civil disobedience had won. It became the method by which India could be made free.

L.F. This is perhaps another clue to your position in India.

G. What I did was a very ordinary thing. I declared that the British could not order me around in my own country.

L.F. It was ordinary, but you were the first to do it. It's like the story of Columbus and the egg.

G. What's that?

L.F. Have you never heard the story of Columbus and the egg?

G. No, tell me.

I told him. He laughed.

G. That's right, it was an ordinary thing to say that I had the right to go peacefully anywhere in my own country. But no one had said it before.[1]

G. Now fire.

L.F. That would be violence.

G. And have you any objection to violence?

L.F. But you have never heard a word from me as to whether I am for or against violence.

G. You don't have to tell me. I look at you and know.

L.F. In case your impending civil disobedience movement develops a violent phase, as it has sometimes in past years, would you call it off? You have done that before.

[1] By this time the party had returned to Gandhiji's dwelling. At 3 o'clock Fischer came for his regular interview.

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G. In my present mood it would be incorrect to say that no circumstances might arise in which I would call off the movement. In the past, however, I have been too cautious. That was necessary for my own training and for the training of my collaborators. But I would not behave as I have in the past.

L.F. Since I am going away soon from your village, I want to be quite sure that I understand your ideas correctly. Would there be any chance of a compromise between what you want and what the British authorities are ready to offer? Might some kind of a modified Cripps proposal be acceptable to you?

G. No. Nothing along the lines of the Cripps offer. I want their complete and irrevocable withdrawal. I am essentially a man of compromise because I am never sure that I am right. But now it is the unbending future [*sic*] in me that is uppermost. There is no halfway house between withdrawal and non-withdrawal. It is, of course, no complete physical withdrawal that I ask. I shall insist, however, on the transfer of political power from the British to the Indian people.

L.F. What about the time factor? When you launch your civil disobedience movement, and if the British yield, will it be a matter of the immediate transfer of political power?

G. The British would not have to do that in two days or in two weeks. But it must be irrevocable and complete political withdrawal.

L.F. Suppose the British say they will withdraw completely after the war?

G. No. In that case my proposal loses much of its value. I want them to go now so I can help China and Russia. Today I am unable to pull my full weight in favour of them. It is my philanthropy that has made me present this proposal. For the time being, India disappears from my gaze. I never wanted independence for India's sake alone. I never wished to play the role of frog-in-the-well.

L.F. You have not felt this way before, Mr. Gandhi.

G. The whole idea keeps blossoming out within me. The original idea of asking the British to go burst upon me suddenly. It was the Cripps fiasco that inspired the idea. Hardly had he gone when it seized hold of me.

L.F. Exactly when did the idea occur to you?

G. Soon after Cripps's departure. I wrote a letter to Horace Alexander in reply to his letter to me. Thereafter the idea possessed me. Then began the propaganda. Later I framed a resolution. My first feeling was, we need an answer to Cripps's failure. What a diabolical thing if the Cripps mission were without any redeeming feature. Suppose I ask them to go. This idea arose from the crushed hope that had been pretty high in our minds. We had heard good things about Cripps from Jawaharlal and others. Yet the whole mission fell flat. How, I asked myself, am I to remedy this situation? The presence of the British blocks our way. It was during my

Monday day of silence that the idea was born in me. From that silence arose so many thoughts that the silence possessed me and the thoughts possessed me too and I knew I had to act for Russia and China and India. My heart goes out to China. I cannot forget my five hours with Chiang Kai-shek and his attractive partner. Even for China's sake alone I must do this. I am burdening my thoughts with the world's sorrow.

L.F. Why will it not wait until after the war?

G. Because I want to act now and be useful while the war is here.

L.F. Have you any organization with which to carry on this struggle?

G. The organization is the Congress Party. But if it fails me, I have my own organization, myself. I am a man possessed by an idea. If such a man cannot get an organization, he becomes an organization.

L.F. Have you sufficient confidence in the present mood of the country? Will it follow you? This civil disobedience movement may involve heavy sacrifices for the people. Has anybody opposed your idea?

G. I had a letter today from Rajagopalachari. He is the only one opposed. I know his views. But how does he expect the Muslim League to work with him when he wishes to work with the Muslim League in order to destroy Pakistan?

L.F. Do you think Jinnah is set on Pakistan? Perhaps it is a bargaining counter with him which he will give up if Hindu-Muslim co-operation can be achieved.

G. As I have told you before, he will only give it up when the British are gone and when there is therefore nobody with whom to bargain.

L.F. So you intend to tell the British in advance when you will launch your movement?

G. Yes.

L.F. You had better not tell them too far in advance.

G. Is that a tip from you?

L.F. No.

G. They will know in good time.

L.F. If you look at this in its historic perspective, you are doing a novel and remarkable thing—you are ordaining the end of an empire.

G. Even a child can do that. I will appeal to the people's instincts. I may arouse them.

L.F. Let us try to see the possible reaction throughout the world. Your very friends, China and Russia, may appeal to you not to launch this civil disobedience movement.

G. Let them appeal to me. I may be dissuaded. But if I can get appeals to them in time, I may convert them. If you have access to men in authority here, tell them this. You are a fine listener. No humbug about you. Discuss this with them and let them show me if there are any flaws in my proposal.

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L.F. Have I your authority to say this to the Viceroy?

G. Yes, you have my permission. Let him talk to me; I may be converted. I am a reasonable man. I would not like to take any step that would harm China.

L.F. Or America?

G. If America were hurt, it would hurt everybody.

L.F. Would you wish President Roosevelt to be informed about your attitude?

G. Yes. I do not wish to appeal to anybody. But I would want Mr. Roosevelt to know my plans, my views, and my readiness to compromise. Tell your President I wish to be dissuaded.

L.F. Do you expect drastic action when you launch the movement?

G. Yes. I expect it any day. I am ready. I know I may be arrested. I am ready.

A Week with Gandhi, pp. 14-20, 24-5, 30-7, 42-59, 67-71, 76-85, 89-93 and 96-106

APPENDIX VI

RESOLUTIONS PASSED BY CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE[1]

July 14, 1942

The events happening from day to day and the experience that the people of India are passing through confirm the opinion of Congressmen that British rule in India must end immediately, not merely because foreign domination even at its best is an evil in itself and a continuing injury to the subject people, but because India in bondage can play no effective part in defending herself and in affecting the fortunes of the war that is desolating humanity. The freedom of India is thus necessary not only in the interest of India, but also for the safety of the world and for the ending of Nazism, Fascism, militarism and other forms of imperialism, and the aggression of one nation over another. Ever since the outbreak of the World War, the Congress has studiedly pursued a policy of non-embarrassment. Even at the risk of making its satyagraha ineffective, it deliberately gave it a symbolic character in the hope that this policy of non-embarrassment carried to its logical extreme would be duly appreciated and that real power would be transferred to popular representatives so as to enable the nation to make its fullest contribution towards the realization of human freedom throughout the world, which is in danger of being crushed. It had also hoped that negatively nothing would be done which was calculated to tighten Britain's hold on India.

[1] *Vide* pp. 282-4.

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These hopes have, however, been dashed to pieces. The abortive Cripps proposals showed in the clearest possible manner that there was no change in the British Government's attitude towards India and that the British hold on India was in no way to be relaxed. In the negotiations with Sir Stafford Cripps, Congress representatives tried their utmost to achieve a minimum, consistent with the national demand, but to no avail. This frustration has resulted in a rapid and widespread increase of ill-will against Britain and a growing satisfaction at the success of Japanese arms.

The Working Committee view this development with grave apprehension as this, unless checked, will inevitable lead to a passive acceptance of aggression. The Committee hold that all aggression must be resisted, for any submission to it must mean the degradation of the Indian people and the continuation of their subjection. The Congress is anxious to avoid the experience of Malaya, Singapore, and Burma and desires to build up resistance to any aggression on or invasion of India by the Japanese or any foreign power. The Congress would change the present ill-will against Britain into goodwill and make India a willing partner in a joint enterprise of securing freedom for the nations and peoples of the world and in the trials and tribulations which accompany it. This is only possible if India feels the glow of freedom.

The Congress representatives have tried their utmost to bring about a solution of the communal tangle. But this has been made impossible by the presence of the foreign power and only after the ending of foreign domination and intervention, can the present unreality give place to reality and the people of India, belonging to all groups and parties, face India's problems and solve them on a mutually agreed basis.

The present political parties formed chiefly with a view to attract the attention of and influence the British power, will then probably cease to function. For the first time in India's history, the realization will come home that the Princes, 'jagirdars,' 'zamindars' and propertied and moneyed classes derive their wealth and property from the workers in the fields and factories and elsewhere, to whom essentially power and authority must belong. On the withdrawal of British rule in India, responsible men and women of the country will come together to form a provisional government, representative of all important sections of the people of India which will later evolve a scheme by which a Constituent Assembly can be convened in order to prepare a Constitution for the Government of India acceptable to all sections of the people. Representatives of free India and representatives of Great Britain will confer together for the adjustment of future relations and for the co-operation of the two countries as allies in the common task of meeting aggression.

It is the earnest desire of the Congress to enable India to resist aggression effectively with the people's united will and strength behind it. In

making the proposal for the withdrawal of the British rule from India, the Congress has no desire whatsoever to embarrass Great Britain or the Allied powers in their prosecution of the war, or in any way to encourage aggression on India or increase pressure on China by the Japanese or any other power associated with the Axis group. Nor does the Congress intend to jeopardize the defensive capacity of the Allied powers.

The Congress is, therefore, agreeable to the stationing of the armed forces of the Allies in India, should they so desire, in order to ward off and resist Japanese or other aggression and to protect and help China. The proposal of withdrawal of the British power from India was never intended to mean the physical withdrawal of all Britishers from India, and certainly not of those who would make India their home and live there as citizens and as equals with the others. If such a withdrawal takes place with goodwill it would result in the establishing of a stable provisional government in India and co-operation between this government and the United Nations in resisting aggression and helping China. The Congress realizes that there may be risks involved in such a course. Such risks, however, have to be faced by any country in order to achieve freedom, and more especially at the present critical juncture in order to save the country and the larger cause of freedom the world over from far greater risks and perils. While, therefore, the Congress is impatient to achieve the national purpose it wishes to take no hasty steps and would like to avoid, in so far as is possible any course of action that might embarrass the United Nations. The Congress would be pleased with the British power if it accepts the very reasonable and just proposal herein made not only in the interest of India but also that of Britain and of the cause of freedom, to which the United Nations proclaim their adherence. Should, however, this appeal fail the Congress cannot view without the gravest apprehension the continuation of the present state of affairs involving a progressive deterioration in the situation and the weakening of India's will and power to resist aggression. The Congress will then be reluctantly compelled to utilize all the non-violent strength it might have gathered since 1920 when it adopted non-violence as part of its policy for the vindication of the political rights and liberty. Such a widespread struggle would inevitably be under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. As issues raised are of the most vital and far-reaching importance to the people of India as well as to the peoples of the United Nations the Working Committee refer them to the All-India Congress Committee for final decision. For this purpose the A.I.C.C. will meet in Bombay on the 7th of August, 1942.

The Transfer of Power, Vol. II, pp. 385-7; also *The Indian Annual Register, 1942*, Vol. II, pp. 207-9

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APPENDIX VII

LETTER FROM C. RAJAGOPALACHARI AND OTHERS[1]

MADRAS,
July 18, 1942

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

We have carefully read the resolution passed by the Congress Working Committee at Wardha on July 14, which is to be placed before the meeting of the A. I. C. C. next month. In view of the far-reaching consequences of the adoption of this resolution, we feel it our duty, having worked with you since 1920, to place before you our considered views in this matter. While there can be no difference of view over India's demand for complete freedom from foreign domination, the idea of the withdrawal of Government being automatically replaced by another Government is altogether impossible. The State is not a mere superstructure, but is so intimately bound up with the functioning of every activity of the people that the withdrawal of the Government without a simultaneous replacement by another must involve a dissolution of the State and of society itself. It is unnatural for any Government to withdraw without transferring power to a successor by consent or without being forcibly replaced by another. The formation of a provisional government as well as the convening of the constituent assembly are possible only if the continuity of the State is assured.

We feel, therefore, that, however difficult of achievement the Hindu-Muslim settlement may be, while the British Government is here and functioning, it is essential that, before a demand for withdrawal can be reasonably made, the major political organizations of this country, namely, the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League, should evolve a joint plan with regard to the provisional government which can take over power and preserve the continuity of the State. Even if we imagine that the British could ever under moral compulsion be made to withdraw unconditionally, we are convinced that the chaos that would follow under existing conditions would not permit within any reasonable time the formation of a provisional government such as you contemplate.

We consider it wrong to formulate a demand which, if complied with, must necessarily lead to anarchy or to frame a programme of widespread self-inflicted suffering based on the refusal of such a demand.

[1] *Vide* pp. 320-1.

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Your proposal that while the civil power may be withdrawn, the British and Allied forces may continue in India in anticipation of a treaty with a problematic provisional Indian government will only lead to the exercise of all governmental functions by the military forces. This will happen if only for their own safety and effective functioning. They are further likely to be urged towards this step by local chieftains and suffering people. This would be the reinstallation of the British Government in a worse form.

In spite of these objections we might have submitted to your proposal if only because of the fact that the British are not going to withdraw, and in actual operation the movement would amount to a nationwide protest against the existing Government and may be productive of a satisfactory settlement in due course. But the critical international situation in which India is directly involved makes it certain that the party to gain immediately by the movement will be Japan. If the movement could possibly displace the British Government, installing a national government capable of resisting Japanese aggression, it might be worth taking all risks attached to it. But as this result is not even remotely probable, it will only produce more intense and large-scale repression and suffering which will facilitate Japaneses invasion and occupation.

It is hardly likely that the authorities will allow the movement to proceed under central direction in an orderly and direct fashion. Even if we do not mind sporadic violence that may result from lack of proper control, there is another serious danger. When responsible leaders are removed and their guidance is no longer available the movement can easily be taken advantage of by the enemy and be converted into a fifth-column activity on his behalf.

Any movement started by you would have commanded our loyal participation, in spite of differences of opinion, if the movement did not involve such grave consequences as pointed out above. Our conviction is strong enough to make it our duty publicly to oppose the proposal on these grounds. But it may be thought at this stage that your move will operate as a protest with an international appeal and bring about a fresh approach towards a political settlement for India without actually plunging the country in direct action. In order that any step on our part may not lessen this chance we refrain from giving public expression to our opposition but send this letter to entreat you to desist from taking the steps you have adumbrated.

(Sd.) C. Rajagopalachari,
K. Santhanam,
S. Ramanathan,
Dr. T. S. S. Rajan

The Indian Annual Register, 1942, Vol. II, pp. 206-7

APPENDIX VIII

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI'S FORMULA[1]

Basis for terms of settlement between the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League to which Gandhiji and Mr. Jinnah agree and which they will endeavour respectively to get the Congress and the League to approve:

(1) Subject to the terms set out below as regards the constitution for free India, the Muslim League endorses the Indian demand for independence and will co-operate with the Congress in the formation of a provisional interim government for the transitional period.

(2) After the termination of the War, a commission shall be appointed for demarcating contiguous districts in the north-west and east of India, wherein the Muslim population is in absolute majority. In the areas thus demarcated, a plebiscite of all the inhabitants held on the basis of adult suffrage or other practicable franchise shall ultimately decide the issue of separation from Hindustan. If the majority decide in favour of forming a sovereign State separate from Hindustan, such decision shall be given effect to, without prejudice to the right of districts on the border to choose to join either State.

(3) It will be open to all parties to advocate their points of view before the plebiscite is held.

(4) In the event of separation, mutual agreements shall be entered into for safeguarding defence, and commerce and communications and for other essential purposes.

(5) Any transfer of population shall only be on an absolutely voluntary basis.

(6) These terms shall be binding only in case of transfer by Britain of full power and responsibility for the governance of India.

Gandhi-Jinnah Talks, p. 36

[1] *Vide* pp. 320-1.

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APPENDIX IX

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

August 5, 1942

I have just seen for the first time the Government's 'communique' issuing certain documents obtained during the police raid from the A.I.C.C. office. It is astonishing to what a pass the Government of India has been reduced when it has to adopt these discreditable and dishonourable tactics. Normally such tactics require no answer. But as there is likely to be misapprehension, I wish to clear up some matters.

It is not our custom to keep detailed minutes of the Working Committee's meetings. Only final decisions are recorded. On this occasion the Assistant Secretary took brief notes unofficially apparently for his own record. These notes are very brief and disjointed and represent several days' prolonged debate during which I must have spoken on various occasions for two or three hours. Only a few sentences were taken down and torn from their context. They often give a wrong impression. None of us had a chance of seeing these notes or of revising them. The record is very unsatisfactory and incomplete and hence often incorrect.

In our discussions Mahatma Gandhi was not present. We had to consider every aspect of the question fully and to weigh the implications of words and phrases in the draft resolutions. If Gandhiji had been there, much of this discussion might have been avoided as he could have explained to us his attitude more fully.

Thus when the question of British withdrawal from India was considered, I pointed out that if the armed forces were suddenly withdrawn, the Japanese might well advance and invade the country without hindrance. This obvious difficulty was removed when Gandhiji later explained that British and other armed forces might remain to prevent aggression.

In regard to the statement that Gandhiji expected an Axis victory, an important qualification has been omitted. What he has repeatedly said and what I have referred to is his belief that unless Britain changes her whole policy in regard to India and her colonial possessions, she is heading for disaster. He has further stated that if a suitable change in this policy was made and the War really became one for freedom for all people, then victory would assuredly come to the United Nations.

The references to negotiations with Japan are also incorrect and entirely torn from their context. Gandhiji always sends notice to his adversary before

[1] *Vide* pp. 370-3.

coming into conflict. He would thus have called upon Japan not only to keep away from India, but to withdraw from China, etc. In any event he was determined to resist every aggressor in India and he advised our people to do so even to the point of death. They were never to submit.

It is absurd to say that any of us envisaged any arrangements with Japan giving her right of passage, etc. What I said was that Japan would want this, but we could never agree. Our whole policy has all along been based on uttermost resistance to aggression.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-8-1942, and *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government*, 1942-44, pp. 205-6

APPENDIX X

RESOLUTION PASSED BY ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE[1]

[*August 8, 1942*]

The All-India Congress Committee has given the most careful consideration to the reference made to it by the Working Committee in their resolution dated July 14, 1942, and to subsequent events, including the development of the war situation, the utterances of responsible spokesmen of the British Government, and the comments and criticisms made in India and abroad. The Committee approves of and endorses that resolution, and is of opinion that events subsequent to it have given it further justification, and have made it clear that the immediate ending of British rule in India is an urgent necessity, both for the sake of India and for the success of the cause of the United Nations. The continuation of that rule is degrading and enfeebling India and making her progressively less capable of defending herself and of contributing to the cause of world freedom.

The Committee has viewed with dismay the deterioration of the situation on the Russian and Chinese fronts and conveys to the Russian and Chinese peoples its high appreciation of their heroism in defence of their freedom. This increasing peril makes it incumbent on all those who strive for freedom and who sympathize with the victims of aggression, to examine the foundations of the policy so far pursued by the Allied Nations, which have led to repeated and disastrous failure. It is not by adhering to such aims and policies and methods that failure can be converted into success, for past experience has shown that failure is inherent in them. These policies have been based not on freedom so much as on the domination of subject and colonial countries, and the continuation of the imperialist tradition and method. The possession of Empire, instead of adding to the strength of the ruling power, has become a burden and a curse. India, the classic land of modern

[1] *Vide* pp. 375-6.

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Imperialism, has become the crux of the question, for by the freedom of India will Britain and the United Nations be judged, and the people of Asia and Africa be filled with hope and enthusiasm.

The ending of British rule in this country is thus a vital and immediate issue on which depend the future of the war and the success of freedom and democracy. A free India will assure this success by throwing all her great resources in the struggle for freedom and against the aggression of Nazism, Fascism and Imperialism. This will not only affect materially the fortunes of the war, but will bring all subject and oppressed humanity on the side of the United Nations, and give these nations, whose ally India would be, the moral and spiritual leadership of the world. India in bondage will continue to be the symbol of British Imperialism and the taint of that Imperialism will affect the fortunes of all the United Nations.

The peril of today, therefore, necessitates the independence of India and the ending of British dominations. No future promises or guarantees can affect the present situation or meet that peril. They cannot produce the needed psychological effect on the mind of the masses. Only the glow of freedom now can release that energy and enthusiasm of millions of people which will immediately transform the nature of the war.

The A. I. C. C., therefore, repeats with all emphasis the demand for the withdrawal of the British power from India. On the declaration of India's independence, a provisional government will be formed and free India will become an ally of the United Nations, sharing with them in the trials and tribulations of the joint enterprise of the struggle for freedom. The provisional government can only be formed by the co-operation of the principal parties and groups in the country. It will thus be a composite government, representative of all important sections of the people of India. Its primary functions must be to defend India and resist aggression with all the armed as well as the non-violent forces at its command, together with the Allied powers, and to promote the well-being and progress of the workers in the fields and factories and elsewhere, to whom essentially all power and authority must belong. The provisional government will evolve a scheme for a constituent assembly which will prepare a constitution for the government of India acceptable to all sections of the people. This constitution, according to the Congress view, should be a federal one, with the largest measure of autonomy for the federating units, and with the residuary powers vesting in these units. The future relations between India and the Allied nations will be adjusted by representatives of all these free countries conferring together for their mutual advantage and for their co-operation in the common task of resisting aggression. Freedom will enable India to resist aggression effectively with the people's united will and strength behind it.

The freedom of India must be the symbol of and prelude to this freedom of all other Asiatic nations under foreign domination. Burma, Malaya, Indo-

China, the Dutch Indies, Iran and Iraq must also attain their complete freedom. It must be clearly understood that such of these countries as are under Japanese control now must not subsequently be placed under the rule or control of any other colonial power.

While the A. I. C. C. must primarily be concerned with the independence and defence of India in this hour of danger, the Committee is of opinion that the future peace, security and ordered progress of the world demand a world federation of free nations, and on no other basis can the problems of the modern world be solved. Such a world federation would ensure the freedom of its constituent nations, the prevention of aggression and exploitation by one nation over another, the protection of national minorities, the advancement of all backward areas and peoples, and the pooling of the world's resources for the common good of all. On the establishment of such a world federation, disarmament would be practicable in all countries, national armies, navies and air forces would no longer be necessary, and a world federal defence force would keep the world peace and prevent aggression.

An independent India would gladly join such a world federation and co-operate on an equal basis with other countries in the solution of international problems.

Such a federation should be open to all nations who agree with its fundamental principles. In view of the war, however, the federation must inevitably, to begin with, be confined to the United Nations. Such a step taken will have a most powerful effect on the war, on the peoples of the Axis countries, and on the peace to come.

The Committee regretfully realizes, however, that despite the tragic and overwhelming lessons of the war and the perils that overhang the world, the governments of few countries are yet prepared to take this inevitable step towards world federation. The reactions of the British Government and the misguided criticism of the foreign Press also make it clear that even the obvious demand for India's independence is resisted, though this has been made essentially to meet the present peril and to enable India to defend herself and help China and Russia in their hour of need. The Committee is anxious not to embarrass in any way the defence of China or Russia, whose freedom is precious and must be preserved, or to jeopardize the defensive capacity of the United Nations. But the peril grows both to India and these nations, and inaction and submission to a foreign administration at this stage is not only degrading India and reducing her capacity to defend herself and resist aggression, but is no answer to that growing peril and is no service to the peoples of the United Nations. The earnest appeal of the Working Committee to Great Britain and the United Nations has so far met with no response, and the criticisms made in many foreign quarters have shown an ignorance of India's and the world's need, and sometimes even hostility to India's freedom, which is significant of a mentality of domination and racial superiority which

cannot be tolerated by a proud people conscious of their strength and of the justice of their cause.

The A. I. C. C. would yet again, at this last moment, in the interest of world freedom, renew this appeal to Britain and the United Nations. But the Committee feels that it is no longer justified in holding the nation back from endeavouring to assert its will against an imperialist and authoritarian government, which dominates over and prevents it from functioning in its own interest and in the interest of humanity. The Committee resolves, therefore, to sanction, for the vindication of India's inalienable right to freedom and independence, the starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale, so that the country might utilize all the non-violent strength it has gathered during the last twenty-two years of peaceful struggle. Such a struggle must inevitably be under the leadership of Gandhiji and the Committee requests him to take the lead and guide the nation in the steps to be taken.

The Committee appeals to the people of India to face the dangers and hardships that will fall to their lot with courage and endurance, and to hold together under the leadership of Gandhiji and carry out his instructions as disciplined soldiers of Indian freedom. They must remember that non-violence is the basis of this movement. A time may come when it may not be possible to issue instructions or for instructions to reach our people, and when no Congress committees can function. When this happens, every man and woman who is participating in this movement must function for himself or herself within the four corners of the general instructions issued. Every Indian who desires freedom and strives for it must be his own guide urging him on along the hard road where there is no resting place and which leads ultimately to the independence and deliverance of India.

Lastly, whilst the A. I. C. C. has stated its own view of the future governance under free India the A. I. C. C. wishes to make it quite clear to all concerned that by embarking on mass struggle it has no intention of gaining power for the Congress. The power, when it comes, will belong to the whole people of India.

The Indian Annual Register, 1942, Vol. II, pp. 209-11; also *Harijan*, 9-8-1942 and *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II, pp. 621-4

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APPENDIX XI

LETTER FROM C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[1]

48 BAZLULLAH ROAD,
THYAGARAYANAGAR,
MADRAS,
August 8, 1942

MY DEAR BAPU,

I am a great nuisance, but you must bear with me. Your last telegram to the effect that everything is being done in the direction indicated by me, "though not identical" gives me some vague relief. But I urge that the straight approach is better than a suspicious and niggardly one, the very error which we feel the British are guilty of in their dealings with us. This is the psychological moment to give what we must to the Q. A. when he perhaps feels neglected by the British. Do not think he has been forgotten by them or that he has receded into unimportance by reason of the storm raised by you. Others may think so, but you won't. The British are deliberately refraining from referring to him or to the Muslim question in order to avoid irritation. But the apparent is also. . . .[2] Going to him now may produce better results than when he. . .[3] obviously in the way and therefore important. It may be amusing that I should address a lecture on non-violence to you. But Newton himself may listen to his newest pupil sometimes! And Newton may go wrong if he refuses to do so. Anyway I have your [certifi]cate that did not go to my head at the time you gave that richly. I suppose you will not withdraw them because I have to differ from you now *a la* the nawabs.

You may reiterate and insist as much as you like on non-violence. But there is not a shadow of doubt. The momentum of your present move is wholly —almost wholly—the violence of the Axis powers and the critical state to which the British have been thereby reduced—not the non-violence or love inherent in your proposals and plans. You are scientific enough to see this as plain as the chemist in a laboratory.

What am I driving at ? It is this. What you are now doing is not an adventure in non-violence though it may have that delusive appearance. It is generating intense hatred in the British mind as a result of the utilization of

[1] *Vide* p. 376. According to C. R. Narasimhan this was airmailed to Bombay on August 8, and since Gandhiji was arrested early on August 9, he could not have seen it.

[2] & [3] Omissions as in the source

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the violence of others that they feel you are pitilessly making at a most critical point of time in the war. There is no room in this for fasting and all that. If you undertake it, the great hatred you have generated will prevent the operation of the forces of non-violence. It is politics, pure and simple, and let it be done as politics are done. There is no ahimsa in what you have got the Congress finally to accept or rather what the Congress has got you to accept. Plans suitable only for ahimsa have no place in this.

Love.

RAJA

From a copy : C.W. 10925. Courtesy : C. R. Narasimhan

APPENDIX XII

RESOLUTION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA[1]

NEW DELHI,
August 7, 1942

The A. I. C. C. have ratified the resolution passed by the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress on 5th August. That Resolution demands the immediate withdrawal of British power from India, and sanctions "the starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale". The Governor-General in Council has been aware, too, for some days past of dangerous preparations by the Congress Party for unlawful, and in some cases violent activities, directed among other things to the interruption of communications and public utility services, the organization of strikes, tampering with the loyalty of Government servants, and interference with defence measures, including recruitment.

2. The Government of India have waited patiently in the hope that wiser counsels might prevail. They have been disappointed in that hope. To a challenge such as the present there can only be one answer. The Government of India would regard it as wholly incompatible with their responsibilities to the people of India, and their obligations to the Allies, that a demand should be discussed the acceptance of which would plunge India into confusion and anarchy internally, and would paralyze her effort in the common cause of human freedom.

3. For the demand of the Congress leaders there is no warrant. In the view of the Government of India that demand is difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile with a full sense of responsibility on the part of the leaders of the Congress Party, or a full appreciation by them of the realities of the present situation. The Congress Working Committee admit that "there may

[1] *Vide* p. 405.

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be risks involved". They are right. Acceptance of the resolution must mean the exposure of India to Axis attack from without. Internally the withdrawal of British rule invites civil war, the collapse of law and order, the outbreak of communal feud, the dislocation of economic life with its inevitable hardships. Nor can the Government of India accept the claim of the Congress Party to speak for India as a whole. The Congress Party has for long occupied a position of great prominence and great importance in Indian political life. At this day its importance is substantial. But it is the duty of the Government of India to take a balanced view of the interests of all sections of Indian thought and Indian opinion. And looking as they must to the repeated protests even in these last few days by the leaders of great communities and solidly established interests, by so many leaders of liberal thought, by those great sections of the population which are giving unstinted and invaluable support to war against Axis aggression, they are confirmed in their view that that claim has no solid foundation, and that acceptance of the proposals now put forward by the Congress Party must mean the abandonment of all those large and powerful elements in the population which have condemned the course of action proposed by the Congress Party and which resent and resist the widespread dislocation which its acceptance would involve of India's war effort and of the general life of the community.

4. Nor can the Congress leaders claim that only thus can India's future be assured. The Congress Party is not India's mouthpiece, yet, in the interests of securing their own dominance, and in pursuit of their totalitarian policy its leaders have consistently impeded the efforts made to bring India to full nationhood. But for the resistance of the Congress Party to constructive endeavours, India might even now be enjoying self-government. British policy for India's future stands clear. It is that once hostilities cease, India shall devise for herself with full freedom of decision, and on a basis embracing all, and not only a single party, the form of government which she regards as most suited to her conditions: and that in the mean time Indian leaders shall fully participate in the government of their country, and in the counsels of the Commonwealth and of the United Nations. The fullest opportunity for the attainment of self-government by the people of India has been guaranteed by His Majesty's Government. It is on the basis fully accepted by His Majesty's Government and by the people of Great Britain, that the fullest opportunity shall be given for the attainment of self-government by the Indian people, that when the day of victory comes the final structure of India's constitution will be erected by Indians themselves. That those guarantees given by the British Parliament and the British people are accepted by the people of India we firmly believe. The suggestion put forward by the Congress Party that the millions of India uncertain as to the future are ready, despite the sad lessons of so many martyr countries, to throw themselves into the arms of the invader is one that the Government

of India cannot accept as a true representation of the feeling of the people of this great country.

5. The leaders of the Congress Party have claimed that the withdrawal of British rule "with goodwill" will "result in establishing a stable provisional government in India, and co-operation between this Government and the United Nations in resisting aggression and helping China". There is no justification for those claims. Nor can the Government of India accept the suggestion that a stable provisional government could be formed in a moment of time within a day or two of the withdrawal of British power. Past experience has shown to their profound regret the existence of the deep differences in this country, the harmonizing of which must be the object of all on whom responsibility falls, the removal of which is the ambition and the hope of the present Government of India. But to deny that those problems confront India today would be to ignore the facts: and the Government of India are satisfied that the interval between the withdrawal of British rule and the establishment of a stable provisional government would provide an open opportunity for the enemies of order and for all dissident elements in the population. In the view of the Government of India it is not too much to say that acceptance of the demand now put forward by the Congress Party must mean the betrayal of the Allies, whether in or outside India, the betrayal in particular of Russia and China, the betrayal of those ideal to which so much support has been given and is given today from the true heart and mind of India, the betrayal of India's fighting men, whose glory is so great, and the betrayal of all those loyal and co-operating elements in India which do not support the Congress Party, but which have played so active and so valuable a part in the prosecution of the War.

6. India has today a government stronger and more representative than ever in the past, a government predominantly Indian and non-official, a government determined to prosecute the War and no less determined to lead India on to her political goal. There is nothing that the Government of India regret more than this challenge at so critical a juncture. But on them there lies the task of defending India, of maintaining India's capacity to wage War, of safeguarding India's interests, of holding the balance between the different sections of her people without fear or favour. That task the Government of India will discharge in face of the challenge now thrown down by the Congress Party with clear determination, but with an anxiety that action shall be preventive of the interruption of war effort and the other dangers to which they have referred rather than punitive, and with a full consciousness of responsibility to India and to the cause of the Allies and of civilization. Their duty is plain, and they have to discharge it, profoundly as they must deplore the situation which they have been called upon to face. They urge the people of India to unite with them in resistance to the present challenge of a party. They appeal to them to lay aside all political differences

and for the period of the War to place before all other considerations the defence of their country, and the achievement of those common aims on which depends the future not only of India but of all the freedom-loving peoples of the world.

The Transfer of Power, Vol. II, pp. 600-3

APPENDIX XIII

TALK WITH PYARELAL ON MARXISM

[After *August 9, 1942*]

. . . After an extensive reading of Marxian literature during his last detention at Poona, he remarked: "I think I could have written Marx better than Marx, provided, of course, I had his scholarship which I do not have. He has the knack of making even simple things appear difficult.". . .

On the fly-leaf of *A Handbook of Marxism* he scribbled: "All for each and each for all." "From each according to his capacity to each according to his need.". . .

I tried to get him to give his appraisal of some aspects of the Marxist philosophy. . . .

I said, "Marx showed us that our ideologies, institutions, and ethical standards, literature, art, customs, even religion, are a product of our economic environment."

G. I do not agree that our ideologies, ethical standards and values are altogether a product of our material environment without any absolute basis outside it. On the contrary as we are so our environment becomes.

Is not the Wardha scheme of Basic Education based upon the assumption that purposive activity of the hand moulds not only our thinking but our whole personality? Does that not come very near the materialistic theory of knowledge as propounded by Marx?

But the Marxist wants to abolish the labouring hand altogether and substitute in its place the machine. He has no use for the hand. Dependence on manual labour, according to Marx, is the symbol and root cause of the destitution and slavery of the worker. It is the function of the machine to emancipate him from this state. I, on the other hand, hold that machine enslaves and only intelligent use of the hand will bring to the worker both freedom and happiness. . . .

The Marxist regards thought, as it were, 'a secretion of the brain' and the mind 'a reflex of the material environment'. I cannot accept that. Above and beyond both matter and mind is He. If I have an awareness of that living principle within me, no one can fetter my mind. The body might be destroyed, the spirit will proclaim its freedom. This to me is not a theory; it is a *fact of experience.*

P. The Marxists concede that an individual may transcend his material environment but class behaviour is essentially determined by it. It cannot change unless the economic environment is altered. To transform the capitalist the capitalistic order must be destroyed.

G. What an individual can do, a whole class of people can be induced to do, it is all a question of discovering the right technique. The whole of our non-violent non-co-operation movement, which aims at transforming the British ruling class, is based on this hypothesis. Trusteeship is my answer to the issue of class-conflict.

I passed on to the Marxist doctrine of economic motivation of history. The wars were an inevitable consequence of the institution of private property in the capitalistic system. Gandhiji rejected the one and disagreed with the other.

G. No, not the economic factor alone. Ultimately it is the Unseen Power that governs the course of events—even in the minds of men who make those events. Supposing Hitler were to die today, it would alter the whole course of current history. Similarly, supposing all capitalists were wiped out as a result of an earthquake or some other natural cataclysm, the history of class-war would then be changed in a way least dreamt of by the exponents of economic interpretation of history. Would not the history of the present war have been different if instead of Chamberlain a more dynamic figure had been the Prime Minister of England? Or, if Chamberlain had not shown lack of political courage at the last moment?

P. The Marxists say that to abolish war we have but to abolish the institution of private property. You have also taught that property is incompatible with the non-violent way of life.

G. This is only partly true. Was not Helen of Troy the cause of the Trojan War? Were the wars of the Rajputs related to the institution of private property? No, to banish war we have to do more. We have to eradicate possessiveness and greed and lust and egotism from our own hearts. We have to carry war within ourselves to banish it from society.

P. The remedies prescribed by Marx are of course wrong but can we not make use of his diagnosis of the malaise that affects our society for a proper understanding of the problem and devising right remedies for the same? . . . My point is that Marx knew of only one effective sanction, viz., of violence —force. If only he had been aware of the sanction of non-violence or satyagraha and its potency, he might have adopted it in place of violence. Even in our own time industry is being changed over from steam to oil and electricity.

G. I have also heard it said that often it is more economical to dispose of the old plant than to try to adapt it from one kind of motive power to another. In the present case, the difference between violence and non-violence is fundamental. It cuts at the very root of the Marxist theory. If you alter the foundation the whole superstructure will have to be changed.

P. I agree. But you have derived non-violence from the *Gita*. I find a powerful support in the Marxist analysis for your method of non-violent non-co-operation.

G. My interpretation of the *Gita* is rejected by those who do not believe in ahimsa and those who are believers in ahimsa do not need it. Your interpretation will be dubbed un-Marxist by convinced Marxists. It will not appeal to them. . . .

After some further discussion Gandhiji said :

You can advance this as your own original thesis on Marx. It might provide a rationale for the practice of satyagraha to those who lack the spiritual background. What has made the teaching of Marx dynamic is that he regarded mankind as a whole and transcending class divisions indentified himself with the cause of the poor oppressed toilers of the world. But in that he is not alone. Others besides him have done the same.

He would not concede that Marx had founded an absolute science of society or discovered any laws of social dynamics which *a priori* have an objective validity. The Marxian system was just an attempt to forge a tool for the achievement of a certain goal which Marx held to be desirable. Finally he said :

We may criticize Marx but that he was a great man who can deny? His analysis of social ills or the cures he prescribed for them may or may not be correct. I do not accept his economic theories but this much I know that the poor are being ground down. Something has got to be done for it. Marx set about to do that in his own way. He had acumen, scholarship, genius.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 136-9

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CHRONOLOGY

(*April 1 — December 17, 1942*)

April 1: Gandhiji attended meeting of Congress Working Committee in New Delhi.

April 5: Left Delhi for Sevagram.

April 6: Arrived in Sevagram.

April 10: Congress Working Committee rejected Cripps proposals.

April 11: Gandhiji inaugurated Swarajya Bhandar at Wardha.

May 1: Congress Working Committee passed resolution defining attitude to war and foreign soldiers.

May 9: Gandhiji left Sevagram for Bombay to collect funds for Andrews Memorial.

May 10: Arrived in Bombay.

May 17: Left Bombay for Sevagram.

May 18: Arrived in Sevagram.

May 27: Had discussions with Jawaharlal Nehru.

May 28: Met the members of the Rashtriya Yuvak Sangh, C. P.

June 2: Mridula Sarabhai and U. N. Dhebar called on Gandhiji.

June 4 and *5:* Gandhiji gave interview to Louis Fischer.

June 6: Gave interviews to Chaplin of International News Service and Belden of *Time* and *Life* and Louis Fischer.

June 7–9: Had talks with Jawaharlal Nehru. Gave interview to Louis Fischer.

June 19: Gave interview to United Press of London on Cripps statement.

June 26: Had discussion with workers of Charkha Sangh. Spoke to students of Khadi Vidyalaya, Wardha.

June 29 and *30:* Had discussions with C. Rajagopalachari.

July 3: Had discussions with Rajendra Prasad and Dr. Profulla Chandra Ghosh.

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July 4: Had discussions with Rajendra Prasad and Jawaharlal Nehru.

July 5: In letter to Rajagopalachari advised him to resign from Congress and Assembly.

July 6: Attended meeting of Congress Working Committee.

July 8–11: Attended meeting of Congress Working Committee.

July 14: Congress Working Committee passed resolution asking British Government to withdraw from India.

July 26: Gandhiji had talks with Vinoba Bhave, Kishorelal Mashruwala and others.

August 1: Spoke at opening of Hindustani Talimi Sangh Bhawan.

August 2: Left Sevagram for Bombay.

August 3: Arrived in Bombay.

August 4: Attended meeting of Congress Working Committee and All-India Congress Committee.

August 8: Spoke at meeting of A. I. C. C.
A. I. C. C. passed "Quit India" resolution.

August 9: Gandhiji was arrested early in morning and was taken to Aga Khan Palace, Poona. Members of Working Committee were also arrested and all Congress Committees declared illegal.

August 15: Mahadev Desai died in Aga Khan Palace.

August 16: Rioting broke out in Chimur when police opened fire on procession taken out to protest against arrests of leaders.

August 20: Gandhiji took silence.

August 24: Broke silence after 91 hours.

November 12: C. Rajagopalachari's request to be allowed to see Gandhiji in jail was turned down by Viceroy.
J. P. Bhansali went on fast demanding enquiry into Chimur excesses.

November 30: Gandhiji was refused permission to communicate with Bhansali.

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28 * Footnote	Appendix VI	Appendix II
169 * Item 199, para 2, line 6	fellowmen	fellowmen. I
270 * Line 31	measure	assure

* Due correction made.

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