THE
COLLECTED
WORKS
OF
MAHATMA
GANDHI
LXXXVIII
(1947)

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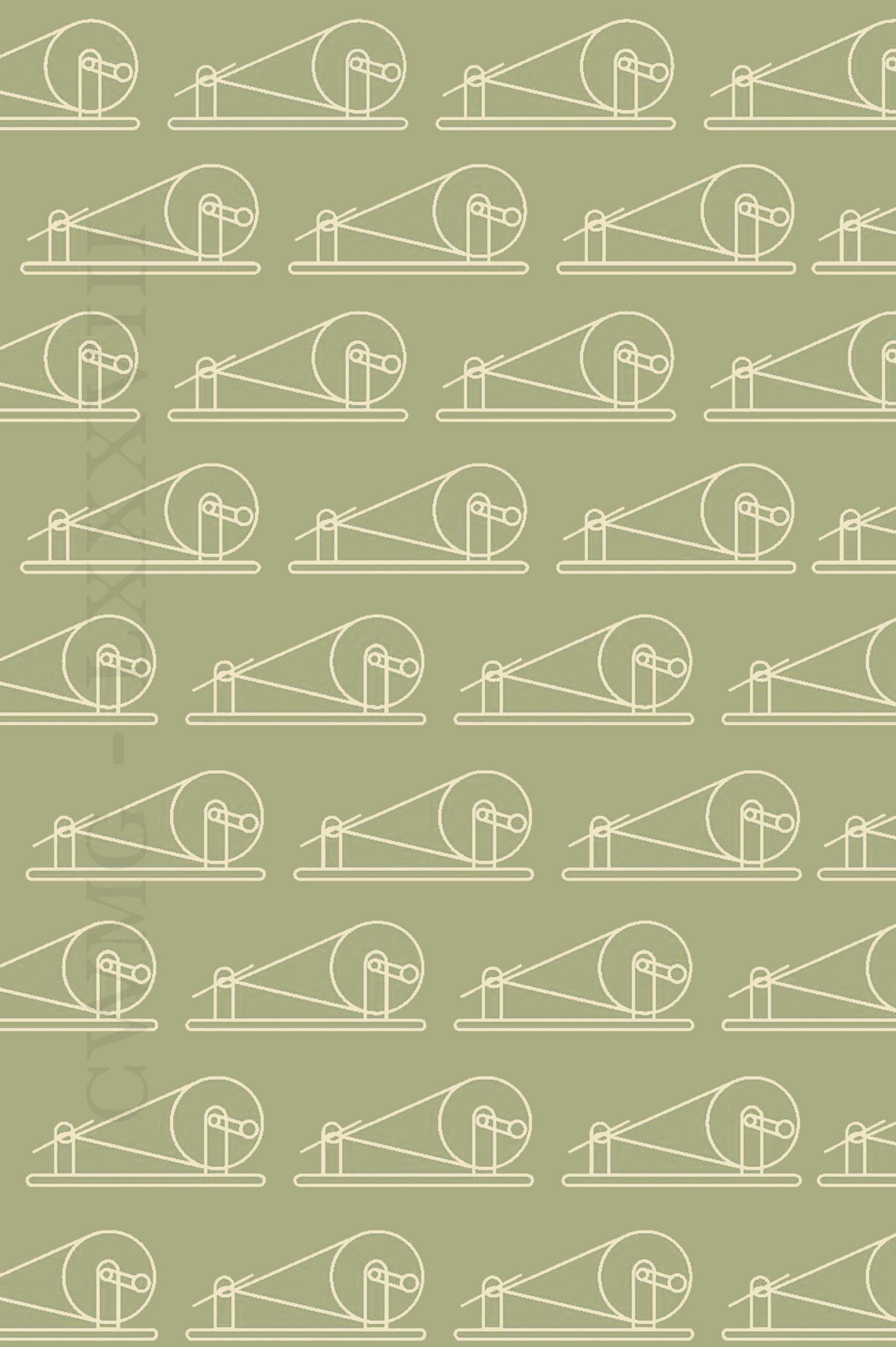


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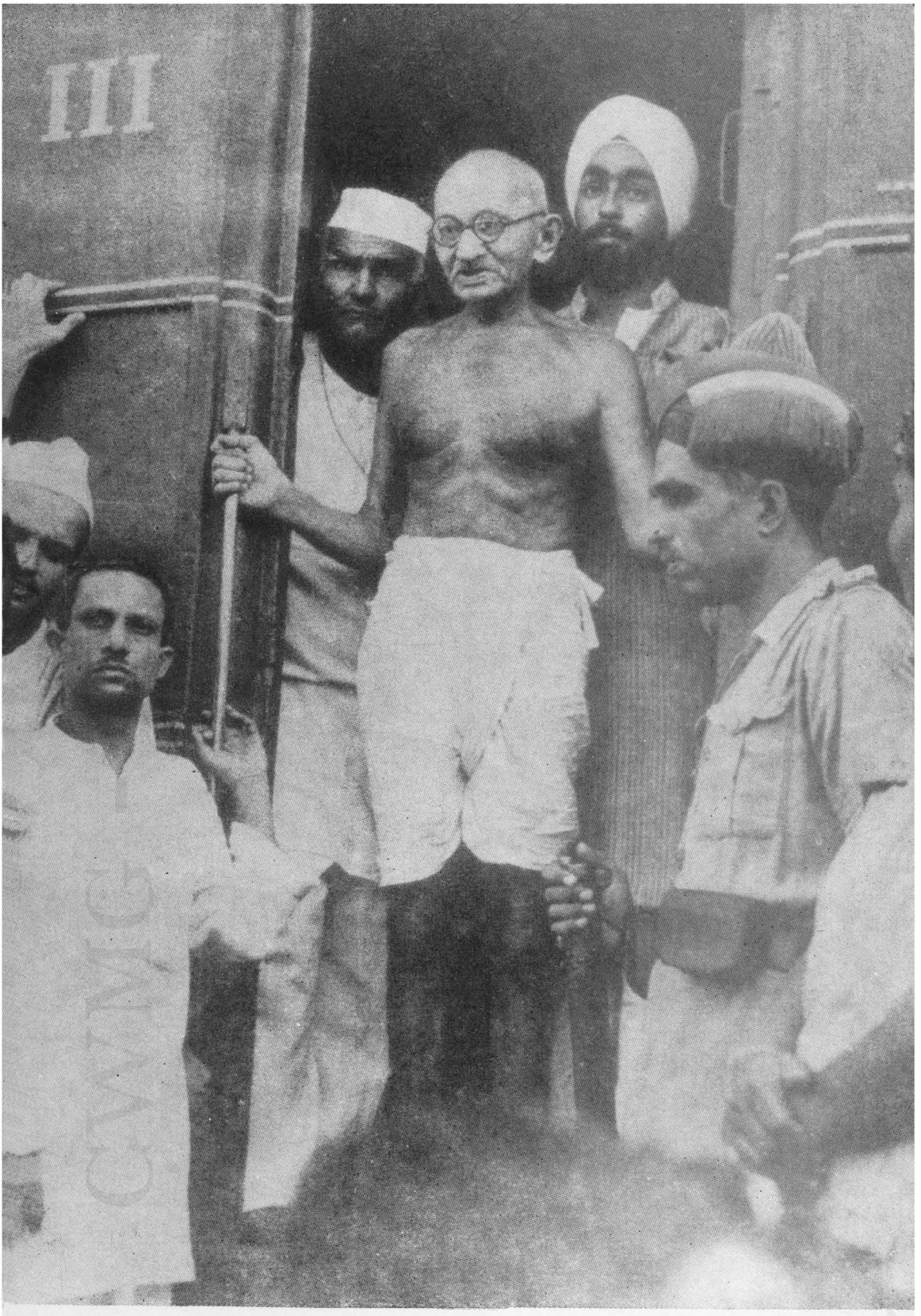


THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

LXXXVIII

(May 25, 1947 - July 31, 1947)

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AT LAHORE RAILWAY STATION, ON WAY TO KASHMIR

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MAHATMA GANDHI

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(May 25, 1947 – July 31, 1947)

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THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION
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PREFACE

The present volume (covering the period May 25 to July 31, 1947) marks the final break with the Cabinet Mission's scheme and whatever chance it offered of keeping the country whole, and the inauguration and working out of what came to be described as the Mountbatten Plan, with its mixed blessings of freedom, partition and bloody turmoil unparalleled in India's history.

Except for a short visit to Hardwar, Gandhiji spent this period in Delhi after his return from his pacification mission in riot-torn Calcutta and Bihar. At the end of July he left for Kashmir, where the Maharaja had been giving a hard time to Sheikh Abdulla and his National Conference (p. 54).

The Mountbatten Plan, though formally announced on June 3, had been in substance before the Indian leadership since early May. On the Congress side there had been distress at the frankly communal approach envisaged, also misgivings about the future, but at the same time there had been the realization that, given the situation in the country, it was perhaps the only way out. So, with a sigh, they had given their approval to the principles underlying it. But Gandhiji had not been reconciled. Even as late as May 26 he was imploring: "I would therefore urge every patriot and certainly the British Power, irrespective of the worst kind of violence, to leave India under the Cabinet Mission's document of the 16th May of last year. In the presence of the British Power today we are only demoralized by the orgy of bloodshed, wanton killings, arson and worse" (p. 13). And on May 27: "The very idea of partitioning the country is frightening. Our concern today should be to bring about an agreement in a peaceful manner to ensure that the country is not partitioned and still the British leave" (p. 14). Then on May 29, writing to Kripalani he said: "If you think that the Congress should accept the two-nation theory, it is a very serious matter" (p. 32). And at the prayer meeting in the evening of the same hay he was even more outspoken: "It will be an act of betrayal if they (the British) do not stand by the proposals of the Cabinet Mission. . . . The Constituent Assembly is sitting in terms of the May 16 paper. . . . I do not take the cables from London seriously. I must cling to the hope that Britain will not depart by a hair's breadth from the letter and the spirit of the Cabinet Mission's statement of May 16 . . ." (p. 39).

He even suggested, as a transitional arrangement, that power could be handed over either to the League or to the Congress, but the Congress Working Committee rejected this suggestion. Gandhiji would not mind a free and friendly decision by the Indian leaders for separation after British withdrawal. Once the British Power was withdrawn, he hoped, "we would have the wisdom to think coherently and keep India one or split it into two or more parts" (p. 13). It was a dispute between brothers and partition should take place, if at all, "through mutual agreement" without third party intervention (p. 14). Moreover, it would be fatal cowardice to yield to the violence of the League and accept Pakistan under "threat and intimidation" (p. 39). Refusing to be cowed down by violence, he said, they should "tell the turbulent elements in the country firmly and boldly that there can be no departure from the document of May 16 until they stop the sanguinary strife" (p. 39).

It soon became apparent not only that the May 16 scheme was dead but that the Congress leadership had watched the burial. The Working Committee had been persuaded that the only way out of the impasse was for them to accept the inevitability of the partition of the country along communal lines. In a talk with Manu, Gandhiji gave vent to his agony: "[Even the Sardar and Jawaharlal] think that my reading of the situation is wrong . . . They did not like my telling the Viceroy that even if there was to be partition, it should not be through British intervention . . . They wonder if I have not deteriorated with age" (p. 50). Gandhiji foresaw the heavy price that would have to be paid. He said: "I see clearly that we are setting about this business the wrong way. We may not feel the full effect immediately, but I can see clearly that the future of independence gained at this price is going to be dark. I pray that God may not keep me alive to witness it" (p. 51). He continued: "I shall perhaps not be alive to witness it, but should the evil I apprehend overtake India and her independence be imperilled, let posterity know what agony this old man went through thinking of it. Let not the coming generations curse Gandhi for being a party to India's vivisection" (p. 52).

Page after page of the volume documents this wide divergence of views on the most momentous political questions between Gandhiji on the one hand and the Congress leadership on the other. This had become so marked that at one stage Gandhiji felt constrained to write to Nehru : "The more I contemplate the differences of outlook and opinion between the members of the

W. C. and me, I feel that my presence is unnecessary even if it is not detrimental to the cause we all have at heart'' (p. 113).

But Gandhiji would not oppose the leadership. Though deeply distressed over the impending tragedy, he had no desire to launch a struggle against what now looked like an accomplished fact (p. 63). And once the Congress Working Committee had accepted the June 3 Plan Gandhiji defended it in public and advised the A. I. C. C. to endorse it (pp. 73, 75, 84-5, 97-8, 118, 153-7). He sensed that the country was not with him but with the C. W. C. He felt that he and the Congress lacked the strength to resist partition non-violently. Above all, his loyalty to the Congress and his friendship for Nehru and Patel prevented an open breach with them (pp. 66, 150, 342, 394, 446). As he put it : ''. . . If I rebel against the Congress, it will mean that I am rebelling against the whole country . . . '' (p. 85). Again : ''When I said that the country should not be divided I was confident that I had the support of the masses. But when the popular view is contrary to mine, should I force my own view on the people? . . . the general opinion is not with me, and so I must step aside and stay back'' (p. 118).

Therefore, though Mountbatten never really succeeded in selling him the partition scheme, Gandhiji tacitly acquiesced and made available equally to the leaders and to the Viceroy his counsel and co-operation in working the scheme. His chief concern throughout was to see steps taken that would help diffuse the mounting tension between Hindus and Muslims in the most sensitive areas and to have issues settled through negotiation rather than confrontation.

This is illustrated by Gandhiji's approach to the problem of N. W. F. P., where the Muslim League's agitation against the Congress ministry led by Dr. Khan Saheb had assumed the character of widespread communal rioting and where a referendum had been contemplated under the Mountbatten Plan to determine which of the two Constituent Assemblies the province would join. Gandhiji first proposed that the Viceroy should prevail upon Jinnah to visit the province and talk things over with the Government leaders there and present to them his picture of Pakistan so as to help them make up their minds (pp. 88-9, 126-7), and in the event of Jinnah not co-operating—which of course he did not —he further proposed that the Frontier ministry should resign in protest against the contemplated referendum (pp. 94-5) and that the Pathans should refrain from participating in it (pp. 276 -7). It need hardly be mentioned that the Congress leadership entirely disagreed with the steps proposed (pp. 483-5).

Gandhiji had been as much opposed to the partition of provinces as to that of India as a whole, but when in Bengal it became apparent that the M. L. A.s representing the non-Muslim minority areas would vote for the division of the province, Gandhiji lent his full support to the step. He said: "The people . . . have the right to act as they desire. My individual opinion cannot thwart the opinion of many" (p. 109). Therefore when Sarat Bose, with the support and connivance of some Muslim League leaders worked out a scheme for a United Socialist Bengal and started lobbying for it, Gandhiji took him severely to task. At a prayer meeting he said : "Who would not be happy if Bengal was spared partition and could remain one undivided whole? But I cannot join hands with anyone who talks of preserving unity through falsehood, fraud and bribery" (p. 123). He was equally outspoken in writing to Bose and sternly told him to "cease to disturb the atmosphere that has been created for the partition of Bengal" (p. 103).

Even more upsetting than the partition of the country was the division of the army which Gandhiji deplored as a "terrible mistake" and potentially the most dangerous part of the plan (pp. 287, 297, 335, 341). While accepting, however reluctantly, the political division of the sub-continent into two "states", he refused to consider the people of India and Pakistan as two "nations". He feared and expressed the fear that the British were leaving a "legacy of war" and even "reproved" Lord Mountbatten for using the word "nations" instead of "States or Countries" (pp. 489-90). In speeches and letters he persistently preached the lesson that geographical division should not mean "sundering of hearts". If Britain and India could remain friends, why not Pakistan and India? (pp. 125, 130, 163, 204). He appealed in particular to the Hindus in India to disprove the "two-nation" theory by themselves practising "the generosity of true Hinduism" (p. 155). He reminded the Hindus that the minorities should enjoy perfect freedom and equality in the Indian Union, as he "who makes slaves of others himself becomes a slave" (p. 425). By respecting the religious sentiments of others Hindus would exalt and ennoble Hinduism (pp. 285-6). In any case he expected and exhorted Hindus to be both courageous and self-restrained and never to answer with violence against Muslims the violence practised by Muslims somewhere else (pp. 37-8, 145, 215).

The old order was thus decisively changing, yielding place to the new, but the old problems remained and were even aggravated: chronic poverty, shortages, economic disparity and conse-

quent social tensions and scramble for loaves and fishes. Gandhiji addressed himself to these too. Writing in *Harijan* he said : "As far as the economic question is concerned it has to be solved in any case. . . . There can be no *Ramarajya* in the present state of iniquitous inequalities in which a few roll in riches and the masses do not get even enough to eat" (p. 2).

Disregarding the political division and communal differences people should bend their energies, he said, to build a better India by discharging the duties pertaining to their station. This appeal was made to businessmen (pp. 55-6); to doctors, engineers and scientists (p. 62), to Government servants (pp. 67-8) and to students (pp. 77-8).

Communists and socialists were regarded by Gandhiji as co-workers rather than as enemies, as "one could not clap with one hand". Hence he took every opportunity of explaining to them his ideal of a socialist order based on truth and non-violence to be established by personal example rather than propaganda (pp. 14-8, 96-7, 107, 262, 283, 324).

With similar wisdom Gandhiji advocated the utilization of the talents and experience of non-Congressmen and deprecated the tendency of Congressmen to regard others as lacking in the spirit of patriotism (pp. 72, 235, 347).

The change of mood from active participation to detached observation is clearly seen and cheerfully accepted by Gandhiji. He tells Rajagopalachari : "I see no place for myself in what is happening around us today" (p. 4). He writes to an Ashram inmate : " All of you . . . should arrange your lives as if I was no longer in your midst" (p. 10).

The "witness" would not shut his eyes or withdraw from the scene, however terrible. He tells Manu, " . . . I am experiencing an ineffable inner joy and freshness of mind. I feel as if God himself was lighting my path before me . . . the Himalayas of my penance are where there is misery to be alleviated, oppression to be relieved. There can be no rest for me so long as there is a single person in India . . . lacking . . . clothing, education, food and shelter of a decent standard" (p. 51). In this time of trial, he sees it as a sign of God's grace that he keeps his physical strength, maintains his serenity in the midst of daily shocks and turmoil and remains happy and cheerful (p. 121).

Unable to convince even close friends that "love alone can prevail against anger", he concludes : "God is humbling my pride. I am being severely tested. But still my heart is full of joy" (p. 259). That he was steadily preparing himself for the severest test of all and that this apparently "spent bullet" had

one more message to deliver is clear from his words to some visitors : "I shall be content if, when someone comes to kill me, I can remain composed, let myself be killed and pray to God that He may grant good sense to the killer . . . " (p. 357).

But sorrow remains the keynote of the volume, so much so that Gandhiji refused to celebrate the freedom to come on August 15. He said: "Unfortunately the kind of freedom we have got today contains also the seeds of future conflict between India and Pakistan. How can we therefore light the lamps?" (p. 380).

In this period Gandhiji also suffered a bereavement in the death of Chakrayya, a Harijan worker. Said he : "I feel like crying over his death; but I cannot cry. For whom should I cry and for whom should I refrain from crying? If Mother India should have any children they should be, as Tulsidas has said, either generous or brave. Chakrayya was generous . . . He was also brave because he welcomed death" (p. 47).

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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 the original is undated, the inferred date is supplied within square brackets, the reason being given where necessary.

In the source-line, the symbol S. N. stands for documents available in the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad; G. N. refers to those available in the Gandhi National Museum and Library (Rashtriya Gandhi Sangrahalaya), New Delhi; M. M. U. for the reels of the Mobile Microfilm Unit and S. G. for the documents of the Sevagram collection, which also are available in the Rashtriya Gandhi Sangrahalaya. 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. *QUESTION BOX*[1]

How to Combat Himsa

The leaders and followers of the League do not believe in attaining their object through non-violence. In such circumstances, how is it possible to melt their hearts or to convince them of the evil of violent action?

Violence can be effectively met only by non-violence. This is an old established truth. The questioner does not really understand the working of non-violence. If he did, he would have known that the weapon of violence, even if it was the atom bomb, became useless when matched against true non-violence. That very few understand how to wield this mighty weapon is true. It requires a lot of understanding and strength of mind. It is unlike what is needed in military schools and colleges. What it requires is purity of the mind. The difficulty one experiences in meeting *himsa* with ahimsa arises from weakness of the mind. Moreover, let us not forget that Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah has, in his interview to the delegation from the Frontier Province, stated explicitly that it was not proper to resort to violence for attaining their rights, i. e., Pakistan.

Today many people are beginning to feel that a clash, possibly of a violent character, with the supporters of the League is inevitable. The nationalists feel that until the League agrees to the partition of Bengal and the Punjab, its demand for Pakistan is unjust. What means should they adopt to meet the situation?

If the answer to the first question is held valid, the second question does not arise. However, the question may be discussed for a clearer understanding. If the majority of the Muslims obey Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah, a violent conflict should be out of the question, or if the majority of the Hindus take their stand on non-violence, no matter how much violence the Muslims use, it is bound to fail. One thing, however, should be perfectly understood. The votaries of non-violence cannot harbour violence even in thought, let alone doing it. If Pakistan is wrong, partition of Bengal and the Punjab will not make it right. Two wrongs will not make one right.

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak* of the same date.

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The majority of the Socialists claim that if there was a socialist revolution the economic question would come to the forefront throwing the communal conflict in the background. Do you agree? If such a revolution takes place, will it promote the establishment of the Kingdom of God which you call *Ramarajya*?

The socialist revolution you envisage is likely to make the Hindu-Muslim tension less acute. It is common knowledge that there are quite a few things at the root of our troubles. Even the end of the Hindu-Muslim conflict will not end all our troubles. It might be said that the Hindu-Muslim conflict has assumed a formidable form and the end of other petty conflicts would undoubtedly reduce the danger. What is happening is this. With the end of slavery and the dawn of freedom, all the weaknesses of society are bound to come to the surface. I see no reason to be unnecessarily upset about it. If we keep our balance at such a time, every tangle will be solved. As far as the economic question is concerned it has to be solved in any case. Today there is gross economic inequality. The basis of socialism is economic equality. There can be no *Ramarajya* in the present state of iniquitous inequalities in which a few roll in riches and the masses do not get even enough to eat. I accepted the theory of socialism even while I was in South Africa. My difference with the Socialists and others consists in advocating non-violence and truth as the most effective means for any reform.

You say that a raja, a zamindar or a capitalist should be a trustee for the poor. Do you think that any such exists today? Or do you expect them to be so transformed?

I think that some very few exist even today, though not in the full sense of the term. They are certainly moving in that direction. It can, however, be asked whether the present rajas and others can be expected to become trustees of the poor. I think it is worth while entertaining such a hope. If they do not become trustees of their own accord, force of circumstances will compel the reform unless they court utter destruction. When Panchayat Raj is established, public opinion will do what violence can never do. The present power of the zamindars, the capitalists and the rajas can hold sway only so long as the common people do not realize their own strength. If the people non-co-operate, what can a raja, a zamindar or a capitalist do? In a Panchayat Raj only the Panchayat will be obeyed and a Panchayat can work only through the law of its making.

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If the Panchayat follows non-violence in conducting its business, all the three would become trustees by law and if it resorts to violence it would mean the end of their power.

NEW DELHI, May 25, 1947
Harijan, 1-6-1947

2. *LETTER TO MIRABEHN*

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1947

CHI. MIRA,

I have your precious letter just received, i. e., 5 o'clock. I am dictating this whilst spinning. The whole day has been spent in seeing people with a little break for rest. You need not wait to see the Vicereine. But you should proceed to Uttarkashi or Mussoorie as the case may be. Your solitude, the bracing air that you get in Mussoorie and Uttarkashi and consequent clear thinking are more precious to me than your seeing high personages or even coming to see me because I appear to be so near. That is only an appearance. I am near enough wherever you are and wherever I am physically. The rest of your letter it is unnecessary for me to touch. I approve all your programme. I am quite well, though in boiling heat. I must not think of Mussoorie or any other similar climate. My work today lies in the affected parts. If God wishes me to do His work, He would keep me well in spite of adverse climate.

Love.

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABEHN[1]
P. O. RISHIKESH
DEHRA DUN DISTRICT

From the original: C. W. 6527. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9922

[1] The address is reproduced from *Bapu's Letters to Mira*.

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3. TALK WITH C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[1]

May 25, 1947

I am not likely to be lured by your logic. After all I am a Bania, am I not?

However, I came here precisely because I was confident of carrying on from here my work for Noakhali and Bihar. And it is being done. I am not lucky enough to enjoy a change of climate. Before I proceed anywhere for a rest the Hindus and Muslims of Noakhali and Bihar must assure me that they no longer require my services. The Government also should help me in this. Then alone will I think of going somewhere for rest. In any case God will certainly grant me the final rest some day or the other. I see no place for myself in what is happening around us today. You know I have given up the hope of living for 125 years. I might last a year or two more. Of course, my health continues to be fairly good. And in spite of all the hard work God continues to grant me new strength. But I have no wish to live if India is to be submerged in a deluge of violence, as is now threatened.

Again, besides communal unity I had recommended to the nation only one thing, viz., handspun yarn with which alone we could bring swaraj nearer.

The spinning-wheel has almost been forgotten. There is all this talk of militarization and industrialization. But it is my conviction that a day will come when they will all see for themselves that for India there is no way other than that of village industries and non-violence. We shall not find a way out unless we develop these. But I am still optimistic.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 4-5

[1] Minister in the Interim Government for Industries and Supplies

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4. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You know that we should maintain silence during the prayer. You gave me the taste of peace here and your example is followed by people everywhere. You will be glad to know that in Bengal this time even huge prayer meetings were peaceful. Usually when I am travelling crowds gather and people, out of affection, raise loud slogans. I do appreciate this affection but now my health cannot stand the din. I am grateful to you that in spite of the disturbances you maintained silence at the previous prayer meetings and set a good example to others. Prayer meetings in Bihar were also as peaceful as in Bengal. In Bihar people gathered in much larger numbers. I am not now physically strong enough to travel far in this terrible heat. Hence in Bihar I travelled for an hour or an hour and a half by train or car, and went to different places where we used to have prayers. In one place by a river bank more than a lakh of people had gathered. Every little while fresh crowds arrived and raised cries of '*jai*'. There was so much noise that I could not hold the prayer. But barring this one place, I could hold regular prayers at every place in Bihar. The gatherings in Bihar tended to be larger than those in Bengal. The people of Bihar knew me but still came round to have a look at me. We are 400 million people and how long can we remember an individual by seeing and hearing him only for a while? People are always eager to see me. They wonder what Gandhi looks like. They want to see if he is a creature with a tail and horns. Thus people used to gather in huge numbers. The Muslims were so few there that the Hindus could well have clamoured that they would not hear any prayer in Arabic. But not a single person in such large gatherings said any such thing. Why should anyone have said so? Why may not one recite from the Koran?

You too are maintaining silence here. But peaceful though you are, you also create disquiet. As here, so in Bengal too, a young man had the audacity to obstruct the prayer. I thought that in the name of non-violence it was leading to violence. I

did not pay any attention to him. He realized the situation and kept quiet. Fortunately the police did not intervene. We held the prayers at the Khadi Pratisthan and, in spite of the large numbers, the gatherings were always peaceful.

Obstructing the prayer has become a regular feature here. Now women have started writing letters to me. Today I have received a letter from a lady in Marathi. She says in her letter that she is not in favour of the recitation from the Koran in a temple. In other words she means to say that all of you are against it because the Muslims who recite the Koran have perpetrated atrocities on thousands of innocent women and children.

But now I am not going to give up the prayer because of these obstructions. Non-violence should not be allowed to prevent something [good] from being accomplished. I cannot be a witness to the commission of violence in the name of non-violence. Hence, even if this lady creates a disturbance my prayer will go on. I would like to tell the lady and her husband, if he is here, that such impudence does not behove us. For the sake of a single individual we cannot offend thousands. If they are not in favour of this prayer they should not come here. In spite of this if the lady creates trouble no one will do her any harm. She need have no fear. Let not even the police, if they are around, arrest her. I shall continue with the prayer even if I hear her voice or those of her supporters. All of you have also put up with enough. I do hope that there are no supporters of this lady's view among you. But, in case all of you subscribe to her views, I would say that all these young men with me would not offer the prayer. I would do it all by myself and you can all get round together and kill me. I would die smiling with the name of Rama on my lips. When you are so many I cannot kill you all by myself. Nor can the police stop you from killing me. But I hope that except for this lady there is none other among you who is opposed to the Koran. I would request you not to heed the lady's shrieks and shouts. Let no one even touch her. Let the prayer be carried on peacefully.

After this the prayer was held. At the end of the prayer Gandhiji said:

I compliment the lady for being satisfied with my reading out her letter to you. The same pattern will be repeated tomorrow. Whatever the opponents may have to say will be conveyed to you but the prayer will go on. But I do hope there will be none tomorrow wanting to obstruct the prayer.

I wish to tell you that the Hindus in Bihar have not lagged behind in committing atrocities. Not only were the atrocities of Noakhali avenged, but much more was done. And then the chain reaction reached as far as Dera-Ismail Khan. In the light of the atrocities suffered at the hands of the Hindus of Bihar, if the Muslims started saying that they would not allow the recitation of Tulsi's *Ramayana*, the *Gita* and the Upanishads and the Vedas, would it be right? If there are any Muslims who talk like that I would ask them what harm the *Ramayana* or the *Mahabharata* had done them, and what crime the Vedas, the most ancient treatises, had committed. What harm had Ramachandraji done them? But the same argument would apply to the Koran and Mohammed Saheb. What harm have they done us? You will therefore realize that because I wish to read the *Ramayana* and the *Gita*, I also think it necessary to read the Koran.

Now you will want to know what I did at Calcutta and Patna. I cannot tell you now about everything I did in Calcutta. There I met Suhrawardy Saheb and had talks with him. Now we shall have to await the outcome of those talks. Whatever it is, people felt a little reassured by my going there. Sarat Babu is doing his best there. But violence has not yet completely ended there.

In Bihar too there is not much improvement. Refugees are returning to their homes, but the Hindus and the Muslims are not yet free from anger against each other. They are still not in a position to say that they are no more scared or that they will not now indulge in any excesses. But the atmosphere is clearing and there is no doubt about it.

Now the question is, why I came here. Frankly, I do not know why I have come. But one thing is certain. I have served the Congress for many years and people remember me as their servant. They want to know my views though they may or may not accept them.

But I wish to tell you that the tendency to look up to London is not desirable. We are not going to have our freedom sent over from London. The Kohinoor of India's freedom is not going to come to us from the hands of others. We can have it from our own hands.

I am not referring to the Kohinoor which is kept in the Tower of London. I am referring to the Kohinoor of our freedom. This Kohinoor is coming to us. We may throw it away if we wish or keep it with us if we so desire. Whatever we decide to do is up to us, not others.

Why then should we look up to Lord Mountbatten? Should we wait to see what he brings for us from England?[1] Our newspapers are all filled with predictions about what Lord Mountbatten is likely to bring from London. But why should we not look to our own strength?

What would happen to the other minorities? Granted that the Hindus, the Sikhs and others are not looking up to the English. But the Muslims are looking only in that direction. Should then the Hindus and the Sikhs too start looking towards them? If they do start looking towards them and Lord Mountbatten heeds them to some extent, what would happen to the rest of the Indians? Would Lord Mountbatten care to listen to the Parsis who are a very small minority? And there are many other people in India for whom neither the Viceroy nor anyone else cares.

Under these circumstances I have to do my duty. In other words, India has to fulfil her own duty and thus attain independence.

Some people among us have lost their senses. We all come to these prayer meetings purely to become truthful. In order to be truthful we should be slaves to none but God. Then independence is just within our reach. Should we also lose our senses? And do you wish that so long as those few fanatics do not come to their senses Lord Mountbatten should keep them under his control and stay on here?

I do not approve of this. I have taught you something else. Ever since I returned to India in 1915[2] I have been saying that each one of us should look after himself. If we do it, not only England or America or Russia but all the three together cannot destroy us. Nobody can deprive us of what belongs to us as a birthright. It is our freedom and, if our intentions are honest, it has got to come.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 82-6

[1] The Viceroy had left for London on May 17 for consultations.

[2] The source, however, has "1916", which is a slip. Gandhiji had returned from South Africa on January 9, 1915.

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5. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

DELHI,
May 25, 1947

CHI. JIVANJI,

It is nearing 10 now. I finished the Hindi in Patna, the English on the train, and have just finished the Gujarati. They will go by air-mail tomorrow and you should, therefore, get them on Monday. That is what you wanted.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised the Gujarati. I have revised one English item. Please revise the rest there.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9977. Also C. W. 6951. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

6. A LETTER

May 26, 1947

I shall be staying here up to June at least. Afterwards God alone knows. It is extremely hot here. But we are in no position to congratulate ourselves at each other's expense. I hope cool breezes have started there. It is not yet time for that here. You must be gaining strength.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

After writing the above I opened the letters which I have brought with me on the train and the first one I read was yours. I am writing to . . .[1] and suggesting to him that if he cannot do the work assigned to him he should leave. I cannot keep him with me here. Even now there are too many with me. I have no wish to train anybody. I suppose . . . is away from the Ashram? Write to him and tell him not to come. Send on to him the letter which I am addressing to him. It would be proper to fix a regular salary for . . . . However, all

[1] Omissions as in the source

of you there may think over this and do what seems right to you. Do not eat *mosambis* or anything else that does not agree with you. I feel that it is always the individual concerned who knows best in these matters. This, of course, does not refer to one who cannot think for himself at all.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 8-9

7. *LETTER TO AN ASHRAM INMATE*

May 26, 1947

I have your letter. . . .[1] bhai has written to me about you. I am sending with this the original letter. If what he says is true, how can [you][2] stay on in the Ashram? I am sure you will not treat the exemption which you have enjoyed as a permanent feature of Ashram life. If a person cannot observe *brahmacharya*, he certainly cannot be forced to do so. Of course, some inmates of the Ashram must observe the rule. But don't you think it proper that anybody who does not like the Ashram life should be permitted to leave it? You should also remember that you do not know the art of working in co-operation with others. It is not at all certain whether I shall be able to go there. In fact I see no such possibility at present. I have no wish to keep anybody with me. Maybe I lack the necessary art or do not know how to adjust myself to others. I do not know which of the two is the correct reason. I would not mind it even if those who are with me decided to leave. The task which I have undertaken requires a great deal of time and I am inclined to take from every worker I have found whatever service he can give. All of you, therefore, should arrange your lives as if I was no longer in your midst. I think this last suggestion sums up all that I have to say on the subject. Meet . . . and make whatever arrangements you think necessary. Show this letter to . . . .

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 9

[1] Omissions as in the source
[2] The verb is in the third person in the source.

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8. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
May 26, 1947

I saw your letter on the train. But I had a good deal of writing work to do then and, therefore, did not read it. Your zeal is sincere but you wish to take up a task that is beyond you. "Better one's own duty bereft of merit, another's duty is fraught with danger."[1] What you have been doing is your real dharma. How will you succeed in bringing about unity between Hindus and Muslims? This, of course, you can do. You may treat the few Muslims who still remain there as your blood-brothers. This should be enough for you to understand things.

Why is it that Truth is not seen to possess the power of a magnet? Tell me if you have seen perfect truth anywhere, and then ask me that question. Truth is not a common pebble but a jewel rarer even than a diamond. Much harder labour is needed to discover it than to dig a mine.

How can anybody occupy Durgabehn's[2] quarters? That may be considered only if she gets totally tired of them and gives them up. You must, therefore, for the present remain where you are. It will be time to consider the matter after Kanchan's[3] confinement is over and the baby is a few months old. Or we may have to think about it if Kanchan or you relax in your resolution about *brahmacharya*. One should learn to live as God ordains. I hope Kanchan is fine.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8411. Also C. W. 5621. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 35
[2] Durga Desai, wife of Mahadev Desai
[3] Addressee's wife

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9. LETTER TO AN ASHRAM INMATE

May 26, 1947

You will not be able to stand the Ashram life. He himself keeps indifferent health, and wants only as much burden as cannot be avoided. I would therefore advise you to give up your craving for Ashram life. You may stay anywhere else you like. It does not seem likely that I shall go to Wardha or anywhere near it. If I cannot survive in these parts I have decided to face death. Anyway I have been praying to God to help me fulfil my resolve. All of you too must wish for the same.

I hope you are both keeping well.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 10

10. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
Monday, May 26, 1947

I had written out the speech for today. Then after 5 p. m. or so I received a letter from the lady who had objected yesterday saying that I had broken my promise by holding the prayers. This was farthest from my thoughts. I appealed to you and called upon you to hold yourselves in restraint in order to protect the objectors and you agreed to have the prayer. It will be discourtesy on my part if I do not hold the prayers because of such obstruction. Generosity in that case would amount to avarice. That is not how ahimsa works. The lady, therefore, should forgive me, for the prayer will go on.

I must repeat what I told you yesterday. Public prayer is a precious duty. It cannot be lightly thrown away. One who objects to it commits a crime, but it is good to pray silently if there is a possibility of the objector being molested. You responded to my entreaty by maintaining complete peace and order and did not molest the objectors but when I felt that this restraint was being abused I decided to follow the other course. I was glad that the lady who had objected remained

calm. Whatever be her own opinion, I hope she will maintain her composure. One must at least observe a minimum of decorum. I would like you to continue the prayers in future in spite of the objectors but at the same time you should be generous with them instead of being angry.

I had told you yesterday that it was unbecoming on our part to keep looking towards London. The British cannot give us our freedom. They can only get off our backs. This they have already promised to do. But it is for us to safeguard our freedom and give it a concrete shape. How should we bring this about? In my opinion we are unable to think coherently whilst the British rule continues in India. It is not for the British Government to change the map of India. All it has to do is to withdraw from India, if possible in an orderly manner, maybe even in chaos, but withdraw in any case on or before the date it has itself fixed.

There is an additional reason why no vital change in the map of India is possible in the present state of the country. A joint statement[1] has been issued by the Qaid-e-Azam and me that violence should not be used for achieving political ends. If, in spite of that appeal, people continue the mad course of large-scale violence and if the British Power yields before it in the vain hope that everything will be all right after this fit of madness is over, it will have left a bloody legacy for which not only India but the whole world will hold it guilty. I would therefore urge every patriot and certainly the British Power, irrespective of the worst kind of violence, to leave India under the Cabinet Mission's document[2] of the 16th May of last year. In the presence of the British Power today we are only demoralized by the orgy of bloodshed, wanton killings, arson and worse. After it is withdrawn, I hope, we shall have the wisdom to think coherently and keep India one or split it into two or more parts. But even if we keep on fighting after that, I am convinced that we will not be so demoralized as we are today, though all violence is bound to cause a certain amount of demoralization. I still hope against hope that a free India will not again offer an example of violence which has already made her so miserable.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 86-8

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXXVII, p. 261.

[2] *Vide* Vol. LXXXIV, Appendix VII.

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11. LETTER TO AN ASHRAM INMATE

May 27, 1947

I am in the midst of a raging fire. Is it God's mercy or irony of fate that the flames do not consume me?

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 14

12. TALK WITH SOCIALISTS[1]

May 27, 1947

The very idea of partitioning the country is frightening. Our concern today should be to bring about an agreement in a peaceful manner to ensure that the country is not partitioned and still the British leave. Even partition may be tolerated, but I cannot bear the thought that it should be imposed by the British. Why should a third party intervene in a dispute between us brothers? Are we not strong enough even to solve our own problems? It is this which makes me feel that our ahimsa was not the ahimsa of the strong but something else. But God has opened my eyes today. If we invite the British to act as intermediaries in the dispute between us brothers, it will be a great blot on our glorious history. That is why I declared in a prayer speech that, if we could not live together, we could certainly separate through mutual agreement, but that third-party intervention should not be tolerated. This is what I am going to tell the Viceroy today. This Viceroy is a very intelligent man. He will displease no party and still have his own way. This is, therefore, going to be a test for us all. Don't forget that Lord Mountbatten is taking measure of our courage and intelligence. As the saying is, a known enemy is better than an unknown friend. Lord Linlithgow or Lord Wavell were not dangerous to us, for we knew what their policy was. I appreciate your desire to bring about equality of living standards in society. I want the same thing. But our first concern should be to come

[1] Jayaprakash Narayan and his co-workers, about a dozen men and women, were with Gandhiji from 2 to 4.30 p. m.

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together, think what is in the best interest of the country and set the people to constructive work. Our people have lived in slavery for 150 years and need to be trained for a different way of life now. I do not fully agree with the idea that it will happen when we have power in our hands or that we can do a great deal through power. No doubt transfer of power will remove many obstacles. But we shall have to do solid work among the people. Since you look upon me as an adviser and seek my advice of your own free will, I have only one advice to give, and that is that, if you wish to establish socialism, there is only one way in which it can be done: go and live among the poor in the villages, live as they live, be one with the village people, work for eight hours daily, use only village-made goods and articles even in your personal lives, remove illiteracy among the village people, eradicate untouchability and uplift the women. I will even go so far as to suggest that you should establish such a living bond with the village people that, if anyone amongst you is unmarried and wishes to marry, he or she should choose a partner from among the village girls or boys. If anybody else seeks your advice on this subject, give him or her, too, the same advice. Make your life an ideal one in this way; when the people see your transparent lives every minute of the day as clearly as we see pictures on a screen, their influence will be felt throughout the country and reform its life. The Congress will soon have power in its hands, but the Congress is not wedded to an exclusive doctrine and does not belong to any one party. Tolerance for all points of view still remains its principle. It is true that the principle is occasionally violated in practice, but even while making this admission I can assure you that if your workers can draw up a programme for village uplift and if the programme does not remain merely on paper but is actively implemented, then the Congress may be in power but the Congress Ministers will assuredly help you in your real solid work. Jawaharlal will even congratulate you with all his heart. I am, however, pained to say that, instead of doing such constructive work, what you are doing today is to incite the people and call for strikes. And at the same time there is communal fighting going on. All of you are men of intellect and learning. Why can't you see who is being harmed by what you are doing? Such a struggle was all right against the British, for we wanted them to go. But whom do you wish to drive out now? What will you gain by fighting against our own countrymen? You should be large-hearted and offer your

co-operation for the great work of national uplift. If those in power commit mistakes, oppose them through your work, not by mere criticism or speeches or agitations. Take the village people and slum-dwellers in your hands and give them the benefit of your knowledge, skill, insight, constructive work and patriotic spirit. Give the people this true education through the example of your own lives. Let all your activities be directed to the welfare of the people. If that is not done and if the people lose patience, our plight will be much worse than the present slavery. Before the people take to the path of destruction, see that they are given constructive, life-giving training. I make this suggestion not to you alone. I have opened out my heart to you because you have come to seek my advice. But what I have said applies to Congressmen, too. Let, therefore, all public workers and all officers of the Government forget their quarrels and disputes over ideologies and start learning and teaching spinning, khadi work and village industries. If the British leave and at the same time the people are given a new life through such education, I am confident that in five years India will be a leading country in Asia.

Q. Why do you oppose the growth of industries in our country through machinery?

A. You can use machines to manufacture cars, engines, aeroplanes and things of that kind. But I am strongly opposed to the use of machines for grinding corn, manufacturing cloth and ploughing the land. The consumption of mill-ground flour has deprived us of all vitality, for machine-grinding destroys all the vitamins. In the old days in Kathiawar we didn't have even water-taps. The women used to fetch water from the river, with shining pots resting on supports studded with bright beads; it would be early morning and the women thus had a sun-bath daily and that kept them healthy. They used to grind the corn in the early dawn, singing *bhajans* the while, including prayers to God. These simple innocent songs containing useful moral wisdom taught them some music and [the grinding] provided them exercise. Afterwards the whole family would go to work in the fields, so that hardly anybody knew what illness was or even the names of the diseases of lungs so widespread these days. In such a vast country, or say, rather, a family, containing a variety of communities and races, there is no need for machinery at all. Machinery does the work in very little time and that is harmful in every way, physically and economically.

With so much leisure on hand, the people get busy in mischief, for, as the saying is, an idle mind is the devil's workshop. Or they waste their time in cinemas and theatres. Many people argue with me and try to convince me that the cinema has an educative value. But the argument doesn't appeal to me at all. For one thing, sitting in a closed theatre one feels suffocated. I had been to such a theatre only once, when I was a small child. If I had my way, I would see to it that all the cinemas and theatres in India were converted into spinning halls and factories for handicrafts of all kinds. And what obscene photographs of actors and actresses are displayed in the newspapers by way of advertisement! Moreover, who are these actors and actresses if not our own brothers and sisters. We waste our money and ruin our culture at the same time. If I was made Prime Minister of the country, these would be the first things I would do: I would stop all machine-driven flour-mills and restrict the number of oil-pressing factories but install the indigenous mills all over the country. I might not destroy the existing textile mills, but certainly would not help them in any way and, in any case, would not permit new ones to be set up. I would close all the cinemas and theatres, though I might, as an exception, permit exhibition of pictures of educational value or showing scenes of natural beauty. But singing and dancing I would stop completely. I have great regard for dancing and music. I love music indeed. I may even claim that I understand what is good music and what is not. But I would surely prohibit music and dancing which tend to pervert the minds of young men and women. I would stop the sale of gramophone records. That is, I would suggest to the Government that it should impose heavy taxes on all such life-killing activities. Similarly, harmful drinks and drugs like liquors, tobacco and tea also should be heavily taxed so that their consumption would automatically decrease. Moreover, ideal villages which are self-reliant in regard to food, which have not a single flour-mill and in which the residents grow all the cotton they need and manufacture their own cloth, right up to the stage of stitching garments in their own homes, should be awarded prizes and exempted from all taxes. In such an ideal village, every resident will be his own policeman, his own doctor and his own watchman, and the people will have no time then to quarrel and fight among themselves.

See, I have given you so much time. What I have described is only my dream of a free India, an idle dream

like Sheikhchalli's[1]. My heart was full and I, therefore, poured it out to you. At present, however, I see no sign of any of the things I have suggested being implemented. I know this and still I cannot keep back my thoughts, and so when people like you come I pour them out.

Q. But, Bapu, who would oppose the suggestion to make you Prime Minister? If you agree to accept the responsibility, I don't think anybody would oppose the proposal.

A. You are the chief opponents. You will ask me why. Well, if you but act as I have advised, my dream would no longer remain a dream but become a reality. You will have economic equality in the country only along the road I have pointed out. Perhaps you will not understand this today; but note my words and remember them when I am dead and you will say that what this old man of seventy-five said was true. This is not a prophecy I am making; I am saying this on the basis of my lifelong experience. A time will surely come when nobody will listen to your long speeches; nobody will even attend your meetings, for preaching sermons to the people without following those principles in your own lives does not work long in society. The people will ask you for an account of your own work, will ask you what you yourselves are doing, before they listen to you. Similarly, in regard to the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity you will succeed only to the extent that you practise it in your own conduct and put your heart in it. Till now we acted like blind men and let ourselves be led by the hand by the British. But now we have to use our own eyes and find our own path. If you don't watch your step and walk straight ahead, you are bound to stumble and fall into pits.

Now be off. I have to go and see the Viceroy.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 14-9

[1] Character in a folk tale; one who indulges in idle dreams.

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13. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
May 27, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today also I have received a long letter from the Maharashtrian lady. She has complained in her letter that the volunteers did not act properly in stopping her. She has also said that the Koran ordains the killing of non-Muslims and hence there should be no recitation from the Koran. I have read the Koran and I found nothing of the kind in it. On the contrary the Koran lays down that one should have love for non-Muslims as well. If those who read the Koran do not obey its teachings, how can we blame the Koran? Even on our side, who follows in practice what is written in Tulsi's *Ramayana*, the *Gita* and the Vedas?

I do not intend following irreligion in the name of religion. I utter every word with the fear of God in my heart. I am pained to find that the lady insists on writing something about which she has no knowledge. Why does she believe that such and such a thing is written in the Koran because somebody says so? But you must be firm in your mind. You must concentrate on the prayer even if she protests. But even if all of you start talking like her, I will continue the prayer till my last breath.

Her second complaint is that the male volunteers touched her while removing her. In my view there is nothing objectionable about it. It is the function of the volunteers to stop trouble-makers from creating disturbance, whether they be men or women. Of course, they should not raise their hands against women or beat them. They must persuade them gently. When there are no carnal thoughts in the mind, there is nothing sinful if one happens to touch a woman. I too rest my hands on the shoulders of girls while walking. Am I committing any crime? They are all like my daughters. If I have evil thoughts in my mind, it would be definitely sinful. Volunteers also should treat the women who come to attend the prayers as their mothers or sisters while looking after the arrangements of

the meeting. A volunteer may touch a woman as he would his mother. That is his duty.[1]

It is quite late today. Hence, I shall be brief.

You all know that I am working in Bihar. There are very few Muslims in Bihar. They would be hardly 14 per cent of the population. Similarly, the Hindu population in Noakhali is also small. I went to Bihar in connection with my work in Noakhali.

I have received a phone call from the friend working in Bihar that people there have started thinking about June[2]. In the same way they were in panic about the 9th when the Constituent Assembly was to meet. I used to receive letters from all corners asking me what should be done. People in Noakhali were being threatened that although during the November riots some Hindus were allowed to survive, this time all the Hindus would be converted. I had then told them that I would return there if they so desired. But there was nothing much I could do there except lay down my own life. But they did not send for me. They prepared themselves to face any eventuality. As a matter of fact, I do not think that the plan of converting all Hindus to Islam can ever succeed.

Similarly, the Muslims need have no fear in Bihar. Why should we have any fear of the 2nd of June? Granting that the Viceroy is bringing *laddoos*, why should we be so eager? As I have already said, they are of no use to us. Only the thing we have produced ourselves would be of use to us.

I am asking you, why should the Bihari Muslims panic? Would not the Hindus who recite the name of Rama think of their Rama?

Similarly, why should the Hindus in Sind be afraid? Why should they panic? I have a letter from there saying that the Hindus are overcome with fear. But instead of being frightened, why do they not take the name of Rama? The people of Sind want me to go to them. I have not been to Sind for many years but I have maintained such close relations with the people of Sind that at one time I used to call myself a Sindhi. I used to have Sindhi companions also in South Africa. Sindhis, Marwaris, Punjabis, all have co-operated with me. Some of them even drank and ate non-vegetarian food. In spite of their

[1] Then the prayer was conducted. Despite shouts from the lady to stop the prayer, Gandhiji insisted that it should continue. What follows is the speech after the prayer.

[2] Lord Mountbatten was to return from London on May 31 and make an announcement on June 2 about the country's future.

inability to give up these things they called themselves Hindus. I was friends with all of them. One of them asks me in a letter if I have forgotten him and Sind. But how can I forget?

People everywhere are filled with fear about the announcement to come on June 2. It is being said that the Muslims are making massive preparations. But what preparations? Are they preparing to turn themselves into brutes? Do they not pray in their mosques that God may make them all good human beings? The Hindus also are not writing to me to say that they would pray to God in silence that He should grant the British the good sense to quit India and wisdom to all those among the Muslims who have been possessed by a frenzy.

They are apprehensive also in the Punjab because they are in a minority. There the Hindus have the Sikhs also with them. Why should the Sikhs be afraid? Why is there fear on both sides as to who would be the first to raise the sword?

If the Hindus of Bihar slaughter the Muslims, they would be killing me. I say the Muslims of Bihar are like my blood-brothers. They are glad to see me. They are convinced that at least this one man belongs to them. Anyone who kills them kills me. If they insult their sisters and daughters, it is insulting me. From this platform I want to convey this to all the Hindus of Bihar.

Why should the Muslims of Bihar be afraid? Two excellent Muslim workers are serving them. Then, Shrikrishna Sinha runs the Bihar Ministry and he is very much on the alert.

It is being rumoured these days that Gandhi wants to go to Bihar and get the Hindus slaughtered. But I would like to proclaim at the top of my voice that even if all the Muslims lose their heads not a single Hindu should follow suit.

As for the Sikhs they claim that a single Sikh is equal to one and a quarter lakh [of others] and five Sikhs are equal to six lakhs. I like them for talking thus. The *Granth Saheb* and the Guru are as much mine as theirs. If I can call myself a Muslim, what is there to be ashamed of in my calling myself a Sikh? And the Sikhs have done brave deeds in a spirit of satyagraha at Nankana Saheb.[1] But today they are thinking of the sword.

They do not realize that the age of the sword is past. They do not realize that no one can be saved by the strength of the sword. This is the age of the atom bomb.

Guru Govind Singh preached the use of the sword. But that cannot be applied today. Of course his teaching that a

[1] *Vide* Vol. XIX.

single Sikh is equal to one and a quarter lakh is useful even today. But it would become true when the Sikh dies for his fellowmen and the whole country.

There have been equally gallant women. In one place when all their menfolk were killed and there was no hope of any help, instead of quietly surrendering they chose to die. This really happened. Some seventy-five women died in this manner; they first killed their children with their own hands, because they did not want their children to be ill-treated by others.

I would say that only when people have behaved like this has their religion remained alive whether they were Hindus or Muslims. I would say the same thing to the Sikhs, namely, that if each one of them is equal to one and a quarter lakh they should all concentrate on God and die with the cry of '*Sat Sri Akal*' on their lips. What greater act of bravery can there be?

I don't mind if anybody calls me a coward. God alone knows whether or not I am a coward. We should accept a lesson in bravery even if it is offered by a coward. I do not want to make a coward of anyone. I have not made anyone a coward, nor am I one myself.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 88-92

14. LETTER TO KAREL HUJER[1]

[Before *May 28, 1947*][2]

I am the same as when you saw me except that my faith burns, if possible, brighter than before.

Harijan, 8-6-1947; also *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, p. 202

[1] & [2] Extracted from Sushila Nayyar's "In Delhi", 28-5-1947. The addressee who had spent a few days with Gandhiji in India in 1935, had written from America: "I think of you in prayer . . . I see the only hope of light for our Western civilization in your radiant and friendly guidance and wisdom."

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15. LETTER TO A FOREIGN NATUROPATH[1]

[*May 28, 1947*][2]

You will be pleased to know that I became a confirmed convert to nature cure when I read Kuhne's *New Science of Healing* and Just's *Return to Nature* over forty years ago. I must confess that I have not been able fully to follow the meaning of 'return to nature' not because of want of will but because of my ignorance. I am now trying to evolve a system of nature cure suited to the millions of India's poor. I try to confine myself to the propagation of such cure as is derivable from the use of earth, water, light, air and the great void. This naturally leads man to know that the sovereign cure of all ills is the recitation from the heart of the name of God whom some millions here know by the name of Rama and the other millions by the name of Allah. Such recitation from the heart carries with it the obligation to recognize and follow the laws which nature has ordained for man. This train of reasoning leads one to the conclusion that prevention is better than cure. Therefore, one is irresistibly driven to inculcating the laws of hygiene, i. e., of cleanliness of the mind, of the body and of one's surroundings.

Harijan, 15-6-1947

16. LETTER TO A NATUROPATH

May 28, 1947

I appreciate your enthusiasm. But the Indian nature-cure system cannot subsist on enthusiasm alone, nor will my identification with it help to keep it alive, as I regard myself an ignoramus in the science. There would be some hope if you transmuted your enthusiasm into knowledge.

If you admit the shortcomings of your system, why don't you try to overcome them by a systematic study of anatomy and physiology? If you had equipped yourself with the knowledge which the allopaths have gained after years of laborious research, you would not have committed the mistake

[1] Extracted from Sushila Nayyar's "Medicine for the Masses".

[2] From *Bihar Pachhi Dilhi*

you did.[1] Do not deceive yourself with the belief that allopathy today holds the field by virtue of the backing and patronage that it receives from the Government. In my opinion it holds its present position in the world because, though it is a false science, its votaries have faith in it and have made great sacrifices to advance it. But the modern naturopaths have made no sacrifices. They are easily satisfied. No wonder they feel they have earned the right to fleece the poor and gullible and grow rich.

I am not writing this in praise of allopathy. I have a fundamental difference with the allopaths. They are too easily satisfied with half-baked knowledge and exploit their diplomas to fill their pockets. There is a craze today for rushing to the West for specialization as if it were the sole repository of knowledge. I would entreat all doctors and would-be doctors of medicine to think in terms of the seven hundred thousand villages of India. They would then see how great the need is in India of a medical cadre trained not in the Western style but in the system of rural medicine. They would then adopt many indigenous practices and prescriptions that have proved successful in India, and not become mere dispensers of foreign imported drugs when our fields are teeming with natural, medicinal herbs. The true function of the medical profession, as I conceive it, is not to prescribe cures, whether foreign or indigenous, but to prevent illness by teaching the people to observe the rules of health.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 24-5

17. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

May 28, 1947

CHI. . . .[2],

You are right in what you have written to . . . .[3] It is the failure of the nature cure doctor, not of nature cure itself. Chakrayya[4] is in doctors' hands. Chances of his surviving are small. I am keeping in touch.

[1] The addressee had failed to diagnose Manu Gandhi's appendicitis.

[2] Although the source does not mention the addressee, it would appear from the contents that it was Dinshaw Mehta.

[3] The name is omitted in the source.

[4] The source has omitted the name; *vide*, however, the following item. Chakrayya was from Andhra and had joined Sevagram Ashram in 1935. He died on May 28, 1947, during an operation for brain tumour in a Bombay hospital. *Vide* also "Speech at Prayer Meeting", pp. 44-7.

I got your letter. I have not misunderstood you in the least, let alone my being displeased with you. I am glad that you state your views frankly. I had only explained how my mind was working, how nature cure was becoming an increasingly simple thing in my eyes.

I don't wish to have you come here for my sake, for as far as possible I hope to keep up my health purely with the help of Ramanama. It is a difficult job, but I should like to try. I think, moreover, that your place is there. If, nevertheless, you cannot control your desire, there is certainly no ban on your coming. I do not know how long I shall be here.

And now about . . .'s[1] house. I have no doubt that we cannot purchase it in the name of the Trust. Before we purchase a building, we must have the men [to work in it]. But how can I object to your accepting it if it is offered to you for 'missionary' work?

As regards Uruli-Kanchan, I will have no objection to your proposal if you believe that its conversion into a separate institution would harm the original Trust. From a purely legal point of view, however, I believe that in that case it cannot be used to further other aims.

Consult Bhai Pakvasa[2]. I am sure that its being made into a separate institution cannot affect the original Trust. I was glad to learn that Mother was keeping well.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 25

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

[2] Mangaldas Pakvasa, solicitor; President, Bombay Legislative Council, 1937-47; became Governor of Central Provinces and Berar in 1947; helped in drawing up the Trust Deed for the original Nature Cure Trust in 1945; *vide* Vol. LXXX, p. 136.

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18. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

BHANGI NIWAS, NEW DELHI,
May 28, 1947

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. I had a telephonic message that everything possible was being done for Chakrayya; hence it was not necessary to send anyone to be by his side. Even so I don't forbid anybody from going to him. If anyone feels that he must go, he may do so. Moreover, one of you has already been there. We need not worry over the girls at the hospital. After all Vijayabehn is there already. Chand, Zohra and the others are nice girls. But ultimately whatever is destined will happen.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 1979

19. INTERVIEW TO DR. LO CHI LUEN[1]

May 28, 1947

[DR. LO CHI LUEN:] How do you think things will shape themselves? How do you predict the future?

[GANDHIJI:] I am an irrepressible optimist. We have not lived and toiled in vain all these years that we should become barbarians as we appear to be becoming, looking at all the senseless bloodshed in Bengal, Bihar and the Punjab. But I feel it is just an indication that as we are throwing off the foreign yoke all the dirt and froth is coming to the surface. When the Ganges is in flood, the water is turbid. The dirt comes to the surface. When the flood subsides, you see the clear blue water which soothes the eye. That is what I hope for and live for. I do not wish to live to see Indian humanity becoming barbarian.

And who can predict the future? Years ago I read Butler's *Analogy*. Therein I read that the 'future is the result somewhat

[1] Chinese Ambassador in India. The interview is extracted from Sushila Nayyar's "In Delhi". Jawaharlal Nehru accompanied the Ambassador.

of our past'. This thought has persisted with me because it coincides with the Indian belief. We are the makers of our own destiny. We can mend or mar the present and on that will depend the future.

History sometimes repeats itself, because we do not learn the lesson of history.

It is only a half-truth. History may seem to be repeating itself today. I believe that nothing remains static. Human nature either goes up or goes down. Let us hope, in India, it is going up. Otherwise, there is nothing but deluge for India and probably for the whole world.

They talked of the havoc wrought by the war in China. Would the war-weary Asiatic countries follow in the footsteps of Japan and turn to militarization?

The answer depended, Gandhiji replied, on which side India threw her weight.[1]

Let us hope that India will rise to the occasion, not only for its own sake but for the sake of the world. . . .[2] The world is today tottering on the brink of self-destruction. Flames of hatred and violence threaten to engulf us. It is my faith and hope that independent India will provide an object-lesson to the world in the way of peace, non-violence and brotherhood.

The learned Ambassador conveyed to Gandhiji the deepest respect and affection of the Chinese people. Gandhiji valued their affection and said he would love to visit China which had so much in common with India. The Ambassador began to talk of Chinese philosophy and quoted Lao-tse's maxim: "Production without possession, action without self-assertion, creation without domination".

You are talking the language of the Upanishads. The same thought is to be found in the *Ishopanishad*.

Harijan, 8-6-1947, and *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, pp. 202-3

[1] This sentence and the following paragraph are from *Mahatma Gandhi —The Last Phase*.

[2] Omission as in the source

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20. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
May 28, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I am happy that no one created trouble or raised any protest today. I am sure frenzy cannot last forever. The same applies to Hindu-Muslim clashes. I continue to get letters, a few of them nice. Some good Muslims write to me that it does not matter if Hindus and Muslims follow different religions. They should not feel separate at heart on that account. Some Hindus even threaten me with dire consequences if I do not stop the recitation from the Koran. They say that they would come here with black flags.[1] And what will they do after coming here? The atmosphere is such that people do not bother to see or hear anything, they just create rows. They too will come and disturb the prayer. But even if such a thing happens, our prayer will continue to be held so long as you give me your peaceful co-operation. But if all of you should come with black flags, I would have my prayer by myself. I would continue to recite Ramanama even if you assaulted me. Even if I have the police to protect me from you or I wield a sword or a gun I have to die ultimately. Then what is the harm if I die with the name of Rama on my lips? When I die in such a manner, you would feel remorse. You would tell yourselves that you did a terrible thing and gained nothing by killing me. But if I have police protection or if I beat you up, you would remark after killing me that it was just as well that I was killed. But I hope you will remain as peaceful as you were when you came.

Today I would like to answer some of your questions. Of course, I cannot answer all the questions today. Yesterday somebody asked what we should do with a mad dog, whether we should not kill it. This is an odd question. He should have actually asked what should be done when a man went mad. But the fact is that if we have God in our hearts even a dog cannot behave madly with us. Once a friend of mine came to

[1] The reference is to the warning given by the members of the Anti-Pakistan Front of Gujarat.

ask me what should be done with a mad dog that was biting everyone. I told him that the dog should be killed and the responsibility would be mine. But it was a matter concerning a dog. It cannot apply to human beings. I remember when I was about ten, a brother of mine had gone mad. Afterwards he was cured. He is no more. But I remember him well. In a fit of madness he would rush out and strike everyone. But what could I do to him? Could I beat him? Or could my mother or father beat him? Nobody in the family beat him. A *vaidya* was called in and he was asked to treat my brother in every possible manner except by beating him. He was my blood-brother. But now I make no such distinctions. Now all of you are like my blood-brothers. If all of you lose your sanity and I happen to have an army at my disposal, do you think I should have you shot? Even an enemy may not be shot if he goes crazy. Anyone who goes mad should be sent to a lunatic asylum. You ought to know that there are a number of such asylums in India. I have actually seen such mad persons who really deserve to be shot. But we leave them to the care of the doctors.

I used to have an intimate friend who was almost like a brother to me. His son became mad and when seized by madness would rush out to kill people. I did not suggest to my friend that his son should be shot. I could have had him shot if I wished, because I was called a Mahatma. And, in our country, a mahatma enjoys the right to do anything. He may commit murder, indulge in acts of debauchery or whatever else he chooses; he is always pardoned. Who is there to question him? But I feared God. I thought that I was answerable to God, if to no one else. As a matter of fact there is no mahatma in our midst these days. All are *alpatmas*[1].

Anyway, I had the boy sent to a doctor. He ran away from him too. He is still not restored. He has children, and all the members of the family are with him. We must try to find out a way of dealing with this madness, as in the case of my friend's son.

Today our blood is boiling. We hear from all sides speculations about June 2. At first there were clashes at three or four places. Now there is talk of killing all the Hindus. And the Hindus would ask why, if the Muslims kill us, we should not kill them in turn. They too would want to spill blood. If

[1] Little souls

this is not madness, what else is it? I trust that you, who are seated here so peacefully, would not give in to such frenzy. If the people who are caught in the frenzy are bent upon killing us, we would let them do so. Would they be cured of their madness if we let ourselves be killed? The prevailing madness is not such as would blind us to all reason. Even when a really mad person rushes towards us with a knife in his hand, we should face the danger. We do not panic. Similarly, if the Muslims come with raised swords screaming for Pakistan, I would tell them that they cannot have Pakistan at the point of the sword. They must first cut me to pieces before they vivisect the country. If everybody talks to them in the same vein, God would cleave their sword asunder. I am a poor helpless fellow. But you will see my courage when the occasion arises. I will not then wield a lathi against a lathi. I wish we would not meet madness with madness. If we remain sensible the madness on the opposite side will disappear. Their [craze for] Pakistan will die down too. If theirs is a true Pakistan, it would have to be the entire Hindustan.

If you got into a frenzy the British would ask if non-violence was meant only for them. They would accuse us of indulging in mutual violence, and ask us whatever had happened to our non-violence. They would describe themselves as superior to us, as paragons of non-violence and say that even if they resorted to force, they at least maintained order. They have to rule after all; and they may quite justifiably argue thus. But I would tell them that they should not do so. They have got to go and they will go because of our non-violent struggle. Here millions of people have shown the courage of non-violence. You did not bow down to the Union Jack. You courted imprisonment and allowed yourselves to be ruined. It is as a result of all this that we are about to be independent. But now we are not talking about gaining independence on the strength of that courage. Today we are behaving in a manner that must invite the world's contempt.

But we must never do such a thing. You will attain true freedom when, instead of killing others, you die yourselves.

Lord Mountbatten is coming. All are apprehensive about what he might bring. If he offers something to the Hindus, why should the Muslims get into a state? And, if he offers something to the Muslims, why should the Hindus get frightened? Let us not look up to him, nor watch for June 2; let us look at ourselves.

If he does not give us anything, shall we all become so mad as to massacre old people, children and women?

The second question is why the members of the Interim Government are dancing to the tune of the British. Are there only three communities in India, namely, the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs? Why are Parsis not consulted? Is it because they possess no arms? And if the Parsis were to be invited, for what fault are the Christians to be left out? And then, why not the Jews? The question is quite pertinent. I am also pained by this situation. The Congress is for all. All people support it. Then why is it wanting in courage? It does not belong exclusively to the Hindus. True, the majority of Congressmen are Hindus but there are others too. If the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs come to an agreement among themselves, would they crush the Parsis? Would the Jews and the others have to perish? And, after coming to a settlement with them, what shall we do with the rest? Shall we discard them? They would ask if that was their reward for supporting the Congress in its first stages. They would want to know why the Viceroy should talk only to certain members of the Interim Government. Is it because Jawaharlal is a very big man? Or because the Sardar is the hero of Bardoli? Or because Rajendra Babu is a great scholar and Rajaji has a great intellect?

I wish to tell you that these are not the only persons in the Congress. All of you belong to it. All those who have stood by the Congress and worked for it belong to it. Those who do not go on deputations and are not vocal are as much members of the Congress as anyone else. If these three communities come to some settlement in utter disregard of the others, it would be a very unhappy situation and their curse would fall on us. Hence, let us realize that whatever we do should be equally in the interests of all the communities.

When the Muslims also realize this, things will proceed very well. Then the document signed by Jinnah Saheb and me, that we should not resort to violence for the attainment of political objectives, will be accepted by all as reasonable.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 93-7

21. A NOTE[1]

[After *May 28, 1947*][2]

I may add that the one that was stolen[3] had radium disc as yours has and had also a contrivance for alarm. It was a gift to me. But the cost then was over 40/-. It was a zenith watch.

From a microfilm: M.M.U./XXIII

22. LETTER TO J. B. KRIPALANI

NEW DELHI,
[*May*][4] *29, 1947*

MY DEAR PROFESSOR,

Your letter.

Your letter to the *Chronicle* requires close thinking. If you think that the Congress should accept the two-nation theory, it is a very serious matter. You should show the letter to the chief members of the Working Committee and send it after their approval.

I have read your Kashmir speech you left with me and defended it before critics. I see nothing wrong in it though I may not deliver it. Do come on Tuesday and we shall talk further about it.

Giridhari[5] told Brijkrishna yesterday that you felt in me a touch of coldness towards you. I expressed surprise at the idea, for I have been trying to do the reverse.

I know that you had not come latterly to me merely to spare me as you had nothing particular to say to me.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1&2] The note is written on a letter dated May 28, 1947.

[3] The reference is to Gandhiji's watch, a present from Indira Nehru, which he had been using for about 20 years, and which was stolen at Kanpur station on May 25.

[4] The source has June, obviously a slip, for the Congress had finally accepted the "two-nation theory" on June 14. They were giving serious consideration to it in May.

[5] Son of addressee's brother

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23. TALK WITH A CO-WORKER

NEW DELHI,
May 29, 1947

CO-WORKER: You have declared you won't mind if the whole of India is turned into Pakistan by appeal to reason but not an inch would be yielded to force. You have stood firm by your declaration. But is the Working Committee acting on this principle? They are yielding to force. You gave us the battle-cry of Quit India; you fought our battles; but in the hour of decision, I find you are not in the picture. You and your ideals have been given the go-by.

GANDHIJI: Who listens to me today?

Leaders may not, but the people are behind you.

Even they are not. I am being told to retire to the Himalayas. Everybody is eager to garland my photos and statues. Nobody really wants to follow my advice.

They may not today, but they will have to before long.

What is the good? Who knows whether I shall then be alive? The question is: What can we do today? On the eve of independence we are as divided as we were united when we were engaged in freedom's battle. The prospect of power has demoralized us.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 209

24. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

May 29, 1947

When we do not get enough food in spite of very hard work, what should we do?

It is an eternal law that anybody who does useful work must get enough to eat. But when that does not happen, it may be assumed that there is something wrong in the working of the Government. But in the changed times now we cannot meet this [situation] by looting Government shops or starting riots, for we ourselves will have to suffer because of the

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resulting loss. Instead, the people may peacefully sit down in front of the shops and, as a last resort, fast indefinitely. But this weapon should be employed only after careful thinking, for these days people have made this sacred weapon very cheap. In any case it should never be employed to gain a personal end.

Probably you know that your statues are being set up and your photographs unveiled at many places. What do you think about this?

How can I say I do not know that my statues are being erected and my photographs are being unveiled everywhere in the country, that they are garlanded and lights are waved before them? But I attach no importance to these things, for I dislike such things intensely. They are a sheer waste of money. And I strongly feel that these activities do me no honour but, on the contrary, are an affront to me. If the people wish to honour me, let them honour the charkha, that is, spin daily by way of *yajna*. That will be as good as honouring me. Let them also read the *Gita* and meditate over its teaching. And if they cannot do even that, let them just repeat Ramanama. To understand a man's virtues and follow his principles in one's own life is as good as honouring the man himself. I know full well what labour it costs to set up statues of a living man or unveil his photographs, to distribute sweets after the ceremony and to make the function a success at great expense. I, therefore, believe that we degrade our religion through such activities. No man can be described as perfectly good or wise or as a mahatma before he is dead. Nobody but God knows a man's heart. I would rather wish that instead of setting up my statues or unveiling my photographs, people opened spinning and weaving schools or did something else which would benefit the country socially, spiritually, economically or politically.

You advise non-vegetarians to eat more meat and save as much grains as possible. Is not this advice of yours contrary to the principle of non-violence?

You have perhaps not understood, or I have not been able to explain, my argument properly. Those who are non-vegetarians do eat meat in any case, but they also eat vegetarian food at the same time and are thus doubly guilty. If they became completely vegetarian, of course nothing would be better than that. But they are not likely to do that, or, if they try, the change might harm their health. Looking at the matter from another point of view, vegetarians also commit violence. In

fact we continually commit violence from the moment we are born. These are the conditions in which we have to observe non-violence. Forcing a non-vegetarian to become a vegetarian is a form of coercion and, therefore, violence. Violence consists in people fighting against one another, in amassing wealth at the cost of the poor, casting lustful glances at women and forcing draught animals to carry excessively heavy loads; persons who do these things are the really violent people. I believe that, compared to such persons, non-vegetarians who save cereals and otherwise lead decent lives, live happily themselves and let others be happy, are better human beings.

It is only with God's grace that we are able to endure the sufferings which fall to our lot in life. In this transient world, things are always happening and passing. But that fact does not absolve us from our moral responsibility. To the man in distress, his misfortune is a stark reality. Many learned men describe this world as *maya*. Be that as it may, so long as we live in this world and remain caught in the cycle of birth and death we have some duties to discharge and must discharge them; there can be no doubt about that. To face courageously the misfortunes that befall one is the best use one can make of life in this human body.

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 30-2

25. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
May 29, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Please remain silent till the prayer is over and I finish saying whatever I have to say. I wish that so long as I am here and alive, those of you who come here out of devotion—let us not talk of those who come only to watch the spectacle—would join me in reciting the name of God. Then please listen to what I say in silence. I am going to talk to you about something very important today.[1]

There are only a few days now before June 2. In the coming days I shall deal each day with some aspect of the

[1] The prayer was then conducted. What follows is the speech after prayer.

problem which is uppermost in your minds. You have drawn me to you by remaining peaceful and by exercising restraint, and thereby compelled me to open my heart to you. How nice it would be if the people who consider themselves the children of this country would think calmly and be courageous. It is indeed a difficult thing to do while the Press continues to give publicity to frightful stories of arson and loot and killings.

I am not at all worried about what June 2 will bring, or what Lord Mountbatten will say on his return. I am not in the habit of worrying over what the Government might say. It has been my way ever since I came here in 1915.

I was born in India. I left the country at the age of 22. It was like being in exile. After spending twenty years, i.e., the best years of my youth in South Africa I returned home. I did not accumulate any wealth in the intervening period. Right from the beginning I had realized that God had so shaped me that I should not run after money, but serve Him. God made me feel that I would not succeed in doing anything else. I learnt the way of service from the *Gita* which says that whatever we possess is not ours but belongs to God. Then came the question how God could be realized. I learnt that God resides in every human being in the world and he who serves mankind serves God.

Then we come to the *mantra* from the *Ishopanishad*[1] which says: "God pervades everything in the world." I used to explain the meaning of this *mantra* every day when I was in Travancore. The *mantra* further says: "Leave everything, do your work and do not covet wealth that belongs to another."

This is a simple thing which even a child can understand. But its deeper meaning is something not easily understood. We are however all grown-ups and we must understand this meaning. That is why I spoke to you about this great thing. If we understand this meaning, what have we to quarrel about?

This is a big thing I have talked about. Let me now come to the main point which I want to touch upon today. I have taken some trouble today. Do I have the time to write out my speech in English every day? Our English newspapers must publish my speeches. But how can our journalists render my speeches into English? Are they able to understand English perfectly? They possess B. A. and M. A. degrees of course. But they do not have adequate knowledge of the English language

[1] Verse 1

to convey my Hindi statements correctly in English. For English is not their own language. It is a foreign language for them. Here, however, I shall speak in Hindustani because it is almost a mother tongue for me and entirely so for all of you. Hence you are able to understand correctly whatever I say in this language. This lady here (Dr. Sushila Nayyar) translates my speeches into English because she knows English fairly well. Still there are some defects in her rendering. That is why today I spent some time and wrote my speech in English. Today I shall talk to you bearing this thing in mind. But newspapers will publish only my written speech.[1]

So, I would like to begin by mentioning the letter in which I have been cursed for continuing the prayer. It says that I am a liar and do not answer questions properly. Those who write such things are childish. They may be adults in age, but they are still children in terms of mental growth.

What pricks them most is the fact that I keep calling upon them to lay down their lives instead of rousing them to kill. They want me to call upon the Hindus to avenge violence by violence, arson by arson. But I cannot deny my whole life and be guilty of advocating the rule of the jungle instead of the law of humanity. If someone comes to kill me I would die imploring God to have mercy on him. Instead, these people insist that I should first ask you to kill and then die if need be. They tell me that if I am not prepared to say such a thing, I should keep my courage to myself and retire to the forest. But why do they say that to me ? Because the Muslims are killing people ? On that account, should the Hindus also stoop to kill? And should both sides thus give themselves up to frenzy? If the Muslims go wrong, should we also go wrong? They maintain that all Muslims are sinister; that they are wicked at heart. They also claim that all Hindus are angels. But I cannot accept such a claim.

I have received a letter from a Muslim woman. She asks me why I do not recite the "*auz abillah*" in Urdu verse. I would like to say in reply that if I started reading it in Urdu verse the Muslims would be enraged and ask me what authority I had to translate it from the Arabic. What would I tell them when they threatened to beat me up?

The fact is that a thing sounds sweet in its original language or in a version over which many people have laboured.

[1] The written speech is not traceable.

Bishops have laboured hard and seen to it that the English of the Bible is very sweet. Somehow, that English has turned out sweeter than the original Latin. Students of English must definitely study the Bible. I do not hate the English language. Rather I admire it. But it becomes clumsy in a wrong place. Hence I am not prepared to sacrifice the sweetness of the language of "*auz abillah*". We do not have poets who can translate it into something equally sweet.

Today I shall not speak about the eternal law of nonviolence much as I believe in it very firmly. If the whole of India adopted this law after due deliberation she would become the unquestioned leader of the whole world. Here, however, all that I wish to stress is that no man should ever yield except to reason.

But today we seem to have given up reason altogether. Reason can hold sway only when we have courage. There is nothing brave about what is going on today. It is a sheer negation of humanity. We have well-nigh turned into beasts. Our papers scream at us every day that the Hindus have played havoc in one place and the Muslims in another. Both the Hindus and the Muslims are indulging in wickedness. I am prepared to accept that the Muslims have played greater havoc. But while both are playing havoc, it is futile to find out who surpasses whom. Both are equally guilty.

News has come that many villages of the neighbouring district of Gurgaon have been burnt down. I am trying to find out which of the two communities is guilty of this arson. But it is difficult to have correct information. People might ask when so much is happening in my vicinity how I can sit idle and wax eloquent. But when you people have come here and when so much is unfortunately happening in Gurgaon, I shall definitely tell you what is in my heart. All I have to say is that even if there is fire burning all around us we must keep calm —why, we should even let ourselves be consumed without being perturbed. Why should we, out of fear, go about saying that such and such a thing is going to happen on June 2? For those who will keep up their courage, nothing is going to happen on that day. Be absolutely sure about it. Each one of us has to die one day. No one is born immortal. Why then should we not resolve that we will die with courage but never do wrong till the very last breath, that we shall not deliberately kill anyone? Once you resolve to do this you will be able to maintain your mental balance, and will not need to look up to

anyone. You would make it clear to those who want to have Pakistan under threat and intimidation that they would not get even an inch of Pakistan that way. If they will be guided by justice, convince us with reasoning and persuade the world, they can have the whole of India for themselves. But we shall never grant it under coercion.

And what can I say to the British? It will be an act of betrayal if they do not stand by the proposals of the Cabinet Mission. We shall not betray nor shall we allow them to betray us. We are both concerned with the proclamation of May 16. The Constituent Assembly is sitting in terms of the May 16 paper.[1] It is for the British to hand over power and quit. The Government of free Indians formed under the constitution worked out by the Constituent Assembly can do anything afterwards—keep India one or divide it into two or more parts. We shall go ahead on that basis. We know nothing more than that if we face reality in terms of the welfare of our own country, we should first agree to establish peace in the country, telling the turbulent elements in the country firmly and boldly that there can be no departure from the document of May 16 until they stop the sanguinary strife.[2] But we shall not be cowed down.

We shall achieve everything if we learn this lesson during these four days. Let them try out all the arms they have accumulated. When we stood firm against such a mighty empire and were not afraid of all their arms, when we did not bow down to their flag, why should we falter now? Let us not make the mistake, on the eve of our hard-won freedom, of thinking that we are likely to lose it if we do not yield, even though it be to brute force. That way lies perdition.

I do not take the cables from London seriously. I must cling to the hope that Britain will not depart by a hair's breadth from the letter and the spirit of the Cabinet Mission's statement of May 16, unless the parties, of their own free will, come to an agreement on any variation. For that purpose they have to meet and hammer out an acceptable solution. That statement has been accepted by the Congress and the British Government. If either of them go back on it, it will be a breach of faith.

The British officials should know what the people are whispering.[3] It is said that the British officers in India are dis-

[1] The following two sentences are reproduced from *Harijan*.

[2] This sentence is from *Harijan*.

[3] This and the last two sentences of the preceding paragraph are from *Harijan*.

honest. It is said that they have a hand in these riots and that they are even inciting both the communities to fight. But we must refuse to believe the serious charge unless it is established beyond doubt. In fact, I would say, how can fighting break out unless we want it? If I do not wish to quarrel with my daughter here, who can force me to do so?

And Lord Mountbatten's task is not easy. He is a great commander, he is brave, but he cannot show his bravery here. He has not come here with his soldiers. He has not come here in his military uniform. He has come here as a civilian and says that he has come to grant India freedom from British rule. Now we have to see how and in what manner they leave. Lord Mountbatten has to lend dignity to the office of Governor-General that he is occupying. He has to prove his intelligence and true statesmanship. It would not be fitting if he commits a slip or loses time. Hence let us all pray together that God may grant him good sense. And let him understand that he cannot force any change in the statement of May 16. If he does anything, it will be betrayal and betrayal helps none. Betrayal can never bring about a good result.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 97-103; and *Harijan*, 8-6-1947

26. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
May 30, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Please do not look up to London. Do not look up to the Viceroy. Not that all Englishmen in Britain are dishonest. A large number of them are noble. Lord Mountbatten is also a noble person. But they are all good in their own places. When they come here and interfere in our affairs they all turn wicked. Now the old idea that our future depends on the protection of the British no longer holds good. We are not in duty bound to retain the Englishmen in our civil services. The civilians may stay on if they wish. Similarly, the businessmen may stay on too, if they desire. But no English soldier will be kept here to protect them. They can stay on here only on the strength of their service and the affection of the Indian people. We shall not be responsible if in a frenzy anybody

harms them. It may be some time before the British finally quit India. They have fixed June 30, 1948, as the target date. It will be exactly one year from today [*sic*]. They must leave before that date if they can. But they cannot stay on even for a single day after that date. It is like honouring a promissory note. If the money on the promissory note is to be paid on Sunday, the payment cannot be postponed to Monday. Similarly, the British cannot stay on after June 30, 1948. They have to abide by the command of the British people. After all, the Viceroy is the servant of the British people. On the 2nd or 3rd June he will reveal what he intends doing and in what manner he will leave. It is his duty and he has to fulfil it. We have to look to our own duty.

And then I wonder who I am. Whom do I represent? I left the Congress many years ago.[1] I am not even a four-anna member of the Congress. But I am a servant of the Congress. I have served it for many years and I continue to do so. Similarly, I am a servant of the Muslim League and also of the Princes. I serve everyone but represent no one. Of course I do represent one person. I represent the Qaid-e-Azam, because I have signed the peace appeal along with him. Both of us have together said that no political objective may be attained by violence. This is a very big thing. The appeal deserved to be signed by other people too. But Jinnah Saheb insisted on having Gandhi's signature. And so I became Jinnah Saheb's representative. Apart from him I represent no one else.

But I did not sign the appeal in my capacity as a Hindu. I was born a Hindu, no doubt. No one can undo the fact. But I am also a Muslim because I am a good Hindu. In the same way I am also a Parsi and a Christian too. At the basis of all religions there is the name of only one God. All the scriptures say the same thing.

I have read the Koran and I do not share that lady's belief that the Koran ordains the killing of the infidels. I consulted Badshah Khan and Abdus Samad Khan who recited the Koranic passages so beautifully today and they also confirmed that the Koran did not ordain the killing of non-Muslims. No Bihari Muslim told me that since I was a non-believer they would kill me. Nor did the Maulvis in Noakhali say any such thing. On the contrary, they allowed the *Ramdhun* to the accompaniment of the *dholak*. All that the Koran

[1] In 1934; *vide* Vol. LIX.

says is that an infidel would be answerable to God. But God would demand an explanation from everyone, even from a Muslim. And He would not question you about your words but your deeds. But then those who are keen on seeing dirt can find it everywhere. There is nothing in which good and bad are not mixed up. Why, our *Manusmriti* talks of pouring molten lead into the ears of the untouchables[1]! But I would say that that is not the true teaching of our scriptures. Tulsidas gives the essence of all Shastras in his statement that compassion is the root of all religions. No religion ever teaches us to kill anyone. We must act in accordance with the following couplet of Tulsidas:

> Sentient and insentient, good and bad, are all creations of God. The man of God takes the good and leaves the bad even as the swan which drinks the milk and leaves the water.

We shall have to tell the Muslims that that is not the way to achieve Pakistan. They cannot have Pakistan so long as the arson and killings do not stop. In the same way Hindus also cannot force the Muslims to stop harping on the theme of Pakistan. But my question is: Why should you needlessly quarrel in the name of Pakistan? After all, Pakistan is not a spectre? True Pakistan is that which guarantees the safety of every child. Whether it is Pakistan or Hindustan, people with different religions and ways of life ought to be able to live in safety there, no matter whether they are Brahmins or Banias or Pandits or belong to any of the other creeds. Hence, I would like to invite Jinnah Saheb to join me on a tour of the whole country and work to end these acts of violence.

I would like to tell my colleague Jinnah Saheb and the whole world that we are not prepared to hear anything about Pakistan so long as these excesses continue. Once they stop, we shall sit down and decide whether there should be Pakistan or Hindustan. When we sit together like brothers, we shall distribute sweets and have illuminations. It is through friendly relations that Pakistan can come into being and through friendly relations alone can Hindustan survive. If we keep on fighting, Hindustan will be destroyed.

The Statement of May 16 of last year is the basis for the settlement. Not a comma can be removed from it. The British have no right to do anything which falls outside the purview of this Statement. Nor are we demanding anything more than what is contained in the Statement. We must make it clear

[1] As punishment for hearing Vedic verses being recited

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that even if we all have to die or the whole country is reduced to ashes, Pakistan will not be conceded under duress.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 103-6

27. *TALK WITH ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN*

May 31, 1947

GHAFFAR KHAN: So, Mahatmaji, you will now regard us as Pakistanis? . . . A terrible situation faces the Frontier Province and Baluchistan. We do not know what to do.

GANDHIJI: Have you read what I have been saying during the past two or three days? One who has faith in non-violence should not yield to despair in this manner. You and your Khudai Khidmatgars[1] are going to be tested now. You can say that you do not accept Pakistan and then submit to whatever is inflicted on you. We have, as you know, adopted the motto of 'do or die'. It does not befit one who professes such a motto to give way to despair. And whatever happens I am going to visit the Frontier Province, for I don't believe in these divisions of the country. I am not going to ask anybody's permission. If they kill me for my defiance, I will embrace death with a smiling face. That is, if Pakistan comes into existence, I intend to tour it, live there and see what they do to me. This girl[2] will of course be with me, so that we two old men and this girl will tour together. Will that be all right?

I understand. I won't take any more of your time.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 45-6

[1] Meaning 'Servants of God'; popularly known as 'Red Shirts', it was an organization of the Khan brothers pledged to non-violence and had been following nationalist policy.

[2] Manu J. Gandhi

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28. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
May 31, 1947

As Gandhiji came on the platform he asked the people to be quiet, telling them that during the prayer one's eyes should be closed and one's ears open.

That man[1] wearing a hat like an Englishman is demanding that Jinnah should be arrested. Does he really want to arrest Jinnah? You may have the power to do so. I too possess such power. But my way of acting is different. Ever since I came from South Africa I have been training you in my way. I am not such a great teacher at that. But then, even a mad person can speak out his mind. For the past fifty-four years I have been regularly saying that we must hold our enemy. For you Jinnah is an enemy, but I regard none as enemy. I have said it and it is the perfect truth that I have become his representative. How can I then regard him as my enemy? Even the British had become my enemies. But I did not become their enemy. I became their friend, their representative, and I told them things that were in their own interest.

There are two ways of 'holding' one's enemies. One way is the way of coercion, the other is the way of love. I have 'held' you by love. When I ask you to be silent, you remain silent. You must have realized that I have used the term 'holding' as a joke but you must have taken it in the right sense. What I mean is that at times we shall no doubt succeed in holding Jinnah Saheb. Do you think the police would arrest him? The police cannot do so. The police cannot arrest me, nor Khan Saheb. Of course the British authorities can arrest him at will. But even Jinnah Saheb would not be quite imprisoned. He would be truly held if I could bring him here and make him stand before you.

There was a man called Mir Alam. He belonged to the Frontier, Badshah Khan's land. He was even taller than Badshah Khan, who is himself a mountain of a man. He was my friend

[1] According to the source, he had protested against the recitation from the Koran, but the prayer was carried on peacefully.

at one time. But the Pathans are very simple-hearted. That is why they are Badshahs—noblemen. Somebody told this man, Mir Alam, that Gandhi had taken £15,000 from General Smuts and had betrayed the Indian community. That was enough. One day Mir Alam confronted me as an enemy. He carried with him a heavy-headed stick. He hit me with it right on my neck. I fell down on the pavement and broke my teeth. I survived because God willed it. Mir Alam was caught by a few Englishmen who were passing. But I had him released. I told the Englishmen that he had been misled by a rumour that I had succumbed to money and it was no wonder that the honest Pathan's blood had boiled and he had rushed out to hit me. Thus it was that I held Mir Alam. He became a close friend.[1]

God willing, Jinnah Saheb too will come and sit here one day and say that he is not, and never has been, our enemy. He will say that he is asking for Pakistan, but his Pakistan will be a great thing and will be in the interest of everybody. Then we would all gather and have illuminations and distribute sweets.

I am not saying this from cowardice or by way of flattery. I am talking only of being brave. We have to be brave like the Sikhs, one of whom is equal to one and a quarter lakh of others. I have already explained to you how one Sikh becomes equal to one and a quarter lakh. That is not because of the *kirpan* which he always keeps to show that he would never be afraid of it. Whether one and a quarter lakh together or a single one of them come to attack him, he would never raise his hand. Who can say that a person who can die in this manner is a coward? Everyone would call him a truly courageous person.

I said yesterday that we would not let Pakistan be formed by threat of force even if the whole of India were burnt down; but if they influenced our hearts with reason and persuaded us and if we were convinced that they had no evil intentions at heart, we would accede to the demand for Pakistan. But then you will have to inspire confidence in us that no one need fear the Muslims in Pakistan. When you have declared, with God as your witness, that there would be no violence for the attainment of political objectives, how can you adopt violent action for attaining Pakistan?

[1] For details of the incident, *vide* Vol. XXIX.

We want neither Birla's nor the Nawab of Bhopal's raj in India. Birla says he is not keen to rule. In the same way, the Nawab of Bhopal also calls himself a friend of his people. He too is unwilling to accept power by going against his subjects. Who then would hold the reins of power? They would come into your hands. Not only into your hands, but into the hands of the poor.

There are many Birlas in the country. What is their power? They have to get their work done by labourers and they can get it done only when they pay for it. When the workers refuse to work, the millions would remain stuck with the rich. If these rich people own land, they are not going to till it themselves. If they do not find anyone to plough their land their vast stretches of land would lie useless. Similarly, all the swords and spears and horsemen of the Nawab of Bhopal are going to be rendered useless. After all, how many people can they kill? Over whom would he rule after killing his own subjects? He would be able to rule over his subjects only by becoming their trustee.

Instead of this, if anyone says that because the Nawab of Bhopal is a Muslim, Bhopal would be a Muslim territory and that in Kashmir a handful of Brahmins would wield power, this will not be conceded at all.

Take the case of the Nizam of Hyderabad. It is said that the moment he has an opportunity, he will try to bring the whole of India under his rule. But who precisely is going to do it? His subjects are Hindus.

The British would be betraying us if they thought that they would find a place for themselves in Hyderabad, Bhopal, Rajkot or some other place after they quit India. But I have not gathered any such impression. I believe that the British intentions of leaving India are perfectly honest. Now that they are leaving India, their sovereignty also ends. How are some footholds here and there going to be of any help? And, when the British are gone, the Princes are going to have their place in the midst of their subjects.

Once when Malaviyaji went to Bombay, I accompanied him. Both of us went and met some Maharajas there. They made us sit on elevated seats, and themselves sat at our feet. Those were the days when the British power was at its peak. Now when the Imperialist power is withdrawing, they will at once realize that they can retain their position only when they listen to the people. The only way of responding to the people

is by coming into the Constituent Assembly. If they take an obstinate stand and refuse to join the Constituent Assembly, they cannot remain rulers.

No Muslim Prince in India can say that he will kill all the Hindus. If anyone says such a thing, I would ask him why he was their protector all this time, why he lived by their food. Similarly, any Prince, just because he is a Muslim, would not be entitled to say that he would join Pakistan. Nor can a Hindu ruler, because he is a Hindu, say that he would be with the Congress. Either would have to follow the wishes of the people.

In the end Gandhiji announced the death of Chakrayya, a young Harijan from Andhra.

He was an inmate of the Sevagram Ashram. He was trained under Nayee Talim. He was a hard-working craftsman. He was not given to weaknesses like falsehood, fraud and anger. By some misfortune he developed some brain trouble. He was a believer in nature cure but his friends insisted that he should be operated upon by surgeons. The disease had affected his eyes. Yet with great effort he wrote me a letter before he was taken to the operation table. He said in this that although he liked nature cure he was willing to undergo the surgery and if he had to die in the process, he would do so reciting the name of Rama. Eventually he passed away on the operation table in a hospital in Bombay.

I feel like crying over his death; but I cannot cry. For whom should I cry and for whom should I refrain from crying? If Mother India should have any children, they should be, as Tulsidas has said, either generous or brave. Chakrayya was generous because he was a selfless worker, always contented. He was also brave because he welcomed death. He was a Harijan but knew no distinctions of Harijan and *savarna* and of Hindu and Muslim. He regarded all as human beings and was himself a true human being.

Today I have talked in one breath about the Nawab of Bhopal and Chakrayya. In India there is room for both. Let the Nawab of Bhopal be a trustee of his people. And let us have millions of young men like Chakrayya. Then alone will India be able to live in peace and happiness.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 106-11

29. *ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS*[1]

June 1, 1947

Do you feel that India will ultimately be united under one central government regardless of what the immediate settlement may be?

The future will depend on what we do in the present.

Do you foresee the possibility of the world being united under one central governing body composed of representatives of the component parts?

That is the only condition on which the world can live.

Do you think there is any possibility of armed conflict between Russia and the United States?

Anything is possible but it is highly improbable.

What do you feel is the most acceptable solution to the Palestine problem?

The abandonment wholly by the Jews of terrorism and other forms of violence.

Do you believe that Egypt and the Sudan should unite under one government when the British leave?

I have no doubt that they ought to.

As a result of your experiment during the past five months do you feel that the principle of non-violence can yet be triumphant in the solution of the world's problems?

My five months in Noakhali have only confirmed my previous experience that non-violence can cure all our ills.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-6-1947

[1] The questions were conveyed by Gerald J. Rock, staff correspondent, of the United Press of America.

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30. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

June 1, 1947

CHI. . . . ,

I was glad to have Dr. Jivraj Mehta's report about you. And now [Dilip] has advanced so far that he is able to maintain a fine car. You can have a daily ride in it to the Hanging Garden. If the experiment has no adverse effect on your health, we may assume that the crisis is over. Do you have Nathuram Sharma's collection of 108 Upanishads? Or any other collection which includes the *Allopanishad*? It is there in Nathuram Sharma's collection. If you have it, get a copy made and send it to me. I don't want the whole book. The *Allopanishad* is the shortest one. My impression is that it consists of about five lines.

I hope . . . is keeping quite well. I can't say how long I shall be here.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 52

31. LETTER TO MANIBHAI B. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
June 1, 1947

CHI. MANILAL,

I have already written to them to send you the money. Even if Dhirubhai is frequently occupied with his own work and Parmanand has not become steady as his wife keeps indifferent health, I suppose you will stick to the place and hope to manage somehow. Ask Balkrishna[1] also to think over the matter.

1. You may give whatever name you wish to the Trust. Respect Dinshawji's wishes in the matter.
2. The main activities will remain the same.
3. There is no need to think about the future.

[1] Balkrishna Bhave

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The budget seems to be all right. I do not have the time to go deeper into the matter. It is with great difficulty that I have been able to write this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10439. Courtesy: Manibhai B. Desai

32. LETTER TO BALWANTRAI K. THAKORE

June 1, 1947

BHAI BALWANTRAI[1],

I have your letter. Probably you do not know that I am but a villager. Mine is a voice in the wilderness. Give up your delusion.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 52

33. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI[2]

June 1, 1947

The purity of my *yajna* will be put to the test only now. Today I find myself all alone. [Even the Sardar and Jawaharlal][3] think that my reading of the situation is wrong and peace is sure to return if partition is agreed upon. The Viceroy is a nice and intelligent man. They did not like my telling the Viceroy that even if there was to be partition, it should not be through British intervention or under the British rule. They wonder if I have not deteriorated with age. But if I did not show myself as I am, I would prove a hypocrite. And I must speak as I feel, if I am to prove a true and loyal friend to the Congress. Never mind if I am not a four-anna member of the Congress. But they all come and consult me, seek my

[1] Gujarati poet and man of letters

[2] In *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, pp. 210-1, Pyarelal explains that in the morning, "mistaking the hands of his watch, Gandhiji woke up earlier than usual . . . he remained lying in bed and began to muse in a low voice."

[3] *Ibid.* The source has "people".

advice. Similarly I am also a friend of the British. I must therefore tell the British what is good for them. Else, of what use is my being their friend? If I were to prove my true and loyal friendship to them it becomes my bounden duty to lay bare the facts before them and show them the right way, regardless of whether my advice is appreciated or resented. I see clearly that we are setting about this business the wrong way. We may not feel the full effect immediately, but I can see clearly that the future of independence gained at this price is going to be dark. I pray that God may not keep me alive to witness it. And I have left you in this vast field to fend for yourself. I have done it with full deliberation because you share my burden in this sacrifice although you are a little girl with no experience of life. In order that God may give me the strength and wisdom to remain firm in the midst of universal opposition and to utter the full truth, I need all the strength of purity that you will have in your sincere work, whether in thought or act, while waking or asleep or even when you are not conscious of yourself. In the matter of devotion or purity, or in treading the path of truth years hardly count; what is needed is spiritual strength. Wasn't Prahlad very young? Had little Dhruva attained a mature age? But they had the strength to tread the path of truth. Moreover, a man may grow old and yet be a fraud. But somehow in spite of my being all alone, in my thoughts, I am experiencing an ineffable inner joy and freshness of mind. I feel as if God himself was lighting my path before me. And it is perhaps the reason why I am able to fight on single-handed. People now ask me to retire to Kashi or go to the Himalayas. I laugh and tell them that the Himalayas of my penance are where there is misery to be alleviated, oppression to be relieved. There can be no rest for me so long as there is a single person in India whether man or woman, young or old, lacking the necessaries of life, by which I mean a sense of security, a life style worthy of human beings, i. e., clothing, education, food and shelter of a decent standard. I said the same thing to Sarat Babu yesterday. I cannot bear to see Badshah Khan's grief. His inner agony wrings my heart, but if I gave way to tears, it would be cowardly and, stalwart Pathan as he is, he would break down. And I don't want him to break down. But maybe all of them are right and I alone am floundering in darkness. The more you remain vigilant and cheerful by maintaining good health the more you will influence all that I do.

I shall perhaps not be alive to witness it, but should the evil I apprehend overtake India and her independence be imperilled, let posterity know what agony this old man went through thinking of it. Let not the coming generations curse Gandhi for being a party to India's vivisection. But everybody is today impatient for independence. Therefore there is no alternative. This is like eating wooden *laddoos*, if they eat it they die of colic; if they don't they starve.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 50-2

34. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 1, 1947

Today also a Brahmin objected to the recitation from the Koran, but the prayer continued. Two young men from the audience took him by the arms, made him sit down and tried to silence him. This created some disturbance in the meeting. When the police came in to take him away Gandhiji said:

Please, constable, don't take him away. Let him sit where he is. Please only see that he does not create any more trouble. The recitation from the Koran is already over. Now we shall have some *bhajans* provided this gentleman allows it. If he does not, we shall have no *bhajans* for the day.

At this that Brahmin gentleman smilingly raised his elbow and said: "Just look, in this scuffle, I sustained these bruises. Is this your non-violence?"

Well, forget about your bleeding. You just tell me whether I should continue the prayer. We shall have *bhajans* if you say 'yes'. If you do not agree, we shall have no *bhajans* today.

The gentleman cheerfully agreed to listen to *bhajans*.

Hinduism does not belong only to you. I am a Hindu too, and a perfect *sanatani*. Now, why should we read only the *Gita*? Why should we not read the Koran too? We must gather pearls wherever we find them. Power is now about to come to us. The Viceroy is impatient to hand it over to us. Would you, at this moment, quarrel like this and show your folly? You must learn to be courteous. You can learn courtesy from Badshah Khan. Today when Manu went to bring him to the

prayer he said he would rather keep away as some Hindu might be hurt by his presence. I then sent him a message saying that he was huge as a mountain and I was a mere Bania, and if I was not scared, why should he be? And now, having come here, there he sits more gentle than a lamb. We too should be well-behaved like him. Granted that there are some uncharitable things in the Koran. But is there any work which does not contain such things? I have lived in the midst of hundreds of Muslim friends. No one has ever told me that I was an undesirable person because I was not a Muslim. A Muslim friend[1] who is no longer alive, and who, a jeweller that he was, possessed also the qualities of a jewel, had warned me to beware of Muslims since all of them were not angels. But I told him I need not look at the darker side of things. I was happy to have found such a good friend. And he was not the only one. I can give you quite a few such names. I had even accepted one of them[2] as my own son. He was always ready to serve people. But God took him away. When such wonderful persons can be found among the Muslims, I say the Hindus should not lose their heads because of what a few Muslims do. The British kept us under control by the force of arms. Shall we start fighting when they are leaving? This is certainly not worthy of us.

After the *bhajans* and the *Ramdhun* had been gone through in an orderly manner, Gandhiji complimented the people as well as the Brahmin gentleman for remaining peaceful and said:

If people would act with a little understanding, independence is almost in their hands, because Jawaharlal is the Vice-President in our Government. True, the Government is headed by the Viceroy; but he has to keep silent now. Your real king is Jawaharlal. He is a king who wants to serve not only India, but through it the whole world. He has acquainted himself with the peoples of all lands and is adept at dealing with diplomats from all countries. But how long can he go on doing it all by himself?

This uncrowned king is at your service. Should he put down your disturbances with bullets? If today he suppresses one person, he will have tomorrow to act similarly in another case. And that would not be swaraj, not Panchayat raj either. Only

[1] Umar Jhaveri, a businessman of South Africa
[2] Hussain Mian

when you remain disciplined will Jawaharlal be able to lead us and our freedom be safe.

Here is an example of the discipline to which Jawaharlal submits himself. Last year when he had gone to Kashmir Lord Wavell wanted to meet him. Maulana Saheb wanted to send for him. When I persuaded him he abided by the order of the Congress President and came here leaving the problem unresolved over there.[1]

Today also Jawaharlal's mind is in Kashmir, where Sheikh Abdullah[2], the leader of the people, is locked behind the bars. I told Jawaharlal that he was needed more here. I told him that if it was necessary I would go to Kashmir and do his work, and that he should stay here. I also told him that although I was bound by my word to do or die only in Bihar or Noakhali, I could still go to Kashmir because there too the problem of the Muslims was involved. I would go there and befriend the Maharaja of Kashmir and work for the good of the Muslims. But Jawaharlal has not yet agreed to this.

In short, now that we have attained swaraj, each one of us should act with discipline, humility and understanding. Then alone would India deserve her independence.

Yesterday I talked to you about the Princes. Similarly today I want to talk about the trading community. Yesterday I said that India would not be ruled by a Birla, nor by the Nawab of Bhopal, nor the Nizam nor the Maharaja of Kashmir. The Princes would be only servants of the people.

It cannot be that the people of India should become free in one place and be under subjugation in another place. When freedom comes, it shall be for all.

Now freedom is definitely coming. Because if the British are honest, and it is my impression that they are, they have to quit. The Viceroy Lord Mountbatten says that he wants to leave as early as possible. And he will stick to his word.

When the British go will we become the rulers of the country? And shall we quarrel among ourselves when we become the rulers of India? Will the Princes then ride over us? No, they will all become the trustees of the people. In other words, they will be servants of society like Chakrayya. Only then can they continue as our rulers.

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXXIV, p. 357.

[2] Leader of Kashmir National Conference—a nationalist organization fighting for a democratic set-up in the State, to which the Maharaja was opposed

In the same way, we should not be ruled by the business community either. We want the rule of the *Bhangis*. The *Bhangis* are the highest of all because their service is the greatest. That is why I have volunteered to be a *Bhangi* myself. By the rule of the *Bhangis* I mean that once you make a scavenger your minister, you must respect his word as much as the British respected the word of the seventeen-year-old Queen Victoria, and everyone, big and small, did his duty. I have seen with my eyes the manner in which the British perform their duties.

I have been to London several times. On one occasion I stayed there for three years. But I was then a mere boy. I have gone to London twice or thrice subsequently. There the people are so reasonable and law-abiding that the police are never obliged to wield firearms. They have in their hand only a baton. People know that the police are their servants. Hence they follow the instructions of the police. The police also try to help the people to the maximum. Things are not done there through bribery. The police do not accept bribes even if offered.

Our Indian police too should follow this example now. They should not accept any bribe at all. If they are not getting enough to subsist upon they can ask the Sardar for higher wages. Let them approach Baldev Singh[1]. Let them go to Nehruji. When big officers and ministers get thousands, why should the policemen receive meagre salaries? These people would do something about it. But the policemen must give up taking bribes.

I also want to say something about businessmen. They must all come together and proclaim with one voice that they all want to become true Banias and true Marwaris. A true Bania is one who weighs things correctly. All the Banias and all the Marwaris and all traders must get together and resolve not to indulge in black-marketing and not to give or take bribes.

If they can do this much Rajendra Babu's[2] helplessness in providing food for the people would be removed. I have received a letter which says that even though I had the salt tax repealed, salt is now costlier than before. How is that? I say after the repeal of the salt tax we should get salt almost free. For such a thing to happen the traders will have to do business for the sake of India instead of for their own sake.

[1] Defence Member in the Interim Government

[2] Rajendra Prasad was Minister of Food and Agriculture.

They should forget black-marketing altogether. When that happens, the ministers of the Interim Government would be able to carry out their respective tasks, and Rajaji, Rajendra Babu, Jawaharlalji, Matthai[1], Bhabha[2] and all the four League Ministers[3] would be able to serve you in every way. Even after that, if India cannot have enough food and clothing and there is no progress in the country, you can remove them from office.

But how would you remove them? Would you have them ousted by the Viceroy's action? No. You would ask the Viceroy not to bother. You would 'hold' the Ministers yourselves in the manner in which I said yesterday I would 'hold' Jinnah. Then you would be able to make them do as you wish.

I have learnt from Jawaharlal that people are starving in London. I was sorry to hear that. However guilty the British might have been in our case, they must certainly get enough to eat.

Ours is a very vast country. If our traders behave properly and if they are sensible we can say that so long as India is alive, the world cannot go hungry. We would provide food for the world. I am a Bania and I know something about trade. If all the Banias and traders co-operate with me and also co-operate with the Interim Government, and if all the Muslims co-operate, I can provide food for everyone. I am not at all prepared to accept that we do not produce enough in our country. If we work hard enough and act with reason and if by the grace of God there is sufficient rain, we can have plenty to eat. But it is not possible to clap with one hand. This can happen only if I can have co-operation from all, and then it would be such a thunderous clap that all of you would be happy and the whole world would be happy.

I tell you in no uncertain terms that if everybody in independent India does his duty well, the whole country will be happy.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 111-6

[1] John Matthai, Member for Railways and Transport in the Interim Government

[2] C. H. Bhabha, Member for Works, Mines and Power in the Interim Government

[3] They were: Liaquat Ali Khan for Finance, I. I. Chundrigar for Commerce, Abdur Rab Nishtar for Communications (Posts and Air) and Ghazanfar Ali Khan for Health

CWMG-LXXXVII

35. DISCUSSION WITH A CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY

[On or after *June 1, 1947*[1]]

You will wish to know what are the marks of a man who wants to realize Truth which is God. He must be completely free from anger and lust, greed and attachment, pride and fear. He must reduce himself to zero and have perfect control over all his senses beginning with the palate or tongue. Tongue is the organ of speech as well as taste. It is with the tongue that we indulge in exaggeration, untruth and speech that hurts. The craving for taste makes us slaves to the palate so that like animals we live to eat. But with proper discipline, we can make ourselves into beings only a "little below the angels". He who has mastered his senses is first and foremost among them. All virtues reside in him. God manifests Himself through them. Such is the power of self-discipline or self-purification.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 233

36. HOW DID I BEGIN IT?[2]

Readers must have noticed that last week I started writing for the *Harijan*. How long I shall be able to continue it, I do not know. God's will be done in this as in other things.

When I think of it, the circumstances under which I stopped writing for the *Harijan* have not altered. Pyarelalji is far away from me and in my opinion is doing very important work in Noakhali. He is taking part in what I have called a *mahayajna*. Parasuram, the English typist, who had become used to the work, has gone to Ahmedabad of his own choice to help Jivanji. Kanu Gandhi was of much help, but he is also engaged in the *mahayajna* of Noakhali. Most of the other helpers are also unable to do any writing for lack of time and other reasons. To resume writing for the *Harijan* under these adverse conditions would

[1] Pyarelal says that the missionary had "a ten-minute talk" with Gandhiji "in the first week of June".

[2] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu* which was published simultaneously with the source. The translation has been edited.

ordinarily be considered madness. But what appears unpractical from the ordinary standpoint is feasible under Divine guidance. I believe I dance to His tune. If this be delusion I cling to it.

Who is this Divinity? I would love to dwell upon it but not today.

The question that is foremost with us all, I discuss every evening after the prayer. This writing will come before the readers after seven days. This interval would be considered too long in the context of the pressing problems. Therefore, in these columns for the moment, I must confine myself to things of eternal value. One such is *brahmacharya*. The world seems to be running after things of transitory value. It has no time for the other. And yet when one thinks a little deeper it becomes clear it is the things eternal that count in the end.

What is *brahmacharya*? It is the way of life which leads us to the Brahman. It includes full control over the process of reproduction. The control must be in thought, word and deed. If the thought is not under control, the other two have no value. There is a saying in Hindustani: "He whose heart is pure has all the purifying waters of the Ganga in his house." For one whose thought is under perfect control, control over speech and action is easy. The *brahmachari* of my conception will be naturally healthy, will not even suffer from a headache and will enjoy a long life. His mind will be brilliant. He will never be slothful. Mental and physical work will not cause him fatigue. His outward tidiness will be a reflection of his inner being. He will exhibit all the attributes of the man of steadfast intellect described in the *Gita*.[1]

If there is not even one person who answers the description we should not worry in the least. There is nothing to wonder at if one who is an *urdhvareta* should have the above characteristics. Who can measure the creative strength of such sublimation, one drop of which has the potentiality of bringing into being a human life?

Patanjali has described five disciplines[2]. It is not possible to isolate any one of these and practise it. It may be possible in the case of truth, because it really includes the other four. And for this age the five have been expanded into eleven. Vinoba has put them in the form of a Marathi verse: They are non-violence, truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya*, non-possession,

[1] II. 55 to 68

[2] In his *Yogasutras*; they are: non-violence, truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya* and non-possession.

bread labour, control of the palate, fearlessness, equal regard for all religions, swadeshi and removal of untouchability.

All these can be derived from truth. But life is not so simple. It is not possible to enunciate one grand principle and leave the rest to follow of itself. Even when we know a proposition, its corollaries have to be worked out.

It is well to bear in mind that all the disciplines are of equal importance. If one is broken all are broken. There seems to be a popular belief amongst us that breach of truth or non-violence is pardonable. Non-stealing and non-possession are rarely mentioned. We hardly recognize the necessity of observing them. But a fancied breach of *brahmacharya* excites wrath and worse. There must be something seriously wrong with a society in which values are exaggerated and underestimated. Moreover, to use the word *brahmacharya* in a narrow sense is to detract from its value. Such detraction increases the difficulty of proper observance. When it is isolated even an elementary observance becomes difficult, if not impossible. Therefore, it is essential that all the disciplines should be taken as one. This enables one to realize the full meaning and significance of *brahmacharya*. In practice he alone is a true *brahmachari*, who observes, in thought, word and deed, the eleven-fold vow in its entirety.

NEW DELHI, June 2, 1947
Harijan, 8-6-1947

37. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI

June 2, 1947

When a person does not know the prayer by heart, the result is always an awkward situation. That is what happened today as also three or four days ago. . . .[1] could not begin the prayer. I then led with the first verse. The same thing happened today. I do not like all this. He must learn the prayer by heart. I may not tell him this, but he himself ought to have realized it. That he did not do so, what does it indicate? If even the three or four persons nearest to me have no heart in the prayer, must not the fault be mine? We seem to be going through the prayer as if it were a forced

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

task. It means cheating God. We may not like praying or may feel it is a burden, but we must not cheat God.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 56

38. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN[1]

June 2, 1947

I am sorry I can't speak; when I took the decision about the Monday silence I did reserve two exceptions, i. e., about speaking to high functionaries on urgent matters or attending upon sick people. But I know you do not want me to break my silence.

Have I said one word against you during my speeches? If you admit that I have not, your warning is superfluous.

There are one or two things I must talk about, but not today. If we meet each other again I shall speak.

Badshah Khan is with me in the Bhangi Colony. He said "Do ask the Viceroy to remove the Governor[2]. We won't have peace till he is gone." I don't know whether he is right or wrong. He is truthful. If it can be done decorously, you should do it.

From a photostat: G. N. 10835

[1] The interview took place at 12.30 p. m. In his note marked 'Secret' Lord Mountbatten said: "I saw Mr. Gandhi immediately after the first session of the meeting with the seven Indian Leaders. As this was a Monday, he was observing his day of silence; and he apparently did not consider the occasion of sufficient importance for him to break this rule, so he satisfied himself by handing me the attached note. The original of this is in my possession; it is written on the back of five separate old envelopes and will be, I feel, a document of some historic importance." (C. W. 11026, Lord Mountbatten Papers, Broadlands Archives Trust, Broadlands, Romsey, Hampshire).

[2] Sir Olaf Caroe of North-West Frontier Province

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39. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 2, 1947

Mahatmaji gave his reactions to the statement[1] of His Majesty's Government and to the draft letter.[2] He said that though he did not agree with the decisions of the Working Committee regarding the division of India, he did not want to take any step which would stand in the way of the Working Committee in implementing its previous decision. He however pointed out that there was still some scope for further clarification, and he suggested that Clause 20 relating to the right of the parts to decide to remain or not within the British Commonwealth should be clarified and the Government should be informed that the Congress does not want that any differential treatment should be meted out to any seceding part of India. He also wanted that a written and categorical assurance should be forthcoming from the Muslim League that it accepts the statement as a final settlement and will not make any further claims beyond what is conceded in this statement.

A. I. C. C. File No. 1499-P, 1946-48. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1&2] The statement was officially announced on June 3, but copies of it were given to the Congress, Muslim League and Sikh leaders, viz., Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, J. B. Kripalani, M. A. Jinnah, Liaquat Ali Khan, Abdul Rab Nishtar and Sardar Baldev Singh, during their conference with the Viceroy in the morning. For the text of the statement and the letter to the Viceroy, drafted by Jawaharlal Nehru in consultation with J. B. Kripalani, Vallabhbhai Patel and Govind Ballabh Pant, which was earlier read out but subsequently redrafted to incorporate Gandhiji's suggestions, *vide* Appendices I and II.

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40. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

DELHI,
Monday, June 2, 1947

I am unable to tell you what has happened or is happening on the political plane. But I would like to repeat what I have been saying these last three or four days, namely, that the common man should not concern himself with what the Viceroy has brought from England. We should concern ourselves with what our duty should be in any situation that may arise. The one thing the country should make clear is that it will accept nothing through force.

Continuing, therefore, the thought that I have been developing these last few days, I should like to ask what our doctors and scientists are doing for the sake of the country. One finds them readily going to foreign countries to learn new ideas and the latest treatments for curing diseases. I would suggest that they should turn their attention to the seven lakhs of villages of India. They will then find that all medical men and women can find work to do there. Not in the Western fashion, of course, but in our own fashion in the villages. They will then also know many indigenous remedies which they will be able to make use of. There are so many herbs in India that we have no need to import drugs at all. But more than through drugs they will help the people by teaching them the right mode of living.

What shall I say to the scientists? Are they giving their attention to growing more food? And this not with the aid of artificial fertilizers but through proper methods of tillage and by use of organic manure? In Noakhali I saw people using even the water hyacinth which grows wild and blocks the flow of river water. This our scientists will do when they learn to live for the country rather than for themselves.

I spoke yesterday of the invaluable work that Jawaharlal is doing. I had described him as the uncrowned king of India. He cannot be replaced today when the Englishmen are withdrawing their authority from India. He, who was educated at Harrow and Cambridge and became a barrister, is greatly needed to carry on the negotiations with the Englishmen. But the time is fast approaching when India will have to elect

the first president of the Republic. I would have proposed the name of Chakrayya, had he been alive. I would wish with all my heart to have a brave, selfless and pure-hearted scavenger girl to be our first President. It is no vain dream. We can certainly come across such Harijan girls if only we make an effort to find them. Had I not selected little Gulnar, the late Maulana Mahomed Ali's daughter? But the silly girl went and married Shuaib Qureshi. At one time she led the life of a fakir and had met me when the Ali Brothers were in jail. Gulnar is now the proud mother of many bright children, but she cannot now be my successor.

Our future President will have no need to know English. Of course he will be assisted by men who are proficient in political matters and who also know foreign languages. These dreams, however, can be realized only if we devote all our attention to our villages instead of killing each other.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 116-8

41. A LETTER[1]

[On or after *June 2, 1947*][2]

Probably no one is more distressed than I am over the impending division of India. But I have no desire to launch a struggle against what promises to be an accomplished fact. I have considered such a division to be wrong and therefore I could never be party to it. But when the Congress accepts such a division, even though reluctantly, I would not carry on any agitation against that institution. Such a step is not inconceivable under all circumstances. The Congress association with the proposed division is no circumstance warranting a struggle against it of the kind you have in mind. Nor can I endorse your attack upon the British. They have not in any way promoted or encouraged this step.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 244

[1] The addressee, in his letter, had said: "The British are quitting India but leaving it divided. . . . In case you launch a struggle against the division of India on communal or Indian States basis . . . I respectfully offer about one lakh . . . disciplined volunteers loyally to carry out your orders."

[2] From the reference to the Congress Working Committee decision to accept the British Government's proposal, which was on June 2

42. A LETTER[1]

[On or after *June 2, 1947*]

I feel helpless. I do not know that a parallel between Ireland and India can be drawn. The Congress and the League have come to terms, the former, no doubt, unwillingly. That being the case, one has to do the best that is possible under the circumstances. This I am trying to do according to my lights.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 244

43. LETTER TO NARMADA GANDHI

BHANGI NIWAS, NEW DELHI,
June 3,[2] *1947*

I have your letter.[3] I have many sons, some of whom bear the name Gandhi and some bear other names. A man who has risen above caste or community, who holds Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Jews in equal regard and who delights in calling himself a Bhangi — if you can count how many crores of sons, and therefore daughters-in-law, such a man is likely to have, please do the total yourself. Your letter was not in your handwriting. Perhaps you don't even know how to sign. The letter, therefore, deserves little attention. Be that as it may, a wise man should use his ancestral well to swim in, not to drown in or to commit suicide. That would be lack of understanding. A man who swims in it is a *jnani*. You must

[1] This was in reply to an Indian in Dublin who had written: "The Indians in Ireland strongly protest against the present talk of partition in India. . . . Ireland had the same fate when the British Government was leaving the country and now the result is that the people of the North and the South Ireland . . . are trying . . . to abolish this partition. . . . India will have to do the same thing. We Hindus and Muslims in this country have firm faith that India can't commit suicide by accepting division under your able leadership and guidance."

[2] From *Bihar Pachhi Dilhi*, p. 62

[3] The addressee, a member of the Gandhi family, had sought Gandhiji's help to resist the proposal to acquire for the nation their ancestral home at Porbandar.

give up that place. Be satisfied with what they give as compensation. I shall understand your demanding another house in exchange. To insist on having this very house is the limit of ignorant attachment. I don't care for a memorial. I have seen a good many memorials turn into ruins. That may happen in the course of time to this one, too. If, however, it is proposed to use our ancestral house for a good purpose, you or your advisers should not stand in the way.

I have spared this time for you under very heavy pressure of work, thinking that in your heart you would understand. If I am right in my belief, do not allow yourself to be misled by anybody but go on doing your dharma. You can show this letter to your relations and well-wishers.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Otabapano Vadalo, p. 9

44. A LETTER

June 3, 1947

I do not get a moment free. After the prayer I give some letters to Manu or Bisen to read out to me and then dictate replies to them. I think I have done all I could to win you over. But it seems I have failed. . . .[1] When we fail to satisfy somebody, we should assume that there must be something wrong with us. Dharma requires that we should not find fault with others but should always be willing to see our own. I should, therefore, advise you to go forward by yielding the way to others.

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 62

[1] Omission as in the source

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45. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 3, 1947

I ask the Socialists if they want to capture the Congress or to serve it. If they want to capture it, it is better that they should remain out. The Congress is a great organization, but no organization can live only on its past. It must always keep abreast of times and attract new blood and justify itself. If the Socialists come into the Congress as *khidmatgars*, and I hope they do want to come as such, they are welcome, for they cannot always remain a party which always complains and refuses to assume responsibility. When I use the Congress platform to advocate any views, I do not try to utilize it to damage the institution. Whether I remain in the Congress or outside I cannot imagine being ever disloyal to it.

A. I. C. C. File No. 1499-P, 1946-48. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

46. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 3, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

If in our view the League has not acted in a praiseworthy manner, let us say that the League has not acted in a praiseworthy manner. Similarly, if the Congress has not acted rightly let us tell the Congressmen too that their action is not right. Only then will democratic rule be established. One group functioning according to its own will does not constitute democratic rule.

[1] J. B. Kripalani, who had been holding discussions with the leaders of the Socialist Party with a view to minimizing the differences existing within the Congress, had placed before the Committee a memorandum submitted by them. The Committee were of opinion that the President should continue the discussions and place before the Committee any agreed proposal. Gandhiji was requested to express his opinion on the question.

Democracy is where even the man in the street is heard. When we are out to establish a democratic order, the Viceroy's House, or even Jawaharlal's house, is not the seat of the Government. I have described Jawaharlal as the uncrowned king. And we are a poor nation. We are so poor that we shall walk rather than ride in a car. Even if somebody offers us a lift in his car, we shall decline his offer saying that he can keep his car, we would rather walk. If we are over-hungry, we shall eat a little more. Thus democracy means the rule of the man in the street. One who always goes about in a car is spoilt. One who lives in a palace cannot rule the Government. That is why I say that we are not going to benefit by what the British, who have ruled over a world empire, might propose for us. Even if the rulers of India think something which does not appear proper to us, we ought to say so.

I said yesterday that the Banias were to blame for the black market. The difference between an ordinary trader and me is that I work for the good of the whole country while other traders fill their own coffers. Like Rajendra Babu I am also worrying about providing food for the whole country.

I am told that these days not much trade is left in the hands of the Banias. There are very few traders who can indulge in black market practices and the whole confusion is due to the Government Departments since the whole thing is managed by the Government. It is up to Rajendra Babu, who is the king of Bihar, to provide food. And it is in the hands of Rajaji, who has been a popular minister in Madras, to provide clothing. Still these things do not reach the people because corruption is rampant among the civil servants. If Rajendra Babu and Rajaji are surrounded by wicked persons whom they are not able to control, then they too should be considered responsible for the rot.

I do not know how far it is right to present the Government servants in this light. But I would certainly say that none from amongst us should resort to black-marketing. If there are some Government officers who give to their favourites twice or thrice the number of ration cards that their families are entitled to, those who receive these cards and those who give them are both guilty. It is possible that hitherto things could go on because of the awe of the British. But if this state of affairs continues even now, God alone can save India. But such things should not continue now. Today it is not necessary to act according to the order of the boss,

regardless of whether it is fair or unfair. We are not under foreign bosses any more. Rajendra Babu cannot issue orders in this way. He does not have under him the police that would force people to accept orders. Even Rajaji or Nehruji or the Sardar cannot compel people to obey their orders through force. Sardar Baldev Singh does have the army under him but even he cannot threaten to have the entire military force cracking down on the people to subdue them. You could not remove the British officers, but you can remove these people. They can rule over you only by pleasing you. I wish to inform you that your *Panchayat Raj* has begun from today. It will be twelve months before we acquire full power. In the meantime, God alone knows what may or may not happen. But you must accept the method of democratic rule right from now. Let no one among us fill his stomach by harming the country.

To all those who are in the Civil Service — be they White or Black, Hindu or Muslim, in the Secretariat or in the higher echelons of the police, to all whom my voice can reach I would say that their duties have now become ten times heavier. You must all now become clean and straight. Then alone will the whole task of our independence become easy and each one of us experience freedom.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 118-20

47. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

NEW DELHI,
June 4, 1947

DEAR DR. HOLMES[1],

This will be presented to you by Dr. B. C. Roy, one of our foremost physicians. Any country would be proud of him. I am sure that he needs no introduction from me. But he insisted. Hence this note. I know you will do all you can to bring him before America.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10968. Courtesy: Prof. Roger W. Holmes and Frances L. Brown

[1] 1879-1964; American clergyman, author of *My Gandhi*; Chairman, American Civil Liberties Union; visited India as the Rabindranath Tagore Memorial Visiting Professor from October 1947 to January 1948

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48. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,
June 4, 1947

MY DEAR KU.,

Your letter. I have sent Shoorjibhai[1] the following wire: "You can take Kumarappa if he can leave work to proper substitute."

If you can conveniently spare yourself without damage to village work entrusted to you, you can go.[2] Of this you are the sole and fittest judge.

You have also to judge how far Shoorjibhai will really need your services. I have grave doubts about it. In this matter again, you can judge much better than I can.

You can share this with Shoorjibhai as I am not writing to him.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 10193

49. LETTER TO SURENDRA[3]

June 4, 1947

I have your letter. I like what you say. It was my belief till now that you had adopted Nathji[4] as your guru. I am like a father to you all, and I am happy about it. If what I say appeals to your head and heart then alone should you accept it. You are free to pick and choose. But that cannot be said in regard to one whom we regard as our guru. There is no pick-and-choose there. Whatever the guru says should go straight home without the aid of reason. . . .[5] In the absence of such a guru one should listen to everybody and then act as

[1] Shoorji Vallabhdas; one of the founder-members of the All-India Village Industries Association

[2] To London, with a delegation of Indian businessmen; *vide* also "Letter to J. C. Kumarappa", p. 129.

[3] A senior member of the Ashram

[4] Kedarnath Kulkarni, Kishorelal Mashruwala's guru

[5] Omission as in the source

one feels prompted. There is a proverb which says that our own intuition (such as it is) is a better guide than all the learning and intellect of another. As you know, I have searched in vain for a guru of the type which I fancied you had found. I have mentioned this more than once either in *Harijan* or *Navajivan* and I have envied those who have claimed that they had found one. These friends in their turn recommended to me the names of Ramana Maharshi, Aurobindo Ghosh, Sahebji Maharaj of Agra, Upasani Baba, Mehar Baba and another name in Karnataka which I have forgotten. But I could adopt none of them and in the end came to the conclusion that perhaps, as with ideals, the quest is more than the attainment. An ideal ceases to be an ideal if it is realized. One can contemplate it, come ever closer to it, but never reach it. So much about the guru.

You should also ponder whether my conception of *brahmacharya*, on which I have tried to base my life, may not after all be the result of a delusion on my part, since I cannot make others see what to me is clear as daylight. The ultimate criterion of the soundness and purity of my theories and conduct must be whether my life, taken as a whole, has moved in the direction of greater self-control and renunciation or of self-indulgence. I shall regard it as your victory if they restore their earlier relationship, because I do not consider them lesser votaries of truth, in speech or action, than I. The question here is not one of absolute Truth. None has perceived it. I am talking about relative truth. Today I shall stop here. Lilavati who is here, has seen your letter. Manu has seen it. Sushila Nayyar has seen it and if more people desire it I shall let them see it.

I shall remain in this furnace of a place for some more time.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 67-8

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50. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

NEW DELHI,
June 4, 1947

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

I have your letter. It is your duty to make Anasuya a genuine worker. It will be good to send Rs. 10 a month to Chakrayya's mother. From his belongings whatever belongs to the Ashram may be retained but the Ashram is bound to return the rest to his mother. Besides his mother, whom did Chakrayya leave behind? What do they do? Where do they live? Do they have any of Chakrayya's qualities? We should do for them, in however small a measure, what Chakrayya would have done if he had lived longer. It becomes our duty to fully understand it.

Now that Kishorelalbhai is not there, Chimanlal, Balvantsinha, Chhaganlal and the others should decide things among themselves. There is no need to consult me.

By all means write about Chakrayya whatever you think proper. But it will be good to send it to me before sending it over to *Harijan*. I have already written about my impressions, you must have read it. I have written what I believe.

If what Lilavatibehn[1] says is true — and I think it is—then he certainly deserved to be the first President of independent India. He who is devoted to God and is a brave servant of the people can become President. I have no doubt about it. Perhaps I had said something to this effect in Godhra in the year 1917 or 1918 as President of the Political Conference. I had said that I would have no peace until and unless a Chamar or some such [untouchable] became President of India.

Vijayabehn told me everything about her sister. I have given her the right advice.

Write to Chakrayya's close relatives on my behalf that they should all become *sevaks* or *sevikas* as Chakrayya was. It will be good if they resist all temptations.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9038. Also C. W. 9162. Courtesy: Prabhakar

[1] Lilavati Asar

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51. DISCUSSION WITH RAJENDRA PRASAD

[*June 4, 1947*][1]

He told Dr. Rajendra Prasad that the first thing for them should be to lighten the burden of taxation and implement in full the constructive programme to which Congress had pledged itself. The politics of the country should be based on it. That did not require much cleverness but determination and honesty of purpose. For instance, universalization of khadi was simplicity itself, but if they yielded even by a jot in the matter of creating new mills, their khadi scheme would come to naught. They must not succumb to filling the exchequer like the previous Government.

I am also of the opinion that we should introduce fresh blood into the Congress organization. Because Congressmen have gone to prison, it does not mean that they should now hold all administrative jobs as a reward for their past sacrifices. On the contrary, shedding all prepossessions and party prejudices we should freely make use of administrative talent and experience wherever it is to be found even outside the Congress ranks.

This particularly applied to the Indian States. There was a vast fund of experience, knowledge, administrative talent and statesmanship in the States, which could be put to use with greatest advantage to the country.

I am sure they will be able to give us much that we lack and need. Congressmen know how to give fight, fill jails, but they lack the art of government, never having had any experience of administration. The States can provide us with all that if we know how to tap and utilize it.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 229-30

[1] From *Bihar Pachhi Dilhi*

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52. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 4, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You know that I am coming straight after meeting the Viceroy. Not that I had gone to get anything out of him. Nor had he called me in order to give me anything. Actually the talk between us was not even finished. But I excused myself saying to the Viceroy that I would not like to miss the prayer time so long as it was humanly possible. He appreciated my point and said that our talk could be resumed later.[1]

I told you that we would not give even an inch of land as Pakistan under coercion. In other words, we would not accept Pakistan under the threat of violence. Only if they can convince us by peaceful argument and if their proposal appeals to our reason would we concede Pakistan.

I cannot say that this whole question has been treated rationally. The Congress Working Committee insists that they have not granted anything under duress. They are not scared because so many people are dying and property is being destroyed. It is not at all true that they have accepted defeat in the face of violence. I should not take them to be a timid lot. They have taken this course because they realized that it was not possible to get round the Muslim League in any other way. For, once the Muslim League agrees to at least some points, our task becomes easy. In short, the Working Committee claims that they have accepted the vivisection of the country into Pakistan and Hindustan not out of fear but after realizing the prevailing situation.

We do not wish to force anyone. We tried hard. We tried to reason with them, but they refused to come into the Constituent Assembly. The League supporters kept on arguing that they were afraid of the Hindu majority in the event of their joining the Constituent Assembly.

What can the Viceroy do under these circumstances? He says that whatever happens, he wants to quit by June, 1948. He would not like to stay beyond that date even if you wanted

[1] For the Viceroy's note on the interview, *vide* Appendix III.

him to. He says they must grant full independence to India. Why he insists on this is another matter. You might say that the British have now become helpless because they are no longer the mighty power they used to be. We would want them to be a first-class power even now. It is true that they have tyrannized over us for 150 years. I also know that we have been fighting against their might for the last 32 years. But I never make an enemy of my opponent. I would still appeal to God and pray that He should be good to them. And whatever God does would be just.

I shall speak no more now about God's infallible power. Let us realize this much that every human being is prone to commit mistakes. Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs all can say that the Muslims have committed a great blunder. But on what ground can we absolve ourselves of the blame? Let us leave it to God to pass judgment.

I would say this much, that it was wrong on their part to demand Pakistan. But they can think of nothing else. They say that they can never live where the Hindus have a majority. They are harming themselves by making this demand and I pray to God to save them in time from any harm coming to them. When my own brother, whether he follows my religion or some other religion, wants to harm me, I cannot aid him, even though he may not be aware that he is harming me. If I do it I am sure to be crushed between the two stones of a quern. Why should I not keep my own millstone apart?

And now I want to reassure you about the British. I want to tell you, not in the light of the Viceroy's speech[1] but in the light of my own talks with him, that the Viceroy has had no hand in this decision. The decision has been taken jointly by all the leaders in consultation. The leaders say that for seven years they insisted on the unity of India. The Cabinet Mission also gave a reasonable award. But the League went back on its assurance and now this course has had to be adopted. They (the Muslims) have got to come back to India. Even if Pakistan is formed, there will have to be mutual

[1] In his broadcast of June 3, 1947, the Viceroy had stated: "I am of course just as much opposed to the partition of Provinces as I am to the partition of India herself and for the same basic reasons. For just as I feel there is an Indian consciousness which should transcend communal differences, so I feel there is a Punjabi and a Bengali consciousness which has evoked a loyalty to their Provinces. And so I felt it was essential that the people of India themselves should decide this question of partition."

exchange of populations and movements to and fro. Let us hope that co-operation endures.

But now that this decision has been taken, should I say that we should all rebel against the Congress? Or, should I ask the Viceroy to intervene? The Viceroy says that he never wanted partition. Jawaharlal says on behalf of the Congress that he too does not approve of it. But they have all been obliged to accept it, not for fear of violence, but because of the circumstances. For the Hindus, the Sikhs, all say that they would live in their own homelands, not in the Muslims'. The Hindus are willing to be under Sikh rule because they say the Sikhs never compel them at the point of the sword to bow before the *Granth Saheb*.

Master Tara Singh came to see me today. I told him that he should not remain a lone soldier, but become equal to one and a quarter lakh. The Sikhs should learn to die without killing and then the history of the Punjab would be completely changed. With it the history of India would change too. The Sikhs are few in number, but they are brave. That is why the British are afraid of them. If the Sikhs became truly brave, rule of the Khalsa would spread throughout the world.

I told you these things to relieve you of your pain. You should not feel sorry at heart that India is to be divided into two. The demand has been granted because you asked for it. The Congress never asked for it. I was not even present here. But the Congress can feel the pulse of the people. It realized that the Khalsa as also the Hindus desired it. You have lost nothing, nor have the Sikhs, nor the Muslims. The Viceroy has already stated in his speech and he has also assured me that when we approach him united this decision would be revoked. Only our united decision would be accepted. The Viceroy says that his task is merely to see that the British carry on their task honestly till power is transferred and then quit in peace.[1] The British people do not wish that chaos should reign after they quit this country.

I had already said that they should not worry about anarchy. I am, after all, a gambler. But who would listen to me? You do not listen to me. The Muslims have given me up. Nor can I fully convince the Congress of my point of view. Actually I am a slave of the Congress, because I belong to

[1] In his speech the Viceroy had said: "Whichever way the decision of the Indian people may go, I feel sure any British official who may be asked to remain for a while will do everything in his power to help implement that decision."

India. I tried my best to bring the Congress round to accept the proposal of May 16. But now we must accept what is an accomplished fact. The wonderful thing about it is that we can undo it any time we want.

In the end, I would only say that you had better forget the Viceroy. It pains me that instead of having direct talks we should negotiate through the Viceroy as mediator. It does us no credit that the League should convey its point to the Viceroy who in turn conveys it to the Congress and the Congress again conveys its own view to the Viceroy. But what can be done when the Muslim League does not agree to anything at all? The Congress agrees to something and the Sikhs have joined the Congress. And the Viceroy then had to request Jinnah Saheb day and night to climb down a little. Thus he found this solution. Even while doing all this the Viceroy says that he is wondering what the League would say and what the Congress would say. But he goes on doing his work in the name of God. Let us therefore have trust in his honesty so long as we have no experience to the contrary.

But I would like to request Jinnah Saheb, implore him, to have direct talks with us at least now. Whatever has happened is all right, but now let us sit together and decide about the future. Let him forget all about the Viceroy now, and let him invite us to come to any understanding he wishes to have, so that it is in the interest of all of us.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 120-4

53. A LETTER

June 5, 1947

It is very difficult—practically impossible—to achieve real freedom without self-denial. Nobody had ever dreamt in those days that our sacrifices would be materially rewarded. But today we are engaged in a race for positions of power. What a misfortune! Shall I describe it as my own tragedy, the tragedy of our soldiers of truth and ahimsa? You may take it either way you like. That, however, is the state of affairs today.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 73

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54. TALK WITH COLLEGE STUDENTS[1]

June 5, 1947

GANDHIJI: We do not know the real meaning of freedom at all. I am not unaware of the fact that while the day of freedom is nearing licence also is increasing. Don't we see frequent strikes and students in schools and colleges insulting their teachers and paying no attention to their studies?

STUDENTS: Yes, that is true indeed. But what should we do when injustice is done to us?

G. You may, while observing perfect self-restraint, investigate whether or not injustice has been done in fact. But you said that you felt no freedom in the air and I have replied to that statement. Aren't you, for example, exercising your freedom when you attack school or college buildings, force the authorities to give you a holiday or insult your teachers? I want your reply to that. We shall have the fragrance of real freedom only when we learn to observe perfect self-control. I ask these girls, if they have ever looked after their homes, whether they are or are not free to throw out leftovers and dirty water on the street.

As long as every child in the country does not realize that he must not spit or throw rubbish anywhere it likes, for that makes his own country unclean and harms the people's health, till then this is the kind of education that we most need. A country whose inhabitants are narrow-minded and undisciplined can make no progress. Now every man or woman is both subject and king, and it should, therefore, be everybody's aim to see that the country prospers. If that were so, the mutual slaughter that has started with the [proposal for] partition and which bodes ill for the future of the country would not have occurred. If only I could convince the Hindus of this and if we could learn to face death courageously, I have no doubt that our country would rise to the greatest height among the nations of the world. Until we learn forgiveness,

[1] The students who came from Bombay and Poona wanted to know about partition and said that they did not feel the glow of independence anywhere.

there is no hope of real progress for man. All of you have come to Delhi. This is a historical city and has been the capital of India for centuries. From the time of Shri Krishna down to the coming of the Pathans, the Moguls, the Rajputs, the Marathas and lastly the British and now our own Government, there has been a succession of rulers. But don't jump to the conclusion that, having got power in Delhi, we have won the blessings of freedom. As long as prosperity and education do not reach the hundreds of thousands of villages in the country and make them happy, I will not believe that we have swaraj. All of you are college students, receive higher education in your colleges and follow the Western way in every detail of your daily lives, from your mode of dressing to the food you eat. It is not your fault that you do so; it is only the result of the fascination the British Government exercised on us. But I will continue to believe ourselves slaves as long as all these things do not disappear completely. For example, every Indian, whether educated or uneducated, has learnt to have tea and biscuits the first thing in the morning. It is little wonder to me that you have not felt the glow of freedom when I see you hugging to yourselves the symbols of your cultural slavery.[1] You are wearing socks in this intolerable heat. (Laughter.) I can go on citing such instances without end. My point, in brief, is that till we have eschewed, even in small matters, all Western things and ways which harm the country, the society and our family life, we shall remain slaves. Some features of their civilization are admirable indeed. But we hardly see anybody emulating those.

In the circumstances in which we are placed today, it will be inviting a calamity on us to resort to violence, for it will be extremely difficult for us to exercise any restraint in the use of violence. Don't think that it is only here that political parties are fighting with one another and that there are no such disputes in Europe and America. But the people in those countries are so well educated that they do not lose their sense of proportion but always keep in mind the interest of the country as a whole in everything they do.

They do not make a mountain out of a molehill as we do. They never lose their sense of proportion. They have learnt to subordinate everything to what they regard as national interest.[2]

[1] This sentence is from *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase.*

[2] This and the following paragraph are from *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase.*

Therefore, for India, non-violence was an absolute necessity. And the need would be even greater, he emphasized, after independence when the external control, which prevented various parts and parties from flying apart or at each other, would be removed.

We have fallen so low that there is rivalry even between Banias and Brahmins, that we never think who our real enemies are but only consider to which community the other person belongs. Instead of working in co-operation with our own countrymen and living happily with them, we try to seek the co-operation of foreigners. We had the most telling example of this the day before yesterday when with the Viceroy's help we partitioned the country. I know, and I suppose you also do, since you hail from Bombay and Poona, that even our religious observances and calendars differ. There is no uniformity even in the incidence of the *ekadashi* or other days of fasting! On the days on which the *Vaishnavas* fast, the *Shaivas* do not. And people have made their God exclusively their own. There is but one God, only He is known by different names. This is made plain in every scripture beyond any shadow of doubt. The time has now come to banish all ignorance about such matters. If we do not get rid of it, we shall pay dearly for the mistake in future.

You are students. The future of the country depends on you. When you asked me for time, I immediately agreed in spite of the heavy pressure of work on me, for I look upon myself as a real friend of students. Whenever I get an opportunity of meeting students, I look upon it as my good fortune. And I am now seventy-eight and can, therefore, say from my long experience that the more deeply you think, while you are students, over the best way of making progress in life and follow it, the more you will be able to advance your own welfare and that of the society and the country. Student life is the best time when you can learn to lead such a fruitful life.[1]

It is time we shed our inertia and girded up our loin, to grapple with the challenge of independence.

What the situation demanded, he continued, was work, solid work; not recriminational or verbal pyrotechnics. Nobody had the right to waste a single moment in idleness, self-seeking or disgruntled brooding. They had to be "like a mother to whom no joy is greater than rearing and nourishing her child without a thought of reward for her pains. . . .[2] Striving is

[1] The following five paragraphs are from *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase.*
[2] Omission as in the source

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everything. But if we strive with an eye to fruit, it hinders our progress." For instance, India had adopted the method of truth and non-violence not as an end but only as a means to the attainment of independence. Therefore, the moment that goal was reached, they fell away from it.

In the result we are where we are today. If we do not wake up in time and replenish our depleted reservoir of non-violence by engaging in constructive work as before, our last state will be worse than the first.

If he had his way, Gandhiji went on to say, he would begin with a radical reform of the military and the police. Under a non-violent order, they might keep a small armed force for defence against external aggression while the people were being organized for non-violent defence. But in the meantime and as a preparation for it land armies with pickaxes and spades should take the place of armed police and engage in growing more food, building roads, constructing drainage channels and teaching people discipline and strict observance of the rules of sanitation and cleanliness. Their selfless service would then enable them to command spontaneous co-operation of the people so that the anti-social elements would find themselves isolated and powerless. Such a force could become a means for the realization of a non-violent social order instead of being an instrument of coercion in the hands of the State.

As with the army so with the police. In England the police was regarded by the people as their best friend and helper, a personification of the sense of duty, but in India its counterpart was dreaded by the common people as a bully and an oppressor.

I have not the slightest doubt in my mind that 99 per cent of the responsibility for the present bloodshed and chaos rests on the police and the military. Instead of protectors, they have become the disturbers of peace. The whole thing ought to be remodelled and the colossal waste of public revenue on these two departments checked immediately. The only way to cope with the rising tide of violence successfully is to begin with police reform.

I have never been able to stop anybody who was eager to go abroad for studies. I could not save even boys brought up in the Ashram from falling a victim to such a desire. But hardly anybody who goes abroad shows himself eager to be of greater service to the country by going abroad. Of course there is much for us to learn in foreign countries. But I cannot help wondering why we are eager to go abroad but make no effort to attract foreigners to our country. If we wish to do so, then there is only one way, and that is that we should overcome

fascination foreign countries have for us and start such activities in our own country. We shall be able to do that and create something new only if we make experiments. For example, new drugs are discovered and new surgical instruments are manufactured in foreign countries. Surely all these things did not happen without experiments. But we have become so lethargic that as long as we get a thing ready-made we don't wish to try and make it ourselves. I do not, therefore, feel inclined to bless people who wish to go abroad.

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 73-6; and *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, pp. 221-3

55. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 5, 1947

Announcing the death of the Buddhist scholar Shri Kosambi, Gandhiji said:

Perhaps you have not heard his name, and so cannot feel grieved. Even otherwise we should not grieve over anyone's death. But it is human nature to grieve over the death of one's dear or revered ones. We are so made that we raise to the skies anyone who goes about beating his own drum and indulges in political acrobatics but fail to appreciate the silent worker.

Kosambiji was one such silent worker. He was born in a village. He was a Hindu by birth, but he had come to believe that no other religion, not even the Vedic religion, gave as much importance to non-violence, piety, etc., as Buddhism did. So he embraced Buddhism and gave himself up to the study of Buddhist scriptures. He acquired such proficiency in the subject that he had no equal in India in scholarship. He taught Pali at the Gujarat Vidyapith and the Kashi Vidyapith and freely gave of his profound learning.

He sent to me Rs. 1,000 which somebody had given him. He wrote to me that I should send someone to Ceylon for the study of Pali. But I asked him whether anyone would acquire insight into Buddhism by studying in Ceylon. I have told the Buddhists the world over that if they want to understand Buddhism they can do so only in India, its birthplace, that they must seek it where it first emerged as an offshoot of Vedic religion. They would grasp the deep significance of Buddhism

only when they had also studied the works of Shankaracharya, that unrivalled scholar who was described as a Buddhist in disguise.

But in scholarship I cannot compare myself with Kosambiji. I am merely a barrister who became one by attending dinners in England! I have a very meagre knowledge of Sanskrit. If I have become a Mahatma today it is not because I read for the bar in England, but because I have devoted myself to service through truth and non-violence. If I command any respect today it is due to the little success I have achieved in my pursuit of truth and non-violence.

When Kosambiji realized that he was no longer physically fit to carry on any work, he decided to give up his life through fasting. At Tandonji's instance I made Kosambiji, very much against his wishes, give up his fast. But his digestion had been severely affected and he was not able to eat anything at all. So, in Sevagram, he again gave up food and keeping himself only on water gave up the breath after forty days. During his illness he refused all nursing and all drugs. He even abandoned the desire to go to Goa where he was born. He commanded his son and others not to come to him. He left instructions that no memorial should be set up after his death. He also expressed the desire that he should be cremated or buried according to whichever was cheaper. Thus, with the name of the Buddha on his lips he passed into that final sleep which is to be the estate, one day or another, of all who are born. Death is the friend of everyone. It will visit us as destined. One may be able to predict the time of birth, but no one has yet been able to predict the time of death. We saw the same thing in the case of Chakrayya.

I beg you to forgive me for taking so much of your time over this.

I received a telegram yesterday saying that I had been talking so loftily for four or five days about not yielding even an inch of land for Pakistan under coercion, that they could take anything by appealing to our hearts. Now that Pakistan has come to be, why am I not undertaking a fast against it?

I am asked why I indulged in such talk then and why I have cooled off now. Why do I not rebel against the Congress? Why am I slavishly toeing their line? How can I remain a servant of the Congress? Why do I not undertake a fast and give up my life?

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They are entitled to say these things. But I have no right to be angry with the correspondent. Getting angry means losing one's balance. There is an English saying: 'Anger is short madness.' The *Gita* also says: 'Wrath breeds stupefaction, stupefaction leads to loss of memory.'[1] Then how can I who have studied the *Gita* give way to anger?

How can I go on a fast because somebody wants me to do so? I believe I have to undergo one more fast in my life. Ever since my fast in the Aga Khan Palace[2] I have had a strong feeling that that was not my last fast, that I shall have to undertake one more fast. But I will not do it at anyone's bidding. I will do it when God commands.

I have said that I have become a witness of Jinnah Saheb. He wants peace in the country. I too desire peace. But if, in spite of that, riots continue to rage everywhere throwing the country into turmoil and God tells me, that is, my own heart tells me, that now I must depart from the world, I shall do so. Jinnah Saheb persuaded me to sign the appeal that there should be no violence in politics. Lord Mountbatten also cast his spell on me and had me sign the appeal instead of Kripalani or Nehru. I signed the appeal on Jawaharlal's advice. Hence, we are three partners to this deal: the two of us because we have put our signatures to it, and Lord Mountbatten—not in his capacity as Viceroy, but as Mountbatten—for he is more than a mere witness.

In other words, there has to be peace in the whole country. If there is not, Jinnah Saheb will be guided by his God, Mountbatten by his and I by mine.

But through you I wish to convey to both of them that the moment they ask me to, I shall accompany them on foot or in a vehicle, whichever way they prefer. I cannot go by air. What shall I be able to see down below from an aeroplane? Besides I have never travelled by a plane. Of course I have seen aeroplanes from below and they look like fishes.

Gurgaon is still burning. I have not received any information about it today, but the Jats and the Meos are in confrontation there. Fortunately they do not wish to indulge in the mad frenzy of killing women and children and old people. They are fighting like soldiers. But why should they fight at all? That they fight is a matter of shame to me, to Jinnah

[1] II. 63

[2] From February 10, 1943 to March 3, 1943

Saheb and also to Lord Mountbatten. It is similarly a matter of shame for Sardar Baldev Singh and Jawaharlal. Fortunately, nothing much happened on June 2 or on June 4.

But one thing has definitely come to pass. Hindustan and Pakistan have come into being and their separate Constituent Assemblies have been formed. Should I now die to nullify them? I am not going to die that way.

I have a very big job to attend to. It is said that now India is going to be industrialized. But industrialization of my conception has to be carried out in the villages with the charkha plying in every home, and cloth being produced in every village.

I would not approve of their idea of having a thousand mills in the place of one Birla Mill. I mention Birla's name because he is my friend. But I have all mill-owners in mind. I would not be disturbed if there was an earthquake or the Birla Mill caught fire, I would shed no sympathetic tears before the Birla brothers. Of course, if someone deliberately sets out to destroy his mills, I would take that person to task.

It seems that now the Congress has decided to set up a large number of mills all over India and spread a network of mechanized industries. And it wants to have a large army in the country. But I have nothing to do with that. Did I have anything to do with the violence in Bihar? And what is there now left in India that can gladden my heart? But I am still here, because the Congress has now grown into a great institution and I cannot go on a fast in protest against it. But I feel as if I was thrown into a fire-pit and my heart is burning. God alone knows why I continue to live in spite of this. Whatever I am, I am after all a servant of the Congress. If the Congress is seized with madness, should I also go mad? Should I die in order to prove that I alone was right? I want to appeal to the reason of you all, of the Congress, of the Muslims, of my friend Jinnah Saheb and win their hearts.

I would like to ask Jinnah Saheb, now that his slogan of *Pakistan Zindabad* has been realized, why he still goes to Lord Mountbatten. Why does he not go to the Congress? Why does he not invite Badshah Khan and Dr. Khan Saheb? Why does he not show them what a pretty rose Pakistan is?

But I have been receiving complaints about Pakistan. I have a letter today which says that a British firm will be going to Lahore to manufacture arms. It is also being said that the

Muslim League has decided to remain in the Commonwealth, and that it will confine itself to the Dominion Status.

The Congress has committed no crime in accepting Dominion Status. It has accepted it provisionally, with a view to putting an end to the British rule immediately. It will opt for complete independence as soon as the Constitution is ready. Will the Muslim League still keep to the Dominion Status? Both our countries should have uniform Constitutions. Both have declared complete independence as their objective. Then it also becomes Jinnah's duty to have nothing less than complete independence. That duty cannot be performed by indulging in mutual fights.

All the Hindus got tired of persuading him, and they conceded Pakistan in the hope that at last they would have peace.

One may ask why I allowed such a thing to happen. But should I then insist that the Congress should do everything only after consulting me? I am not so mad. And, if I rebel against the Congress, it will mean that I am rebelling against the whole country, because the Congress belongs to the whole country. I shall do such a thing only when I find the Congress has gone over to the capitalists.

But so far, I think, the Congress is working for the poor. It may be following a path different from mine and have its mind fixed on armaments, an army and factories but I have to convince them by arguments, not by resorting to a fast.

Even fasting can be devilish. May God also protect me from such devilish fasting. May He keep me from devilish actions, devilish speech and devilish thoughts. Better far that He takes me away before I succumb to any such thing. If I undertake a fast it will only be a pure and godly fast.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 124-30

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56. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

DELHI,
June 6, 1947

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letter. I had it read out at 4.15 a.m. after the prayers and now I am dictating this. I cannot answer all the questions. I can offer no solace to you. One who has lost faith in oneself has only Ramanama to fall back upon. So great is the value of repeating God's name that one may die with it on one's lips and yet stand to gain. So my advice to you and Gangi is that you should do whatever you can reciting His name all the time.

Everything about me is uncertain.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI ANAND HINGORANI
GURPURI BUNGALOWS
DECCAN GYMKHANA
POONA

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

57. A LETTER

June 6, 1947

I am replying to your letter today itself. You are gravely mistaken in assuming that as soon as swaraj comes prosperity will flood the country. If, before assuming that, you had used your imagination a bit to see that after 150 years of slavery, we would need at least half that much time to cleanse our body-politic of the virus that has infiltrated every cell and pore of our being during our subjection, you would not have found it necessary to ask me. I am sure you will understand what I mean, namely, that far greater sacrifices will be needed after the attainment of self-government to establish good government and raise the people

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than were required for the attainment of freedom by means of satyagraha.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 81

58. DISCUSSION WITH RAJENDRA PRASAD

June 6, 1947

If all the leaders join the Cabinet, it will be very difficult to maintain contact with the people at large. The result will be that opportunists and enemies of the Congress will incite the people and our poor people will easily fall a prey to their propaganda. That is why I suggested even in my prayer speech that a Harijan like Chakrayya or a Harijan girl should be made the nation's first President and Jawaharlal should become the Prime Minister. If similar arrangements are made in the provinces too, we shall have gained two ends at the same time. The leaders will be able to keep in touch with the people and young men and women will get trained.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 81

59. NOTES FOR DISCUSSION WITH VICEROY

[*June 6, 1947*][1]

Frontier Province—postponement of referendum before Pakistan scheme disclosed otherwise bloodshed is a certainty. Therefore the Ministry[2] may make a statement and resign.

2. There must now be no coalition Ministry but only the Congress. You may have another Pakistan Ministry, provisional.

3. You should ask Ji[nnah] at this stage to talk to Congressmen and settle all other matters and work as friends excelling one another in well doing.

[1] Gandhiji met the Viceroy on June 6, 1947 at 4.30. p. m. Presumably, these were the points discussed at the Working Committee meeting and referred to in "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", pp. 94-5. These were conveyed in detail to Lord Ismay on June 6, 1947; *vide* the following item.

[2] The Congress Ministry in N. W. F. P. headed by Dr. Khan Saheb

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4. Agreement between the States that each will have identical status and treaty with the British.

From a facsimile: *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, between pp. 288 and 289

60. TALK WITH LORD ISMAY[1]

[*June 6, 1947*][2]

Mr. Gandhi suggests that H. E. should speak to Mr. Jinnah in the following sense:

I am extremely anxious lest the referendum in N. W. F. P. should lead to bloodshed and blood-feuds between brother and brother Pathan, and I have been wondering whether it could possibly be avoided. Now that you have got your Pakistan, would it not be wise for you to go to the N. W. F. P. and speak to the people of the Province, of whatever party they may be, including the present Ministry and their followers? You could explain what Pakistan, which has hitherto been a vague expression, really is and present your case in an attractive manner, in the hope that you will be able to woo them to become a Province of Pakistan, with perfect freedom to frame their own Provincial constitution.

If you are successful in your persuasion, the proposed referendum and all that it involves would be avoided. If you felt disposed to adopt this suggestion, I could, I think, give you a positive assurance that the Khan Brothers and their followers would meet you as friends and give you an attentive hearing.

Mr. Gandhi asked that if this appeal to Mr. Jinnah was unsuccessful, he (Mr. Gandhi) might be informed of the fact, in order that he might consider the position again.[3] Mr. Gandhi added that Abdul Ghaffar Khan was so anxious about the permanent blood-feuds which would result from the referendum that he would go to almost any length, consistent with honour, to avoid it. In the last resort, he would be prepared to advise his brother and his colleagues in the Ministry to resign, and then to ask the Viceroy to put the N. W. F. P. under Section 93.

[1&2] This was an enclosure to a letter dated June 7 from Lord Ismay, Chief of Viceroy's personal staff, to Gandhiji which read: "I enclose herewith a copy of a note that I have sent to the Viceroy, summarizing the suggestions . . . you put forward in our talk yesterday evening."

[3] For M. A. Jinnah's response, *vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", p. 141.

Mr. Gandhi emphasized that he had not discussed the above with his colleagues, and therefore that it should not be mentioned to anyone at this stage.

Mr. Gandhi suggested that Mr. Jinnah should be advised to try to win over West Bengal and Eastern Punjab to Pakistan by the same methods.

Mr. Gandhi suggested that H. E. the Viceroy should speak in the following sense to Mr. Jinnah, when he found him in the right mood to listen:

I am here to help both parties to reach an agreement in any way that I can, and I regard this task not only as a pleasure, but as a duty. You must remember, however, that I cannot in any event, be here forever. Now, therefore, that the decision has been made and you have your Pakistan, why do you not go yourself and talk with the Congress leaders as friends, and try to get a settlement between yourselves on all the various points at issue? This would make for a much better atmosphere than adhering to the practice of only meeting together under my chairmanship.

Mr. Gandhi said that there was a lot of loose talk going about that H. M. G. might have different agreements with Hindustan and Pakistan which would possibly tend to favour one over the other. It was, therefore, important that an announcement should be made to the effect that it was H. M. G.'s wish either to enter into tripartite arrangements with both the Dominions, or to have identical bilateral agreements with each of them; and that, in any event, there would be no question of differentiation.[1]

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 254-6. Also from a copy: India Office Library and Records, London

[1] In his letter dated June 10, to Gandhiji, Lord Mountbatten said: "Thank you so much for the admirable suggestions which you had handed to Lord Ismay. . . . I will, of course, take the earliest opportunity of mentioning to Mr. Jinnah the points you made. I will do my best to convince him, but I hope you will not count too much on my intervention. I think the idea in the fourth paragraph of your note is a good one, and I will follow it up with H. M. G. Perhaps the Prime Minister would give an assurance in debate in parliament." *Vide* also "Letter to Lord Mountbatten", pp. 126-8.

61. DISCUSSION WITH MEMBERS OF HINDU MAHASABHA

[*June 6, 1947*][1]

Gandhiji explained to them that his whole life was dedicated to God's service. His politics was not unrelated to the deepest things in life. It was only an extension or application of the ideals of truth and non-violence to the social sphere. He would die in the propagation of those ideals rather than barter them even for independence. They must, therefore, excuse him for not taking their advice.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 233

62. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 6, 1947

I shall not waste time in reading out her long note.[2] I was under the impression that people had understood me by now. But I find that we are not so fortunate. Irreligion is being practised in the name of religion. But we shall have to put up with irreligion. If the lady tries to interrupt, let no one harass her. Now she has gone a step further and writes to me that I should not even deliver my speech. She may say what she likes. The prayer will not stop nor will I desist from delivering my speech. If everyone starts behaving in this manner the administration of the country cannot function. You will please remain peaceful.

I see that you are all oppressed by the heat. But you have got to listen and I have got to speak. But I can speak to you only when you maintain quiet. This does not mean that you should not fan yourselves with a piece of paper or a handkerchief. Even though it is hot, I am getting some air. This girl is fanning me, how can I then stop you?[3] If all of

[1] In the source, the discussion precedes an account of Gandhiji's meeting with "some missionaries", who, Pyarelal says, "came on the following day" that is, on June 7; *vide* pp. 95-6.

[2] A lady had again objected to the verses from the Koran being recited at prayer.

[3] There was laughter as the person wielding the fan was a man.

you do the fanning yourselves, I would not say that it is the job of a woman. You can bring your own fans. A woman can also act like a man. If she does not become disheartened, woman is man's 'better half'.

In the *bhajan*, the *gopi* says that hearing the flute she wants to go to the forest. But the *bhajan* is not meant only for women. We are all like *gopis* before God. God by Himself is neither male nor female. For Him there is no distinction of status, no distinction of birth. He can be described only as 'not this, not this'. God resides in the forest that is the heart and His flute is the voice within. We do not have to go to desolate forests. We have to hear the divine music that goes on in our own hearts. When each one of us starts hearing that sweet music, all would be well with India.

We heard this *bhajan* at an opportune moment. This lady tells me that I should retire to the forest for it is I who have spoilt Jinnah. But who am I to spoil him? If at all, I can only hope to transform him. I can do it not by force but by love. One can only destroy by force, by the atom bomb. The atom bomb has only wrought destruction. It has not drawn anyone to itself. If there is any real magnet in the world which can draw man to man, it is only love. I am witness to it. The lady says I should not read the Koran, should not speak at all, only retire to the forest. But even if I go to the forest you will drag me back. Men are created to live together. If I had learnt the art of living in a forest and drawing people there, I would not have had to make speeches or to say anything. I would have lived in solitude and silence and you would have done what I wanted. But God has not yet qualified me for that.

You may want to know what I talked[1] with the Viceroy during my long session with him today and what I have brought from him. What could he give? He is helpless. He has nothing to take and nothing to give. He tells me that he is praying to God that every man in India, whether Hindu, Muslim or Sikh, should realize that he has not come here to rob the country or cause internal strife. He has come here only to leave, if possible after seeing peace established, if not, he will leave in any case. He says that the British would not remain in the country after August 15. He will stay on as the Governor-General only if we want him to do so. The Viceroy

[1] For Lord Mountbatten's note of his interview with Gandhiji, *vide* Appendix IV.

says that at present he has nothing more than Dominion Status to give. It would have been different if we had driven them out. But this, he says, is the best way if they are to leave as friends.

The Viceroy also told me that the British were leaving as friends because India did not try to drive them out by force. People did sabotage the railways, telegraph service, etc., in 1942. But they were only a few. The masses did not indulge in such activities. He told me that we behaved decently with them. We only asked them to quit, because we were pained that they had spread poison in the country. But, he said, the Congress did not give them poison. The Congress only resorted to non-co-operation and the British realized that they could not hold on except with the help of Martial Law, and so they had decided to leave.

Had our non-co-operation been perfect, the British would have left long ago and in a much better manner. The Congress had called upon the students, Government servants and soldiers to come out and join the movement. But they were weak; they could not leave their positions. But still we did not threaten to kill them or poison them. The British recognized this strength in us and so they are going. But the Viceroy says that the people still do not trust him. A journalist has written that the British had come here to rule and are now going away after dividing the country into two so that both the parts should fight and one or the other should seek the help of the British, and thus provide them the excuse for staying on.

This would mean betrayal and I hope the British will not betray us this time. Even if they do we should ourselves be brave. Why should the brave be afraid of betrayal? When the Viceroy talks to me with such honesty, why should I doubt his intentions? The Viceroy asked me if I at least trusted him. I told him that I would not have gone to him if I did not trust him. I told him I was truthful and honest.

I talked to the Viceroy in this vein and I also conveyed to him my pain at the division of the country into India and Pakistan. He then told me that it was not the doing of the British, that they had given what the Congress and the League had unitedly asked for. He said that the British could not leave at once because even dividing the effects of a small house took time and here it was the question of dividing a whole country. But I asked the Viceroy to relax. It would be better that we should attend to the task of division ourselves.

For the past two or three days I have been pleading with them that, now that they had got what they sought, even though it be a little less than expected, they should show what it is. Is it a rose in name only or does it also have the fragrance? Why not let us at least smell it? Tell us if there is place for the Sikhs and the Hindus in Pakistan. Or are they to be slaves? And do they intend to split up the N. W. F. P. by having a referendum there? Do they want to split up Baluchistan too?

Would they not show even now by their actions that though so long the Muslims had considered the Hindus their enemies they consider them so no longer? That they would not divide the Pathans, the Baluchis and also the Hindus? Will they not show that India will remain one even if we must divide the assets like brothers and that we will carry on our affairs without the British?

I shall not mind it if they abuse me for talking in this manner. Even yesterday abuse was hurled at me when someone exclaimed why I did not die. But let these people at least explain what is in their mind. Why do they not come to me even now? Why do they not come to you? Why do they not invite the Congressmen or the non-Congressmen to meet them? There was a time when they had forged an agreement between the Congress and the League. Why do they not forge a stronger and lasting agreement now?

Let us all try together to be friends and not enemies. The Viceroy by himself cannot achieve this. Nor can the Congress alone do it. We can become friends only by making united efforts.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 130-4

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63. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

June 7, 1947

I had a long conversation with His Excellency. . . .[1] The more I see His Excellency the more I feel that he is sincere. But it is quite possible to damage him if the surrounding atmosphere of which the Indian element is the author overwhelms him, as it may well do any of us.

All the points we discussed[2] at the Working Committee meeting yesterday were touched upon by me and I carried with me the impression that he really appreciated them.

To be wholly truthful requires the highest form of bravery and therefore of non-violence.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 220

64. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

June 7, 1947

The oftener we meet the more convinced I am becoming that the gulf between us in the thought world is deeper than I had feared. He (the Sardar)[3] says that you are largely responsible for the present situation. He is of the opinion that Badshah Khan's . . .[4] influence is on the wane. Badshah Khan has not left any such impression on me. Whatever he is today, he was always. There is undoubtedly more steadiness today than before. I also feel that Dr. Khan Saheb[5] and his colleagues would be nowhere without the Badshah. He alone counts in so far as the Congress influence is concerned.

If the Qaid-e-Azam does not go to the Frontier and does not woo the Badshah, his brother and his other colleagues, the Frontier Ministry should resign and so also the Parliamentary

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] *Vide* pp. 87-8.

[3] Vallabhbhai Patel had an hour's talk with Gandhiji on the night of June 6.

[4] Omissions as in the source

[5] Prime Minister of N. W. F. P., brother of Abdul Gaffar Khan

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majority on the sole ground that a referendum at this moment must lead to bloodshed and probably, if not certainly, to a lasting blood-feud, which they should avoid in so far as it is humanly possible. Amrit (Rajkumari Amrit Kaur) tells me that you think to the contrary. You think the referendum should take place now. . . . You are also of opinion that a referendum will not cause bloodshed, indeed that my proposal would be more likely to cause it. I do not share this view. I had told the Badshah that if I do not carry you with me, I shall retire at least from the Frontier consultation and let you guide him. I will not and cannot interpose myself between you and him. After all, was it not you who brought him to me? You will now decide and tell me.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 268-9

65. DISCUSSION WITH A PHILIPPINO AND MISSIONARIES[1]

June 7, 1947

I would put my old-fashioned spinning-wheel even against a modern invention like the atom bomb. If everybody plied it even for half an hour daily, we should see a miracle in only five years. Europe is now looked upon as the leader in civilization and has advanced very far, but at one time Asia was more civilized than Europe. We wish to get rid of the artificial European civilization, based on machinery, that has invaded our country. We have no need for it at all. I wish to revive our ancient culture which is rooted in non-violence and spiritual values. Our happiness, prosperity and peace lie in doing so. If we can revive our ancient culture, we shall serve as a beacon-light in the world's effort to establish peace.

Every individual and every nation should search their hearts far more seriously than they do today. Instead of thinking of strife and competition and wealth, we should cultivate family-feeling, strive for self-purification and spread love and a sense of brotherhood. That alone can be called an ideal state in which men can lead a really 'human' life and get opportunities

[1] In *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Pyarelal explains: "They praised India's non-violent revolution which was without a precedent in history. But they wondered if it was possible to abolish war in the present era of science and industrialization and realize the ideal of world peace."

to cultivate perfection in every sphere. Today even in our own country anarchy is reigning. The fault is not wholly ours. We have been suppressed as slaves for a hundred and fifty years. The British and American missionaries in India have rendered no real service to the country. Their conception of service is to do work of compassion and serve the poor. But by establishing hospitals, schools and such other institutions, they attracted our children and men and our people left their own religion and embraced Christianity. Our religion is in no way inferior to Christianity. I can cite you numerous instances like these to show how far we have been bled. And when the blood has disappeared, only the skeleton remains. That is our plight today, but I am full of hope that we shall regain our health in a few years and a revitalized India will make missionary bodies also reorientate their outlook and activities.

This body is not mine, but belongs to God, and I have this mud-pack regularly, follow a strict routine and take care of my health in order that I may loyally and with a sense of responsibility safeguard His gift and use it for the service of the people.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 93-4; and *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, pp. 233-4

66. DISCUSSION WITH SOCIALIST WORKERS

June 7, 1947

Today the rulers are not foreigners but our own countrymen. If we do not work in perfect harmony with them, our newly-won freedom will be in danger. Let all people sit together and find a proper solution to problems on which there are differences. But our greatest defect is that, as soon as we differ from somebody ever so slightly, or a misunderstanding arises, instead of meeting the person concerned and trying to find a solution we take him to task publicly. This creates a great mental gulf between people, leading to antagonism. Parties and isms are only results of such differences. One fruit of this poison we have seen in the coming into existence of Pakistan. Are we not satisfied even with that? You have simply not understood what socialism means. The Russian type of socialism will not suit India at all. Even in Russia their policies

have not succeeded completely. Why don't you try to save the country from the calamity which has befallen it today? So long as this communal virus has not been eradicated, socialism will never come. Note down and remember, all of you, these words of an old man. The people will want to see our work and our sacrifices; they will judge our labour and look for perfection of character in us. But you wish to pay no attention to these things. On the one hand, hundreds of thousands of our brothers and sisters have become homeless. If now you incite the people and exploit these riots to establish new parties or spread your isms, rest assured God will never forgive this terrible crime of betrayal of the country.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 4-5

67. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 7, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I am telling you in all humility that it is improper to obstruct the prayer. I cannot stop the prayer. It will go on. But I find that every day there is some complaint or other. It pains me very much.

I want to continue with the same subject. I want to talk about what is in the air, because great pressure is brought to bear on me. I am being told that while I kept on opposing [the idea of Pakistan] till the Viceroy's declaration and saying that we would not agree to anything under coercion, now I have become silent. I am being rightly told so. I must confess that I am not happy about this decision. But many things happen in the world that are not to our liking; and yet we have to put up with them. We have to put up with this thing in the same manner.

A newspaper has said that even now the All-India Congress Committee can reject the proposal. I also think that the All-India Congress Committee is fully entitled not to accept the proposal. But we should not suddenly oppose the Congress to which we have been loyal all this time and which has earned reputation in the world and has also done so much work.

A large number of *Sanatanists* believe in the monster of untouchability and think they are following their religion by clinging to this monster. But God alone will judge who is a true *Sanatanist* amongst us. Similarly, if the Congress also puts a religious garb on irreligious practices, we shall have to wind up the organization. Who can kill the Congress? We shall all lay down our lives before it. We will do it not by committing suicide. But we shall continue to fight it and will not bow down to it till we bring it on to the correct path or die ourselves. But we shall do this when we find that the Congress is deliberately erring. In my view, it is not committing a deliberate blunder at present. Nor has it committed deliberate blunders earlier. Had it functioned so far by accepting irreligion as religion, it would not have risen to the position it has today.

It is not correct to say that the Congress Working Committee should have consulted the A. I. C. C. before taking this decision. The Working Committee cannot function if it has to wait for consultation at every step. Subsequently the A. I. C. C. can challenge the Working Committee and vote it out to form a new one.

When I was working regularly for the Congress and enjoyed the right to enforce the constitution of the Congress, I had said during one of the discussions that we could not collect 300 or 1000 members of the A. I. C. C. every now and again. It would be impossible for the Working Committee to function in this manner. Of course, later on, the A. I. C. C. can certainly call for an explanation from the Working Committee. It can also remove the Committee by passing a vote of no confidence so as to make sure that it will not repeat its mistakes, and form a new Committee.

Supposing the Working Committee issued a *hundi* of several lakhs in the name of the A. I. C. C. which the latter did not approve. The A. I. C. C. would still have to honour the *hundi*, but it could certainly dissolve the Working Committee and elect a new one so that the mistake was not repeated. In fact in such a situation the A. I. C. C. ought to take such a step.

The same rule applies in the case of its decision regarding the Hindustan-Pakistan affair. The division is now a *fait accompli*. But there is still ample scope for adjustment. We can make or unmake at will Hindustan and Pakistan or whatever else we call it. True, the Congress does not represent the League. But as I have looked at the Congress I feel that the Congress represents the entire Indian nation. On that account

the Congress can never say that because the Muslims have done great harm to us it will also harm them in return. The Congress would not remain what it is if it did that. Even when I went to the Round Table Conference[1] I had said that I would do them a good turn even if they harmed us.

The Congress wants to establish democratic rule. It will not act against the interests of the Princes either. But the Princes will be able to retain their position only when they become the trustees of their subjects like the Raja of Oundh[2]. A small principality like Oundh will be long remembered only because it bowed to the sovereignty of the people. As against this, the State of Kashmir, although it is worth millions, will be wiped out if it does not listen to the voice of its people. Hitherto these rulers may have behaved arrogantly with the support of the British authorities; but now they must realize that their authority issues from the people. I made a special mention of Kashmir because at the moment our eyes are fixed on it. But this applies to all the native States.

I talked at such length in order that the Congress may continue to belong to the people and the people may continue in the Congress fold, i. e., they may follow the Congress discipline. If we start having internal strife, the Congress is going to perish. If you do not approve of the decision of the Working Committee you can frankly say so at the next A. I. C. C. meeting. I have no intention to attend the session. I will attend if I am invited. But who is going to listen to my solitary voice? After all you are the people. You can convey it to the Congress in a civil manner whether or not you approve of what it has done.

Now it becomes the duty of the Congress to give up what has been granted as Pakistan and make its best efforts in the portion that remains with it. Let the people in Pakistan go ahead of the Congress in their efforts to bring progress to their land. If this happens the two can live in amity and happiness.

In the end Gandhiji repeated his appeal to Jinnah Saheb and called upon him to invite the Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and all others to come to a settlement and spare the Viceroy the trouble and the Congress leaders the needless running around. He appealed to Jinnah to build a Pakistan where the *Gita* could be recited side by side with the Koran, and the

[1] In 1931; *vide* Vol. XLVIII.
[2] Appasaheb Pant

temple and the gurudwara would be given the same respect as the mosque, so that those who had been opposing Pakistan till now would be sorry for their mistake and would only sing praises of Pakistan.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 134-7

68. A LETTER[1]

[Before *June 8, 1947*]

All rights to be deserved and preserved come from duty well done. Thus the very right to live accrues to us only when we do the duty of citizenship of the world. From this very fundamental statement perhaps it is easy enough to define the duties of man and woman and correlate every right to some corresponding duty to be first performed. Every other right can be shown to be a usurpation hardly worth fighting for.

Harijan, 8-6-1947

69. WALLS OF PROTECTION[2]

Let us ask ourselves what walls should be erected to protect *brahmacharya* of which I wrote[3] last week. The answer seems clear. It is not *brahmacharya* that needs walls of protection. To say that is easy enough and sounds sweet, but it is difficult to understand the import of the statement and more so to act accordingly.

It is true that he who has attained perfect *brahmacharya* does not stand in need of protecting walls. But the aspirant undoubtedly needs them, even as a young mango plant has need of a strong fence round it. A child goes from its mother's lap to the cradle and from the cradle to the push-cart till he becomes a man who has learnt to walk without aid. To cling to the aid when it is needless is surely harmful.

I made it clear last week that *brahmacharya* is one out of the eleven observances. It follows, therefore, that the real aid to *brahmacharya* are the remaining ten observances. The difference

[1] Extracted from 'Gleanings'

[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, which was published simultaneously with the source.

[3] *Vide* pp. 57-9.

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between them and the walls of protection is that the latter are temporary, the former permanent. They are an integral part of *brahmacharya*.

Brahmacharya is a mental condition. The outward behaviour of a man is at once the sign and proof of the inner state. He who has killed the sexual urge in him will never be guilty of it in any shape or form. However attractive a woman may be, her attraction will produce no effect on the man without the urge. The same rule applies to women. But he or she who has not conquered lust should not turn the eyes even towards a sister or a brother or a daughter or a son. This advice I have given to friends who have profited by it.

As for myself I have to admit with great shame that while the sight of women had ceased to rouse any sexual urge in me in South Africa, in the early days of my return to India past recollections roused the urge against which I had to battle fairly hard. The same is true of the vague fear which is so unbecoming in man.

I was cowardly by nature. I was frightened to sleep in the dark. To sleep alone in a room was an act of bravery for me. I hope I have lost that cowardliness. Yet I do not know what would be my state if I lost my way and had to wander alone in a thick forest on a dark night and if I were to forget that God was ever with me. If this childhood fear has not completely gone from me, it would be certainly more difficult for me to be fearless in a lonely jungle than to control the sex urge.

There are certain rules laid down in India for the would-be *brahmachari*. Thus he may not live among women, animals and eunuchs, he may not teach a woman alone or even in a group, he may not sit on the same mat with a woman, he may not look at any part of a woman's body, he may not take milk, curds, ghee or any fatty substance nor indulge in baths and oil massage. I read about these when I was in South Africa. There I came in touch with some men and women who, while they observed *brahmacharya*, never knew that any of the above-named restraints were necessary. Nor did I observe them and I was none the worse for the non-observance. I did give up milk, ghee and other animal substances but for different reasons. I gave up the attempt two or three years after my return to India. But if today I could find any effective vegetable substitute for milk and ghee, I would gladly renounce all animal products. But this is another story.

A perfect *brahmachari* never loses his vital fluid. On the contrary, he is able to increase it day by day and, what is more, he conserves it; he will, therefore, never become old in the accepted sense and his intellect will never be dimmed.

It appears to me that even the true aspirant does not need the above-mentioned restraints. *Brahmacharya* is not a virtue that can be cultivated by outward restraints. He who runs away from a necessary contact with a woman does not understand the full meaning of *brahmacharya*.

Let not the reader imagine for one moment that what I have written is to serve as the slightest encouragement to life without the law of real restraint. Nor is there room in any honest attempt for hypocrisy.

Self-indulgence and hypocrisy are sins to be avoided.

The true *brahmachari* will shun false restraints. He must create his own fences according to his limitations, breaking them down when he feels that they are unnecessary. The first thing is to know what true *brahmacharya* is, then to realize its value and lastly to try to cultivate this priceless virtue. I hold that true service of the country demands this observance.

NEW DELHI, June 8, 1947
Harijan, 15-6-1947

70. LETTER TO P. K. ELAYADAM

NEW DELHI,
June 8, 1947

MY DEAR ELAYADAM,

I have received your letter of 3rd instant informing me that Rs. 500 have been received by Khadi Pratishthan. I have before me also your letter of 12th May describing your condition. I fear that what you say leads me to think that your mind is not sound and that you are unnecessarily afraid of being murdered. I am sure that nobody is after you. Imagining the worst happened to you, why should there be any fear? You see in the papers that innocent persons are daily murdered throughout the world. From that you should derive the lesson that since death is the inevitable lot of every creature born, it should be welcomed as a faithful friend whether it comes out of illness or accident, even though it may be named murder. Therefore I would advise you to lead a useful life of service

wherever you are and on hearing from you I shall instruct Khadi Pratishthan to refund the money received by them.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

P. K. ELAYADAM, ESQ.
C/O SHREE KASHI VISHWANATH SEVA SAMITY
50, BURTOLA STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: C. W. 10566

71. LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

June 8, 1947

I had gone through your draft.[1] I have now discussed the scheme roughly with Pandit Nehru and the Sardar. Both of them are dead against the proposal and they are of opinion that it is merely a trick for dividing Hindus and the Scheduled Caste leaders. With them it is not merely a suspicion but almost a conviction. They feel also that money is being lavishly expended in order to secure the Scheduled Caste votes. If such is the case, you should give up the struggle at least at present. For the unity purchased by corrupt practices would be worse than a frank partition, it being a recognition of the established division of hearts and the unfortunate experiences of the Hindus. I see also that there is no prospect of transfer of power outside the two parts of India. Therefore, whatever arrangement is come to, has to be arrived at by a previous agreement between the Congress and the League. This, as far as I can see, you can't obtain. Nevertheless, I would not shake your faith, unless it is founded on shifting sand consisting of corrupt practices and trickery alluded to above. If you are absolutely sure that there is no warrant whatever for the suspicion and unless you get the written assurance of the local Muslim League supported by the centre, you should give up the struggle for unity of Bengal and cease to disturb the atmosphere that has been created for the partition of Bengal.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 187-8

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXXVII, p. 526.

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72. A LETTER[1]

June 8, 1947

Hinduism has denied to women the right to remarry. Therefore, to be fair, men too ought not to remarry, much less expect or ask for my blessings. But if they must remarry, let them select as their partner a widow who is desirous of remarrying. If widowers stopped marrying maidens they would be highly obliging the country.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 101

73. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

June 8, 1947

The work you are doing in the Constituent Assembly is also service done to me. Personal service, when it merges into universal service, is the only service worth doing. All else is rubbish.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 241

[1] A widower wanting to remarry had asked for Gandhiji's blessings.

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74. TALK TO A WOMAN RELATIVE[1]

June 8, 1947

Women at any rate should think of God and His infinite power and know that His is the only real support. While cultivating self-confidence and courage, they should also exercise wisely their natural qualities of humility, simplicity and kindness with which God has endowed them. India's women were never weak, are not so even today and will not be so in future. If we think over the matter, we shall see that from the times of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* their courage has been unrivalled, and that courage has been the result of strength of character. Revive that strength of character. If the women do not remind themselves of the examples of Draupadi and Sita and display the same strength of virtue, they will never be able to serve the country well no matter how many of them get educated. If the atrocities one hears of are perpetrated on women, the fault does not lie with men alone. Women also are responsible. I know that today women have taken the downward path. In their craze for equality with men, they have forgotten their duty. Ba was in no way weaker than I; in fact she was stronger. If I had not had her co-operation I would have been sunk. It was that illiterate woman who helped me to observe all my vows with the utmost strictness and kept me ever vigilant. Similarly in politics also she displayed great courage and took part in all the campaigns. From the worldly point of view she may have been illiterate, but she was an ideal woman who had received what I regard as true education. She was a devout *Vaishnava*, used to worship the *tulsi*, religiously observed sacred days and continued to wear the necklace of holy beads right up to her death. I have given that necklace to this girl[2]. But she loved the Harijan girl as much as she loved Manu or Devdas's Tara. She was a living image of the virtues of a *Vaishnava* described by Narasinha Mehta in his *bhajan*. It is because of her that I am today what I am. She never spared herself, no matter how ill she herself was, in serving me. And often I have been in danger

[1] She was one of a group from South Africa on a visit to India.
[2] Lakshmi

of my life. In the fast of 1943[1] I may say I was nearly at death's door, but she never cried or lost courage but on the contrary kept up other people's courage and prayed to God. I can see her face vividly even today.

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 98

75. TALK WITH COMMUNIST WORKERS

June 8, 1947

I will tell you the same thing that I told[2] those Socialist friends on two days. All of you should think first of the interest of the country as a whole. Instead of doing that, you are wasting your time over minor grievances. The moment you come upon some error by somebody, real or imaginary, without any investigation you Communists start making inflammatory speeches, denounce the Government and incite the people. Is there not a single act of Government deserving your co-operation? Just think for a moment. If you were in the place of Nehru, what would you do? You should, therefore, either take the places of Nehru or Sardar — I stand guarantee that they will step down the moment you ask them to do so — or co-operate with them. That will be for your own good. In any case you should stop making speeches full of baseless allegations. Your principles are fine indeed. But you do not seem to follow them in practice, for you do not seem to know the difference between truth and falsehood or justice and injustice. What is more saddening about you is that, instead of having faith in India and drawing inspiration from its unrivalled culture, you wish to introduce Russian civilization here as if Russia was your motherland. I disapprove of relying on any outside power, however much that may materially benefit us, for I believe in the principle that your eating is not going to satisfy my hunger, that I can satisfy my hunger only by eating myself. I tell Rajendra Babu the same thing every day, that in the matter of food we should not depend upon any foreign country. It would be more honourable for us to share among ourselves the food that we have than to live on other people's

[1] The source has '1942', a misprint.
[2] On May 27 and June 7; *vide* pp. 14-8 and 96-7.

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charity. Let us be worthy of our freedom. We may certainly accept useful and beneficial ideas from foreign countries, but this does not mean that we should uncritically admire everything foreign. There are good and bad things in every country. It is a grave error to believe that everything in our country is bad and in other countries good. Some things in foreign countries are good while some features of our culture are unrivalled. You also use the word 'satyagraha' as part of your jargon. But anybody who uses this word should realize that by doing so he accepts a great responsibility. A satyagrahi should rely wholly on truth. He cannot then afford to be ambiguous in his attitudes. He cannot jump on to a bandwagon. In brief, he cannot depart from his principles in the smallest degree. A satyagrahi cares for nothing but truth. He will give no pain or do no injustice whatever to anybody either in thought, word or deed. And he must always have perfect clarity in his thoughts.

All of you are servants of the country and are eager to serve it. Such as we are, we are brothers and sisters born in the same country. As such, we should supplement one another's work, give up slandering one another and stop fruitless arguments, be generous and mutually forgiving. Let us give up our narrow-mindedness, cultivate generosity of heart and raise the good name of the country to the highest point in the whole world. In that lies everybody's happiness, peace and prosperity.[1]

All of you are like my own children. Since you heard me patiently, I poured out my heart to you. You can come to me whenever you wish. I want your help. I can do something only if I have it. What can I do by myself ? One cannot clap with only one hand, as the saying is.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 102-4

[1] What follows is in Hindi.

76. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 8, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Our peace during the prayer should not be disturbed even if bombs are showered from the sky and there is an upheaval. As the *gopi* hears the notes of the flute in the wilderness, the devotee of God hears the voice in the recesses of his own heart. It has been described as 'the voice of silence' in English. In other words, we can hear that voice only when we are quiet.

I have already informed you that Prof. Kosambiji who was an erudite scholar and was considered a leading authority in Pali recently died at the Sevagram Ashram. Balvantsinha, Manager of the Ashram, writes that he had not witnessed such a death so far. It was exactly as Kabir described in the following couplet:

> The servant Kabir says: Although we wear this sheet with ever so much care, it has to be given up even as it is.

If we can all befriend Death in this manner, it would be to the good of India.

I am told that I should act as an arbitrator in the dispute between the Meos and the Jats. But how can I act as an arbitrator? In the first place I do not know any of them. And then, only a person who has the authority to have his judgment accepted can act as an arbitrator. I possess no arms nor would I seek the help of a court of law. But I think they should now restrain themselves. Whether what has happened is good or bad, now the Congress and the League have also come to a settlement. They should not go on fighting till either side accepts defeat. The Meos are a brave community and the Jats and Ahirs too would not give a chance to anyone to say that they had been defeated. Fortunately, they are not killing the aged, infants and women. Both the sides have amassed enough arms. They are fighting bravely, but anyway it leads to destruction. A poor man is as much pained when his hut is burnt down as a king when his palace is burnt down. Fighting is going on so close to us and yet we are able to do nothing about it. Darkness has descended over the region.

Even so those of you who know them should carry my voice to them if they can and try to stop the fighting.[1]

I am accused of spoiling the situation in Bengal. It is my claim that nothing is spoilt at my hands. Whether it is in Bengal, Bihar or Noakhali, nothing has ever been spoilt at my hands. I can only improve things and I have done so. Now, like the Punjab, Bengal too is going to be divided. In one part of Bengal the Muslims are in a majority and in the other the Hindus. A large number of Hindus desire partition, for, how long can one put up with turbulence? They say once there is partition they can at least live in peace in their homeland. The Muslim League in Bengal has rejected this proposal. But who takes the Bengal Muslim League seriously? Division of Bengal is certain under the new proposal.

Now I am being blamed for not letting Bengal be divided. It is true that I do not want the division. But then I also totally disapprove of the whole country being divided into Hindustan and Pakistan. Even if I was the only Hindu remaining, I would still have the courage to go and live in the midst of the Muslim majority. What is the worst they could do? Kill me; could they do anything worse? But they would not kill me. They would protect one solitary individual. God would protect me. God always protects one who has no one to protect him. That is why the poet says, "God is the strength of the weak." I do not at all like the division of Bengal. But I will say that the Hindus should let themselves be subdued and give up their desire in order to save their life and property. If they feel that they will be able to live in peace in their part of the province, let no one imagine that I shall come in the way.

Sarat Babu came to me the other day. He does not want Bengal to be partitioned. He says that the whole Province has one culture, and the same food habits. Why then should it be divided in the name of religion? Sarat Babu has his view, I have mine. The people however have the right to act as they desire. My individual opinion cannot thwart the opinion of many.

I always co-operate in good things. If a bad man recites Ramanama, shall I not join him? I shall certainly join him in reciting Ramanama. And if a man considered good indulges in wicked acts, shall I join hands with him? If I do so, I shall not be Gandhi for Gandhi can never worship Satan. Whoever acts out of good intention, out of love, will have my support.

[1] *Vide* also pp. 38 and 83.

I have come to know that money is being squandered to stall the partition of Bengal. Nothing enduring can be achieved with the help of money. Votes purchased with money have no force. I can never be party to such an act. I can never support an act of goondaism, even if committed by my own kith and kin.[1]

Hence, I would like to tell Sarat Babu that even though he and I would like to stop the partition of Bengal we should forget about it for the time being. It cannot be achieved by impure means. God cannot be realized by impure means and no means for obtaining anything dishonourable can ever be pure.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 137-40

77. TELEGRAM TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE[2]

[After *June 8, 1947*][3]

HOW CAN BRIBE-GIVERS AND BRIBE-TAKERS BE PUNISHED BY PRIVATE PERSONS EXCEPT AT THE BAR OF PUBLIC OPINION? BE CALM AND STEADFAST.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 188

78. MESSAGE FOR ANNIE BESANT'S BIRTH CENTENARY[4]

NEW DELHI,
June 9, 1947

When I was studying in London in 1888 and after I had become, like many, an admirer of Bradlaugh[5] and Besant[6], imagine my excitement when one fine morning I read in the London Press that Annie Besant had become a Theosophist under Blavatsky's[7] inspiration. I was a mere boy practically unknown

[1] *Vide* also the following item.

[2] & [3] The telegram was in reply to that of the addressee which read: "If information false, punish informants, if information true, punish bribe-givers and bribe-takers." The addressee was referring to Gandhiji's allegation regarding "votes purchased"; *vide* the preceding item.

[4] Which was to be on October 1, 1947

[5] Charles Bradlaugh (1833-91), English free-thinker and radical, prominent for his championship of individual liberty; was close associate of Annie Besant till 1885.

[6] 1847-1933, British Theosophist; founded Indian Home Rule League in 1916; and was President of Indian National Congress in 1917

[7] Helena Blavatsky (1831-91) founder of Theosophical Society

to anybody. I would have been more than satisfied if I could have touched the hem of the garments of the massive Blavatsky and her distinguished disciple. But I could not though some friends had kindly taken me to Blavatsky Lodge. When Dr. Besant came to India and captivated the country I came in close touch with her and though we had political differences my veneration for her did not suffer abatement. I hope therefore the centenary celebrations will be worthy of the great woman.

M. K. GANDHI

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 109-10

79. A LETTER

NEW DELHI,
June 9, 1947

MY DEAR . . .,[1]

I am ashamed to have kept you long in suspense. This is my day of silence. Rajkumari reminds me of yours of 20th May and I wrote out the enclosed[2] which I hope you can decipher. Now that I tax my memory, I fancy that the Williams Brothers[3] whom you would not have known took me to Madam Blavatsky. This is of no consequence. I have written this for the sake of accuracy.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 109

[1] The name is omitted in the source. Presumably the addressee was Marjorie Sykes.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] *Vide* Vol. XXXIX, p. 60.

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80. FOREWORD TO "CHARLES FREER ANDREWS"[1] DRAFT[2]

Charlie Andrews though a very great scholar was simple like a child, straight as die and shy like an Indian woman. With the biographers the record was a labour of love. I am sorry I have not read it.

M. K. GANDHI

NEW DELHI, June 9, 1947

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 108

81. LETTER TO MARJORIE SYKES

NEW DELHI,
June 9, 1947

MY DEAR MARJORIE,

Yours received just now. Here are a few words of foreword.[3] I have no time to look at your chapter. I have handed it to Rajkumari who is sitting near me.

Love.

BAPU

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 108

82. DRAFT OF LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

June 9, 1947[4]

DEAR BADSHAH,[5]

Here is a note from Jawaharlal.[6] It is the result of a difference of opinion between him and me. In the circumstances I must not guide you. He has put forth his argument as usual in his very able manner. Now you have to act as you think best. His suggestion that you should come to Delhi and discuss

[1] By Benarsidas Chaturvedi and Marjorie Sykes
[2] For the Foreword as published, *vide* Vol. XC.
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.
[4] From p. 828 of the source
[5] The superscription is not in Gandhiji's hand.
[6] For extracts from Jawaharlal Nehru's note, *vide* Appendix V.

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the situation before taking any final decision is worthy of consideration. I am planning to go away to Bihar, if I can, before the meeting of the A. I. C. C.

I hope you were none the worse for your journey to Peshawar.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, facing p. 289

83. DRAFT OF LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

June 9, 1947[1]

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,[2]

I have your note which I have read most carefully. If I shared your premises, I should whole-heartedly agree with you.

I am sending your note by messenger to the Badshah with my covering letter[3] of which I enclose a copy herewith.

The more I contemplate the differences in outlook and opinion between the members of the W. C. and me, I feel that my presence is unnecessary even if it is not detrimental to the cause we all have at heart. May I not go back to Bihar in two or three days?

Would it be wrong if you insisted that referendum would be wrong without the presentation of the picture of Pakistan?[4]

From a facsimile: *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, facing p. 289

[1] From the source, p. 828
[2] The superscription in Devanagari is not in Gandhiji's hand.
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.
[4] This sentence is not in Gandhiji's hand.

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84. A LETTER

June 9, 1947

CHI. . . .,[1]

Bhai . . . has gone to you. I had a long talk with him at the end of which it was decided that both of them would leave the Ashram. . . . The step will pain both Bhai . . . and me. But, having regard to his health and his mental suffering, I have advised him that since it is quite uncertain when I shall come there it is best that he should not continue in the Ashram. I have . . .'s letter. I cannot reply today. . . .

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 106-7

85. A LETTER

June 9, 1947

CHI. . . .,[2]

Kosambiji has passed away. We should send to Ceylon as quickly as we can some Indians who follow Buddhism and are desirous of learning Pali. Do you have any such students in mind? Try to think over what rules we should frame for selecting such students and give me some suggestions. For instance, what would be the expense for each student, etc. . . .

I got your article on Anandshankarbhai.[3] If you had written in Gujarati instead of in English, Gujaratis would have benefited by your article. Whom will this benefit? I could read only the first paragraph.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 107

[1] & [2] Omissions as in the source

[3] Anandshankar Dhruva died on April 7, 1942.

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86. LETTER TO MADALASA

June 9, 1947

CHI. MADALASA,

I have your letter.

Shriman is coming here on the 12th. Since I have started writing in *Harijan*, you may get your problems solved through it. I have not been able to understand your question properly. Do not try to explain away to yourself any writing or action of mine. Whenever you feel perplexed by something, you must try to get your doubt resolved. My writing can never warrant indulgence. My life is dedicated to the cause of self-control. It is possible that I might not succeed in reaching my ideal. But I am sure that I will never give people excuses for self-indulgence.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 333

87. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

DELHI,
June 9, 1947

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

I am enclosing Sankaran's letter. How far is this true? He also writes about Bhai Ranade. What is all this? However much we may work, if our minds are not pure or if our conduct is not sincere, we are good for nothing.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9037. Also C. W. 9161. Courtesy: Prabhakar

88. TALK WITH VISITORS[1]

June 9, 1947

This fight between brother and brother is not going to stop so long as the masses do not get work as well as bread. Order in the society, in fact in the country, cannot possibly be restored unless the indigenous crafts are developed. This is the sole remedy for banishing starvation from the country. The affluent in India can be counted on one's fingers, whereas there are millions who are starving.

I fought for India's independence. There were satyagraha movements and as a result we have achieved what the world would consider success (not the kind I would have wished). The partition has come in spite of me. It has hurt me. But it is the way in which the partition has come that has hurt me more. And it is difficult to say what the result of the constant tension will be. I have pledged myself to do or die in the attempt to put down the present conflagration. I love all mankind as I love my own countrymen, because my God dwells in the heart of every human being and I aspire to realize the highest in life through the service of humanity. It is true that the non-violence that we practised was the non-violence of the weak, i. e., no non-violence at all. But I maintain that this was not what I presented to my countrymen. Nor did I present to them the weapon of non-violence because they were weak or disarmed or without military training, but because my study of history has taught me that hatred and violence used in howsoever noble a cause only breed their kind and instead of ensuring peace endanger it. There is no miracle except love and non-violence which can drive out the poison of hatred. Thanks to the tradition of our ancient seers, sages and saints, if there is a heritage that India can share with the world, it is this gospel of forgiveness and faith which is her proud possession. I have faith that in time to come India will pit that against the threat of destruction which the world has invited upon itself by the invention of the atom bomb. The weapon of truth and love is infallible, but there is something wrong in us, its votaries, which has plunged us into

[1] The source does not identify them except as foreigners.

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the present internecine strife. I am, therefore, trying to examine myself because it must be owing to some shortcoming in me which it has been my fate to see reflected in the present outburst of violence.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 111-2

89. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 9, 1947

I have received some letters saying that *Allopanishad* about which I had talked to you some days ago is not to be found in any collection of religious writings. I had mentioned this work from memory so I consulted a friend[1] and he has written to say that the collection I have in mind does mention *Allopanishad*, saying it has seven *mantras*. These Upanishads date back to the time of the Atharva Veda. He has said much else which would be of greater interest to students. Hence I shall not quote that part of the letter.

Then I have a letter from Jayachandra Vidyalankar. Jayachandraji says:

> Maharana Kumbha, grandfather of Rana Sanga, was the first to offer organized resistance to the Muslim aggressors. He conquered the territories occupied by the Muslims in Gujarat and Malwa and erected the victory pillar at Chittor. On the pillar side by side with the many representations of Hindu gods and goddesses and next to those of Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh the name of Allah is also inscribed. It is well known how the Hindu leaders like Maharana Ranjit Singh and Chhatrapati Shivaji respected Islam. Why do these champions of Hinduism who resent the recitation from the Koran at your prayers not object to Allah's name inscribed on this victory pillar?

After pointing out that the cause of Hindu-Muslim animosity lies in faulty writing of history, Vidyalankarji requests me to see to it that the teaching of history is done in the right spirit, without which all attempts to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity must fail.

Lately I have been receiving a large number of letters attacking me. A friend points out how ineffective were my words when I said that vivisection of the country would be the

[1] Mathuradas Trikumji; *vide* the following item.

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vivisection of my own body and calls upon me strongly to oppose the partition of the country. But I do not think I am in any way to blame in this matter. When I said that the country should not be divided I was confident that I had the support of the masses. But when the popular view is contrary to mine, should I force my own view on the people? I have repeatedly said that we should never compromise with falsehood and wickedness. And today I can say with confidence that if all the non-Muslims were with me, I would not let India be divided. But I must admit that today the general opinion is not with me, and so I must step aside and stay back. The lesson which we have been trying to learn for the past 30 years and which we now tend to forget is that only through truth and non-violence can we triumph over untruth and violence. Impatience can be overcome only with patience and excitement with calm. Today we cringe before our own shadow. There is nothing in common between me and those who want me to oppose Pakistan except that we are both opposed to the division of the country. There is a fundamental difference between their opposition and mine. How can love and enmity go together?

Another friend writes that this Viceroy is even more dangerous than the other Viceroys; that whereas the others crushed us at the point of the sword this one trapped the Congress with his smooth talk. I can never agree with this opinion. The correspondent has unwittingly and unknowingly praised the Viceroy and has debunked the intelligence and efficiency of the Congress Ministers. Why can he not understand the simple thing that the general opinion, that is, the opinion of those who are fit to hold any opinion, is supporting the Congress leaders? The leaders are not fools. They too find the partition repugnant, but as representatives of the country they cannot go against public opinion. They derive their power from the people. The situation would have been different if the correspondent had the power. And under no circumstances would it be proper to criticize the Viceroy when the leaders are elected representatives of the people or when our own people betray the country. The saying "as the king so the subjects" is not so apt as its reverse: "As the subjects so the king."

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 140-2

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90. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

June 10, 1947

CHI. . . . ,[1]

I am writing this at 4.30 in the morning after the prayer. I got your letter yesterday. You are as persevering as ever. I even used yesterday the information you sent.[2] Do you read reports of my speeches these days? I was somehow under the impression that *Allopanishad* was included in Nathuramji's collection. I see now that it is referred to in his notes. Your other discovery also does you credit. So you have regained sufficient strength to write all that! You have been a close student of my life. Even so, I wrote something in order to save your time and mine. I do feel unhappy that I have not been able to convince people that I am perfectly pure. But time always does its work, and it will do so in this case, too. I am being tested. The task here is a very difficult one. I think I shall be here up to the 15th at any rate. How I wish you would recover completely !

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 215; also *Bihar Pachhi Dilhi*, p. 107

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

[2] The addressee had sent to Gandhiji copies of *Allopanishad* from a manuscript as well as from the Adyar collection of *Unpublished Upanishads* found at the Royal Asiatic Library. What follows is from *Bihar Pachhi Dilhi*, which, however, places this under June 9, 1947.

91. A LETTER

June 10, 1947

If we examine all that we say we shall find that we indulge in exaggeration so much that it has almost become a habit with us. We do not care to examine the truth or otherwise of our idle talk. If we appreciated the value of silence we would be rendering a great service to the nation. The present time particularly is not for making speeches. Deeds, not words, are what is demanded of us. 'Silence is everything.'[1] He who wants to see truth and take shelter in God must observe at least one day of weekly silence. I say it on the strength of my own experience of silence on Mondays.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 112-3

92. A LETTER

June 10, 1947

This is a time of trial. I have passed through many an ordeal in my life. But perhaps this is to be the hardest. I like it. The fiercer it becomes, the closer is the communion with God that I experience and the deeper grows my faith in His abundant grace. So long as it persists, I know it is well with me. I am dictating these letters early in the morning. I woke up but lay reciting Ramanama. However, since attending to one's duty is as good as reciting Ramanama, I woke up Chi. Manudi. I send the girl to sleep whenever it suits me and wake her up when I wish. And whenever I wake her up she promptly gets up and can prepare herself to take down with an alert mind what I dictate. She falls ill now and then. No doubt I am overtaxing her. I know I make her work beyond her capacity. But God seems to sustain her in spite of it all as if to help me in my hour of trial. Hence she can sit upright at any hour whether it be midnight or very early in the morning. This too is Divine help in my time of trial. Still another sign

[1] Gandhiji quotes the saying, मौनम् सर्वार्थ साधनम् ।

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of His grace is the way in which He is keeping up my physical strength enabling me to maintain my serenity in the midst of daily shocks and turmoil. I remain happy and cheerful. It may be said that it is for this reason that I have been constantly realizing that "Adversity so-called is not adversity, nor is prosperity what we know by that name; the only adversity is to forget God, the only prosperity His ceaseless remembrance".[1] For sixty years we have been in the thick of the fight, and now we have ushered the goddess of liberty into our courtyard. Yet many big tasks remain to be fulfilled. For the situation is much like having a sumptuous meal all ready and someone pouring dal into the pot of rice pudding. Thus, having worked so hard and for so long we now need most to cultivate humility and capacity for hard work.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 113

93. A LETTER

June 10, 1947

The spinning-wheel is the key to swaraj. It helps us to identify ourselves with the poor millions. But we should not on that account succumb to a feeling of pride. If one spins with the egoistic feeling that one is thereby helping the poor, one's spinning would be futile. Helping the poor is, however, one's duty; it is a Divine obligation. If God has granted a man inexhaustible means of wealth to sustain himself, he needs must do this much for the sake of his countrymen. One who spins with the realization that it is one's dharma is the true *sevak*.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 113-4

[1] Gandhiji quotes from *Ashram Bhajanavali*; *vide* Vol. XLIV, p. 390.

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94. A LETTER

June 10, 1947

To seek God one need not go on a pilgrimage or light lamps fed with ghee and burn incense before the image of the deity or anoint it or paint it with vermilion. For He resides in our hearts. If we could humbly obliterate in us the consciousness of our physical body, we would see Him face to face.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 114

95. ADVICE TO HINDU MAHASABHA YOUTHS[1]

June 10, 1947

You do not know I repudiated the title of Mahatma long before you questioned it. But maybe out of your concern for me, you feel it necessary to put me on my guard lest I should fall into the dotage of old age.

He repeated to them that if people did not know how to face death non-violently, they could by all means die fighting valiantly. But even if they wanted to avenge wrong-doing in Pakistan, the right way was to go to Pakistan and fight with those who were the authors of it. There could be no bravery in taking cowardly reprisals on the Muslims residing in India.

I say the same thing to Pakistan, too. In England they managed to survive when odds seemed all against any chance of survival. The secret of it was their wonderful unity, national discipline and organization. For betrayal of the country, father did not hesitate to send his son to the gallows. But in India, even after partition, Hindus and Sikhs are quarrelling among themselves. Each wants to go his own way. Nobody listens. Where will it all end? We, old leaders, are like autumn leaves. Tomorrow you shall have to shoulder the whole burden. It is up to you, the youth, therefore, to shed your

[1] The two youths had come during Gandhiji's morning walk. They said Gandhiji was no mahatma and that he was misleading the Hindus.

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indifference, inertia and sloth and throw yourselves into constructive work with all your heart and soul.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 247-8

96. TALK WITH RAJENDRA PRASAD

June 10, 1947[1]

We ought to take warning from this.[2] If I could free myself from here, I would like to tour all over the country and launch a new movement among the youth to throw themselves into constructive work. I can see their enthusiasm to do something for the country. But it is getting no sustenance and there is every danger of its running into a wrong channel. I sensed the malady from which our country is suffering long ago. We, top leaders, are getting old. Before we pass away, we should devote whatever strength God has given us to train younger people to shoulder the responsibility of building up the India of our dreams just as we trained them before as non-violent soldiers for the freedom struggle. People cannot be trained for the serious tasks ahead unless at least a portion of the top-ranking leaders remain outside the Government to work among the people.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Volume II, p. 248

97. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 10, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Whatever I have said in connection with the decision of Bengal, I have not levelled allegations against any party. I have only repeated what I have heard. Who would not be happy if Bengal was spared partition and could remain one undivided whole? But I cannot join hands with anyone who talks of preserving unity through falsehood, fraud and bribery. Nothing need be said if no Bengali—either Hindu or Muslim — has done it. Why should anyone wear the cap if it does not fit?

But people do entertain suspicion that something wrong is being perpetrated in Bengal. Those who told me this also gave

[1] Inferred from Pyarelal's introductory remarks in the source

[2] The reference is to the remarks of Hindu Mahasabha youths who had met Gandhiji the same day; *vide* the preceding item.

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me their names and addresses. But I do not think it proper to disclose those here. If they have been telling me falsehoods, it is bad and they should be punished. But who am I to punish anybody? I have not the power to punish anyone.

But I have one great thing with me and that is public opinion. Public opinion has tremendous power. In our country the significance of this expression has not yet been fully realized. In the English language, however, the expression has a forceful connotation. Even the king is helpless in the face of what the English call 'public opinion'. Even the redoubtable Mr. Churchill, scion of a great family, a powerful orator and erudite scholar —certainly not an ignoramus like me—could not save his office in spite of all his achievements. It only means that public opinion in England is highly awake, no one can do anything in opposition to it.

In India public opinion is not as vigilant as in England. Had it been so a worthless fellow like me would not have presumed to become a mahatma. And even after I became a Mahatma everything that I did would not have been put up with. As it is, in India anyone who is called a mahatma ceases to be answerable to the public, whatever—right or wrong—he might do.

Tolstoy had been a great warrior, but when he realized that war was not a good thing he gave up his life in trying to put an end to war. He has said that the greatest power on earth is public opinion and it is generated by truth and non-violence.

That is what I am trying to do. But nothing is going to come of my efforts unless public opinion in India is informed with courage and truthfulness.

But that is not the case today. The impression I have is that we do not want the Dominion Status that is to be granted to us on August 15. The reason is the public opinion that has been forming over the years in favour of complete independence. This talk of Dominion Status pricks the country. The feeling is justified and yet not quite right. It is not right because we are not aware of the potentialities of Dominion Status. First, with the coming of Dominion Status the British will quit India in two months. Secondly, we can shake off the Dominion Status whenever we want. Of course if we persist in our madness others are hardly to blame. Anyway, to return to the subject of public opinion, if it stays vigilant all will be well. If through public opinion, without any bribery, without any corrupt methods being adopted, Bengal decides to remain one,

then it is well and good. But we have been cowards and slaves so long that we are unable to resist the temptation to do ignoble acts.

But if one has not acted wickedly and still people level charges against one, why should one feel unhappy? For instance, there are many high-placed officers who do not become corrupt, who remain clean; and yet allegations of corruption are made against them. This does not perturb them. If someone calls me a wicked and corrupt man, do I have to weep? Do I become wicked merely because someone calls me so? I do admit that false allegations are sometimes made against people out of malice and cowardice. We should not talk ill of anyone.

We should see good points of people. If we want to be free let us not find fault with others, let us look at their better side and try to encourage them.

I now assume that the division of India is a fact and the Congress has been forced to accept it. But if the partition cannot make us happy, why should it make us unhappy? Only we should not let our hearts be sundered. We must save our hearts from being fragmented. Otherwise Jinnah Saheb's claim that we are two nations will stand vindicated. I have never believed in it. When we are descended from the same ancestors, can our nationality change simply from our changing our religion? When Sind, the Punjab and maybe the Frontier Province too go to Pakistan will they no more belong to us? I for one do not regard even Britain as an alien country, why should I then regard Pakistan as another nation?

It may be said that I belong to India and in India to the Bombay Presidency, there again to Gujarat, in Gujarat, particularly to Kathiawar, where again to a small town of Porbandar. But because I belong to Porbandar I also belong to the whole of India, that is, I am also a Punjabi and if I go to the Punjab I shall live there regarding it as my home and if I am killed I shall accept death.

I am happy that Jinnah Saheb has said that Pakistan will not belong to an emperor, but that it will belong to the people and the minorities too will get a square deal there. I would only like to add that he should put into practice what he says. He should also impress this upon his followers and tell them to forget all talk of war.

We too will not think of suppressing the minorities in our part of the land. Even the handful of Parsis in India shall be our co-sharers. It would be bad if the Hindus and Muslims joined hands and threatened to annihilate the Parsis saying

they were drink-addicts. The Parsis are my friends and I tell them that if they do not give up drinking they will kill themselves. But we shall not kill them. In the same manner Hindus and Sikhs should be protected in the Punjab. The Muslims should treat them kindly and in a brotherly way and reassure them. If the Muslims start tyrannizing over them, the Hindus and Sikhs should tell them, without fear of death, that they will not accept Islam under duress nor partake of [beef][1]. The Hindus should not think that they have become a new community which cannot accommodate Muslims. We are in a majority in this part of India. We must enlighten the majority and work with courage. Courage does not reside in the sword. We will become truthful, we will become servants of God and, if need be, we will lay down our lives. When we do this India and Pakistan will not be two separate entities and the artificial partition would become meaningless. If we fight among ourselves the charge of our being two nations will be proved. Let us all therefore pray to God that although India and Pakistan have become separate nations our hearts may not be divided.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 142-6

98. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

NEW DELHI,
June 10/11, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

The Rajkumari has given me the purport of your conversation with her.

Though you have been good enough to tell me that I could see you at any time I wanted to, I must not avail myself of the kindness. I would like, however, to reduce to writing some of the things I hold to be necessary for the proper and swift working of the scheme.

1. As to the referendum in the Frontier Province I must confess that my idea does not commend itself to Pandit Nehru and his colleagues. As I told you, if my proposal did not commend itself to them, I would not have the heart to go any further with it.

[1] The source has 'meat'.

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2. This, however, does not in any way affect my proposal that before proceeding with the referendum, you should invite Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah to proceed to the Frontier Province and to woo the Ministers including Badshah Khan and his Khudai Khidmatgars who have made the province what it is—better or worse. Before he goes, no doubt, he should be assured of a courteous hearing from them.

3. Whether he favours the idea or not, Qaid-e-Azam should be asked to give a fair picture of the Pakistan scheme before the simple Pathan mind is asked to make its choice of Hindustan or Pakistan. I fancy that the Pathan knows his position in Hindustan. If he does not, the Congress or the Constituent Assembly now at work should be called upon to complete the picture. It will be unfair, I apprehend, to choose between Hindustan or Pakistan without knowing what each is. He should at least know where his entity will be fully protected.

4. There is as yet no peace in the Frontier Province. Can there be a true referendum when strife has not completely abated? Minds are too heated to think coherently. Neither the Congress nor the League can disown liability for disturbances by their followers. If peace does not reign in the land, the whole superstructure will come to pieces and you will, in spite of division, leave behind a legacy of which you will not be proud.

5. The sooner you have a homogeneous ministry the better. In no case can the League nominees work independently of the whole Cabinet. It is a vicious thing that there is no joint responsibility for every act of individual members.

6. The only way to keep the wonderful time-table made by you is to anticipate the future and ask your special staff to work out all the items presented by you, without reference to the Cabinet and then when the time comes, the report should be presented to the respective parties for acceptance, amendment or rejection.

7. The more I see things the more firmly I believe that the States' problem presents a variety of difficulties which demand very serious and fearless treatment on your part.

8. The problem of the civil and military services, though in a way not equally difficult, demands the same firm handling as the States. Gurgaon strife is an instance in point. So far as I know one single officer is responsible for the continuance of the mischief.

9. Lastly may I suggest that the attempt to please all parties is a fruitless and thankless task. In the course of our

conversation I suggested that equal praise bestowed on both the parties was not meant. No praise would have been the right thing. 'Duty will be merit when debt becomes a donation.' It is not too late to mend. Your undoubted skill as a warrior was never more in demand than today. Fancy a sailor without his fleet, save his mother wit!

10. I have tried to be as succinct as possible. I could not be briefer. If any of the points raised herein demand a personal talk, you have but to appoint the suitable time. Please do not think of calling me for the sake of courtesy.[1]

11. I received your kind note of 10th instant whilst I had almost finished this note. It does not call for a separate reply. This was finished at 9.25 p. m. It will be typed tomorrow.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

From the original: India Office Library and Records, London; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47*, pp. 256-8

99. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
4.15 a.m., June 11, 1947

CHI. CHAMPA[2],

I have your letter. My advice is that, as the girls are there, you should stay on there and return to Sevagram when it is cooler. Let the girls study whatever they can there. You do the same. Nothing is definite about me. Your place is ultimately in Sevagram. More in my next letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. CHAMPABEHN MEHTA
SATISHKUNJ
PANCHGANI, DIST. SATARA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8761. Also C. W. 1053. Courtesy: Champa Mehta

[1] The addressee in his reply of June 12, said that he doubted "whether it would be practicable to make any special staff work out all the details of splitting up of the Departments of the Government of India".

[2] Daughter-in-law of Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta

100. LETTER TO PARASURAM

NEW DELHI,
June 11, 1947

CHI. PARASURAM[1],

Shri J. P. Narayan tells me that you would like to serve the Socialist Party if I agreed. I could have no objection whatever to your bettering your prospects. I was told that you were in the *Harijan* office till you felt you could join me. You know that I have not filled your place and I have no intention of doing so. You will return when you like.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 5858. Also C. W. 3072

101. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA[2]

NEW DELHI,
June 11, 1947

MY DEAR KU.,

The Bania fingers seem to be paralysed. May your departure be as distant as possible!

Love.

BAPU

PROF. KUMARAPPA
A. I. V. I. A.
MAGANWADI
WARDHA

From a photostat: G. N. 10196

[1] Hailing from Malabar, he was Gandhiji's stenographer for two years and left the service in the beginning of January, 1947; *vide* Vol. LXXXVI, pp. 299-300.

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's letter of June 9, in which he had discussed his going to London with a delegation of Indian businessmen. Referring to the British Government's plan to scale down their war debts he had expressed the hope that Gandhiji would not let the sterling credits slip through his Bania fingers.

102. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

DELHI,
June 11, 1947

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. I get no free time at all, and so you should not worry if I do not reply or am late in replying.

Kosambiji has passed away. We shall be honouring his memory by sending out scholars of Pali.

We may take it that physical division of the country is now certain. Since the Congress has accepted the plan, we must now look for another way. That way I have been showing. Just as land or other property can be partitioned, so also can men's hearts. If, therefore, our hearts are true we can behave as if they had not been partitioned.

I hope Kanchan and the baby girl are doing well. Kanchan must be delighted beyond measure.

Find out where I am in July. You will also have to consider whether you will be able to free yourself from your work at the time. I shall be here up to the 15th at any rate. After that, Rama alone knows.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I got your long letter just now. I understand your unhappiness. We shall talk over the matter when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8410. Also C. W. 5622. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

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103. ADVICE TO SADHUS[1]

June 11, 1947

Those who live carefree lives at the expense of other people's sweat can never achieve spiritual progress. Today religion has become fossilized. . . . The corruption that is evident today in all religious orders and the mental, physical and moral deterioration of our society are all traceable to the fact that we have looked down upon physical labour. . . . You should, therefore, map out a programme which will enable you, besides spreading the knowledge of Ramanama, to serve society by performing bread labour and getting the masses to do the same.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 238

104. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
June 11, 1947

But I do not at all believe in such violent activities.[2] They have only one occupation: to incite people wherever possible. There is a saying in Kathiawad, now current in Gujarat, that one may look for insects in water but some look for them even in milk. These people thus have no such thing as principles. They make no distinction between truth and untruth, violence and non-violence. What is even more pitiable is that they receive their guidance from Russia. We certainly want to adopt what good things or good ideas we find in others but at the same time we should be practical. The Communists in Bengal and other places are indulging in destructive activities. They must see who will ultimately suffer by that. The country has not even become fully independent. Will it bring equality if people surreptitiously set fire to Government buildings or destroy post offices and telegraph wires? And whatever is destroyed belongs to the people ultimately. That is why I do not believe in this ideology. My communism will be full of dignity

[1] Two of them had joined Gandhiji on his morning walk.

[2] Manu had asked Gandhiji why he was so critical of the Communists.

and courage. To cause harm clandestinely is unmanly and barbarous. It suggests cowardice. If we examine our history we shall find that when the Rajputs fought they fought bravely in the field and at sunset they stopped combat and men of both sides met each other as friends. What does the legend of the *Mahabharata* show? There may be differences of opinion about the truth of the actual events narrated in this epic created by our ancestors but the idea behind it and its moral are wonderful. Besides, socialism or communism is in our very blood. Our prayers, our Vedas and Shastras provide innumerable instances of it. What do we say in our morning prayers?—

> I desire not a kingdom nor paradise, nor even release from birth and death. I desire only an end to the pain of the anguished.

What can Lenin, the Communist leader, add to this? Why are we so much infatuated by him?

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 121-2

105. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 11, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Although I have spoken to you about the impending division of Bengal, nevertheless I wish to speak to you about it again a third time. I have just received a letter.[1] It is full of anger. As I have told you, anger is a kind of madness. The man who is a prey to anger loses all discrimination. The letter I received shows such anger.

The writer says that I have caused great harm to Bengalis. In what way have I caused harm to Bengalis? I have said that I do not want that Bengal should be vivisected. It is true that I do not want that. If a just scheme were offered to us I would say that a Bengali is above all a Bengali, be he Hindu or Muslim or Christian. If he wants to uphold his mother tongue, uphold his country, who can interfere? I wish to tell you that even the Congress cannot interfere, nor can the League. It is very clear that if Bengal could remain united it would be a

[1] From H. S. Suhrawardy; *vide* the following item.

very good thing. But how is that to be? That is the question. If we wish to achieve something good but choose a method which is crooked we shall not reach our goal. If you adopt a wrong path and want to go east you will end up by arriving in the west. We must therefore not choose a wrong path. We should take the right path. That is what I have been saying. But people get angry. I want to tell you that I stick to what I have been saying. I stand by what is right. If someone does not have right on his side, whether he is my brother or my son, I do not care. I therefore tell the Bengalis that if Bengal is to be divided it will be through their own decision and if Bengal is to remain united it will also be through them. So far nothing has happened. This much for Bengal.

But I have other matters brought to my attention, too. Today some friends from Campbellpur came to see me. They said that they were so far living happily there. They did not run away. But what were they to do? They are scared about what their plight would be in Pakistan and Campbellpur certainly would be included in Pakistan. I told them that whatever the situation might be in Pakistan they were after all living in India. If the map of India is divided in two, how can it affect them? I said, "You are brave people. You don't fear anyone except God. Anyone who fears God need fear no one else in the world. I therefore cannot advise you to leave Campbellpur." They wanted to know how they could defend themselves if they remained there. I said I had told the Hindus in Noakhali that they were not to move out from where they were. They wanted weapons. But what could they be doing with the weapons? The Government had the weapons and if the Government could not protect them, they being in a minority, then the Government was incompetent. Such a Government should go and I told them to force such a Government to go. If a few Muslims are left behind here, are they to be slaughtered and would the Government merely watch? Then the Government no longer remains a Government. It becomes a tyranny. And why should we live under a tyranny? We have been fighting the British for so many years. Must we now fall from the frying pan into the fire? Is it for this that we have undergone so much suffering, made so much noise and resorted to satyagraha and non-co-operation?

That will not be right. I said the same thing to the Muslims of Bihar. They said that I could talk in that way because I was a Mahatma, but they were traders and had businesses

and families and children to look after. I must show them a way. I said I was helpless. I could not change now in my old age.

What were they to say? They were good people and I was busy. I told them to go saying I could only advise them to be brave. I do not indulge in tall talk. Man is born to be brave. Man is not born to become cowardly or to become scared. Man is a part of God. He has in him the divine spark. I have not heard that a cow or a bullock or a horse partakes of the divine spark. It is true that as all creatures are creatures of God we are more or less alike. But the difference between man and other creatures is that we do not say of the latter, as we can about men, that they have in them the divine spark. Then if we have the divine spark, is it so that we may become frightened of each other or is it so that we may love each other? So I tried to explain things to them. But how were they to understand?

Mr. Jinnah is doing something very big. Nobody had ever dreamt that in this day and age Pakistan would become a possibility. But today Pakistan is a reality. True, it has not yet come into being. But surely by the 15th of August it will be formed. When I think over the matter I tell myself that I should not grieve over it. The Congress says there was no alternative to division. Jinnah says that he will not rest till India is divided. So let there be division. But shall I throw up my hands and accept this division? I say that nobody can cut me into pieces. Therefore nobody can cut India into pieces. This is mere talk. I tell you that if you become truthful, then whether it is Pakistan or India or whatever other name you may choose, the task will be the same. Who can tear asunder that which God has created one? But I can ask Mr. Jinnah what he intends to do with regard to those people. It is already agreed what parts are to be included in Pakistan. Campbellpur is so included. It cannot be shifted. What are the people there to do? Should they flee? Does he want that they should continue to live there? He says that all will get justice; that in Pakistan the same standard will apply to all and no one will be discriminated against merely on the ground that he is a Hindu or a Christian. He says that all will get the same justice.

Today my tongue, my words, have lost their power. But he still has that power. He is the ruler of Pakistan and nobody can deny it. So I ask the ruler of Pakistan, what he intends doing. He should make his intentions public. Let me now go a little further. Badshah Khan is a friend. Badshah Khan can

go somewhere else. He can stay with Maulana Azad. He has a beautiful bungalow. He can eat there what he wants. He can put up with Jawaharlal. He has a huge mansion. It is not like my poor hut. And what would I offer him to eat? I cannot even provide meat. He agrees to take whatever I eat, cereals, a little fruit, and that is all. But he is happy with it and thus he is my friend. He is a fakir. Dr. Khan Saheb is his brother. Dr. Khan Saheb can do nothing without Badshah Khan's help. Badshah Khan is a fakir. That is why he is "Badshah" or king. He has become a king not through the sword but through love, through service. When I go there I never hear him called by any other name. It is here that he is called the Frontier Gandhi. There they do not even know Gandhi, to say nothing of Frontier Gandhi.

So Badshah Khan and others decided that there ought to be a referendum. Tempers have not yet cooled, for Pathans are hot-blooded. What will be gained by a referendum? They will not all of them say that they want Pakistan or that they want Hindustan. Then there will be division among the Pathans. I should like to ask the leader of Pakistan if he wants a division among the Pathans. And will he compel one of the parts? Would it not be better for him instead to explain what Pakistan is?

Pakistan has been granted. The Congress has agreed, willingly or unwillingly. Now Punjab is to be divided, Bengal is to be divided. I tell you that it is in the hands of the leader of Pakistan to stop the division of the Punjab and Bengal. Why does he not say 'I now have Pakistan. Why do you fear? We have fought. Let us forget who has been or has not been at fault. I have just signed that declaration with Gandhi that we shall not resort to the sword to gain political ends. We shall try to gain those ends by argument. Let us then argue. I will not resort to a referendum.' If Jinnah says that he will welcome all the Pathans, those who consider him their enemy and those whom he considers his enemies —the Khudai Khidmatgars, the Khan Brothers, the Hindus, the Sikhs, the Parsis and Christians — he will welcome all, then I will say that you lose nothing by remaining in Pakistan. Why should he not say this much? Why should he not say what shape Pakistan is going to take? If he says this everyone will be happy.

Pakistan is not something imaginary. India is not something imaginary. I should ask the Congress also to explain. No poison must be spread. If poison continues to be spread, what

will be the result? Then the Pakistan that has been formed will be a bad thing. The English will have gone, leaving the Indians, both Hindus and Muslims, to abuse them.

Pakistan was not inevitable. But when they saw that Hindus and Muslims could not make up their minds to work together in the Constituent Assembly, what could they do? Then they talked with both the parties and both agreed on Hindustan and Pakistan being separate entities. I am not concerned with what name you give it. But it should be done properly. If it is not done properly the poison will remain. I am sorry that Mountbatten has come today. He has not come with any wicked intention. But I have a fear that through him harm will come. Unless of course he stops doing what he must do, unless he pleads with me, pleads with the Congress, pleads with Mr. Jinnah, pleads with you and tries to satisfy everyone. But in this world nobody can please everybody. He who tries to please everybody always fails. This is the law of God. It is the experience of the whole world. So he cannot expect to please all. I would say that if the Congress is erring he should take it to task. He should say, 'I have come here. I am an officer of the Navy and I like to talk frankly.' He should say that what we do is not right, what the Congress does is not right. But why should we bother him? After all his dharma is different from ours. But why should brother fight against brother? Why now? When there was time we fought. We shed blood. What we were fighting for, we got.

I notice that Ibn Saud has sent a telegram to the Qaid-e-Azam. He says in it that he is not happy over what has happened. But he hopes that there will be peace in the world. The Qaid-e-Azam has said in reply that he also wants peace. But where is peace to come from? There is no peace in India today and if Hindus and Muslims continue to fight as enemies, how can there be peace? I shall say that all the telegrams addressed to me, all the anger directed at me, are futile. I say simply, where there is truth there is God. Where there is non-violence, there is God. Where these are not, there is nothing.

I shall only say that Mr. Jinnah carries a great responsibility. He has to reassure the world. At any rate, he has to reassure those who are in Pakistan and those whom he wants to be in Pakistan. He has to draw them to him. If he cannot do so it is bad for India and it is bad for Pakistan. It is bad for the Hindus and for the Muslims. I cannot wish

anyone ill. My sole prayer is that we may do only what is right.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All-India Radio

106. LETTER TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY

June 12, 1947

I have your long, angry letter[1]. Instead of being angry you should be thankful to me that I have dispelled all suspicion, if there was no ground for any. . . . Do you not realize that the unity of Bengal is as dear to me as it is to you? The partition agreed to by the Congress and the Muslim League, however reluctantly it may be, can still be undone by you if you have the Muslim opinion behind you and if you would, as I suggested to you when we met, stoop to conquer the Hindus.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 190

107. TALK TO ARMY MEN

NEW DELHI,
June 12, 1947

I know that this is a transitional period and going through the pages of history we find that whenever there has been a revolution such inhuman things have happened. But I wanted to change history. For example we fought the battles of satyagraha on the strength of ahimsa and truth for sixty years and achieved something which is beyond imagination. In the same way I want to put army men to good use and see how they can serve the country in a different way. But I want one thing

[1] Dated June 10, it read: "I am sorry that by this statement of yours the issues also have become confused. Newspapers have been only too glad to jump on the statement that the United Bengal plan is dishonest. I do not expect any answer from you . . . or even that this letter will have the slightest effect upon you but I consider it my duty to convey to you my reactions in view of the irreparable—pardon me, Mr. Gandhi, for using this expression—mischief that your statement might cause. Not being able to specify whom you mean, you have slandered all persons who believed in a United Bengal." *Vide* also the preceding item and "Telegram to Sarat Chandra Bose", p. 110.

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and people want something different. What is to be done about that? Only His will truly prevails. It is no exaggeration if I say that science is being misused these days, that it is being put to diabolical use. Nothing can stand up to it except ahimsa. I have no doubt about it.

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 127

108. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 12, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You see Khwaja Saheb[1] sitting to my right. I told you earlier how I once went to his house with Swami Satyadev. At that time Swami Satyadev would not even drink water offered by a Muslim. But Khwaja Saheb was not offended and warmly welcomed him. He was then a trustee of the Aligarh University. Later he resigned the trusteeship to join the non-co-operation movement. I seem to remember that at the time I went to his house a meeting of the League was in progress there. Was there any satyagrahi in that assembly?—I asked. The Maulanas Mohammed Ali and Shaukat Ali were in jail and everyone was feeling discouraged. Khwaja Saheb told me that I could have two satyagrahis and a half. One was Shuaib Qureshi, who was a well-known and courageous young man. Then there was another gentleman, present there, who was a staunch satyagrahi. He had once been assaulted by a mob and injured in two places on his arm. But though he was strong he remained calm and did not offer physical resistance. Lastly, Khwaja Saheb said, he himself was half a satyagrahi. From then on he has been like a brother to me.

He did not want the country to be divided. Nevertheless it has happened and he has come to me to lament it. I told him that we would not weep and I made him laugh.

Sapru Saheb too has felt hurt by what has happened. Well, the League wanted it, but the Congress did not like it. How long can a thing over which the two are not agreed last? Geographically we may have been divided. But so long as hearts too have not been divided, we must not weep. For all will be

[1] Khwaja Abdul Majid, President, All-India Nationalist Muslim Majlis

well so long as our hearts remain whole. The country may well be divided today into Pakistan and Hindustan. In the end we have to become one. Not that they will come and join us through vexation. Our behaviour will be such that even if they want to they will not be able to keep themselves away from us.

It irks Jawaharlal that the rest of the country should be called Hindustan. When one part is now Pakistan, how can the other part be Hindustan, he asks. He is right. For it will mean that it belongs to the Hindus. What then would the Christians, the Jews and the Muslims left here do? Must they leave? Must Pantji ask Khwaja Saheb, who belongs to U. P. and is a friend of his, to leave U. P. ? If this happens, Mr. Jinnah will have been proved right in his assertion that the hearts were already divided.

But this is not what history says. I told you about the letter I had from the well-known historian Shri Jai Chandra Vidyalankar. He says that even when Hindus and Muslims fought against each other they never killed in the name of religion. In our childhood also we never felt that we had separate identities. In days gone by when, accompanied by Hindus, Jainuluddin[1] set out on a pilgrimage to Kashi, he got repaired all derelict temples he passed on the way. The name of Allah is inscribed on the Victory Tower of Chittor.

Why should our hearts now become so soiled that we cannot sit together or see each other with a kindly eye?

Assuming that a few Muslims have become wicked, shall we then also become wicked? This is not what Jawaharlal wants. He says that so long as Muslims were part of the country the name Hindustan was fine for the understanding was that anyone born in Hindustan belonged to Hindustan, whatever his religion. Now Hindustan will imply that the country belongs to Hindus. And who among the Hindus? Only the caste Hindus. But as I have said the caste Hindus—Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas—are a very small part of the population. The vast majority consists of untouchables and Adivasis. Will they be ruled by the few caste Hindus? True, today it is they who rule the roost. But if the untouchables and the Adivasis are allowed to fall under the domination of the caste Hindus, Mr. Jinnah will have been proved right in saying that a handful of caste Hindus want to keep all the rest under their heel. Could we be such fools? Could we accept the two-nation theory of Mr. Jinnah?

[1] Sultan of Kashmir; contemporary of Rana Kumbha of Chittor, the great-grandfather of Rana Pratap

It would mean that if my son becomes a Muslim he becomes a national of another country. If we segregate three-quarters of our fellow countrymen and keep them away from the governance of the country, our Hindustan will be just as Mr. Jinnah has pictured it.

Then there will be a Parsistan, a Sikhistan, separate bits for the untouchables, the Adivasis and so forth and Hindustan will no longer remain Hindustan. It will undergo Balkanization.

If this is what the English desire there will be no place left in the world for them.

So we must not weep over what has happened. Jawaharlal has suggested Union of Indian Republic as the name for the country. That is, all will live together here. If a part wants to secede we shall not force it to remain, but those that remain shall live as brothers. We shall so treat them that they will not want to break away, they will not feel that they are separate. All will be loyal to the Union and serve it.

Today someone asked me why we should still continue with Hindustani. Such a question should not be raised. If we adopt the attitude that since Urdu will be the language of Pakistan we should have Hindi as our language then the charge of separatism against us also will be proved. Hindustani means an easy language to speak, read and write. It used to be one language at one time but lately we have Urdu loaded with Persian expressions which the people cannot understand and Hindi crammed with Sanskrit words which also people cannot understand. If we used that language we should have to eject from our midst people like Sapru. Although a Hindu, his mother tongue is Urdu. If I start talking to him in Sanskritized Hindi he will not be able to make head or tail of it. We should therefore continue the work of Hindustani—of the Hindustani Sabha—and prove our love for those whose language is Urdu.

I see God's will in what has happened. He wants to test us both to see what Pakistan will do and how generous India can be. We must pass the test. I am hoping that no Hindu will be so mad as to show inadequate respect for things the Muslims consider sacred or fail to accord the same status to the Aligarh University as he does to Malaviyaji's Hindu University. If we destroy their sacred places we shall ourselves be destroyed.

Similarly we should protect the fire temples of Parsis and the synagogues of Jews as we protect Hindu temples. I must also say that untouchables will be treated here on par with the

people of the highest caste. True Hinduism embraces all religions.

We must see that we have a hundred per cent success in this. We cannot act on the principle of tit for tat. That is an obsolete principle. The times have changed. Now if someone abuses us we have to answer him by love. We have to answer lies with truth and meanness with generosity. Always and in every situation our eyes, ears and hands should remain pure. Only then can we save ourselves; only then can the world survive. I have not the least doubt of it. We must not run away with the idea that now that we have given the Muslims what they wanted we can do what we like.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 150-4

109. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

NEW DELHI,
June 13, 1947

DEAR QAID-E-AZAM,

His Excellency the Viceroy writes saying that you will gladly accept my suggestion and put the case of Pakistan to the leaders and the people there, provided I can obtain an undertaking from the Congress that they will not interfere.

I do not know what you mean by the undertaking from the Congress that they will not interfere.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

QAID-E-AZAM M. A. JINNAH
10, AURANGZEB ROAD
NEW DELHI

From a copy: India Office Library and Records, London; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47*, p. 261

[1] The addressee in his reply of even date, *inter alia*, said: "I thought it was quite clear what I meant, that the Congress should undertake that they will not interfere with the people of the Frontier in any way whatsoever."

110. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

NEW DELHI,
June 13, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

Your two letters of 12th instant were received last night for which I thank you. I have sent a letter to Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah of which a copy is enclosed herewith.[1] The condition precedent to the Qaid-e-Azam accepting my suggestion is dangerous in its implication. My suggestion is simply what I conveyed to you in my letter[2] of 11th instant.

Before proceeding with the referendum you should invite Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah to proceed to the Frontier Province to woo the Ministers including Badshah Khan and the Khudai Khidmatgars. . . . I have added, "Before he goes, no doubt, he should be assured a courteous hearing from them." The visit, therefore, if it takes place, will take place for convincing and converting the Ministers and Badshah Khan and his Khudai Khidmatgars. It should in no sense be a propaganda tour. I hope both you and Her Excellency would have a quiet and cool week-end in Simla.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY

From the original: India Office Library and Records, London. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47*, pp. 260-1

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* pp. 126-8.

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111. A LETTER

June 13, 1947

A time-table should be drawn up for all the work to be done. If everything is done according to a schedule, one will not fall ill and one will certainly have peace of mind. That is how I am keeping myself alive. Ramanama is our only Saviour. Therefore whenever we have the time we should repeat Ramanama.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 132

112. LETTER TO A WOMAN

June 13, 1947

I have your loving letter. That you did all this on getting a son is something I do not like. I personally like daughters more. Nature has not endowed man with the power and feelings that daughters are blessed with. It will not be well with us till women shed the ignorance that makes them value sons above daughters. And you have come to me for "thanksgiving". By the same token you may vow tomorrow that if you become addicted to drink you would come to me for thanksgiving! I say this in jest but it will show you my distress.

Besides, I do not possess the power you attribute to me. I am a sinner like others. However, may God protect you and your son. You should bring him up so that he grows up to serve the poor of India.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 132-3

113. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 13, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

When I was walking around in Noakhali I saw that people were very frightened. And frightened people cannot think of God. Then we had to pass through villages and find our way along narrow tracks round the fields—something which few men and women in Noakhali ever did. But the experience I gained from this walking tour I could not have gained otherwise. We had to pass through the fields owned by both Hindus and Muslims. So we uttered both names of God as we walked.

When God is here, there and everywhere God must be one. If then we call Him by different names and are intolerant of other people's names for God it would be nothing but madness. That is why I had posed the question whether those calling God Rahim would have to leave Hindustan—of course now we must give up calling the country Hindustan—and whether in the part described as Pakistan Rama as the name of God would be forbidden. Would someone who called God Krishna be turned out of Pakistan? Whatever be the case there this cannot be permitted here. We shall worship God both as Krishna and Karim and show the world that we refuse to go mad.

A friend has sent me a harsh letter asking me if I must still persist in my madness. "In a few days you will be leaving this world," he says, "Will you never learn? If Purushottamdas Tandon[1] says that everyone should take up the sword, become a soldier and defend himself, why do you feel hurt? You are a votary of the *Gita*. You should be beyond dualism. You should not feel grief or joy over every little thing. You talk like the foolish sadhu who again and again tried to save a scorpion from drowning while it went on stinging him. If you cannot give up your refrain of ahimsa you can at least allow others to take the path of their choosing. Why do you become a hindrance?"

[1] 1882-1961, Congress leader; president of the Congress in 1923; actively associated with Servants of the People Society, Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and Rashtra Bhasha Prachar Sabha

If I have the steadfast intellect of the *Gita* I am going to live a hundred and twenty-five years and not a day less. If all of us cultivate steadfastness of intellect there is no reason why even one person should not live to 125 years. Of course if God so wills it He may remove me today, but I am not going to die in a hurry. I have to live and work yet. Purushottamdas Tandon is an old co-worker. We have worked together for years. Like me he is devoted to God. When I heard that he was saying the things he did I was grieved. Were we going to lose what we had learned from thirty years of experience and what we had been so assiduously cultivating? Self-defence is invoked for taking up the sword. But I have never known a man who has not passed from defence to attack. It is inherent in the idea of defence. Now, for my feeling hurt. If I had perfect steadfastness of intellect I would never have felt hurt. Even as it is I am trying not to feel hurt. But each day I advance a little further. Otherwise I should be a hypocrite for reciting the *sthitaprajna* verses of the *Gita* every day. Of course mere recital of the verses cannot make one a *sthitaprajna* in a day.

If I utter Ramanama and it does not spontaneously come out of the heart in a single day, should I give up? I had a Punjabi friend, Rambhaj Datt Chowdhary, who is now no more. Sometimes he composed poems. When he came out of jail he brought along a poem he had composed, and since he himself could not sing he asked his wife Sarla to sing it. In her melodious voice Sarla sang: "Never admit defeat even if you should lose your life." And I told myself that I would never accept defeat. If I regularly recite the *sthitaprajna* verse every day I must one day achieve steadfastness of intellect. Then nothing that Tandonji or anyone else can say will make me laugh or cry. I shall then leave the laughing and crying to God and give up grieving.

The example of the sadhu and the scorpion is a good one. When some person without faith asked him why he was so set on saving the scorpion, whose very nature it was to sting, he answered: "If it is in the nature of the scorpion to sting it is in the nature of man to put up with the sting. If the scorpion cannot give up its nature, how can I give up mine? Do I have to become a scorpion that stings and kill it?"

In the end the learned friend has counselled me that if I cannot give up being stubborn and must persist in ahimsa I should at least not stand in the way of others. Shall I then become a hypocrite? Shall I deceive the world? The world then

will only say that there is a so-called Mahatma in India who mouths sweet phrases about ahimsa while his co-workers indulge in killing.

Something regrettable has happened. I have been a friend of the Princes, and their servant too. I have been a servant also of the rich. I have been dragging the Rajas and the rich people to the Bhangi Colony to secure their help. Where was the occasion otherwise for them to visit the Bhangi quarter? But I am a Bhangi and they come there.

I have seen Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer's statement in the Press. He is a learned man. He has been a disciple of Annie Besant. On my Harijan tour[1] I went to Travancore on his invitation and I stayed there as his guest. I had gone there not to quarrel but to work together with him. I find his statement jarring. If he has been misreported he must forgive me but if the report is true he should give thought to what I have to say. He says that on August 15 when India gains freedom Travancore will be declared independent. And the independence he has in mind is of such a nature that already the Travancore Congress has been forbidden to hold meetings. According to a report Sir C. P. has declared that all those who are opposed to the idea of independence should quit Travancore. This order comes from a man who himself belongs not to Travancore but to Madras. How can he say such a thing?

While there was British Raj Travancore was required to pay homage to the British. Now that India will be a free democracy how can it do what it likes? The State now is ours, that is, it is part of democratic India. As I have often said, in a democratic India a raja and a scavenger will have the same status. As human beings they will be equal. They may well be different in their intellectual endowments. If the Maharaja of Travancore is gifted with a greater intellectual calibre he should use it in the service of the people. If he uses his intellectual gifts to suppress the people it is a worthless thing. If he suppresses or annihilates the people of Travancore, does he propose to rule over the bare land?

I am told Hyderabad is going to follow suit. They have not yet stated their position very clearly. They say for the time being they will watch without joining either Dominion. But of whom will the Nizam become independent? Ninety per cent of the population of Hyderabad consists of Hindus and they include among

[1] In 1934

them some well-known figures. If the independence contemplated by either Hyderabad or Travancore is not such as can make the people feel that they are free, then these States cannot survive. The times have changed and they should realize the fact.

Is this what the Englishmen, who have come here to do good, will in the end bring about? I cannot understand the English. People say I am mad because I trust everybody—yes, while I am called mad because I do not give up my insistence on ahimsa I am also called mad because I trust the British. Why do I listen to Mountbatten ?—they ask. If he is an honest man, can't he—a competent commander—see that to allow some six hundred Princes, who were not able to make the slightest move without permission before, to do as they like, is to make a mockery of freedom? It is a blessing that quite a number of Princes have already expressed themselves in favour of joining India.

The British say that they are going, that they will not double-cross us. Let us then pray that God may grant wisdom to the British and their representatives. May they be brave and truthful so that after they leave no one can call them names and say that they caused harm to India.

So far as I am concerned they may leave right now without waiting two months. We could then all come together and settle things between us. I even go so far as to say that even if we have to indulge in mutual slaughter, we should be left to ourselves. Only the English should go.

To the two States I shall say they may stay but they must stay only to serve the people. Even the Congress will not survive if it does not serve the people.

Let the Princes not question the right of the Congress to say anything in the matter. The Congress has rendered much service to them. I remember when I was at school something had gone wrong with the succession in Mysore and the Congress had helped to secure the throne for the Prince. Something similar once happened in Kashmir and the Congress helped. Then Baroda had once been in disgrace and the Congress made not a little effort to rehabilitate the Prince. The Congress always considered the Princes as its own countrymen. What harm could they do? In time, it was thought, they would co-operate. If the Princes now stand up and say, 'Well, we are the rulers', it would not be proper. They ought to come into the Constituent Assembly, rather they should send popular representatives there.

If they do not do so then it seems that strife is going to be India's lot. We are hardly out of the Hindu-Muslim quarrel and

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we are faced with this new conflict with the Princes. Then there will be the I. C. S. I hope the Civil Service will conduct itself decently and no occasion for a quarrel will arise. But if there must be quarrels there are innumerable little groups who will advance their claims to this bit of the country or that. But what will become of India then? There will be nothing left for anybody. The country will be destroyed.

My fate has ever been to be involved in conflict. I want that conflict should now cease. But I cannot see the country lose its freedom while petty factions fight.

In the end I shall say that we must go on uttering the names: Rama—Rahim, Krishna—Karim. We may not abuse the Princes, but we must tell them that they should be the servants of their people; they can be masters no more.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 154-60

114. WHO AND WHERE IS GOD?[1]

I have defined *brahmacharya* as the way of life which leads to Brahman. The knowledge that Brahman is God does not help us to know what His real nature is. So if we have true knowledge about God we can know the correct path that leads to Him.

God is not a human being. Therefore to say that He incarnates Himself in the form of a human being is also not the whole truth. We can only say that God incarnated in the form of a man only means that that man has more godliness in him than other men. As God is omnipresent, He is everywhere and dwells within every human being and all may therefore be said to be incarnations of Him. But this leads us nowhere. We call Rama and Krishna incarnations of God because people saw divinity in them. In truth Krishna and others exist in man's imagination—they are creations of his imagination. Whether they were historical figures or not has nothing to do with man's imagination. Sometimes we tread a dangerous path in believing that Rama and Krishna were historical entities and are compelled to take recourse to all manner of arguments to prove that.

The truth is that God is the force. He is the essence of life. He is pure consciousness. He is omnipresent. In spite of

[1] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu* which was published simultaneously with the source.

that all do not get benefit from or shelter in Him or say everyone is not able to secure shelter under him.

Electricity is a great force but all cannot benefit from it. There are certain laws for generating it and therefore we can get electricity only if we abide by those laws. Electricity is a lifeless force. Men, the living beings, have to labour hard to acquire the knowledge of its laws.

Similarly there are laws for knowing the great living force which we call God. But it is self-evident that it requires hard labour to find out those laws. That law in short is termed *brahmacharya*. I can say from my experience that the simplest way to cultivate *brahmacharya* is Ramanama. Devotees and sages like Tulsidas have shown us this path. No one need give undue importance to my experience. Perhaps I realized it only at Uruli-Kanchan that Ramanama was the panacea for all ills. Very little work remains to be done by a person who knows how to make full use of it, and yet his work would be most impressive.

There are numerous aids to *brahmacharya*. But the true and eternal one is Ramanama. Only when Rama descends from the lips into the heart can one know His real power. The eleven vows are certainly there to achieve this infallible means. The ends should be such that it should become difficult to differentiate between the ends and the means. Take only truth from among the eleven vows. We can well ask whether Truth is the end and Rama is the means or vice versa.

But let me come to the point. The current meaning of *brahmacharya* is complete control over the sex organs. The golden means to attain that end is Ramanama. For proving the efficacy of Ramanama there are undoubtedly certain rules. They have been discussed once. Even so we shall dwell on them again.

NEW DELHI, June 14, 1947
Harijan, 22-6-1947

115. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

NEW DELHI,
June 14, 1947

DEAR QAID-E-AZAM,

Yours[1] of the 13th instant was received when I was at a meeting.

I had hoped that H. E. had not clearly understood your meaning. I now see that I was mistaken. I cannot ask the Congress to commit hara-kiri.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 375

116. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI

BHANGI COLONY,
NEW DELHI,
June 14, 1947

I can see as through a crystal the sincerity and love in Jawahar.[2] He has always argued with me and made me feel confused over so many issues. But today he hardly ever argues over anything that I say. He would be heart-broken if I hesitated to attend the A. I. C. C. He has made me a captive of his love. That is why I have proclaimed that I am at Jawahar's and Sardar's orders. He has the heart of a child. And yet he has the intellect, learning and power that only the greatest among intellectuals could boast of. He can renounce things as easily as a snake its slough. His tireless energy would put even a youth to shame.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 137-8

[1] *Vide* p. 141.

[2] Jawaharlal Nehru had met Gandhiji at midday to inform him that he would be called upon to address the A. I. C. C. in the evening; *vide* pp. 153-7.

117. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 14, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I am very fond of this prayer of the Elephant King. The story of *Gajendramoksha* is part of our best literature. When the elephant, even with his immense strength, is helpless and sees that his own might cannot save him from being dragged down by the crocodile, then he surrenders himself to God.

We are in a similar plight. It appears to us at the moment that we are vanquished but we are not really vanquished. He who sees God by his side can never be vanquished.

God has so made man that when man is about to be drowned, when he sees that he has lost all, only then does he think of God. When he is happy he does not think of God.

Yesterday I spoke[1] of what Sir C. P. Ramaswamy, the Diwan of Travancore has said. This is the age of telegraph and radio. What I said reached him and he has sent me a very long wire.[2] He has explained many things but he has not lifted the ban on meetings and processions by the Travancore Congress Committee. He has not said a word about it. This is not good. It bodes ill.

He says further that Travancore has always been a free country. This is right in a way. In ancient days our country was divided into innumerable kingdoms but India was always considered one country. Our saints and seers established places of pilgrimage in all parts of the country and did many things that promoted its social, economic and religious unity. But politically the country was never united. During the reigns of Chandragupta and Ashoka, India had to a large extent become unified but even so a small bit in the South remained outside the empire. It was only when the English came that for the first time the country became one from Dibrugarh to Karachi and Kanya Kumari to Kashmir. The English did it not for our good but for their own. It is wrong to say that Travancore was free under the British regime. The Princes were

[1] *Vide* p. 146.
[2] *Vide* Appendix VI.

never free. They were vassals of the British, they were subservient to them. Now when the British rule is on the way out and power is coming into the hands of the people, for any Prince to say that he was always independent and shall remain independent is wholly wrong and not in the least becoming. True Sir C. P. has been a friend of mine. But what of it? Even if it be my son why should I hesitate to say what is true? If when India is free Sir C. P. declares that Travancore is independent, it means that he intends to enter into a conflict with free India.

I can only tell him that he should descend from the pedestal of power and live as a servant of the people of Travancore. If after once dispossessing you of the kingdom the British for a consideration returned you to power and gave you the right to oppress your subjects, what is there to be so proud about it? It would be a matter of pride if you considered your subjects as your masters. Of course India is not down. But if it is faced with problems it is not a gentlemanly thing to kick someone who is down. If India has become divided into two, you are not concerned with it. You must be decent and understand, you must not promote useless strife.

Some friends have come from Rawalpindi with news of happenings there. Sucheta Kripalani also gave me the distressing report of the situation there. One thing made me very sad. When the Pakistan issue was still undecided the conditions there were tolerable but now the Muslims are on the rampage. They say that now that they have Pakistan, they will make slaves of everyone else. I mention this at the prayer meeting here so that what I say may reach the ears of the Muslims. It will certainly reach the ears of Mr. Jinnah. If what I say is wrong, let my Muslim brethren take me to task and say that it is not right. Let them invite me to Peshawar to see how happy Hindus, Sikhs, women and children are. But I have got the names. If some ordinary men had said such things, one need not have worried because there are always a few irresponsible people everywhere. But if all the Muslims think and express themselves in these terms then it is very bad.

Mr. Jinnah says that under the Muslim majority the minorities will live in peace. But what is in fact happening? If after Pakistan has come into being the conflict is further sharpened then it will only mean that we have been made fools of. It will mean that they will be masters and anyone following a different religion will have to stay there as a slave or a servant and admit that he is inferior to them.

I am eager to hear from them that all are well treated in Pakistan and that temples also are well looked after. When I see that I shall bow my head to them. But if that does not happen then I shall know that Mr. Jinnah was uttering a falsehood and I shall begin to suspect Lord Mountbatten who although a commander of such a high rank was in such a hurry. He could have allowed the carnage to go on, if it had to go on, and said that he would not bow before the sword.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 160-3

118. SPEECH AT A. I. C. C. MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 14, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I wish I had made some preparations for this meeting. Unfortunately I could not. You will no doubt agree that no one could be as much hurt by the division of the country as I am. And I don't think that anyone can be as unhappy today as I am. But what has happened has happened. You know of my efforts in the building up of the Congress. Why was the Congress Working Committee formed? When a government has to be run, even if it is a government of the people, a cabinet of ministers has to be appointed. Our Working Committee performs a similar function. It acts in your name. You have the power to keep it going or to dismiss it. The Working Committee has on your behalf accepted partition. Now we have to consider what our duty is. If you want to throw out the resolution[1] you can do so. But you cannot make any changes in it. If the Congress Working Committee has done this, it has done so deliberately and for certain weighty reasons. And this decision has been taken jointly by the Congress, the Muslim League and the British Government. The Working Committee does not approve of the scheme in its entirety. But even so it has accepted it. The Cabinet Mission plan had been devised by the British Government, but not this new plan. Both the Congress and

[1] The resolution, passed by the A. I. C. C. on June 15, welcomed the decision of the British Government to transfer power and accepted the British Government's proposals of June 3, which were "likely to lead to the secession of some parts of the country from India".

the League have a share in its formulation. If you reject it, the world will call you irresponsible. You must therefore go along with those who have acted on your behalf. If you want to reject it, you must remember that what the country needs most today is peace. If you are sure that your rejecting the scheme will not lead to further breach of the peace and further disorders you can do so. Whatever you decide to do, you must do after a great deal of deliberation.

So many things are happening today which bring to mind the English saying about swallowing a camel and straining at a gnat. The decision that has been arrived at has been reached with your complicity and yet you complain of the Working Committee, the Working Committee which has men of such great calibre on it. Those people had always said that the Congress would not accept Pakistan and I was opposed to Pakistan even more. However we may leave aside my position. The decision has not been mine to take and the Working Committee has accepted it because there was no other way. They now see it clearly that the country is already divided into two camps.

But our constitution permits it and your duty demands it that if you feel that the Working Committee is in the wrong you should remove it, you should revolt and assume all power. You have a perfect right to do so, if you feel that you have the strength. But I do not find that strength in us today. If you had it I would also be with you and if I felt strong enough myself I would, alone, take up the flag of revolt. But today I do not see the conditions for doing so.

We have great problems to tackle and mere criticism cannot help in the solution of great problems. It is easy to criticize but doing some work is not so easy. The Congress has to its credit some important achievement but the Congress so far has not borne the responsibility of Government. It has not even had a look at it. It was kept busy by work which was even more important. Everything cannot be done at the same time. When now the responsibility of Government has devolved on us we have gladly accepted it and we have detailed some of our best workers for the job. There they have to grapple with some very intricate problems. They have to attend to the affairs of the millions of our countrymen.

I criticize them, of course, but afterwards what? Shall I assume the burdens that they are carrying? Shall I become a Nehru or a Sardar or a Rajendra Prasad? Even if you should put me in their place I do not know what I should be able

to do. But I have not come here to plead for them. Who will listen to my pleading? But the President[1] said that I should at least show my face here. Hence I have come to show my face and to speak a few words.

It is most important that you should understand the times. The demand of the times is that we should bridle our tongues and do only what will be for India's good.

You will have seen from the newspapers what I have been doing these days. But you may also hear it from me. If through me something has been spoiled then it is my duty to use all my power for putting it right. It is open to me whether to spoil it further or to mend it. I shall cite here the example of Rama. His father went mad and his mother became foolish and Rama was exiled. The people of Ayodhya were grieved but it all led to something glorious coming out at the end. I do not consider the *Ramayana* as history but the lesson that is to be drawn from it is of daily use. It would be wrong to believe that Ravana had ten heads. But there was a Ravana that was *adharma*. It was this Ravana that Rama killed during his exile and saved dharma.

This is what we have to do today. We have to draw something good out of this bad thing. I am not the one to be upset by defeat. From my childhood up I have spent my life fighting and my struggle has been to extract good from evil. If there is gold in mud, even if there is a lot of the mud and very little gold it should not be thrown away. We should draw out gold and diamonds even from mud.

This decision puts both our religions on trial. The world is watching us. In the three-quarters of the country that has fallen to our share Hinduism is going to be tested. If you show the generosity of true Hinduism, you will pass in the eyes of the world. If not you will have proved Mr. Jinnah's thesis that Muslims and Hindus are two separate nations, that Hindus will for ever be Hindus and Muslims for ever Muslims, that the two will never unite, and that the Gods of the two are different. If, therefore, the Hindus present at this meeting claim that India is their country and in it Hindus will have a superior status, then it will mean that the Congress has not made a mistake and that the Working Committee has only done what you secretly wanted.

But if you want to save dharma you must be true Hindus. There are only a hundred thousand Parsis in India. Our ancestors

[1] J. B. Kripalani

gave them shelter and set an example in world history. Must we now kill them? And what shall we do with the Jews? We must so treat them that they will enjoy perfect freedom here. And what about the untouchables? It is said that Islam has risen to abolish untouchability. If you say that untouchables are nothing, the Adivasis are nothing, then you are not going to survive yourselves. But if you do away with the distinction of *savarna* and *avarna*, if you treat the Shudras, the untouchables and the Adivasis as equals then something good will have come out of a bad thing. There should be no distinction of high and low in a democratic polity. But if we oppress them and oppress those following other faiths then it will mean that we do not want India to survive, that we are out to destroy it. It does not matter if the land is divided. But if we divide the hearts then what the Congress Working Committee has done has been well done.

It is not a small thing that some States should secede from India. It is a very serious thing. Today and yesterday at the prayer I said a great deal about the States. I shall briefly repeat here what I have been saying. I myself come from a native State. Time was when I myself used to be severe with the States' people telling them not to force their burden on the Congress for we were fighting against a third power and the States' people also were giving us help in our fight. I had wanted them to consolidate that strength. But now with the British gone, we cannot let the Princes do as they please. Those of them who now want to be independent should ask themselves what good the British ever did them. They were content to be vassals of a foreign government, the British Government, for so many years, but now that the millions of India are going to have the reins of power in their hands the Rulers refuse to be subservient to the people's government. I must tell the Diwans of all the States that if they do not advise the rulers to join the Constituent Assembly, they would be showing disloyalty to the Rulers. We do not want to be enemies of the Princes. If they want to be independent they may be independent. We shall not imprison them. If they want to stay on in the country, they must understand that their subjects are with us. If they do not want to stay in the country they may go and settle down in Paris or elsewhere. But if they want to remain in India they must remain as servants of the people. They must understand the implications of democratic government. They must concede that all men are created equal. They must not don the mantle

of superiority. Only then can they survive for ever. They must recognize the paramountcy of the people as they recognized the paramountcy of the British Government. Then they can freely carry on in their own States. Only they cannot carry on as they did during the days of the British regime, plundering the people. They must dedicate themselves to the service of the people and become their true friends.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 142-6

119. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

NEW DELHI,
June 15, 1947

CHI. PREMA,

It is 4.30 just now. I am writing this after the prayer. Others around me are sleeping. The nib of the pen is broken and I don't wish to get up and get a new one. Meanwhile Chi. Manu came in with a glass of fruit juice and I asked her to bring me a nib. And now I am writing with a new nib, and it won't move smoothly till the grease on it has gone. This is how the old man's work goes on. What place does a man like me have in the midst of you all who are soaring in the sky in the refreshing breeze of the coming independence ?

I am now waiting to see where God will lead me next.

I cannot permit you to publish my letter. It will do me no harm, but I am afraid lest my imperfect memory harm somebody else.[1]

General Shah Nawaz told me that he would not be able to do full justice to the job unless its control was entirely in his hands. I replied that, if it was so he should resign. This is all so far as I am concerned.

I accepted . . .'s[2] offer because she wanted to work under me in Bihar. She is a great help to me indeed. It is perfectly

[1] The addressee had wanted to publish her correspondence with Gandhiji in connection with the Rashtra Seva Dal's allegation against Shankarrao Deo, the Congress Secretary, that he had obliged Shah Nawaz Khan to resign from the supreme command of the Congress Seva Dal in spite of Gandhiji's sympathies with the latter.

[2] Omission as in the source

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true that she has no faith in truth and non-violence. But, then, how many others like her have been doing such fine work! Who cares for truth and non-violence these days? You look at the matter from one point of view only. Go on doing your work to the best of your ability and bring credit to yourself.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–5: Kumari Premabehn Kantakne, pp. 325-6

120. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

NEW DELHI,
June 15, 1947

CHI. MIRA,

I have your another long though interesting letter.

I am sorry about your illness. You must get rid of it even if you have to be in Uttarkashi for a long time.

I am myself thinking of going to Uttarkashi but it is all in the realm of dreamland. Therefore take no thought of it. You may however send me every detail about it.

I must not think of Dharampal just now. Those who are with me are too many. I want to be alone but I know I cannot be. My movement is quite uncertain.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6528. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9923

121. A LETTER

June 15, 1947

When seemingly good men become bad, they develop cunning. A bad man is in the same plight as a cunning man. The [answer to the] second question is beyond your understanding. You may ask it when we meet again. If everybody did his own duty, our condition would improve immediately. The *atman* is its own friend and its own foe.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 141-2

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122. A LETTER

June 15, 1947

Only the self-reliant man can progress towards success in any task. This is as true of a country as of a man. At present we have no faith in ahimsa because we have no self-reliance. It has become second nature with us in every matter to look to other people or other nations. As a result we have become so weak in body, mind and resources that we cannot protect even our own selves. That is why I tell Rajendrababu every day that it is better for us to starve than to import even a single grain of food from outside. But mine is a voice in the wilderness. Or could it be that I am growing too old and therefore losing my grip over things?

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 142

123. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 15, 1947

If I did not feel unhappy I would be a person with a heart of stone. It is easy to become a saint and sainthood gives greater satisfaction. Sitting in a forest or in solitude and pursuing knowledge is no doubt a kind of spiritual living, but to practise goodness while living in the world is, in my opinion, more difficult kind of spiritual living. One may not be a scholar but one must show sympathy towards the poor and the afflicted. Yes, it is a sign of a *sthitaprajna* to remain calm in the face of a calamity or illness or the death of a dear one. But it is the duty of a man to show sympathy towards those who suffer and to endeavour to lighten their suffering.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 141

[1] Manu Gandhi had asked Gandhiji why the happenings in the country made him unhappy if he was trying to become a *sthitaprajna*.

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124. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 15, 1947

I am sorry that today my silence has to begin earlier than usual, because tomorrow afternoon there is going to be a meeting of the Working Committee. I therefore give you my message in writing. I have had letters from various countries asking me one question which I wish to answer today through this message. The question in brief is: 'Why is it that in your country political parties take recourse to violence to gain political ends? Day by day violence continues to increase in your country. Can you explain why? For thirty years you fought the British non-violently. Why does it end up thus? Would you still want to give the world the message of non-violence?'

In answering the question I have to confess my bankruptcy. However, ahimsa can never suffer bankruptcy. As I have explained the ahimsa which we have practised during the last earlier thirty years has been the ahimsa of the weak. Whether this view of mine is valid or not you will judge for yourselves. What has to be admitted is that in the changed conditions of today the ahimsa of the weak has no place. The truth is that India has not so far had an opportunity to practise the ahimsa of the brave. Nothing is gained by my repeating that no power in the world can stand before the ahimsa of the brave. For the truth of this can only be proved by repeatedly and extensively manifesting it in life. So far as I can I have endeavoured to manifest it in my life. But maybe I am not fully qualified, maybe I am a beggar. Why then should I ask you to follow me when I am not able to show results? The question is pertinent and my answer is simple. I ask no one to follow me. Each should go by the voice within. If you cannot hear the voice within you may do as you like. In any case you must on no account blindly follow anybody.

Another important question is that, if I am fully convinced that India is following the path of error, why do I associate with those who are in error? Why do I not go my own way in the faith that if I am on the right path my old co-workers will all return to me? I like the question. I shall not argue

against it. I will merely say that my faith and my creed are as they were. They have not weakened. It is possible that my method was wrong. When one is in a difficulty old experiences and old patterns help but one should not become merely mechanical.

I further request all those who wish to advise me that they should have patience with me and above all they should join me in the faith that to ameliorate the pains of this suffering world there is no way save that of ahimsa, however arduous it may be. Millions like me may not be able to practise this in life. For this they themselves will be to blame, not ahimsa.

I may here mention another matter to you. Although I am observing silence, some friends from Travancore came to see me. They assured me that there was not the least bit of exaggeration in what I had been saying concerning that State. They also told me that where meetings were organized they were lathi-charged and yesterday some thirty-five persons were taken into custody. The voice of the people there is being throttled. Whatever may be the case I have not the least doubt that in a free India it is an absurd thing for a State to proclaim independence. This may even be interpreted to mean that they have declared war against the hundreds of millions of people of free India. It is a very unwise thing especially when the Maharaja does not enjoy the support of his people. It was perhaps possible when the British were at his back. But now the conditions are drastically changed.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 163-5

125. A LETTER

June 16, 1947

Every day all kinds of reports keep appearing in newspapers. This should not happen. They are all mere speculation. Just by chance a report may turn out true and from this newspapermen claim that they can foretell the future. There is, however, only one power in the world that knows the future and that is God, and He never makes predictions. I never read the predictions appearing in newspapers and I would advise you too not to read them. I have never seen anybody profiting from them. I would, therefore, request you not to trust even English or British newspapers.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 151

126. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 16, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

This morning when I was observing silence, Shri Purushottamdas Tandon paid me a visit. I have told you how I was pained by Tandonji's statement that every man and woman should carry arms. A correspondent had asked me how I, a votary of the *Gita*, could feel hurt. The letter also said that Tandonji believed in the principle of tit for tat. I asked Tandonji about it. Tandonji explained that although he did not believe in the principle of tit for tat, he certainly believed that everyone should carry arms for self-defence. This he said was also the teaching of the *Gita*.

I told Tandonji that he should at least write to the friend and explain that he did not believe in the principle of tit for tat so that he should not labour under a misapprehension. I do not believe that the *Gita* advocates violence for self-defence. I understand the *Gita* differently. If the *Gita* or some other Sanskrit work advocates this I am not prepared to accept it as Shastra. An utterance does not become scriptural merely because it is couched in Sanskrit. Tandonji reminded me that I had advised the killing of the monkeys which ravaged fields or otherwise caused harm. I do not like to kill any living thing, not even an ant. But the question of fields is a different question and people differ.

Tandonji said we might not adopt the principle of tit for tat or a tooth for a tooth and a slap for a slap. But if we did not take up arms and show our strength how were we to defend ourselves?

My answer is that self-defence is necessary; but how does one defend oneself? If someone comes to me and says, 'Will you or will you not utter Ramanama? If you do not, look at this sword.' Then I shall say that although I am uttering Ramanama every moment I will not do so at the point of the sword. Thus I shall risk my life in self-defence. Now if I recite the *Kalma* I do not lose my religion. What does it matter if I say in Arabic that Allah is one and that Mohammed is His only Prophet! There is no sin in saying this and if by my merely saying this they accept me as a Muslim, I shall consider it a matter

of pride. But if someone comes to me and wants to make me recite the *Kalma* at the point of the sword I will never do so. I will defend myself with my life. I want to stay alive to prove this paradox. I do not wish to stay alive in any other way.

I have said that geographically our land may very well be divided but that our hearts should not be divided. But who will listen to me? The day was when everyone listened to Gandhi because Gandhi showed the way to fight the British. And how many Britishers were here? Only seventy-five thousand. But they had such resources, such might, that, as Annie Besant said, they answered brickbats with bullets and our violence was wholly ineffective. Ahimsa promised to be more efficacious, so Gandhi was looked up to, but today they say that Gandhi cannot show the path and therefore arms should be taken up for self-defence. One can then only say that all these past thirty years that we spent in non-violent struggle had been wasted. We should have thrown out the British through violence.

But I do not think that the thirty years were wasted. It was good that under the severest oppression we remained non-violent. They used their arms against us. But we were not cowed down and the message of the Congress spread throughout the length and breadth of India. Only it did not penetrate the seven lakh villages of India because our ahimsa was the ahimsa of the impotent. No one at the time showed us how to make an atom bomb. Had we known how to make it we would have considered annihilating the English with it. But there having been no alternative my advice was accepted. But today people say that nobody now cares for me.

But all of you who come here to the prayer meeting every day, why do you do so? How do I force you? You come bound by the string of love and quietly listen to me. If I can thus make myself heard by even the Hindus alone, you will see that India holds her head high in the world. I say nothing of the Muslims. They think I am their enemy but the Hindus and the Sikhs do not consider me their enemy. If the Hindus will heed my advice regarding the non-violence of the brave I shall tell them to throw their arms into the sea; I shall show them how the brave can rely on non-violence.

The Congress Working Committee consists of only a handful of men. I have seen that some of them are narrow-minded, as I could gather from one or two speeches. But I have information from all over India. They say, 'Where will the Muslims now go? What the Muslims can do we can do, for

we are in a majority. After the British leave we shall rule over them. We consider ourselves rightful rulers because we went to jail and submitted to beatings and whippings.' It does not become us to talk in this way. This is violence. If you do not wish to listen to any talk of non-violence, if you are predisposed towards violence it is a matter of shame. If you go by the principle of tit for tat, you can take it that both the faiths will be destroyed. Islam will be finished, as also Hinduism.

If we practise the non-violence of the strong, the Pakistan that they have secured will only remain a plaything. We shall lose nothing through non-violence.

I do not consider Pakistan and India as two different countries. If I have to go to the Punjab, I am not going to ask for a passport. And I shall go to Sind also without a passport and I shall go walking. Nobody can stop me. They might say I am their enemy but if I went I would go not to become a member of some Assembly but to serve and it would not be for the first time in my life. I went to Noakhali and let no one imagine that, because it is now to be included in Pakistan, I would not go there again. A part of me lies there. I shall tell the Hindus there that if they are true Hindus they should not fear anyone even if they are surrounded by murderers.

I shall consider myself brave if I am killed and if I still pray to God for my assassin and I shall utter the name of God not with my lips alone but seeing Him in my heart. I shall not go to temples and mosques looking for God.

Today Badshah Khan, who has been so brave, is not able to show bravery. For years he has been instructing the Pathans in ahimsa. But today he says he cannot declare allegiance to India. If he did that there would be a carnage ten times as bad as in Bihar. What is he to do? Ahimsa is not a commodity which can be bought in the market. If we could display true ahimsa, the Frontier Province alone could save the whole of India.

The Muslims cannot drive a bargain with us. They cannot have all that they were given under the British regime. They cannot be given separate electorates if they ask for them. Separate electorates were a poisonous weed planted by the British but we shall be just to them. Their children will have as much opportunity of education as other children. In fact if they happen to be poor, they will have even more facilities. If we show such justice the people of India will have proved their courage[1].

[1] What follows is from *The Hindu*.

The A. I. C. C. passed its resolution only yesterday. But Gandhiji received two newspaper cuttings, one from a Nagpur paper purporting to report a speech by the Premier of the Central Province and the other criticism of the speech. The speech makes the Premier say as follows: It was Mr. Jinnah's claim that the Muslims had a separate culture and that in Pakistan only Islamic law would prevail. It would be difficult for non-Muslims to live in Pakistan in such conditions. Pandit Shukla pointed out that while there were 1,85,00,000 Hindus in the Muslim areas of British India, there were 30 million Muslims in the Hindu areas of British India, and these have lived in these parts for generations. What would be the condition of these, Pandit Shukla asked. They would be treated as aliens. They would have no citizenship rights. The grants that were being given today for their education would be withdrawn and they would have to depend on their own resources.

The report went on to say: Pointing to Minister[1] Hasan who was sitting next to him, Pandit Shukla jocularly observed that Dr. Hasan would not only have to quit the Cabinet, but that he would not be allowed to live in Wardha. He would have to seek shelter in Pakistan. Even though religious and cultural freedom might be conceded to the Muslims living in Hindustan, they would have no representation in the legislatures or in the services. They would have to maintain their own institutions and they would be entitled to no Government grants.

If the report was fairly accurate, Mahatma Gandhi observed, the speech was unfortunate, although it might have been made in lighter vein. Surely the Union Provinces were not going to be caught in the trap prepared for them. They had to show by their action that the Muslim members in the Provincial Cabinets were just as welcome as they were before and that no matter what was done in the so-called Pakistan provinces, the Union Provinces would be strictly just and fair in their treatment of their Muslim brethren. Pakistan should make no difference in their regard for the Muslims as well as the other minorities. This had no reference to the apples of discord which the foreign power had thrown in their midst such as separate electorates.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 166-70; and *The Hindu*, 17-6-1947

[1] For Health

127. A LETTER

June 17, 1947

Your letter was read out to me today at 4.15 after the morning prayer. After taking honey in hot water, I am now replying to it. Maybe I read your letter or listened to it in a hurry. But one may be able to concentrate even when one is in a hurry. . . .[1] I have spent my whole life in examining principles and I am still doing the same. I may not be able to convince you just now. But won't you agree that "one had rather lose a hundred thousand than one's credit"?

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 159

128. A LETTER

June 17, 1947

Time is kind and time is also a healing friend, but it is equally cruel and can also be an enemy.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 159

129. LETTER TO SURENDRARAI B. MEDH

NEW DELHI,
June 17, 1947

CHI. MEDH[2],

Tell the satyagrahis[3] that they should adhere to truth and non-violence and not violate their pledge even in the face of death.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5005

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] A co-worker of Gandhiji in South Africa
[3] Of South Africa

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130. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 17, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I have no hand in choosing the *bhajans* that are sung these days. But often the *bhajan* that is sung fits the occasion. Today's *bhajan* says that in the company of the good one forgets the notions of self and others and no one is an enemy or a stranger. This indeed is the need of the hour. But everyone coming to me says, 'However much you may shout, the separation is going to endure. Each party must consolidate itself. I do not like this kind of talk, though I am not much worried either. I shall continue to say that what has happened has happened; only it should not be sealed and made permanent.

As you know, when the prayer ended yesterday, a friend asked a question. I asked him to put it in writing. He has done so. He says that if the decision about Pakistan is not undone he and his wife will both end their lives by fasting and they will do the fasting here at this spot.[1] But if someone must fast it is I. There is a philosophy about everything, that is, there are certain laws and certain methods for doing everything. Even a small thing like the charkha has a philosophy. We did not know it before but now a theory has been evolved, and we have come to realize the power of the charkha. I go so far as to say that the whole world will gain its freedom through the charkha. The world will not be freed through the atom bomb. There are two kinds of Shastras in the world—one *satvik* and the other *rajasik*, one conforming to dharma, the other not conforming to dharma. The shastra of the atom bomb does not conform to dharma. It does not show faith in God. It usurps the place of God.

Fasting, similarly, has its shastra. Fasting not governed by a philosophy does not conform to dharma. If someone says he

[1] Gandhiji could not offer them hospitality as he himself was a guest there. So the couple fasted in front of the Bhangi Colony. They however yielded to Gandhiji's advice the next day, i. e., June 18, and broke their fast saying henceforth they would devote themselves to constructive work; *vide* pp. 177-8.

will fast so long as God does not appear before him, he may well die but God will not appear before him.

Fasting for a public cause also has its shastra and I am the only one adequately versed in it. I cannot consider the fast proposed as conforming to dharma. My heart is not going to be touched by it. The world too will have no sympathy with it. I should therefore advise the couple to give up this idea and return to their home. This does not mean that they should sit still. We must not let the thought enter our minds that we have become separated. Let us not recognize Pakistan in our hearts; let us not consider anyone an enemy or an outsider.

All this will come about by keeping the company of the good, by reading noble works and by giving up wicked thoughts. Only then will our hearts become cleansed of evil thoughts. Cleansing the heart is not an easy thing. Only by uttering Ramanama can this be accomplished.

But our minds today are filled with hankering after comforts. We will not think of Rama but rather of a cigar. Our thoughts turn in wrong directions. People continue to proclaim that they will teach the Muslims a lesson. We thus lend support to the argument for the perpetuation of Pakistan.

It is Mr. Jinnah who created Pakistan. We had not thought it possible even in our dreams that he would manage to get it. But he is a brave man. With the help of the British he has succeeded in getting Pakistan. If we now shut our eyes to it and go about saying that we shall teach the Muslims a lesson it is not going to undo the fact of Pakistan.

I am not asking you to kowtow to the Muslims. One does not kowtow to one's younger brother. One does one's duty by one's younger brother and earns his trust.

You will have seen from the newspapers that I had been to see the Viceroy today.[1] The Viceroy asked me, "Did you see the newspapers today?" I said, I rarely saw newspapers. Then he said, "We have accomplished something good today." He had received separate reports from the Hindus and the Mussalmans on the question of partition and was able to make them agree to produce a joint report.

What I say is that when two brothers have decided to separate it cannot be done by losing temper. If there is a chair in the house it cannot be broken into two. If there has to be division in the ratio of three and one the statistics will have to be worked out very carefully. The good thing we have started

[1] For the Viceroy's report of the meeting, *vide* Appendix VII.

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with the formation of a committee should be carried further. One's goodness is not proved merely by one's displaying a smile. If what we have is not merely sweet words but a sincere desire to work together, then I will say that the creation of Pakistan has been to the good. Then it will not be necessary to trouble the Viceroy. We shall merely tell the experts to sit together and compile an inventory that will satisfy both the parties. Where calculation helps we should resort to calculation. Where calculation does not help we should draw lots. But we must not fight.

Lastly, I have today received a lengthy wire from Sir C. P. Ramaswamy, the Diwan of Travancore, in which he has tried to explain to me that he has the support of the Christians and others in Travancore. I dislike such wires. By sugarcoating something bitter it cannot be made sweet. The very basis of the thing is wrong. "Come now, we are independent." Independent of whom? Of the people? What is to be gained by becoming independent of India? Why do they indulge in this kind of circumlocution? They should boldly say that they are with India. Only then will it be said that they are loyal to their people; else they are disloyal to them.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 170-3

131. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
June 18, 1947

CHI. DINSHAW,

I have your letter. Let the [clinic] at Uruli-Kanchan be a separate one.

The nature-cure clinic at Purandar is not required for what I have in mind, but for Gulbai's sake you may buy it over if you have the money.

I am not in a position to send for you nor have I the time. I have lost interest in everything. I have not the strength to guide you. In the case of nature-cure, nothing save Rama-nama has any relevance in my life. Read what I am writing for the *Harijan* journals these days, both in Gujarati and English.

You may write to me in English whenever you want to. The bond of love that has grown between us is for ever. But

you are an urban, anglicized gentleman, whereas I am an unsophisticated villager. That is why you and I cannot see the same thing in the same way. Similarly although I am very close to my English friends they go their way and I go mine. Still the love grows; it certainly does not diminish. Truth binds us all.

Now I have covered everything. Is there anything more?

Of course you are free to come whenever you wish.

I understand what you say about Manu. You have said enough.

Can you read all this?

Blessings to all of you from
BAPU

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

132. A LETTER

June 18, 1947

. . .[1] is making a great mistake in leaving home. Is there any difference between Sevagram and Gopuri? It is best that he should live where he feels happy. We can live only in our own bodies. Another's body may seem attractive to us, but we can hardly live in it.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 165

133. LETTER TO MOHAN SINGH THAKUR

June 18, 1947

CHI. MOHAN SINGH,

So your brother is gone, as you too will, and I and all of us. Our grief is due to selfishness. So do not grieve. Do what you think is your duty. If you can come back, do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi: C. W. 10429. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

[1] Omission as in the source

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134. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

NEW DELHI,
June 18, 1947

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your short but newsy letter. Letter[1] to Mohan Singh is enclosed. Read what I have written to Chimanlal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat the Hindi: G.N. 1980

135. A LETTER

June 18, 1947

I have your letter. I think your relations with the women are not pure but are tainted with lust. You should free yourself of it. When a person belongs to an organization, he should abide by its rules.

[From Hindi]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 165

136. A TALK

NEW DELHI,
June 18, 1947

If people start fasting over every little thing right from now, what is going to happen later? For my part I shall certainly plead with them[2], try to make them see reason, but if, nevertheless, they fast I am not going to yield even if they come to the verge of death. Because even that is a test of my truth and non-violence. To yield to a wrong thing out of fear is also a kind of lie and violence. A devotee of truth and

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The Maharashtrian couple who had decided to go on a fast; *vide* p. 167.

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non-violence remains steadfast even if the whole world goes against him. Only then can he propagate the principles of truth and non-violence. Who knows that God is not thus testing me? But I feel that Hindus themselves are responsible for subverting Hinduism. How can there be peace when there is no unity? There are so many castes and sub-castes among Hindus. Why, they have even separate festivals. I remember there is a festival called *Shitala Satam*[1] in the month of *Shravan*. My mother used to say that *Shravan Sud Satam*[2] was of *Kanabis* and *Shravan Vad Satam*[3] was ours. I can cite many such differences. These so-called small things have a profound impact on the people and make them feel that they are separate from others. That is why I say that the scholars, poets and writers of today should try to stamp out such bad customs and do their best to promote unity through their speech, thought and deed. Such customs were perhaps appropriate for the period in which they originated. But now we must get out of the rut. And religious leaders, writers, poets and scholars should lead the way. If that happens people will slowly come nearer to each other and, if they do so outwardly, they will automatically come nearer mentally also.

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 165-6

137. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 18, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I spoke to you yesterday about a friend and his wife who were fasting on the road outside Valmiki Mandir. Today they have sent me a very respectful letter. But the letter does not show wisdom. They are young, I am old. If I say that I possess a little wisdom they should accept my word. They say they can see the wisdom of what I say but that their conscience will not let them give up their fast.

You must have heard of the *Gita Rahasya* written by Tilak. It is so rich in thought that it needs to be studied again and

[1] Seventh day of the month
[2] Seventh day of bright fortnight of the month
[3] Seventh day of the dark fortnight of the month

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again. I read it in Yeravda jail. True, I do not find myself in agreement with everything he says but the fact remains that Tilak was a great scholar and had a vast knowledge of Sanskrit literature. It is a long time since I read this work and so I cannot remember his exact words. But I shall tell you the substance of what he says. I think what he says is right.

He says at one place that "conscience" is an appropriate word for the inner voice, but that when one says that one acts according to the promptings of one's conscience it does not really mean that one acts according to the promptings of one's inner voice. According to the Vedic thought all creatures are endowed with conscience. But in many people conscience is dormant, which is to say the inner voice is torpid. How can it then be described as "conscience" ? According to our Shastras the inner voice awakens only when one follows *yama-niyamas* and practises various other disciplines. I have digested this teaching of Tilak well so that I am able to tell whether what is taken for the inner voice is really the inner voice or not. If a voice told a thief, 'kill that girl, cut off her limbs and take away her jewellery', I would not say it was the still small voice within. It would be sheer wickedness. We are all today sunk in stupor. It frequently occurs to us to kill innocent children. But the prompting does not come from the inner voice.

Then I am an expert on fasting. Some Jain friends had resorted to fasting merely because they were not able to get something which they wanted. I persuaded them to terminate the fast. I told you also how even a great scholar like Dharmanand Kosambi had given up fasting on my advice. Kaka Kalelkar, who is here, tells me that just before his death Dr. Kosambi had told him that I had been right in advising him to give up his fast. So, as an expert on fasting, I advise the couple to terminate their fast if they can do so. Three days should be enough.

You will have seen from the newspapers that I met Mr. Jinnah yesterday. I could not tell you about this meeting before because such a meeting had not been mooted. When I was at the Viceroy's House, the Viceroy told me that Mr. Jinnah was present there and that I should see him. Well, I could not have refused. I am the kind of person who would not hesitate to visit Mr. Jinnah at his house. We met and we agreed that it would be good if we also met Badshah Khan. Then we were to see the Viceroy in the evening. But Badshah Khan, like the humble man he is, had taken a bus to Deoband and it

took him not three but five hours to get back and this meant that we could not see the Viceroy again in the evening.

The Viceroy has left Delhi today but he would have been happy if we could have met. We therefore went to Lord Ismay at 4.30 in the afternoon. Badshah Khan has now gone to see Mr. Jinnah at his residence and he is still with him.

Do not please build any great hopes on this. But we can certainly hope that the wound that we have received in the shape of Pakistan can be prevented from becoming still deeper. We can but strive. The result is in the hands of God. Let us pray that the effort may lead to a happy result.

What would be a happy result in this instance? This, that the Pathans in the Frontier Province may all be united. Pathans are a sword-happy people. One can hardly find a Pathan who cannot wield a sword or a gun. From generation to generation vendetta rules their lives but Badshah Khan saw that they could defend themselves better by dying than by killing. He wanted the Pathans to develop this lofty courage and render service. But before this dream could be realized this question of referendum came up.

Some will now say that they want to be with Pakistan. Some others will say that they will remain with the Congress. And the Congress of course has come to be regarded by some as an organization of the Hindus. This will create a schism among the Pathans and may lead to a strife which it may be difficult to curb. They will indulge in mutual slaughter. Badshah Khan wants that by some means it may be made possible for the Pathans to remain free without having to submit to a referendum. They should make their own laws and remain united. It would not then matter whether they chose Pakistan or India. They say they have no money. They are a poor people. They do not want to be an independent nation. But they would decide which country to join after they have got over the present quarrels.

Then it also irks Dr. Khan Saheb that some Hindus found it necessary to take refuge in Hardwar. Therefore Badshah Khan wants these Hindus to return to N. W. F. P. There are still numerous Hindus in the N. W. F. P. who are too poor to be able to leave. They can feel secure only after this question of the referendum is settled. It is for this that Badshah Khan has gone to see the Qaid-e-Azam. What he brings from there remains to be seen.

Khwaja Abdul Majid has been to see me. He wants to be assured that, now that Pakistan has been conceded, the

Nationalist Muslims will not be ignored. The Khwaja Saheb, being a good Muslim, also considers himself a good Hindu just as I being a good Hindu consider myself a good Muslim. He says that separate electorates should be done away with for we all want to present the Union of India to the world as a united nation. We may follow different religions but in the eyes of the law we shall all be citizens of India and anyone who is loyal to India should have the same rights as everyone else. I assure Khwaja Saheb that he would certainly have all those rights. At least there are two of us, who regard each other as a man of religion and goodwill. We shall see to it that no one is deprived of his rights on the ground of religion. At the same time we have to see that no special concessions are made on religious grounds. This is what Mr. Jinnah did. First he advanced eleven demands, then fourteen, then twenty-one and in the end he advanced the demand for Pakistan. Nobody now shall be permitted to do this. India is a vast country and it has a place for everyone who will be loyal to it.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 173-7

138. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
4.30 a.m., June 19, 1947

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have your letter. I hope you are now content. Munnalal is in your hands, and so certainly are you in his. If you understand this, it will be more than enough. If the Ashram does not improve, how can Sevagram improve? If Sevagram does not, how can India?

May all of you keep well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6251. Also C. W. 6975. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

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139. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

NEW DELHI,
After morning prayers, June 19, 1947

CHI. MATHURADAS,

This is only to tell you that I admit the truth of what you say.[1] It is very true that even-mindedness is yoga.[2] Neither Truth nor ahimsa can be attained without this evenmindedness. Whenever I get excited, I feel ashamed of myself afterwards, become unhappy and my hope and wish to live for 125 years loses its edge. Long life is not for indulgence. Are not anger and impatience also forms of indulgence? Why should you become unhappy because I am unhappy? Rest assured that I am quite vigilant. My position is like that of a castor-oil plant on a treeless heath. Wait and watch. I have now a whole heap of copies of the *Allopanishad*. The search has certainly benefited us. These days there are no interruptions during the prayers.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *Bapuni Prasadi*, pp. 217-8

140. A LETTER

June 19, 1947

With regard to your letter the following emendation easily suggests itself. Cohabitation for purposes of procreation is still after all sense-enjoyment. It is, therefore, right to forbid it. But I do not wish to stretch the point. Your argument as a whole seems correct. But I cannot go into it in detail. I am returning the letter. Since you have faith in me, you seem to think along lines similar to mine. . . .[3] It is perfectly possible that pure conduct may not have behind it pure thought. What we must examine is the thought and in doing so we must be severe. Examine

[1] The addressee had conveyed his uneasiness at Gandhiji's growing irritability.

[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 48

[3] Omission as in the source

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a thought with complete objectivity, even if it be the thought of an impure man.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 172

141. LETTER TO MAHESH DATT MISHRA

NEW DELHI,
June 19, 1947

CHI. MAHESH,

I have your two letters. My going there has been postponed. It will not be possible to have you or anyone else with me. Your place is to study. It will be different if I settle down somewhere else. Mridulabehn was saying to Manubehn: "Why does Bapu stop Mahesh? His place is in his own town or in the C. P." If you think I am stopping you then you are wrong. You can go where you wish, but there should be some stability.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6719. Also C. W. 4463. Courtesy: Mahesh Datt Mishra

142. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 19, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Yesterday at the end of the prayer meeting a friend asked me a question. I told him to put it in writing, which he did. But the slip of paper containing the question remained in someone's pocket and when the garment was washed, the slip suffered in the process and when it reached my hands nothing could be made of it. It is a matter of shame but the questioner is not present at the meeting so I do not know to whom I should express my apology.

What I told you yesterday about the couple fasting here for the last 3 or 4 days first made them somewhat angry. How could I describe myself as an expert on fasting? Why

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was I so proud? But when I met them at 9 o'clock last evening I explained to them that if a man five-foot tall claimed to be five-foot tall he could not be called proud. They had said it in the heat of the moment. And they realized that rather than fast they should not in their hearts recognize the division of India. They broke their fast with milk and fruit. I congratulated them. They asked me, "Tell us, how can we co-operate with injustice?" I said, "Give up the gains accruing from injustice." We should not use coercion against anyone. We should not benefit from injustice. This is the path of non-violence. This is non-co-operation.

I had said yesterday that Badshah Khan was seeing Mr. Jinnah and that we should pray for the success of the meeting. It may be asked what fruit our prayer has yielded. I cannot tell you more than what Mr. Jinnah has stated in the newspapers. He says that the talks were cordial. That is good. But what has been the issue? He says the issue will be known when Badshah Khan sends word from the N. W. F. P. This means that there is no issue. But we cannot expect to see today the fruit of yesterday's prayer. He who expects this does not know God. Let me tell you something about the significance of prayer.

We cannot demand the results of prayer nor may we give up praying. We may give up food and drink for a time and occasionally we should do so. But we may never give up praying. We must go on praying till our last moment. As food nourishes the body so Ramanama nourishes the soul. There are times set for the recitation of *Gayatri* in the morning and evening worship and for *namaz*. But there is no time set for uttering Ramanama. He who utters Ramanama with every breath is blessed. Such a man can live to 125 years. If I die before completing 125 years then you may consider that I had not attained to the state that I have described.

I shall go to Hardwar the day after tomorrow. Jawaharlal will be accompanying me. He is supreme in the United Provinces. Today he is supreme in the whole of India. We are faced with a complex situation. There are thousands of refugees there. What shall we do about them? I am against providing free food to people. One must do something for the food one gets. God has ruled that only he who works shall eat. I must tell the refugees that they must work. Of course they should try and get back home as soon as they can. But in view of the happenings in the N. W. F. P. I cannot ask them to rush into the jaws of death. I must ask the Muslim League that they

should bring to book all those in Pakistan who have committed crimes. I do not advocate abuse for abuse and violence for violence. But it is the duty of the Government to protect the people it governs even if they be followers of a different faith. True, they have asked everyone to come back. But how can people go back if they know that they will be ill-treated there. Therefore the government there should declare that it will punish the criminals and see that people are protected. If they do this I will see to it that the refugees do not stay on in Hardwar even for a day.

In the N. W. F. P. today it has been made clear to the people that they are to cast their ballot for either India or Pakistan. India is being represented as Hindu raj and people are reminded of Bihar. In this atmosphere hardly any Muslim would want to give up Pakistan for India. Under the circumstances Badshah Khan wants that for the time being N. W. F. P. should be a free province, i. e., without joining either Pakistan or India, the Pathans should be allowed to formulate their own laws and frame their own constitution.

The Congress should tell the Pathans to make their own constitution and assure them that the Congress will not interfere in it in any way. We shall have such control as the centre exercises in other provinces, but in internal matters they can carry on their affairs according to the *Shariat*.

The League should similarly declare that the provinces to be included in Pakistan will have freedom in internal matters and the centre will be responsible only for certain given subjects. That is to say, we shall be having two centres with the provinces enjoying the maximum autonomy. If this is conceded there will no longer be any need for a referendum. I will also then advise the Pathans that since they are nearer to Pakistan geographically they should join Pakistan. Today I cannot tell them this because I do not know how things in Pakistan are going to shape.

If in this confused situation a referendum is still considered necessary it may be held but the choice should not be between Pakistan and India but between Pakistan and Pathanistan. This, simply, is what I wish to tell them.[1]

He was, however, able to tell them that the movement for a Free Frontier State called Pathanistan had come to stay, for it was a solid movement. If it was an anti-Indian movement, it was a bad and mischievous thing. If

[1] What follows is from *The Hindu*.

it was meant to conserve, as he thought it was, Pathan life and culture, it deserved every encouragement. Geographically, it was only a bit of India. Numerically too, the Pathans were very few, compared to the millions of India. But their war-like qualities and their position on the map of India gave them a unique importance.

Also, the Frontier was a Congress province. It was so when the Congress was in the wilderness, and it was now the same too when Congress was in power. It was also represented on the Constituent Assembly. But now, it was face to face with a delicate position. There was the referendum immediately to be held. Both the Congress and the League were committed to it. It was not open to any one party to vary the terms. The issue was to be Pakistan or Hindustan. That had a sinister meaning in the context of what had happened in front of them. Were they to be with the Hindus or with the Muslims?

The Congress was not a Hindu organization. It never was and, he hoped, never would be. But how could the Pathan mind grasp the difference in the midst of confusion becoming worse confounded from day to day? He would advise the Congress to make its position clear and would ask the Muslim League to do likewise. Let both honour the Pathan sentiment and let the Pathans have their own constitution for internal affairs and administration. It would promote Pathan solidarity, avoid internal conflict, retain Pushtu culture and the Pushtu language. If they would do that, they would be better able unitedly to federate with Pakistan or the Union of India, and that would be his advice whether there was a referendum or not. Any premature referendum would be a leap in the dark.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 178-82; and *The Hindu*, 29-6-1947

143. LETTER TO VINA

NEW DELHI,
June 20, 1947

DEAR VINA,

Your letter is unnecessarily long. I have thought of you as a determined girl with terseness of speech. It therefore pains me when I find it otherwise.

Of course the best men or women irrespective of party laws should be selected for responsible service, provided that they are always lovers of the country and incorruptible.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

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144. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

NEW DELHI,
June 20, 1947

CHI. AMRIT BABU,

Your two letters. I am sorry about Ramen[1] and Abha[2]. How I wish both will be healed under Kularanjan Babu. Shanti Kumar[3] wants Abha in Bombay. I have sent his communication to Kanu. My movement is unsettled. Otherwise I would have her with me. My own inclination is that she should give the fullest trial to Kularanjan Babu.

About Paniala[4] you should discuss with Satis Babu and act as he decides. It grieves me that I am not in Noakhali. I do not know when I shall return. The poor widows should be supported. You can show this to Satis Babu.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 10567. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

145. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 20, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I shall set out for Hardwar tomorrow morning. And I shall be back by the evening. I expect it will be night by the time I return. I shall therefore not be present here for the prayer. If you desire you can nevertheless assemble and pray. I have to go there to reassure the refugees. I do not think I shall be able to do much. But it is a duty I have to do.

Today someone has sent a letter to this little girl Manu warning her that if she recites verses from the Koran at the

[1] & [2] Addressee's son and daughter, Ramendranath Chatterjee and Abha Gandhi; they were both ill and taking nature-cure treatment under Kularanjan Mukherjee in Calcutta.

[3] Shantikumar N. Morarjee

[4] The reference is to the rehabilitation of women widowed during communal riots in Paniala, Noakhali.

prayer she will be killed. To threaten someone thus is not in keeping with our traditions and Manu is only a little girl. If she recites verses from the Koran she does so under my instructions. I myself do not have a good voice. If it is a joke, it is not a good joke.

As for the verses from the Koran, I have explained my position to you. There is nothing objectionable in the verses. I have explained to you the meaning. The Muslim friend who is my constant companion says that he who recites this prayer is not harassed by Satan. Tulsidas says the same thing in his *Ramayana* about the virtue of Ramanama and we have the same feeling about the *Gayatri Mantra*. Why then such threats? What good do they do? If any good comes from such threats it will be only for the threatened girl for such things make her more fearless.

I want to tell you that today we have forgotten swadeshi. I have been telling you from the beginning that if we ape foreign manners it is futile to talk of self-rule. Such threats show Western influence. What harms us, what keeps us starved, is not the swadeshi. Formerly when someone did something in the style of foreigners I used to take him to task. But then at that time I held sway and the gun did not rule the country. Today my writ does not run, I am an old man. I cannot run about from place to place. If even today my voice could reach people, I would say the same thing that I have been saying for the last thirty-two years. I am now 78 but I spent my youth in exile in South Africa and what I have taught for thirty-two years after my return from South Africa has amounted to this: that in imitating Western ways we will destroy whatever we have achieved. Swadeshi is that which appeals to the soul.

I talked about complete swadeshi and I insisted that khadi was its centre. We did not then have the national flag. We later devised the tricolour which represents all the people of India. Today the tricolour has all but ceased to flutter. If we enshrine it in our hearts we can rise very high.

Today although we wear khadi or a khadi cap there is only emptiness inside. I had then said that not only foreign cloth but even the mill-cloth produced in India was taboo for us. Camphor which we do not produce here and which is a very useful thing is not foreign when imported from Japan. But if we import from Japan something which we can produce here it is poison to us. Our people in their millions used to make cloth. They met their own requirements and also exported

shiploads of it abroad. What crime have they committed that now they should send out their cotton and the cloth made from it should then be brought to India and sold here cheaper than the cotton? What lies behind this is something that can make one's hair stand on end.

There was a time we made piles of foreign cloth and burnt it and nobody said that national wealth was being destroyed. Mrs. Naidu burnt a sari that had come from Paris and the late Motilal Nehru applied the match-stick to all his foreign clothing. He had wardrobes filled with foreign clothing. When he went to jail he sent me a letter—I am unable to trace it now—in which he said that it was only now that he was really living and that all the prosperity of Anand Bhavan had never given him the joy he felt there. In the jail he had no cigars, no drinks and no meat. He was not even given enough to eat. But he still felt happy. True all this did not last long. Man after all wants to soar high but he cannot always sustain himself in the flight. Again and again we rise only to fall. But the rising becomes a cherished memory. At least it is so in my case. But where are those times now?

It is not the times that have changed. A well-meaning petty trader has sent me a postcard bemoaning the change. He says we have all become selfish, not only the traders, the rulers too are selfish. Our ministers are selfish. And the British even while they are going indulge in petty tricks and incite quarrels in order to gain something. If they want to go, why don't they give up their greed? Why don't they make their going decent? But why talk about the British? The Congressmen themselves are selfish. Who shall put out the flames when the ocean catches fire? If salt loses its savour with what shall it be salted? The Congress made so many sacrifices and fought for so long. Where is that glory now? They now want to be Presidents and Secretaries. All this in my opinion represents foreignness.

I hear that there are curbs on the sale of Indian mill-cloth, but that there are no curbs on the sale of imported cloth. What is all this? I do not understand this swaraj. What we gain with one hand, we seem to lose with the other. It is a matter of sorrow.

A correspondent asks me to reassure West Punjab. I have done so, but expressions of mere sympathy are not going to do much good. After all Punjab is a place where Lala Lajpat Rai was born. It is the home of brave men. It is the country of the Sikhs. I do not admire the bravery of the

Sikhs wielding the sword. In my view true bravery is that which an unarmed man shows. But the people in the Punjab today talk of acquiring arms. When I asked them if they wanted money, they said, "No, we want weapons." This mentality is again foreign. What can I tell them to assuage their suffering? I can only tell them that the Punjab should produce not sheep and goats but lions. I know the Punjab. I know its women too. They are strong of body. They should also be strong of heart. The atmosphere there is not conducive to making men lion-hearted. Women of the Punjab today crave for gaudy foreign clothing. They want saris which will be transparent. The men too are not far behind. Even if they do not wear such clothes they want to attire their women in them. When the sisters from Punjab come to me and I ask them why they display so much jewellery and dress themselves in such clothes they answer that their husbands or fathers or brothers insist on their wearing them. Why do men make dolls of their women?

If we give up all this we shall not feel frightened. Whom are we afraid of? The Muslims? If they become devils let us become men. Then they will also become men. When I, a poor bania, am not frightened, why should you be? The worst they can do is to kill me. Let them kill me. Will they drink my blood? Let them do so. That will save some food and I shall consider that I have been of service. But who am I to render service? It would be more appropriate to say that it is God who has used me for service. Hence I tell you, "Do not be frightened."

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 182-7

146. TOWARDS REALIZATION[1]

What is the mark of him who has Rama enthroned in his heart? If we do not know this, there is danger of Ramanama being much misinterpreted. Some misinterpretation is already in existence. Many sport rosaries and put the sacred mark on the forehead and vainly babble His name. It may well be asked whether I am not adding to the current hypocrisy by continued insistence on Ramanama. I must not be deterred

[1] The Gujarati original appeared under the title "Marks of a Votary of Ramanama" in *Harijanbandhu*, which was published simultaneously with the source.

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by such forebodings. Silence thus brought about is harmful. The living voice of silence needs to be backed by prolonged heartfelt practice. In the absence of such natural silence, we must try to know the marks of him who has Rama in his heart.

A devotee of Rama may be said to be the same as the steadfast one (*sthitaprajna*) of the *Gita*. If one goes a little deeper it will be seen that a true devotee of God faithfully obeys the five elemental forces of nature. If he so obeys, he will not fall ill. If perchance he does, he will cure himself with the aid of the elements. It is not for the dweller in the body to get the body cured anyhow—he who believes that he is nothing but body will naturally wander to the ends of the earth in order to cure the body of its ills. But he who realizes that the soul is something apart from, though in the body, that it is imperishable in contrast to the perishable body, will not be perturbed nor mourn if the elements fail. On the contrary he will welcome death as a friend. He will become his own healer instead of looking for medical men. He will live in the consciousness of the soul within and look to the care, first and last, of the indweller.

Such a man will take God's name with every breath. His Rama will be awake even whilst the body is asleep. Rama will always be with him in whatever he does. The real death for such a devoted man will be the loss of this sacred companionship.

As an aid to keeping his Rama with him, he will take what the five elements have to give him. That is to say, he will employ the simplest and easiest way of deriving all the benefit he can from earth, air, water, sunlight and ether. This aid is not complementary to Ramanama. It is but a means of its realization. Ramanama does not in fact require any aid. But to claim belief in Ramanama and at the same time to run to doctors do not go hand in hand.

A friend versed in religious lore who read my remarks on Ramanama some time ago wrote to say that Ramanama is an alchemy such as can transform the body. The conservation of the vital energy has been likened to accumulated wealth, but it is in the power of Ramanama alone to make it a running stream of ever-increasing spiritual strength ultimately making a fall impossible.

Just as the body cannot exist without blood, so the soul needs the matchless and pure strength of faith. This strength can renovate the weakness of all man's physical organs. That is why it is

said that when Ramanama is enshrined in the heart, it means the rebirth of man. This law applies to the young, the old, man and woman alike.

This belief is to be found in the West too. Christian science gives a glimpse of it. In this issue of the *Harijan* Rajkumari has given apt illustrations culled from a book written by Seventh Day Adventists.[1]

India needs no outside support for a belief which has been handed down to her people from time immemorial.

HARDWAR, June 21, 1947
Harijan, 29-6-1947

147. LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

HARDWAR,
June 21, 1947

MY DEAR SARAT,

I have a moment to myself here. I use it for writing two or three overdue letters. This is one to acknowledge yours[2] of 14th instant.

The way to work for unity I have pointed out when the geographical is broken. Hoping you are all well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 10535. Also *The Nation*, 11-6-1949, and *My Days with Gandhi*, p. 236

[1] In her article "Education in Health", Amrit Kaur explains that three Seventh Day Adventist friends came to see Gandhiji and presented a book to him called *The Ministry of Healing*.

[2] Reiterating his proposal for a united Bengal; *vide* also p. 103 and Vol. LXXXVII, p. 526.

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148. ADVICE TO REFUGEES[1]

HARDWAR,
[*June 21, 1947*][2]

It is useless and depressing to recount the story of the horrors they have gone through.

But every affliction has its own rich lesson to teach if we would learn it. I hear many of those who were well-to-do in the past are idling away their time in playing cards and even gambling. Some are reported to be buying property or resorting to other methods of making money. I call it criminal behaviour. If I was given the rare opportunity of making common cause with poor refugees, I would share with them my talents and such riches as I had brought with me. All of you should make a co-operative effort so that wherever you go ultimately you lead a better and corporate life as a result of the life lived in Hardwar. Hardwar is considered to be a holy place. I do not think it is holy but you can make it so by your behaviour.

Harijan, 6-7-1947

149. FROM AMERICA[3]

Mr. Richard Gregg writes from U.S.A.:

> Today's New York newspaper carries a dispatch from New Delhi stating that you have given up hope of living for 125 years and that there is no place for you in India because of the deluge of violence. If this report is substantially correct, I beg you, please reconsider your attitude. As I see the matter there is far more at stake than present violence in India, even if this should last for fifteen years.
>
> India is the source of the deepest and strongest spiritual insight and culture in the world. . . . It is also the most enduring. Despite the grave harm that has been done to Hindu culture by the modern loss of religion and contact with the West which so fully embodies that secularism, Hindu culture still stands supreme. . . .

[1] & [2] Extracted from "Weekly Letter" by Sushila Nayyar who explains that a deputation of sixteen representatives of the refugees from the N. W. F. P. and the Punjab met Gandhiji at Hardwar.

[3] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

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> More than anyone else, you represent that Hindu culture, and the continuance of your life is of great importance to all the world. Even though for a time the number of those who agree with you and truly follow the road of ahimsa may shrink to only a handful, the very smallness makes possible an enhancement of quality and spiritual power. We may not tell God that if violence (the folly of men) does not stop within a certain time that fits our hopes, we will stop doing our utmost including living as long as we can in order to do our utmost. I only dare say this to you because I want you so much to stay with us.

The dispatch from which Mr. Gregg quotes is substantially correct. The loss of hope arises from my knowledge that I have not attained sufficient detachment and control over my temper and emotions which entitle one to entertain the hope. One day I found to my cost that I had not attained the required detachment. No one has the right to live at all unless it is a life of service. And a man without detachment in terms of the *Gita* cannot render full service.

A faithful confession of one's failings is good for the soul. It enables one the better to get rid of those failings. Let the readers of the *Harijan* know that I am making every effort to get out of them so that I can regain the lost hope. In this connection I should also repeat that the hope is open to every one who dedicates himself to the service of his fellowmen. Nor need it be laughed out as an idle dream. That it may not be realized in me and many fellow aspirants should be no proof of its futility.

The statement that I find no place for myself in a society that bases itself on violence had nothing to do with the reported loss of hope. I deliberately use the adjective 'reported' for I do not want to harbour the thought of hopelessness. What was true when the report was made, need not be and is not true in an equal measure today.

It must be clear that there can be no place for a man of peace in a society full of strife. Yet he may live the full span of 125 years and may hope by ceaseless striving to make a place for himself. That is exactly the meaning of my second statement and no more. I am in that society, though not of it. The statement registers my protest.

Has the non-violent effort of the past 30 years come to naught? I have already argued out the position in my speeches reported in these columns. It is to be hoped that the violence has not penetrated India's villages. Be that as it may, I wholly endorse Mr. Gregg's warning that "we may not tell God that

if violence (the folly of men) does not stop within a certain time that fits our hopes, we will stop doing our utmost including living as long as we can.'' I very much fear that the dispatch in question tore the sentences out of their context and evoked the doubts expressed by Mr. Gregg. I hope I am incapable of judging God.

NEW DELHI, June 22, 1947
Harijan, 29-6-1947

150. LETTER TO H. GREENFIELD

BHANGI COLONY,
NEW DELHI,
June 22, 1947

DEAR MR. GREENFIELD[1],

I have just finished reading your very interesting monograph on salt. If it has not been sent for printing and if it still admits of improvement, I would suggest that the tenth chapter on future development should be expanded so as to place at the disposal of the public cheap and effective methods of producing salt in small quantities.

You have suggested a Salt Board. The idea seems to be attractive but I do not at all like the suggestion about controlling production and distribution through selective licences. I am studying the present movement of salt and so far as I know it is very unsatisfactory. Special contractors are said to produce salt and control its price also. My information may be inaccurate, even faulty. If it is neither inaccurate nor faulty the manner is a great handicap. I abide by the suggestion made to you at one of our pleasant talks that salt should be manufactured by Government or under its supervision but without monopoly. Whoever wishes may compete with the Government at his own risk. By so doing the best quality of salt would be produced at the cheapest rate. If this is done with care, attention and faithfulness, India will be able to produce all the salt

[1] Member, Central Board of Revenue

required for the consumption of men and animals and for purposes of curing and industry.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 168-9

151. TALK WITH RAJENDRA PRASAD AND OTHERS[2]

NEW DELHI,
June 22, 1947

You do not know it but only yesterday I went to Hardwar and the hardships of the people there made me very unhappy. One can have an idea of the life women and children are leading there only if one has actually gone through it. But we are not ordained to have that kind of experience. In a few days the rains will arrive. Only God knows what will happen then. There is so much work to be done and yet all of us are sitting idle. I do not understand it. This is the chief difference between the foreigners and us. When five of us meet we plan big schemes, talk about them but in the way of implementation the result is zero, whereas the people outside will have no peace till they have achieved what they decided on. These days I receive heaps of letters. Everyone thinks that we are now sure to get swaraj, so why not by some means or other get into positions of power? I feel very unhappy when I read such letters and tell this girl to say in reply: "Bapu

[1] As the addressee was on leave in London, F. M. Innes, who was officiating, replied on June 23: " . . . I am arranging . . . for an account of cheap and effective methods of producing salt to be drafted. . . . It would be better to add this as an Appendix to the monograph rather than include it in Chapter X. . . . with regard to your comments regarding the proposed Salt Board and . . . control . . . through licences it is difficult to say anything at present. . . . I hasten to assure you, however, that it is not the present intention to establish a Government monopoly. . . ." The addressee, to whom the letter was forwarded assured Gandhiji in his letter dated August 4 that his monograph had not yet been printed and therefore it was possible to make changes. He added: "Any properly constituted Salt Board would, I am sure, readily supply clear . . . instructions on the manufacture of good cheap salt. . . . The important thing is to see that the Board is composed of competent . . . persons. . . . As for the question of monopoly it is for the Government of the future to decide . . . ."

[2] Rajendra Prasad was accompanied by two friends from Himalayan territories.

has no power. Yes, if you want to do scavenging work, you can come with a broom and a basket. He has the power to give that work because he is himself a scavenger."

I do want to visit the Himalayas. But first I want to have a look at the tragic scenes of mass killing in Hardwar, Noakhali, Bihar and the Punjab. You have just seen the striking natural beauty of the Himalayas. I have seen the reverse. I have seen to what extremes the stone hearts of human beings can go. What is going on in the Frontier Provinces today? How much a great man like Khan Saheb has to suffer? Only I can understand his unhappiness. It is only God who keeps him alive. His physical health is so bad that the less said about it the better. But he does not care. His intestines do not function at all. But he has never paid any attention to that. He roamed about in the villages of Bihar in the hot sun. He never bothered whether he had anything to eat or not. Whenever he got time he slept on the floor using his only pair of clothes wrapped in a towel as a pillow. He loves this girl very much and therefore he accepts services from her. He improved in health when she daily cooked new dishes for him to eat and looked after him. Manu broke down when he embraced her while taking leave but the eyes of a Pathan like Khan Saheb were also filled with tears. Who knows how much that Khudai Khidmatgar has still to suffer? But he is a brave soldier. He is born for the sake of the country. He will bravely face all the hardships that come his way and when the time comes he will embrace death with a smile on his face. Of that I have not the least doubt.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 191-2

152. TALK WITH WOMEN WORKERS[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 22, 1947

Frankly speaking we are not going to make any progress till we have patriotism, sincerity and honesty. We are not even fully independent yet and I have been receiving complaints that some so-called eminent leaders of India are making money

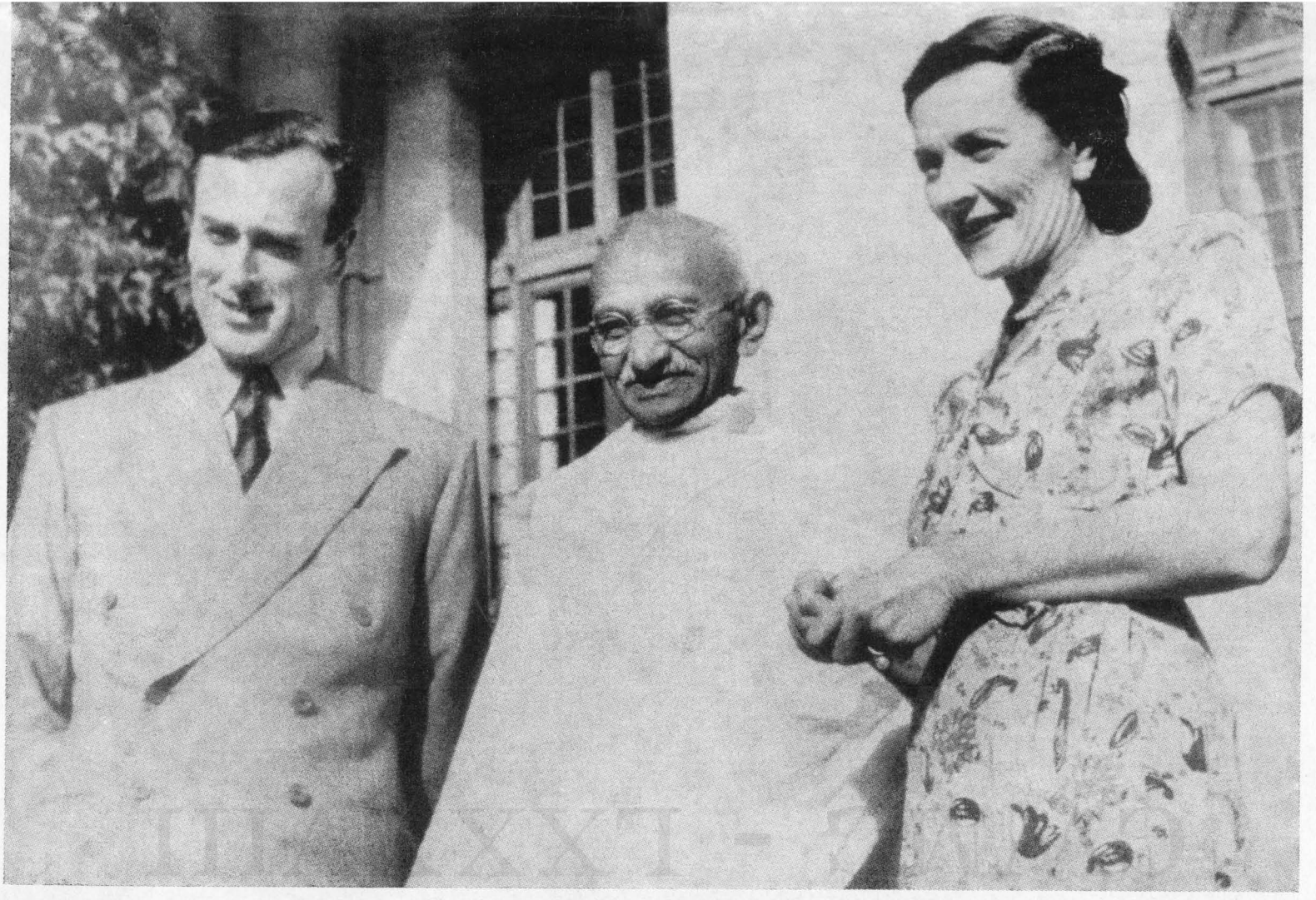
[1] Four or five women working in refugee camps who were accompanying Gandhiji during a walk

through their sons, that nepotism is on the increase as also is corruption and that I should do something about it. If it is true all one can say is that we have reached the limit of our misfortune. I am an old man. Why should I be afraid of anything? How long can this kind of administration go on? The fact is that we have raised our standard of living so much that we are compelled to resort to dishonest ways. We are human beings. Since God has granted us human form we should show at least a modicum of honesty in our conduct. We are betraying our way of life and that is why we are suffering. I have a few letters describing some of the dishonest means Congressmen are resorting to in order to further their selfish interest. This has made me unhappy. I must also confess that at present I am not in a position to say anything to anyone. For haven't I grown too old and therefore has not my mind too atrophied? However, bear in mind that all this is not going to go on for very long. I do not want to live to see all this. But if they go on deceiving us there will be such a tremendous upheaval that the golden history of our cherished freedom, won without shedding a drop of blood, will be tarnished. A mother, having brought forth a child, selflessly devotes herself to his care till he grows up and becomes independent. Even after the children are grown up her constant desire is to make herself one with them. Unless we have the same feeling and devotion for our motherland, many countries will be lying in wait to crush us down. You sisters can do much if you are disposed to. But to my grief and shame I have to say that women today have given themselves up to luxurious ways of living. They take pride in going to the clubs, wearing foreign dresses and talking in English with their own countrymen. I can understand one's talking in English with those who do not know our language. But to say nothing of compatriots talking among themselves in English, even husbands and wives, brothers and sisters prefer to talk with each other in English rather than in their own language. Shall I call this our shame or our sorrow? But these seemingly small things are an indication of how little devotion we have for our country or rather of how much influence the British exercise on us.

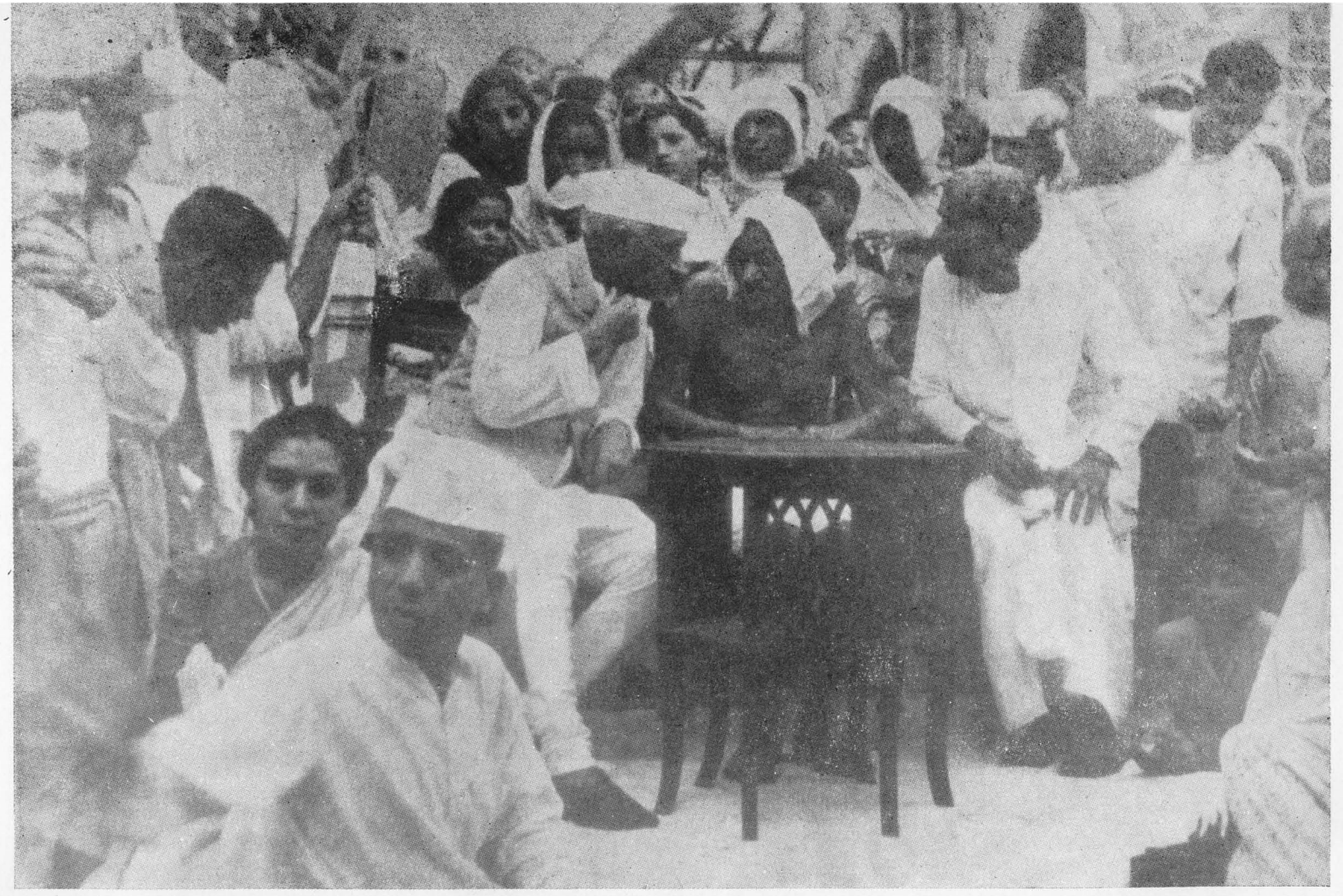
[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 192-3

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WITH LORD AND LADY MOUNTBATTEN



ADDRESSING REFUGEES AT HARDWAR

153. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 22, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

As you know I had been to Hardwar to see the refugees from the Punjab and N. W. F. P. There are some 32,000 refugees there from Dera Ismail Khan and other places. I had no time to enter into any discussions with the refugees but I talked[1] to them fully. I also visited their camps. I heard many things said about the refugees. There are two kinds of people among them: there are those who are really poor and in a bad way and there are others who are well-to-do. Some of them are given to gambling, drinking and to questionable methods of making money. I must say that it does not behove them to behave thus at this time of crisis.

People have gone there driven by their misery. They have got separated from their relatives. But what can be gained from crying over it? I told them to try and forget their sorrow. By forgetting sorrow one gets rid of sorrow. They have to create joy from sorrow. A great calamity has come to pass in the shape of the division of India, but why should I cry over it?

I want to tell you and through you I want to tell them that they should forget their sorrow. These 32,000 men and women should form themselves into a co-operative organization. They should take up work. They should not gamble and drink and smoke hemp. They should keep themselves engaged in some work or other. The Government cannot feed so many of them even if it wants to. Today everywhere the black market is rampant. Even if people are truthful they cannot get full rations for themselves. But crying and complaining will not help. People should learn to co-operate.

In that historic march in South Africa we covered twenty miles each day. We were a large crowd. All I had to give to each was an ounce of sugar and a little bread. This did not constitute enough rations for a person. It was always evening by the time we had done our twenty miles. I would notice

[1] *Vide* p. 187.

cooking going on. I discovered that people were picking edible leaves from grass, adding salt and then cooking it. Water there always was. It made me very happy. One could always travel in such company.

The soil of Hardwar is even more fertile and various other industries can also be taken up there. If they do this they will not feel the fatigue. Those who have to live on others should so conduct themselves that they are not felt to be a burden.

Let them profit by the reported holiness of Hardwar though he was sorry to have to confess that the holy places had become dens of thieves and mendicancy had received the stamp of virtue. He had very sad memories of the Kumbha Mela of 1915 when he had the privilege of serving as a servant with his companions from South Africa in the Servants of India camp. It was open to the refugees, if they would, to make the place holy by their behaviour.[1]

I met a few sisters there who were engaged in sewing and spinning. I met a few men also who were doing something or other. It is good. They should not become beggars. They should be brave and fearless.

As I could not go everywhere myself, Dr. Sushila Nayyar went around the camps. She found the conditions there extremely insanitary. This should not be so. And it is a thing the Government will not do for us. We must ourselves keep our surroundings clean. The camps should be spread out. It is said there is danger from wild animals. But why should wild animals be feared. As man fears animals of the forest so the latter fear man. The 32,000 refugees should really not be frightened of wild animals.

They should be ashamed of fear of man or wild animals. Wild animals fled the haunts of men. Such was the universal experience. Let them recollect that Shraddhanandji founded his Gurukul on the other side of the Ganges which was infested by wild animals. Then they should remember that the police were there to afford such protection as they needed. Courage, hope, personal bravery, purity and industrious co-operation would make their life pleasant. They would then not be a burden on those among whom they lived but they would be, as they should be, like sugar to milk.

A distressing thing has come to my ears. It is from Kabul. It seems the Hindus living in Kabul are living there on sufferance. They have to wear turbans of a particular colour.

[1] This and the paragraph below in small type are from *The Hindu.*

It made me very sad to think that people can put up with such indignities for the sake of money. We must live there only if we can safeguard our rights, otherwise we should leave the place. This sort of thing cannot be tolerated. Then Kabul is our home territory. It is the country of the Pathans. The only difference is that on this side there is British rule while on that side there is no British rule. My fight in South Africa was over issues very much similar. It is intolerable that our people should not live as free citizens in Kabul. I am sure the report is exaggerated. I shall find out.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 187-90; and *The Hindu*, 23-6-1947

154. LETTER TO PURNANANDA

NEW DELHI,
June 23, 1947

DEAR PURNANANDA,

Your letter. I do not even understand the pros and cons. Let justice prevail though the heavens weep.

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

155. LETTER TO PARASURAM

NEW DELHI,
June 23, 1947

MY DEAR PARASURAM,

Your letter. I am sorry you feel cramped in Ahmedabad.[1] Of course you will go to the Socialist Party in Bombay where you will get greater scope for service according to your notion.

Keep well wherever you are.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 5859. Also C. W. 3073

[1] The addressee had gone to help Jivanji D. Desai in printing and publishing *Harijan*; *vide* also p. 129.

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156. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

VALMIKI MANDIR,
NEW DELHI,
June 23, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

The news today is the limit. Look at the Reuter cable.[1] The Bill provides for two nations. What then is the point of the big talks going on here? If there has been no tacit acceptance on our part you people can prevent this crime.

Once the Bill is passed, no one will listen to you.

In my opinion [Ravishankar Shukla]'s[2] speech was certainly bad. That he said what he did in jest does not take away from the gravity of the lapse. I personally feel that he[3] should be asked to resign only if he is also found guilty of some other lapse. To dismiss him solely on this ground will be difficult.

I have also written to Jawaharlal about this.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
1, AURANGZEB ROAD
NEW DELHI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 355

[1] It gave a "colourful description of the grand ceremonial that was scheduled to mark the introduction in Parliament of the Independence Bill, announcing the birth of two nations". *Vide* also pp. 199-200.

[2] The name is omitted in the source; *vide* however p. 165.

[3] Dr. Hasan, a minister in the Central Provinces Government

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157. A LETTER

June 23, 1947

Religion should really unite all hearts. Only then is it truly religion. It is clear to me that violence should be banished not only from India but from the whole world and all people, from the youngest to the oldest, should feel a new life both in their bodies and souls. Today, wickedness flourishes in the name of religion. A medicine is good only if it cures the patient of his illness. What is the use of a medicine which aggravates the complaint? Personally, of course, I do not believe in medicines. There is only one never-failing medicine and that is Ramanama. It is a sin to feel proud of one's community or caste. And it is ignorance too.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 196-7

158. A LETTER

June 23, 1947

We should learn to be humble. If we but care, we can learn even from a tree. If you hit with a stone a mango hanging from the branch of a beautiful mango tree the tree will immediately let it fall to the ground. If man will only think, he can learn a great many noble lessons from trees and birds and beasts. That is what I am trying to do and, having succeeded in some measure, sometimes feel like advising others also to do the same. I will, however, go on working as God prompts me and as long as He wants to take service from me.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 197

159. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
June 23, 1947

CHI. JIVANJI,

Has there been any significant difference in circulation since I started writing?

I have gone through the correspondence with Tandonji sent by you. I see no objection to its being published. How did this question arise?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I see from Parasuram's letter that he is leaving the office there.[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9978. Also C. W. 6952. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

160. LETTER TO RALIATBEHN[2]

DELHI,
June 23, 1947

RESPECTED SISTER,

Manu and the others have come just now. Manu says you are bed-ridden. One may say you have more faith than I. So you must be repeating Ramanama. I would say your capacity to bear is also much more. What then is happiness or unhappiness to you?

Shamaldas[3] had come and he assured me that I should not in the least worry about you. He would look after everything. Narandas also is there and so I am not worried.

Nothing is definite about my stay. Here today, where tomorrow, God alone knows!

[1] *Vide* p. 195.
[2] Gandhiji's sister
[3] Gandhiji's nephew; son of Lakshmidas Gandhi

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I hope Phuli[1] is all right.

Obeisance from
MOHANDAS

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

161. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
June 23, 1947

CHI. NARANDAS,

Show the accompanying letter[2] to Aunt. What is her complaint? Who is treating her? Ramanama is compatible only with the use of the five elements: water, earth, etc.

How are your affairs? How about khadi, the school, music, Harijan work, etc.?

I didn't like Abha's[3] falling ill. I write to her regularly. If I could stay at one place, I would keep her with me and hope for her complete recovery.

Jaisukhlal's Manu is fine. The cut has healed.[4] I heard that Jamna[5] and others paid a visit to Bombay. I hope she is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II/526. Also C. W. 8638. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

162. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 23, 1947

The proposed partition of India and of the provinces is going to be a test for us. Today's newspapers say that the Bill for the partition of India will be introduced in Parliament with much ceremony and India which has so far been one nation

[1] Addressee's daughter
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] Addressee's daughter-in-law
[4] She had been operated upon for appendicitis.
[5] Addressee's wife

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will now become two nations. It is a sad occasion and calls for no celebrations. We cherish the hope that although we are separating we are separating as brothers belonging to the same family and that we shall remain friends nevertheless. If what the newspapers say is true Britain intends to divide us into two nations and that with fanfare. Will this be their parting shot? I hope not.

But if the larger part of the country, that is the Indian Union, does its duty, they will be checkmated by their own move. We cannot now escape division however much we may dislike it. But a higher dharma demands that we should pursue a straight path and still consider ourselves one nation refusing to treat the Muslim minority as outsiders. India is as much their country as it is ours.

It means, clearly, that we have to bring about revolutionary changes in Hinduism. We are marred with the blot of untouchability. It certainly is our weakness. One reads that Muslim League leaders have been holding out the bait of separate electorates for the untouchables in Pakistan. Is this an invitation to them to join Pakistan and Islam? I do not wish to comment on the recent reports of forcible conversions. I have myself heard things from untouchable brethren. I am full of fears about what is going to happen.

There is only one way of getting rid of this fear and it is that the spectre of untouchability should be exorcised. Let there be no untouchables in India. Let all Hindus be one. Let there be no high and low. Let us show special consideration for those poor sections, such as untouchables and the *adivasis*, whom we have so far ignored. Let us educate them, see to their proper living. All should be listed alike in the voters' roll. The present condition should be changed. It should become vastly better. Will Hinduism rise to such heights or will it cling to false values, copy others in their evil ways and thus commit suicide? That is the question before us.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 190-1

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163. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

NEW DELHI,
June 24, 1947

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I have your letter. It is 4.55 a. m. just now. I don't like your plan. A plan which costs as much as you say is of no use to a village. You should start by yourself there. Whatever money you need will come without your asking for it. It will not wait for numberless printed explanations.

Even as a ghost finds a *pipal* tree, in the end you too may find your place of work.

Remember what I told you on a previous occasion.

What need for a man like you to bother himself about such things ?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 2923. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

164. LETTER TO DILKHUSH DIWANJI

NEW DELHI,
June 24, 1947

CHI. DILKHUSH DIWANJI,

Parents' blessings do not cease when they die. Though the body perishes, the *atman* inhabiting it certainly does not. You must free yourself from the delusion that it does.

I remember your mother. She was very particular about punctuality. I have passed on the cheque for Rs. 74 for Harijan work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10432. Courtesy: Dilkhush Diwanji

165. LETTER TO PRAGJI DESAI

DELHI,
June 24, 1947

CHI. PRAGJI,

I have your letter. You seem to be too hasty in coming to conclusions. If you study my speeches, you may find some light.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5040

166. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
June 24, 1947

CHI. MAGANBHAI,

I just got your letter and am writing the reply.

Mahadev's[1] work will not be carried on by associating his name with an educational institution. Then why bother about the name? If the teachers and students imbibe his spirit, all will be well. Be careful in your work, and know that it will immortalize his name.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] Mahadev Desai who died on August 15, 1942

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167. TALK WITH SIKH VISITORS

NEW DELHI,
June 24, 1947

So long as we do not realize the importance of limiting the necessities of life, so long as we do not realize the value of will power, we shall remain unhappy. There is nothing impossible in this world for a person who has an iron will. What tremendous progress science has made today. There was a time when if a man wanted to go from one village to another he had to walk the distance. Today in twenty-four hours he can with the greatest ease reach another part of the world. There are many other conveniences to make life easy. Why then is man unhappy? The main reason in my view is our shallow mentality. We will never be at peace so long as we have the desire to rule over others, are jealous of others' happiness and find happiness in killing. I have my sympathies with you. You have left your beloved motherland. You have left behind your possessions and your dear ones. All this suffering is not a light matter. However, we should learn a lesson from that. We are lost in sectarian quarrels and are ourselves making our case complicated. Humanism is true religion. *Daridranarayan* is the true and the highest God. We are all children of one God. Our lives are very short. Death is inevitable for us all. However long a man may live, if he has not done any good deeds he is as good as dead. A man will still be alive, though his physical body perish, if he has done some good deeds. If, therefore, we learn a lesson from the misery that has overtaken us and make our lives successful, then that misery is not misery but happiness. There are many sad events in a man's life and all of them are like blessings. Had Rama been crowned a king, he would have spent his days in luxury and comfort and the world would hardly have heard of him. But the day he was to be crowned, he had to put on bark clothing and go into exile. Isn't it the limit of unhappiness? But Rama and Sita turned that sorrow into joy and went into exile with smiles on their faces. It is for this reason alone that His name is uttered every morning by millions of people. The unhappy event in His life turned out to be a blessing. If I had been able to bring this home to the

people of India, they would have been supremely happy today.

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 201-2

168. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 24, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

This *bhajan* dwells on the piteous plight of Rama in the story. Here is Rama, about to be crowned but ordered to go to the forest as an exile! Can there be anything more pitiable? Something similar is now happening before our eyes. There is on the one hand rejoicing everywhere in the world at the British Government's decision to grant Dominion Status to India. On the other hand we are engaged in a fratricidal strife in the name of defending religion. I receive many letters every day attacking me. Some say I have destroyed the Hindus, some others that I have been appeasing the Muslims. They make no impression on me. I seek to appeal to no one except God, for we are all His creatures, His servants. And why should I allow myself to be annoyed by these letters? How have I offended? I only say that no one can protect his religion by doing sinful things or by committing atrocities on others. This applies to Hindus and Muslims alike. That Pakistan is a bad thing, I agree. What is there to rejoice over it? Our country has been divided. What is there in it to celebrate? For the last sixty years, since I was a schoolboy, I have believed that all Indians, be they Hindus, Muslims, Parsis or Christians, are brothers. Now that our land has been divided, does it mean that we should divide our hearts? How can the people of a country become two peoples? India can have only one people. When I say this they abuse me. Shall I listen to them and become a murderer? By so doing I shall only be harming myself. One is one's own foe as well as one's own friend. Hindus alone can destroy the Hindus and no one else.

Today flames are raging everywhere. Hinduism will be saved only if we can save ourselves from these flames. My physical powers are waning. I am no longer strong enough

to put up with this heat. It is a permanent law that truth ever triumphs and falsehood perishes. What I say is not addressed to the feeble of heart but to those who are brave and unselfish, those who know how to die defending their mother, their daughter and their religion. The man who can die happily is more courageous than the man who kills. I want the whole of India to rise to this standard of valour.

I shudder to see what is going on everywhere around me. With whom must I argue? We are looking up to the British. How long must we? After the fifteenth of August the British will have left. Whom shall we look up to then? It has been suggested that Punjab should be placed under martial law. I have seen Punjab once placed under martial law. I know what martial law means. It cannot change men's hearts. I shall still say that if Muslims want to save Islam, Hindus Hinduism and the Sikhs their Gurudwaras, they must together resolve that they will not fight. If there is a dispute over division it should be settled not through resort to force but through arbitration.

Sir C. P. says that Gandhi and the Congress are all too willing to grant independence to N. W. F. P. but not to Travancore. How can a learned man like Sir C. P. say such a silly thing? If Travancore becomes independent then Hyderabad, Kashmir, Indore and other States will also declare themselves independent and India will be Balkanized. Then Badshah Khan does not want to secede from India. He says that he will not join Pakistan. Must he then be a slave of the Hindus? It is said that the Congress has been bribing him. If the Congress had resorted to bribery to gain support of people it could not have survived. Badshah Khan tells us to frame our Constitution first. In the meanwhile he will have come to some decision. But what Sir C. P. says is something quite different. In N. W. F. P. it is the voice of the people. But in Travancore it is a Maharaja and his Prime Minister speaking on behalf of the Hindus. Sir C. P. cannot throw dust into people's eyes by advancing the example of N. W. F. P. I would suggest to Sir C. P. that Travancore should come into the Constituent Assembly.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 190-4

169. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

NEW DELHI,
June 25, 1947

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. I understand about your birthday. How is it that all of you wish to leave before I do? What will be my condition then? What selfishness is this? Thank God, living or dying is not in our hands. All our efforts to that end are in vain. As the saying is, that which we do alone keeps us company.

My future plans are wholly uncertain.

What public statement can I make in connection with the Gen. Shah Nawaz affair?[1] How am I responsible for what someone else may say? I am certainly responsible for what I do or say, but for nothing else.

Publication of the correspondence with you will serve no useful purpose. If Deo wishes to publish anything, he will ask me.

If what you say regarding Mridula is true, that is to say, if I have correctly followed your meaning, then you make too subtle distinctions. Reflect over this.

This much is true. If you come and spend a few days with me, you will probably understand the position better. That is, you should come and stay for three or four days at a time at short intervals. Alternatively, go on doing whatever work falls to your share and let the world go its own way.

You are doing your work well.

Sushila Pai has left.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G. N. 10455. Also C. W. 6894. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

[1] *Vide* p. 157.

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170. A TALK

NEW DELHI,
June 25, 1947

The Interim Government should first of all set about changing the education system. Only if we begin now can we expect to see the results after a certain number of years. As far as possible the Universities should be set up in the villages so that they may serve the villagers. Most of our people live in villages and this is the only way to make the city-dwellers take interest in their daily life and necessities. Mere literacy or a smattering of languages should not satisfy us. If I were the Education Minister, I would impart instruction in alphabets only through crafts. For instance I would not make a child trace over and over again a letter of the alphabet but would make them draw the letters as they would draw a crow or a parrot. I would thus instruct them in art. Similarly I would teach history, geography, geometry and arithmetic with the help of a charkha or *takli*. With it the mind, soul and body can also be fully educated. *Takli* is a thing through which we can teach all the subjects to a child. Primary education these days is inordinately expensive and because of their poverty most students are unable to reach High School. If education is imparted through arts and crafts, it will not only make the students self-reliant but bring in enough money to pay the salaries of the teachers. They will, however, develop self-confidence and an urge to be of help to their parents. Today, so many educated youths are unemployed. There are so many instances of educated youths before me who do not render even a penny's worth of help to their parents. I am becoming more and more convinced that the basic education can be of great help in our economic, political and social advancement.

Here you must also note another thing: one must not depend on the Government for every little thing. When the National Government comes into being a certain amount of assistance will certainly be forthcoming. But if today it is the Congress Government tomorrow some other party may form the Government.

The educationists however should concern themselves solely with providing to the people education that is sound and character-building. We look down upon those who do manual

work. In Kathiawad one has to bathe if one happens to touch a weaver. Since all this is being done in the name of religion, we have become complacent. The main reason for all this is that we acquiesced in our slavery and abjectness for so many years. Had we assigned to craftsmen and artisans a place of dignity in society, like other countries we too would have produced many scientists and engineers. But now we must wake up.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 206-7

171. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 25, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

The refugees from N. W. F. P. and the Punjab I met in Hardwar told me that Hindus residing in Kabul are obliged to wear turbans of a particular colour to make them easily distinguishable. In this connection the Afghan Consul[1] has today issued a long statement contradicting the report. He says that there is no such thing in Kabul. He says that the Hindus even have temples in Kabul and they have the right to build temples there. If that is so we can feel proud.

The carnage in Lahore, Amritsar and Gurgaon is a matter of shame for all the three communities—Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. This carnage should be stopped by whatever means and people should be brought together. I saw in the newspapers today that yesterday in Lahore there was a conference of the representatives of the three communities at Nawab Mamdot's house which lasted till midnight and at which it was agreed that the rioting should be stopped. This is good news. After all, is Pakistan to be raised over the ashes of Lahore and Amritsar? And these are no small townships. They have taken generations to build. Amritsar moreover has the Golden Temple of the Sikhs. It is a matter of grief that man can thus forget his humanity and become Satan. These leaders will meet again tomorrow,[2] and if they are successful it will not

[1] Ghulam Mohammed

[2] A security committee consisting of Iftikhar Hussain Khan of Mamdot, Bhimsen Sachar and Swaran Singh was formed for day-to-day review of the law and order condition in the province.

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be necessary for martial law to be imposed in these cities. These leaders therefore deserve our thanks.

I find myself in a dilemma. I feel the urge sometimes to go to Bihar, sometimes to Noakhali. In Noakhali my work was just started and it has given much comfort to the Hindus. I must go to Bihar too. I had intended to be here eight days but I have already been here a month. Where am I to go and what am I to do? I am perplexed. For a devotee of God it is good in a way. A devotee should think only of today and not of tomorrow for tomorrow is in God's hands. There are some who jibe at me for my tall talk about ahimsa and ask why I do not visit Amritsar or Gurgaon. But what shall I gain by going there? I want that you should see me as I am. I have never been a prey to misgivings. But today there is so much confusion in the world and India that it is difficult to see things clearly. The *Gita* says that one must attend to one's present duty. There is large-scale rioting going on in several places and I cannot make up my mind which one to go to. God gives me no guidance here. I ask friends. When the heart is besieged by doubt the best thing is to wait in patience. Throwing a stone may further spoil things. Nawab Mamdot says that the minorities will be given fair treatment in Pakistan. Why should I distrust him? If Hindus can live in Afghanistan as citizens, why should they not in Pakistan?

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 194-6

172. A LETTER

NEW DELHI,
June 26, 1947

DEAR RAI SAHIB,

I have your interesting letter. If your daughters are wise girls, they will certainly contribute to the success of my dream. Let them be in touch with the Kasturba work in Gauhati. Hope you are better.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

173. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

NEW DELHI,
June 26, 1947

CHI. RAMESHWARIBEHN,

I got all your letters. I had dictated a postcard. The address was correct.

I am myself in a dilemma. I do not know what to do. I know how things are there. They got Pakistan through conflict. Now everything is sought to be achieved through conflict. My faith is in Ramanama. Let me see what way Rama shows.

My programme is uncertain. For the moment I am here. I shall certainly be doing something. I wish to go everywhere and nowhere. Kashmir is also in my mind. It is well you did not go to Kashmir. If you want to come do come.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8011. Also C. W. 3111. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

174. LETTER TO RAVI SHANKAR SHUKLA

NEW DELHI,
June 26, 1947

BHAI SHUKLAJI,

I have your letter and all the documents. I have read the ones in Hindi and English. I do not like these opinions. I have expressed my views through the newspapers.

Yes, Hassan's conduct was not at all correct but it will not be proper to ask for his resignation.[1] However, if there is

[1] Consequent to the addressee's speech on June 16, Dr. Hassan had been reported to have tendered his resignation and also given publicity to it in the papers besides writing to Gandhiji, which was resented by the Premier as well as the Congress Parliamentary Board.

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some other complaint, then that can be a reason for demanding his resignation.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am writing to Dr. Hassan.

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

175. A TALK

NEW DELHI,
June 26, 1947

Khadi activity will not gather momentum if you have the slightest misgivings about making khadi the national dress. As a result unemployment will increase. If you want to give work to the millions khadi alone provides such work. Its various processes right from the growing of the cotton to the weaving of the cloth will provide employment to every member of a peasant family. It indirectly provides employment to the families of carpenters, blacksmiths, weavers and tailors. The National Government will have to give priority to this issue and concentrate attention on it, for a new argument will be pressed before us as to what would be the harm in using mill-cloth. It is indigenous, it will be argued, cheap and attractive. However, I have not the slightest use for mill-cloth however attractive and cheap, when there is the question of providing food to the millions. Police, Government officers, peons, Government guest houses and Government offices should as far as possible use only khadi. I use the expression khadi activity in its broadest sense. All the things produced by village industry should be encouraged.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 212

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176. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
June 26, 1947

As against the sins of crores of men, perfect purity of even two persons will certainly have an effect. Yes, there is this, that these two persons are very severely tested. For example, a man will buy a brass plate after approving its outward appearance but the same man while buying a gold plate will examine the gold thoroughly to ascertain whether it is genuine or not. Thereafter he will guard the plate as he would his own life. He will have it tested at a thousand places. There is a similar difference between a pure and a sinful soul. God tests the pure soul many times. And after a devotee has passed through the tests God values him more than He does Himself. Does not the *bhajan* "*Gajendramoksha*" say the same thing? We should not commit sins because crores of people do so. If we are pure in all respects we will certainly make an impression and people will strive to become like us, or such persons will be rejected as unwanted grains. Those who work with a pure heart and without any expectation of reward will certainly triumph. There is not the least doubt about it. If all of us learn to be unselfish all the quarrels of the world will end right away. If true love manifests itself in the heart everything will be all right.

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 213

177. TALK WITH VISITORS[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 26, 1947

Yes, I am not at all satisfied with the kind of freedom we are about to get because the freedom of my imagination is quite different. I did not want mere political freedom. If our non-violence were genuine and of the brave the shameful

[1] These were two men from Payoda.

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things which are happening in India today would not have happened. The power to which I have been wedded for the last thirty and more years is certainly genuine. But I, the votary of that power, am imperfect. I have no doubt that we were able to hold out against the British only because of our non-violence. And I have no doubt that only non-violence is going to help us in the communal strife. But I am not able to see how I can convince the people of this. People welcomed my lead because we had no strength to use arms against the British and that was chiefly why we succeeded against them. However, that was the non-violence of the weak. But what is wanted now is the non-violence of the brave. I must also make it clear that a third power has taken advantage of our weakness, sparing no pains to spread poison among us. I am positive that the sooner the foreigners leave our country the better it will be for us. Aren't the British, perhaps, showing their cleverness even while they are leaving?

We have no need for big mills and heavy machinery. If one machine does the work of a hundred men, then where are we to employ those hundred men? In a country with such a huge population proliferation of mechanized industries will surely lead to large-scale unemployment. I have great regard for technologists. I have respect for scientists. But I have no use for machinery if a person owning it becomes a millionaire, spends his life in comforts and luxury, lives in bungalows, moves about in a car, gets milk when he asks for water, and wears soft and expensive clothes, while on the other hand thousands of people do not even have roofs over their heads, have to sweat for bread, have no clothes to cover themselves with and then have their work snatched away by one millionaire. The real India does not live in Bombay, Delhi or Calcutta but in seven lakh villages. If we wish to make those villages self-reliant, the human machines should be activated. If there are riots in India today, the cause is to be found in idleness and unemployment. If everyone ate what he earned by the sweat of his brow, if they had to work eight hours a day for their livelihood, no one would have even a minute to spare. Our best religious book is the *Gita*. In it Lord Krishna says that whoever eats without performing *yajna* eats stolen food.[1] The new meaning of *yajna* is that a man has no right to eat till he has earned his food with hard labour.

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 12

There is in this world no one happier than a self-reliant man who finds happiness in the accomplishment of his work. Isn't there a saying that 'dependence on others always ends in disappointment'. It is very true. If we look around we find that there is no peace or happiness on the face of anyone. The main reason for it is that people expect help from others even for the smallest things.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 214-5

178. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 26, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I was with the Viceroy for an hour and half today. I had no specific business with him. I had not gone there to give the Viceroy something or take something from him. He has his own way of working. He felt that since I have been fighting for the freedom of India and serving the people, he should summon me also as he has been summoning others. He consults every one and then he does what he has to do. What he has in his heart God alone knows.

I get many letters full of abuse. The abuse has no effect on me for I take the abuse as praise. But people hurl abuses at me not because I take it as praise but because in their eyes I am not what I ought to be. There was a time when these same people used to sing my praises. I have selected two questions contained in a letter I have received today which I shall answer here. The first question is: "You have become so used to the British army. What will happen to you after the British army withdraws from here?" I answered this question when I was in South Africa and again answered it after my return here many years ago. I still say the same thing. We have no use for the British army. It does not increase our strength but reduces it. I am of course a votary of non-violence but this applies even to those who do not believe in non-violence. If everyone becomes a soldier and learns to wield the rifle, what need would there be left for the British army? If the withdrawal of the British army shocks us, then how can we be said to be fit for swaraj? If a man's

lungs become diseased, he cannot keep himself alive with another person's lungs. Swaraj constitutes the lungs of India. If we want to survive we cannot do so with others' help. We are today like a man who has spent his life in a dark cellar and, being suddenly let out, is for the time being blinded by sunlight. We do not want the British army or any other army either to suppress us or to defend us.

But the riots in Amritsar, Lahore and other places have made us lose faith in ourselves. We have become so wicked that we have begun to fear each other. The idea has begun to take root in our hearts that if the army is not there people will eat each other up. But the fact is that so long as there is a third party ready to suppress us we cannot hope to be strong ourselves. Swaraj is not for cowards.

The second question is: "What a silly old man you are that you cannot see how your ahimsa stinks. Your ahimsa can save neither the Hindus nor the Muslims. If we suffer you to live it is not for your ahimsa but in consideration of the services you have rendered to the country."

What stinks in my nostrils is not my ahimsa but the blood that is flowing everywhere around me. My ahimsa smells sweet to me. A man who drinks nectar every day does not find it so sweet as when he drinks it after having swallowed a draught of poison. Ahimsa did not always smell as sweet as it does now. For then the atmosphere was permeated with ahimsa. But today when violence is giving out so much stench it is only my ahimsa which acts as an antidote. The letter also asks me why I am repeatedly meeting Mr. Jinnah. He is our enemy and we ought to keep away from him. The Baluchis similarly are our enemies and the Congress ought to have nothing to do with them. How can the Congress do so? Its mission is to serve all. I agree that Mr. Jinnah has done a disservice to the country in denouncing Hindus, especially *savarna* Hindus as his enemies. If a man acts wickedly one feels sorry but after all he is our brother. Hindus cannot go mad. Although Mr. Jinnah has got Pakistan it does not mean that we should cease to associate with him. There are many disputes which can be settled only if we meet together.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 196-8

179. LETTER TO MAHESH DATT MISHRA

NEW DELHI,
June 26/27, 1947

CHI. MAHESH,

I have your letter. Do what service you can from there. Take care of your health.

My programme has become quite uncertain. I cannot say where I shall be. Now you have to look after things there. It is good if you can write something for *Harijan*.

Whenever you want to send anything you have written, do please send it. Nothing is certain about Kashmir.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6722. Also C. W. 4464. Courtesy: Mahesh Datt Mishra

180. LETTER TO DEV PRAKASH NAYYAR

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1947

CHI. DEV,

Yesterday Sushila[2] handed me your letter of the 24th instant. Today at 4.15 after the prayers while sipping warm water I had it read out to me, and then Mahesh's letter. Now I am dictating the reply. I like your letter, also Mahesh's. I have no idea when I shall be going there. Do understand that I am not staying on here of my own inclination. My desire is to be in Bihar and Noakhali. But we cannot have things all our own way. Knowingly I refrain from doing anything. God can toss me anywhere He chooses; I wish only to be a ball in His hands.

I feel hurt to hear the statement of Ansari Saheb[3]. Why did he go to Jharia? Nor did I understand why Shah Nawaz

[1] The reference is to Gandhiji's intended visit to Kashmir in place of Jawaharlal Nehru as the Maharaja objected to the latter's visit; *vide* p. 217.

[2] Dr. Sushila Nayyar, addressee's sister

[3] Abdul Qayyum Ansari, Minister for Rehabilitation, Bihar

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Saheb went. I have sent for him. The matter will be decided after his arrival. Mridulabehn too is here. I shall show your letter to her.

I greatly appreciate your staying on there. You are gaining direct experience. You will find in it the key to adult education. Adult education in my opinion is a very important matter. It puts us to test. Preserve good health, both physical and mental. I notice it every moment that perfect mental health ensures physical health.

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

181. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

Immediate

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

Panditji was with me at noon and I gave him the purport of the conversation about Kashmir and he immediately asked whether the letter[1] you were kindly sending to the Maharaja Saheb was going by wire or post. I could not give him a satisfactory answer and I said it would probably be by post. He said the letter would take some days to reach there and the reply too might be delayed. I share his anxiety that the matter brooks no delay. For him it is one of personal honour. I have simply undertaken to replace him to the best of my ability. I would like to free him from anxiety in this matter. I seek your aid.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 269-70

[1] The letter to Hari Singh was dictated by Mountbatten on June 26 in Gandhiji's presence; *vide* Appendix VIII.

[2] Mountbatten replied that the letter had gone by post but that he was telegraphing to the Resident to inform the Maharaja of the despatch of the letter and its contents.

182. LETTER TO KULARANJAN MUKHERJEE

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1947

DEAR KULARANJAN,

Your letter. Abha is there. It is now for you to convert her to your method. I am anxious for her to gain complete recovery. I am glad her brother is progressing.[1]

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

[PS.]
What about the phone?

SHRI KULARANJAN MUKHERJEE
114-255-2C HAZRA ROAD
KALIGHAT
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: C. W. 10569

183. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1947

CHI. NARANDAS,

You will have received the letter[2]. I wrote to you about Abha and Aunt. This is regarding Anna's[3] Kamala[4]. She wishes to return and stay there with her children. I have asked her to write to you and told her that she may go if you agree. Do not think about what I would like. I have no particular wish in the matter. You yourself will have to think and decide. If you don't need any person there, you can say no to her. You ought not to be burdened.

My plans are uncertain.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8639. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* also p. 181.
[2] *Vide* p. 199.
[3] & [4] Harihar Sharma and his wife

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184. LETTER TO MAHESH DATT MISHRA

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1947

CHI. MAHESH,

I have your letter. I have already dictated a letter[1] to you and sent it. This is another I am dictating. Do not harbour the fear that I shall ask you to go. You came of your own accord and you will go when you want to go.

Forget what Mridulabehn said. Do not split hairs. Let us not consider in what light others see us. It will be enough if we can see ourselves as we are. You know the English dictum, "Man, know thyself." It is very apt. When a man fully knows himself, he will certainly not become God but he will be able to realize God.

I had realized that you desired, like so many others, to live near my physical body. This desire I cannot satisfy and do not want to satisfy. I wish for solitude. But this again is a matter of wishing. I do not want to exercise my wish in anything. I want to be a devotee of God. In the words of Mira:

Hari holds me by a fragile thread,
I move as he moves me,
I am pierced by the rapier of love.

It will be very good if you get on with Dev[2]. You would complement each other. You have both imbibed the education devised by the British. You have both seen the terrible inadequacy of that education and you are both with me and perhaps, it may be said, under my discipline. Travel everywhere in Bihar, not together but separately. Compare your experiences and go ahead. I shall then be free from anxiety and my work there will proceed smoothly. Do not both be out of Patna at the same time.

Send me whatever you have written. I have left it for you to find out all that has been written about the Frontier Province.

Make your body as hard as steel.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6725. Also C. W. 4465. Courtesy: Mahesh Datt Mishra

[1] *Vide* p. 216.
[2] Dev Prakash Nayyar

185. LETTER TO SOHANLAL

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1947

BHAI SOHANLAL,

I have your letter. I have no doubt that we should continue our work. The result is in God's hands. Even so ask Shri Jajuji[1]. If you want to send him this postcard do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6865

186. LETTER TO R. D. RANADE

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1947

BHAI RANADE,

Why should you atone for any error that I may commit? It is totally against Hinduism.

"*Raghupati Raghava*" is not a *bhajan*, it is a *Ramadhun*. This refrain is nobody's monopoly.

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

[1] Shrikrishnadas Jaju

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187. TALK WITH RAJENDRA PRASAD

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1947

I do not know why but I cannot swallow the idea that mechanization should be stepped up in India and that the country should find happiness through it. Either I am in error or I am not able to make myself understood. Have you given thought to the possible consequences of using tractors and pumping machines to water the fields and trucks instead of carts for transport of goods? How many farmers will become unemployed, how many bullocks will become idle? Moreover, I feel that in the long run the land will lose its fertility if it is ploughed with machines and tractors. People will stop keeping cattle and we shall have to import fertilizers. Even the small children get work if a peasant has a plough in his own house and tills his land himself. For example one person can work on the *kos*[1], another channels the water to the fields, one can plough while another does the weeding. In this way each will live on the labour of each. How natural and happy village life is, while life dependent on machinery is unhappy and brings unemployment. Yes, machinery has a place but it has been misused. So far we had been fighting against the British in order to give the village industries their due place. We should be careful that the same thing is not repeated.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 220-1

[1] A big leather bucket in which water is drawn from a well with the help of a bullock for watering the fields

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188. TALK WITH ARUNA ASAF ALI

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1947

While we are in a foreign country, we should work to spread our culture. . . . [1] spends too much money. The foreigners will not have any regard for us if even our ambassadors behave in this way. . . . They are very capable and intelligent. But once they go out they behave as they like, thinking that there is no one to question what they do. We have ambassadors in every country. If such a large amount is spent on one ambassador, the rest of them would also spend on a similar scale. How can a poor country like India afford that? You do know that you can make plain *chapatis* as well as *laddoos* and other sweets out of wheat flour. But what a great difference there is between the two expenses as well as in digestibility. If we make *laddoos* every day and eat them, we shall become ill physically as well as financially. On the other hand, *rotis* are beneficial in both the respects. If you can understand this thing, you can understand about . . . When I see such a great reaction among national servants, and that too so soon, I tell myself that those who had dedicated themselves as such, donned khadi, gone to jail, adopted non-violence and participated in the spiritual programme had not done so with knowledge, that it was merely sheeplike behaviour. Otherwise, how can one change one's way of living so soon and to such an extent?

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 226-7

[1] Omissions as in the source. The reference presumably is to Asaf Ali who had been serving as India's ambassador in Washington.

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189. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today I have received a distressing letter. A friend writes from Delhi that a large number of refugees from the Punjab are on their way to Delhi. They have left their homes because they felt that their lives and property were in danger. But where can they flee? If we hear that there is going to be an earthquake in Delhi tomorrow, shall we flee the place? The brave never run away. Death is one's constant companion. No one is immortal. As for property it is something one is always acquiring and losing. The friend also writes that when the refugees who have come to Delhi want to rent houses, the landlords ask for premium. My advice to those who have houses or land in Delhi is that they should welcome these homeless people to their houses. But even if they cannot do so, at least they should not demand premium but be content with such modest rent as the refugees can pay them. It is their paramount duty to give shelter to the refugees. I take it that in the case of some of the landlords, rent from their houses is the sole source of income. But even so the rents they charge should be reasonable. The letter suggests that the Interim Government should consider this problem and as far as possible reduce the difficulty faced by the refugees.

I cannot answer all the questions addressed to me through letters and newspapers. But I shall select a few and attend to them. Today I have selected three questions. The first question is that since in the world money has replaced God, what is India to do? My answer is that dependence on money power, physical force or brute force is folly. The mightiest power is God, before whom, as a *bhajan* says, all powers become ineffective. Today the materialist outlook prevails and we have come to feel that there is no such thing as spiritual power or soul-power for it is invisible and intangible. But I am a believer in the power of the spirit and I place no value on brute force. I still say that brute force is transient while soul-force is eternal for it is truth itself.

The second question is: "After the British leave, Dominion Status will continue only till the Constituent Assembly has finalized the constitution. Thereafter will you be friends of the British or their enemy?"

The answer is that we have always hoped that we shall continue our association with England. The bad deeds of a bad man are buried with him, only the good is left behind. India today is passing through the agony of child-birth. If the English emerge well out of it, that is if the Viceroy and his English advisers do what will be good for the country, then how can they remain our enemies? Even Dominion Status we have secured by being their friends. We now become partners in Commonwealth. Even when we leave the Commonwealth we shall still have friendship for them. In this lies their good and ours. Jawaharlal Nehru, the Vice-President of the Interim Government, has already said that no one need fear an independent India. India will cultivate friendship with all countries.

The third question is: "Who will be the President of the Indian Republic? Will it be some Englishman, and if it is not to be an Englishman then should we not have Jawaharlal Nehru? For he is a highly educated man, can speak English and French and has large experience of foreign countries." My answer is that if I have my way the President of the Indian Republic will be a chaste and brave Bhangi girl. If an English girl of 17 could become the British Queen and later even Empress of India, there is no reason why a Bhangi girl of robust love of her people and unimpeachable integrity of character should not become the first President of the Indian Republic.[1] It is not necessary that the President should be a highly educated person knowing many languages. We do not want to display our pride to the world by electing a learned Brahmin or a Kshatriya as the President of India. By electing a Harijan girl to that office we shall demonstrate our soul-force. We shall show to the world that in India there is no one high and no one low. Only the girl should be clean in body and mind. She should be chaste as Sita and her eyes should radiate light. Sita had such radiance that Ravana could not touch her. If I can find such a girl she will be our first President. We shall all salute her and set a new example before the world. After all she does not have to concern herself with running the

[1] This sentence is from *The Hindu*, 28-6-1947.

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Government of India. She will have a cabinet of ministers and she will act on its advice. She will merely have to sign papers. All the Indians, be they caste Hindus or Muslims or followers of some other faith, should declare with one voice that whoever may be the President they will all salute him. This is real moral power. All the rest is falsehood. If such a girl of my dreams becomes President, I shall be her servant and I shall not expect from the Government even my upkeep. I shall make Jawaharlal, Sardar Patel and Rajendra Babu her ministers and therefore her servants.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 199-202

190. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

Urgent

NEW DELHI,
June 27/28, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I sent you a note[1] in the afternoon. The time after the evening prayer and walk I wish to devote to talking to you on certain matters I was able to touch but could not develop when we met.

I told the Parliamentary Delegation that heralded the Cabinet Mission and the Cabinet Mission itself that they had to choose between the two parties or even three. They were doomed to fail if they tried to please all, holding them all to be in the right. I had hoped that you were bravely and honestly trying to extricate yourself from the impossible position. But my eyes were opened when, if I understood you correctly, you said that Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah and the League members were equally in the right with the Congress members and that possibly Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah was more so. I suggested that this is not humanly possible. One must be wholly right in the comparative sense. You have to make your choice at this very critical stage in the history of this country. If you think that Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah is, on the whole, more correct and more reasonable than the Congress, you should choose the League as your advisers and in all matters be frankly and openly guided by them.

[1] *Vide* p. 217.

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You threw out a hint that Qaid-e-Azam might not be able to let you quit even by 15th August especially if the Congress members did not adopt a helpful attitude. This was for me a startling statement. I pointed the initial mistake of the British being party to splitting India into two. It is not possible to undo the mistake. But I hold that it is quite possible and necessary not to put a premium upon the mistake. This does not in any way impinge upon the very admirable doctrine of fair play. Fair play demands that I do not help the mistaken party to fancy that the mistake was no mistake but a belated and only a partial discharge of an obligation.

You startled me again by telling me that, if the partition had not been made during British occupation, the Hindus being the major party would have never allowed partition and held the Muslims by force under subjection. I told you that this was a grave mistake. The question of numbers was wholly untenable in this connection. I cited the classic example of less than one hundred thousand British soldiers holding India under utter subjection. You saw no analogy between the two instances. I suggested the difference was only one of degree.

I place the following for your consideration:

(a) The Congress has solemnly declared that it would not hold by force any Province within the Union.

(b) It is physically impossible for millions of caste-ridden Hindus to hold well-knit though fewer millions of Muslims under subjection by force.

(c) It must not be forgotten that Muslim dynasties have progressively subjugated India by exactly the same means as the English conquerors later did.

(d) Already there has been a movement to win over to the Muslim side the so-called scheduled classes and the so-called aboriginal races.

(e) The caste Hindus who are the bugbear are, it can be shown conclusively, a hopeless minority. Of these the armed Rajputs are not yet nationalists as a class. The Brahmins and the Banias are still untrained in the use of arms. Their supremacy where it exists is purely moral. The Sudras count, I am sorry, more as scheduled class than anything else. That such Hindu society by reason of its mere superiority in numbers can crush millions of Muslims is an astounding myth.

This should show you why, even if I am alone, I swear by non-violence and truth together standing for the highest order of courage before which the atom bomb pales into insignificance, what to say of a fleet of Dreadnoughts.

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I have not shown this to any of my friends.

If I have misunderstood you in any single particular you have only to correct me and I shall gladly accept the correction. If I am obscure anywhere, I shall try to remove the obscurity either by letter or by meeting according to your wish.

My anxiety to save you from mistakes as I see them is the sole excuse for this letter.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

From the original: India Office Library and Records, London; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47*, pp. 250-2

191. LETTER TO DAS

NEW DELHI,
June 28, 1947

DEAR DAS,

I wrote out a note the moment I got Mrs. Sen Gupta's[2] letter.

I am averse to multiplying newspapers which crop up like mushrooms.

Mrs. Sen Gupta should not be dragged into this thing.

Despriya's[3] memory would be better served by doing his work silently and selflessly.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In his reply dated June 28, the addressee said: "Thank you for your letter of this morning, which I have read with much interest. I am glad you wrote because after reading your letter I feel that almost from first to last I must have failed to make clear to you my meaning. I am glad that you have not shown your letter to others, since I should be very sorry that views should be attributed to me which I did not, in fact, express. I hope you will agree to discuss these matters again at our next meeting." Lord Mountbatten who read out Gandhiji's letter at his staff meeting that day stated how he had been misinterpreted by Gandhiji. For the minutes of the meeting, *vide* Appendix IX.

[2] Nellie Sen Gupta (1886-1973); widow of Jatindra Mohan Sen Gupta; she was President of Indian National Congress at one of its critical sessions in 1933; after partition in 1947 she settled in Pakistan.

[3] Jatindra Mohan Sen Gupta (1885-1933), a Congress leader of Bengal who succeeded C. R. Das; he served several terms of imprisonment and died as internee at Ranchi on July 23; was connected with the English daily *Forward* and himself founded the English daily *Advance*.

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192. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
June 28, 1947

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Your interpretation is correct but still let me explain the thing a little more. It is only proper that the amount earmarked for the Talimi Sangh in the budget should be handed over to them. We shall see if there are further dues. If Manibhai asks for the whole amount in lump sum it is only right that we should pass on to him what we have decided to give him. I know he has been asking for it although Balkrishna is the moving spirit behind it. Since it is not possible to supervise things from Sevagram, it is better that we hand over the amount earmarked for them so that they manage their affairs as best as they can. Our ship sails on faith and that is how it should be. I can understand that you will not take an independent decision. That burden should be shouldered by me so long as I live and am capable of doing so.

I understand what you say about your health. Don't spare any efforts. Ask me anything you wish regarding your treatment or diet.

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

193. LETTER TO JUSSAWALA

NEW DELHI,
June 28, 1947

BHAI JUSSAWALA,

I did get your letter. I did not send a reply as I had neither the time nor the inclination. Now that another has come I would only say that we cannot gain more from America.

I have quite a few letters from there and I have frankly told them that their prescriptions and equipment are of no use to the Indian masses. For the rich, they are like toys. My views are being confirmed in the opposite direction, that is, towards simplicity. I am therefore not in favour of your going to America. If I had my way I would stop you from going.

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The thing for which you intend going to America is no longer to be found anywhere. But this is a different subject. There is another gentleman like you who also has an invitation. I have been able to convince him that there is no point in going. The best thing is frankly to tell them what we think.

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

194. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

NEW DELHI,
June 28, 1947

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. I was happy to read about Pandurang. It will be very good if he can be firm in his resolve. There must be no place for clandestine adultery. It is difficult for him to remain an unmarried widower.

May God save him.

You did well in writing about the Goshala. I should advise you clearly to spell out your ideas in writing to Aryanayakumji. You should not be concerned with how others take it. If we are pure and others still think us impure, it only means that we have to be even purer and more determined. You should therefore tell Aryanayakumji frankly. That would be in keeping with true friendship. That the land has been taken from us should not weigh in considering the matter of the Goshala.

It will be good if Shakaribehn[1] comes. It will give relief to Chimanlal.

The restraints involved in *brahmacharya* also include not living among animals and eunuchs. I have advised against them.[2]

Why did Kishorelalbhai[3] leave Sevagram? Did he give any reason for it or was it that he just came and went.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am glad to know that Hoshiari[4] is improving.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1981

[1] Wife of Chimanlal N. Shah
[2] *Vide* pp. 100-2.
[3] Kishorelal G. Mashruwala
[4] Addressee's niece

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195. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 28, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

What I am going to tell you today will be something very special. I hope you will hear me with attention and try to digest what I say. When someone does something good he makes the whole world partake of the good. When someone does something bad, though he cannot make the world share his action he can certainly cause harm. The Constituent Assembly is discussing the rights of the citizen. That is to say they are deliberating on what the fundamental rights should be. As a matter of fact the proper question is not what the rights of a citizen are, but rather what constitutes the duties of a citizen. Fundamental rights can only be those rights the exercise of which is not only in the interest of the citizen but that of the whole world. Today everyone wants to know what his rights are, but if a man learns to discharge his duties right from childhood and studies the sacred books of his faith he automatically exercises his rights too. I learnt my duties on my mother's lap. She was an unlettered village woman. She was unable even to sign her name. Nobody in those days thought of learning to read and write by employing tutors. I am telling you of things seventy years ago. My father was a Diwan, but at that time a Diwan did not have to be particularly well versed in English. He dressed himself in an *angarkha* and wore village-style shoes. He did not even know what trousers were. My mother taught me to repeat Ramanama. She knew my dharma. Thus if from childhood we learn what our dharma is and try to follow it our rights look after themselves. I could live only on condition that I drank the milk that my mother gave me. If I had shirked the obligation to drink milk I would have forfeited my right to live. The beauty of it is that the very performance of a duty secures us our right. Rights cannot be divorced from duties. This is how satyagraha was born, for I was always striving to decide what my duty was.

Today we notice a strange phenomenon. He who is a ruler for a moment gets it into his head that he has been created

by God solely to rule over people, that he has the right to hang some, to imprison others and to fine some others. He wants that all the duties should be discharged by the people. He says he has derived his right to rule from God. Industrial workers and industrial magnates are demanding their respective rights. The zamindar insists on his rights, the peasant on his. But there are no such two classes here that one of them should exercise only rights and the other discharge only duties. If a ruler shirks his duties while the people do theirs then the people become the ruler. If the ruler does his duty and considers himself the trustee of his people he will survive. But if he becomes authoritarian he cannot survive in this age. Till now we have been sunk in darkness. The rulers have forgotten their duties and so have the ruled. The rajas have only been repeating that they were descended from the sun or the moon. But in truth a sovereign is only the first servant of the people. It is the duty of the servant to surrender all to the master and then live on what is left over. The people similarly should learn to do their duty. They are in millions. If they are so disposed they can kill the ruler. But by so doing they will only harm themselves. If we keep our streets clean and well lighted or do something similar we should do it as a duty. Every one of us should become a scavenger. A man who does not first become a scavenger cannot live, nor has he a right to live and we are all scavengers in some sense or other even if we do not admit it. If the people pay taxes it is not so as to fill the coffers of the ruler but because without that the administration cannot function. The same thing applies to mill-workers and mill-owners. Here at hand and around is squalor in the Harijan quarter. When I see it my heart cries out at our worthlessness. I live in such beautiful and clean surroundings while they have to wallow in dirt. Mill-owners should similarly first feed the workers and themselves eat only afterwards. But even if the mill-owners do not do their duty, does it mean that the workers should kill them? They can certainly do so. But then the whole structure would collapse. They gain nothing by frightening the mill-owners. They would themselves be behaving as masters then. If they want to improve their lot they must not forget that they will earn their rights only by doing their duty. There are today millions of workers. If they forget their duty anarchy and chaos will result.

Every man is born a debtor. The scripture also says that we are born debtors in the world to which we owe a debt and

we are dependent on others right from birth. Man becomes man only by recognizing his dependence on others.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 202-5

196. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

NEW DELHI,
June 28/29, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I have to inflict another letter on you—this time about the Frontier referendum.

Badshah Khan writes to me to say that he is carrying out the plan I had discussed with you and he with Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah. The plan was to move for free Pathanistan framing its own local constitution and when the Pakistan and the Union constitutions were out, to decide either to belong to one State or the other. In this move he has failed. Therefore the referendum would go on without any interference by his followers, the latter abstaining from voting either way. He fully realizes that in this case the Frontier would probably go to Pakistan.

He wants me also to draw your attention to the fact that Punjab Muslims, men and women, are being freely introduced in the Frontier Province to affect the referendum and that notable non-Frontier Muslims too have been sent to the Frontier Province for the same purpose. This increases the risk of bloodshed and worse.

He also says that the non-Muslim refugees numbering many thousands will have no chance, so far as he is aware, of taking part in the referendum and they are threatened with dire penalty should they dare to exercise the vote.[1]

I see in today's papers that Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah contends that if the Pathans abstain from voting, the abstention will constitute a breach of the terms of the referendum. I do not see the force of the contention.

[1] The addressee in his reply said that he was asking the Governor to "take such steps as may be necessary about Punjabi Muslims being introduced into the Frontier . . . and non-Muslim refugees having no chance to vote."

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Many thanks for your telegram[1] to the Resident in Kashmir.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

From the original: India Office Library and Records, London; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47*, p. 262

197. SOME VALUABLE HINTS

The writer is a student of the country's politics.[2] I am not *au fait* with the Congress work. Therefore I have no right to announce any opinion on the foregoing hints which should, therefore, be taken for what they are worth.

NEW DELHI, June 29, 1947
Harijan, 6-7-1947

198. A PERPLEXITY[3]

I give below extract from a letter received from a well-educated Indian in England.

> I am in a confused state with regard to the relations between men and women. I have already written to you that I believe in certain restrictions on these. Yet my situation is very like that of Trishanku. I often feel that if these relations were more natural than they are, there might be less sinfulness. Yet something within me tells me that every touch, be it ever so superficial, is bound to lead to the eruption of animal passion. When one examines the court cases here even about brother and sister or even father and daughter, the beginning seems to have been quite innocent. In my opinion the glow of mere touch drags down inside of a month, even a week, one who is not endowed with extra purity.

[1] *Vide* footnote 2, p. 217.

[2] The article by "Anonymous" is not reproduced here. Advocating the slogan "Produce or Perish" instead of "Industrialize or Perish", the author suggested: "The Congress should set up a number of committees of experts, one on the defence of India, the second on economic planning, the third on industrial planning and the fourth on the secretariat planning."

[3] The Gujarati original appeared under the title "A Difficulty" in *Harijanbandhu* which was published simultaneously with the source. The translation has been revised.

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> A good man may take even ten years but he is sure to go down the incline of vice. There is a constant conflict between the habit which we have inherited and the thoughts developed from the study of books by modern writers. The question often arises—can society altogether abjure contact between the sexes? I have not been able to come to a decision. Such in short is my sorry plight.

This is the state of many young men and women. There is only one way for such young people. They have to avoid all contact with the opposite sex. The checks and restraints described in our books were the result of experience gained during those times. They were, no doubt, necessary for the writers and their readers. Today every aspirant has to pick out from them the necessary items and add new ones which experience may make necessary. If we draw a circle round the goal to be reached, we shall find many ways leading to the goal, from which each one may choose according to his needs.

An aspirant who may not know his own mind will certainly fail if he blindly copies another.

Having said so much by way of caution, I must add that to find the true way to *brahmacharya* through a study of court cases and erotic literature is a wild goose chase. The true way is not to be found in English law courts or in the novels. They have their use in their limited field, but they are of no use to the aspirant after *brahmacharya*. English men and women who tread the difficult path are not afflicted by the imaginings of the correspondent quoted above. Those whom I have in mind have their God enthroned in their hearts. They are neither self-deceived nor would they deceive others. To them sisters are sisters and mothers are mothers. All women are to them sisters and mothers. It never occurs to them that every contact with them is sinful or that it is fraught with danger. They see in all women the same God they see in themselves.

It betrays lack of humility to say that such examples do not exist because we have not come across them. It also amounts to lowering the glory of *brahmacharya*. Rejecting the possibility of perfect *brahmacharya* is like saying that there is no God because we have not seen Him face to face or met men who have had that experience.

NEW DELHI, June 29, 1947
Harijan, 6-7-1947

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199. A THOUGHTFUL SUGGESTION

As the originator of the first design, I should say that the three stripes were to represent all the communities and the charkha was the symbol of non-violence.[1]

NEW DELHI, June 29, 1947

Harijan, 6-7-1947

200. A LETTER

June 29, 1947

Often it is easier to win independence than to preserve it. Time alone will show whether the goal that the Congress has achieved, the freedom that has been won, will endure. Speeches and discussions are not going to help now. I do believe that if those holding positions of responsibility and power show some restraint in making speeches and pay more attention to work it will have an effect.

And now a new development is taking place. People who believe themselves to be Congress workers, shun members of other parties or criticize them in public as if non-Congressmen had no spirit of patriotism in them. These Congressmen think that they are the only servants of the people. If this state of affairs continues, the atmosphere in the country will become more and more bitter.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 239

[1] This note appeared under an article on the national flag by S. D. Kalelkar, not reproduced here. The author *inter alia* says "our wheel may have three stripes of red, white and green (of the mother earth and her children the tillers) with a wheel with eight spokes superimposed in any suitable colour."

201. TALK WITH BHIMSEN SACHAR[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 29, 1947

I shall be happy if you and your family do not leave Pakistan but all of you bravely sacrifice your lives there. I will not weep. All of you are my fellow soldiers. The strength of an army depends more on the soldiers than on the captain. I am sure that peace will be established in India if I get even twenty-five brave soldiers of my imagination. But I am sorry to say that the local leaders who have some influence are trying at any cost to transfer their property and family to safety. When this is happening, with what face can I advise the poor, the common people not to run away but to die wherever they are? Think over all this if you can.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 239-40

202. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 29, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Yesterday I talked to you about duty. However I was not able to say all that I had intended to say. Whenever a person goes anywhere certain duties come to devolve on him. The man who neglects his duty and cares only to safeguard his rights does not know that rights that do not spring from duties done cannot be safeguarded. This applies also to the Hindu-Muslim relations. Whether it is the Hindus living in a place or Muslims or both, they will come to acquire rights if they do their duty. Then they do not have to demand rights. A child feeds at his mother's breast because it is his duty to do so. And this alone gives him the right to live. This is a paramount law and no one can change it. If Hindus consider Muslims their brothers and treat them well, Muslims too will return

[1] Leader of the Congress party in the Punjab Assembly

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friendship for friendship. Take a village for example. If there are in it five hundred Hindus and five Muslims, then the five hundred Hindus come to have certain obligations towards the five Muslims which *ipso facto* gives Hindus certain rights. In their arrogance they should not think that they can crush the Muslims and kill them for it cannot be anyone's right to kill. There is no bravery in killing. It is cowardice and a disgrace. The duty of the Hindus is to share with the Muslims in their joys and sorrows even if they wear beards and face towards the West during *namaaz*. They should see whether they are getting enough food and water and whether their other needs are being satisfied. When the five hundred Hindus do their duty, then they earn the right to expect that the five Muslims also would do theirs. If the village catches fire and the Muslims think that they should let it burn and do everything to see that it spreads, then they will not be doing their duty. Fires in villages are a common occurrence. If someone lights a *bidi* and throws away the burning match-stick and it comes into contact with a little dried grass or wisp of cotton, a fire starts. And since villages mostly have thatched roofs just a little wind can make the fire consume the whole village. But as a matter of course in such an eventuality the five Muslims will also want to extinguish the fire and will set about bringing pails of water for the purpose. By thus doing their duty they automatically acquire rights. Today we do not do our duty. The work goes on because God has so made the world that its progress does not stop. But supposing the five Mussalmans are bent on mischief, supposing you give them food and water and treat them well and they still abuse you, what then will be the duty of the five hundred Hindus? It certainly is not their duty to cut them down. It would be bestial, not human, to do so. If a brother of mine has gone mad, shall I then start beating him up? I shall not do so. I shall confine him in a room and stop others from treating him roughly. This is the human way. Similarly if the Muslims in question do not want to behave in a friendly manner and keep on saying that they are a separate nation, that though they are only five, they can summon five crores of Muslims from outside, the Hindus should not let themselves be frightened by such a threat. They should tell the Muslims outside that they want to be friends with the five Muslims, but that they don't reciprocate. That if they want to help them it is their affair, but the Hindus would not be frightened or subdued by force. The world will understand that the five hundred Hindus are good people and want

to do their duty. The same thing applies to a village where there are five hundred Muslims and only five Hindus. There are many such villages in Pakistan. Some people from the Jhelam area had been to see me. They were concerned about their future in their home country. I told them that if the Muslims there were good people, could exercise self-control in doing their duty, then they would have nothing to fear. But if the few Hindus there were wicked, then even if Hindus from all over India went to help them nothing would be gained.

Some Indian Princes are offended. They believe that so long as there are the sun and the moon in the sky, they ought to remain on their thrones. They argue that it was not the people who installed them as the rulers, it was the British or the sun or the moon. This does not show that they are doing their duty. This bespeaks pride and arrogance. So long as they were protected by the British these Princes squandered crores of rupees in England and America. They indulged in wild orgies. Now it cannot continue. Now they can remain rulers only on the sufferance of the people and as their servants. Of course even servants must eat. So long they plundered their people. They should also be allowed to continue in their palaces for they can say that they have been used to live in palaces and have never lived in huts. What can the people lose by letting them do so? But if the Princes refuse to recognize the rights of the people, if they say that they will blow their subjects to bits with cannon, then they will not be doing their duty. What then should the people do? In that eventuality it becomes the duty of the people to fight against the ruler and remove him from the throne. That does not mean that they should set fire to the palaces and destroy everything. That would be wickedness. If the ruler is on the wrong path the duty of the people is not to drag him down. The people should fight against him with courtesy, truth and peace. The people should not merely run after rights. He who runs after rights does not secure them. His plight is that of a dog who sees his reflection in the water and wants to attack it. His right is illusory. When you do your duty the rights will drop into your lap.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 205-8

203. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

NEW DELHI,
June 29/30, 1947

CHI. MIRA,

I have your two wires and two letters giving me a vivid description of your experiences in Uttarkashi. The second letter is disturbing. After I commenced dictating I felt like dozing and I dozed. After the dozing was finished I got your third letter telling me about your movement to Dhanaulti.[1] I hope that you were able, without any harm to the body, to negotiate the journey in your dilapidated condition. It grieves me to think that even Uttarkashi with all its sacred associations could do no good to your body and that you found the water there to be too heavy and the atmosphere stifling. I hope the new place will treat you better. By going to Uttarkashi you have knocked on the head and on the principle of 'once bitten twice shy'. I shall look upon every Himalayan place with suspicion. However, I am in God's hands. I shall wish neither one way nor the other. Sufficient unto the day is the good thereof. I must not think of the evil. No one knows what is really good or evil. Therefore, let us think of nothing but good. Coming to mundane matters, when I am free from here I must go to Bihar and Noakhali and I might have to go to Kashmir almost immediately. Date will be decided, I hope, inside of a week. To Hardwar I went only for a few hours to see the refugees. The weather was too hot to permit of much movement.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN
C/O SHRI DEVDAS GANDHI
BIRLA HOUSE
MUSSOORIE

[PS.]

So Pandit Jagatram's[2] wife is dying. She will be well rid of her pain. I have noticed your well-thought-out suggestions.

[1] She however went instead to Pratapnagar where she settled down to the work of reading through and selecting from Gandhiji's letters to her.

[2] Pandit Jagatram Bharadwaj

This was going to Devdas to be forwarded to Dhanaulti. Now I have your fourth letter. I do hope all these changes will result in sending you to a place which will give your mind and body the needed rest.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6530. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9925

204. TELEGRAM TO P. SIVASHANMUGHAM PILLAI[1]

[On or before *June 30, 1947*][2]

GLAD RAMESWARAM AND OTHER TEMPLES ARE BEING OPENED TO HARIJANS. HOPE INTERNAL CLEANSING WILL FOLLOW.

The Hindu, 1-7-1947

205. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

NEW DELHI,
June 30, 1947

CHI. JAWAHAR[3],

Your letter. I have the invitation. I shall be at the Viceroy's house at 10 a. m. tomorrow. You or Vallabhbhai can fetch me, if that will save petrol.

Blessings from[4]
BAPU

[PS.]

I spoke at the meeting about B[adshah] Khan.[5]

From the original: Jawaharlal Nehru Papers (M. O. Mathai). Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Speaker, Madras Legislative Assembly

[2] The telegram was reported under the date-line "Rameswaram, June 30". The temples were opened to Harijans on June 30.

[3] & [4] The superscription and subscription are in Hindi.

[5] *Vide* pp. 248-9.

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206. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
June 30, 1947

CHI. AMRIT,

Better a p. c. than no letter. Sushila is just off to Wardha to attend to her hospital work. Nothing certain about me. Hope you are better. It is not so oppressive here as when you left. Love to you all.

BAPU

[PS.]

When this was going to be posted, your letter was received. How funny. My movement still uncertain.

From the original: C. W. 4194. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7830

207. A LETTER

NEW DELHI,
June 30, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter. I cannot agree. Why should the Harijans not enter when the temples are open to them? Temples are Godless whilst they are closed against Harijans.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

208. LETTER TO TALEYARKHAN

NEW DELHI,
June 30, 1947

DEAR TALEYARKHAN,

Your letter. My advice is 'stop where you are'.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

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209. LETTER TO MARJORIE SYKES

June 30, 1947

DEAR MARJORIE,

I have your long tale of woes. I am powerless to guide. If you permit me, I can send it to Ratibaboo. Otherwise be guided by Heaven.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

210. LETTER TO HOOSENBHAI LALJEE

June 30, 1947

BHAI HOOSENBHAI,

I have your letter. These days it is no use consulting me; I don't know what is happening. I am buried in my own affairs. I shall now show your letter to friends.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

HOOSENBHAI LALJI
BOMBAY

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

211. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
June 30, 1947

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have already written[1] to you regarding Kamala. Now I am also sending with this the letter I received from her today. Decide as you like and let me know, and write directly to her too.

Abha is really ill and is in Calcutta.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8640. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* p. 218.

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212. A LETTER

June 30, 1947

Our worst enemies are fear and lethargy. We can become aware of our strength only when we have driven out these two. . . .[1] We should not live on anybody's charity. We should seek help only from ourselves and from God. . . .

A servant of the people should never worry about his livelihood. Anybody who has voluntarily taken up the mission of service comes to command through his service such respect that people will come and offer him one rupee when he needs only half a rupee. But the public servant who renders such effective service must put up with many conditions and restrictions. I am not stating a mere copy-book maxim. I write from my own experience.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 242

213. A LETTER

June 30, 1947

I am surprised and pained to hear that you are marrying again. What you say about how grieved you were at the death of your first wife and how devoted you two had been to each other does not interest me much. Dharma requires that since you worshipped her so much for her virtues you should strive earnestly to imbibe those virtues and fulfil the aspirations which she cherished. I can write more on the subject but there is this conflagration raging around and I must either let myself be consumed in it or discover Truth. So I do not have any time at all. You, who have accepted the path of service and constructive work, do you not know that women's education and uplift is one of the eighteen points I have enumerated? I therefore feel disposed to say that as long as a widow in our society does not have the right to remarry without fear, a widower also should observe the restriction. But perhaps it

[1] Omissions as in the source

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is too late now. Please reconsider if it is still possible. Otherwise throw this letter into the waste-paper basket.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 242-3

214. A LETTER

June 30, 1947

I was pained to read about your illness. He who wishes to serve must not fall ill. And if one does not want to fall ill, then surely one must not transgress nature's laws! If you had made proper use of nature's gifts, namely, air, sun, earth, water, food and rest and had at the same time kept repeating Ramanama, you would have escaped such serious illness. Drink plenty of water, apply mud-packs, take baths and live only on fruit juice. We look upon a fruit diet as a costly diet, but this is a great error. The truth is that in our lethargy we do not take the necessary trouble to grow vegetables and fruits. If we shed our lethargy and ignorance, we shall find this seemingly costly diet quite inexpensive and be able to maintain perfect health.

In the morning, you should take sun-bath with the whole body, except the head, completely uncovered. You should also take hip-baths in warm and cold water. If you do not pass clear stools, take enema. And take complete rest. The mind also has a great effect on the body.

Therefore, without tiring yourself read some good books or have them read to you in a spirit of devotion, and shut your eyes and meditate on God. I am sure you will get well if you do this much. Dictate a letter to me from time to time. Avoid the labour of writing yourself.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 243

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215. LETTER TO P. C. GHOSH

NEW DELHI,
June 30, 1947

CHI. PROFULLA[1],

Sardar has sent word that there should be a Marwari in your Cabinet, either Badridas Goenka or Khaitan. I think it will be proper to do so, improper not to.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 3787

216. LETTER TO Y. M. PARNERKAR

NEW DELHI,
June 30, 1947

CHI. PARNERKAR[2],

I have your letter.

I am strongly against people going abroad. I cannot appreciate the assumption that all knowledge is concentrated abroad and only ignorance abounds at home.

Keep in mind that in the West they experiment on living beings so that the human body may be preserved. In order to extract all that they can from the cow they slaughter her as well as the bull and feed on their flesh. What can we learn from them?

But I am alone although my being alone does not hurt me. What if I am in the wrong? Am I not confining the mistake to myself? Therefore I have only one advice to offer, that you should do what the Goseva Sangh suggests. But no going abroad even if they suggest it. Serving the Goseva Sangh means serving the cow because the former came into being only for the latter's sake. Try to bring round your colleagues by your knowledge.

[1] Leader of the West Bengal Assembly Congress party; Chief Minister after partition

[2] A dairy expert at Sevagram Ashram

I have no time or inclination to write more.
I hope Sharad[1] is doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

217. LETTER TO SIYARAM SHARAN GUPTA[2]

June 30, 1947

BHAIJI,

I have your letter. I do not think your flag-salutation [song] can be popular in today's atmosphere. But if it has life, some day it will.

Blessings from
BAPU

SIYARAM SHARAN
JHANSI

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

218. TALK WITH PRABHAVATI AND OTHERS

NEW DELHI,
June 30, 1947

God has sent us here so that we should get rid of our sins, our meanness and narrow-mindedness. There is only one way of doing that and it is prayer. You can pray in any way you like. If you want you can call Him Allah or Rama or Shiva. It is all the same. I feel that if only the leaders would realize it we have a golden opportunity here. If we but make up our minds and come together and calmly, without casting aspersions on one another, consider things and set actively to work, we shall add lustre to truth and non-violence, the power with which we secured our freedom, and the whole world will begin to look up to India for advice. We have no need for any 'isms'. Codes of conduct given in our scriptures are replaced by 'isms' of modern times. That little book *Gita* teaches us that those who eat without doing any work are thieves, that those who eat while

[1] Addressee's daughter, Sharad P. Machve
[2] A Hindi poet

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their neighbours starve eat sin and that we should look upon everyone with an equal eye.[1] I do not believe that communism or socialism of Russia, America or England can teach us anything more than this. Our scriptures are full of religion and philosophy. We are heirs of those who wrote such great books. But without caring to see what we have, we run to others. It is not as if those others had achieved perfection.

And it is possible that the experiments which were successful there may be quite unsuitable for this country and we may as a result find ourselves in the plight of a washerman's dog[2]. If you listen to my advice the best course, and the only course, for all of us is to extend as much co-operation to the National Government as we can. If you are opposed to certain things, if you do not like a particular policy, then you only have to . . .[3] They are all very wise men. They will certainly listen to you if you try to explain to them your point of view. Give them as much active help as possible. We are all one body. If there is a thorn in one foot the whole body suffers for it. One feels relieved only when it is taken out. Similarly, we all have to suffer for the mass-slaughter going on in the country. What can Sardar and Nehru alone do? There are only a handful of such wise men in the country today. Do not let your abilities be frittered away when the National Government is about to be formed. Utilize them in useful activities. It is not as if politics were the only field of service. There are so many others which are untrodden. Take up the one in which you are interested. Bear in mind the welfare of the country. I do not wish to say anything more.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 246-9

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 12 and 13

[2] Which belongs neither here nor there

[3] Omission as in the source

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219. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 30, 1947

People are today watching the referendum that is about to be held in the Frontier Province because legally the Frontier Province has been and still is a Congress province. Badshah Khan and his co-workers are being asked to choose between Pakistan and India. The word Hindustan is being misunderstood as if Hindustan is Hindu and Pakistan is Muslim. The problem before Badshah Khan is how to get out of this difficulty. The Congress has pledged its word that after consultation with Dr. Khan Saheb there should be a referendum in the Frontier Province under the direct supervision of His Excellency the Viceroy. The referendum will thus be held on the appointed date.

The Khudai Khidmatgars will not participate in the referendum. This will result in a clear victory for the Muslim League and the Khudai Khidmatgars will also not have acted in defiance of their inner voice, granting that they have one. How does this violate any conditions of the referendum? The Khudai Khidmatgars who have so long bravely fought the British are not going to be scared by defeat. Various political parties take part in elections knowing full well that they will be defeated and when a party does not take part in an election the defeat is certain.

Badshah Khan is chided for raising a new demand of Pakhtoonistan. As far as I can remember even before the formation of the Congress Ministry Badshah Khan was taken up with this notion of freedom for the Pathans in their homes. Badshah Khan does not want to set up a separate State. If he is only free to make his own constitution he will gladly join one of the two federations. I can see no ground for objection to this demand of Pakhtoonistan. Of course if the idea is to teach the Pathans a lesson and to humble them anyhow it is a different matter. A serious charge levelled against Badshah Khan is that he is playing into the hands of Afghanistan. I am quite sure that Badshah Khan cannot practise deceit against anyone. He will never allow the Frontier Province to be absorbed into Afghanistan.

As a friend of his I know that he has one weakness. He has a suspicious nature and he has always suspected the intentions of the British. I must ask him that he should get over this weakness, which is not peculiar to him. It does not become a leader of his stature. I have called this a weakness on his part and so it is, but it is also in a way his strong point, for even if he wants he cannot hide his opinions.

From the Frontier Province I now take you to Rameswaram where it is said Rama had built a bridge or causeway for his horde to cross into Lanka, which he conquered but did not retain and gave to Vibhishana, the brother of Ravana. The temple at Rameswaram has now been opened to Harijans. Thus except for the temples in Cochin all the famous temples in the South have been opened to the Harijans. The following is the list of the important temples furnished me by Rajaji: Madurai, Tinnevelly, Chidambaram, Srirangam, Palni, Triplicane, Tirupati, Kanchi and Guruvayur. The list is not exhaustive. The Harijan Speaker[1] of the Madras Assembly has been going to these temples along with other Harijan and non-Harijan devotees. It may be that educated Harijans and others do not see the great importance of this reform. Let us not however underestimate its import, for this reform has been brought about without bloodshed. We shall hope that Cochin too, like Travancore, Tamilnad and British Kerala, will open its temples to Harijans.

The temple-entry reform will remain incomplete so long as temples do not become truly sanctified through internal reform.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 209-10

220. LETTER TO SURENDRA

NEW DELHI,
July 1, 1947

CHI. SURENDRA,

Your letters are too long. Why do you write such long letters to a man like . . .[2] I have no doubt that he is making a mistake, unless I myself am in error. His mistake lies in the remedy he is adopting and it is as clear as daylight. But only work can correct it, not argument.

[1] P. Sivashanmugham Pillai; *vide* p. 240.
[2] Omission as in the source

My remarks which you cite were true in relation to the problems to which they referred. Now I say what I feel and think today.

I do not interpret the Shastras as you do. I have never said that the body can become immortal. How can a thing which by its nature is perishable become immortal? Old age which is the result of the natural process of living is different from the condition that is brought on by disease. Think over the problem independently of the *Sankhya* doctrine. Does not the *atman* exist independently of the body and survive it? If one realizes it, one may believe—as I do—that one's body will grow old but not the spirit. As regards the other points, I will deal with them if I write to you again. I am extremely busy these days. It is 5 a. m. now.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 249

221. LETTER TO ABHA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
July 1, 1947

CHI. ABHI,

I have your letter. You can be arrogant and obstinate. Whatever be my wishes, what does it matter when I have once given you my permission?

Why should I be angry about your getting treated by Dr. Roy? Have I not myself taken his treatment? It may not have been the same kind as you are taking but that is of no moment. I want you to be completely cured. Am I not also concerned about your illness? Now for my wishes. Ever since you fell ill I have always felt how nice it would be if you could remain with me! I certainly wish that you should come and stay with me. The question is whether during my tour you should be running around with me while you are ill. I might be going to Kashmir shortly but nothing is certain. Nevertheless you can come over. I shall do whatever I think best for you. While you stay with me, my treatment will have priority. I take the help of a doctor only when I am defeated as I did in the case of Manu. Understand

that yours will be a similar case. In my eyes there is no difference between you and Manu.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

222. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

NEW DELHI,
July 1, 1947

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Your letter. I have written[1] fully to Abha. You will read my letter.

Hope Ramen is all right. In spite of my letter, if Abha prefers to go to Sevagram, of course she will do so. I am quite prepared to take charge of her in spite of my wanderings.

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 10568. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

223. LETTER TO KULSUM SAYANI

NEW DELHI,
July 1, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER KULSUM,

I have received your letter. Convey my blessings to Hamid and Zarina. May they serve the country. There is no mention of the daughter-in-law in the card!

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Begum Kulsum Sayani Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

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224. A LETTER

July 1, 1947

There is a perpetual conflict in man's heart between the two opposing forces, darkness and light. If these did not exist there would be no life. I am, therefore, struggling to find light.

A handful of capitalists are ruling over millions with the help of machines. They are impelled solely by self-interest and greed. I am ready to devote all my energies to ending this economic inequality, but only if I emerge safely from this conflagration.

Let us take a warning from the damage we have suffered from the present Hindu-Muslim conflict in the country and the shameful exhibition of ourselves that we have made before the world. If we do not take a similar warning also from the existing economic inequality, we shall suffer the same fate in future that we are doing today. I must admit, however, that today I am alone in thinking as I do. No one has so far paid any attention to the Harijan men, women and children with whom I am staying these days. It remains to be seen how much I can do from here.

I assume that you take sufficient care of your health. 'If the mind is pure, we have the Ganga flowing by the doorstep.' Remember, therefore, that health of the body depends upon that of the mind.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 250

225. A LETTER

July 1, 1947

A man who wishes to be good, to keep himself constantly occupied with work or to devote himself wholly to service of the people, must first of all acquire the virtue of concentration.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 250

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226. COMMENTS ON INDIAN INDEPENDENCE BILL[1]

July 1, 1947

1 (1) Two Dominions
3 (b) No province excluded without consent of the dominion concerned.
9&10
15 Legal Proceedings
16 (3) Aden
19 (3b) Pakistan Assembly to be set up after the Act

1. Some declaration should be made, if it cannot be included in the Statute, that Dominion Status would be temporary.
2. That it would be equal treatment for the two.
3. There is nothing to show that Pakistan is a seceder and that entity of India is retained in spite.
4. No province can go over to the other Dominion without consent.
5. Pakistan Assembly will not meet before the appointed date.
6. The States' position is uncomfortably weak. May 1946 statement would not be used to block progress.

From a facsimile: *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, between pp. 288 and 289

227. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 1, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You will have understood the *bhajan* that has been sung. It was composed by Tukdoji Maharaj of the Central Provinces. Its language is Hindustani—not the Hindustani crammed with Arabic and Persian words but the Hindustani of Delhi. It has beauty and sweetness. It says that Rama is accessible to one

[1] The Viceroy wrote to Gandhiji on June 30 saying that Nehru, Patel and he felt that Gandhiji should "unquestionably be shown" the Indian Independence Bill and invited him to the Viceroy's house for the purpose at 10 a. m. the following day. Gandhiji scribbled his comments partly in pencil, partly in ink.

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who has suffered loss of home and property, the loss of friends and companions or suffers from bodily disease. If a person in spite of such misfortune does not leave Rama then he finds Rama.

A friend complains that I have been saying at prayer meetings that the division of India has somehow to be undone. But I have never said this. When something has been agreed upon between the Congress and the League and the country has been divided, what can be gained by opposing it? After all the hearts have not been divided. The Congress has accepted Pakistan and we must let it go at that.

A Sikh youth asks me what I, claiming to love the Sikhs, am doing to prove it. Hindus and Muslims have both gained something. But what have the Sikhs gained? I can only say that if the Punjab has been divided I can do nothing about it. I have not the power in my hands. To me there is no difference between Sikhism and Hinduism. I have read the *Granth Saheb*. What it contains is also contained in the Vedic dharma. But today they are treated as a separate community. It is a small community but well known for its valour. I had visits from two friends who have settled in Canada. They say Canada has a large number of Sikhs and they are doing good work there. There are Sikhs also in Africa. One finds Sikhs everywhere one goes. They are farmers, engineers, railway mechanics, motor-car drivers. Today the Sikhs live in great material comfort.

I had today a wire from the Muslim League at Mathura. They say that the Hindus there are ill-treating them. I do not know how far this is true. But if it is true it is not good. We should not display the cruelty of numbers. The arrogance that comes from the strength of numbers can only destroy us.

You must be eager to know the result of my meeting with the Viceroy today. I had been to see the Viceroy with Nehru and the Sardar. I must ask the Press correspondents not to indulge in guess work but wait for an authoritative announcement from the Viceroy's House. They should do nothing at the present juncture that may harm the country.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 211-3

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228. LETTER TO K. KELAPPAN[1]

[Before *July 2, 1947*][2]

It is very good that all temples have been opened. I agree that opening of temples in Cochin also is now necessary. Now there ought to be reform of temples, as in every way the condition of Harijans will be exactly like that of *savarna* Hindus. For this work why should Pracharakas be sent from this side? They may be prepared there only. Why not you yourself ?

BAPU

The Hindu, 4-7-1947

229. LETTER TO MOHAMMED HUSSAIN KHAN

July 2, 1947

Must I despair of converting you to the use, whenever you can, of Urdu language in place of English? Thus your letter . . .[3] is a case in point. You will then probably have avoided exaggerations into which you have been betrayed.

There was certainly no compulsion against Bihar Government in regard to the acceptance of your demand nor could there be any demand by a member of the public upon his Government, nor was your proposal for the payment of Rs. 1,500 per family of Bihar refugees accepted. So much about what you state as facts within my knowledge. Though I cannot speak from knowledge, I am quite sure that there was no connection whatsoever between what happened[4] on the 10th June last and the rehabilitation scheme.

I also told you when we met . . . that Pandit Nehru should be ruled out of the discussion of your proposals. I do not see how he could intervene as a member of the Central Government.

[1] President of the Kerala Provincial Congress Committee

[2] The letter was reported under the dateline "Calicut, July 2, 1947".

[3] Omissions as in the source

[4] The reference is to the opening of fire by the police on Khaksars who in violation of the order banning processions, etc., had taken out a procession and violence had broken out.

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Further, is not your statement that the Bihar Government's action "surpasses in cruelty and arrogance all human imagination" somewhat extravagant? I suggest that the use of such language and statements as cannot be supported by evidence is not the way to attain a peaceful end. . . . Nevertheless . . . I am sending . . . (your letter)[1] to the Chief Minister of Bihar, I note that you were good enough to send me an extra copy of your letter.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 331

230. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
July 2, 1947

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter today. Why do you worry? It is very likely that Krishna Kumar goes to the movies. Manu reminds me that she had told me about it. I don't remember such things, but I believe Manu. She didn't see anything objectionable in that. Who doesn't go to the movies these days? Manu did. She herself has not come under the bad influence of movies. I am sure Sita[2] also must have done so. And I know that Manilal[3] at any rate goes. Probably you also must have gone occasionally. So far as I know, I am the only person who has never seen a movie. But no, I did go once, not knowing what the thing was about, and saw a film[4] about the exile of Janaki and Ramachandra. It was a depressing experience and I felt like running away from the place, but could not do so. It was sheer waste of time. This incident occurred in Shantikumar's[5] house. But now that you write to me I will make further inquiries if an opportunity offers itself. I cannot say that Brij Krishna has done justice to Kr. Kumar. The latter didn't impress me as a shallow youth. I would be pained if Sita selected a shallow person. However, there is no question of engagement just yet. You may, therefore, leave for South Africa without the least worry.

[1] In addition to throwing the blame for the incident on Congress, the addressee had made some demands: "(1) Rs. 20,000 for each Khaksar martyr, (2) unconditional release of Khaksar prisoners (3) rehabilitation of the Bihar Muslim refugees . . . with further assurance that such acts of arrogance and cruelty will not be repeated again."

[2] & [3] Addressee's daughter and husband

[4] The movie was 'Ram Rajya' which Gandhiji saw in Bombay on June 2, 1944.

[5] Shantikumar N. Morarjee

I have discovered, however, that I have much less strength to bear pain or hardship than I thought I had. What is happening today in the country and the Congress in connection with independence and Pakistan fills me with agony. And moreover the weather is bad. I have therefore given up counting on my being alive very much longer. And if, after you have left, I pass away, you will feel unhappy. You wouldn't be able to bear the thought of Sita's present condition while Manilal and you were far away from her. Because I put all my trust in God nothing will happen to me. But I mentioned this because I thought it my duty to do so.

I have replied to the letter which you have received regarding Sita's college. See it yourself and show it to Sita. My letter was dispatched today. I shall let you know immediately I receive a reply to it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5006

231. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

DELHI,
July 2, 1947

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have read your letter regarding the *Rentia Jayanti*. I am sending on the statement[1] as revised by me. I am sending a copy to you. We are thus quite in time. I am forwarding Balasaheb's letter to you. I spin daily without fail for half an hour at least. But as regards the number, it is all confusion, for I am drawing two threads at a time and then combining them into one, so that I cannot keep count of the number. However, I will see what I can do. I don't think there will be any harm in counting 75 rounds a day.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–9: Narandas Gandhine–II, p. 316

[1] Addressee's appeal for celebration of Gandhiji's birthday; *vide* "Statement on Rentia Jayanti", footnote 1, p. 319.

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232. A LETTER

July 2, 1947

He who has chosen the path of truth and ahimsa has not the slightest cause to fear anybody. He need not worry what will happen if the British play false with us.

As for me, I must do or die. But I do not yet see my way to either course. I am still groping in the dark all alone. When I see my way clear either way, then alone will the country, it seems to me, have new light. My faith in God is daily becoming stronger so that even though I am wrestling with my thoughts all alone in this intolerable heat of Delhi, my physical strength has not suffered. How merciful is Rama!

Why do you write to me in English? Though we have not achieved the swaraj of my conception, why should we not make good use of what we have got? How long shall we remain slaves of the English language? Since your mother tongue is Urdu, you should write to me in Urdu or Hindustani. I feel ashamed to have to preach this sermon to a nationalist Muslim like you.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 257

233. A LETTER[1]

July 2, 1947

You did a good thing in sending to me the money you received as present on the occasion of your birthday. I will spend it on poor Hindu and Muslim children. However, this money which you sent me was given to you by somebody else. I want money earned by your own labour. I hope you understand what I mean by such money.

Spin for half an hour daily for *yajna* and wear the khadi made from that yarn. If there is any surplus, send it to me for being distributed to poor children like you. If you do that, I will bless you that you may live up to a hundred and twenty-five years, on condition, however, that you promise to devote your

[1] According to the source this was addressed to a child.

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whole life to service. My blessings to mother. Learn Hindustani well. Sanskrit, of course, you must learn. And you must be as strong as a tough.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 257-8

234. A LETTER

July 2, 1947

If we follow the same policies as Pakistan what will be the difference between them and us? Even if somebody has done us an ill turn, we should wish to do him a good turn. If I cannot convince people like you or inmates of the Ashram that love alone can prevail against anger, whom else can I hope to convince?

God is humbling my pride. I am being severely tested. But still my heart is full of joy.

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 258

235. LETTER TO UDESHI

NEW DELHI,
July 2, 1947

BHAI UDESHI,

Why did you have to take the trouble of writing to me in English? How far does your knowledge of English go? You may be trying to say that those who read *Harijan* are more intelligent than those who read *Harijanbandhu*. God knows! From your name, you appear to be a Gujarati and still you write to a Gujarati like me in English. It seems you have not the least suspicion how utterly absurd this is. I am sorry.

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

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236. LETTER TO VASANTLAL

NEW DELHI,
July 2, 1947

BHAI VASANTLAL,

I have your letter. I am rather surprised that you have to recommend Sheth Husainbhai to me. And who am I to write to Sardar Vallabhbhai? Perhaps he knows Husainbhai better than I.

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

237. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

NEW DELHI,
July 2, 1947

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. At the moment it is 50 minutes past 4 o'clock. I am dictating this letter while sipping fruit juice. I had your letter read out to me at a quarter past four, soon after the prayers. My earlier advice stands. You should give up worrying about mundane matters. You are ripe for meditating upon the eternal. I am going to dictate as much as I can in a few minutes.

America is not India. America worships gold. The golden calf is her god. She is almost like Australia. The only difference is that Australia is peopled by those who are considered the scum of England whereas America is peopled by that of Europe. However, sometimes one does come across a diamond in a coal-mine. In modern parlance they constitute the New World; India is an ancient land. India will never be considered primarily a worshipper of the golden calf. I do not think so and also never heard anyone saying so. Still if what you say is true, then I have missed the truth right from my childhood.

Pride of language, village and religion have long been coexisting and they still do. Now it is five o'clock and I must go for my walk with Rajendra Babu. What more can one say to the wise?

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

238. LETTER TO RAMASWAMI

NEW DELHI,
July 2, 1947

BHAI RAMASWAMI,

I have your letter. I do not remember you. I have forwarded your letter to Bhai Ramachandran. You may see him.[1]

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

239. SPEECH AT DELHI PROVINCIAL POLITICAL CONFERENCE

DELHI,
July 2, 1947

If you want to hear the few things that I have come to tell you please maintain silence.

Yesterday your Vice-President came and invited me to this conference. I had not known till then that Jayaprakash was the President of the conference. When people persisted I was in a fix. It would not be right to refuse. Drawn by your love, I was forced to come. The police tie us up in iron chains, but the bond of love, in the words of Mirabai, though fragile and tenuous, is stronger than any iron chain. And drawn by this bond I came here punctually at a quarter past eight. Here I shall speak out a few things. It has become a fashion these days to call oneself a socialist. It is a mistaken notion that one can serve only if one carries a label of some 'ism'. I have been studying the question since the time when Jayaprakash perhaps had not even been born.

Some fifty years ago when I used to practise law in South Africa there were many people there who called themselves socialists but in fact they were less socialist than I was. I used to work among the coolies. I had made this work my life's mission and I lived as the coolies lived. I have always considered myself a servant of the workers and peasants but I have never found it necessary to call myself a socialist. My socialism is of a different kind.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Ramaswami", p. 310.

Even if everyone forsakes me I shall not be worried. I am your friend and, therefore, I tell you that if a cripple cannot obtain something he needs we should ourselves give up that something. I shall first watch the cripple's life and his food and only then shall I think of doing something for myself. This is my socialism. If you want to bring about this kind of socialism, then I shall be the first to come forward to help. It is my firm belief that even a king can become a socialist by being a servant of his people.

If we want to make the king as well as the people socialist, how shall we set about it? We can convert others to socialism by setting an example ourselves. It is said that there are two ways of changing the king. Either by cutting off his head or by depriving him of his throne. My method is to make the king a socialist through love. It is heinous to kill. If you teach thousands of people to kill, the order that you will bring about will not be a socialistic order but an order of murderers. The Viceroy can call himself a Congressman as the speaker calls himself a Congressman. But would the Viceroy be ready to give up his powers if he were asked to do so? Similarly there are many people who call themselves Congressmen but are they indeed Congressmen? Are they true socialists? There are many who have drowned themselves in their wealth and in the pleasures which wealth can buy.

I firmly hold to truth and love. By love I do not mean the kind of bond that binds husband and wife or father and son, for this depends on self-interest. By love I mean that bond which binds the devotee to God.

In South Africa although the Whites treated me as an enemy, nevertheless many of them came to me as friends. If socialism means turning enemies into friends I should be considered a genuine socialist. This idea of socialism is my own. All the socialists should learn socialism from me. Only then shall we be able to produce dedicated workers and bring about peasants' rule. I do not believe in the kind of socialism that the Socialist Party preaches. Maybe my preaching to you is a cry in the wilderness, maybe you will not listen to me. There are people who call me names and treat me as a madman. I cannot teach you violence because I do not believe in violence. I can only teach you not to bow your head even if you should lose your life. Therein lies true courage. Nobody can take away this courage from me. When I die you will all admit that Gandhi was a true socialist.

When I talk of trusteeship people call me mad. But there is something in that madness. If you think a little deeply you will understand it. Today I can say with conviction that if there is anyone among all these people who is a socialist it is I. And this gives me the right to say what I am saying. The public life and the private life of a public servant are interrelated. Socialism cannot be established without moral purity. Socialism has been in vogue ever since the time of Lord Krishna. He played with the cowherds. He lived with them, ate with them; he went along with Sudama to cut firewood in the forest for the wife of his preceptor. There are many such instances. He even became the charioteer of Arjuna to show that there was no one high or low for him. He comported with the cowherd maidens freely for there was no impurity in his eyes. Thus what you call socialism, the thing which you think you should learn from Russia or America or England, has been there in our country for a very long time.

Jayaprakash is like a son to me and the other leaders of the Socialist Party are all my friends. I humbly want to tell them that if they adopt the kind of socialism I have described the whole country will be with them. I regret I cannot support the theory of socialism you accept, for I know that those who advocate it do not conform to it in their lives. Their precepts and practice vary. It will not do merely to preach. Rama spent fourteen years in exile in the forest and we worship him. But if he had not done so and merely contented himself with saying that a son should obey his father, who would have remembered him today? Today there is murder, plunder and rape in the air. My voice is not heard. People consider me mad. I am expected to teach how to return two blows for one but I cannot do so. All I can say is: 'Friend, if you want to kill me you may do so, but I will kill no one.' I pray to God that He may keep me filled with this courage to the end. One who has cultivated such courage cannot be plundered. When Gandhi is dead you will all say Gandhi was a socialist. I say it humbly but with conviction because I have full sixty years' experience to back it.

[From Hindi]

Gandhijiki Delhi Diary—III, pp. 188-90

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240. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 2, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

A friend writes to me: "There are things in the world which people like and things which people do not like. To do things which people do not like is the limit of folly. You used to give some guidance to the people. You should do so now and support the people in the path they may choose."

But I do not like this. What is the good of supporting something that is already popular? One must do something which is not so popular. One loses nothing by being alone. One has a right to do what one likes, whether people are pleased or displeased. If someone wants to make a rope out of grains of sand he will not succeed.[1] For ropes can be made only from fibre. One should do things which it is reasonable to do.

People say when I was in the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan I used to praise that language sky-high. I used to propagate Hindi in the South where people spoke Tamil. It was all to the good. But why Hindustani? My answer is that Hindustani has been born from Hindi. I attended to the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan at Indore.[2] I also went to the Marwari Sammelan out of love for Jamnalalji. I had no desire to go there. It was love that drew me. I made it clear there that my Hindi was of a special kind. It was a language spoken by the Hindus, Muslims and others. It could be written either in Persian or in Devanagari. My Hindi is the Hindi that every illiterate man can speak. I speak such rudimentary Hindi but I do make myself understood. I have read Tulsidas but I have not been educated in Hindi. I have not been educated in Urdu either. I have not the time. Since the Hindi I advocated was not popular with the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, I left[3]

[1] According to *The Hindustan Times*, 3-7-1947, Gandhiji said that he was told by way of illustration that he was trying to twist a rope of sand in trying to popularize Hindustani with the two scripts Nagari and Urdu, especially when Pakistan had become an established fact.

[2] Gandhiji presided over the Sammelan which was held on April 20-22, 1935; *vide* Vol. LX, pp. 459-61.

[3] On July 25, 1945; *vide* Vol. LXXXI, pp. 33-4.

that body. Hindi today has become Sanskritized and Urdu is of a kind that only Maulana Saheb[1] or Sapru Saheb[2] can speak and understand. I have therefore said that I do not want either Hindi or Urdu. I want the confluence of the Ganga and the Yamuna. But the people call me a fool. Where there are Anjuman Tarakki-e-Urdu working for Urdu and the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan working for Hindi, I can never succeed. Then there would be no Pakistan. This renders my striving for Hindustani a futile exercise. But my heart rebels. Why should I leave Hindustani? Why should I leave a good thing? When we go to Prayag and take a dip where the Ganga and the Yamuna meet, we become purified. Similarly I wish to become purified in the confluence of Hindi and Urdu.

The Muslims today consider me the greatest enemy of Islam. But I say that if I remain alive, one day they are going to turn to me. Everyone is behind me. Only my fear is that the madness that has inundated India may carry us away. Even if I am the only one left to say so, I shall still say that Hindustani is the national language. Both India and Pakistan are my country. Nobody can stop me. Even Mr. Jinnah cannot stop me. I have not become a foreign national so that Mr. Jinnah may imprison me. I am not going to take out a passport for going to Pakistan. You should all have the same courage. Mother India whose flag we have been carrying all this time has made so many sacrifices. Shall we now take it that she has been decapitated? Let no one make the mistake of taking up Hindi at the cost of Urdu. What one person does many persons will take up. As for me, I am not going to budge from my position even if I should die.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 213-5

[1] Abul Kalam Azad
[2] Tej Bahadur Sapru

241. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

NEW DELHI,
July 3, 1947

CHI. LILI,

I got your postcard and also the telegram. You are born for service. Don't worry. Do to the best of your ability whatever work comes to you unsought. I don't like your relations calling on you for help. But you cannot escape such requests. If your brother recovers soon and you can be free, you will be able to devote yourself to study. Even now I suppose you are not kept busy the whole day looking after him. What is necessary is that the mind should form the habit of study. Sushila is at Wardha.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10436. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

242. A LETTER

July 3, 1947

A man harbouring a sense of guilt is a coward. Every man makes mistakes. I have made many in my life. But he who realizes his mistakes will be saved. Understand your mistake properly and then it will no longer give you a feeling of guilt, but will become a blessing.

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 265-6

243. A LETTER

July 3, 1947

A true *brahmachari* will have no imperfection in him, no pretension and no fear. If you are such a *brahmachari*, why need you be afraid to talk to women? You will be afraid only if there is some impurity hidden in you somewhere. Think over this.

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 266

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244. LETTER TO DHIRU

NEW DELHI,
July 3, 1947

CHI. DHIRU,

I have your letter. You have travelled quite a lot. In my opinion, you need not go anywhere for studies. Learn whatever you can from experience and books. Inner purity has much more value than outer behaviour. Now calm down and render such service as you can. I have hardly time to write this much. If I don't, surely it would never get done. I have Dr. Pranjivandas's[1] speech. Why should he have spoken in English where people understand [Gujarati].

Blessings from
BAPU

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

245. A LETTER

July 3, 1947

I want to see *Ramarajya* established but how is it to be brought about? It will be possible only if we become brave, give up fear and have faith in God.

[From Hindi]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 265

[1] Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta of Jamnagar

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246. TALK WITH RADHAKANT MALAVIYA AND GOVIND MALAVIYA

NEW DELHI,
July 3, 1947

We have so many big institutions. Some of them are even good. But sometimes the entire institution goes to pieces because of the mutual bickerings among its workers. In most cases bickerings arise out of rivalry for an office. The teachers and the managers in their selfishness do not realize how much harm they are doing to the students and to the institutions on the establishment of which so much money was spent. In ancient times the gurus always lived in the forests and the children of both kings and paupers had to go there for study. The guru had to worry only about his food and the students saw to that.

There were therefore no bickerings. But we in our wisdom improved upon this. To save the children the arduous journey into the forest we established institutions with all the conveniences, thus making ourselves unhappy rather than happy and squandering public money. In Kathiawad there was a very good institution by the name of Dakshinamurti, but it was not self-supporting and ultimately it became a burden. That was owing to quarrels among the workers.

I do not understand why the educational institutions cannot become self-supporting. Sometimes an institution becomes morally depraved. I blame the teachers and managers more than the boys and girls. In some way they are guilty of some lapse. . . .[1] A similar incident concerning . . . had once come before me. Educationists are a menace to society if their character is not perfect. That is why I have been advising everyone to think twice before opening an institution. I do not know whether you know . . . I have just given an example. Generally all such things do happen in educational institutions in India.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 268

[1] Omissions as in the source

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247. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 3, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You have heard the *bhajan*. It says that it makes one laugh to think that a fish in water should remain thirsty. We are in the world of God and we do not know God. It is our ill-luck, for God is always with us. As nails are not apart from fingers, God is not apart from us. If a nail gets broken it causes pain; similarly when one breaks from God, it is painful.

India today is in pain. But the pain is in the cities. The seven lakh villages of India do not revolve round the cities. India is a country 1,900 miles long and 1,500 miles broad. The division of India does not change the map of India. It remains as it was.

A friend writes to me that the Brahmins in India are like a rock in a sea. Their number is infinitesimal. I am in a minority if I am all by myself. The rock is in a minority if it stands aloof from the sea. Then it shrivels up. But when it is in the sea it is a part of the sea. How can then the Brahmins be a minority in the sea that is the Hindu community.

There was a time when only Brahmin boys went to school. Since they have been given to learning from the very beginning, they also learnt wherever there was something new to be learnt. Today of course even those who are not Brahmins get education. Why should then the Brahmins complain about their sons not getting admission? I have been talking to you about rights. There is no such thing as a right. If a Brahmin claims education as a matter of right, I may ask him how he came to acquire the right. I do not believe in birthright. Rights are a result of the duties done. You will agree that a sinner has the right to reap the harvest of his sins. I say that one who does noble deeds has a right to the fruits of those deeds. If someone asks me what the rights of the Brahmin are I shall say it is his right to know the Brahman. A Brahmin has only two duties—to know the science of the Brahman and to teach it to others. A Brahmin who fulfils these duties earns the right to live as a Brahmin. Formerly people used to give grains and

other things to a Brahmin to enable him to live. The Brahmins on their part took only as much as they needed and returned the rest. A Brahmin's right thus is to teach the science of the Brahman. Why should they cry that their sons are not able to go to college? How can everyone go to college? How many boys and girls in the seven lakh villages of India go to college? That is possible only under Nai Talim, of which I shall not talk today.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 215-7

248. LETTER TO UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM

NEW DELHI,
July 4, 1947

MY DEAR UTTIMCHAND,

Your note and cheque for Rs. 500 for the A. I. S. A., the latter being sent to be used as per your instructions.

I am surprised that Rs. 350 have not been acknowledged. Nothing remains unacknowledged. I am inquiring. Owing to my wanderings it is difficult to carry all records.

Of course I would have accepted the prize money with pleasure if the perplexity had been solved by me or my friends. It is quite clear that we are unfit to cope with your puzzles. And now we are all scattered.

Jairamdas[1] is here. I know about the loss of his brother. I shall see that your note reaches him.

You are right. People are often wise after the event.

I almost despair of seeing peace in my lifetime. But man proposes and God disposes. Who can fathom His ways?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Jairamdas Doulatram

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249. A LETTER

July 4, 1947

I know that people have no faith in ahimsa. If they bravely employed violence, though I would not co-operate with them I would not oppose them either. But the violence which has broken out is the violence of cowards.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 270

250. A LETTER

July 4, 1947

I was surprised to learn about your civil marriage. Personally I do not believe in this form of marriage. In the marriages I arranged in the Ashram, there was nothing beyond the religious rites and today the parties are all living happily. If we thus introduce law in the sphere of human relationships, there will be little purity and dignity left in our lives. For the rest, everybody is his or her own judge in such matters. I for one believe that more numerous the laws the more the harm done to the people. But I suppose I am an old man now. How can I convince others that I have not grown senile? I regret that I do not have much time to do written exercises in Bengali. You should write to me in Bengali instead of in English. I shall be able to read it slowly.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 271

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251. MESSAGE TO STUDENTS FROM THE PUNJAB

NEW DELHI,
July 4, 1947

The country's most priceless possession are its students. We are old now. Today we are here, tomorrow we may be gone. You are the true leaders of the country. Students' role in satyagraha movement was by no means insignificant. Many young students sacrificed themselves for the sake of swaraj. If I find that this valuable wealth is being wasted anywhere I feel very hurt. I use the word "wasted" because the students become instruments in the hands of others. I feel unhappy when people take undue advantage of you and incite you to go on strikes, drag you into politics and you do all that without using your discrimination.

Do not entertain any communal feelings. Put your powers to good use and treat all the women as your sisters whether they are Hindus or Muslims. To the men and women who have come here, teach rules of sanitation; give those who are ignorant knowledge of the alphabets, maintain the accounts of the camps with great honesty, arrange religious discourses or *kirtans* at night so that the afflicted souls may be comforted. If you can do all this, then the calamity that has befallen us will have become a blessing, you will gain experience and learn something new from it.

As far as possible give up the fondness for English. I find it is somewhat more in this part of the country. English is a great and rich language. But we can't set fire to our hut at the sight of someone's palace. Can we? Do learn that language as a pastime if you want but never at the cost of our national language and the mother tongue.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 272-3

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252. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 4, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Some people ask me if what has happened and what is happening and the Dominion Status that we are about to get will lead to *Ramarajya*. Those who put the question are usually sarcastic and I have to admit that I cannot say that all this will lead to *Ramarajya*. All the signs I see are against it. The country has been divided and there will be two Dominions and, if they are hostile to each other, how can we expect the establishment of *Ramarajya*? Of course Dominion Status does not imply subservience to the British. It is as good as independence. But the other Dominions in the British Commonwealth are more or less of the same race. Since India is an Asian country, how can it remain a Dominion? If all the countries of the world were to become such Dominions, that would be a different matter and then *Ramarajya.* could be brought about. But what has come about cannot lead to *Ramarajya* or the Kingdom of God. The British Government had originally intended to transfer power to Indian hands by June 30, 1948. But now they have decided that the sooner they get out the better it would be. But how can they do that? So they came to the conclusion that if Dominion Status were granted to the divided India there would be no risks because then they would still have links with us.

I do not want India to be a frog in the well, unaware of what happens outside the well. Jawaharlal and other leaders have said that we will not be hostile to any country. We shall have friendship for all including the British. Do they then want a world federation? As I said at the Asian Relations Conference,[1] a world federation is possible of realization and in that case it would not be necessary for countries to maintain armed forces. Some countries today describe themselves as democratic but of course one does not become a democrat by simply saying so. What is the need for an army where there is rule by the people? Where the army rules the people cannot rule.

[1] For Gandhiji's two speeches at the Conference, *vide* Vol. LXXXVII, pp. 181-3 and 190-3.

There can be no world federation of countries ruled by armies. The military dictatorships of Germany and Japan had tried to inveigle various countries into friendship with them. But the deception did not last long. Today I look around and find *Ramarajya* nowhere.

People ask me if the rule of the sword and the bullet that prevails today is not the result of my teaching of truth and non-violence for thirty-two years. But does this then mean that for thirty-two years I have prevailed through lies and hypocrisy? Does it mean that the millions of people who imbibed the lesson of ahimsa from me have after thirty-two years suddenly become liars and murderers? I have admitted that our ahimsa was the ahimsa of the weak. But in reality weakness and ahimsa cannot go together. It should therefore be described not as ahimsa but as passive resistance. But the ahimsa I advocated was not the ahimsa of the weak while passive resistance is only for the weak. Then passive resistance is a preparation for active and armed resistance. As a result the violence the people had been harbouring in their hearts has now suddenly erupted.

Our passive resistance has not been a complete failure. We have all but won our freedom. The violence we see today is the violence of cowards. There is also such a thing as the violence of the brave. If four or five men enter into a fight and die by the sword, there is violence in it but it is the violence of the brave. But when ten thousand armed men attack a village of unarmed people and slaughter them along with their wives and children it is the violence of cowards. America unleashed its atom bomb over Japan. That was the violence of the cowards. The non-violence of the brave is a thing worth seeing. I want to see that non-violence before I die. For this we should have inner strength. It is a unique weapon. If people had realized its beauty all the life and property that have been lost would never have been lost.

If people had learnt the lesson of ahimsa which I had been trying to impart to them over the last 32 years, there would have been no need at present for rationing of food and cloth. If we are thoughtful in consuming food and cloth, there can be no scarcity of either in India. If people learnt to live truthfully and help each other there would be no need for us to look towards the Civil Service. The late Mr. Montagu had described the Civil Service as a wooden structure. Civil servants do not consider themselves servants of the people nor are they employed for the service of the people. They are here somehow to keep the foreign rule going. Ensconced in their offices they

issue orders through peons. If we could learn to stand on our feet and give up dependence on Civil Service there would be no need in India either for rationing or for the Civil Service today. Some kind of civil service no doubt will be needed for running the administration. If civil servants could change with the times and run the administration to serve the people, then a truly democratic regime could be brought about.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 217-20

253. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

BHANGI COLONY,
NEW DELHI,
July 5, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[1] which came into my hands after the evening prayer.

Agitation is undoubtedly being carried on today by Badshah Khan and his lieutenants to tell the voters that it is wrong for them to take part in the voting. There should be no demonstration during the voting days and there should be no approach to the voters during the voting time. If this is what you mean I shall be glad to refer to the matter in those terms at the evening prayer. I am quite prepared to adopt quicker means of reaching Badshah Khan, if you suggest any.

If you have any other thing in view, you will please let me know.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 264

[1] Dated July 4, it *inter alia* said: "It is reported to me from the Frontier that Red Shirts are now "persuading" people not to vote. I think you will agree that any action of this sort is likely to lead to . . . violence. . . . I trust that if the reports are true, in view of the policy stated in your letter you will be able to persuade Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan to implement that policy."

[2] Replying on the same day, the addressee requested Gandhiji "to deprecate any agitation before the polling days" and to send a letter to Badshah Khan "as soon as possible".

254. LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

BHANGI COLONY,
NEW DELHI,
July 5, 1947

DEAR BADSHAH,

Khudai Khidmatgar Alam Khan saw me before 12 o'clock and he said that he was leaving for Peshawar tonight. I did not send any letter through him. But I told him that there should be no demonstration against the Muslim League, that it should be enough that in the present state of tension and misrepresentation Khudai Khidmatgars should not vote at all one way or the other, that they were entitled so far as internal affairs were concerned to claim and to have complete autonomy without any interference from Pakistan or the Union, and that they could come to a decision as to the choice between the Union or Pakistan when the constitutions of the two were promulgated and when the Frontier Province had fashioned its own autonomous constitution. Above all, every occasion for clash with the Muslim League members was to be avoided. Real Pathan bravery was now on its trial. It was to be shown by cheerfully meeting blows or even meeting death at the hands of the opponents without the slightest sort of retaliation. Boycott would certainly result in a legal victory for Pakistanis, but it would be a moral defeat if without the slightest fear of violence from your side the bulk of Pathans refrained in a dignified manner from participating in the referendum. There should be no fuss, no processions, and no disobedience of any orders from the authority.

I had acted promptly on receipt of your letter. I wrote a long letter[1] to His Excellency on which he took action. You must have seen also how I had dealt with the question of the Frontier Province in one of my post-prayer speeches.[2] I send you herewith a copy of my letter to the Viceroy and of my post-prayer speech. This letter is also in answer to a complaint received by the Viceroy that it was reported that there was fear of disturbance to be caused by the Khudai Khidmatgars.

[1&2] *Vide* pp. 232 and 248.

I hope the strain under which you are working is not telling upon your health.

Love.

BAPU

Abdul Ghaffar Khan, p. 445. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47*, pp. 266-7

255. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

NEW DELHI,
July 5, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind letter of even date just after I had finished my prayer speech and was going out for my walk. Fortunately about noon I had a visit from a Pathan whom I had known to be a Khudai Khidmatgar. He was going to Peshawar and so I gave him the message which I have reproduced in the letter[1] I enclose herewith. You may read the letter and if you think that it covers the new point you have raised you may send the letter by special messenger as suggested by you. I am hoping that there will be no disturbance on the part of Badshah Khan and his followers. In the message that I sent through the Pathan Khudai Khidmatgar I covered much more ground than mentioned in my letter to Badshah Khan.

I thank you for giving me the purport of the telegram received by you from the Resident in Kashmir.[2]

I hope Her Excellency was none the worse for her visit to the Bhangi Basti.

It is open to you not to send the enclosed if it does not merit your approval.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 265

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The Resident acknowledged the receipt of the addressee's letters to himself and the Maharaja and said he was meeting the Maharaja as soon as possible.

256. LETTER TO MECMANAGE

NEW DELHI,
July 5, 1947

DEAR MECMANAGE,

Your letter. You should earn your own salvation. Forget Dr. Mehta. Let God be your sole Guide. You have my blessings in whatever good you may do.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

257. A LETTER

July 5, 1947

Seeing God does not mean seeing a being like man, with two hands and two feet and holding a conch, disc and mace. Seeing God means getting an opportunity of serving humanity, it means serving the poor and making ourselves blessed through service.

Though we cannot see God, we can feel His compassion and His goodness everywhere, and this cannot but have its effect on us. For instance, imagine a beautiful picture drawn by a great painter. We may not know the painter, but from the painting you can certainly form an idea of his artistic ability. Likewise, we do feel the presence of a Divine power behind the creations of nature and this infinite universe.

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 276

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258. LETTER TO A JOURNALIST

July 5, 1947

Newspapers are a very important means of education and spread of knowledge. But how far is this ideal pursued by journalists?

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 276

259. LETTER TO GAJANAN NAIK

NEW DELHI,
July 5, 1947

CHI. GAJANAN,

Who is bothered about principles these days? One does what one can. I think it is useless to involve me in this.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

260. LETTER TO JAYACHANDRA VIDYALANKAR

NEW DELHI,
July 5, 1947

BHAI JAYACHANDRAJI,

I have your letter. My energy is depleted now. I cannot take up any new venture. There is also no time to look after everything. I am also no use in respect of the Oza[1] Memorial. Moreover my stay here is uncertain.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

[1] Prof. Gourishankar H. Oza

261. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 5, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Lady Mountbatten has been to see me today. She had no particular business with me. I even told her on the telephone not to take the trouble to come and see me. But she said that since I had gone and seen them so many times she felt bound to return the visit. I pointed out that I only went to see the Viceroy on business. But she was firm and she came. She has simple ways. She came and squatted down as we are squatting here, and inquired after everything. She asked how we find it here and listened with interest. I told her that I lived here among the sweepers. I also told her that I lived in a temple which was clean as it ought to be. If she wanted to see the living conditions of the sweepers she should visit their quarters which were nearby. She visited the sweepers' quarters and inspected the condition there with much interest. I did not go with her because crowds might have collected. Then she went to Harijan Nivas where Harijan boys are given training. She was very happy to see it.

I have today received a letter which I had not intended to deal with here.[1] But now I feel that I should not keep it over till tomorrow. What has happened among the Sikhs on the issue of division of the Punjab is distressing. Formerly there was no distinction between the Hindus and Sikhs. All the poison was spread by Macauliff who wrote the *History of the Sikhs*. Since Macauliff was a well-known historian, everyone swallowed what he said. The *Granth Saheb* of the Sikhs is actually based on the Hindu scriptures. Sikhs are a brave community. But their number is small. If the Punjab is divided Sikhs must be divided too. The letter says that the Sikhs who have now come over to East Punjab will be all right. But what will happen to the Sikhs in West Punjab, he asks. Will the Congress help if they find themselves in trouble? I can only say that those who are brave do not need anyone's help. They should only look to God for help. And why must you assume

[1] It was from the editor of *Ajit*, an Akali daily of Lahore.

that the Sikhs in West Punjab will find themselves in trouble? If something happens to them, do you imagine that the vast masses of people in India will look on indifferently and do nothing? The Sikhs therefore should not worry.

The Bill that has been introduced in the British Parliament will very soon be enacted into law. India will then be divided into two Dominions, that is to say, the British Commonwealth will have two new members. The Bill has 20 clauses which I have read. I cannot say that it has any ambiguity or that the English have used a language which can bear different interpretations.

No Englishman wants to deceive us. But the Bill certainly contains the poison. That poison we have drunk and so has the Congress. The British carried on their rule in India for 150 years and the British Government accepted the fact that politically India was one nation. They also tried to develop it as a nation and to some extent they succeeded also. Before them the Moguls had made a similar effort but they were less successful.

Having first unified the country, it is not a very becoming thing for them to divide it. I do not say that was their intention. The Cabinet Mission too had treated India as one single country and had produced arguments in support of this assumption. Today those arguments have become irrelevant. Thus the Bill in creating two Dominions gives us poison. It is true that both the Congress and the Muslim League gave their assent to the Bill. But accepting a bad thing does not make it good.

What the Quid-e-Azam used to say has come to pass. I think one can say that he has won complete victory. In my view the Bill puts to test all the three parties including the British. It makes us a Dominion but that is only a temporary phase. The Governor-General will have to put his signature to the Constitution that the Constituent Assembly has framed. He cannot change even a comma of that document. The same thing will happen in Pakistan. If after the constitution comes into being the two Dominions proclaim their independence from the British Commonwealth, nobody can stop them. It seems to me that that is what they will do. Of course all these things belong to the future and nothing definite can be said at present. What is clear at the moment is that India is now broken up into two self-governing Dominions.

The British have also given rise to a situation which will be yet another test of their *bona fides*. All the various Princely States in India ought to have been brought within the Indian Union. The present dangerous situation should not have been allowed to remain.

The supporters of Pakistan have now got what they wanted. It may not be very much in terms of land area but they have been brought on a footing of equality. Till recently when the fight for Pakistan was on I was unable to understand what Pakistan meant. Even today I cannot understand it. The outline of Pakistan will emerge after its Constituent Assembly gives shape to its Constitution. But the real test of Pakistan will be the way it treats the nationalist Muslims, Christians, Sikhs and Hindus in Pakistan. Then Muslims themselves have various sects; there are Shias and Sunnis and various others. It is to be seen how these various sects are treated. Will they be friends with the Hindus or will they declare war against them? Will they perhaps take it into their heads that they are masters and all the rest are slaves? They will have to furnish answers to these questions in their Constituent Assembly.

India too has to show whether the Muslims in India will be treated as friends or as enemies. To me all religions are one. They are branches of the same tree. All religions worship the same God. Formerly there used to be wars over religion in Europe too. But now there is a new climate in the making. People have got so fed up with such strife that they are even giving up God. If this is the way the world is moving, how long can India be kept behind?

To those who consider India one nation the question of majority or minority does not arise at all. This Bill in a way is a test for all the parties. If we pass the test, we can accept it as a godsend. If not it will act as a noose for us.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 220-4

262. WHO IS A SOCIALIST?[1]

Socialism is a beautiful word and so far as I am aware in socialism all the members of society are equal—none low, none high. In the individual body the head is not high because it is the top of the body, nor are the soles of the feet low because they touch the earth. Even as members of the individual body are equal, so are the members of society. That is socialism.

In it the prince and the peasant, the wealthy and the poor, the employer and the employee are all on the same level.

[1] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, which was published simultaneously with the source.

In terms of religion there is no duality in socialism. It is all unity.

Looking at society all the world over there is nothing but duality or plurality. Unity is conspicuous by its absence. This man is high, that one is low, that one is a Hindu, that one a Muslim, third a Christian, fourth a Parsi, fifth a Sikh, sixth a Jew. Even among these there are sub-divisions. In the unity of my conception there is perfect unity in the plurality of designs.

In order to reach this state we may not look on things philosophically and say that we need not make a move until all are converted to socialism. Without changing our life we may go on giving addresses, forming parties and hawk-like seize the game when it comes our way. This is no socialism. The more we treat it as game to be seized, the further it must recede from us.

Socialism begins with the first convert. If there is one such, you can add zeros to the one and the first zero will account for ten and every addition will account for ten times the previous number. If, however, the beginner is a zero, in other words, no one makes the beginning, multiplicity of zeros will also produce zero value. Time and paper occupied in writing zeros will be so much waste.

This socialism is as pure as crystal. It, therefore, requires crystal-like means to achieve it. Impure means result in an impure end. Hence the prince and the peasant will not be equalized by cutting off the prince's head, nor can the process of cutting off equalize the employer and the employee. One cannot reach truth by untruthfulness. Truthful conduct alone can reach truth. Are not non-violence and truth twins? The answer is an emphatic 'no'. Non-violence is embedded in truth and *vice versa*. Hence has it been said that they are faces of the same coin. Either is inseparable from the other. Read the coin either way. The spelling of words will be different. The value is the same. This blessed state is unattainable without perfect purity. Harbour impurity of mind or body and you have untruth and violence in you.

Therefore, only truthful, non-violent and pure-hearted socialists will be able to establish a socialistic society in India and the world. To my knowledge there is no country in the world which is purely socialistic. Without the means described above the existence of such a society is impossible.

NEW DELHI, July 6, 1947

Harijan, 13-7-1947

263. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

4.30 a. m., July 6, 1947

CHI. DINSHAW,

The relations between us remain the same as before. How can we go on if you don't express your views freely to me? And should I hide my thoughts from you? Could we in that case remain close? I don't like your worrying all the time. I would certainly like to help you out of your anguish. How can he who has chosen to be a guru guide others if he himself is in the dark? Can one blind man lead another? What will you do when I die? I shall lead you to light as soon as I see it. I am what I am. I have just shown you my limitations.

My stay also is not certain. I may go to Kashmir or to Bihar or to Noakhali or God knows where.

Why did you have to undertake the fast?

Calm down. Engage yourself in whatever work you know. I would send for you if I could settle down somewhere.

Blessings to all the four of you from,

BAPU

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

264. A LETTER

July 6, 1947

It was and still is my aspiration to live up to 125 years. But I have lost my place among the people. If it were not so, why would they suddenly forsake the ahimsa to which they had clung for nearly 32 years? But I shall be satisfied if I can show that I can die bravely.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 284

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265. A LETTER

July 6, 1947

There is certainly power in Ramanama. But the person who utters it may possibly be imperfect.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 285

266. A LETTER

July 6, 1947

We shall never be able to raise the standard of public life through laws. We are not made that way. Only if the lives of the leaders, both private and public, are perfect, will they be able to produce any effect on the people. Mere preaching will have no effect.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 285

267. TALK TO HINDUS

NEW DELHI,
July 6, 1947

If you have finished saying what you wanted me to hear I will say a few words. I am a Hindu, by birth and upbringing, by practice and faith. In addition to the Hindu scriptures, I have read the holy books of almost all the other religions. I wish to raise my Hinduism higher and that is the reason why I respect other religions. Can an old man like me all of a sudden become an apostate? Calmly seek an answer to this question from your heart. I do not want your testimonial. I do not live by anyone's testimonials. I live by a testimonial from God alone. And if I have to die in obtaining that, I shall die bravely. If at that moment I get the fruits of my last sixty years' penance for truth and non-violence, I shall feel more than rewarded. I shall regard it as a grace

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of God. I am not at all angry with you for venting your anger on me. You have the right to do so and it is only for that that you have come here. I only say that I feel sorry for all of you. You do not know what is true religion. How can we blame a child if he throws away a glass utensil? He does not know that it will break. Similarly in spite of the fact that you are very angry with me I feel sorry for you.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 287-8

268. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 6, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I believe that the N. W. F. P. referendum will begin from tomorrow. I have advised Badshah Khan and his ministers not to cast their votes either way. I have offered similar advice to the League. It is of course left to them to accept or reject it. I shall advise the Khudai Khidmatgars to cease this mutual strife.

With the division of the country our army also is to be divided. Does it follow that the two sections of the army should engage in mutual warfare? The Congress has a long history of anti-militarism. Ever since the Congress was formed, ever since the time of Dadabhai Naoroji, the G. O. M. of India, Hume, Pherozeshah Mehta and Tilak, we had been complaining that while the expenditure on education was insignificant, huge sums were being spent on the army. The army in fact had been created so as to keep the 40 crores of India under subjection. Then there were the French in a part of the country and the Portuguese in another part. Clive was worried about the danger posed by the French and the Portuguese settlements and he created an army to keep himself safe from the danger. There was also a further fear. Afghanistan was a conglomeration of tribes and Russia might launch an invasion across Afghanistan.

Notwithstanding the army we were able to hold our own against the British. But our ahimsa was not the ahimsa of the strong but of the weak. I showed the way of passive resistance and we did not prepare ourselves for armed resistance. But the army still remains. Why? It is a matter of shame. The way things

are today it looks as if both the countries would be increasing their armed forces. If one country increases the army the other will do the same. The Pakistanis will say that they must increase their armed forces to defend themselves against India. India will repeat the argument. The result will be war. The question is, shall we spend our resources on the education of our children or on gunpowder and guns, and give our youth military education?

Pakistan does not believe in peace. They say the Koran does not say anything about it. But I ask you, what are you going to do? Will you do the same?

If we are given Dominion Status we remain two countries. If we become independent we still remain two countries. But have we become two countries in order to fight? What the British have done gives me no cause for satisfaction or for pride. To me the future appears dismal. When I think about it I shudder. If India and Pakistan go to war and one defeats the other what good does that do? I am in the dark. May God show us light. "From darkness lead us to light."

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 224-6

269. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[Before *July 7, 1947*][1]

CHI. AMTUSSALAAM,

Will the loom be given free? If not, how will the money be realized? Do you want the khaddar for clothing? Do you want more than what has been sent? Will they pay for the yarn? How will they pay?

You must take rice from the relief officer.

Give the conch-shell bangles, vermilion and the beadstrings only to those who wear them. Satis Babu and Vishvambharnath should be shown this.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 720; also *Bapuke Patra—8: Bibi Amtussalaamke Nam*, p. 280

[1] In *Bapuke Patra—8: Bibi Amtussalaamke Nam*, the letter precedes the letters of July 7.

270. LETTER TO WANDA DYNOWSKA

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

MY DEAR UMA,

Your letter. You are suspicious. Sardar is not so bad as you imagine. He has no anti-European prejudice. Don't be sentimental but deal with cold facts and you will succeed.

My movement is uncertain. You will come when I am fixed up somewhere.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

271. LETTER TO DR. D. P. GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

DEAR DR. GUPTA,

Your letter.[1] Faith to be faith stands all trials and thanks God. Are not the prayers of your Muslim neighbours sufficient encouragement for you to persist in well-doings?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10570

[1] The addressee, whose son had suffered injuries at the hands of Muslim rioters, had written that he could no longer have any faith in the doctrine of winning one's enemy by love notwithstanding the sympathetic attitude of Muslim neighbours who prayed for his son's recovery.

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272. LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

[*July 7, 1947*][1]

DEAR BADSHAH,

No news from you. I hope you had my long letter and that you have acted up to it. Your and my honour is involved in strict adherence to non-violence on our part in thought, word and deed. No news up to now (9.30) in the papers.[2]

Love.

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 279-80

273. MESSAGE TO KINDERGARTEN SCHOOL

July 7, 1947

Are all the Bal Mandirs which are coming up these days worthy of the name? This is a question to be considered by all who are interested in children's education. The country needs good facilities for children's education as much as it needs food, cloth and houses to meet its physical needs, for its future depends on the children.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 290

[1] According to the source this was written two days after "Letter to Abdul Ghaffar Khan", pp. 276-7.

[2] The addressee's reply dated July 12, *inter alia* read: "I and my workers have been going about from village to village asking the people to remain non-violent even under provocation on the part of the Muslim Leaguers. . . . We have been working under very difficult and trying circumstances but have adhered to non-violence. . . . How long a state of affairs like this can last, it is not easy for me to say. . . . The Muslim Leaguers backed by officials are out to create disturbances. . . . Another thing causing concern is the presence in our province of a large number of Punjabis who openly incite people to violence . . . suggesting . . . that top leaders of Red Shirts should be done away with."

274. LETTER TO MADALASA

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

CHI. MADU,

I have your letter. You must have got my telegram. I hope Bharat[1] has regained health. Do not let him wander around.

I wish you to get engrossed in the Mahila Ashram work. That is a major activity among the many activities of Jamnalal. One reason for keeping you near by is that you may get immersed in that work. Now stop having more children if both of you can exercise self-control so that you can look after the two you have and manage the Mahila Ashram work. The Ashram does need a worker like you. If you start doing that work, Shriman will take more interest in it.

Sushila has come from Wardha today.

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 333-4

275. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

CHI. JIVANJI,

I have your letter. I shall be content with whatever Narabhai[2] brings out. I do not also have the time. It may, perhaps, be necessary to show the matter to Pyarelal. This may mean some more time, but Pyarelal has worked with him. I put no great value on August 15. You must have read my speech of yesterday. I see no joy on anybody's face here. Now do as Naraharibhai advises.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9980. Also C. W. 6954. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

[1] Addressee's son

[2] Narahari Parikh, who along with Kishorelal Mashruwala was editing *Harijan* during Gandhiji's Noakhali tour.

276. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

CHI. JIVANJI,

This time I am sending a Gujarati article[1] of mine together with its translation, one article by Maganbhai, one published article by Kakasaheb and reports of my speeches. I am alone just now. Rajkumari and Sushila have gone out of Delhi. They will return tomorrow. I don't think you will be short of English matter. I have with me Gujarati translations of my speeches made by Mridulabehn. I have not been able to revise them. Perhaps I may send them on Tuesday. But I don't think you will need them.

I have followed your other suggestions.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9981. Also C. W. 6955. Courtesy: Jivanji Desai

277. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter.

I don't at all remember having received the previous one regarding the Trust. Letters do get lost in this way these days.

I agree with you about Kamala. . . .[2] arrived here yesterday. I shall show him the relevant portion of your letter. About the Trust, I shall think and then write.

Abha arrived here yesterday. I shall see now what can be done. I thought it right to let her come.

I was pleased to read about the work you are doing. Isn't the place where you are working as good as an ashram? Where else will you build another?

[1] "Who is a Socialist?", *vide* pp. 282-3.
[2] Omission as in the source

Today is my silence day. It is nearing 2. I have heaps of work lying in front of me. I have just managed to write this.

I understand about Aunt. She will live on as long as she has debts to collect from you all. Is she calm in mind? Does she talk with anybody? What things is she able to eat.

Is Fuli strong enough to do the nursing?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 642. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

278. A LETTER

July 7, 1947

You ask for my help, but who am I to help you? God alone is the true helper and source of support. Seek help from that Almighty God.

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 290

279. A LETTER

July 7, 1947

I sympathize with you in your misfortune. But it is ignorance to think that we suffer because of our misfortunes. Misfortune is really a test for us. And if we pass the test, all will be well with us. Only those who are blessed with grace can understand this. You should try to understand this truth and patiently strive to strengthen your power of endurance.

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 291

280. A LETTER

July 7, 1947

I am able to say from my own experience that the mind also is an important factor in recovering from illness. Fear, anger, impatience and depression aggravate the illness. The more cheerful you are the sooner will you recover. You should therefore try to create such an atmosphere around you. It is a sin against God

to fall ill. I have repeatedly pointed this out to Chi. Manudi and made her cry for neglecting her health. But I have noticed during these past two days that she has become a little more sensible. I can only hope that this will not prove temporary.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 291

281. LETTER TO GOPALRAO KALE

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

CHI. GOPALRAO,

The Hasan chapter is not yet closed. I have a long letter from him. Let me know if he is clean enough.

Herewith I am enclosing a copy of my Gujarati article. When should the whole matter reach you?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

282. LETTER TO DR. HASAN

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

BHAI HASAN,

I have your letter[1]. Who wrote it? Neither the handwriting nor the language of the letter appears to be yours.

What do Bhai Gopalrao and Dada Dharmadhikari say?

I am having another complaint. I desire that at least a few Muslims should prove perfect in every way. I want to see you become such a one. The time is extremely delicate. I am sending a copy of your letter to Shuklaji.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] Dated June 14, it alleged that Prime Minister Shukla's speech was "in a serious strain and not in a lighter vein" and thus it made the addressee's position very awkward; *vide* also pp. 165 and 210.

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283. LETTER TO RAVI SHANKAR SHUKLA

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

BHAI SHUKLAJI,

I have a long letter from Dr. Hasan, a copy of which I am sending to you. Is this episode closed now? Has everything been cleared up? Is there no more complaint against the Doctor?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

284. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. I know I have not been able to write to you often. How can it be anger? I am buried in work.

Pakistan has come into being. But our duty remains the same. Those who are there have to do or die.

I want to reach there early. When it will be only God knows.

Whatever rice we get we should accept. We should not carry on trade in it. I consider it immoral. I cannot go into greater details.

How are you?

Abha came here yesterday. She does not appear to be well. Today is my silence day.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 586

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285. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. My anxiety is that Kishorelalbhai is unnecessarily worried and he is leaving the house that he had built for himself. I do not mind that he distrusts me. Time will show whether I deserved to be trusted. But let us leave everything to time.

The Prabhakar episode I think is now closed. I presume that Shankaran's accusation against Prabhakar was wrong. Prabhakar flatly denies it. He will never do anything to discredit the Ashram. It is good that you had a talk with Aryanayakum about the dairy. He has not written anything to me. When he does I shall say if there is anything for me to say. I want you to do as much service as you can. What will he do by having only the building? But I cannot say anything. It is not very likely that Anna will continue to live in the Ashram now. Can she (Kamala) live in the Ashram without Anna and undertake to observe the rules of the Ashram? Anna says she can now take care of herself.

It is a different thing if Ramprasad and Kanta, observing the rules of the Ashram and eating in its mess, can live there. Otherwise I think they have to leave the Ashram.

My stay here is uncertain.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1982

286. A LETTER

July 7, 1947

What has happened to us today that we are killing one another in the name of religion? Can anybody tell me which religious scripture teaches this?

If you regard yourself as a true Muslim, you should issue a statement. You should do this, however, not because I am

suggesting it. If you yourself feel in your heart that Muslims are committing an error in the name of religion, then you may issue whatever statement you deem fit. Don't think that you should issue such a statement merely because Gandhi says so. Such a statement will have no effect.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 291

287. A LETTER[1]

July 7, 1947

I know that even today we are apathetic with regard to this problem, because we look upon the practice as a part of dharma. But you should strive harder still. I should like you to dedicate your whole life to this one mission. Those who serve only according to their capacity find their work quite easy. If one undertakes several tasks at once, one is unable to do justice to any of them.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 291-2

288. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Last evening I told you why it was that the prospect of freedom that is about to be ours did not fill me with joy. Today I wish to tell you how you can turn a bad thing into a good thing. What has happened has happened. Nothing is to be gained by brooding over it or blaming others. In legal terms it will be only a few days before freedom comes into effect. All the parties have arrived at an agreement and they cannot go back upon their word. Only God can undo what man has decided to do.

The easiest way would be for the Congress and the League to come to an understanding without the intervention or the help

[1] This was addressed to a member of Bihar Harijan Uddharak Mandal who came to see Gandhiji.

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of the Viceroy. In this the League would have to take the first step. I do not in the least imply by this that the decision about Pakistan should be undone. It should be taken as final, no more open to discussion now. But if ten representatives of either party sit together in a mud hut and resolve that they will not leave the hut till they have arrived at an understanding, then I can say that the decision they arrive at will be a thousand times better than the present Bill which is before the British Parliament and which envisages the setting up of two Dominions. If all the Hindus and Muslims who come to see me or write to me do not deceive me, then it is clear that no one is happy with the division of India. They all accept it against their will.

There is also another method, perhaps as difficult. The army is going to be divided—the army which so far had one single purpose—whatever that purpose might have been. This division of the army certainly fills the heart of every patriot with fear and misgivings. Why are two armies being created? Are they to defend the country against foreign aggression or are they to fight against each other and prove to the world that we are good only for fighting and killing each other?

I have deliberately painted before you this frightful picture so that you may be warned. The way to escape this is, at any rate in my view, attractive. Will the Hindu masses and all those who have taken part in the struggle for freedom pass the test today? Will they rise up and say that they have no need for an army or at least take a pledge that this army will not be used against their Muslim brethren whether they be living in India or Pakistan. By saying this they will turn their thirty-year-old weakness into strength. Maybe the method I suggest will be considered foolish. However, I must say that God has the power to turn foolishness into wisdom as He has done so many times in history. Those who have set out on the dangerous course of dividing the army should pay heed to what I say.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 227-8

289. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

NEW DELHI,
July 7/8, 1947

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

I have your letter. Sushilabehn told me everything. No blemish can attach to the innocent. Those who accuse them become themselves soiled. You do not, therefore, have to undergo penance. Still we should be careful in everything.

Take care of your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9039. Also C. W. 9163. Courtesy: Prabhakar

290. DISCUSSION WITH DR. SUSHILA NAYAR AND ARUNA ASAF ALI

NEW DELHI,
July 8, 1947

God has chastised me severely. I have not known a test more severe than this. What a high standard of morality we had when we were slaves. We are about to suffer the greatest fall from that lofty height in the so-called "priceless freedom" which is approaching. What more is left to be witnessed now? How can I give you any idea of what is going on in my mind? At one time I feel that Bihar is calling me, at another time I hear the call from Noakhali where I succeeded to some extent in establishing peace. When I came here from Patna a month ago, I imagined that I would be back at my work in a week. But in the course of this one month so many changes have taken place in the country that a family wouldn't have seen as many in a generation. I am rotting in Delhi. However, I have not at all given up Noakhali and Bihar work. I am very keen to go to the Punjab also. But I cannot decide where to go. Being in this state of mind, I am following a great thinker who said, "If you cannot see your way, it is better to stay

where you are.'' So I am here. I cannot go to Sevagram at present. I must either accomplish something or die in the attempt. I will think of something new only when I have reached one of these two places. There is no third way. At the moment I do not feel like giving any advice to the Ashram inmates. In all these years I have said much to them, made them do much work. Now every one of them should do what they think best. Ultimately all service is alike in value. The head is perched high in the body and it has great value but the soles, though at the very bottom and in contact with dirt, are not any lower in value. If the sole is pricked by a thorn and one is unable to walk, how much one feels it! Similarly those who have dedicated themselves to service may render it in any manner they like according to their ability and interest. To me every kind of service is valuable.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 294-5

291. INTERVIEW TO DEPUTATION FROM QUETTA[1]

NEW DELHI,
July 8, 1947

Pandit Malaviyaji had told me specifically that I must visit Uttarkashi once. He himself was to take me along. But that was not to be. Now it occurred to me that I might visit the holy places which Malaviyaji described to me. For I do not at all hope to live for 125 years. Nor do I have that desire. I hope and trust that God will take me away while I am clinging to the aims and principles to which I have been devoted and before anything ugly happens to the country. Then Mirabehn is there. However, the weather there is not favourable at present and so I have postponed my going. Now I will come to the main thing.

When people learnt that I was going on a pilgrimage to Uttarkashi they imagined that I must be having differences with the leaders and that that was why I was retiring to the Himalayas. Yes, it is true I had difference of opinion with the leaders concerning the present situation because it seemed to me that the *Ramarajya* of my dreams was not materializing. But I do not worry because I have developed detachment and I am doing what

[1] A member of the deputation had asked Gandhiji if it was true, as the rumours suggested, that he was going away to Uttarkashi because of his differences with the leaders.

I have been doing all along and what I feel is true. I do not worry if anyone is not convinced by what I say. I will tell the world from the house-tops what is true. Since the people have agreed to be governed by the leaders, the latter should fulfil their obligations towards the former. It is a rule of democracy that the leaders cannot impose on the people what they do not want. I have forebodings that the future of India will be something different from the people's conception of it. I am therefore very much worried.

Sometimes I wonder whether during the last thirty years I have not taken the country in the wrong direction. However, as I have confessed time and again, our non-violence was not that of the brave. As there was no other alternative we adopted it. Had it not been so we would not have been indulging in perfidious mass murders to solve mutual quarrels among brothers. Our struggle was only 'passive resistance'. Our struggle was based on the non-violence of the weak. Even then a great power had to leave the country. If I alone can adopt non-violence of the brave I can show to the world what splendid results it can bring about.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 296

292. DISCUSSION WITH V. K. KRISHNA MENON[1]

NEW DELHI,
July 8, 1947

We must integrate the Princely States. Otherwise as there has been one Pakistan there will be a thousand Pakistans. We must put the talents of the Princes to good use.

The problem of Kathiawar is very difficult. When I suggested that Balwantrai[2] should be taken into the Working Committee I had done so after careful thought. He has been brought up in a cultured State like Bhavnagar. He renounced everything and worked there. Certainly Dhebar is also capable. But the two differ in talent and temperament.

Moreover, in the whole of Kathiawar the Bhavnagar State is politically the most advanced. I have been associated with it from

[1] Secretary, India League, London, 1929-47; Special Representative of the Government of India in London, 1946-47, and Indian High Commissioner, 1947-52; later served as Defence Minister, Government of India

[2] Balwantrai Mehta, Chief Minister of Gujarat, 1964-65

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the time of Sir Prabhashankar Pattani[1] or even earlier, when I joined Shamaldas College.[2] Whenever I think of Sir Prabhashankar Pattani, his image, white-bearded, floats before my eyes. He was also a poet. At that time he composed verses on the spinning-wheel, khadi and swaraj. I do not recall the words but they still ring in my ears. This biggest executive of a princely State began his spinning in a small village of Bhavnagar State. I will not take up your time in dwelling on the details. If I start telling stories about him, there will be no end of them. Let me therefore, come to the main point. His son Anantrai is also a very capable person. . . .[3] His services should be utilized. . . .

There are numerous small States in Kathiawar. They have been exploiting the people. Balwantrai will be able to tell you their whole history. I should therefore like you to discuss this subject with him. There is no doubt that he is a capable person. Dhebar is a good man, while Balwantrai is "capable". That is the difference between the two. That is why I made the suggestion to Kripalani. If Kathiawar can be brought into line, it is bound to have an impact on other Indian States. Moreover Balwantrai has much knowledge of the Indian States. I may say you wouldn't be far wrong if you called him the Sardar of Kathiawar. He has so much talent that I should like you to utilize his service if you can.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 298-9

293. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 8, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today I am late by ten minutes. I apologize to you for it. I had so much to do and so many people came to see me that I could not free myself earlier. Whatever I say these days, I say with great deliberation. I first prepare the notes of what I intend to say and only then speak. Today I kept writing for a long time and then went out to wash myself. The girls came to remind me that it was time but I did not hear them. The result has been this delay.

[1] Who served as Dewan of Bhavnagar State
[2] In January 1888
[3] Omissions as in the source

A friend has today written me a letter in English. He says, "I do not know the national language. My language is Tamil. If I write to you in Tamil, you will have difficulty in understanding it even if you knew a little Tamil. I therefore write in English."

As you know I want everyone to write to me in his own language. The best thing would be for everyone to learn the language of North India which is Hindustani—midway between Hindi and Urdu. The writer has quoted some lines from Bernard Shaw. Bernard Shaw has hit out at the English. He displays very pungent humour. He says that the English are never wrong. They do everything on principle. They fight on principle and plunder on principle. They enslave us only on principle. They killed their king to uphold democracy. Copying Shaw the correspondent makes fun of me and says that in the cause of freedom the British are dividing the country into two. But I know the English better than anyone else. They are leaving India because they know that they can derive no economic gain from continuing their rule in India and they have also realized that politically they can no longer keep us in subjection.

During the first world war Martial Law was introduced in one part of the country. During the second world war Lord Wavell brought the whole of India under Martial Law. But now the English have realized that that kind of thing cannot go on, that keeping India in continuous subjection might be a financial liability. They therefore want to quit. There are still two ways to save the country as I explained to you yesterday. The English still control power. They have a large army here and till that army has left we cannot really say that the British have left. They can still make their presence felt. The British want to dismember the country. Their going should not be a signal to Hyderabad, Travancore and others to declare themselves independent. Where then would be India's freedom? It has to be admitted that some of the recent events have created doubts in the people's minds about the intention of the British. But so long as their bad faith has not been proved I shall not judge them. It is of course true that the British have been shirking the right step that should be taken concerning the Indian States. But if they leave India in a situation where the various parts fall apart and start fighting against one another there can be no greater blot on their prestige.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 229-31

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294. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
July 9, 1947

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Your letter was read out to me this morning after the prayer at 4.45. After taking honey in warm water I am now writing this.

Your coming here will serve no purpose. Your striving is false. Your attachment to Kanchan will not go by your keeping her away from you. Nor even by your living with her. Such attachment disappears only when one has realized the Supreme. I doubt whether you will even be able to overcome it. But I will not dwell on this.

What you write about K.bhai[1] is correct. If my truth and ahimsa are genuine, all will be well. My speeches are being summarized with great care. Read the English reports only. This is enough for today. Take interest in the constructive work.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

What is wrong with the name Jivram? If you didn't like it, are you sure you will not dislike another name, too? I suggest that you yourself should give the name of your choice.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8409. Also C. W. 5623. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

295. LETTER TO FRANCESCA STANDENATH

NEW DELHI,
July 9, 1947

MY DEAR SAVITRI,

Your second letter just received. I was glad.

You may send your answer to Sevagram, Wardha, C. P., India.

We are born to endure hardships. I therefore do not send you a word of sympathy for all you have gone through. It is enough that you are cheerful in spite [of it all.] Keep the gold watch. An English firm has sent me one. Others have offered.

[1] Kishorelal G. Mashruwala; *vide* also p. 229.

How do you pass your time? Do you earn something? What is your age?

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

296. A LETTER

July 9, 1947

I also am a worshipper of art. Isn't truth also an art? I would say that anybody who makes a distinction between truth and beauty knows neither.

He who has taken a vow of service, what need he think? He should reduce himself to a cipher, welcome whatever opportunity of service God grants him from time to time and acquit himself in it to the best of his ability. It is not for us to think about the results. We should only take care that our motives are not selfish. We are merely instruments in God's hands. Truly has Narasinha Mehta said: "To say in pride, 'It is I who am doing this'—that is ignorance, like the dog's who believes that he is carrying the cart under which he walks." In that one line of verse the poet has explained man's dharma.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 302-3

297. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
July 9, 1947

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have thought about the Trust[1]. It seems to me we should not trouble Mavalankar. Why don't you invite Saralabehn Ambalal? She is a wise lady. But it is for all of you to decide.

Devdas should not be included. He is already overburdened. I think nobody should be included merely because of his name.

The names of members of the Managing Committee seem all right.

If Girdharlal Kotak and Maganlal are already there on the Committee, they should be consulted before their names are dropped. It is all right if they are dropped as per rules.

[1] Presumably Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

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If it is possible to devise some method of storing rain water, the experiment should certainly be made. If you can get water by sinking deep wells, that also is worth trying. It is very necessary to make some efforts in this direction.

If you decide to grow fruit trees, that also will ultimately be profitable. This whole subject is of importance for a region like Kathiawar.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 8643. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi. Also *Bapuna Patro–9: Shri Narandas Gandhine*–II, pp. 317-8

298. DISCUSSION WITH INDONESIAN VISITORS

July 9, 1947

Non-violence is the only thing which can counteract any kind of atom bomb. However, I feel that you have no knowledge of non-violence. Let me ask you: suppose Russia, America and England combined together and attacked you, what kind of violence would you use against them and how? I feel that you could withstand it only if the whole of Asia helped you against it. Even then the European arms would be superior to yours. But Indonesia alone will be able to counteract all the three powers if you show courage, are prepared to die a brave death and adopt non-violence. Yes, it is true that everyone will be sacrificed. But no one will be able to subjugate you. The non-violence which we practised was not that of the brave. It was passive resistance. If we could have practised non-violence of the brave there wouldn't have been this fratricidal carnage which is taking place now. Spiritual courage is more important than physical courage. If, therefore, not only India but the whole of Asia practised non-violence of the brave, Asia would have a different status. Unluckily the wave of violence has spread all over India. I must confess that all the hopes I have pinned on India will be belied if we are not able to practise non-violence of the brave. I hope at least that God will not make me a witness to it.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 303

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299. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
July 9, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You will ask me why I went to see the Viceroy[2] today. Freedom is not yet ours. There is only hostility. They stop the trams as they like, they stab and loot. Freedom is like the sun but it does not seem to me that it is coming. The Viceroy calls me his friend. How can I be a friend of his? I am a friend of the sweepers, of the poor.

The writer of the letter I spoke[3] of yesterday reminds me that in 1940 I had said that I found violence in the air. He asks if I found violence in the air then, what do I find now? He has the right to ask. It cannot be said that things are going well in India. People are stopping trains, indulging in arson and plunder and stabbings. This is anarchy. People embezzle funds and adopt improper methods to make money. Others quietly part with money. There is untruth, violence, hatred and distrust in the air.

Against this background comes the declaration of June 3. Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs have agreed to see India dismembered. Then came reports in newspapers of thefts, looting, arson and murders. The correspondent sarcastically asks me if this is my idea of love. He says I have been a votary of truth and asks where that truth is now. Now the only question is, who is higher and who is lower? Where is the tolerance I have been talking about? If it is not there, who is responsible for it? Is it the Viceroy or is it someone else?

My answer is that it is true that there is a stench everywhere. I say I am responsible for it. For thirty years I have been telling the country to follow truth and non-violence.

[1] *The Hindustan Times*, 10-7-1945, reported that Gandhiji began by referring to the *bhajan* which described love as the highest thing in the world—the best unifying force. Yudhishthira performed the *yajna* because he wished to become the servant of his people through love—in other words ahimsa. He preferred service to kingship and thereby was a true king.

[2] For the Viceroy's note on the interview, *vide* Appendix X.

[3] *Vide* p. 302.

If my advice had been heeded, the result would have been different. You judge the tree by the fruit. If the English go, does it mean that law and order should also go with them? Even people who talked the language of satyagraha had harboured thoughts of violence and intended at the very first opportunity to take to arms. The swaraj I had dreamed of is still a long way away. I do not wish to be a witness to this internecine strife. I do not wish to shed tears over what has happened in Multan, Rawalpindi, Garhmukteshwar, Bihar and Bengal, for I am a soldier. Nor do I wish to die. Neither the Hindus, nor the Muslims, nor the Sikhs can ensure their survival through the madness that has overtaken them. Money can be earned by the sword but not merit. The only way is for us even now to take to the path of non-violence. Therein alone lies our good and that of the world. Humanity demands that the British should bring about reconciliation between the two parties, between the two armies. I hope that the days that are left will be enough to achieve this. Then there is the question of the States. Fifteenth of August is the last day. There is still time. If reconciliation cannot be effected before that date, then I fear it will be too late. The British are stronger than we. They have immense military strength. Those who imagine that the British are finished as a military power are mistaken.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 231-3

300. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI[1]

[*July 10, 1947*][2]

Though I am here, my heart is in Noakhali. See that none of you leaves his or her post of duty. If any of you dies, I will dance with joy.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 312

[1] & [2] From Sushila Nayyar's "Notes", sub-title, "Noakhali", in *Harijan*, 20-7-1947. Writing under the dateline New Delhi, July 10, 1947, Sushila Nayyar explains: "Some of Gandhiji's party have left the place (Noakhali) mostly on account of illness. . . . Among those who are still there are Shri Pyarelalji and Shri Kanu Gandhi."

301. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

July 10, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

The happy event[1] you told me of is out in the papers today. My congratulations and blessings to the pair. Let us hope they will prove true servants of humanity.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 10830

302. LETTER TO SUDHIR GHOSH

NEW DELHI,
July 10, 1947

DEAR SUDHIR,

I often think of both[2] of you. Hope you are doing well. Do write occasionally.

Love to you two.

BAPU

Sudhir Ghosh Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *Gandhi's Emissary*, p. 218

303. A LETTER

July 10, 1947

The controls must go now. I can understand that it will take some time to remove them, but I cannot understand the argument that they must be retained.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 308

[1] Engagement of Princess Elizabeth and Lieut. Philip Mountbatten
[2] The addressee and his wife Shanti Ghosh

304. A LETTER

July 10, 1947

If I had my way, I would have a law passed which would require everybody, from the highest official to the lowliest peon, to spin for half an hour daily. It is inconceivable that one cannot spare half an hour out of twenty-four hours for spinning. But mine is a lone voice today. When I speak of spinning, please understand the word in its broadest sense. It means constructive work. . . .[1] Without such work, the country will not be able to solve the problems which it faces.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 308

305. A LETTER

July 10, 1947

These days cotton is being exported to other countries and in exchange we import food. If that is so, you are right in holding that the cultivators will take greater interest in growing cotton than in growing foodgrains. That will harm us in the end. If a country cannot grow the food it needs, its freedom cannot but be in danger.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 308

306. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

NEW DELHI,
July 10, 1947

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

When everything is so clear cut, it would be quite right to follow Kamalnayan's suggestion.

You must understand that I really have no time.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] Omission as in the source

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307. LETTER TO RAMASWAMI

NEW DELHI,
July 10, 1947

CHI. RAMASWAMI,

I have your letter. I have sent the following telegram:[1]

"Ramaswami, brilliant Harijan, wants to serve your editorial department. My opinion he is worth keeping."

I was under the impression that you were in England or America and that I had lost you. Now I understand. I also recollect everything. I am sending you a telegram as well. Write to me what you are going to do. Why don't you return to the Ashram?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

308. INTERVIEW TO ARTHUR MOORE[2]

July 10, 1947

It does not look like success so far.[3] But there must be some result.

GANDHIJI: I have no doubt about it.

It depends upon you, Gandhiji. You are the biggest force.

I am a spent bullet.

Oh, no; you are not. Whatever progress India has made is because of you.[4] Now is the time. What can be done?

That is the grace of God. I am only an instrument. Without His will not even a leaf will move. Then who am I? An insignificant being. Pray that Indians may become wise.[5]

Your word counts. Just now Hindus are worked up. . . . It is that feeling that one wants to allay.

[1] Presumably to Ramachandran; *vide* p. 261.
[2] A former editor of *The Statesman*
[3] Moore was referring to Gandhiji's Delhi fast for Hindu-Muslim unity in 1924.
[4] This sentence is from *Bihar Pachhi Dilhi*.
[5] This paragraph is from *Bihar Pachhi Dilhi*.

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I am doing my utmost. Personally I do not think this mood will stay.

Mr. Moore thought Sardar Patel's attitude to be bellicose. Gandhiji corrected him:

You do not know the Sardar. He is not vindictive or communal. But he does not share my belief that non-violence can conquer everything. He used to be a whole-hogger once. He is so no more.

The Sardar is the most popular leader. Perhaps that explains it.

No, the Sardar is the strong man. He will not let any difficulty baffle him. That is the explanation.

There is a growing feeling of retaliation in the people's minds. It is bad.

I do not think this feeling will stay. If it does, it will mean good-bye to freedom. India will commit suicide.

The Sardar and some Congressmen feel that the area ceded to Pakistan has to be taken back. It irritates the Muslims.

There you are greatly mistaken. Personally I feel Pakistan has come to stay. They realize it.

On that basis friendship is possible?

Pakistan has come but how friendship can be achieved I do not know.

I feel heart unity is more important than political boundaries.

I grant that any day. I am working at it against heavy odds.

But you are not a spent force Gandhiji. Things have to get worse before they get better. It is darkest before dawn.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 309-10; and *Bihar Pachhi Dilhi*, pp. 307-8

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309. INTERVIEW TO WINKLEMAN[1]

NEW DELHI,
[*July 10, 1947*][2]

He said that he was a philosopher rather than a diplomat. He was soon to leave for Singapore and another would take his place. He was sorry to leave India when India was passing through eventful times. He wished Gandhiji a long life. There was a lot to be done yet. He asked Gandhiji:

Do you expect a lot of trouble still?

GANDHIJI: If I can forecast the future, I feel there is some more trouble in store for us before we settle down.

WINKLEMAN: You are a believer in God. Your mind must be at rest if you feel that India is going in the right direction. Europe is not. The troubles of Europe are due to the fact that Europe has left Christianity.

G. Yes, I have believed that for a long time.

W. What do you think of the situation in Europe?

G. I think nothing. It is beyond me. It is a complicated affair.

W. Yes, it is complicated. He had met Dr. Malan in 1939 in Europe. He was asked several questions about Europe. He said that there was no hope for Europe. Asked why, he had replied: "Europe has lost its religion. The philosophy of materialism has come to stay. They think they can do everything without God. They will be making so many mistakes that another upheaval will come before long." "And it did", added the visitor. "People think that they can separate religion from business and lead two lives. It cannot be done."

I have held that opinion for a long time.

Harijan, 20-7-1947

[1] Dutch ambassador; the interview is extracted from Sushila Nayyar's "Notes", sub-title, 'The Problem of Europe'.

[2] From *Bihar Pachhi Dilhi*

310. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 10, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I am often asked, now that Pakistan has been conceded, what is the duty of those of us who are in the Indian Union? I have spoken on this question many times but it comes up again and again. One possibility is that India and Pakistan will be enemies. The Muslim League often says that Hindus and especially the caste Hindus are its enemies. Must then the Hindus also consider the Muslims their enemies? At least that is not my way. And in my old age I cannot give up my way. My humanity tells me that the whole world is my friend. Cutting each other's throats will not bring good to anyone. Friendship does not mean appeasement. A friend does not seek to appease another friend. If harsh words have to be said, they must be said. I have been asked, if I am against appeasement, what else have I been doing? When in 1944 I trudged my way in the sun on eighteen successive days to the Qaid-e-Azam's house I was doing my duty. I did not seek to appease the Qaid-e-Azam. Had he accepted what I went to offer him all this blood that has now been shed would never have been shed. And all this poison would not have been spread. Also there would have been no third power in India and even after the formation of Pakistan, India would have been one. My talks with Mr. Jinnah were friendly. Appeasement today has a bad connotation. When Germany and England were hostile to each other, Chamberlain, who was the Prime Minister at the time, had sought to appease Hitler. It is not my view but that of many Englishmen that, had Chamberlain not chosen the path of appeasement, history would have been different. But since I do not consider anyone my adversary why should I go out to appease anyone?

Will the temples and the Gurudwaras in Pakistan be destroyed? My feeling is that they will not be. Will they stop the Hindus from going to the temples? I do not think that this is the meaning of Pakistan. Has not Daulatana Saheb said only today that none but enemies of Islam would say that Hindus and Sikhs could not follow their faith in Pakistan. If the

Hindus and Sikhs in Pakistan really get the same justice as the Muslims then I have not the least doubt that Islamic democracy is a lofty thing. If they consider all mankind as having descended from Adam, how can they stop the followers of other religions from worshipping God in their own different ways. I think that Daulatana Saheb means what he says. I shall ask the Hindus of the Punjab and N. W. F. P. not to flee from their homes in fright. The Golden Temple is in Amritsar but what will happen to Nankana Saheb[1] for which the Sikhs have made such sacrifices? It has to remain in Pakistan. There are so many Hindu temples in Hyderabad. I do not say that Hyderabad will become a part of Pakistan. Ninety-five per cent of the population there is Hindu. If all those Hindus are included in Pakistan, what will be the meaning of Pakistan? The great Jama Masjid will be in the Union. Shall we forbid the Muslims to say *namaaz* there? Then there is the Taj Mahal in Agra. And a Muslim University in Aligarh. Will Muslim students be stopped from studying there? Is there a place that does not have both mosques and temples? I find both wherever I go. Why then do the Hindus from the Punjab, Sind and N. W. F. P. want to flee to India? They should be brave. We have no use for the bravery that consists in burning down houses and killing innocent children. It is not bravery. It is devilry.

But if people do leave their houses in Sind and other places and come to India, must we drive them out? If we do that, how can we call ourselves Indians? With what face can we shout *Jai Hind*? For what had Netaji fought? We are all Indians whether living in Delhi or Gujarat. They will be our guests. We shall welcome them saying that India is their country as much as Pakistan. If Nationalist Muslims also have to leave Pakistan we shall welcome them here. As Indians we all have the same status.

There are still thirty-five days to August 15. Let us cease to be beasts and become men. We have all been put to the test and that includes the British. I have just received a telegram from Noakhali saying that now that Pakistan has come into being the Hindus who had suffered there are not likely to get any compensation. Why should they not get compensation? With Pakistan established it is all the more the duty of the Government there to protect the Hindus. The telegram also says that those who have committed murders and who are at

[1] Where on February 20, 1921, a number of Sikhs were killed; *vide* Vol. XIX, p. 378.

present in prison are likely to be freed. I hope this will not be. The Pakistanis must demonstrate that the Hindus living in Pakistan will not be harmed in any way. Then we shall have reason to celebrate 15th of August as Independence Day. But if this does not happen, this independence is not for me nor, I am sure, will it be for you. A lot can happen in these thirty-five days.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 234-7

311. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

BHANGI COLONY,
NEW DELHI,
July 11, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I am still without any news from Kashmir. I wonder if you can remind the Maharaja. If I was not bound by any promise made to you, of course I would not want any permission to go to Kashmir. I would simply go as any private person.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 270-1

312. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
July 11, 1947

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. I am glad you got my wire and letter in time. I was relieved to learn that Sita had arrived there safely.

Since I had written, there was no need for you to write anything. I hope it will not be misunderstood. It is we who

[1] The addressee, who replied the following day, enclosed a copy of the letter from the Maharaja, who had again advised Gandhiji to postpone his visit in any case till the end of autumn. Also he had said that it would not be possible for Gandhiji to see Sheikh Abdulla. Lord Mountbatten further wanted to know whether Gandhiji would visit Kashmir after his Noakhali visit or before; for Gandhiji's reply, *vide* "Letter to Lord Mountbatten", p. 345.

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have to yield, they who have the power. If they are annoyed, it is our child that will be harmed. That is why I gave in on many points and the matter was settled. But all that is over now.

How long do you expect to have to look after the things there? Go on doing what you can and give Vijayabehn such satisfaction as you can.

You must not expect Tari[1] to help you in household chores. The public service she is doing is a sufficiently big contribution on her part.

It remains to be seen how Vasant turns out.

I am well.

Manu is still not fully restored. Abha is here now. Her health also is no better, nor is Sushila's. The weather is partly to blame of course. It is extremely hot. Hot winds blow. It is so even at night. There was some relief for two or three days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5007

313. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
July 11, 1947

CHI. KANAIYO,

I certainly wanted you to have Narandas's entire letter.[2] But this is an apt instance of how even one's simple wishes are not fulfilled. As is my wont, when this morning I enquired whether the whole letter was sent to you [I learnt that] Bisen[3] had not sent the part pertaining to the Trust. He acted in good faith but if he had clearly understood his dharma he would not have erred. If he had asked me at the time he was attending to it so much time would have been saved.

Have you grown weak? Even if you have not, if you are tired of the place[4] you can quit. If I can get away from here or am able to do something for Bihar take it that I shall soon be there. If I have written the same thing to you yesterday, let this be for

[1] Tara Mashruwala, addressee's sister who was working in Kasturba National Trust in Madhan

[2] *Vide* pp. 304-5.

[3] Shiv Balak Bisen, Gandhiji's secretary

[4] Ramdevpur where he was supervising a relief camp

a second time. There have been no such fixed stages in my life. I spent 20 years instead of one in South Africa. In Bihar I spent the whole year instead of four days. And how long I had to stay in Rajkot.

Abha is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

314. LETTER TO GOVINDDAS

NEW DELHI,
July 11, 1947

CHI. GOVINDDAS,

I have your letter and your long statement.[1] Where is the time to read the statement? And what is the need of it? Of what importance is one such temple being opened? You should understand the situation there and do independently what you think proper.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 10423. Courtesy: Seth Govinddas

315. NOTE TO SUNDERLAL

July 11, 1947

I have read this. See what I have deleted.[2] Nobody has forced the division on us. When was the country a "paradise" ?

From the Hindi: C. W. 10268. Courtesy: Purushottam Prasad

[1] Criticizing the Trustees of a temple at Jabalpur on their decision not to open the temple to Harijans and offering his resignation from trusteeship of the temple

[2] From the addressee's letter to the editor, *Bharat*, a Hindi journal of Allahabad, Gandhiji had deleted the bracketed words from the following sentence: "If we want to we can even make use of the division (imposed on us by aliens) to make the country a paradise (once again)."

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316. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 11, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

A co-worker writes from Noakhali: "When you came to Noakhali you talked so much about doing or dying. Now if you do not come here before the 15th of August, you will repent."

I admit that if I do not go to Noakhali before August 15, I shall repent. Why am I in Delhi? I ought to be either in Bihar or in Noakhali. I am restless here. I was not so in Noakhali. I walked long distances every day, visited ever new villages and met an immense number of people both Hindus and Muslims. I did some work in Noakhali, also in Bihar. There is a fire raging inside me. That fire will not rage after I go to Noakhali. I ask you to pray that God may quickly send me to Noakhali.

I have not forgotten my pledge to do or die. From Noakhali I went to Bihar, for whereas in Noakhali only a few hundred people had died, in Bihar thousands were killed. So for me Noakhali and Bihar were alike. From there Jawaharlal summoned me here. Kripalani also sent me a wire calling me here, but what have I achieved here? Of course many people retort, "What could I achieve in Noakhali? If there is a settlement concerning the whole of India, there will automatically be a settlement concerning Noakhali." But I proceed the other way. I had learnt when still a child the formula, "As in the microcosm so in the macrocosm." My untutored and rustic mother also taught me to begin with myself and not to bother about the world. There is God to look after the world. I must therefore keep the pledge I made in Noakhali.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 237-8

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317. STATEMENT ON RENTIA JAYANTI[1]

NEW DELHI,
July 12, 1947

Lovers of the charkha should show a hundred times more zeal for the coming *Rentia Baras*. That does not mean that they should send a hundred times more yarn. They may well send that much yarn. But those who do not observe truth and non-violence and those who do not pray should not send the yarn. That is to say, those who spin for the sake of the *yajna* should adhere to truth and non-violence, believe that God is their sole help and that real swaraj will come only with the help of yarn. Those who do not believe in these should not participate in the yarn *yajna*.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 20-7-1947

318. LETTER TO S. K. PATIL[2]

July 12, 1947

You are enunciating the doctrine of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. Only you will wait till the 15th August. Both these statements ill conform with the Congress policy. Has the Congress policy changed? Congressmen have changed I know, but I am not aware of any change in the Congress constitution.

Secondly, if Congress policy or practice changed who compels you to wait till 15th August? Who will be responsible for the incalculable harm that will have overtaken the people of India as well as Pakistan in the meantime? Who can control the people if they go mad and launch on a course of retaliation?

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 308

[1] This was appended to Narandas Gandhi's appeal published under the title "Gandhiji's Seventy-ninth Birthday Celebration by National School, Rajkot", not translated here. Narandas Gandhi, who organized mass spinning for 78 days from July 26 to October 11, had also invited people to participate in the celebration by contributing 78 coins of any denomination. *Vide* also p. 257.

[2] Bombay Congress Leader; member of Union Cabinet 1957-63. He was reported to have said in a public speech that if any harm befell the Hindus in Pakistan, the Congress would after the 15th August take reprisals in India.

319. A LETTER

July 12, 1947

He who is filled with a desire to serve does not have to go looking for an opportunity for it. There is no rigid boundary to the field of service and no limit to the strength one can acquire for it. For one who has the doors of his heart opened, no job is too difficult. Let this suffice for today. I have spared a few minutes for you from great pressure of work and am writing these few lines. You are, moreover, wise and will understand the agony of my heart.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 317

320. A LETTER

July 12, 1947

He who has conquered anger has achieved a great victory in life. I myself am not free from it. But I am ceaselessly striving and have made progress. The final result can be judged only after my death. Chi. Manudi's health is deteriorating from day to day. Though I sometimes feel irritated by her carelessness in regard to it, I must admit that none from among the countless girls who came and worked with me acquitted herself as well as this girl of sixteen or seventeen did both physically and mentally in doing whatever work I assigned to her in Noakhali and Bihar. And even at the age of thirteen, she had rendered similar service to Ba. I have admired her ever since then. All this has a bearing on my reply to the question whether I have conquered anger. She has ruined her health in serving me, but if only she would give me co-operation, take proper rest, be careful about her diet and remain cheerful, I could help her to regain her health in a month and she would feel better than she ever did. But I have to remind her again and again. Though running a temperature, she was rolling *khakharas* for me yesterday. This made me angry. If I had scolded her, she would have started crying and the temperature would have risen still higher, instead of coming down.

This anger bespeaks weakness both of body and mind. When the mind is full of agony, what can we expect but physical weakness? But I am confident that in the end I shall overcome this anger too.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 317-8

321. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 12, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today I have received a letter from a friend which says: "What is happening in the country today is very bad. People who went to jail during the satyagraha movement think they have done something very big which should entitle them to be Prime Minister or Minister or Parliamentary Secretary or Governor of some province. They think they should have a motor-car. I have also been to prison twice and once I was with you in Yeravda. But I have remained a beggar and no one has ever bothered about me!"

If someone has been to jail, has he done a favour to India? If this sort of mentality persists, I fear the Congress will perish. Those who are in the Congress should not even dream of such things. Arguing thus a Congressman may say that, since he has been to jail, his son should be married to the best girl in India or that his daughter should be married to the best young man in India. Jawaharlal has not become the Vice-President or the Prime Minister because he has been to jail. If he does not get his salary, he will not starve. Rajendra Babu might have become the Chief Justice of Patna High Court but he voluntarily gave up practice and chose to live the life of a fakir. Rajaji also has not become a minister by virtue of his jail-going. It is not my contention that they are all angels. They are men like us and all men make mistakes. And how many of us can be absorbed in Government offices ? It is an unworthy thought and should be given up. We must never think that we should get some reward for having gone to jail. The reward of doing one's duty lies in the duty done.

I have been asked: "Whereas in Pakistan Mr. Jinnah has been made Governor-General, here in India it is the Viceroy

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who has been made Governor-General. Why should this be so? The battle for India's freedom was fought by the Congress. The Muslim League has had no part in it. Whenever the Congress resorted to civil disobedience or satyagraha the League refused to co-operate. Even so the Congress cannot get an Indian as Governor-General. This is not just. This will mean that we shall be safe only if we kowtow to the British or we shall die." I shall say that under the scheme that will come into effect on August 15, it does not matter whether the Governor-General is an Englishman, a Frenchman or a Dutchman, whether he is a brown-skinned Indian or a White or a Negro. If I had my way a Harijan girl would be the Governor-General. So if Lord Mountbatten becomes the Governor-General he will still be a servant of India. You will say this is the kind of talk to pacify children. Mountbatten, who is a scion of a Royal family, will not be anybody's servant. But I am not deceiving you. I do not expect any reward from Lord Mountbatten. So long I have been fighting against him. Maybe you will say that the Congress leaders have been deceived by him. Do you mean to say that Jawaharlal, Sardar and Rajaji are so soft-brained as to be taken in? True, as I have been saying what I had wanted has not come to pass. But Mountbatten will be Governor-General because we want him. If we did not want him he would not hold that office. But Mr. Jinnah may have chosen to be Governor-General in order to show off. We should not be jealous and we should not be angry. He wants to show to the world what Islam is. Let us see whether he makes of himself a master or a servant. If even a single Sindhi flees, then the responsibility for it will rest on the Governor-General of Pakistan. He will have to be just to all, like Abubaker or Omar, or Ali. I do not say they were all non-violent. But I have in mind their bravery and their chivalry. I understand from the newspapers that originally the idea had been for India and Pakistan to have one Governor-General in common. But Mr. Jinnah later went back on his word. Who was then to prevent him from becoming the Governor-General of Pakistan? In my view he did not do the right thing. When he had once agreed he should have accepted Lord Mountbatten as Governor-General and later if something had gone wrong he could have removed him. Now Islam is to be tested through Mr. Jinnah. He is assuming the Governor-Generalship of Pakistan with the whole world as witness. The world will now wait to see what special virtues Pakistan displays under him. The Congress has

always been fighting against the British. Jawaharlal is a simple-hearted man. But the Sardar is a fighter. He used to quarrel with me because I trusted the British. When he himself has been caught up in their wiles, what can you or I hope to do? When he agrees that the Viceroy should be the first Governor-General of India, why should we object? We shall see whether he will serve India as Governor-General or betray her. It will be a new experience. There is wisdom in this and we have nothing to lose. After all we accepted Dominion Status on the advice of the Viceroy. He is an Admiral and a great warrior. Let us have him and if he does not come up to our expectations we can always fight with him.

When I went to see the Viceroy he confided in me that the young man to whom Princess Elizabeth had been betrothed was like a son to him and he hoped that I would write a few words of blessings to him. So when the Viceroy's daughter[1] came to see me two days ago I gave her a letter of congratulation addressed to the couple. She is such a sweet girl. At the prayer I offered her a chair but she declined the offer and sat down with us on the *duree*. And today I learnt from Rajkumari Amrit Kaur that the young Princess who has got engaged to be married will be the future queen of England because the king has no son. The Viceroy too has no son. Anyway if the Viceroy had been a bad man I wouldn't have been so free with my blessings. I do not consider him a bad man. If Jawaharlal or Sardar Patel had become Governor-General in his place it would have been a dangerous thing. Besides, the Governor-General wields no effective power. He will have to act on the advice of Jawaharlal and his cabinet. He will only be a figurehead.

But we have got into the way of thinking that Lord Mountbatten has great status and the English are capable only of devilry. Lord Mountbatten therefore will have to prove his honesty and love of justice and I am sure that he has come to India to do only justice.

Many Muslims come to see me these days. They too are nervous about Pakistan. One can understand Christians, Parsis and other non-Muslims feeling uneasy, but why Muslims? They say they are treated as Quislings, that they will receive even worse treatment than the Hindus in Pakistan and after full power has been transferred to Pakistan their association with the Congress will be considered a crime according to the tenets

[1] Pamela Mountbatten

of *Shariyat*. I do not agree that this is the meaning of Islam. What crime was committed by the Congress having Muslims within its fold? Do Muslims by associating with the Congress become criminals? Do they not say *Kalama* or perform the *namaaz*? Has Islam changed so much since the time of the Ali Brothers? How can nationalist Muslims be called Quislings? I do hope that Mr. Jinnah, while he protects the non-Muslim minorities in Pakistan, will also at the same time accord protection to these Muslims.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 239-43

322. SOCIALISM[1]

Truth and ahimsa must come alive in socialism. This can only be possible when there is a living faith in God. Mere mechanical adherence to truth and ahimsa is likely to break down at the critical moment. Hence have I said that truth is God.

This God is a living Force. Our life is of that Force. That Force resides in the body, but is not the body. He who denies the existence of that great Force denies to himself access to its inexhaustible power and thus remains impotent. He is like a rudderless ship which, tossed about here and there, perishes without making any headway. Many find themselves in this plight. The socialism of such people does not reach anywhere, what to say of the millions.

If such be the case, why is there no socialist who believes in God? If there are such socialists why have they not made any progress? Also there have been many believing in God; why is it they have not succeeded in bringing socialism?

There is no effective answer to this. Nevertheless, it is possible to say that it has perhaps never occurred to a believing socialist that there is any connection between his socialism and his belief in God. Equally, men of God perhaps never felt any need for socialism. Superstitions have flourished in the world in spite of godly men and women. In Hinduism which believes in God, untouchability has, till of late, held undoubted sway.

The nature of this Divine Force and its inexhaustible power have been matters of incessant quest.

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 20-7-1947.

My claim is that in the pursuit of that quest lies the discovery of satyagraha. It is not, however, claimed that all the laws of satyagraha have already been formulated. I cannot say either that I myself know all the laws. This I do assert that every worthy object can be achieved through satyagraha. It is the highest and the most potent means, the most effective weapon. I am convinced that socialism will not be reached by any other means.

Satyagraha can rid society of all evils, political, economic and moral.

NEW DELHI, July 13, 1947
[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 20-7-1947

323. IN DEFENCE OF THE OLD[1]

The correspondent, from whose letter I had quoted the other day, writes:

> I was in full agreement with the opinion you had expressed on the views set forth in a letter I wrote eleven years ago. Nevertheless, I lacked the courage to act up to them. I often say to myself, why go into the charcoal pit at all? Though you have placed before the world your conception of the ideal man with a view to promoting social good, nevertheless it seems to me that that good would be better served by keeping intact the restraints handed down by men of experience. It is true that awareness of distinction between man and woman should be removed. The feeling that woman is property should also go. But in propagating these tenets the harm that has been done by the Communist Party is terrible. Kishorelalbhai objects even to sitting on the same mat with women. This perhaps only shows his orthodoxy. Nevertheless, the idea is not to be lightly set aside. We must not forget what the *Gita*[2] says: that whatever great men do, common people follow. Therefore, it seems to me that it is wisdom for those who have reached a higher state to act in accordance with the capacity of those many who belong to a lower state and this they will do in order to avoid the risk of weaker people resorting to thoughtless imitation. I admit, however, one apt argument in defence of your position, viz., that if there was nobody to demonstrate the feasibility of the higher state,

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 27-7-1947 under the title "In Defence".

[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 21

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society would cease to have faith in it. Therefore there must be someone to demonstrate it. As to this all I can say is that every great person must be left to choose his behaviour after due appreciation of the pros and cons.

I like the above criticism. Everyone should learn to know his own weakness. He who, knowing his own weakness, imitates the strong, is bound to fail. Hence have I contended that everyone should construct his own restraints.

I do not think that Kishorelal refuses to sit on the same mat with a woman. I should be surprised if that were so. I could not appreciate such taboo. I have never known him to advocate it.

I only see ignorance in likening a woman to a charcoal pit. It is an insult to both man and woman. May not a son sit beside his mother or a man share the same bench in a train with his sister. If he gets sexually excited in such company he is surely to be pitied.

Although I grant that for the sake of social good much must be given up, I nevertheless feel that there is room for discrimination. There are nudist groups in Europe. I was asked to join one but I refused. I said that until it could be shown that there was a certain measure of purity in the individual, nudity was not desirable. This I said although I believe that theoretically speaking there is nothing harmful in both the sexes going about completely naked. Such was the case with Adam and Eve in their innocence. But immediately they became conscious of their nakedness, they covered themselves and fell from Paradise. We are in that fallen state. If we forget it, we shall harm ourselves. I consider this an instance of observing conditions for the sake of social good.

It was in the interest of social good that pressure was brought to bear on me to give up insistence on the eradication of untouchability. Marriage of nine-year-old girls was defended in the name of social good. So was prohibition against crossing the seas. Such instances can be multiplied. Every custom has to be examined on its own merits.

Restraints must not be such as to perpetuate differentiation between men and women. We must remember that in most of our daily transactions such differentiation has no place. Strictly speaking making such a distinction is relevant only on the occasion when one is overcome by sexual desire. Men and women who are overcome by this desire at all hours of the day show sickness of mind and cannot be instrumental in promoting

social good. This is not the normal state of man. If the millions in villages were prey to such desire all day long they would be no good for any useful work.

NEW DELHI, July 13, 1947
[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 27-7-1947

324. LETTER TO V. V. DASTANE

July 13, 1947

With whom will you fight?[1] Not the British.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 312

325. LETTER TO DATAR SINGH

NEW DELHI,
July 13, 1947

DEAR SARDARJI[2],

I have read through your article. I can't usefully add anything to it. I shall discuss it with Rajen Babu.

You should not think of bringing your wife here till she is fairly restored.

And how is Kirpal?

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 2218

[1] Pyarelal explains that the addressee was feeling disconsolate over the partition.

[2] A Punjab farmer. For many years he acted as Adviser to the Government of India on Animal Husbandry.

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326. A LETTER

July 13, 1947

We should learn to see our own defects rather than those of others. Is it the fault of the sun that we cannot gaze at it? It is the weakness of our own eyes that is to blame. If we can see the truth of this, all will be well with us.

Just as there can be no flower or fruit without sunlight, similarly man cannot grow without prayer.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 322

327. A LETTER

July 13, 1947

If people shed superstition, give up copying others and look at the current events with a sufficiently critical eye, I am sure our path will become quite smooth.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 322

328. A LETTER

July 13, 1947

I have not the least doubt in my mind that food control must go now—as soon as practicable. If a few Indians die in consequence, I will shed no tears. But the idea that we should share the available food equally cannot be spread through laws, and even if legislation were to succeed in doing so, I would not praise it. On the contrary, I would not hesitate to charge it with having done violence to the human spirit.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 323

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329. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 13, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

There have already been two occasions when I was late for prayer. It has happened again today. I did my best to be here before 7 o'clock but I did not succeed. I had gone to see the Viceroy. Since I am vegetating here I have to be doing something. So many things are happening here and a person like me has to be saying something or other. I went to the Viceroy at four expecting to be free early. But there were various other people there and the result was I got delayed. However, I am very happy to observe that the prayer started punctually.

There has been a Press conference addressed by Mr. Jinnah. A report of it has reached me. He holds out the assurance that the minorities in Pakistan will not be put to any hardship. They shall be accorded the same treatment as Muslims. The Hindus will be free to visit their temples and the Sikhs their Gurudwaras.

Of course, I cannot take anyone's word at face value. Even today in Pakistan carnage and arson are rampant. This is happening in the Indian Union too. Who is doing this? Is it only the Muslims or are Hindus too responsible for it? I am flooded with letters of all kinds. People ask why they cannot live in peace. I ask Mr. Jinnah when his assurance will be put into practice. Will it be effective only after August 15? Sind will be a part of Pakistan. The Muslim League has the most influence there. Mr. Jinnah has become the Governor-General. Still there is a king in England and so long as he is there we are in some way still connected with him through the Governor-General and the Governor-General still remains responsible to the king. Mr. Jinnah also remains the President of the League. This further strengthens his status. He should act with justice. Why should Sindhis be running away from Sind? If even a single Sindhi leaves Sind it will be a matter of shame to Mr. Jinnah as Governor-General. The proof of a man's word is his action.

I do not know what has happened or not happened in U. P. But the Muslims of U. P. are walking in fear. They do not know whether they can continue to live there or not. But why can't

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they live there, I ask? I ask U. P. and Bihar as I ask Mr. Jinnah: Can Muslims live in those provinces or not?

We have at last rid ourselves of the British. There was a time when they made us fight against each other. That time is now no more.

The Muslims of U. P. have a grouse over the proportion of Government jobs to be given to them. They say that whereas up to now they held between 60 and 70 p. c. of Government posts, now it is proposed that they should have only 14 p. c. according to their population ratio. I cannot share this complaint. When all is said and done, how many of us can have Government jobs? What good can they do to us? And then we take up jobs in order to serve the public, not merely to further our own interest. If what has been the practice so far is continued it will not be just. If the doctors and lawyers have been fleecing the population till now, does it mean that they should continue to do so? If I am asked by someone whether the percentage of jobs so far allotted to them will continue, I can ask in turn who gave them that percentage and how? The Congress fought against the Government and the Government bribed those who fought the Congress. Now the Government will be ours. Why should the Government be obliged to bribe anyone? It is now imperative for us to abolish untouchability. Would the Government have had the courage to open the temples through legislation? When I see that in Madras one temple after another is opening its doors to Harijans, it makes me happy. This is how dharma can be safeguarded. The same applies to Christians and Parsis. Our Government must be dedicated to raising the status of those who are downtrodden. If it does something for the Harijans, why should the Brahmins complain? Yes, if someone suggests that the Brahmins should be beaten and humiliated, then I shall say 'no, that is bad'.

If I can say anything on behalf of Muslims or the Indian Union, it is only this, that everyone should have justice. If this is ensured then there will be nothing more left to say and the pain of partition will have been forgotten.

People say that the work of partition is finished, that the army has been divided, the navy has been divided. I say we have been weakened. Foreigners will say India has no navy. They will in their own interest align themselves with one or the other Dominion and thus this division of the army will become a cause of civil war. But I hope that Pakistan and India will be friends, that they will be just to their minorities.

Even if we have not learnt the lesson of ahimsa, we should at least from our thirty years of experience learn the lesson

that we shall never again become slaves irrespective of whether we achieve this through violence or non-violence. I do not say that it should be only through non-violence. I have been saying this since I was in Bihar. People ask for guns and swords. I say, why do you want these weapons? Proclaim that you will never bow down. I said the same in Noakhali. If we can show that we have learnt this lesson after thirty years of experience, it will not matter whether people are violent or non-violent. If they come and ask me, I shall still say that they must follow only non-violence. If a single individual has to defy the world he can do so only through non-violence. Where there is non-violence, there is God. The sword breaks before it.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 243-6

330. A LETTER

July 14, 1947

If a strong-willed man who is ill resolves to get well, I am sure that he can get well through sheer power of the will. Thoughts energize the nerves and help greatly in restoring a sick man to health. Therefore, though you are in hospital and in doctors' hands, you should give them this help.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 331

331. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

NEW DELHI,
July 14, 1947

CHI. BHANSALI,

I have your letter. You cannot leave the Ashram in this manner. All of us are responsible for any sin committed in the Ashram and we should all become more vigilant in our own conduct. . . .[1] has not been guilty of immoral conduct. He assures me that he has been guilty of no lapse. He has entertained no impure thoughts. We should not, therefore, take any extreme step merely on suspicion. When the time to wind up

[1] Omissions as in the source

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the Ashram comes, I myself will give the call. There is room for much purification in us all. All vows have the same importance. Violation of any one of them amounts to violation of all. Relations of men and women attract our attention immediately. Moreover, we condemn such relations in a great many cases, but we ought not to assert positively that they really deserve our condemnation. All depends on the purity or otherwise of the mind. If my mind becomes affected by the sight of a woman's picture, I have committed adultery. But though I used to sleep with . . . by my side, my mind remained unaffected and so I could claim that I committed no immoral act. That my claim might not be accepted by others would be a different matter. That I should give up such practice if my co-workers cannot put up with it is also another issue. The point I am making is that we ought not to pass judgment on any action merely on the basis of suspicion. Though all the vows are of equal importance, some of them may be easier to observe than others. The vow of ahimsa seems to me the most difficult of all. Any thoughtless remark constitutes violence. Getting angry with anybody is violence. You can think of many other similar instances and calm yourself. You will find that, though you have risen high, you have still further to climb. Be calm and continue the watch.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 822. Courtesy: Balkrishna Bhave

332. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
July 14, 1947

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. No one can be punished privately by an individual.[1] We must not let ourselves be witnesses to such punishment. I do not know why Shantabehn tolerated it. I am writing to her. Let me have whatever further information you get.

Instead of feeling unhappy over what happened, you should take necessary steps to prevent a recurrence of it.

[1] A labourer working in the Ashram had been beaten by another for theft.

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Aryanayakum should certainly ponder over this incident. But that will happen only if you handle the affair without getting excited.

I understand what you say regarding the infant's name.

Do not lose patience over the construction work.

I will look into the matter concerning . . .[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8406. Also C. W. 5624. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

333. A LETTER[2]

July 14, 1947

You should give up your fondness for writing with a pencil or fountain-pen. Anybody who wishes to improve his handwriting should use a reed-pen. How can all the children in the country afford to use fountain-pens? I suppose you know how much a fountain-pen costs. If I was a teacher and had my way, I would forbid the bringing of a fountain-pen into the classroom. But mine has become a lone voice now. If you have any influence with your friends, popularize the use of the reed-pen among them. I shall be more than satisfied if you do this.

Children must take exercise. It helps to build a sound body. They should also be self-reliant. For example, they should wash their own dishes and clothes, sweep their own rooms, and so on.

It is a sin to use books without protecting them with covers. It is an affront to goddess Saraswati to do so. But the covers must not be made of mere waste paper or be folded shabbily. A cover lengthens the life of a book and thereby saves much money.

And surely you know that one must not eat before doing the day's quota of spinning. Similarly one must not miss the morning and the evening prayers.

One must also make it a regular practice to go to bed early and rise early.

Like you, I too have learnt Bengali alphabet and have made enough progress to be able to write a few words. Since you asked for some advice, I managed to spare time to write

[1] The name has been omitted.

[2] According to the source this was addressed to a child.

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this much. I can write much more, but that will be after you have tried and carried out the foregoing suggestions. Write to me from time to time. Chi. Manu has progressed greatly in other ways, but her health has gone down badly, and that obliges me occasionally to be harsh with her and force her to lie down and take rest. That displeases her very much, but her pain is a sign not of wisdom but of ignorance. I have, therefore, to harden my heart in dealing with her. She starts crying, but I pay no attention to it.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 330-1

334. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

NEW DELHI,
July 14, 1947

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. I am thinking about Prabhakar. Sushilabehn will write. Hoshiari should take up physical work only after she recovers fully. What occasioned the coming of Anantram's wife? She may have left now.

Munnalal writes that the villagers beat up a Harijan.[1] What is all this? I have written a letter to Shantabehn, read it and give it to her.

I understand about Kamalabehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1983

335. NOTE TO G. D. BIRLA

NEW DELHI,
July 14, 1947

I shall have rest either when complete peace is restored to the country or when God sends me to eternal sleep.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 332

[1] *Vide* p. 332.

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336. TALK WITH MRIDULA SARABHAI AND OTHERS

NEW DELHI,
July 14, 1947

India has been partitioned. But the division of the army has greatly affected me. Do not these people realize that if either India or Pakistan is invaded by a foreign power, it is equally the duty of both to resist the aggression? How humiliating will it be for us if Pakistan and India cannot remain united even in such a crisis? If the army is divided, a situation will arise when both the armies will start fighting one another, and that situation will be very difficult to control. On the whole it is harmful to both the countries. And that is why I am requesting . . .[1] to give a serious thought to this question. Even if we have not learnt non-violence in the last thirty years, we certainly will have realized that we will not be slaves to any third power, let alone the British. But I feel that . . . anything I say is not acceptable to people today. That is why I do not think too deeply over anything. I request these people to allow me to return to Bihar and then Noakhali. But the Viceroy and Jawaharlal do not agree. And I do not want to go if it hurts their feelings.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 334

337. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 14, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

It is said that my speeches these days are such as to generate a feeling of pessimism. Indeed I am advised by some not to speak at all. It reminds me of a story about a painter. He placed a painting on display with a notice that critics might mark the spots where they found the painting faulty. The result was that the painting was soon reduced to a blur of colours.

[1] Omissions as in the source

The painter had wanted to show that it was not possible to please everyone and he was satisfied that he had created a good painting. I am in a similar situation. I never speak merely for the sake of speaking. I speak because I feel that I have a message to deliver.

It is true that today there are differences between me and my closest colleagues. I do not approve of certain things that they have done or are doing. But it is not possible for me while I am in Delhi not to express my views on the present situation. What is at the root of these differences? If you go into it you will find that there is only one thing at the root of it. Non-violence is a creed with me while it has never been so with the Congress. The Congress accepted non-violence only as a policy—a policy has the status of a creed only so long as it is pursued. The Congress has a perfect right to change its policy the moment it feels that it is no longer necessary to pursue it. But it is different with a creed. It remains for ever and it cannot be changed.

In the Congress constitution non-violence is still the policy but in practice Congressmen have changed it. Legal pundits may well comment on it but you and I cannot do so nor should we. Why should Congressmen not change their policy? Besides, the constitution of the Congress says 'peaceful' and not 'non-violent'.

In 1934, at the Bombay Congress, I tried my best to have the term 'peaceful' replaced by the term 'non-violent'. But I was unsuccessful. Therefore anyone can, if he chooses, say that 'peaceful' means 'something little less than non-violent'. In my view there is no difference between the two. But my view is neither here nor there. It is the experts who must decide. You and I must only understand that the practice of Congress today is not in the least non-violent. If non-violence had been the creed of the Congress, how would it be possible for it to support the army as it is doing today? If the army is so disposed it can crush the people and establish a military regime. Shall I give up the hope altogether that people will ever listen to me? And if they will not listen to me, what harm does it do if I speak out? Why should they seek to stop me?

I have repeatedly made it clear that the struggle that has been waged over the last thirty years was not a non-violent struggle. It was only passive resistance and such resistance is a weapon of the weak. It is not that people who use this weapon do not want to use the weapon of non-violence. It is simply that they do not know how to use it. If we had the courage for the battle of non-violence we would today be presenting to the world an entirely

different picture of free India. But today we can show only a dismembered country where brother fights brother and no one can trust another. We are not able to attend to feeding and clothing the people and have nothing to offer those impoverished millions who can see God only in the form of bread and who have no interest in this unending violence.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 246-8

338. TALK WITH A VISITOR

[On or before *July 14, 1947*][1]

VISITOR: What about Russia? It is a big question at the moment.

GANDHIJI: It will remain so for some time.

Do you think Russia is a threat to world peace and the peace of India?

Any great power may be a threat.

Is the Communist Party very strong in India numerically or in terms of real support?

No.

Do you think the peasants may be ready to receive their message?

Not at the moment.

What about the relations between India and Pakistan? Do you think there will be difficulties or complications after independence?

There may be or there may not be.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 309

[1] The source places this in the second week of July.

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339. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO ASAF ALI

[After *July 14, 1947*][1]

Freedom has come but it leaves me cold. So far as I can see, I am a back number. I have come to the conclusion that our way was non-violent only superficially; our hearts were violent. It was enough to displace the foreign power. But the violence nursed within has broken out in a way least expected. Heaven knows where it will lead us.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 322

340. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

NEW DELHI,
July 15, 1947

DEAR NATESAN[2],

Anna—Harihar Sharma—told me you were ill and bed-ridden. You have no business to be ill. Your work is not finished. Who is older—you or I?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 2241

[1] According to the source this was written in the third week of July.
[2] (1873-1949); publisher; editor of the *Indian Review*

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341. LETTER TO KAJI

NEW DELHI,
July 15, 1947

DEAR KAJI,

I have your full letter which is deeply interesting.

I can give no opinion. All I can say generally is that you should avoid parties within our own ranks.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

342. LETTER TO CHANDABHAI

NEW DELHI,
July 15, 1947

BHAI CHANDABHAI,

If you had given me instances of my negligence, it would have helped me. I am inquiring into what you have said. Don't give up your resolve.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

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

343. LETTER TO A STUDENT

July 15, 1947

Everything will be well with a people who are disciplined and who value integrity of character. The young should be taught this while they are students.

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 335

344. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI[1]

July 15, 1947

Right now it does not seem possible that I shall be able to go to Sevagram. It will be possible only when the watchword of "do or die" has shown some result. If peace is restored in the country, the first part will have been fulfilled and I shall be able to go to Sevagram alive. Otherwise, well, the spirit is immortal. So if the second part of the resolve is fulfilled, my spirit will for ever be there. I am writing this under great pressure of work. Chi. Manudi is quite ill. But I have become more strict with her during the last four or five days and she is, therefore, taking care of her health and observing all the rules, and that is doing her good. I keep myself informed of the state of her health every hour. This is no burden. On the contrary, nursing is a hobby with me. If Chi. Manudi had fallen ill while with you there, that would certainly have weighed on my mind. Since she is with me, my mind is at perfect peace. She is under my own supervision and carries out all my suggestions. But I have to keep reminding her continually about medicines, food, fresh air, etc. If she learns to be careful about these things, she will never fall ill. There is no need to send her to you. She does not at all want to be away from me. Nor do I want it.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 335-6

345. A LETTER

July 15, 1947

How can I today speak of tomorrow? Why should we, then, worry where I shall be and what I shall be doing next month? Why, we don't even know what is going to happen the very next moment. Rama might take me away even while I am writing this letter. Without, therefore, worrying about the future, we should only think how best to do the duty at hand. You should stay on

[1] Although the source does not mention the addressee it would seem from the contents that it was Jaisukhlal Gandhi.

there and finish the course in *Nai Talim*. Only afterwards should you think about what to do next. Otherwise, it will be with you as it was with Sheikhchalli in the story: the *ghee* will be spilt before it reaches home. You will not be able to finish the course in *Nai Talim* and will be left nowhere. One must undertake a task only after careful thinking and, having undertaken it, one must cling to it till death. Nobody who weakens in his resolve can ever make progress.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 336

346. A LETTER

July 15, 1947

. . . [1] and I are convinced that we have been making one mistake after another. The partition was indeed an error, but the leaders (not I) felt that it was unavoidable. The partition of the army, however, is a terrible mistake we are making. Let God move us as He wills. How can we help if it is not ordained that India should have peace even now.

My health cannot be described as very good, but it is good enough. God will preserve it as long as He wishes to take service through me. Why need we worry?

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 335

347. LETTER TO S. K. BELVALKAR

NEW DELHI,
July 15, 1947

BHAI BELVALKARJI[2],

I have your letter.

I am confident that you will have all success in what you are beginning with regard to the *Shanti Parva* on *Akhi-panchami*. I am also of the view that you should receive sufficient financial help in your venture.

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

[2] Sripad Krishna Belvalkar, Hon. Secretary, All India Oriental Conference, 1926-27, General Editor of the critical edition of the *Mahabharata*

Thank you for proposing to send me a copy of the *Bhishma Parva* when it is ready.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

348. A LETTER

July 15, 1947

You will have read my speech.[1] Perhaps you know that I am not happy with what is happening in the Working Committee and I cannot help saying what I feel. I therefore wanted to leave this place and go to Bihar or Noakhali. But I am Jawahar's slave. His love prevents me from going. I may have to go to Kashmir. Let us see what happens. I feel that we must do something in regard to the controls and the general condition of the country. Only then shall we be able to win the confidence of the people.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 335

349. TALK WITH N. G. RANGA[2]

NEW DELHI,
July 15, 1947

If there is enmity between Hindus and Muslims today the masses are not to blame. Opportunists are to blame. Those who have any energy should devote themselves to the uplift of the country without harbouring any prejudices. If there is one great fault in us it is that we cannot refrain from criticizing individuals in public and our public is not educated enough to analyse and judge a speaker. Everyone has virtues and vices. Today when swaraj is about to come, the handful of scholars that we have should make available to the masses whatever they have. Our leaders are almost all becoming old. The scholars

[1] *Vide* pp. 335-7.

[2] President, All India Kisan Sabha and Andhra Provincial Congress Committee; Member, Congress Parliamentary Party at the Centre

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should devote themselves to training of the younger generation so that they can carry on our heritage. Mere criticism is not going to help anyone.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 337

350. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 15, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

The other day I spoke of the temples in Tamil Nadu and Malabar that had been thrown open to Harijans and I especially mentioned the Rameswaram temple. It is a huge temple and there is a lot of superstition concerning it. Some thought that the entry of Harijans would pollute the temple. I have received a letter today complaining that I had not mentioned the Tirupati temple in Andhra Desh which is also a great and ancient temple. The correspondent asks me to rectify the omission and thus give satisfaction to the people of Andhra. I know the glory of this temple but I make no difference between Tamil Nadu and Andhra. Today the atmosphere is such that everyone wants separation.

Some friends from Bengal have been to see me. They say that with the division of Bengal Hindus in East Bengal are haunted by the fear that the Hindus of West Bengal will forget them. If that happens I shall be pained. It will be very bad if Hindus thus forget Hindus and Muslims forget Muslims. Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians all are Indians. Religion is a private matter. If I wish to worship God, what power on earth can stop me from doing so? But if Mussalmans, Parsis, Hindus and Christians all consider themselves separate, what is left of India? I admit that it was hardly necessary to divide Bengal. I have lived among Bengali Muslims. I have walked with them in Noakhali. I found only love in their hearts. Why should Hindus have harboured fear of Muslims? The madness that had seized them would not have lasted for ever. In my view no harm will come to the Hindus of East Bengal. But many things have happened which we did not want to happen. Bengal has been partitioned. And India and Pakistan are separate countries. But we should proceed forward from what has

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happened and later put it right. Hindus and Muslims of East and West Bengal have always lived together and speak the same language. If the Hindus of East Bengal treat the Muslims there as friends, would the Muslims still want to kill them? When not a single Hindu considers Muslims his enemies, all will be friends.

They also asked me if the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee will be dissolved since it too has been divided into two. In my view the division of Bengal does not apply to the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. It should continue in its present form. It is outside Government laws. If it divides itself, then I will say that West Bengal has broken faith. The structure of the Congress today is such that at the very bottom there are village Congress Committees, Mandal Congress Committees, District Congress Committees, then Provincial and at the very top the All-India Congress Committee. Thus there will be Congress Committees in East Bengal as well as in West Bengal. Both will then constitute the B. P. C. C. The Congress belongs to all, to Muslims, Christians, Parsis and others. It is not going to change its character in the days to come. The Bengali friends also wonder whether East Bengal has been so impoverished that it must have even its ministers from West Bengal. But they should welcome this. For this will make for cohesion between East and West Bengal. East Bengal no doubt has an overwhelming majority of Muslims. But why should we assume that all Muslims are bad? So many Muslims were slaughtered in Bihar and yet I can say that the millions of Hindus in Bihar are not bad. It is wrong to condemn the whole community for the fault of a few individuals. It only goes to show that we ourselves are not clean, that we are cowards, that we have not the courage of non-violence, for the courage of non-violence is the courage to die, never the courage to kill. There are vast armies in the world but considering the population of the world, they are only a handful. But we have got into the way of never being able to see straight. Whenever there is some incident somewhere we at once ask for the army to be sent. In Noakhali, Bihar, the Punjab and the N. W. F. P., wherever there were riots there was only one demand: that the army be sent for their protection. Why should people who ought to be brave want this?

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 249-51

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351. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,
July 16, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I had a long talk with Panditji about Kashmir. He is firmly of opinion that I should go in any case, not minding if Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah or his deputy goes after my visit. He thinks, and I agree, that if now my visit is postponed, it will disappoint many persons in Kashmir. That I may not be allowed to see Sheikh Abdulla Saheb should not affect the contemplated visit one way or the other. In the circumstances, I suggest that you should telegraph to the Maharaja Saheb that as my visit would not mean any speeches or public meetings, it should not cause any embarrassment to the State and that I should go to Kashmir at the earliest possible moment.

As I have said to you my suggestion is subject to your wish not to interfere with Panditji's wishes in the matter. If, for any reason, you wish otherwise, I would not go.

If I go, I would go as a private visitor. Hence I would not think of putting the Maharaja Saheb to any trouble on my account. Friends would make arrangements for my stay.

Finally, I should add that if, for any reason, I do not go to Kashmir, most probably Panditji would want to go for two or three days though he would prefer my going.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 273; also *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, p. 352

[1] Lord Mountbatten, in his reply dated July 17, besides assuring Gandhiji of his help and co-operation, said: "I have received news that the Maharaja is sending his Prime Minister [Ramachandra] Kak to Delhi, early next week to join the discussions which I am arranging with the States Department. I feel it would be both courteous and wise if Pandit Nehru and you could have a talk with Pandit Kak before deciding on the precise date and details of your visit."

352. A LETTER

July 16, 1947

I do not deserve the credit you give me. We have arrived as far as we have done through the co-operation of millions and the sacrifices of countless people. For the rest it is sheer ignorance to feel, 'I am doing this' like that of the dog who thought that it was carrying on its back the cart it walked under. In fact nothing happens without God's will.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 339-40

353. A LETTER

July 16, 1947

When a misfortune is impending, man's reason is first destroyed. That is why the Shastras say that at the hour of undoing reason becomes perverted. If there is one thing that has destroyed innumerable innocent and happy families in this manner it is described in a two-letter word: *satto*[1]. It is time you turned your back on it. There is no happiness in this world like that of contentment. You can go to the Ashram and maintain yourself and your family by working there. The only condition is that every member of the family will have to work for eight hours daily and there will be no choice of work. May God grant you wisdom.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 340

[1] Speculation

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354. A LETTER

July 16, 1947

There are differences between . . .[1] But I don't look upon such differences as a matter for serious concern. Truly speaking differences of opinion keep people alert. Honest differences of opinion do no harm whatever.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 340

355. A LETTER

July 16, 1947

It is true that, though we may have been efficient as satyagrahis, we are but novices as rulers. That is why I advise everybody to take advantage of the services of all those who have experience of administration, without harbouring prejudice against anyone, irrespective of whether or not the persons are supporters of the Congress. The only consideration should be whether the people's interest will be served.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 340

356. A LETTER

July 16, 1947

I was much pained to see your letter written in English. If we have lost faith in our language, then I must say that we have also no faith in ourselves. All these are clear signs of our degradation. And, even in English, how many mistakes you make! Whenever I get letters written in bad English by persons whose mother tongue is Hindi or Urdu or Gujarati or Bengali or Marathi or Tamil or Telugu, I feel that we are still slaves. All kinds of people come to see me, and if I don't know a visitor's language I can always have what he says translated.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 340

[1] Omission as in the source

357. A LETTER

July 16, 1947

Now that you are becoming the manager of this institution and have asked for my blessings, I should like to say only this: the soul of an institution is its manager. May God grant you the strength to work in that spirit.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 340

358. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
July 16, 1947

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. I have the impression that I have already written to you something in reply to your criticism of my experiment.

I am doing nothing just now. There has been no change at all in my conviction up to now. On the contrary, it is deepening with the passage of time. That is, I believe that even if only one *brahmachari* of my conception comes into being, the world will be redeemed. But the task is an extremely difficult one. Any progress in that direction will of course be a gain. On the other hand, there is no doubt that if the assumption is erroneous, much harm can come of it. Just now there is only one aspect of the question that presents itself to me. That is, that the difference of opinion between Kishorelal and myself on this issue pains me, for behind that difference lies great anguish of mind on Kishorelal's part. Were it not for that, I think the difference of opinion between us would not be so painful to me. I would advise you not to worry in the least about this issue as long as it is only at a theoretical stage.

I like your idea of going to East Africa for collecting funds.

There can of course be no doubt about the necessity of the laws being repealed. But I am afraid they will not be totally repealed. The fact that some of the workers are selfish is certainly

a handicap, but it seems right to me that you should go on doing the best that you can in a spirit of detachment.

I think the changes which are taking place here will have an impact there. Let us see how things shape. The burden of work on me may or may not decrease, I don't worry about that. You also need not worry.

Perhaps I may never be able to return to Sevagram. It seems likely that I shall have to stay on in these parts, that is, in Bihar and Noakhali.

I have had a letter from Kaji.[1] He has complained against Dadoo and others. The letter is a long one. However, it has produced no effect on me, for have we not had similar experiences in the past?

I was indeed very happy to learn about your health and I wish you all success. I would even welcome your writing in detail on the subject. As a result of it you may even succeed where I failed and live up to a hundred and twenty-five years. For that, however, you should remember that diet is not the only thing. The chief thing is the mind. Food, of course, has an effect on the mind.

It is now 5 a. m. I must, therefore, get ready.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Enclosed is a copy of my letter to S. I am sending it to be dispatched to you in case they have not sent one to you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5008

359. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 16, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

The *bhajan* that was sung today has been known to me ever since I was a boy just entering high school. It appeared as a prayer in a little book for children called *Bal Mitra*. It is a good and sweet *bhajan* and it teaches the truth that we should not be too concerned with the body. The body is there today and will be gone tomorrow. It will either be burnt up

[1] *Vide* p. 339.

and become ashes or go to the grave and become mixed with the soil. If it is cast into water it will be eaten up by marine life. In the end it is all the same. What does not sound so good in the *bhajan* is the words "after me the deluge". True it has been composed by Kabir, but what of it? I do not like it. In my humble opinion it shows selfishness. Why should the deluge overtake the world after I am dead? In the first place we do not really die. For the self is immortal. As for the world it is ever changing. It is God's play. But we do not go wholly by what the *bhajan* says. If we did, where was the need of a Constituent Assembly? Where was the need of all the laws that our leaders are busy enacting. If they had all taken up the attitude of "after me the deluge", no one would have been doing anything for anyone. This sentiment, therefore, is an expression of extreme selfishness.

Some newspapermen had been to see me. In the course of the talk Dravidastan was mentioned. Dravidastan comprises the Southern part of India beyond the Vindhyas. The languages spoken are Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada. I have acquainted myself a little bit with each of these languages and I can say that they are all rooted in Sanskrit. If you hear Telugu spoken you will find that it is full of Sanskrit words. Tamil too has Sanskrit words in abundance. Only they have been given Dravidian dress. Malayalam too resembles Sanskrit. And the same is true of Kannada. I do not treat Dravidastan as something apart from India. The British have made us all one. Everyone living between Kashmir and Kanyakumari is an Indian. To make distinctions such as Aryans or non-Aryans or the Aryavrata and Dravidastan is foolish. I am quite certain about this.

That leads to the question of language. We have here two languages, Hindi and Urdu, which were developed in India by Indians. Their grammar is the same. I have combined these two to form Hindustani. This is spoken by many crores of people. It is the common language of Hindus and Muslims. If you spoke Sanskritized Hindi or Urdu laden with Arabic and Persian expressions such as Prof. Abdul Bari spoke, very few people would understand you. Does it then mean that we are to ignore the four languages of Dravidastan? That is not what I have in mind. All I want is that each province should use its own language for internal purposes but must learn Hindustani as the national language. All provinces have their own languages. Oriya, Bengali, Assamese, Sindhi, Punjabi,

Gujarati, Marathi, they are all distinct from Hindustani. Should we rather learn these languages or accept English as our national language? If I were to speak to you in English, very few of you would be able to understand me. We can only have a very meagre smattering of English even if we work hard at it for eight or 10 years. It is enough to drive the country mad. English therefore cannot be our national language. It can be the language of international communication. It can be the language of commerce, though even in this capacity it has not found universal acceptance so far. The national language of India can be no other than Hindustani. While provincial languages must remain, the language spoken by the largest number of people is Hindustani. I have been associated with the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. The kind of language used there is not easy to understand nor is very pure Urdu easily understandable. The language of the masses is Hindustani. We can create in it as much literature as we need. It is the duty of the people of Dravidastan to learn Hindustani alongside their own languages. If they could learn Hindustani in both Devanagari and Persian scripts it would be even better. Thus they should be able to have a knowledge of both the languages. But if they want to learn just enough Hindustani to make themselves understood they can learn it in their own respective scripts. In Madras the Hindustani Prachar Sabha is engaged in the work of teaching people Hindustani through their own script.

He freely admitted that if it was wrong for the Southerners not to learn Hindustani, it was equally wrong for the Northerners not to learn one or more of the Southern languages which had rich literature. He appealed to members from the South not to ask for an English speech in an Indian audience. They would then soon pick up Hindustani. Let them remember that India could exist as a free country only if it accepted moral government. Congress as a fighting machine against bondage was held together by its moral force.[1]

It is a misfortune indeed that while we have hardly disposed of one question, with Pakistan formed, we are faced with the demand for Dravidastan. If this tendency persists, where will India be? What can be more paradoxical than that, while as a slave country we remained united, we should begin to break up as soon as freedom is gained?

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 251-4; and *The Hindustan Times*, 17-7-1947

[1] This paragraph is from *The Hindustan Times*.

360. TALK TO I. N. A. MEN

July 16, 1947

If India wants to survive in a world of atom bombs, she must be disciplined and united first, and untouchability and caste distinctions should go. I have never heard or seen that an army helps in generating such a social and moral climate.[1] The army formed under the leadership of Netaji was not formed to promote these virtues, and if it showed unity and discipline it was because it had no other alternative. We have so many of those soldiers in India. Why did not they show their worth? We would not have witnessed two world wars which we did if there were any truth in the claim people make about the virtues of military training. And nobody can tell when a third world war may flare up. Both violence and non-violence have equal need for discipline and unity. Let me tell you that a peaceful and non-violent victory is far superior to a violent victory. There is not the least doubt about it.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 343

361. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

July 17, 1947

We are going in for British extravagance which the country cannot afford.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 641

[1] They had argued that it was necessary to have an army because an army fostered unity and discipline among the people.

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362. LETTER TO PYARELAL

July 17, 1947

CHI. PYA.,

I indeed feel delighted to read about your work[1] and I long to return there. The Kashmir problem[2] is threatening to become serious. After going to Kashmir, if I do go, I intend to return there visiting Bihar on the way. I want to stay with you. But I do not know what God will prompt me to do.

If you have no workers with you, cannot you do with Kanu and others? I discussed your schemes with Satis Babu.

You seem to be on your feet for long hours till late in the evening. I must confess that I would not have had such courage. I am sure you can speak Bengali well enough by now.

If you send some toffee again, I shall have a look at it and may even be able to sell it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, between pp. 496 and 497

[1] The addressee was doing relief work in Bhatialpur village in Bengal. He was one of the few who had continued the work in Noakhali after Gandhiji's departure in the first week of March.

[2] The reference is to the threat of independence held out by the State.

363. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

July 17, 1947

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have neglected writing to you thinking that Manudi has been doing so. I am writing today, for Manu's health is not improving and I observe that she is not taking sufficient care. She seems to be having a low fever and cannot digest what she eats. Her weight has gone down. I have asked her to remain in bed and take complete rest from today. Since the day before yesterday, she has been under the treatment of Sushilabehn, who is here. There is no cause for worry.

Abha has fallen ill and has, therefore, come here.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

364. A LETTER

July 17, 1947

"When the Lord of Janaki is your protector, who can harm you?" Seek refuge in him and nobody will be able to harm you.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 344

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365. A LETTER

July 17, 1947

My advice is that constructive workers should not take part in politics. If they take interest in both, they will be able to do justice to neither.

You say that the Congress has become weak. I also say that. Why, Jawaharlal and Kripalani themselves say the same thing. But saying it will not make the Congress strong. Is it not we ourselves who have made it weak? A little introspection would show us that we have enough strength instantly to overcome the weakness. The weakness is only due to decrease in the spirit of selflessness. However, there is no other institution in the country which has the stature and the spirit of self-sacrifice of the Congress.

If the importance of Indian languages is not recognized in the field of education, the national spirit will not be awakened. And is there a greater humiliation for the country than that? Similarly, the importance of khadi also should be recognized. If I had my way, I would give to the Government employees no uniform not made of khadi. All the cloth used in Government offices also would be khadi. The greater the progress we can make in this sphere the greater will be our gain.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 344-5

366. LETTER TO SWAMI BHASKARANANDA

NEW DELHI,
July 17, 1947

SWAMIJI,

I have your letter. I have read the statement you gave me yesterday. I do not like it although I don't mind your complaint against me.

The demands of the Akhil Bharat Dharma Sangh are not just. It would be useless to enter into a discussion. I cannot accept the draft you have sent me. But if Goswami will do me the favour, I

shall certainly be happy to meet him.[1] My opinion is that dharma cannot be saved by following his path.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

BHASKARANANDA

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

367. DISCUSSION WITH VISITORS

NEW DELHI,
July 17, 1947

That is what you think.[2] I tell you that I can show you the miracle today if Hindus maintain peace and show courage. But with what face can I tell the League not to indulge in atrocities? You say that if I give you the lead you will follow me. Have you ever thought against whom and to whom I can give the lead? The British have not partitioned the country. It has been done with the consent of the Muslim League and the Congress. Isn't that so? The leaders had no other alternative. They thought it was better to partition the country so that both the parts could live happily and peacefully rather than let the whole country go to pieces. About this I did hold a different view. My view was that no one could take an inch of land by resorting to violence and murder. Let the whole country be reduced to ashes. They could take the whole country by friendly negotiations and peaceful methods. But though non-violence is a creed with me, it is not so with the Congress. There is only one other person in the country who has accepted non-violence as a creed and he is Badshah Khan. It is true that I had believed that our satyagraha struggles were based on non-violence. Only lately I realized that it was not true. I admit my mistake. I first started the satyagraha struggle in South Africa. At one of the meetings Mr. Hosken[3] said that Gandhi was fighting a weak man's battle. I strongly contradicted him and proudly said that what was needed for satyagraha was spiritual strength and not physical strength, and that

[1] See also "Letter to Swami Karapatri", p. 372.

[2] The visitors, who were from the Punjab, had told Gandhiji that his belief that he was a spent bullet or that the country was not behind him was not true.

[3] William Hosken, who was the leader of a committee of European sympathizers of the Indian cause during Gandhiji's South African struggle

we were fighting with soul-force. As you know we were quite successful in that struggle. Immediately after that I came away to India. I employed the same method here. At the time I did believe that people were fighting with genuine spiritual strength. I would not have launched the struggle if I had then realized that it was only "passive resistance". But God had willed to use me for this mission and so he blurred my vision. And because our fight was not one of non-violence we see the result today. There is arson, murder, loot and chaos all around.

Non-violence and weakness are contradictory terms. I have been in public life for the last sixty years and I have never felt so much despair as I do now. I learnt from my childhood not to admit such a thing as failure. Nevertheless today I am struggling against this all-pervading darkness to find some light somewhere. Bear in mind that India will be wiped out from the face of the earth if she rejects the path of non-violence. Nay, the whole world may be on the way to perdition. Quite soon we shall be getting our freedom from the British. But if now we again lose that freedom, the word itself will be forgotten and it is quite possible that a military regime will take over. This is the reason for the despair that has taken hold of my heart. How wonderful is non-violence of the brave! I am trying day and night to cultivate it. It will be enough if I can cultivate the non-violence of the brave as far as I am concerned. I pray to God that He may give me that strength.

I say to you that if someone comes to kill you, do not be afraid and do not move from your place but let him kill you. I shall be content if, when someone comes to kill me, I can remain composed, let myself be killed and pray to God that He may grant good sense to the killer—as these girls sing every day. I had said in the Asian Conference which was held here about four months ago that the man who made the atom bomb would have to come to India to study non-violence and the fragrance of the non-violence of India would permeate the whole world. Let us see when my hope materializes.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 345-7

368. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 17, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

We learn from newspapers[1] that the Indians in South Africa are being subjected to *goondaism*. They are being killed. I was in South Africa for twenty years and I know how Indians are treated in that country. There is a large number of Muslims there but they all call themselves Indians. May God give us all the sense at least to call ourselves Indians when we are in a foreign country.

Recently Sarup[2] had been to the United Nations along with Justice Chagla and others to present before the world body the case of the South African Indians. Since then harassment of Indians in South Africa has taken a new form. It is not the law that has been unleashed against them but *goondaism*. If this goes on, how will the handful of Indians be able to live there? Once I marched into the Transvaal with two thousand people. Not a single Boer so much as touched us. Some of them even gave us water to drink. We have plenty of water here. But it is not in such abundance there. People collect water when it rains and keep it stored in tanks. The Boers were friendly and we went wherever we wanted. But I see a different picture today. Now that we have two Governments here, I shall ask Mr. Jinnah and Jawaharlal to send a joint telegram to Smuts[3]. Mr. Smuts considers me his friend. As a friend I must entreat him to tell the Whites not to do physical violence to even one single Indian. And if he cannot make himself obeyed, he must resign. Lord Mountbatten too should not helplessly watch. He is an Admiral of the Fleet and is of Royal family. Philip Mountbatten, who is going to marry Princess Elizabeth, is like a son to him. Besides, up to

[1] According to *The Hindustan Times*, 18-7-1947, the latest campaign against Indians in South Africa was the boycott of Indian traders by the European community with threats of violence.

[2] Vijayalakshmi Pandit, who headed the Indian delegation to U. N. O. during October-December, 1946; *vide* Vol. LXXXVI.

[3] Jan Christiaan Smuts (1870-1950); Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa, 1919-24 and 1938-48

the 15th of August he will be the Viceroy and afterwards the Governor-General. He should therefore make use of these advantages and tell Smuts that India is now a Dominion even as South Africa is, that it is now a member of the vast family that is the British Commonwealth and that the ill-treatment of Indians in South Africa should forthwith stop.

It has been said that Dominion Status is even better than full independence. But till I have tasted this fruit I cannot say whether it is nectar or poison. Maybe it is nectar. But let us first taste it.

My advice to South African Indians is that they should live there as good citizens. Those of them who are wealthy should not neglect their Muslim brethren who are like untouchables there.

I had been asked, now that temples in Tamil Nad and Andhra have been opened to Harijans, what is the situation with regard to temples in the U. P. ? There are the temples in Hardwar for instance. Can Harijans visit these temples? In Travancore this was achieved long ago. Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyar, the State's Diwan, who at the moment is perhaps a little angry with us, had persuaded the Maharaja to abolish untouchability by law. In the U. P., besides Hardwar there is Kashi. Can Harijans visit the temples there? If the Harijans cannot visit those temples, then I shall consider those temples impure. All the religions of the world are today faced with a severe test. Hinduism should win not 99 per cent but 100 per cent marks.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 255-7

369. DISCUSSION WITH SIKH VISITORS

NEW DELHI,
[On or before *July 18, 1947*][1]

VISITORS: It is not good that you still trust the nationalist Muslims. The Leaguers are not at all satisfied with the Pakistan they have got. They want Ajmer, Agra, Delhi and Aligarh. Only if you saw them yourself could you have an idea of the atrocities perpetrated by them. Still you blame the Hindus alone.

GANDHIJI: Let me take your last point first. I grant that Hindus there are being very cruelly treated. But to take revenge here for this increases my shame. Why do you not face them

[1] In *Bihar Pachhi Dilhi* this appears among the items of July 20. However, in *Harijan*, Sushila Nayyar reported this under the date-line July 18.

there even with arms and defend yourselves? What do you gain by taking an eye for an eye?

Now about your misgivings about the nationalist Muslims. It is not becoming for us to distrust them. I will give you my own example. My eldest son Harilal often comes here. So many times he has given me his word that he will give up bad company and his many vices. And not once has he kept his word. But even so if he again comes to me today and promises that he will reform himself, how can I get angry with him? I will encourage him to keep his word. Only then is there hope of his reforming. In the same way we must trust the Muslims of India when they say that they will be loyal to India. But at the same time we should remain fully vigilant.

The world cannot function without trust. Isn't there a saying that faith makes the ships move? You have seen how much harm the British have done to India. I must confess that even now I have to be vigilant as far as they are concerned. And yet we would not have made so much progress if we had not trusted Lord Mountbatten.[1]

We must however be prepared to fight the danger.

The real preparation lies in purging ourselves of our inherent weakness, selfishness and disunity.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 366-7; also *Harijan*, 27-7-1947

370. LETTER TO LADY MOUNTBATTEN

NEW DELHI,
July 18, 1947

DEAR SISTER,

So you are celebrating the silver jubilee of your wedding amid a shower of congratulations and good wishes. Let me add mine to them and hope that your joint career here will blossom into citizenship of the world.

I hope your daughter is fully restored.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

LADY MOUNTBATTEN OF BURMA

From a photostat: G.N. 10831; also *Life of the Countess Mountbatten of Burma*, p. 131

[1] What follows is from *Harijan*.

371. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

NEW DELHI,
July 18, 1947

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I have just received your note about your having entered the 42nd year. All public workers must now aspire to live up to a hundred and twenty-five years and conduct themselves accordingly. Do so and go on rendering service for many many years.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10814

372. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

VALMIKI MANDIR, NEW DELHI,
July 18, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

I enclose Akbar's[1] letter. I find it quite reasonable. He has written to you also. Let me know what you think about it. If you do not have the time, forget about it. I will deal with the matter as best I can.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
1, AURANGZEB ROAD
NEW DELHI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 356

[1] Akbarbhai Chawda, an Ashram inmate at Sevagram. He had written about the Jagirdari system in Sanoli.

373. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

July 18, 1947

CHI. MANI,

Read the accompanying letter.[1] Show it to Sardar if you like. Drop the matter if he has no time. Let events take their own course.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Return Akbar's letter.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 139

374. A LETTER

July 18, 1947

Is not politics too a part of dharma! It will have some effect on the people only if it is carried on with a sense of dharma. Politics also requires purity of conduct.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 350

375. A LETTER

July 18, 1947

What other cause can there be for my despair? When one is disappointed in one's hopes, one should understand that God wishes to teach one some lesson. What is happening today has, therefore, woken me up, and I intend to search out and uncover whatever weakness may be lurking in me. How can we understand all that God does?

The reluctance to accept other people's services is, to my mind, a form of pride. True, it is a sin to exact service from

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

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other people when we are in no real need of it, ourselves lolling the while in luxurious beds. But when we are too ill to attend to our needs, it becomes our duty to accept service from others, for the body is not our property but belongs to God. And there is nothing in the world which cannot be useful in some way or other.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 350-1

376. A LETTER

July 18, 1947

It is far better bravely to commit suicide than to yield out of fear and live. I see no violence in such suicide. There is violence in suppressing oneself and living in fear. Physically, suicide may be violence, but it is not so from a higher point of view. You will be able to see from this what sort of ahimsa it is that I cherish.

Repeating God's name is itself a form of prayer. If we practise any form of prayer in the right spirit, we shall automatically acquire control over our minds.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 351

377. A LETTER

July 18, 1947

You should obtain Chimanlal's permission. He is the Manager of the Ashram. I cannot interfere in the matter because I am not the Secretary of the Ashram.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 351

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378. A LETTER

July 18, 1947

I very much like all the vows you intend to take. But do nothing merely because I advise it or just to please me. There is no sin as bad as self-deception.

We are falling lower and lower each day. Our depravity has reached such a point that reports of atrocities committed on women have become a common thing. I tremble at this. God will show the path. Just now I have but one prayer:

'Ishvar' and 'Allah' are Thine names;
To all, O Lord, good sense give.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 351

379. LETTER TO ATMARAM

NEW DELHI,
July 18, 1947

CHI. ATMARAM,

It seems that although you believe in non-violence, you keep committing lapses, putting your dharma to shame and thereby harming your work. I gather this from Bhai Balwantrai's talk. You should observe the jail rules if you court arrest. Outside you should behave courteously and should not look upon anyone as your enemy, and if you are accused of something and a lawyer offers to help in the normal course without your begging him, you may accept his help. These are all signs of non-violence. Know the opposite to be violence.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

380. TALK WITH CHINESE COUPLE

NEW DELHI,
July 18, 1947

There is no reason to feel unhappy.[1] On the contrary I congratulate you that even though you hold such a high office you are not infatuated with this language. Besides, to me also English is a foreign language. So both of us are in the same plight.

If America does not put her affluence to good use, its very affluence will ruin it. If America tries to win friendship of other countries with the help of her money, and if China, Japan, Iran, India, Pakistan or any other country gets involved with her even in a small degree, both will come to grief. That is why I have been daily telling Rajendra Babu that import of foodgrains is the worst kind of slavery. There is nothing more degrading for a country than to beg from others when it cannot meet its requirements.

It is a practical principle that if you want to be friends with someone and if you want the friendship to endure, you should not seek economic aid from them. So, however rich America may be we shall only become crippled if we seek economic aid from her.

I am of the firm opinion that there is absolutely no need of machines either in India or in the rest of Asia. I have no use for machines which deprive men of employment and keep them starved and naked, no matter how much they are the fashion today and highly admired and how effective they may be in changing cities into paradises. I would certainly not feel sorry if there was an accident and all the machines were destroyed.[2]

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 353-4

[1] The husband had said that his wife was unhappy as she did not know English and could talk to Gandhiji only through an interpreter.

[2] Before leaving, the couple requested Gandhiji for a message; *vide* the following item.

381. MESSAGE TO CHINESE WOMEN

NEW DELHI,
July 18, 1947

If only the women of the world would come together they could display such heroic non-violence as to kick away the atom bomb like a mere ball. Women have been so gifted by God. If an ancestral treasure lying buried in a corner of the house unknown to the members of the family were suddenly discovered, what a celebration it would occasion. Similarly women's marvellous power is lying dormant. If the women of Asia wake up, they will dazzle the world. My experiment in non-violence would be instantly successful if I could secure women's help.

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 354

382. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
July 18, 1947

Gandhiji began his speech by drawing attention to the *bhajan* of the evening and said that he did not know whether it was Mira's. The tune was different from Mirabai's ordinary tune. The sentiment was undoubtedly hers. It said God alone could extricate man from difficulties. Today India was passing through difficulties. Was she to look to man or God to deliver the country? If they believed in the *bhajan*, they were to look to God and none else and they would be perfectly safe.

The *bhajan* just sung is very much to the point, for we are today in great distress. We have no food to eat, no cloth to cover ourselves with. To whom shall we go for help? To Jawaharlal Nehru? Or Sardar Patel? For they have today become the rulers. The Viceroy has given up or is about to give up power. He will now be the Governor-General because we have chosen him to be so. Formerly important officials used to be appointed from London. But now the Indian Independence Bill has been passed and even the consent of the King has been secured for it.

[1] The first, the third and the last two paragraphs are from *The Hindustan Times*.

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According to the Bill, the Governor-General would be appointed by them, the people of India, and not imposed on India as hitherto. Therefore Lord Mountbatten would be Governor-General of India by their appointment precisely as a *chaprasi* would be. This was not said in disparagement. It was a compliment paid to Lord Mountbatten that he had been elected to be Indian Union's servant deriving his appointment from them. It was necessary to say this in order to dispel the suspicion that still lingered in many minds.

All power therefore is now in the hands of our people. But this *bhajan* says that when we are in distress we do not go to anyone else, we go to God. He alone can help us. If we go about our affairs with God in our hearts, our affairs will prosper, otherwise not. He is the ruler of the world and our good lies in surrendering ourselves to Him.

There is a newspaper called *The Dawn*, published from Delhi. Every day it is full of abuse. I too have my share of it. I generally laugh it away. But today the editor has published an open letter addressed to me. It is well phrased. He says I have been shouting that Mr. Jinnah is soon going to be put to the test and that I should stop my shouting.

May I ask the editor why the Hindus are running away in fear and despair from Karachi which is going to be the capital of Pakistan? Why are the Hindus frightened? The Sind Hindus are first-class businessmen. Why are they running away to Bombay, Madras and other places? It will not be they who will be the losers but Sind. For they will make money for themselves wherever they go. One finds Sindhis in South America. There is hardly any place in the world where Sindhis are not found. In South Africa they were making big money and they gave of it liberally to the poor. They have one vice, viz., drinking. They do not seem to be able to give it up.

The Dawn asks why I address myself only to Mr. Jinnah and the other League leaders. What is happening in the U. P. which is my province? But Sind too is my province. The whole of India including Pakistan is my province. I consider myself a citizen of Pakistan but not because I want to claim any citizenship rights. I seek no office. All I want is just enough to eat, which God gives me. I know nothing about the U. P. Besides, I have not blamed anyone. The editor of *The Dawn* is a big man. If he thinks that what I say is not right, why does he bother? There are so many like me who go about saying what they want. But I had a talk with Pantji about the U. P. He told me that so far as he can he tries to protect the Muslims, but that the Government cannot reach

everywhere because the Muslim Leaguers are everywhere hurling abuses at the Hindus and provoking them. Occasionally Hindus too lose their temper. Pantji admitted that what the Hindus did at Garhmukteshwar was not right. According to newspaper reports even the League leaders of the U. P. have praised the work of the Pant Ministry.

I should like to remind the *Dawn* editor that even if what he says is right and even if what Pantji says is not the gospel truth, there is no reason why for one Muslim throat cut in the U. P. ten Hindu throats should be cut in Sind or the Punjab. I want to live to see the day when this communal madness is forgotten. Whatever be our religion we should be Indians in action. Only then shall we be able to safeguard our freedom.

If the *Dawn* editor truly wants to serve Islam, I shall tell him that this is not the way of Islam. As for saying things to Mr. Jinnah I have been saying what I like even to Lord Mountbatten and Jawaharlal Nehru. If Jawaharlal's words and actions differ, I shall shun him even though he is a pandit. But I must advise the *Dawn* editor that he should flush the poison out of his pen. National newspapers contain many things that are good and many things that are bad. If we can agree and stop publishing news of mutual strife I shall consider that we have achieved something.

Gandhiji said he had a suggestion to make to *The Dawn* and all the newspapers, whatever their hue, that they should avoid all exaggeration. In order to give effect to the suggestion, they should appoint a joint board to which all reports about communal trouble would be submitted and even passed on to responsible Ministers and, when necessary, given publicity.

His suggestion could find favour only if the editors realized their duty to the public and were anxious that a peremptory stop should be put to all communalism. Division having become a settled fact, it was surely time that the country was allowed to take up the task of feeding and clothing the ill-fed and ill-clad millions. The editors had a weighty part to play in the noble task. To foment trouble was ignoble.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 257-60, and *The Hindustan Times*, 19-7-1947

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383. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,
July 19, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I sent your kind letter of yesterday[1] to Pandit Nehru and he at once wrote saying that regard being had to your advice, my going to Kashmir should be postponed till after Pandit Kak's arrival in New Delhi. So I shall await Pandit Kak's arrival and further developments.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 274-5

384. A LETTER

July 19, 1947

I was pained by the facts narrated in your letter. I also can find no answer to the question why Congress workers are in such a rush to get into Government service. It would seem it is just selfishness which has blinded everybody.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 356-7

385. A LETTER

July 19, 1947

The money at the disposal of our institution is public money and any institution maintained with public funds must pay the utmost attention to economy. But one does not see this being done and the institution constantly finds itself short of funds.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 357

[1] Actually of July 17; *vide* footnote 1, p. 345.

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386. A LETTER

July 19, 1947

It is time people intending to take vows gave careful thought to the matter before doing so. But there should be no difficulty in giving up something that is repugnant to our way of life.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 357

387. A LETTER

July 19, 1947

Why should you not accept responsibility? Are you afraid of it? Then you have not fully learnt the lesson of ahimsa. I suggest that you accept the responsibility which has come to you and acquit yourself well of it. I am sure you understand that at times it becomes one's duty to accept a responsibility. Take care of your health. Chi. Manu is very run down these days. If only she would give me a little help, I would soon restore her to health. She should remain in bed. But when I insist on her doing so, she cries and feels unhappy and makes her condition worse. Though I am like a mother to her I cannot explain to her the meaning of dharma. That is why she is ill. This is an instance of my crying in the wilderness. I am working at high pressure. On top of it there is a meeting of the Working Committee today. God knows what will happen there. Maybe I shall have to go to Kashmir.

I need not write more to you. You do not like my offering my good wishes to . . .[1] and expressing the hope that Pakistan will really become a holy land. But I do not care overmuch what other people like or do not like. I follow the dictates of my inner voice. But that is by the way.

I am a friend of Pakistan, too. It makes no difference to me if they don't regard me as their friend. Whatever, therefore, I say to them as a true friend is only for their good.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 357

[1] Omission as in the source

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388. A LETTER

July 19, 1947

I have read your letter twice, and I must say that I do not like it much. We should be generous to others. What right have we to make such a comparison? Making such comparisons between individuals demeans us. What is more, I smell envy in it. If we compare ourselves with others through envy, we ourselves shall be ruined. We should be happy to see somebody doing better than we. In the eyes of ...[1], of course, all are equal; you are not inferior to her or she superior to you.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 357-8

389. A LETTER

July 19, 1947

I was glad to have ...[2]'s frank confession. He who has such frankness will never be unhappy.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 358

390. A LETTER

July 19, 1947

Anybody who wants to strive for great things must have infinite patience.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 358

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] Omission as in the source

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391. LETTER TO SWAMI KARAPATRI

NEW DELHI,
July 19, 1947

SHRI GOSWAMIJI[1],

Swami Bhaskaranandji has talked to me about you. If you can kindly come over here next Tuesday or Wednesday, we can talk about the protection of dharma.[2] I shall await your reply.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

392. LETTER TO SWAMI BHASKARANANDA

NEW DELHI,
July 19, 1947

SWAMI SHRI BHASKARANANDJI,

Your letter. Why do you write in English?

A letter for Goswamiji[3] is enclosed herewith. Kindly forward it to him and oblige.

I have not been able to understand your point in the third paragraph.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

[1] A religious leader
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Swami Karapatri", pp. 413-4.
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

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393. INTERVIEW TO NAGA LEADERS[1]

July 19, 1947

GANDHIJI: Why not now? Why wait for August 15? I was independent when the whole of India was under the British heel. You can be independent and if you have non-violence in common with me, no one can deprive you of independence.

NAGA LEADERS: Government said that if we become independent military sanctions will be applied against us.

The Government is wrong. I will come to Kohima and ask them to shoot me before they shoot one Naga.

The trouble will not be started by us. It may be started in spite of us.

You have opened a very large subject. Independence, yes. But if you say you will be independent of the whole world, you cannot do it. I am independent in my own home. If I become independent of Delhi, I would be crushed to atoms. I have not stored food. I have to get it from Delhi. I have not stored water here; vegetables I have to get. As I can see, you are all slaves. I am not. From where do you get your cloth?

It is foreign cloth.

Then you are slaves of foreigners. Will you go naked if the foreigners do not give you cloth ? What of your food ?

We grow enough.

You cannot be in complete isolation.

We do not talk of isolation.

Then no army will deprive you of your freedom. Those days are gone.

We will be friends with all.

Then you are safe so far as India is concerned. India has shed blood for her own freedom. Is she going to deprive others

[1] In the source, the author explains that these were "excerpts from the record of Pyarelal Nayyar". The delegation was headed by Phizo. The leaders told Gandhiji that they would declare themselves independent on August 15, 1947.

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of their freedom? Personally, I believe you all belong to me, to India. But if you say you don't, no one can force you.

Is there any word for the Nagas?

If I come there I will teach you the art of spinning and weaving. You grow cotton and yet you import cloth. Learn all the handicrafts. That's the way to peaceful independence. If you use rifles and guns and tanks, it is a foolish thing.

No, we certainly shall not do that.

Peace in Nagaland, Eight Year Story: 1964-72, pp. 83-4 and 224-5

394. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 19, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

There was a meeting of the Working Committee here but there is nothing to report that may be of interest to you. I should like to draw your attention to a disturbing phenomenon and that is that everyone in the Congress wants to climb the ladder by using his connection with the Congress. It is something very dirty. Had Congressmen been only a handful and they had cherished such a desire one could have understood it, but the Congress has many crores of people in it and if they all harbour ambitions of advancement the Congress rule will be killed. There are only two kinds of people who must have jobs: those who have no other recourse left and those who want to serve without any thought of self-interest. Since the Congress now holds the reins of administration in its hands, it now commands huge revenues and the spending of the revenues. If Congressmen should entertain the feeling that a portion of all the money that is spent should go to them and if the tax-payers get it into their heads that they no longer need pay taxes, it won't do at all. It will mean that we have forgotten our duty and taken to unrighteous ways.

I am being flooded with telegrams. I cannot say I am the only one to receive telegrams. Those who are in the seats of power, I am sure, must be receiving many more telegrams. Some say cow-slaughter must be stopped, particularly cows which provide us milk and draught cattle should be saved. Perhaps the friends sending the wires do not know that even when I was in South

Africa I was a devotee of the cow. And if we are devoted to the cow we have got to protect her. Unfortunately those who ought to be saviours of the cow have become devourers of the cow. People send me wires expecting me to persuade Jawaharlal and the Sardar to enact laws to protect the cow. But I will not do so. I will ask these devotees of the cow not to waste their money on telegrams. Let them spend that money on the cow. If they cannot themselves do so let them send the money to me. I must say that it is we who are responsible for cow-slaughter. We give the cows so little to eat and make the bullocks carry such heavy loads that they become like skeletons. We use the goad to make the bullocks go faster. What right have such people to demand that cow-slaughter be stopped? After all most cows are owned by the Hindus. Why do they sell them to slaughter-houses? No Hindu will think of buying a cow with a low milk yield. Goshala people might well buy one for they have money received from donations. The others go to slaughter-houses. I have never seen anywhere in the world such enfeebled cattle as in India. In the name of dharma we are practising *adharma*. No law that Jawaharlal Nehru or Sardar can enact will stop cow-slaughter. There were laws even during the war, for milk was in demand. Even then milch cows were slaughtered and this will be the case here too. This will be the case in Pakistan.

I have been asked some questions. Here is one: "One understands that the national flag that has been proposed will have a little Union Jack in a corner. If that is so, we shall tear up such a flag and, if need be, sacrifice our lives."

ANSWER: But what is wrong with having the Union Jack in a corner of our flag? If harm has been done to us by the British it has not been done by their flag and we must also take note of the virtues of the British. They are voluntarily withdrawing from India, leaving power in our hands. A drastic bill which virtually liquidates the Empire did not take even a week to pass in Parliament. Time was when even very unimportant bills took a year and more to be passed. Whether they have been honest in framing the bill only experience will show. We are having Lord Mountbatten as our chief gate-keeper. So long he has been the servant of the British king. Now he is to be our servant. If while we employed him as our servant we also had the Union Jack in a corner of our flag, there would be no betrayal of India in this.

This is my opinion. But I understand that the report is not true. It pains me that the Congress leaders could not show this generosity. We would have thereby shown our friendship for the

British. If I had the power that I once had I would have taken the people to task for it. After all, why should we give up our humanity.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 260-3

395. TRUE ISLAM

A Muslim correspondent sends a letter which is given below[1] barring personal references:

> Islam is a universal religion and its great message is to strive and know the Truth.... I would request you kindly to avoid bringing in the name of Islam when you refer to the actions of the Muslims, as the two are today different.

Would that this Islam might be exhibited in deeds under Pakistan and the correspondent's taunt dispelled!

NEW DELHI, July 20, 1947

Harijan, 17-8-1947

396. MESSAGE FOR CHARKHA JAYANTI

NEW DELHI,
July 20, 1947

One age of khadi has ended. Khadi has probably been instrumental in doing one thing for the poor. What now remains to be shown is how the poor can become self-reliant, how khadi can become an embodiment of non-violence. That is the real task. We have to show dedication to it.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, p. 533

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

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397. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI

July 20, 1947

If you learn what you are doing not mechanically but with intelligent attention, it will in time come to you without effort.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 365

398. A LETTER

July 20, 1947

Haven't we been proved worse even than lifeless matter! What beautiful fragrance sandalwood emits when rubbed! A joss-stick burns up, but leaves behind an aroma of holiness in the air. If only we could learn from such examples.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 365-6

399. A LETTER

July 20, 1947

Every year young men and women get married. But marriage, as has been said, means stepping into a nobler state. But how many make this saying meaningful in their conduct? I hope that you two will do so.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 366

400. A LETTER

July 20, 1947

I am indeed impatient to go to Bihar, but a visit to Kashmir has also been mooted. The matter will be decided by the end of the month. The Kashmir visit will be only for two days. Doctors have suggested that I should not take Manu with me for those two days, for her health will not be able to bear the strain of the journey. But I believe that, even if it be only for two days, the Kashmir climate is bound to benefit her. Besides, even in her sleep she is often heard muttering, beseeching me not to leave her behind. . . .[1] How then can I leave her here and go alone? Another suggestion also has been made, namely, that I should take her to Kashmir and leave her there with Begum Sheikh Abdulla. A month's rest there, together with the climate of Kashmir, will benefit her. I will, therefore, take her only if she agrees to this condition, otherwise, after returning from Kashmir I intend to leave for Calcutta and reach Noakhali on August 15 and I will take her along with me. This is just for your information. In the end I have to do what Manu wants.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 366

401. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
July 20, 1947

CHI. KANAIYO,

The enclosed letter is for you to see. Also the copy of my reply. Give me detailed news about your health.

Abha is all right. The doctors say that hers is not a deep-rooted malady; Manu's is. At present both of them are taking rest.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] Omission as in the source

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402. LETTER TO JAMNA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
July 20, 1947

CHI. JAMNA,

I have your letter. I hope by now the attack of asthma has subsided. In my opinion one can prevent it by leading a disciplined life. Whenever there is an attack, you should remain calm, repeat Ramanama and have faith that it will cure you. But the condition for this is that you must lead a regular life.

I see no point in sending Abha[1] there at present. She had better go there after she is completely recovered.

It seems I will have to go to Kanaiyo[2]. I shall see where I go after that. I agree that he ought not to lose weight.

I had an acknowledgment from Narandas[3].

Blessings from
BAPU

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

403. LETTER TO DIWAN CHAMANLAL

NEW DELHI,
July 20, 1947

BHAI CHAMANLAL,

I have your letter. I had a talk with the Raja Saheb of Sirmur.

For me to take the reins of the Congress in my hands is certainly difficult, even if it is not impossible. Who will listen to me today and why should they? Yes, the disturbances make me unhappy but what can I do?

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original: Diwan Chamanlal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Addressee's daughter-in-law
[2] Addressee's son who was working in Bengal
[3] Addressee's husband

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404. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 20, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Some people tell me—as they have a right to tell me—that what I say these days is not calculated to enthuse the people. They remind me that the political freedom for which we had been fighting, we have at last secured and by and by economic freedom will also come. All that may be true. Nevertheless I cannot rejoice on August 15. I do not want to deceive you. But at the same time I shall not ask you not to rejoice. After all I cannot expect everything to be ordered according to my wish. I did not want India to be partitioned but it has been partitioned. What good can come of crying over it? Even if something worse had happened, I would have had to put up with it. India's partition has grieved me more than it could grieve you. I have been a rebel all my life. How can a rebel cry? When I went to Noakhali I found people crying and I wiped their tears. I told them nothing was to be gained by weeping for the dead. But the people in whose hands we have entrusted the reins of power are big people. If they say that we should have celebrations on Independence Day, then you should do so. You should not worry why Gandhi does not join in the celebration. The Congress does not force anyone to celebrate. That I shall not celebrate does not mean that the British will not be leaving. By August 15, a number of British officers will have already left the country. Those who remain will stay under our authority. They will be appointed not from London but by us.

Unfortunately the kind of freedom we have got today contains also the seeds of future conflict between India and Pakistan. How can we therefore light the lamps? I shall consider freedom to have been secured only on the day Hindus and Muslims have cleansed their hearts. Only lately some Muslim League friends from the Punjab have held out the threat that if the Boundary Commission does not decide in their favour they will get what they want by fighting. The Sikhs also are holding out similar threats. But when we accept the principle of arbitration we must go by the award. We should not talk of fighting. I

know only one kind of fighting and that is satyagraha. It purifies the soul. If that kind of fighting went on all the time in the world it would be very good for the world. I shall appeal to my Hindu, Sikh and Muslim brethren that once having accepted the Boundary Commission as the arbitrator they should accept its award.

Burma too will soon be a free country like India. The Burmese leader General U Aung San, has brought Burma to the gates of freedom. What does it matter that he was not a satyagrahi? He was a brave warrior and it is largely thanks to his efforts that Burma is about to get its freedom. It is a great tragedy that an armed gang of assassins killed him and his four comrades.[1] However far we may be from him, his sudden death is a matter of grief to us. If such things are to continue, then the world has come to a sorry pass. I cannot believe that the assassins were dacoits. I had spent a long time in Burma. I am acquainted with Rangoon, Mandalay and other places. Buddhism is the religion there as it is in the rest of Burma. Why should there be so much blood-shed in a country where Buddhism is the religion? I am sure behind these murders there is factional politics. It is sad that this has happened when Burma is about to gain its freedom. I hope India will take a lesson from this tragedy. Let us pray that in this time of sorrow God may grant comfort to the people of Burma who like us have been fighting for their freedom and grant strength to the relatives of the dead to bear the grief. Let us also pray that the hearts of the murderers may change.

The editor of *The Dawn* has in today's issue of the paper accepted two of my suggestions.[2] It makes me very happy. He says that he can assure me that in Pakistan Hindus and Muslims will live as brothers. He further says that there should be a committee of journalists which should examine reports of communal riots and should decide what should be published. He suggests that as I am a journalist myself I could become the chairman of such a committee. I must express to him my inability. I do not have the time. Also I am no longer fitted for this kind of work. Besides I am never at one place for long. How should I then preside over such a body? But if he is serious about it he can meet other editors and do something.

I must finally say once again that only when the minorities both in India and Pakistan say that they are happy can freedom

[1] Aung San with six colleagues was assassinated on July 19 at the instigation of U Saw, a political rival. *Vide* also p. 390.

[2] *Vide* p. 368.

be said to have been really gained and only then will it be time for us to rejoice.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 263-6

405. A LETTER

July 21, 1947

I received your long letter only yesterday. Yours is the first letter I have taken up after the prayer. It is ten minutes past four just now.

You are unnecessarily angry with . . .[1] Is it her fault that she did not see you? Don't you know that she feels deeply obliged to you? Is she likely to slight you? You have virtues and defects in equal measure. Let your defects remain with you. We will worship your virtues and extract from them whatever fragrance they are capable of giving.

You will rise still higher if you give up defending me and you will also oblige me.

I like what you say regarding your relatives. You should not copy me in the distinction you have seen me make in my behaviour between relatives and others. You should copy my virtues, but not my errors. Anything good I may do should be looked upon as golden. In such instances you should copy me both in speech and deed. You should, therefore, always keep in mind what I said regarding the brothers. I do not wish to make any change in it. My own sister is on her death bed, but I do not go to her, nor do I go looking for doctors. On the other hand, I did everything possible for Chakrayya. Draw a lesson from this if you can. If, nonetheless, you see any partiality in me, you should reject my partiality and copy only my concern for others. You should know that I also, like all living and lifeless things, have virtues and defects, and should behave accordingly. I think you did a wise thing in writing about this matter. It is because of that that I am able to explain my point of view to you. You may ask me for further explanation when we meet some time, if you and I remember the matter then. I liked your letter so much that, instead of tearing it up, I am giving it to Bisen and Manudi to read.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 370-1

[1] Omission as in the source

406. LETTER TO AYAZ PEERBHOY

NEW DELHI,
July 21, 1947

BHAI AYAZ PEERBHOY[1],

I have gone through your letter. You are right. I have already said that the struggle we carried on for the last thirty years was non-violent in name only but was not non-violent in spirit. The violence which we harboured in our minds is now coming out. How can the ignorance of those thirty years be dispelled all at once? Those of us who understand this must do the best we can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *Weekly Observer*, 6-3-1948. Also from a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

407. A LETTER

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,
July 21, 1947

I had a letter from . . .[2] She says that I waste my time on Manu. Poor woman, how can she know that in my eyes that time is most valuably spent? For I have undertaken to be a mother to that girl, and by devoting time to achievement of that aim I wish to uncover to the world a great spiritual mystery similar to that which I have demonstrated concerning truth and ahimsa. I am no doubt a father to so many other girls, but why am I a mother to Manu alone? That, however, is a long story. Here I will say only this, that I saw in her the necessary readiness to look upon me as a mother. She is devoted to me as a daughter to her mother, is eager to serve me and is as innocent as a child. I have not seen in any other girl the virtues I have seen in her. God has, therefore, given me a means at the right time whereby I can prove to the world that if men could develop the attitudes of mothers, humanity would be saved. In India and in Pakistan,

[1] Editor, *Weekly Observer*
[2] Omissions as in the source

women are being wickedly dishonoured. If that is to be ended, I think men will have to learn to be not fathers but mothers. But I shall not dwell further on this subject. I am short of time. I am not at all happy that your health has again taken a turn for the worse. I don't see your articles in *Harijan* these days. I should like you to go on writing something, if necessary, with somebody's help. For my part, I can barely cope with my work. I have Sushila and Rajkumari with me now and hope, therefore, that I shall get their help. Thinking over the matter, I even feel that I should stop the *Harijan*.

Chi. Manudi is improving gradually. But as soon as she feels better, she starts running about and falls ill again. As a result, I have to pay more attention to her when she is well than when she is ill. But I see that even she is being careful now.

Probably I shall have to go to Kashmir towards the end of this month . . . also is here. She has returned ill from Noakhali. I will see what I can do for her.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 371-2

408. A LETTER

July 21, 1947

A meeting of the Working Committee is going on these days. I am discussing with them the problem of Kathiawar, too. If there should be attempts going on to include Junagadh and Manavdar in Pakistan it would be nothing new,[1] though Mountbatten has said nothing so far. Much will depend on what the Kathiawar Princes are about. That is why I am trying to get Balwantrai Mehta included in the Working Committee. I have formed an impression about him that he will be a very useful man.

I see Bhai Anantrai from time to time. He also is a very energetic man. But one must know how to make use of the energy.

We shall have to be vigilant about Hyderabad. Then there is Kashmir of course. How many problems shall we be able to cope with?

The heat here has not yet come down, though there are clouds. Let us hope the rain god will be kind now.

[1] Their Rulers acceded to Pakistan in September 1947, but the subjects repudiated the accession and joined the Indian Union in November that same year.

This heat has affected my digestion, so I have had to make drastic changes in my diet. I don't feel much physical weakness but towards the evening I feel mentally exhausted. . . .[1] How are your affairs?

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 372

409. NOTE TO P. C. GHOSH

NEW DELHI,
July 21, 1947

You should be relieved from the Working Committee. That is better than abandoning the responsibility and coming here.[2] How should we know? Anything may happen there at any time.[3] This should have occurred to you. If what I say appeals to you, I would like you to see Jawaharlal, Sardar and Kripalani. I am of the firm opinion that those of you who are in responsible positions should not remain in the Working Committee.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 375

410. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

NEW DELHI,
July 21, 1947

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have your letter. Whether you call it my despondency or grief the cause of it is the same. How can non-violence overcome the prevailing violence ? Passing through the turmoil, I have realized that although our 30 years' struggle could be called non-violent, it was not firmly founded on non-violence and so it ought not to have been so called. If it were not regarded as non-violent, my energy would not have been spent over it. That is why God made me blind and allowed me to be used. How can we create non-violence out of what was mistakenly called non-violence but which was really violence? Isn't it all wrong training? How can one

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] The addressee, Chief Minister of West Bengal, had gone to Delhi to attend the meeting of the Congress Working Committee.

[3] The communal situation in Calcutta and Noakhali had been tense.

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have the right training now, i. e., in true non-violence, after having had 30 years of wrong training? We may name this churning of the heart anguish or anything else you like.

Is your analysis correct? If we are cautious and take the right steps we can undo our earlier lapses. But who will do it and how? There is a barrier everywhere which we must cross.

So being far away, don't magnify my anguish.

I am happy. One thing is true; the heat here does not agree with me but I don't feel like going to the hills either. There is nothing to worry about.

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

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

411. LETTER TO SANKARAN

NEW DELHI,
July 21, 1947

CHI. SANKARAN,

I like your programme of work. If you have there all the facilities and if it benefits all, you may prolong your stay.

Of course some harm has been done by allopathy but the benefits are obvious. Otherwise there could never have been so many hospitals. Allopathy suits well the present atmosphere. If you read the lives of the doctors of former times, you will know about sacrifices they made. It is one's duty to see the good points of the other side. What sacrifices have the naturopaths made? And what pretensions they have! But the beauty is that nature cure flourishes in spite of the pretensions, the reason being that it is the natural thing.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

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412. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

NEW DELHI,
July 21, 1947

CHI. KRISHNADAS,

I have your letter. Jinnah Saheb has himself said that non-Muslims will have the same place in Pakistan as the Muslims. But it remains to be seen whether or not such a policy is implemented.

The poor Hindus who will migrate owing to oppression will certainly be accommodated in India. But this much is certain that they will have to labour for their bread. I did say that those leaving behind property ought to be paid its value but I could not have said that they would be paid. Show me if I have written anything to this effect. I have spoken on this matter frequently enough in the course of my Noakhali speeches.

I certainly regard myself as a "practical idealist"[1]. Who will define an *atatayin*[2]? Can we accept the definition as given by Manu? But it is no longer accepted today. And after having defined a criminal, who is to execute him? An individual or the State, i. e., the Panchayat? And should it follow or precede the judgment? Today the policy of capital punishment is itself being strongly opposed. What should be regarded as scripture? People raise such questions. It is not easy to answer the second point. An exchange of population cannot be carried out so easily. The whole question deserves to be thought over. Maybe, I shall say something in my speech[3] today. I am thinking of going over to Noakhali soon. The question is how to get away from here.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] The two words are in English.

[2] A criminal; according to *Shukranitisara* any one of the six: incendiary, poisoner, assassin, robber, usurper of land, rapist. Manu, who has not defined the term, however, says that such a one, whether a guru, a minor, a woman or a learned brahmin, may be unhesitatingly put to death.

[3] *Vide* pp. 388-90.

413. LETTER TO SWAMI SIVANANDA

NEW DELHI,
July 21, 1947

SHRI SWAMIJI,

I have your letter. There was violence in the name of non-violence and we are now tasting its bitter fruit. What more can I write?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SWAMI SIVANANDA
RISHIKESH

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

414. A LETTER

July 21, 1947

I have never imagined myself as perfect. Had I been a perfect *sthitaprajna*, would I today be seeing the failure of my aims? But failure does not grieve me, for I like to be awakened. I don't wish to die under any delusion.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 372

415. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 21, 1947

A friend from Pakistan writes:[1] "You in India are talking about celebrating August 15. Have you ever considered how we, the Hindus in Pakistan, are going to celebrate it? Our hearts are full of forebodings for that day. Will you say something about this? For us the day will be one for confronting troubles, not at all for celebration. The Muslims here have

[1] *Vide* p. 387.

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already begun to frighten us. We do not know what the Muslims in India think. Will they also not be frightened? We are even scared that attempts may be made to convert us on a large scale. You will say that we must ourselves safeguard our faith. This may be possible for an ascetic. It is not so for a householder."

Mr. Jinnah is now going to be the Governor-General of Pakistan. He has said that non-Muslims will be treated exactly as the Muslims. My advice is that we should trust him and hope that non-Muslims in Pakistan will not be ill-treated. And also the Muslims in India will not be ill-treated. My feeling is that now that there are two States, India can ask for guarantees from Pakistan.

I nevertheless feel that August 15 is not a day for celebration[1] whilst the minorities contemplate the day with a heavy heart. It will be a day for prayer and introspection. Only, if the two countries are to be true to themselves they should start being friends right now. Either all should together celebrate August 15 as brothers or it should not be celebrated at all. The day for rejoicing over freedom will be when we feel sincere friendship for each other. But this is my own individual opinion and nobody seems to share it.

The same friend from Pakistan then asks me: 'If all the Hindus of Pakistan or a very large number of them come away from Pakistan, will India give them shelter?'

I think that such people should certainly be given shelter. However, if the well-to-do among them want to live in their old style, that will be difficult. In any case, they should certainly be given a place to live and they should be paid for their work. But I shall continue to hope that no non-Muslim will be forced to flee Pakistan out of fear and no Indian Muslim will flee his motherland.

The correspondent further asks: "What will happen to houses and landed property left behind in Pakistan?"

I have already said that the Government of Pakistan should pay the market price of the land and houses. The practice in such matters is that the other Government also has a say. In this case it will be the Government of India. But why should I assume that the matter will go so far? It will be the duty of the Government of Pakistan to pay the price of such land and houses to the owners.

The correspondent reminds me that I consider myself a practical idealist. But what is going on in the country is in-

[1] The rest of the sentence is from *The Hindustan Times*.

human. Can non-violence be practised towards the criminal, and if so, how? My endeavour always has been so to practise my ideal that it should produce results even though I may not always succeed. Whom shall I call criminal? All those described as criminal by Manu cannot be put to death today. Today attempts are being made to abolish capital punishment and reformers even go so far as to advocate abolition of all corporal punishment. They say that evil-doers should be considered as sick and hospitals should be set up for them as for those suffering from other diseases. What I mean to say is that everything that goes by the name of scripture should not be accepted as scripture. Only that should be accepted as scripture which takes into consideration the various changes that are continually taking place. Attitudes keep changing from age to age. There are few laws which remain unchanged for ever. And then it is not everyone's province to punish criminals. This right belongs to the elected body or the government. The government makes laws and then courts are set up to dispense justice according to those laws. If that were not so there would be the risk of all of us becoming criminals. The murders that were committed in Burma were brutal. Now we understand that they were political murders.[1] I am sure that the murderers regarded their victims as criminals. Our terrorists did not accept my advice. They sincerely told me that those whom they murdered were criminals. They never regarded themselves as criminals. That is why I say that he who takes the law into his own hands commits an offence. He commits violence against the people. Only an elected Assembly can dispense with the obligation to be non-violent. What is happening in the world today is brutality.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 266-8

[1] *Vide* p. 381.

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416. A TERRIBLE CONTRAST[1]

Prof. Kumarappa is at present in London. From his letter received from there I quote the following extracts:

> The air travel, as I explained to you, is extremely dull as the sense of motion that we get on surface travel is practically absent. From our height you can see nothing but the bare red earth with some streaks indicating rivers. Trees, etc., are not visible except as chumps of grass here and there. . . .
>
> Last evening I strolled all over Marble Arch, Hyde Park, Kensington, Westminster, Whitehall, James' Park, Piccadilly, Bond Street, etc., clad in my *dhotijamma*. London is hot even for that. Our old-time London of plenty and pleasure seems to have undergone a radical change. There seems to be very effective rationing in which a great deal of credit should be given to the willing co-operation of the public in restraining themselves in the interests of all. This is in striking contrast to our lack of a public conscience. I used to think the efficiency of rationing here was a credit to the efficiency of the Government machinery here. But I think now that it is largely due to public self-control that even black markets are not able to hold their own. Our culture though based on self-discipline and self-control has to extend its influence to public behaviour. This should be the foundation of our swaraj.

Assuming the correctness of the information the writer gives, the contrast between the willing co-operation in London and the black marketing with all its implications here is terrible.

NEW DELHI, July 22, 1947

Harijan, 3-8-1947

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

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417. *REALIZATION OF DIFFICULTY*

An English sister reading my recent speeches giving a glimpse of my grief over the happenings in India writes:

> Does not this deep agony, this descent into hell, this feeling of something near despair, mean that you ought to extend your life-span even further than 125 years? How very much easier it would be to die! . . . Day and night one feels the narrow of hell. . . .

I know that she is not joking when she expects me to extend my life-span even further than 125 years. She is a brave woman of great faith. With me there is no question of extending my life-span even to one day longer than the allotted time. I am fatalist enough to believe that not a blade of grass moves but by His will. What I have done and still would wish to do is to aspire after a life of 125 years, provided that it is a life of uttermost service of humanity. But such a wish becomes quite empty if it is not accompanied by the requisite correctness of conduct. Answering the description of a steadfast man of the *Gita*, such are the lines according to Sir Edwin Arnold's rendering:[1]

I confess that in spite of my trying to reach the state, I am far away from the condition of equipoise. I realize how difficult it is in the face of the storm raging round us.

She says in the same letter:

> The only comfort is that mankind, some of it, has discovered its innate impotence apart from God.

The motto in her letter-head is:

> In hearts too young for enmity
> There lies the way to make men free. . . .

How true and yet how difficult!

NEW DELHI, July 22, 1947
Harijan, 10-8-1947

[1] The quotation from Edwin Arnold's *Song Celestial* is not reproduced here.

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418. LETTER TO E. NAGESHWAR RAO

NEW DELHI,
July 22, 1947

DEAR NAGESHWAR RAO,

Your letter with the instructive enclosure. I have not the time to enter upon a detailed answer. So far as I am concerned your charge cannot be established. What will ultimately happen I do not know.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI E. NAGESHWAR RAO
RAO'S HOUSE
BILASPUR C. P.

From a photostat: G. N. 118

419. LETTER TO KULSUM SAYANI

NEW DELHI,
July 22, 1947

Heaven knows what is in store for us. The old order changeth giving place to new.

Nothing is settled. Whatever is decided by the C. A., Hindustani with the two scripts remains for you and me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat: Kulsum Sayani Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also G. N . 8042

420. LETTER TO MAHARAJ KUMAR OF VIJAYANAGARAM

NEW DELHI,
July 22, 1947

DEAR VIJAYA,

I am glad you have given up your knighthood.
Hope you have also given up your cold.
Love to you all.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

421. A LETTER

July 22, 1947

I do not see that I am of much use here. It may be asked why then I continue to stay on here. What reply can I give? Very often one has to bow to the demands of love. How many things Lord Krishna was forced to do through the bonds of love? Similarly, I have to do many things out of the love that binds me to Jawahar and Sardar. They have tied me up with the chains of their love. I see no harm in such slavery and have, therefore, let myself be bound. If we stop thinking of the faults of others, we shall profit in many ways and be saved from much harm.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 379

422. A LETTER

July 22, 1947

After careful thinking, I feel that an Ashram should meet its own expenses. Only such Ashrams will be able to maintain themselves. Isn't there a saying that you can't go to heaven without yourself dying? Today only this much.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 379

423. LETTER TO RAM MANOHAR LOHIA

NEW DELHI,
July 22, 1947

CHI. RAM MANOHAR,

This morning at 4.45 I read your statement about the Adivasis and others. It is good but it may not prove effective.

I find none who can undertake this work. The Nagas met me.[1] I understand what is happening.

We had only one force and we have lost it. That was moral force or spiritual force if you choose to call it that. The opposite of it is brute force or military strength. That we do not seem to have at present. It will ruin India. Now you will understand why I talked about . . .[2], etc. As the saying goes, a word to the wise.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

424. LETTER TO LAKSHMINARAYAN AGRAWAL

NEW DELHI,
July 22,1947

BHAI LAKSHMIBABU[3],

This friend has come from Bihar. What do you say about what he has to relate? I do not want to form an opinion on the basis of a one-sided account. Can anything be done in this matter?

How is the work there going on?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi: C. W. 10426. Courtesy: Bharat Kala Bhavan

[1] *Vide* pp. 373-4.

[2] The source is not clear here. *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase* Vol. II, p. 328, however, has: "You will now understand why I have laid so much emphasis on banning tea, cigarettes and such other articles of addiction."

[3] A khadi worker; Secretary, Gandhi Smarak Nidhi, Bihar

425. A LETTER[1]

July 22, 1947

The country is today passing through a critical time. If we do not unite and work together, I think neither the Congress nor the Socialists will succeed. Don't they both have the same goal? This is a time to think only of our duty as men. Consult among yourselves and let me know what you desire. I see no wisdom in people banding themselves into separate groups.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 379

426. TALK TO REFUGEE STUDENTS

NEW DELHI,
July 22, 1947

If you ask me, my advice can appeal to you only if you have no love for degrees. Only then can I give you time. If you want degrees you can work for them without giving thought to anything else. You will think it natural in me, an old man from your point of view, to advise students not to run after degrees. However it is not so. I say what I do with the fullest sense of responsibility. All that you learn is not real learning. It is no more than stuffing you merely with a knowledge of the letters. True education is that which proves useful in life and makes you industrious.

Students have played a big role in helping the country win its freedom. If students forget communalism and learn humanism they can easily bring about the unity which neither the laws nor the Viceroy, nor Jawaharlal Nehru and other leaders can bring about. Let them persuade their school fellows, their parents, their sisters and purify the atmosphere in their schools, their homes and their neighbourhood. Student life is the foundation of life. It is a preparation for adult life. The building can be strong only if the foundation is strong. Therefore, instead of wasting time in

[1] According to the source, this was addressed to a Socialist leader.

memorizing false history, devote yourself to true knowledge. Certainly history will give you a sort of knowledge but you should acquire the knowledge which will provide you with food for life. Teach sanitation in your camp, learn to look after the sick, take lessons in nursing, organize *bhajans* and games for recreation in the evening so that those who are unhappy may forget their sorrow for a while and be comforted, the children get some knowledge of the letters and physical exercise and learn to keep their bodies and minds clean. The rainy season is approaching. Make arrangements through collective labour to protect yourselves from the rains. You can do so many such things. If you do that you will certainly learn so many things which you will never learn in your colleges. Knowledge gained through experience is far superior and many times more useful than bookish knowledge. I have no doubt about that.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 379-80

427. TALK WITH VISITORS

NEW DELHI,
July 22, 1947

I do not consider myself a mahatma[1]. I am, like you, an ordinary human being and want to serve the people as long as God gives me the strength to do so. Moreover, anyone who is not distressed or ashamed by the carnage that is going on in the country must either be God or a hard-hearted man. I am neither. I feel unhappy that every day innocent men, women and children are being murdered. The reason for all this is that what I had believed to be non-violence was not pure non-violence. I have now realized it but it is too late. Even so I am certain that if we want to bring about peace in the world there is no other way except that of non-violence.

Q. Now perhaps you will honour the British since they have willingly agreed to your terms.

G. Personally I never had any complaint against the British. I have no likes or dislikes for persons, for I consider every individual

[1] The visitors, foreign nationals, had asked why Gandhiji, who was a mahatma, let himself be distressed by the communal carnage.

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a friend and I have benefited from this. Let me make one thing clear. The British are not doing us a favour in leaving the country. They are going because circumstances have rendered their going inevitable. They ruined India during their 150 years of rule. They could have atoned for it if they had gone leaving the country whole. I must say that they have taken advantage of our weakness of will to create dissensions among us, whether knowingly or unknowingly. The fault no doubt is ours. We were so stupid as to go to them for justice. We should have told them, "Hand over the country to us. We shall settle our own affairs." It was our misfortune that a third party had to meddle in our domestic affairs. For this state of affairs we have to thank the power that kept us in slavery for so long. All the same the English are my friends. Many Englishwomen are staying with me as my daughters. They have so many things to teach us. I am sure if they can remain on terms of friendship with India, both the countries will benefit. England and America have gained nothing from their advance in technology and by manufacturing atom bombs. But I have no doubt that if our so-called backward country pursues the path of non-violence it will have a place of glory in the world. I may not live to see that. My co-worker Jawahar, who is like a son to me, is working hard to make my dream come true. He will show light to the whole world. Jawahar and his colleagues appear old. The struggles of satyagraha and frequent incarcerations have reduced their expectation of life by twenty to twenty-five years. But I believe that not a blade of grass moves except by His will and I am, therefore, confident that though they are old their contribution in bringing stability to a tottering world will be very significant.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 381-3

428. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 22, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I have received a letter today. It says: 'You have given Lord Mountbatten too much of a build-up. You seem to imply that Lord Mountbatten can do no wrong. But if you will remember at the Second Round Table Conference[1] you had said that when

[1] In 1931; *vide* Vol. XLVIII.

freedom was achieved the Viceroy's house would be turned into a home for Harijan children or a hospital. Your present attitude is not in conformity with this.'

I do not give anyone any kind of build-up. I want nothing from Lord Mountbatten. And he wants nothing from me. I do not want even titles and he has nothing else to give. It is said that I am always rebuking my own people and never can find anything good to say of them. So far as Lord Mountbatten is concerned he must for the moment continue to live in the Viceroy's house. If I could drag him out of it I would keep him with me. But he has to meet the Princes there and rectify the mistakes of the past. He has to undo the harm those mistakes have done. And he has been made Governor-General precisely because he can work with speed. Giving him this office does not imply any flattery of him. And do you think Jawaharlal and Sardar Patel are the kind of people to flatter anyone? But if the Viceroy has deceit in his heart only he will be the loser. My sixty years' experience tells me that he who seeks to deceive others deceives only himself. But I do not really know whether Lord Mountbatten will remain permanently in the Viceroy's house or whether it will be made into a hospital. Only Jawaharlal and Sardar will know about it.

Another correspondent wants to know if the proposal to retain British officers in the army and the partition of the army has my approval. The correspondent should rather ask me if I approve of the retention of the army itself. Keeping an army, whatever its nature or size, can have no support from me. But times have changed. I had fondly assumed that we were all or almost all non-violent. But my eyes have now been opened. What I had taken to be non-violence, I now see, was only passive resistance. Passive resistance is resorted to by a person who does not have arms. We were simply obliged to be non-violent while we had violence in our hearts. And now with the British withdrawing from India we are spending that violence in fighting against each other. I am certain that I never had any violence in my heart. But what am I to do about others? They argue that the fact they were non-violent in the fight against the British does not necessarily mean that they should be non-violent now. The fault is mine. My teaching during the last thirty-two years was imperfect. If I am asked I will still say that I am not for maintaining an army. Is India going to be a military State? From Bengal, the Punjab and Bihar there are demands for the army to be sent. If at one place it is Hindus who want the army to protect them, at another it is Muslims. I therefore have no knowledge about how the army is

going to be divided and I do not care to waste my time over things which do not interest me.

Four sisters came to congratulate me today because the tricolour with the wheel has been adopted as the national flag of India. I see nothing in it for congratulations. I am told that instead of the charkha there is only a wheel on the flag. But it is all the same to me whether they keep or do not keep the charkha. Even if they cast it away I will still have it in my hand and in my heart.

A friend tells me that the charkha is still there on the flag. Another friend tells me that it is not there, that it has been discarded even while I am still alive. I do not know. What I do know is that even if the charkha was shown on the flag but was not in people's hearts, both the flag and the charkha would be fit only to be burnt. But if the charkha had a place in the hearts of the people, then it would not matter whether it was placed on the flag or not. I only want that the country should have only one flag and everyone should salute it. It made me very happy to hear that in the Constituent Assembly both Chowdhary Khaliq-uz-Zaman and Mohammed Sadullah, saluted the flag and declared that they would be loyal to the National Flag. If they mean it, it is a good sign.

But a telegram received from Sylhet is very disturbing. The referendum there is over but harassment of the people continues. Why have the Muslims there gone crazy? Nationalist Muslims are being killed and the telegram says that someone should be sent there as an observer. Whom can I send? It is only for Kripalani or Jawaharlal to find someone. I feel I ought to go to Noakhali now. Sylhet is close to Noakhali. But how can I go? I am imprisoned here. I am convinced that there is not a word of untruth in the telegram. The sender has signed his name too. It is reported that after the referendum Muslims burnt down a Harijan colony. It is a matter of shame. On one side we have Khaliq Saheb and Sadullah Saheb saluting the National Flag, on the other side in Pakistan such grisly things go on.

From Karachi comes a letter. It is from a rich man who says that the Pakistan Government has taken over his house. He is in a quandary, for he has nowhere to live. I must say to Mr. Jinnah and the other leaders there that I am shocked. At such a juncture instead of rejoicing we must pray that we may be rescued from this morass and have an opportunity to taste the fruits of freedom, the freedom of which we have so long been dreaming. This is indeed a time for prayer.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 269-72

429. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
4.15 a.m., July 23, 1947

CHI. SITA[1],

I have your postcard. Why do you lose hope so soon? No one has hurt your self-respect. Such things do happen when one is a student; there is nothing unusual about it. You must calm down and concentrate on your studies and build up a strong body. Observe all the rules carefully. Keep writing to me. Sumi[2] will be well. Her Bengali handwriting seems good. Have you tried to write something in Urdu below hers? Blessings to Vinodini[3]. Write to Manilal.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

430. LETTER TO PUSHPA K. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
July 23, 1947

CHI. PUSHPA,

I am writing this at 4.25 in the morning. There should be no complaint against you. You ought not to leave the Khadi Vidyalaya without permission. Those who cannot maintain discipline prove useless in the end. So wake up. Write to me what happened. How are you? How is your work going on? How is your health?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] Daughter of Manilal Gandhi
[2] Sumitra, Ramdas Gandhi's daughter
[3] Jaisukhlal Gandhi's daughter

431. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

4.50 a. m., July 23, 1947

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have forgotten about the difference between Gonds and Harijans and also about Kodabet. When replying to letters I do not have the original letters in front of me. Even when they are there I forget to look into them.

We have no time to think more. Do what all of you can do together. We are far away from the ideal of ahimsa. We should lead a thoughtful life. I do feel deeply concerned about the Mangs, but what can I do from this distance and in the midst of my other preoccupations? I therefore write nothing more on the subject.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

About Prahlad, do what is proper.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8406. Also C. W. 7221. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

432. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL CHOKSHI

July 23, 1947

CHI. NAJUKLAL,

I was pleased to see your letter. I take no interest in Sevadal and such other activities. My sphere of work is well defined. All days are the same to me. Your writing has no effect on me, but at the same time I see no reason for celebration either. You may do what seems best to you. I am glad that Moti[1] and the children are doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

NAJUKLAL CHOKSHI
GHADIYARI POLE
BARODA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 12156

[1] Addressee's wife

433. A LETTER

July 23, 1947

Learning a language is certainly very useful. It also helps in one's mental growth. But the present practice of teaching the pupils compulsorily through English must be stopped now. The mother tongue should be given proper importance and its development encouraged. It is our country's misfortune that this plain truth has become the subject of a heated controversy.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 391

434. A LETTER

July 23, 1947

You suggest that the Government should promote education by spending crores of rupees and setting up universities. I cannot swallow the suggestion. There is no dearth in our country of people who have an interest in education. There are thousands and hundreds of thousands of them. They should form an organization and take up this work. A cultivator who wishes to grow corn ploughs and sows the field at the right time. If educationists, similarly, utilize this opportunity and work along the right lines in this field, their institutions will overflow with money. The university will be able to maintain itself through the labour of the students who join it. And if it becomes a people's institution, the public also will help of their own accord. True, it will also need some Government help, which it will certainly get. If, however, the university is run along the lines I have indicated, it will become self-supporting.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 391

435. LETTER TO PATIL

NEW DELHI,
July 23, 1947

BHAI PATIL,

I have your letter. Retaliation[1] means revenge and revenge means blood for blood. We cannot therefore say that there is exaggeration in the cuttings that I have received. I feel we help nobody by now talking about revenge. What I said in this connection in my speech on Monday[2] should be pondered. This is a very critical time and we have to weigh every word we utter.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

436. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

July 23, 1947

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. What you say about Pushpabehn is correct. I have written to her.[3] Read the letter.

The incident about the Gonds is painful. We are very far from ahimsa. We should go on striving.

Hoshiari should not fall ill.

I have no time to write more. Go on doing whatever you can there.

There will certainly be mistakes. Our task is to rectify them and go forward.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have forgotten the difference between Gonds and Harijans. I could not distinguish between a whip and a cane.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1985

[1] This word is in English.
[2] *Vide* pp. 388-90.
[3] *Vide* p. 401.

437. LETTER TO SHANTA

NEW DELHI,
July 23, 1947

CHI. SHANTA,

I have your letter. What is the use of experiments in non-violence in Sevagram? Villagers punishing the Gonds should not be tolerated. I understand what Kishorelalbhai writes. My mind is working in a different way. Where is non-violence? Physical punishment is not the only violence. Much greater violence can be done through thought. In my opinion the Gonds' case must make us think. What was the duty of us all in that episode? But I shall not go further, nor can I. Only this much for today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8413; also C. W. 5625

438. LETTER TO DEV PRAKASH NAYYAR

NEW DELHI,
July 23, 1947

CHI. DEV[1],

Herewith Chand's letter. If Chand sticks to her word, what is there to worry about? I want to see your position as that of a *sthitaprajna*. This is how I understand Nai Talim. The work otherwise would be too difficult. Therefore you have to remain cheerful under all circumstances and, if you can sincerely do so, calmly write me a letter which I may pass on to Chand. I have written to Chand that I am sending on hers to you.

I do believe that I shall reach Patna by the end of this month.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Brother of Pyarelal; he joined Gandhiji after N. K. Bose.

439. LETTER TO VITHALDAS

NEW DELHI,
July 23, 1947

BHAI VITHALDAS,

Received your letter and the monthly *Arogya*. I do not know if you can render any service through the monthly. I have found the naturopaths to be full of hypocrisy and arrogance. If your monthly contains nothing but the truth you might possibly be able to render some service.

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

440. TALK TO MAHARANI OF NABHA

NEW DELHI,
July 23, 1947

You have willingly divested yourself of these things.[1] Similarly the State treasury does not belong to you. It belongs to the people. You have been appointed by them a trustee. I wish you would keep an account of every pie as a trustee does of the public trust. Keep your personal needs within bounds. You will render a great service to middle class women and make an impression on the State if like other women you manage your household yourself and do all the domestic chores of the palace. How can you have any idea of the plight of middle class women? I know their plight because I take an interest in their lives. They hesitate to do any work from a false sense of shame. If they have not enough to eat in the house they will put up with it. Let alone doing any work themselves, in order to keep up the prestige of the house they think it necessary to have a servant to clean the house, fetch water and do the grinding. This is sin. For this, the rich are to blame. Their women live in affluence and not only do no work themselves but pass remarks on those who do. In Europe even men lend a hand in domestic chores. As a result women have too much free time, they become lazy and lose self-confidence. That is why I say the times have changed. Ladies of ruling families and rich classes should not miss

[1] The Maharani had presented to Gandhiji her gold bangles.

this opportunity they have got of doing service. If they take to doing household work they will create an atmosphere in which doing such work will no longer be regarded dishonourable but on the contrary will be respected. As a result the financial condition of the downtrodden middle class will improve and with it the education of their children, their health and their living condition also will improve. We can then feel proud of our country.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 389-90

441. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 23, 1947

Before the prayers started someone passed a note to Gandhiji. In it the writer had asked him whether he had seen God face to face. Answering the question after prayers, Gandhiji said that he had not seen God face to face. If he had, he would have no need to be speaking to them. His thought would be potent enough to render speech and action on his part unnecessary. But he had an undying faith in the existence of God. Millions all over the world shared that faith with him. The most learned could not shake the faith of illiterate millions. The *bhajan* sung during the prayers described the way to see God face to face. The poet asked the aspirant to shed anger and desire and to be indifferent to praise or blame if he expected to reach the blessed state. Gandhiji compared *nirvana* to *Ramarajya* or the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. The dream of *Ramarajya* was far from realization. How could it happen when they had all along been nursing violence in their hearts under the garb of non-violence?[1]

Today I wish to say something about salt. People say there was a time when I had marched to Dandi for salt but today there is no salt to be had or, if there is, an exorbitant price has to be paid for it. I can only bow down my head in shame. People say that although salt tax has been abolished it has not affected the price. Salt is not rationed but there is black-marketing in it. Traders are so mean that they derive huge profits even from salt. But we have become lazy.

There are many places in the countryside where people can make salt for themselves at no cost. This concession had been got even at the time of my agreement[2] with Lord Irwin. If

[1] This paragraph is from *The Hindustan Times*, 24-7-1947.
[2] *Vide* Vol. XLV, p. 436.

we were not lazy we would be getting salt not only cheap but also clean. The salt available in the market is very dirty. The reason is that people do not take pains. The salt that was given to me in jail I used to clean myself. We have become so selfish today that we cannot even let people have salt at a low price. How can we call a regime *Ramarajya* where even salt is denied to the people? Salt is needed not only for human beings but also for animals. What I fear is that now as a consequence of partition both the countries will need to increase their revenues and they may impose tax on salt. But will they be so lacking in sense as to deprive people even of salt? If that happens, too great a price will have been paid for freedom.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 273-4

442. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

July 24, 1947

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,[1]

I did not say anything yesterday about the Maulana Saheb. But my objection stands. His retiring from the cabinet should not affect our connection with him. There are many positions which he can occupy in public life without any harm to any cause. Sardar is decidedly against his membership in the cabinet and so is Rajkumari. Your cabinet must be strong and effective at the present juncture. It should not be difficult to name another Muslim for the cabinet.

I have destroyed the two copies you sent me yesterday.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The superscription and the subscription are in Hindi.

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443. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

VALMIKI MANDIR, NEW DELHI,
July 24, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

The more I think of it the more I am convinced that I should leave here as soon as the Kashmir affair is settled. I do not like much of what is going on. I do not say that for that reason it should be changed; but only that I should not be said to be associated with it. Moreover, I must reach Bihar and thence Noakhali before the 15th. That too is urgent work. I would request you not to detain me any more. There are still four or five days in any case.

I even feel that *Harijan* should now be stopped. I do not like leading the country in an opposite direction. Please think over all this when you have time.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
1 AURANGZEB ROAD
NEW DELHI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 356-7

444. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS DAS

NEW DELHI,
July 24, 1947

CHI. KRISHNADAS DAS,

The existing flags will certainly do. The present flag is not prohibited. The new one will fly over the Government offices. This is a new version. But it does not eliminate the old one.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

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445. A LETTER

July 24, 1947

Jawahar desires that I should go to Kashmir. He seems even to have decided that I should start on the 30th. Chi. Mridula has even fixed up the programme for the visit. But . . .[1] does not seem to like the idea. I personally am not at all keen on the visit. But I do wish to go to Lahore. From there I will proceed directly to Bihar. If I get a few days there, I shall be able to do a good deal. Thus the whole thing is uncertain, and in these circumstances your coming here does not seem advisable. Go on doing what you can there. As for other things, I suppose you read my daily prayer speeches. In them I pour out my heart.

My mind is in Bihar and Noakhali now. Considering the pressure of work, my health is fairly good. Chi. Manu's is no good at all. She is a little better today. She will write the rest and complete this letter.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 399-400

446. A LETTER

July 24, 1947

Realizing Truth means realizing that all human beings are one, that all religions are one, just as our limbs are members of the same body.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 400

[1] Omission as in the source

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447. LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
July 24, 1947

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your and Chi. Balkrishna's letter. Do what you can. Since Dr. Dinshaw does not approve of both of you becoming trustees it is best that you should not be one. Your work of course must not be affected. One place on the Board of Trustees must be kept vacant. Whatever the reason for Chi. Balkrishna's staying on there, I think he should remain. The fact that his health has improved is also, in my view, a good omen.

I note what you say about yourself. Your vow[1] becomes you. God will help you to fulfil it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 2726. Courtesy: Manilal B. Desai

448. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

NEW DELHI,
July 24, 1947

CHI. LILA,

I have your letter. Why need you feel unhappy because those dear to you fall ill? Anybody falling ill is a test for you. There is no reason for you to get panicky. It will be well if Dwarkadas[2] survives, and also well if he passes away. God will look after his children. You must complete your study. You should also know that there are a great many other people as unhappy as you. But rare indeed are those who find happiness in suffering. You are one of them, and may you remain so.

I have been tearing up your letters because you yourself wished so. But even if they had been preserved, what need

[1] To serve at Uruli-Kanchan all through life
[2] Addressee's brother

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would there be to read them again? I have never blamed you and will never do so. What does it matter whether I have done anybody good or harm? Everybody will reap as he sows. Calm yourself. My blessings to Dwarkadas.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9611. Also C. W. 6583. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

449. A LETTER[1]

July 24, 1947

Inciting the workers in this manner and making inflammatory speeches against the capitalists is not going to help. That will only lead to conflict and the economic problem will remain unsolved. Both the sides should adopt the method of reasoning and persuasion. Don't you see that, at a time when the communal virus is spreading, by exploiting the situation and pouring abuse on the Congress you are not furthering your own cause? I hope the reports in the papers are false. Please let me know. Do remember that both the Congress and your party pursue the same goal, which is eradication of poverty in the country and peace and prosperity for all. But the methods are different. We are passing through such difficult times that if the country's leaders and the people become divided into opposite camps, I don't know what will be the fate of the country. Please think whether the words of an experienced old man, who has trained you all like his sons, have any substance in them. If you think that they have, then I don't at all wish to press you to join the Congress against your will but I do wish to suggest that you engage yourself in constructive activities like communal unity, etc. If you find no substance in what I have said, then tear up this letter. I wish nothing but what I believe is for the country's good and your own.

I hope Chi. . . .[2] and you both keep good health and are regular in your meals. I also hope that you no longer need medicines.

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 400

[1] According to the source this was addressed to a Socialist leader.
[2] Omission as in the source

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450. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

NEW DELHI,
July 24, 1947

CHI. BHANSALI,

I have your letter. As the saying goes, 'extremes should always be avoided'. Swaraj—as I have conceived it—is far away. Perhaps it may not materialize in my lifetime. It will not draw any nearer by your keeping standing.[1] If you can, go deeply into the matter. You will then make headway. But if you cannot, then it is your duty to do as I say.

Teach whoever is willing to learn. Do whatever body-labour you easily can. By vigilance at the Ashram, I do not mean the watch and ward business of a sentry but the voluntary observance of dharma and the restraining influence it will exercise. Let us not be another's judge.

Let Pushpa stay at the Khadi Karyalaya. She should come to the Ashram only after becoming proficient in khadi work. She should have the utmost capacity to abide by rules.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

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

451. LETTER TO SWAMI KARAPATRI

NEW DELHI,
July 24, 1947

GOSWAMIJI,

I have your letter. Thanks.

I think I know the five demands of the Dharma Sangh. I must say that I do not agree with the current interpretation of Sanatana Dharma.

I have called cow-protection *goseva*, i. e., service of the cow. Legislation hardly serves the cow, much less protects it.

All my life has been and is being spent in protecting dharma. Dharmashastra undergoes modifications with the passage of time.

[1] *Vide* pp. 331-2.
[2] *Vide* also p. 401.

Therefore I hold that as far as I know your activity harms dharma.

Untouchability has absolutely no place in Sanatana Dharma. If the former persists I see the ruin of dharma.

I have said all this in brief.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

GOSWAMI KARAPATRI

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

452. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

July 24, 1947

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I am sorry to read about the bullock. I think the bullock is like a son to the farmer. Animal husbandry is a difficult science. Agriculture can be fruitful only through co-operation. The larger part of it should involve manual labour. I have advised them in Noakhali to clear the fields by manual labour. Bullocks are scarce there. A large number of them were slaughtered. My advice will be that no new bullocks should be bought. How long can they go on buying bullocks? This whole question needs consideration.

Your dream was beautiful. If we comfort ourselves thus the whole problem will be solved.

Ponder over the song: "O good man, give up the pride in thy heart."

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1986

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453. A LETTER

July 24, 1947

God is our only support. Seek His help, what help can I give? I am but an ordinary weak man. . . .[1] It seems to me that I may have to stop *Harijan*. I have today written[2] to . . . also and said that I don't wish to deceive myself. I say and write only what the inner voice dictates. It is possible that from the point of view of other people what I am doing may be wrong, but I can follow no other path as long as I myself am not convinced of the error. You may discuss this matter at length with . . . I am not made to act in any other way.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 400

454. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 24, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

As I have said repeatedly, when one is at prayer or engaged in similar sacred activity one does not smoke. Christians drink and smoke a good deal but I have never yet seen a Christian drinking or smoking when in a church. The same rule applies to mosques and gurudwaras. This place of course can be called a temple, a church or a mosque, since our prayer consists of texts taken from every religion. It would be good if you gave up smoking. Though I know that you are not going to do so on my asking you, still those who want to smoke can go out of the congregation and do so.

Then some people get up and walk away while the prayer is still going on. It may be they do not find it interesting. But interesting or not, our purpose after all is to utter the name of God. The rule is that till the prayer is ended—and it is I who end it—no one should leave.

[1] Omissions as in the source

[2] The reference, presumably, is to "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel"; *vide* p. 409.

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The Charkha Sangh has a stock of old tri-colour flags valued at Rs. 2 lakhs. The Charkha Sangh is an organization of very poor people. I am its President. The people working in that organization are paid very little. They want to know what they are to do with the flags. There is not much difference between the new and the old flag except that the old one was a little more elegant. The old flag had the charkha. The new one has the wheel but not the spindle and the *mal*. The new flag does not render the old flag redundant. Even after the king is dead, the kingdom remains and old coins are not discarded for the new ones. When the new coins are issued old coins do not suffer any depreciation of value. Therefore, so long as there is even one old flag in stock at the Gandhi Ashram the two flags will have the same value. People who have old flags should not tear them up and if they want to buy more flags they should buy the same flags from the Gandhi Ashram so that Rs. 2 lakhs worth of goods are not wasted. Of course in future the Charkha Sangh will make flags only of the new design.

I have two questions before me today. A correspondent wants to know what will happen to the Congress after August 15 and what its programme will be. He says that till now anyone wishing to join the Congress had to swear an oath that he would fight for the freedom of India through truthful and non-violent means. Now that freedom of India has been won he wants to know what the position will be.

The Congress alone can tell what its programme will be. As a humble servant of the Congress I know that so long the task before us had been to fight foreign rule. We became rebels and we dislodged that rule. Outwardly we followed truth and non-violence. But inwardly there was violence in us. We practised hypocrisy and as a result we have to suffer the pain of mutual strife. Even today we are nurturing attitudes that will result in war and if this drift is not stopped we shall find ourselves in a conflict much more sanguinary than the Mutiny of 1857. India then did not have enough awakening and the mutiny was confined only to the sepoys. All that we did was to cut down Englishmen. In the end the British army overcame the mutineers. God forbid that the present strife should ever assume such dimensions. Therefore not only out of regard for truth and non-violence but also in the interest of the country, for which hundreds of thousands faced imprisonment and suffered hardships, I shall appeal to you not to prepare for warfare. For by so doing you will not only lose the country's freedom but

you will send it back into slavery. England, Russia, America or China—any of these countries may attack and enslave us. Do you, on the fifteenth of August, want to witness the spectacle of Hindus fighting Muslims and the Sikhs being crushed between the belligerents? I would rather that there was an earthquake and we all were crushed to death. Therefore since the Congress belongs to all India it should see to it that Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, and all the other communities are kept happy. I do not suggest that you should try to appease the Muslims or become cowards. I have never advocated cowardice. We should bravely pacify the people. This should be the chief programme of the Congress.

Although I have been President of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan twice it is my firm opinion that Hindi in Devanagari script can never become the national language of India. Today many of our leaders say that Gandhi talks nonsense. He is always out to appease the Muslims. Jinnah Saheb, however, while talking of two nations had accused me of wiping out Urdu. Thus today I am regarded as an enemy of both the languages. But I want to remain a friend of both. My claim that if there is any true friend of India, it is Gandhi, will be vindicated in the eyes of God. I can even today point out so many Hindus who neither know Hindi nor can write in Devanagari. We will have to adopt a language which is a mixture of Hindi and Urdu as the national language if Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis and Sikhs are to live here. I have no doubt that the language you speak can become a great language.

An Indonesian leader Sjahrir is on a visit here. He will meet Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr. Jinnah. India can give Indonesia its moral support which will be more effective than any military aid.

An Englishman says in a letter that now that India has been partitioned it will no longer have the status of a great nation. I do not agree, provided the two parts remain friendly with each other.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 274-7

455. LETTER TO HARIPRASAD DESAI

[Before *July 25, 1947*][1]

Why so jubilant? *Purna* swaraj is far off.

Have we got swaraj? Did swaraj mean only that the British rule should end? To my mind it was not so. For me Sabarmati is far off[2], Noakhali is near.

The Hindustan Times, 28-7-1947

456. LETTER TO SUNDERLAL

NEW DELHI,
July 25, 1947

BHAI SUNDERLAL,

I have your letter and the enclosed papers. Let me see when I can go through them. I am writing this at 4.50 in the morning.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

What a pity! Is there no other language than English for our work? Oh! what culture, what convenience![3]

From Hindi: C. W. 10265. Courtesy: Purushottam Prasad

[1] The letter was reported under the date-line Ahmedabad, July 25.

[2] The addressee, an old associate, had asked Gandhiji to return to Ahmedabad as Gandhiji had pledged on the eve of the Dandi March to go back to Sabarmati Ashram only after India attained swaraj.

[3] Gandhiji was referring to Hindustani Culture Society's letter-head used by the addressee.

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457. *HINDI* v. *HINDUSTANI*

Shrimati Perinbehn Captain writes:[1]

> It was with shame, disgust and sorrow that I heard on the Delhi radio that our own group of men wished to dethrone our national language. . . . Please write to me fully what you would like: (1) our Hindustani Committee to do, (2) our honest and self-sacrificing Hindustani *pracharaks* to do, and (3) last but not least, those of our countrymen —Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians and Jews, who have accepted and loved Hindustani as understood by the Congress resolution, to do. . . .
>
> Please try and prevent our friends from losing their vision through hatred and thereby losing all hopes of linking in true friendship and love the whole country from Kashmir to Kanya Kumari and Assam to Sind.

This represents the common grief of many nationalists like her, labelled Congressmen or not. Since this letter was written the threat has been postponed for two months or until such time as the Constituent Assembly meets again. It is a wise postponement which gives time for passions to cool down in order to allow clear thinking.

Let the Hindus, by their conduct, direct or indirect, disprove the Muslim League statement that we, the Hindus and the Muslims of India, are not one nation but two and that too because of our respective religions. Congressmen have declared from the very inception of the Congress that India is one nation composed of men belonging to all religions and sects known in the whole world and it has proved the claim often enough at crucial moments in spite of many lapses which it would be easy to fling in its face.

Dadabhai Naoroji, whose grand-daughter has written the above letter with so much feeling, has become and still remains the only Grand Old Man of India.

Pherozeshah Mehta became the uncrowned king of the Bombay Presidency and after Dadabhai Naoroji's death ruled the Congress by right of service unselfishly rendered.

Who was Badruddin Tyabjee—at one time President of the Congress? Was he not a Mussalman every inch of him? Was he any the less an Indian? India has many religions but only one nationality and this, I dare to say, in spite of its two divisions.

[1] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

They may persist for a long time, but we must not be enemies one of the other for a single minute. It takes two to make a quarrel, but friendship does not require reciprocity. That which requires reciprocity is a bargain. This friendship, otherwise called love or non-violence, belongs not to the cowardly but to the brave and the seeing.

I entirely endorse Perinbehn's remark that not Hindi, highly Sanskritized written in the Nagari characters, nor Urdu, highly Persianized written in the Urdu characters, can ever be the link between two or more communities in India. It can only be Hindustani which is a fusion of the two forms robbed of their artificial character and written either in the Nagari or the Urdu characters. This natural fusion has been going on for many years and like all natural processes, it has been slow but nonetheless sure. It does not matter to me whether any Muslim brother reciprocates or not, by trying to understand my form of speech or writing, but surely I am richer for endeavouring to understand his form of speech and writing. Speaking to many Muslim divines I have not found it difficult to explain my meaning through Hindustani, though I have never attempted to pretend to speak their high-flown Persianized Urdu. They have as a rule been the losers and I invariably the gainer. What is true of me is true, I am sure, of many more.

Now about her main questions:

Every member of the Hindustani Committee is to live up to his creed, that is to say, he or she should himself or herself master both the scripts and be familiar with a mixture of the two forms, Hindi and Urdu. This will happen when both are diligently studied in their simple forms. And when this first requisite is fulfilled, he or she must try to induce others to acquire the knowledge.

Secondly, if the Hindustani *pracharaks* are honest and self-sacrificing they are bound to infect their surroundings with the spirit that actuates them.

Thirdly, those who have accepted Hindustani as the national language of the whole of India and love it, have to prove their acceptance by speaking and writing only in Hindustani, when it is meant for those who do not know the mother tongue. Thus a Tamilian will speak only in Tamil to a fellow Tamilian, but with a non-Tamilian he will make use of Hindustani and not English as is now the wont.

NEW DELHI, July 25, 1947

Harijan, 3-8-1947

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458. SCHEDULED CASTES

A correspondent writes:

> If the Scheduled Castes of x area are included in Pakistan, they would probably have no alternative other than embracing Islam.

The correspondent is well educated and is an M.L.A. The question immediately arises as to what will happen to the Scheduled Caste members in the Pakistan areas where they are not living in contiguous areas. Will they all have to embrace Islam? I can only say that their religion must be very poor stuff if it admits of change like one's clothes. Religion (binding faith) is made of sterner stuff; it is a deep personal matter, more personal than honour. To be true, it must be able to defy coercion of the extremest type.

So much for those who are in fear of compulsory conversion. But what about those who inspire men and women with such fear? I have heard it seriously argued that people have often mistaken voluntary for compulsory conversion. I think the argument does not carry any conviction. People have been known in all ages to resort to conversion when they have known their friends, relations or neighbours to profess conversion under duress. When, therefore, there is suspicion all round, conversion should be stopped altogether. Here I remind myself of the argument of the correspondent used only the other day that my "brave" words about personal religion would be all right if they were confined to *sannyasis* but not to householders who were exposed to a variety of temptations from life. Though I do not endorse this argument, for it weakens those on whose behalf it is led, I cannot help feeling that there is considerable force in it, especially when it is made applicable to members of the Scheduled Castes who have been ill-treated by their fellow Hindus and would, therefore, yield to compulsion in the hope of avoiding ill-treatment from their fellows who arrogate to themselves superiority, falsely so-called. Frequently this compulsion assumes subtle forms, as for instance, free grants of land or offer of service even beyond merit.

NEW DELHI, July 25, 1947
Harijan, 3-8-1947

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459. LETTER TO PERINBEHN CAPTAIN

NEW DELHI,
July 25, 1947

CHI. PERINBEHN,[1]

Your letter. You will see what I spoke yesterday on Hindustani.[2] You and I must work hard, even unto death for the purpose. Let us not lose heart.

Make an effort to speak and write Hindustani in both the scripts.

The agony is postponed for two months. Much can be done by earnest people during the breathing time.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

460. LETTER TO BHAKTAPRASAD

NEW DELHI,
July 25, 1947

BHAI BHAKTAPRASAD,

I have your letter. I wish you all success in your work of service.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] The superscription is in Devanagari.
[2] *Vide* p. 417.

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461. A LETTER

July 25, 1947

It is true that a great calamity has befallen us, but if we think deeply we will see that it contains a unique opportunity for working for the prosperity and moral regeneration of the country. How I wish we realized this!

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 406

462. A LETTER

July 25, 1947

Why are you so sensitive? He who wishes to serve cannot afford to be sensitive. We townspeople have done such great injustice to the people of the villages that if they merely abuse us and stop at that, in my view they are letting us off very lightly. If, therefore, you bear with their abuses and in atonement for your sins patiently and selflessly try to become one with the villagers, you will have no need to come to me.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 407

463. A LETTER

July 25, 1947

In the first place, if people change their religion as they change their clothes every day or every hour, religion will lose all its power. One's religion represents the priceless spirit of resolution arising from deep faith. If the strength of resolution is rooted in the heart, it will not yield or submit to any amount of force or coercion.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 407

464. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 25, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Rajendra Babu tells me that he has received some 50,000 postcards, between 25,000 and 30,000 letters and many thousands of telegrams demanding a ban on cow-slaughter. I spoke to you about this before. Why this flood of telegrams and letters? They have had no effect. I have another telegram which says that a friend has started a fast for this cause. In India no law can be made to ban cow-slaughter. I do not doubt that Hindus are forbidden the slaughter of cows. I have been long pledged to serve the cow but how can my religion also be the religion of the rest of the Indians? It will mean coercion against those Indians who are not Hindus. We have been shouting from the house-tops that there will be no coercion in the matter of religion. We have been reciting verses from the Koran at the prayer. But if anyone were to force me to recite these verses I would not like it. How can I force anyone not to slaughter cows unless he is himself so disposed? It is not as if there were only Hindus in the Indian Union. There are Muslims, Parsis, Christians and other religious groups here. The assumption of the Hindus that India now has become the land of the Hindus is erroneous. India belongs to all who live here. If we stop cow-slaughter by law here and the very reverse happens in Pakistan, what will be the result? Supposing they say Hindus would not be allowed to visit temples because it was against *Shariat* to worship idols? I see God even in a stone but how do I harm others by this belief? If therefore I am stopped from visiting temples I would still visit them. I shall therefore suggest that these telegrams and letters should cease. It is not proper to waste money on them.

Besides some prosperous Hindus themselves encourage cow-slaughter. True, they do not do it with their own hands. But who sends all the cows to Australia and other countries where they are slaughtered and whence shoes manufactured from cow-hide are sent back to India? I know an orthodox Vaishnava Hindu. He used to feed his children on beef soup. On my

asking him why he did that he said there was no sin in consuming beef as medicine. We really do not stop to think what true religion is and merely go about shouting that cow-slaughter should be banned by law. In villages Hindus make bullocks carry huge burdens which almost crush the animals. Is it not cow-slaughter, albeit slowly carried out? I shall therefore suggest that the matter should not be pressed in the Constituent Assembly.

Where trees are in abundance, rainfall too is abundant. The foliage in a forest attracts precipitation from clouds like milk from the udder of a cow. It is a law of nature that where there are no trees there is no rainfall and the land soon becomes a desert. I spent many years in Johannesburg. The climate there is very salubrious. After they planted trees there, rainfall too has been favourable. Therefore the programme of tree-planting that the authorities in Delhi have started is a very good thing. Those who have no spare patch of ground can still grow vegetables in earthen pots.

I have been asked, 'Since in view of the atrocities being perpetuated by Muslims it is difficult to decide which of the Muslims are to be trusted, what should be our attitude towards the Muslims in the Indian Union? What should the non-Muslims in Pakistan do?'

I have already answered this question. I again repeat that all the religions of India today are being put to the test. It has to be seen how the various religious groups such as the Sikhs, the Hindus, the Muslims and the Christians conduct themselves and how they carry on the affairs of India. Pakistan may be said to belong to Muslims but the Indian Union belongs to all. If you shake off cowardice and become brave you will not have to consider how you are to behave towards the Muslims. But today there is cowardice in us. For this I have already accepted the blame. I am still wondering how my 30 years' teaching has been so ineffective. Why did I assume, to begin with, that non-violence could be a weapon of cowards? Even now if we can really become brave and love the Muslims, the Muslims will have to stop and think what they could gain by practising treachery against us. They will return love for love. Can we keep the crores of Muslims in the Indian Union as slaves? He who makes slaves of others himself becomes a slave. If we answer sword with sword, the lathi with lathi and kick with kick, we cannot expect that things will be different in Pakistan. We shall then lose our freedom as easily as we have gained it.

I like the statement that has been issued on behalf of the future Governments of India and Pakistan. But I wish to see it implemented. However, we cannot assume that they will not do in Pakistan what the statement says. To assume this will mean preparing for war. The two armies will confront each other and the two-nation theory of Mr. Jinnah will have been proved true. I pray to God that He may not let us drift into such a situation.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 277-80

465. DISCUSSION WITH A CONGRESSMAN[1]

NEW DELHI,
[Before *July 26, 1947*][2]

A Congressman came to Gandhiji the other day asking him how he would reorganize the Congress under the new set-up. Gandhiji was emphatic that if the Congress was to live as a potent force, it must become a body of constructive workers. Constructive work, he knew, had never been over-popular. He thought that it was never more necessary than now. Without the backing of constructive work and penetrating the villages, their legislators would practically be idle and the voters would be exposed to the machinations of the vote-catchers. The labour vote would presently be a drop in the ocean in the face of adult suffrage both for men and women. It was probably the boldest experiment known to the world on a vast scale. Unless it was well planned and all attendant dangers anticipated and provided against, adult suffrage might well prove a deluge drowning the whole country. He (Gandhiji) knew nothing so effective for the purpose as a well-thought-out constructive programme.

Harijan, 3-8-1947

[1] & [2] The discussion is extracted from Dr. Sushila Nayyar's "Congressmen and Constructive Work", reported under the date-line New Delhi, 26-7-1947. It appeared under "Notes".

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466. LETTER TO SATISH

5 a. m., July 26, 1947

CHI. SATISH,

You are entitled to write to me. Now please write to Jawaharlalji the briefest note explaining what you want, etc. Then just wait in patience.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

467. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

July 26, 1947

CHI. LILI,

I have your postcard. It is 5 o'clock in the morning. You must firmly tell Dwarkadas that, if the diagnosis is correct, he will live only for a few days. Bear cheerfully whatever happens. You are on trial. God will see you through. I hope you got my airmail letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

468. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

July 26, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,

Your letter. It is now 5.05 a. m. At 5.15 I go out for my walk. I hope that the cholera will subside. I do wish to reach Noakhali before the 15th of next month.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

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469. LETTER TO HORACE ALEXANDER

NEW DELHI,
July 26, 1947

MY DEAR HORACE,

I have yours of 22nd.

It is high time we met. I am not here now long I hope. I should be leaving in two or three days. Patna for four or five days and then Noakhali just before August 15.

You will know my programme and see where we should meet.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1446

470. LETTER TO CARL HEATH

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,
July 26, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I was much touched by your letter[1] of 19th instant. I wholly agree with you that the number of years a person lives in this world is of no consequence whether to him or to the world but even a day spent in true service of mankind is of supreme and only importance. I further agree with you that hope and faith are as often as not synonymous terms. Of course good is eternal, evil transitory.

I must abide by my statement: there can be no place for a man of peace in a society full of strife. Please do not look at my bad imperfect English but consider the heart of my meaning. I am sure you will agree with me that a man of peace is out of place in a society full of strife. He must know this fact and yet work and act in that society. I wonder if I have at all

[1] The addressee, an English Quaker, could not agree with Gandhiji's reply to Richard B. Gregg; *vide* pp. 187-9.

made my meaning clear. There is no such thing as surrender in me to the spirit of evil.

I do hope that your physical illness is under control.

Love to you all.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1052; also *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, p. 323

471. LETTER TO MECMANAGE

July 26, 1947

DEAR MECMANAGE,

Your letter. My advice is: you should settle down in Ceylon and quietly serve the Ceylonese. The way of ahimsa is narrow.

If I know you, you will not be happy in the Ashram. Marry by all means. But marry a simple Ceylonese girl and see how you and she feel.

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

472. LETTER TO BASANT K. DAS

NEW DELHI,
July 26, 1947

DEAR BASANT K. DAS,

Your letter. I seem to agree with all you say. But do see me even tonight after prayer and walk with me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

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473. LETTER TO DR. CHOUDHARI

NEW DELHI,
July 26, 1947

DEAR DR. CHOUDHARI,

Many thanks for your letter. You will be surprised that I have no photographs of myself.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DUBLIN
IRELAND[1]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

474. LETTER TO MOTWANI

July 26, 1947

DEAR MOTWANI,

I have your letter of the 18th inst. I have not mixed up socialism with sociology. I must confess I have read very little if anything at all about sociology.

Socialism as conceived in the West may go against Indian culture. Then it is faulty but socialism as defined by me in the articles you have read, is a living thing and true. It is undoubtedly an economic doctrine but not based on class warfare.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

475. A LETTER

July 26, 1947

I have your letter. If a man believes that a *peepul* tree is haunted by a ghost, he will not get rid of his fear by going to the tree again and again. Only if he visits the tree several times in the company of a person who does not share his fear and nothing happens to him, will his fear go. This can happen

[1] The address is in Devanagari.

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in the case of *brahmacharya* only if a man of conventional ideas lives in the company of a perfect *brahmachari* from time to time. But then, how are we to find such a *brahmachari*? And who will accept such a claim by anybody?

The example of the *peepul* tree and the ghost is applicable only up to a certain point. I hope you know that I have never claimed that I am a perfect *brahmachari*.

When shall I know that state supreme,
When will the knots outer and inner snap?

I write this for a seeker. Just now it is not germane to go further than this. If the seeker finds his path, it might be pertinent to go further.

I have no doubt that if the Congress wishes to preserve its strength, it must vigorously pursue the constructive programme.

You worry about me from your sick-bed. But there is One who worries about you and me and everybody else; why don't you leave everything to that Almighty? And if I am destined to give still more service, nothing will happen to me. For you, prayer is the only unfailing remedy.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 416

476. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

VALMIKI MANDIR,
NEW DELHI,
July 26, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

Two Khaksars came to see me yesterday. One of them wept bitterly. The other complained that although an official had assured them that now nothing would be done to them since they were going away, yet there was firing in the mosque the same evening, that many were killed, that an old man of seventy received seven bullets, that no one knew how many had died and how many had survived and that for three days the Khaksars were kept there without food and water, unable even to go out to answer calls of nature.

I was stunned to hear all this. I rebuked them. I said it could not be true. I said, "Sardar told me only today that since the Khaksars would not leave the mosque police officials had to enter the mosque, that they did so with the permission of the Imam, that the action that was taken was ordered by

the Muslim officer, that no violence had been used, nothing beyond tear-gas had been fired and that no one had been killed. I therefore cannot swallow what you say." They answered, "If that is what your Sardar says, how can we hope to be believed? What use asking for justice now? One day you will know. Truth will be out." I said, "If I hear of a wrong being done I do not hide it even for the sake of my dear ones. I shall say no more. I will do my duty." Now if there is anything in this please let me know.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
1, AURUNGZEB ROAD
NEW DELHI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 357-8

477. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
July 26, 1947

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have your letter. At the moment it seems there is some improvement in Manu's condition. She gets clear motions. There is no pain and no fever. She eats well. But I have to force her to take complete rest. She is fidgeting to resume her service of me. But I do not let her. She is being given no medicine. She is under Sushilabehn's treatment, and the latter believes, as I do, that the only medicine she requires is complete rest. Manu has now begun to realize this.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] According to *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II (p. 331), in his reply dated August 11, the addressee said: "The whole story . . . is a fabrication and no Khaksar has died . . . Khaksars were plotting to stage a demonstration during . . . independence day (August 15) . . . not to allow the Congress flag to be flown and to create a disturbance and indulge in violence. The Commissioner (a Muslim), therefore, used tear-gas in the mosque and arrested them. . . . The Khaksars want Delhi and Agra to be included in Pakistan, also Ajmer. . . . they want to establish a front in Delhi and create disturbance. . . . do not want . . . the Commissioner . . . Delhi. They take sanctuary in mosques. Local Muslims are not giving them any support."

478. LETTER TO MAHESH DATT MISHRA

July 26, 1947

CHI. MAHESH,

You have not returned the book you had borrowed from Brijkrishna. Why? It belongs to the library here. Send it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6723. Also C. W. 4467. Courtesy: Mahesh Datt Mishra

479. TALK WITH KELLY

NEW DELHI,
July 26, 1947

When such a mighty power is dislodged a country's condition becomes even worse. We shall see this if we examine the history of the world. Compared to that nothing has happened in India. That does not mean that our present inhuman conduct is justified. It is really shameful. I am pained because we have sullied the noble method by which without shedding a drop of blood we made a great power leave in friendship. I also say that our countrymen are very simple at heart and that the British have taken advantage of that. We are so stupid. Perhaps you do not know that the person who treated me as a son and took me to Africa was an orthodox Muslim. If you go to Bengal, the U. P., Gujarat, or the Punjab, you will find that Muslims speak the same regional language. It is our good fortune and the grace of God that this poison has not spread to our villages.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 419-20

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480. TALK WITH DR. SYED MAHMUD[1]

NEW DELHI,
July 26, 1947

I can understand the five of us working in different directions and thinking in different ways, but how harmful it will be to you and to the country if we behave as if we were one another's rivals? All of you should think about this. It is not that such things are happening only in Bihar. That is so more or less in every province. If the five of us cannot work in amity and are not frank with each other, my attempt to solve this great question of Hindu-Muslim unity is bound to fail. However, my cry is "do or die". I said this to Ghanshyam Das[2] just now. I am sure about myself. But what will happen to the country?

Moreover, we are now filled with another kind of arrogance. We disregard the old and experienced diwans and other officials of the States and criticize them in public. I have also received the complaint that when they come to see us our behaviour towards them is very unbecoming. If it is true, then one day we shall be sorry for our arrogance. We should utilize the services of everyone. After all they are our countrymen, aren't they? They have not become our enemies because they served the British Government. How a person like Girijashankar Bajpai abused me in 1942! What poisonous falsehoods he spread at the time Ba died![3] Should we spurn him if he wants to help us now? The loss shall be ours if we lose such an intelligent and experienced person. Please remember that they are at heart patriots. Only, for certain reasons they were not able to make sacrifices. If we seek the advice of such old and experienced persons, they will show their genius. They will easily be able to do what we can't. We are novices in the matter of administration. Our country will suffer if we don't take their help. So we will have to forget our old prejudices and work in unity.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 418-9

[1] Minister for Development and Transport, Bihar Government
[2] G. D. Birla
[3] *Vide* Vol. LXXVII, footnote 2, p. 243.

481. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 26, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I personally feel that a barrister and a scavenger should get equal wages. But it is easier said than done. And it is not something that can be accomplished through strikes. We should for the time being accept and assimilate the rise in salaries recommended by the Pay Commission[1] and then proceed to build up public opinion in favour of the principle of equality of wages. Strikes too are governed by a logic. Nothing is gained by indiscriminate strikes. Today unfortunately strikes are sweeping the country. There are strikes even where people have their own governments. I think that under British rule we did not have so many strikes. Today I have received a telegram from Calcutta and I also see from newspapers that the employees of the Accountant-General's office have gone on a pen-down strike. The strike includes the employees of the Post and Telegraph department which operates not for the good of any particular individual but for the good of the community. It is true that it has some big officers getting huge salaries and it is unjust that the members of the subordinate staff should be paid such low salaries. Why should the difference in salaries be so great as it is? This was started by the British and we liked it and continued it. But if people were to put down their pens, what would become of India? If through strikes they bring about a little rise in salaries it would not be a great thing. The method is wrong and is harmful to the country. The present plight of India brings to my mind the story of the goose that laid golden eggs. The owner of the goose wishing to have all the eggs at once killed her. As a result not only did he get no more eggs but he lost the goose as well. The administration that has come into our hands is somewhat like that goose. If we want to get out of it all the eggs together it will surely die and so shall we.

[1] The report of the Central Pay Commission appointed by the Government of India was announced in New Delhi on May 16, 1947. A minimum basic salary of Rs. 30 per month and a maximum salary of Rs. 2,000 per month, to be relaxed only in the case of a few selected posts, were among its chief recommendations.

Strikes as I have said have a logic. I first tried the weapon of strikes in South Africa. Indians there were treated as coolies. Strikes had then a meaning because they had no other way of making themselves heard. Therefore anyone who knows anything about strikes will only say to the strikers everywhere that the path they have chosen will be their own undoing. India has already been partitioned and if the strikes continue God alone knows what will become of India. It is our duty quietly to go on doing the work that we have been doing. As a result of the recommendations of the Pay Commission the emoluments of the low-paid employees have been considerably raised. If you go on demanding more and more India will go bankrupt. It is true that the Government receives crores of rupees in revenue but that money cannot be spent for the benefit of only a handful of people. The largest share should go to the villagers from whom it comes.

Recently there has been a workers' strike in Bombay. The Government there had already given one or two crores of rupees to the workers, but they were not satisfied and in order to show their strength resorted to a token strike. What they ought to have done was to accept what they had been given and set about cultivating public opinion in their favour. But they chose the way of strike. The Congress itself has become divided into many factions and I am told that one of the factions was behind the strike. These token strikes, even if they last only a couple of hours, show a kind of arrogance. The party organizing such a strike seeks thereby to demonstrate its hold on the workers. What purpose otherwise can such a strike serve? The country can gain nothing from such strikes. Therefore what the workers of Bombay did seems to me wrong.

Must we destroy ourselves through such strikes? The motive behind them is not service of the country but selfishness pure and simple. The British have hardly left the country. The reins of the Government have hardly come in our hands and we have started fighting over money. I hold in principle that a barrister and a scavenger should receive equal payment. But a barrister is able to snatch more and we gladly let him. I too was once a barrister but I found the idea of thus making money repugnant and I became a Bhangi. But where are we to find men who will have the talent to work as Governors, barristers, traders and the like? And who will be satisfied with the wages of a scavenger ? Even a tailor is able to earn four or five rupees a day. But who will pay a scavenger that much? The need

today is for man to change his nature, to cultivate generosity and not to cut other people's throats to further his self-interest. If the assassinations in Burma cannot teach us a lesson, then what is going to be the plight of India and the world?

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 281-3

482. DISCUSSION WITH AN AMERICAN PACIFIST[1]

NEW DELHI,
[Before *July 27, 1947*][2]

A young American pacifist came to see Gandhiji some days ago. He had brought a note of introduction from Miss Muriel Lester. He told Gandhiji how she had carried the message of peace to young Americans during the war and explained to them why they should stay out of the war. He asked Gandhiji how young American pacifists should behave today.

Gandhiji's reply was that they should behave as they would if the war was still going on. Even if they are a few individuals, they should not hesitate to do the right thing. The few would multiply into many.

The Friend was eloquent about Miss Lester. He had great admiration for her. He thought she was one of the greatest women. Gandhiji said:

She herself would contradict it. There are many great women, but few good women. If you had said that she was a very good woman, you would have been right. A true pacifist's language must be correct and thought exact. If you want to play your part effectively in this movement against war, you have to model your life accordingly. The movement against war is intrinsically sound. No one can question the value of peace. Yet it has not made enough headway. The fault lies with the pacifists.

The friend turned back to what Gandhiji called inexact language on his part because he had described Miss Lester as one of the greatest women. He said he had called her great because she was good.

Gandhiji retorted that he never knew that goodness and greatness were synonymous terms. A man might be great, yet not good.

Harijan, 10-8-1947

[1&2] The discussion is extracted from Sushila Nayar's "Notes", sub-title, "Good or Great?", dated New Delhi, 27-7-1947.

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483. THE NATIONAL FLAG[1]

The National Flag has been in existence since 1921. Those who say that what was so far the Congress Flag has now become the National Flag of India make a meaningless fuss and at the same time insult the Congress. The Congress has been national from its very inception. It has never been sectional. It embraces all sections and all Indians. Of course, it is open to the Congress to become sectional and commit suicide. If God's wrath descends upon it the calamity may well overtake it. Nevertheless, many will be praying that such a misfortune may not overtake it. Is it possible that Jinnah's jibe that the Congress is national only in name but Hindu in action, will be proved just?

Here, however, we shall confine ourselves to the Flag. What has happened is that, having acquiesced in the division of India, the Congress has nevertheless delivered it from the British domination and has taken over the larger part. Therefore, the flag under which the Congress has fought so many non-violent battles will now be the flag of the Government of free India. I see no haughtiness in this. The joy that one finds in climbing the Himalayas, the views one sees, are not to be had on reaching the top. The pleasure lies in the journey, not in arriving at the destination. Similarly the pleasure that it gave us to fight under the National Flag has now come to an end.

I have just reread an article I wrote for *Young India* of April 13, 1921. I advise the reader to glance through that article. It is reproduced in this issue. The modified Flag has value only if it carries the significance attached to it. If it does not, it is to me valueless.

There is reason for this caution. Some say that the original flag has gone, that a new age has begun and with it have come new ways, and that the flag will be one to befit this new age. I have not known a worthy son to whom his mother appeared ugly. It may be possible to gild pure gold, but who can make his mother more beautiful? Hence, in my opinion nothing would have been lost if no changes had been made in the original flag. People are saying 'the charkha was

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan* of the same date.

old women's solace and Gandhi's toy; but swaraj is not for old women. It is for the warrior and we therefore want the Asoka emblem with lions and if the lions do not find a place on the flag, it is merely for artistic considerations: they cannot be reproduced on cloth. But the lions must feature somewhere or other. We have had enough of cowardliness. Nobody has yet had the experience of the non-violence of the brave. We shall talk about it when we see it. It is the lion who is the king of the forest. Sheep and goats are his food. We are tired of wearing khadi. Now we shall wear clothes made of glass. Our forefathers used cloth to cover themselves. We wear clothes to adorn ourselves. Clothing therefore should be such as will show to advantage every limb of the body. The improved flag has no need of khadi. We do not want to disfigure with khadi the shop windows of our towns. The poor in the villages may by all means wear khadi. We shall not treat it as an offence. Old women in their huts may spin away on the charkha. In this new age this should be considered a favour.'

I will refuse to salute the flag that is modified on the above lines however artistic it may appear.

Happily there is the other side which says: 'The new flag is merely an improved design of the original. The spinning-wheel continues on it. That it is without the spindle and the *mal*, is a failing of art. A picture after all is only a picture. It always leaves something for the imagination. The spinning-wheel in a picture has no slivers and no spinners at work on it. These are left for the imagination to fill in. This rule applies as well to the improved design of the flag. Thus conceived, the improvement must appear innocent. This tricolour flag with the wheel will certainly consist of hand-spun and hand-woven khadi. Our country has called it khadi whether it is woven from hand-spun cotton or silk. When the original conception is kept intact there is no harm in making a concession to art. When the country was at war with a foreign power, art lay in being engaged in the battle. Now that it has ended in success, art must have a place, though perhaps, a subordinate one. Otherwise we shall not be able to perpetuate the memory of the struggle.' This is another interpretation.

If any further interpretations not inconsistent with this are added I see no harm in it. One may see some other subtle meaning in the same three colours. Those who see unity in the diversity of the universe may find it in the three colours. Looking at the wheel some may recall that Prince of Peace, King

Asoka, ruler of an empire, who renounced power. He represented all faiths; he was an embodiment of compassion. Seeing the charkha in his *chakra* adds to the glory of the Charkha. Asoka's *chakra* represents eternally revolving Divine Law of ahimsa.

NEW DELHI, July 27, 1947

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 3-8-1947

484. LETTER TO AKBARBHAI CHAVDA

NEW DELHI,
July 27, 1947

CHI. AKBAR,

I have your long letter and also the short one. I have given it to Sardar to read.[1] It is good and gives all the information. If necessary, I shall write more. These days I get no time at all. Now about the second. The story of my going to Gujarat is nothing but rumour. If I could go, I would certainly visit you to see your work. Perhaps the rest of my life will be spent in Bihar and Noakhali. We are all in God's hands, aren't we?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI AKBAR MIAN,
KANZAR
SAMA, *via* PALANPUR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3240

485. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
July 27, 1947

CHI. VALJI,

You are quite right. I can do nothing in a matter such as this. To the innocent, punishment is like a reward, and the guilty repays a part of his debt through it. Both, therefore, should shed fear and appear in the court without any lawyers. I will go through the draft. If God requires my services, He will

[1] *Vide* p. 361.

let me live not a hundred and twenty-five but a hundred and fifty years, and if He doesn't require them any longer He may take me away even today. One must live as Rama bids.

Blessings from
BAPU

PROF. VALJI G. DESAI
14 GANESHWADI
POONA-4

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7503. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

486. A LETTER

July 27, 1947

It is a great mistake for a man to believe that he is always right and others are always wrong. Nothing in the world is wholly perfect and nothing wholly imperfect. Nothing is wholly good or wholly bad. It is we who think things to be perfect or imperfect, good or bad. How I wish you would learn to look at things in this way.

I shall most probably leave Delhi at the end of this month. Where I go will be decided tomorrow. I must reach Noakhali on August 15. But everything rests in the hands of God. . . .[1]

If we do not pay vigilant attention to the villages, I do not know what will happen. After all, how many prosperous cities and towns are there in India? No more than can be counted on one's fingers. They do not make the country prosperous and happy. India means her seven hundred thousand villages. If there was but one worker selflessly working in each village, then in a year's time India's face would be transformed. But unfortunately "a worker" has now come to mean something exactly the opposite of this. I can see from the letters that I receive that a kind of reaction has set in among the workers. Without dwelling further on this point, let us hope that everybody will work with God as witness. I am quite well. Chi. Manudi also has improved a little, though not quite as much as one would wish. Probably we shall go to Kashmir and I hope that she will benefit from the magic climate there and improve during the two days' visit. Here is Rajendra Babu coming,

[1] Omission as in the source

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and I am also being reminded by Lady Watch that it is time for my walk. So I obey her and stop here.

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 427

487. A TALK TO VISITORS[1]

NEW DELHI,
July 27, 1947

That is what I say. We shall have to give the country a different lead. For this we shall have to train a whole army of workers. Their sole concern should be to mix with the people, familiarize themselves with their hardships and make them understand that now the country is theirs and the Ministers are people elected by them. It is an insult to the people rather than the Ministers if there are such demonstrations. However, if there is injustice done to the people, they can take the Minister concerned by the ear and remove him. We should now cultivate that kind of power. The Ministers are there not to rule over the people but to serve them. I gave the same advice to the Socialists. But even a person like . . .[2] does not understand. I do hope to convince him though. The Congress should forget its struggle against the British and launch a movement to educate the public in democracy. We had gained one thing in our struggle against the British and that was that we could speak with one voice and say to the British that they must quit India. There was none in India who said: 'Let them stay'. . . . Similarly we must now say with one voice that we shall make our country prosperous, we shall not let even a single person go unfed and unclothed, we shall make our lives lofty, peaceful and happy. We should be prepared to make any sacrifices necessary to that end. In our struggle against the British we risked our lives. Thousands of people died. But that will not be so in our new movement. The only thing that will be wanted is that the rich should give of their riches. But the method of extracting money from them will not be the one

[1] The visitors requested Gandhiji to issue specific instructions regarding strikes, etc. "Our own teaching," they said, "is being used against us."
[2] Omissions as in the source

suggested by the Socialists and Communists like Lohia, Ramgopal and others. Their method will lead to the moral and economic degradation of the labourers rather than that of the capitalists. Poor workers are like the sheep. They follow whichever way they are led. If they take to the ways of duplicity, destruction, plunder, it will be difficult to bring them to the right path. Besides, if they continue going on strike, they will go without wages. It is solely out of a desire for cheap leadership that these so-called leaders have brought the working class under their influence.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 427-8

488. MESSAGE TO ARMY OFFICERS

NEW DELHI,
July 27, 1947

I have only one message for you. You have got your guns and sten-guns and you are proficient in killing men and all living things. Instead of that you should learn the art of using the sickle, ploughing the land and producing the food necessary for men and other living beings. Forget violence and gain proficiency in non-violence. Maybe from this you will think that I have gone mad. But look at the way Capt. Shahnawaz and Col. Jiwansingh live and work today. They have ceased to be army officers and have become public servants and farmers. Thus they have become more powerful. They are themselves happy and have made people happy. One of them is a Muslim and is doing wonderful work in Bihar. The other, in spite of being a Punjabi and orthodox Sikh, has identified himself with the Muslims of Noakhali. I mention just these two names because I happen to remember them. But many such persons have come to me. They have changed their lives and have become happy. Such a time is now coming. You note down in your diary that the world will curse the scientist who has made the atom bomb. People have wearied of bloodshed. They would like to follow the path of non-violence and peace. India alone can give a lesson in that. America has great riches. Even other countries have more money than we have. Because they have money, they are investing in devices of mass destruction. That is why our scriptures and the *Gita* teach us not to hoard

wealth. The right way of becoming happy is the observance of truth, non-violence, non-hoarding, celibacy, non-stealing and physical labour. This is as true as a geometrical theorem. Our army will lead the world if it adopts non-violence instead of violence.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 429-30

489. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 27, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

There are more than 800 princely States in India. Some of them are very large and some very small. Recently the Viceroy had summoned the Princes to Delhi. So long the States had functioned under the protective umbrella of the British Empire which has now been taken away. The Viceroy spoke to them in very gentle terms. I liked his speech. He advised these rulers that they should all opt for either India or Pakistan. His speech was not a brief one. What hurt me was that in his lengthy address there was not even a mention of the States' people. The relationship of the British Government was with the rulers of the States. The subjects of the States did not figure anywhere. Therefore, when paramountcy lapses these States legally become independent and the British Government cannot interfere, but after all the rulers have certain duties and obligations. The States' subjects can no longer be ruled at the point of the bayonet. But the security they have under the British protection is no longer there. Take some large State—Cochin, for instance. It has an extensive sea coast. It cannot enter into treaty relations with the whole world in order to ensure its security and it was the duty of the Viceroy to point this out. I would have been happy if he had somewhere in his speech also mentioned the States' people. Since I was born in a Kathiawar State as a subject I have a right to say something about this question. Formerly if a ruler wanted so much as to employ a Dewan he had to seek permission from the Viceroy. They certainly did not like this. If, therefore, they now have been deprived of British protection, they are also free

of British pressure. But there is now pressure from their people. So, if the rulers want to stay as rulers, they can only do so as servants of their people. They should seek the advice and co-operation of their Prajamandals in the work of administration. It is true that the Prajamandals have no experience of administration. But then even the leaders of the Central Government have had no previous experience of administration. This does not mean that the rulers should nominate twenty or twenty-five persons and call them Prajamandal. They should do whatever they do with sincerity. So far as the question of their joining Pakistan or the Indian Union is concerned, regard will have to be paid to the geographical situation. A State in Gujarat or Kathiawar cannot unite itself with Bengal. The States thus cannot free themselves from the constraints of geography.

It is curious that the British have not said that the paramountcy which they had so long exercised now vests in India and Pakistan. This has complicated the problem both for India and Pakistan. I must say that the rulers are now on their trial. They may remain rulers but they must be servants of the people in fact.

I am saying this not because the Viceroy has complained to me about the rulers or that Jawaharlal or Rajendra Babu have said anything to me. The fact is that people are now watching what the Indian Government and Pakistan Government will do?

But what is the plight of the States' people? Are they happy at the thought of the coming freedom? Will they celebrate the day of independence? As for me I shall fast on the day and my prayer will be: 'O God, now that India is free do not destroy her.'

The States form one-fourth of the area of the country. Will the 10 crore subjects of the States celebrate August 15 as Independence Day? If the Princes declare that they will from now on be servants of their people, then all will be well. Then the taxes they raise from the people will be for the uplift of the people. They will return their revenue ten times over not in the form of money but in the form of schools, hospitals, roads, gardens and public parks.

Jawaharlal and Sardar Patel have made no comment on the speech of the Viceroy though they could not be very happy in their hearts. But why should we have any poison in our hearts? It is like a game in which all one's cards must be placed on the table. Only when there is no poison in our hearts can we genuinely celebrate August 15 as Independence Day.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 284-6

490. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

5 a. m., July 28, 1947

CHI. JIVANJI,

I have had to prepare the material this time in considerable haste. Please, therefore, be careful there. If the men are competent, there will be no difficulty.

We may have to decide to close down *Harijan* altogether. If I have not so far intimated to you this view, I do so now. I have no heart in some of the things which our leaders are doing today. At the same time I cannot see myself opposing them too strongly. But what else can I do if the journal is continued? And without me you people don't wish to run it. Nor does Sardar. This is the debate going on in my mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9982. Also C. W. 6956. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

491. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

NEW DELHI,
July 28, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

It is my silence day. Hence this infliction in the shape of my handwriting.

Pandit Nehru told me last night that as there were hitches about my going to Kashmir, he had decided to go even if only for two or three days.[1] Thus I am now free to go to Bihar

[1] Replying the same day, Lord Mountbatten said he was told by Kak that he had informed Gandhiji as to "why the Kashmir Government were so very anxious not to have the visit from a political leader which might result in the spread of violence from the Punjab border". The Viceroy added that Kak would "greatly prefer" Gandhiji to Jawaharlal Nehru, if Gandhiji "felt it was essential" that either of them should go. The addressee urged that Gandhiji's "visit at this moment would be better than a visit from Jawaharlal Nehru", for he really did not know "how the future Prime Minister can be spared from Delhi with only 18 days left for him to take over power". Ultimately, it was Gandhiji who went to Kashmir; *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", pp. 460-2.

and thence to Noakhali. Before doing so, I might go for two days to the Punjab. I should like to leave Delhi tomorrow. You wanted me to see you before leaving. If the need is still felt, I am at your disposal tomorrow. You will then name the hour.

May I say I deeply appreciated your wish to go to an unpretentious house as the chosen Governor-General of the millions of the half-famished villagers of the nation. I hope it will be possible to carry out the wish.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 275

492. NOTE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

VALMIKI MANDIR, NEW DELHI,
July 28, 1947

I have already written to you—haven't I—that I do not wish to go to Kashmir and that Jawaharlal will go instead. Now I have a letter[1] from the Viceroy saying I may go but not Jawaharlal. I therefore cannot make up my mind. What shall I do?[2]

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 359

493. LETTER TO SUSHILA PAI

July 28, 1947

The decision about Pakistan is of course wrong. But against whom am I to fight and to what end?

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 312

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] In his reply, the addressee counselled Gandhiji to wait for a day as he was busy with the Working Committee.

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494. LETTER TO JUGATRAM DAVE

NEW DELHI,
July 28, 1947

CHI. JUGATRAM,

Jivanji[1] has passed on to me the postcard that you had written to him.

The distinction that you make seems to be too fine. There is no substance in it. Show me if you see any. I hope you are getting on well.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

495. LETTER TO SANYUKTA HARJIVAN

NEW DELHI,
July 28, 1947

CHI. SANYUKTA[2],

I read your letter addressed to Manudi. I have forbidden her to do any writing, and hence I am answering the letters. It is suspected she has intestinal tuberculosis. The disease, whatever it may be, is not in advanced stage. Manudi is very silly. She does not seem to understand that it is her duty to take care of her health. She will realise it now. There is no need at all to give her injections or medicines. She requires rest and change of diet. She is having both. Do not worry in the least. Manudi does not at all wish to leave my side. If you sisters have any charm, use it. Can you say that you are now fully recovered?

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

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

[1] Jivanji D. Desai of Navajivan Press
[2] Sister of Manu Gandhi

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496. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

July 28, 1947

CHI. SITA,

I have your letter. You have received education but have learnt no practical wisdom. You have of course given no written undertaking. But what about the undertaking I have given on your behalf ? You must abide by all the rules in force there. The permission I have given for your meetings is independent of those rules but should be subject to them. You should, therefore, willingly submit to whatever restrictions they place on your movements. Only thus can you create a good impression about you there.

I wish you would tell me frankly how you feel about Krishna[1] deep down in the heart. If I feel that you are keeping back anything from me, I shall get nervous. I hope you know that you can free yourself from my discipline whenever you wish. That means that you are free to go back on your promise. I would not be happy to know that you were waiting for the year to end somehow. Whatever you do, do it willingly and cheerfully. Do not let the least trace of dissimulation creep into your conduct.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5011

497. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
July 28, 1947

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. I have gone through Kishorelal's letter. I understand Manilal's view. I prefer mine. If Sita were to marry today, she would not have my blessings. The world endures through vows. If I had not taken a vow before my mother, today I would be a drink-addict, a meat-eater and a

[1] Krishna Kumar; *vide* p. 256.

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lecher. If I was saved from these three vices, the credit goes to the vow. And I had not taken the vow of my own free will, but at my mother's instance and through my eagerness to go to England.

But in this case you are the mother and Manilal is the father, and I admit that the father and the mother know better than the grandfather. Therefore, what you two advise will be best. If you leave the decision to me, I shall not be able to take any other view. I send herewith the letter which I received from Sita today. I have replied[1] to her. I think she will send the letter to you.

I should be happy if you could come to some definite decision. I shall most probably leave Delhi tomorrow.

Enclosure: 1

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5010

498. A LETTER

July 28, 1947

If we give anything away there should be no condition attached to the gift. Only then will the giving be pure. I have observed that most disputes in the world arise from 'agreements' and 'conditions'. I, therefore, suggest that it will be more befitting if your donation to the institution is unconditional.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 434

499. A LETTER

July 28, 1947

We first deceive ourselves, and later comfort ourselves some way or other. We should not express our opinion on any matter without fully going into it.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 434

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

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500. A LETTER

July 28, 1947

Whatever you wish to tell . . .[1] you should tell him directly. To have it conveyed through a third party will be hazardous to both sides. After all he is not a tiger or a leopard that he will eat you up. Therefore try to explain the matter to him patiently. I have come to no final decision as yet about *Harijanbandhu*. Let me see how things develop.

I note . . . is going to be married. There should be no expenditure incurred, of course. The ceremony should be perfectly simple, with a prayer and the religious rites, and with the bride and the bridegroom fasting, observing silence, reciting the *Gita* and spending the day in the service of the cow, spinning, cleaning and similar activities of the Ashram, as a preliminary to expanding their field of service.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 434-5

501. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
July 28, 1947

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter. I shall let you know when something is settled about the date. We shall see what we have to do after we reach Noakhali. Let us not incur any expenditure now. Babua should be well. Is not typhoid caused by water? Everyone should drink boiled water.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9283

[1] Omissions as in the source

502. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

VALMIKI MANDIR, NEW DELHI,
July 28, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

Jawaharlal told me last night that you might approve of his going to Kashmir but not mine; he has, therefore, left me free to do as I like. So now I propose to leave tomorrow for Lahore. Lahore and Amritsar on the 30th, Rawalpindi on the 31st. I may stay there for a day and then take the train for Patna. If this is all right, please give your endorsement so that I may make the necessary preparations. You will also have to make some arrangements, won't you?

My note[1] to the Viceroy is going right now.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 358

503. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 28, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I shall answer some questions today.

Q. After 15th of August will there be two Congress organizations in the two countries or only one or would there be no Congress at all?

A. I think then the need for an organization like the Congress will be still greater. Its programme will no doubt be altered. If the Congress does not foolishly accept the two-nation theory, there will be only one Congress in the whole country. The partition of India does not and should not mean the partition of the Congress. The partition of India into two sovereign States does not mean that India is two nations. Supposing one or more princely States kept out of the Union, would

[1] *Vide* pp. 446-7.

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the Congress turn their representatives out of the Congress? Would the States' people not expect it to take even greater interest in their welfare? Of course the problems that this will create will be even more complicated and some of them will be more difficult of solution, but there still will be no reason for the Congress to be broken up into two. It will require greater political acumen, greater depth of thought and much more patient deliberation and decision. We must not anticipate incapacitating difficulties.

Q. Will the Congress now become a communal organization? A demand is being vociferously raised that since the Muslims now consider themselves a separate nation, we too should candidly call ourselves Hindu India and place upon the country the deep imprint of Hinduism?

A. The question betrays sheer ignorance. The Congress can never become an organization of the Hindus. Those who seek to make it such will be doing great harm to India and Hinduism. India is the country of the millions but their voice is not heard. It is only the vociferous sections living in cities who talk of two nations. We should not mistake their voice for the voice of the millions.

Then it must be remembered that Muslims in the Indian Union have not said that they are not Indians and Hinduism with all its shortcomings has never encouraged separation. People professing different religions have mingled to form the Indian nation and they are all citizens of India and no section has the right to oppress another section. The power derived from the sword or from numbers is not real power. Truth is real power.

Q. What attitude should non-Muslims adopt towards the Pakistan flag!

A. The Pakistan flag for the time being will be the Muslim League's flag. If the Muslim League represents Islam then the Muslims all over the world should have one flag and those who are not hostile to Islam should respect that flag. I do not know the flags of Islam, Hinduism, Christianity or of any other religion. And if I have not made a deep study of Islam, I can be mistaken about its flag. If the flag of Pakistan, whatever its colour, represents all the people living in Pakistan then I shall salute that flag and so shall you. In other words the two Dominions cannot become enemies of each other. I am watching with much interest and more fear what attitude the Dominion of South Africa adopts towards India. Can the people of South Africa hate the people of India? Will

the South African Whites still refuse to travel with Indians in the same compartments?

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 286-8

504. LETTER TO THADANI

July 29, 1947

MY DEAR THADANI,

You seem to have been resurrected.

You do not know how I have worked at your thesis. I discussed it with the late Principal Dhruva[1] who gave you credit for imagination but not for real discovery. You know how cautious he was in condemnation. It was his delight to see something good in everything. Then I discussed it with a scholar but a scoffer hard to please. I am unable to pass independent judgment and, not having any scholarship, all I can say is, like Barkis[2], "I am willing".

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

505. LETTER TO WANDA DYNOWSKA

NEW DELHI,
July 29, 1947

MY DEAR UMA,

Your letter. I am doing all I can.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI UMADEVI
ADYAR
MADRAS

From a photostat: G. N. 8063. Also C. W. 5104. Courtesy: Wanda Dynowska

[1] Anandshankar Bapubhai Dhruva of Gujarat College, Ahmedabad
[2] Character in Charles Dickens's *David Copperfield*

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506. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

NEW DELHI,
July 29, 1947

CHI. BHANSALI,

You must not assume the entire responsibility for Pushpa. In fact you ought not to assume any. You are under my discipline. You should, therefore, assume only as much of that responsibility as I entrust to you. In doing that lies your good, as also mine, and that of Pushpa and of the Ashram too. It is indeed a good thing that you have lost the capacity to judge people. There was a time when you possessed it in good measure. But you were more inclined to see the defects of men and of institutions. You know the results of doing that. And so you became a *sannyasi*, wandered about and submitted yourself to a great many hardships. And now you are back where you were. I see nothing but God's hand in this. I think it will be best for you to assume no responsibility not entrusted to you by me. That is your real dharma and only by acting in that way can you keep a watch on the Ashram. I have also explained to you the meaning of keeping a watch.[1] It means that you should maintain the highest standard of purity in your own conduct so that everybody else may look upon you as the ideal to be followed. I know of no better method of keeping a watch. To notice and point at people's defects does not mean keeping a watch. You are sometimes swayed by emotion and act thoughtlessly. I heard that you undertook a fast once again. There was no need at all to do that. To permit Pushpa to slacken in the least degree in the observance of rules will be tantamount to betraying her. It was I who admitted her to the Ashram at some risk. I pained her parents by doing that. She has not succeeded in becoming a perfect devotee. She has realized that she is far away from that sublime state. But her wilfulness . . .[2] have not yet vanished. She has still not realized the importance of abiding by the rules. You should, therefore, humbly renounce your claim to be Pushpa's elder brother or father or guardian. She must observe the Ashram rules with the utmost punctiliousness

[1] *Vide* p. 413.

[2] Omission as in the source

and become one with it as sugar becomes one with milk. Till she merits such a certificate, I shall not be relieved of my worry on her account. I owe a responsibility to her parents. Even if her renunciation in giving up her intention to marry the person whom she wished to marry was not the result of selfishness or wilfulness, she has yet to demonstrate that it was an act of supreme self-abnegation. I don't have to explain this to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 823. Courtesy: Balkrishna Bhave

507. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
July 29, 1947

CHI. DINSHAW,

Sushilabehn informs me that you keep writing to her letters full of despair and grief. The grief appears also in the letters you write to me.

I am leaving for Kashmir tomorrow.[1] I shall return in two days. I shall therefore not call you there, but you may meet me in Patna. You will know from the newspapers the date of my arrival there. Maybe I shall reach there on the 9th. I shall be putting up with Dr. Mahmud. Thence I shall proceed to Noakhali. If you come, I may take you along with me. You will gain some fresh experience. We shall talk to our heart's content and we shall know all the differences of opinion we have with each other. Notwithstanding all the differences of opinion, however, the relations between us can never be affected. If I did not earlier ask you to come, the reason simply was that I did not want that the work you were doing to earn some money should suffer. Now I understand that you attach little importance to this. Therefore the main reason for not asking you to come is obviated. I hope Mother is getting on well. Gulbai[2] and the children will also be well.

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

[1] Gandhiji left for Kashmir on July 31, 1947.
[2] Addressee's wife

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508. LETTER TO FRENYBEHN KHANTIA

Air Mail

NEW DELHI,
July 29, 1947

CHI. FRENYBEHN,

I have your letter written in English. I saw your husband's signature also on it. Is your husband the same Khantia who used to visit me in the jail along with Dinshaw?

The news that you give me about Dinshaw is painful. Now, without mentioning your letter, I am writing[1] to him asking him to come over. It is good that you wrote to me. Never mind if you wrote in English, though all of you should cultivate the habit of writing in Gujarati. I hope you will be able to read what I am writing in Gujarati.

I hope you don't assume that you would understand better what is written in Gujarati if the same was written in English. But I know of many Parsi friends who have distorted their mother tongue to such an extent that they use it only at home and only in talking with the servants.

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

509. A LETTER

July 29, 1947

I have your letter of gentle rebuke and advice. It is true that I have got involved in too many things. But do not all the planets revolve round the sun? Similarly, all my activities revolve round the unity of India. And rest assured that either I shall die or this inhuman conduct of ours will cease. There is no third possibility.

I am leaving for Kashmir the day after tomorrow. I shall not make any public speeches or address meetings there. The Viceroy also feels that in the present circumstances it would be better if I went rather than Jawaharlal. I shall be there for two days, then reach Calcutta around the 8th and from there Noa-

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

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khali on the 15th. But it will be as God ordains. You know that without His will not a leaf moves.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 440

510. A LETTER

July 29, 1947

Anybody who wishes to serve always finds enough for his needs. He can indulge in no luxuries, of course. If, therefore, you wish to live in the Ashram for the sake of service, you should be content with whatever you get. Otherwise you should leave the Ashram and find a job. A person like you should have no difficulty in finding one. There is no third course open to a public servant.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 440

511. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 29, 1947

DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your letter. Your apprehension about freedom turning into ruin is justified. If that happens, whose fault will it be? Now we have to think what to do.

I want to reach there before the 15th. Let us see what God wills. Abha is better but one cannot say the improvement is very great. She moves about. I think she will be with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

How do you manage during the Ramzan? Don't you get goat's milk?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 587

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512. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

NEW DELHI,
July 29, 1947

CHI. AMRITA LAL,

You will find no difficulty in reading this much, I hope. I want to make all arrangements for reaching Noakhali before the 15th of next month. Therefore you need not come to Delhi.

Abha is all right, although I cannot say that she is completely cured. We should remain as God keeps us. I am glad that Romen has recovered.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 10424. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

513. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

NEW DELHI,
July 29, 1947

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your long letter. I have written[1] a letter to Bhansali. Read it. Everything is included in it. What you have done is correct.

After reading the letter to Bhansali, do as you think proper. That there should be dearth of cow's milk either in the Ashram or in Sevagram is intolerable. Take whatever steps are necessary to improve the position.

It is a matter of shame for us that Champabehn should be obliged to take buffalo's milk. If we permit her to stay but cannot provide her with cow's milk at any cost, then we cannot help giving her buffalo's milk.

Consult Jajuji and find a solution.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1987

[1] *Vide* pp. 455-6.

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514. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 29, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I have many important things to talk to you about today. I am told I should go to Kashmir. I am not particularly desirous of going there nor should I be. It is a beautiful place, hemmed in by Himalayan peaks. But there are many other beautiful places in the world and many other places of pilgrimage. I once did want to go to Kashmir. The Maharaja of Kashmir had invited[1] me and Sir Gopalaswami Ayyangar was his Prime Minister. But I can go to Kashmir only when God wills it.

When some time ago Pandit Jawaharlal had been detained in Kashmir[2] we needed him here. Maulana Azad was the President of the Congress. He wanted to have Jawaharlal back from Kashmir. Lord Wavell also felt the need of Jawaharlal's counsel and both Wavell and Maulana Saheb were worried. The Maulana then sent word to Jawaharlal that the mission he had undertaken was the mission of the Congress and as a matter of discipline he ought to return when the Congress wanted him to return. Jawaharlal agreed but he said that he would again be going to Kashmir. The Maulana said the matter could be taken up later and if necessary I could be sent there. I also told Jawaharlal that no one could prevent him from doing so later.

Now the Government has changed, the Viceroy has changed. I said I was prepared to go to Kashmir so that Jawaharlal might not be disturbed in what he was doing. But there were several complications and I said I would go if the Viceroy advised me to go. The Viceroy told me[3] that he himself was going to Kashmir and that I might postpone my visit. So I did not go. And now the situation is such that either Jawaharlal or I should go to Kashmir. He cannot go. There is

[1] In 1938

[2] It was in June 1946; *vide* Vol. LXXXIV, pp. 353-5 and 357.

[3] During an interview earlier in the day; for the Viceroy's note on the interview, *vide* Appendix XI.

too much work for him here. Of course the climate of Kashmir is very good and, if he went there, he would gain in health. But there are also lots of problems there. If the head of the Interim Government makes a journey to Kashmir, it can be interpreted as an attempt on his part to make Kashmir accede to India. Therefore, it seems that it would be better for me to go.

Kashmir has a Maharaja and also the subjects of the Maharaja. I am not going to suggest to the Maharaja to accede to India and not to Pakistan. This is not my intention. The real sovereign of the State are the people of the State. If the ruler is not a servant of the people then he is not the ruler. This is my belief and that is why I became a rebel because the British claimed to be the rulers of India and I refused to recognize them as rulers. Now they are about to leave India. Those who had come to rule have agreed to be servants. They now want to be servants in thought, word and deed. Mountbatten now will be Governor-General not because the King has so appointed him but because we, the Interim Government, want to make him the Governor-General. My idea was that a Harijan girl should be made the Governor-General. But I can see that under the present circumstances it is not possible because we have to negotiate with the Princes and attend to various other problems. Yes, when democratic rule is firmly established then it will be possible to do so.

So long the Maharaja of Kashmir could do as he liked under the protection of the Viceroy. Now the power belongs to the people. I do not want that the Maharaja should be inconvenienced. The pandits and mullahs in Kashmir know me at least by name. I have given a lot of money to Kashmiris. In Kashmir, shawl-making, embroidery, etc., are well developed handicrafts. The charkha also has done good work there. The poor people of Kashmir know me.

The people of Kashmir should be asked whether they want to join Pakistan or India. Let them do as they want. The ruler is nothing. The people are everything. The ruler will be dead one of these days but the people will remain. Some people wonder why I cannot say all this through correspondence. But that way I can do even Noakhali work through correspondence. I do not want to do anything in public when I am in Kashmir. I do not want even a public prayer, though I may have it, for prayer is part of my life.

Now as for my advice that we should fast and pray on August 15, I may say that I do not intend to mourn. But it

is a matter of grief that we have no food and no clothes. Human beings kill human beings. In Lahore, people cannot leave their houses for fear that they will be killed. These are not the conditions in which we can rejoice and feast.

On April 6, 1919, the whole of India had woken up.[1] But there were no celebrations on the day. I told Hindus and Muslims and everybody to pray, fast and spin. There was no enmity between the Hindus and Muslims at that time and everyone celebrated the day by fasting. The excitement that was witnessed on that 6th of April is something that one may not witness again. Today it is more imperative for people to fast. Millions are starving. It was a time when even collecting a crore of rupees for the Tilak Swaraj Fund was difficult. We did not have the power in our hands. Today we have many crores of rupees in our hands. We shoulder a great responsibility. At such a time if we are not humble what will happen? If on August 15 we feast and gorge, what will Rajendra Babu do on August 16? What will he feed the people on? I shall, therefore, say that we must celebrate the day but by fasting, praying and spinning. Yes, we should not mourn.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 289-91

515. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
July 30, 1947

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter. If I ask Jawaharlal, he will agree to be the Chairman[2], but he will be able to do nothing. Where has he the time? How is it that all the memorial committees require big names? Has no memorial an independent importance of its own? If there is any intrinsic worth in Pali literature, some persons are bound to be attracted to it.

I feel that we should do only as much as the Advisory Committee accepts. Further than that I shall not be able to go. I remember the episode about Bhai Prabhu. The whole of it was a painful affair. "In the very act of protesting innocence," as the saying goes, "the man betrayed himself." If he writes

[1] *Vide* Vol. XV.

[2] Of the Dharmanand Kosambi memorial committee

something to me, I will send it to Jiwanlal and then the path will be clear before him. I am now leaving Delhi. I am going to Kashmir. From there I will go to Patna and thence to Noakhali. If I reach Noakhali, a new life will take shape there.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I showed to J. the papers which you sent to me regarding Goa. He said he had copies of those papers. Our representative in Goa sends him copies of all his dispatches. Let events take their own course now. Nobody should force Goa to join either this or the other part. For the present it will be enough if it joins the Indian Union. It seems a sorry affair that, instead of putting one's house in order, everybody wants to grab things. You may give what guidance you can from there.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10989

516. A LETTER

July 30, 1947

I am going to Kashmir. I am going only in order to see for myself the condition of the people. In any case I shall have a glimpse of the Himalayas. Who knows if I am going there for the first and the last time? I was very eager to go to Uttarkashi, but that does not seem possible now. . . .[1]

Money comes seeking a man who wants to do public service. The progress of any public work is never held up for want of funds. If it is held up, we should conclude that there is some deficiency in us. I have had many experiences in my life which illustrate this.

Don't you remember the example of Sabarmati? Maganlal and I were greatly worried, and then all at once a motor-car came up and stopped in front of the Ashram and a stranger placed a large wad of notes in my hands.

Wasn't that also the fate of Narasinh Mehta's *hundi*? And isn't the story of Draupadi's garment similar? If, therefore, we put our trust in God and go on serving in a selfless spirit, our work will never be held up. . . .

I know that the atmosphere in Noakhali is full of fear. But my workers are there and I am sure that they will lay down

[1] Omissions as in the source

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their lives before any Hindu can be killed. That, at any rate, is my hope.

[From Gujarati]
Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 446

517. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

SEVAGRAM,[1]
July 30, 1947

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I had no talk with Balkrishna apart from polite enquiries after his health and so on. Where was the time? I did tell him to see me at four but he did not want to say anything.

I think I have replied to Kotwal. I do not in the least relish the idea of his going to jail in Ajmer. There is absolutely no need to come here. Why should he at all go to jail? Let him do whatever constructive work he can in Indore. If he does not get my letter, let him consider this as my reply to him.

Mishrilal had lost much weight. Now he should take it easy. The same is the case with Kanaiyalal Khadiwala. Many useless persons went to the U. P. I know it.

I was glad that you gave me news about Harilal. I am keeping fairly fit these days. You should think it a matter of duty to give yourself rest.

We are waiting for the rains. If it does not rain, people will suffer.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 6091

[1] Permanent address

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518. LETTER TO SYED MINHAJUL HASAN

NEW DELHI,
July 30, 1947

BHAI HASAN[1],

I have had a talk with Shuklaji[2]. I find that you have lost the confidence of the others. Under the circumstances you had better resign from the Ministry without rancour and devote yourself to whatever other public service you can take up. This should not cause resentment. A ministry can work only with a homogeneous team. This is only my advice. Do as your inner voice prompts.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

519. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 30, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

This is my last day here. From tomorrow there will be no prayer meeting. Of course, if you gather here for prayer, it will be good. But I shall not be present. If God grants I shall be in Shrinagar by day after tomorrow. As I said yesterday, I shall be staying there for two or three days. I have no particular business to attend to. I am not going there to attend a public meeting. I am only going there to meet the people. I shall not return empty-handed. But that is in the hands of God. I am only keeping a promise in going. After the promise is fulfilled I shall get away. From there I go to Noakhali.

I have a letter from a Bihari Muslim saying that now in Bihar Hindus and Muslims are living as brothers. Mr. Ansari[3], a

[1] Health Minister, Central Provinces
[2] Ravi Shankar Shukla, Chief Minister, Central Provinces
[3] Qaiyum Ansari, Minister for Public Works, Roads and Buildings, and Cottage Industries

Minister in Bihar, tells me that now there are no riots there. People are returning by special trains but they are not coming at the expense of the Bihar Government. The Bihar Government is not sending them. The Bengalis had taken away people and it was for them to send them back. I shall advise the Bihar Hindus that they should accept the Muslims who are returning to Bihar. They should not depend on the Government. So long we have had to depend on the Government because power was not in our hands. Now that power is in our hands no one can say that the work has to be done by the Government. The country has been partitioned. I feel it was bad but bad or good it is now an accomplished fact. Pakistan in fact is nothing. Only the Government has been divided. This is all that I want to tell the Biharis.

Now I want to say something about Bombay. The Bombay Government have decided that the salaries of its employees will be increased according to the recommendations of the Pay Commission. I have been guilty of exaggeration. I had said[1] that the salaries had already been increased. As a matter of fact this has not yet happened. Still, since a decision has been taken the salaries will certainly be revised. Why then should the employees go on hunger-strike?

I have received a telegram from there saying that if I intervene, some agreement can be arrived at. I have said I do not hold any power. Of course they are all my friends. They have worked with me and they say that they will abide by my decision. But I cannot say anything. Ashok Mehta is there. He also wants to leave things in my hands. I must express my inability. So long we did not have power in our hands. Now that we have the power why should I destroy that power by my interference? I do not wish that people should make me a dictator. Only God can take work from me. The Government has done its work. It has agreed to implement the recommendations of the Pay Commission. Why should I spoil the thing by my intervention? Therefore, they should not expect me to do anything about it. The employees should also not indulge in token strikes and the like. I say this in all humility. I am their friend as well as the friend of the Government and of the Rajas. They should not persuade me to do anything which is wrong. It is the duty of all the parties to get all work done by the Government that will assume office on August 15. In the days of British rule we were hampered. We

[1] *Vide* p. 435.

tried to assert ourselves. We started a non-violent battle. We can still do so. But we have got to be equipped for it. Public opinion has to be prepared.

Take, for instance, the question of banning cow-slaughter. Shall we bring coercion to bear on the Muslims? Then why not on the Hindus? Why not on the Parsis? Cow-protection cannot be ensured in this manner. If we follow our respective faiths the cow can be saved without resort to legislation. I want that even Muslims should not slaughter cows. They should not eat beef. But this has to be left to them. We should not assume in our pride that since power has now come into our hands, we can force others to our will through law. I want that we should make proper use of the swaraj which we have won. Let us follow the path of dharma, so that the real swaraj we want may be ours soon.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 292-4

520. EVEN PROUD GUJARAT![1]

Shri Maganbhai Desai has sent me a copy of his correspondence with Shri Ratanlal Parikh. The latter writes :

> The report in the newspapers of the Congress decision in regard to Hindi has made a great impression on the public mind. People are so much opposed to the Urdu script that it is as well that the move in support of it is no longer a live issue. Even staunch Congressmen have begun to oppose it. This means that the number of candidates for Hindustani examinations to be held in February is likely to be greatly reduced.

I hope that what Shri Ratanlal says is not true. Gujarat must not commit this folly. I do not approve of the dislike of the writers for Urdu, though of course I can understand it. But for the life of me I cannot understand this thoughtless dislike of the script. Does it not betray a bankruptcy of practical sense? The Gujaratis as businessmen do not discriminate between friend and foe. They gladly take money from both. Will they not show the same business sense in politics?

In Delhi I daily come in contact with Hindus and Muslims. Most of the Hindus speak a language which has very few Sanskrit words and many more Persian words. They or the vast majority do not know the Devanagari script. They write to me

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 10-8-1947 under the title "Thou too Gujarat!".

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in Urdu or in indifferent English and when I take them to task for writing in English, they write in Urdu. If the national language is to be Hindi and the script only Devanagari, what will be the plight of these Hindus?

But I confess that in this matter I have a bias for Muslim brethren, though not of Gujarat. The Muslims of Gujarat do not know Urdu. They can learn it with difficulty. Their mother tongue is Gujarati. But the language of the Muslims in North India is Hindustani, that is to say, simple Urdu. The millions of villagers of India have nothing to do with books. They speak Hindustani, which the Muslims write in the Urdu script, while of the Hindus some write in Urdu and some in the Nagari script. Therefore, the duty of people like you and me is to write in both the scripts. The Gujaratis decided to perform this duty with gladness. They found joy in doing this. It was not a bitter draught. Why then have they developed a dislike for the Urdu script now? For me it has become all the sweeter in the present atmosphere of bitterness. The non-Pakistani Muslims are all the dearer to me. They must not look up to Pakistan for their safety. Such a thing would be a shame for Hinduism. Sanatana Hindu Dharma is not narrow. It is liberal. It is not circumscribed like the frog in the well. It is the dharma of mankind. A Malayali commentator of the *Mahabharata* has, in my opinion rightly, called it the history of mankind. Be it as it may, the word Hindu is not derived from Sanskrit. The foreigners called the inhabitants on this side of the river Sindhu Hindus. We have adopted the title. Manu is not the name of any one man. The Law of Manu is known as *Manava Dharma Shastra* (the Law of Mankind). This Law has human origin. One can only guess as to how many of the *shlokas* are the original work of Manu and how many are interpolations. Dr. Bhagwandas has pointed out a number of interpolations. The Arya Samaj looks upon certain others as such. There has been some difference of opinion even on the interpretation. In my opinion whatever out of them appeals to the head and heart of the wise, is the law for mankind. There is, therefore, always room for addition or deletion. The *shlokas* looked upon as interpolations are the result of the efforts, successful or unsuccessful, of the reformers in different ages. Such a law belongs to all mankind. It does not permit of discrimination on grounds of caste and class. It knows no distinctions between Hindus, Muslims and Christians—all are equally men. How can one believing in this Shastra make distinction between one person and another. 'This is

mine and that is someone else's, is the calculation of narrow minds' is one of the pearls of wisdom. Going by this immortal *shloka* you and I cannot discriminate between Hindustan and Pakistan. What even if you and I happen to be the only ones having such a belief. If we are true, others are bound to follow us.

The Congress has always had this broad vision. Today it is needed more than ever before. India has accepted partition at the point of the bayonet. This cannot be undone in the same way. The two can become one only when there is heart unity.

The omens today seem to point to the contrary. In this crisis the Congress must stand firm like a rock. The national language can only be one, not two. It cannot be Persianized Urdu or Sanskritized Hindi. It must be a beautiful blend of the two simple forms written in either script. How I wish Gujarat would remain unaffected by the gathering storm. Will those who have soared high now crash at the first blow? If I have my way, this will not happen. There is a Gujarati hymn which says, "Will he who has been purified by the fire of love ever turn back?" Let us follow the poet. Let us not turn away from the Urdu script. We must not turn back.

ON THE TRAIN TO KASHMIR, July 31, 1947

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 10-8-1947

521. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ON THE TRAIN,
July 31, 1947

CHI. AMRIT,

Your last words were penetrating. Personal service when it merges into universal service is the only service worth doing. All else is rubbish.

Keep well and cheer up.

The journey is going well. Not a soul at the stations. Hence the night undisturbed.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3706. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6515

522. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

ON THE TRAIN,
4.30 a. m., July 31, 1947

CHI. MANI,

Read the enclosed[1] and do what is necessary. Your steadfast devotion to Father has given you a magnificent opportunity to serve. Utilize it as you wish.

Is there any truth in the letter I wrote about the Khaksars?[2] They have now written to me in detail. Pass on the enclosed[3] to Rajkumari.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MANIBEHN
C/O SARDAR PATEL
1 AURANGZEB ROAD
NEW DELHI

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 139

523. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

ON WAY TO KASHMIR,
July 31, 1947

CHI. SHARDA,

I keep thinking about you. You should do what you and Chokhawala think best. You should decide to "do or die" either in the Ashram or at Surat. I can think of nothing else. You should have no worry. Nobody should cling to life, not you certainly. Your body is what it is because you are so built.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10078. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

[1] A letter about the refugees. However, this is not available.
[2] *Vide* pp. 431-2.
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

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524. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

[*July 31, 1947*][1]

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Yesterday I despatched the letters to you. I am sending three Europeans to you. Please look after them. Give them lots of work. Since they are poor they will need to be cared for. Do not show them undue importance. Treat them as you would our own people. They do not even take milk. If you find them a burden, you can send them on their way. They are good men. They are hard-working. Prabhakar and Wardekar have already come to know them.

Please take good care of the cows. Take Balvantsinha, Parnerkar and Aryanayakum into your confidence in all matters. Do what Jajuji says. In my view Sevagram cannot do without milk. Maybe we should dispense with the condition that everyone should get milk only from the village. Do what you think is right.

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

525. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESIDENT, PUNJAB STUDENT CHRISTIAN LEAGUE

RAWALPINDI,
[*July 31, 1947*][2]

Replying to a question by the President of the Punjab Student Christian League, Gandhiji said:

Foreign missionaries will not be asked to quit India. Indian Christians will be free to occupy high official positions in the Indian Dominion.

Asked if non-Christians in the Indian Dominion would have freedom to embrace Christianity, Mahatma Gandhi said he would be guided in this connection by the rules and laws framed.

[1] In the source, this is placed among the letters of this date.
[2] Gandhiji was in Rawalpindi on this date.

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Christ came into this world to preach and spread the gospel of love and peace, but what his followers have brought about is tyranny and misery. Christians who were taught the maxim of 'Love thy neighbour as thyself,'[1] are divided among themselves.

The Hindustan Times, 3-8-1947

526. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

RAWALPINDI,[2]
July 31, 1947

Speaking after the *Ramdhun* he said that he had received two letters which he would like to answer. The first was in English. The handwriting was good but that was little consolation for him. The British were quitting India but the people had become so used to slavery that they still could not shake off the lure of the English language which few could ever hope to master. This linguistic conquest constituted a worse type of slavery than the conquest by the British sword. Every language was good in its own place. He would not ask the Zulus or the Dutch in South Africa to learn Gujarati, for instance. Similarly, he would not ask all the sisters assembled there to learn English. That was neither possible nor desirable. His mother tongue was Gujarati. He loved it. But he would not think of making it the lingua franca of India. There were hardly a crore of Indians who spoke Gujarati but there were nearly 21 crores who talked in Hindustani; whether they could read or write was a different matter. Hindustani was written in the Urdu or Nagari script.

The second letter was written in beautiful Urdu handwriting. He encouraged all those who came in contact with him to learn the two scripts and he was proud of the fact. He would rather teach Urdu to his boys and girls than teach them English.

In the letter written in English, the writer had asked him to spend at least a week in Rawalpindi and see with his own eyes what the Hindus had suffered. Why should he wish to go to Kashmir? His reply was that ever since he had gone to Delhi he had wanted to come to the Punjab. He wanted to visit Lahore, Amritsar and Rawalpindi. But he believed that he was in God's hands. God was the Master of all the universe and He could upset the plans of men. The original plan was that he would spend a day at Lahore and Amritsar, two days at Rawalpindi and at least ten days in

[1] *St. Matthew*, xix. 19

[2] According to the report the meeting was held in the compound of Lala Devraj Anand. But it proved too small for it. The consequent overcrowding and noise made Gandhiji cut short the prayer to *Ramdhun* only.

Kashmir. Now he had only two or three days for Kashmir. And that too was in fulfilment of a promise.

Though he could not stay in the Punjab, he had not forgotten them. He had to reach Noakhali before the 15th. That again was in fulfilment of a promise. He was a devotee of Rama and Rama had said that a promise must be kept at any cost. He referred to the black flag demonstration that Hindu young men had arranged at the Amritsar railway station. All the time the train stopped they kept shouting 'Gandhi, Go Back' in English. He had to close his ears as he could not stand the noise. He closed his eyes also and kept on repeating God's name. They were too noisy and too excited, else he would have liked to get down and ask them what harm he had done to them to deserve such noisy hostility. He knew however that praise and blame must be received with equanimity. At the other stations people were extremely well-behaved and cordial. He had not been disturbed during the night and he was grateful for it.

In the second letter the writer had objected to the projected recitation from the Koran. If the people had been quiet, they would have heard the verse from the Koran. It was a fine verse and he saw no reason why he should avoid it simply because it was from the Koran and written in Arabic. No one could object to the sentiments expressed therein. If they wished to live in peace as brave men and women, they must cultivate the virtue of tolerance. The only right way of fighting the misled Muslims was the way of love. But if they did not appreciate it, they had the crude way of retaliation open to them; but to insult the scriptures of either religion because of the misdeeds of its followers was a thing which he could never understand.

Harijan, 24-8-1947

527. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON[1]

[*July, 1947*][2]

Things are topsy-turvy. We are all, including the British, on our trial. God is great. He will make possible what appears impossible to man.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1529

[1] This was a postscript to a letter from Amrit Kaur to the addressee.
[2] According to the addressee the letter was brought to her in July.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S STATEMENT[1]

June 3, 1947

1. On February 20th, 1917, His Majesty's Government announced their intention of transferring Power in British India to Indian hands by June 1948. His Majesty's Government had hoped that it would be possible for the major parties to co-operate in the working out of the Cabinet Mission's Plan of May 16, 1946, and evolve for India a constitution acceptable to all concerned. This hope has not been fulfilled.

2. The majority of the representatives of the Provinces of Madras, Bombay, the United Provinces, Bihar, Central Provinces and Berar, Assam, Orissa and the North-West Frontier Provinces, and the representatives of Delhi, Ajmer-Merwara and Coorg have already made progress in the task of evolving a new constitution. On the other hand, the Muslim League Party, including in it a majority of the representatives of Bengal, the Punjab and Sind as also the representative of British Baluchistan, has decided not to participate in the Constituent Assembly.

3. It has always been the desire of His Majesty's Government that power should be transferred in accordance with the wishes of the Indian people themselves. This task would have been greatly facilitated if there had been agreement among the Indian political parties. In the absence of such agreement, the task of devising a method by which the wishes of the Indian people can be ascertained has devolved upon His Majesty's Government. After full consultation with political leaders in India, His Majesty's Government have decided to adopt for this purpose the plan set out below. His Majesty's Government wish to make it clear that they have no intention of attempting to frame any ultimate Constitution for India; this is a matter for the Indians themselves. Nor is there anything in this plan to preclude negotiations between communities for a united India.

4. It is not the intention of His Majesty's Government to interrupt the work of the existing Constituent Assembly. Now that provision is made for certain provinces specified below, His Majesty's Government trust that, as a consequence of this announcement, the Muslim League representatives of those provinces, a majority of whose representatives are already participating in it, will now take their due share in its labours. At the same

[1] *Vide* p. 61.

time it is clear that any constitution framed by this Assembly cannot apply to those parts of the country which are unwilling to accept it. His Majesty's Government are satisfied that the procedure outlined below embodies the best method of ascertaining the wishes of the people of such areas on the issue whether their constitution is to be framed:—

(a) in the existing Constituent Assembly; or

(b) in a new and separate Constituent Assembly consisting of the representatives of those areas which decide not to participate in the existing Constituent Assembly.

When this has been done, it will be possible to determine the authority or authorities to whom power should be transferred.

5. The Provincial Legislative Assemblies of Bengal and the Punjab (excluding the European members) will, therefore, each be asked to meet in two parts, one representing the Muslim majority districts and the other the rest of the province. For the purpose of determining the population of districts, the 1941 census figures will be taken as authoritative. The Muslim majority districts in these two provinces are set out in the Appendix to this announcement.

6. The members of the two parts of each Legislative Assembly sitting separately will be empowered to vote whether or not the province should be partitioned. If a simple majority of either part decides in favour of partition, division will take place and arrangements will be made accordingly.

7. Before the question as to the partition is decided, it is desirable that the representatives of each part should know in advance which Constituent Assembly the Province as a whole would join in the event of the two parts subsequently deciding to remain united. Therefore, if any member of either Legislative Assembly so demands, there shall be held a meeting of all members of the Legislative Assembly (other than European) at which a decision will be taken on the issue as to which Constituent Assembly the Province as a whole would join if it were decided by the two parts to remain united.

8. In the event of partition being decided upon, each part of the Legislative Assembly will, on behalf of the areas they represent, decide which of the alternatives in paragraph 4 above to adopt.

9. For the immediate purpose of deciding on the issue of partition, the members of the legislative assemblies of Bengal and the Punjab will sit in two parts according to Muslim majority districts (as laid down in the Appendix) and non-Muslim majority districts. This is only a preliminary step of a purely temporary nature as it is evident that for the purposes of final partition of these provinces a detailed investigation of boundary question will be needed; and as soon as a decision involving partition has been taken for either province a boundary commission will be set up by the Governor-General, the membership and terms of reference of which will be settled in consultation with those concerned. It will be instructed to demarcate the boundaries of the two parts of the Punjab on the basis of ascer-

taining the contiguous majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims. It will also be instructed to take into account other factors. Similar instructions will be given to the Bengal Boundary Commission. Until the report of a boundary commission has been put into effect, the provisional boundaries indicated in the Appendix will be used.

10. The Legislative Assembly of Sind (excluding the European members) will at a special meeting also take its own decision on the alternatives in paragraph 4 above.

11. The position of the North-West Frontier Province is exceptional. Two of the three representatives of this province are already participating in the existing Constituent Assembly. But it is clear, in view of its geographical situation and other considerations, that if the whole or any part of the Punjab decides not to join the existing Constituent Assembly, it will be necessary to give the North-West Frontier Province an opportunity to reconsider its position. Accordingly, in such an event, a referendum will be made to the electors of the present Legislative Assembly in the North-West Frontier Province to choose which of the alternatives mentioned in paragraph 4 above they wish to adopt. The referendum will be held under the aegis of the Governor-General and in consultation with the provincial Government.

12. British Baluchistan has elected a member, but he has not taken his seat in the existing Constituent Assembly. In view of its geographical situation, this province will also be given an opportunity to reconsider its position and to choose which of the alternatives in paragraph 4 above to adopt. His Excellency the Governor-General is examining how this can most appropriately be done.

13. Though Assam is predominantly a non-Muslim province, the district of Sylhet which is contiguous to Bengal is predominantly Muslim. There has been a demand that, in the event of the partition of Bengal, Sylhet should be amalgamated with the Muslim part of Bengal. Accordingly, if it is decided that Bengal should be partitioned, a referendum will be held in Sylhet District under the aegis of the Governor-General and in consultation with the Assam provincial Government to decide whether the district of Sylhet should continue to form part of Assam Province or should be amalgamated with the new province of Eastern Bengal, if that province agrees. If the referendum results in favour of amalgamation with Eastern Bengal, a boundary commission with terms of reference similar to those for the Punjab and Bengal will be set up to demarcate the Muslim majority areas of Sylhet District and contiguous Muslim majority areas of adjoining districts, which will then be transferred to Eastern Bengal. The rest of the Assam Province will in any case continue to participate in the proceedings of the existing Constituent Assembly.

14. If it is decided that Bengal and the Punjab should be partitioned, it will be necessary to hold fresh elections to choose their representatives

on the scale of one for every million of population according to the principle contained in the Cabinet Mission's Plan of May 16, 1946. Similar elections will also have to be held for Sylhet in the event of it being decided that this district should form part of East Bengal. The number of representatives to which each area would be entitled is as follows:—

Provinces	General	Muslims	Sikhs	Total
Sylhet District	1	2	nil	3
West Bengal	15	4	nil	19
East Bengal	12	29	nil	41
West Punjab	3	12	2	17
East Punjab	6	4	2	12

15. In accordance with the mandates given to them, the representatives of the various areas will either join the existing Constituent Assembly or form the new Constituent Assembly.

16. Negotiations will have to be initiated as soon as possible on the administrative consequences of any partition that may have been decided upon:

(a) Between the representatives and the respective successor authorities about all subjects now dealt with by the Central Government including defence, finance and communications.

(b) Between different successor authorities and His Majesty's Government for treaties in regard to matters arising out of the transfer of power.

(c) In the case of provinces that may be partitioned, as to the administration of all provincial subjects, such as the division of assets and liabilities, the police and other services, the high courts, provincial institutions, etc.

17. Agreements with tribes of the North-West Frontier of India will have to be negotiated by the appropriate successor authority.

18. His Majesty's Government wish to make it clear that the decisions announced above relate only to British India and that their policy towards Indian States contained in the Cabinet Mission's memorandum of 12th May, 1946, remains unchanged.

19. In order that the successor authorities may have time to prepare themselves to take over power, it is important that all the above processes should be completed as quickly as possible. To avoid delay, the different provinces or parts of provinces will proceed independently as far as practicable within the conditions of this plan. The existing Constituent Assembly and the new Constituent Assembly (if formed) will proceed to frame constitutions for their respective territories; they will, of course, be free to frame their own rules.

20. The major political parties have repeatedly emphasized their desire that there should be the earliest possible transfer of power in India. With this desire His Majesty's Government are in full sympathy and they are willing to anticipate the date of June, 1948, for the handing over of power

by the setting up of an Independent Indian Government or Governments at an even earlier date. Accordingly, as the most expeditious, and indeed the only practicable way of meeting this desire, his Majesty's Government propose to introduce legislation during the current session for the transfer of power this year on a Dominion Status basis to one or two successor authorities according to the decisions taken as a result of this announcement. This will be without prejudice to the right of the Indian Constituent Assemblies to decide in due course whether or not the part of India in respect of which they have authority will remain within the British Commonwealth.

His Excellency the Governor-General will from time to time make such further announcements as may be necessary in regard to procedure or any other matters for carrying out the above arrangements.

The Muslim majority districts of Punjab and Bengal according to 1941 (census):—

1. THE PUNJAB

Lahore Division—Gujranwala, Gurdaspur, Lahore, Sheikhupura, Sialkot.
Rawalpindi Division—Attock, Gujrat, Jhelum, Mianwali, Rawalpindi, Shahpur.
Multan Division—Dera Ghazi Khan, Jhang, Lyallpur, Montgomery, Multan, Muzaffargarh.

2. BENGAL

Chittagong Division—Chittagong, Noakhali, Tipperah.
Dacca Division—Bakerganj, Dacca, Faridpur, Mymensingh.
Presidency Division—Jessore, Murshidabad, Nadia.
Rajshahi Division—Bogra, Dinajpur, Malda, Pabna, Rajshahi, Rangpur.

The Indian Annual Register, 1947, Vol. I, pp. 143-6

APPENDIX II

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S LETTER TO VICEROY[1]

6 JANTAR MANTAR ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
June 2, 1947

The Congress Working Committee have considered the statement which H. M. G. propose to make tomorrow and a copy of which you were good enough to give me this morning.

2. The proposals contained in this statement are of far-reaching importance and affect the whole future of India. These envisage the possibility of certain parts of India seceding from the rest.

[1] *Vide* p. 61.

3. As you know, the Congress has consistently upheld that the unity of India should be maintained. Ever since its inception, the Congress has worked towards the realization of a free and united India. Any proposal, therefore, which might bring about separation of a part of India from the rest is painful to contemplate and, in the opinion of the Congress, is harmful to all the parties concerned. Such a proposal would normally have to be considered by the All-India Congress Committee. The Working Committee would make its recommendations to that Committee, but the final decision would rest with the All-India Congress Committee, or the full session of the Congress itself.

4. We have realized, however, that in the peculiar and abnormal situation of today it is not possible to delay matters and decisions have to be reached rapidly. There has been far too much uncertainty in the country and this has led to instability and to violence on a large scale. We have also appreciated that the negotiations that have been going on for some time between you and [the] Indian leaders had of necessity to be secret.

5. My Committee considered the principles underlying the present proposals about a month ago and generally accepted them. This acceptance was conveyed to you in paragraph 12 of the letter dated 1st May, 1947, which Shri Jawaharlal Nehru wrote to you.

6. As we have stated on many occasions, we accepted in its entirety the Cabinet Mission's Statement of 16th May, 1946 as well as the subsequent interpretation thereof dated 6th December, 1946. We have indeed been acting in accordance with it and the Constituent Assembly which was formed in terms of the Cabinet Mission's Plan has been functioning for nearly six months. We are still prepared to adhere to that Plan. In view, however, of subsequent events and the situation today, we are willing to accept as a variation of that Plan the proposals now being made.

7. I do not wish to enter into any detailed examination of the proposed statement of H. M. G. It has been produced after considerable consultation and I am desired to say by my Committee that we are prepared to accept it and to recommend to the All-India Congress Committee to do likewise. We do so in the earnest hope that this will mean a settlement. We feel that the situation in India, political and economic, as well as communal, demands more than ever a peaceful approach to all our problems. These problems cannot be solved by methods of violence, and there can be no submission to such methods.

8. While we are willing to accept the proposals made by H. M. G., my Committee desire to emphasize that they are doing so in order to achieve a final settlement. This is dependent on the acceptance of the proposals by the Muslim League and a clear understanding that no further claims will be put forward. There has been enough misunderstanding in the

past and in order to avoid this in the future it is necessary to have explicit statements in writing in regard to these proposals.

9. We believe as fully as ever in a united India. The unity we aim at is not that of compulsion but of friendship and co-operation. We earnestly trust that when present passions have subsided our problems will be viewed in their proper perspective and a willing union of all parts of India will result therefrom.

10. There are some matters, however, to which I should like to draw your attention. My Committee realize that the proposals being put forward may result in injury to the Sikhs unless great care is taken and their peculiar position in the Punjab is fully appreciated. We are aware that H. M. G. and you are anxious to protect all legitimate Sikh interests. The matter will have to be considered by the Boundary Commission provided for and we earnestly trust that all other factors, apart from population, will be taken fully into consideration. The Sikhs have played a vital role in developing a considerable part of the Punjab. They have been pioneers in the canal areas and have converted by their labours the desert into the richest part of the Punjab. It has been made clear in the document that the notional partition is of a purely temporary character and the final boundaries will be determined by the Boundary Commission.

11. In the last sentence of paragraph 9 it is stated that "until the report of the Boundary Commission has been put into effect, the provisional boundary as indicated in the Appendix will be used." It is not quite clear to what this refers and what the use will be. It is well known that the notional division ignores other important factors and that the Sikhs are distressed by it. If any further use is made of this notional division for administrative or other purposes, this will inevitably affect the final division and will give rise to a great deal of apprehension in the minds of the Sikhs. We would, therefore, urge you not to apply that notional division for any administrative purpose during the interim period. This would be in keeping with the spirit of the document and with what you conveyed to us this morning.

12. In paragraph 11 of the statement reference is made to a referendum in the N. W. F. Province. There has been a growing demand in the Province for independence and subsequent decision as to their relation with the rest of India. The referendum should also provide for this.

13. In paragraph 20 of the statement, which, we are told, is an addition to the original draft, the last sentence refers to the right of the Constituent Assemblies to decide in due course whether or not India or any part of it will remain within the British Commonwealth. It seems to us extremely undesirable and likely to lead to friction if the relations of Britain with the Indian Union and the seceding parts of it are on differential basis. We should, therefore, like to make it clear that we cannot be consenting parties to any such development.

14. In view of the importance of the proposals and decisions being made, my Committee intend to convene a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee at an early date. They propose to recommend the acceptance generally of the statement of H. M. G. as a settlement of our political and communal problems.

His Excellency Viscount Mountbatten of Burma
Viceroy's House
New Delhi

A. I. C. C. File No. 1499-I, 1947. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX III

LORD MOUNTBATTEN'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI[1]

June 4, 1947

In connection with the last sentence in Paragraph 20 of His Majesty's Government's statement[2], Mr. Gandhi suggested the possibility of a tripartite agreement between Great Britain and the two new Dominions—or two bilateral agreements.

Mr. Gandhi also spoke to me of "you and your magic tricks" in getting Congress and the Muslim League to agree on anything.

Mr. Gandhi said that he was very keen on going to Kashmir. I pointed out that Pandit Nehru had also declared such an intention and suggested that perhaps the best course might be for me myself to go.

From a photostat: C. W. 11027. Lord Mountbatten Papers. Courtesy: Broadlands Archives Trust

APPENDIX IV

LORD MOUNTBATTEN'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI[3]

June 6, 1947

I had received an urgent letter from Krishna Menon warning me that Mr. Gandhi was in a very unhappy and emotional mood, and that some of the Congress leaders feared he might denounce the plan and its acceptance at his prayer meeting that evening.

I immediately sent a message inviting Mr. Gandhi to come and see me at any time before the prayer meeting. He arrived at 6 with the prayer meeting due at 7 p. m.

[1] *Vide* p. 73.
[2] *Vide* Appendix I.
[3] *Vide* p. 91.

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He was indeed in a very upset mood and began by saying how unhappy he was.

I replied immediately that whilst I could quite understand and indeed shared his upset feelings at seeing the united India he had worked for all his life apparently destroyed by the new plan, I hoped to convince him that this plan was nevertheless the only possible course.

I told him that although many newspapers had christened it "The Mountbatten Plan", they should really have christened it "The Gandhi Plan", since all the salient ingredients were suggested to me by him. I enumerated these as follows:

(a) Mr. Gandhi advised me to try and get the Cabinet Mission Plan or any other plan retaining the unity of India accepted by all the leaders provided it did not involve coercion or violence. I had bent every effort to follow the first part of his advice; but when no agreement could be reached I had followed the second part of his advice and not insisted on a plan which would involve coercion with its attendant risk of violence.

(b) Mr. Gandhi had advised me to leave the choice of their own future to the Indian people. It was therefore he who gave me the idea for letting the Provinces choose, and the method proposed seemed the simplest and fairest way of carrying out his suggestion.

(c) Mr. Gandhi had told me that the British should quit India and transfer power as soon as possible and not later than the end of this year. I told him[1] that this had been the most difficult of all of his ideas to carry out, and I was very proud to have found a solution.

(d) I told him that I had understood that in his earlier days he had not been averse to Dominion Status. Mr. Gandhi was kind enough to say that this was indeed so, and that even during the war he had expressed himself as not being against it; and he later sent me an extract from *Harijan* dated 16th December 1939, in which appeared the words: "Similarly, I have said to a friend that if Dominion Status was offered, I should take it, and expect to carry India with me."

Note: I subsequently reported this conversation to both Mr. Krishna and Mr. V. P. Menon, and asked them to work on similar lines in talking to Mr. Gandhi. Both reported that the line I had taken had been remarkably successful, since Mr. Gandhi now felt that I had honestly tried to follow his advice, and that he had taken a far greater part in shaping the future of India than had at first sight appeared to him from the way the Plan was worded.

From a photostat: C. W. 11029. Lord Mountbatten Papers. Courtesy: Broadlands Archives Trust

[1] The source has 'me'.

APPENDIX V

EXCERPTS FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S NOTE[1]

June 8, 1947

"There is no doubt that the Governor and many of the Frontier officials have not only not co-operated with the Provincial Government but have actually sometimes obstructed its work. . . . In any event they are nearly all leaving the Frontier soon and we must proceed on that basis. There is no particular point in our raising this issue of *en masse* withdrawal now."

The question of referendum . . . came up "not exactly on the Pakistan issue" but in view of certain changes and developments in the all-India situation. . . . it was . . . stated that in view of this new situation it would be advisable to have a referendum in the Frontier in order to determine to which Constituent Assembly the N. W. F. P. desired to belong. The proposal, therefore, was not just meant for the N. W. F. P., but became part of a larger plan which provided for referendum in the N. W. F. P., Baluchistan and Sylhet. It seemed a logical and reasonable proposal apart from the particular circumstances prevailing. . . ."

"But in all likelihood parts of Bengal and the Punjab will decide in favour of secession and so we may take it as almost granted that the question will arise for decision in the N. W. F. P. The present position is that the British Government and the Viceroy are definitely committed to this referendum. Some of us are also more or less committed. . . . The question of referendum, therefore, appears to be a settled one and it is not quite clear how we can get out of it. For the Viceroy it is still more difficult. Any change in the plan . . . may even lead to conflict on a big scale. We may, therefore, take it as a settled fact that a referendum will take place."

In order to ensure peaceful conditions during the referendum, Pandit Nehru explained, it was proposed that "it should be organized by British military officers to be imported from outside. . . . The Provincial Government would be closely associated with the machinery for this referendum". Normally speaking, Pandit Nehru did not think that there was much chance of "any big violent conflict".

The proposal that the people of the Frontier should be allowed to vote for sovereign independence raised certain difficulties: "The Viceroy

[1] *Vide* p. 112.

said he can only agree if the parties agree. . . . It may also introduce an element of confusion in the voting when three issues are before the voter. . . . Votes may well be split."

As for the suggestion that the Frontier Congress should keep out of the referendum, Pandit Nehru argued that it would mean "accepting the Muslim League's dominance in the N. W. F. P.—in effect a surrender to the Muslim League agitation".

"Whether it will lead to peaceful conditions or not, it is difficult to say. But I imagine that any such waiver or surrender is even more likely to lead to conflict and bloodshed because the Muslim League would celebrate this surrender as a great victory for the League. . . . They would be justified then in claiming that the present Ministry does not represent the bulk of the population. . . . It seems difficult for the Provincial Ministry to continue after a decision has been given against them by a referendum or by a waiver of referendum. . . . Possibly, the question would immediately arise of another election to the Provincial Legislature. Having avoided the referendum . . . we do not avoid trouble and difficulty and the Provincial Ministry cannot continue. The election takes place anyhow with all its possible evil consequences. . . . The only other course is a peaceful submission to the Pakistan idea, and I doubt very much if most of the Pathans will agree to it."

. . . Pandit Nehru concluded . . . to keep away from the referendum "would be to ensure a wrong decision" and that too "not by the ordinary democratic process but by private arrangement".

"This seems to me a very dangerous procedure to follow both in regard to avoidance of violence and regarding our own future in the N. W. F. P. To fight democratically and to be defeated does not weaken us for long and we can renew the struggle in other ways later. But to give up without a struggle means a certain lack of integrity through fear of consequences and leads to the collapse of the organization which was unable to face the issue.

In view of all these circumstances, it seems to me that the only right course is for us to accept the referendum and to prepare for it with all our strength. We have a good chance of winning it. . . . We should go to the referendum on the cry that we want the largest measure of freedom and independence in the Frontier. . . . This is not a straight issue of sovereign independence but a slight variation of that theme which should prove helpful. . . . In effect, after Pakistan comes into being in Western Punjab, and the Frontier is cut off from India, the N. W. F. P. will inevitably have, because of this cutting off and other reasons, a very great deal of autonomy and independence. . . ."

". . . If there is risk in this course, there are far greater risks of bloodshed in other courses. The course suggested is a brave, frank

course of accepting battle peacefully. To give up the battle, when final decisions are being taken, will result in deep psychological injury to our people."

". . . To some extent he (Mountbatten) is naturally bound by the past and the present set-up; but he is trying his best to go ahead in the right direction. He realizes the difficulties of the Frontier problem and wants to do everything in his power to solve them. I think he will prove helpful. He is convinced, however, that in the peculiar conditions that are arising in India now owing to possible secession of some parts, a chance must be given to the Frontier people to decide themselves by means of a referendum. He is definitely committed himself to this and he cannot get out of it without grave injury to his own prestige and impartiality. He would probably prefer to resign than to face such a situation."

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 269-72

APPENDIX VI

TELEGRAM FROM C. P. RAMASWAMY IYER[1]

Will you allow me to protest against erroneous statements made by you at your prayer meeting yesterday relying on inaccurate reports. There was no banning of meetings in Travancore except where breaches of peace were apprehended and a number of meetings have been actually held. Fourteen persons alone have been arrested throughout the State, of whom eight have been ordered to be released. Those who were arrested were dealt with for defying the Magistrate's orders in places where breach of peace was apprehended. There was no lathi-charge anywhere.

You have asked the Indian States not to rely on the British. It is not Indian States that are now relying on the British Government, but the Congress and I am aware that the British Government are more anxious to secure the consent of the Congress to Dominion Status than to befriend the States. I wish to assure you that we are at least as conscious of our need for self-reliance as you are. You will find out for yourself that the people of Travancore are, as an overwhelming majority, in favour of the stand for independence. May I also make it clear that this independence is wholly consistent with close relations as regards defence, foreign affairs and all matters of common concern with the rest of India.

The needless threats indulged in by Pandit Nehru are really uncalled for because no Indian State wishes to enter into any relations with

[1] *Vide* p. 151.

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foreign and hostile powers against the interest of India. I hope you will persuade yourself and your followers to credit those who differ from you with as much patriotism as you claim for yourself. With regard to the audacity attributed to Indian States by you, I may invite your attention to the statement of Sir Stafford Cripps at the Press Conference on May 16, 1946, in which he said: "It is not necessary for me to state that a contract or arrangement of this kind cannot be handed over to a third party without the consent of the States. They will, therefore, become wholly independent." On July 18, 1946, both Lord Pethick-Lawrence and Sir Stafford Cripps have stated: "As for States, they need have no anxiety. It is for them to agree to come in or not as they choose." Lastly the present Secretary of State on June 3, 1947, stated that after the transfer of power, States should be free to choose their own future and that British Paramountcy would end. The course left open to them would be autonomy or affiliation with either Pakistan or Hindustan.

The audacity, if any, is on the part of those statesmen under whose aegis the Congress is now embarking on Dominion Status. The threats of Pandit Nehru and his reliance on world powers, including Britain, to help him to implement those threats will no doubt be considered by Lord Listowel and Sir Stafford Cripps, but it is difficult to see how they can go behind their own statements. I note with intense regret that you have not yet withdrawn the false allegation that I have asked Travancoreans who do not agree to independence to quit the State in spite of my denial and the telegram addressed to you by twelve journalists who attended the Press Conference. The B. B. C. has repeated the calumny this morning evidently taking shelter under your statements.

The Hindu, 17-6-1947

APPENDIX VII

LORD MOUNTBATTEN'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI AND M. A. JINNAH[1]

June 17, 1947

I saw Mr. Gandhi from 10 to 11 a. m. The main topic of the discussions was the referendum. He still wanted Mr. Jinnah to go and see the N. W. F. P. Government leaders to [talk to] them as suggested in the statement he had prepared with Lord Ismay.

He was most dissatisfied at Mr. Jinnah's stipulation about no Congress interference; and he still wanted me to urge Mr. Jinnah to go, as their correspondence had come to a full stop.

[1] *Vide* pp. 168 and 366-8.

I asked him whether he would agree to see Mr. Jinnah right away, and on obtaining his agreement, sent a telephone message to Mr. Jinnah asking if he would come earlier than his original time, to see Mr. Gandhi. Mr. Jinnah came at 11.0 a.m. and joined the meeting until 12 noon.

Both these great men spoke in such low voices that they could not hear each other, so I had to move their chairs close together. After a good deal of mutual recrimination about their correspondence, I finally solved the problem by suggesting that since Abdul Ghaffar Khan had been invested with plenary authority by the Frontier Ministry, Mr. Jinnah should take advantage of his presence in Delhi to meet him here.

Both leaders seemed to think this a good idea, but Mr. Gandhi said that Abdul Ghaffar Khan was most mistrustful of Mr. Jinnah and would not come unless he received a written invitation. Mr. Jinnah said he had frequently extended verbal invitations, and that if Abdul Ghaffar Khan was not prepared to accept these, he certainly had no intention of sending him a written invitation.

After this wrangle had gone on for some time, I solved the difficulty by offering to invite all concerned to meet me at 7.45 the same evening. Both accepted and honour was satisfied.

Unfortunately, Abdul Ghaffar Khan had had an engagement 100 miles outside Delhi, and although he was due back between 6.0 p. m. and 7.0 p. m., he did not get back in time for the meeting. I personally telephoned Mr. Jinnah and Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur, Mr. Gandhi's secretary, and got them to agree to a meeting with Abdul Ghaffar Khan at the Viceroy's House the following day, under the chairmanship of Lord Ismay.

Before Mr. Jinnah's arrival, I mentioned to Mr. Gandhi that I believed a question was likely to be asked in the House concerning the position of those Indian States who declared their independence. I informed him that on being asked this question, in my Press Conference, I had replied to the effect that States would not be allowed Dominion Status and that the question of separate negotiations with States was a hypothetical question which had not yet arisen. If I received such a request, I would refer it to H. M. G. I pointed out that Hyderabad had a Trade Commissioner in London, and I was sure that H. M. G. could not be expected to cut off trade relations with Hyderabad.

Mr. Gandhi begged me on no account to make any statement in Delhi, and, if possible, to make no statement about this question until he returned. Since he wished to continue the discussion with me and I was unable to do so, I invited him to see Lord Ismay and arrange for an immediate meeting.

MOUNTBATTEN OF BURMA
17-6-1947

From a photostat: C. W. 11031. Lord Mountbatten Papers. Courtesy: Broadlands Archives Trust

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APPENDIX VIII

LETTER FROM LORD MOUNTBATTEN TO HARI SINGH[1]

June 26, 1947

I am writing to tell Your Highness that I have had a talk with both Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru, who are both still anxious to visit Kashmir. I pointed out to them that any visit from a big Congress leader in which speeches were made could not fail to cause the League to send speakers of the order of Mr. Jinnah to counter their propaganda. This would in effect produce the electioneering atmosphere which you so rightly wish to avoid, since, as you pointed out to me, there has been no bloodshed up to date and only violent political speeches could now bring about the bloodshed.

Mr. Gandhi tells me that Pandit Nehru is prepared to forgo his visit if he (Mr. Gandhi) goes instead.

I am therefore writing this at Mr. Gandhi's request . . . to suggest that you should agree to his visit in the near future and make things as easy as possible for him. He has given me his firm assurance that he will make no political speeches or carry out any form of propaganda. The object of his visit would be to see Madame Abdullah; and, if you granted permission (but only if you did grant him permission), he would like to see Sheikh Abdullah. He would like to meet the people in general way, but has no desire to address them or to collect large crowds.

May I suggest that Your Highness or your Prime Minister should communicate direct with him to save time.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 269

APPENDIX IX

EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF VICEROY'S 48TH STAFF MEETING[2]

June 28, 1947

His Excellency The Viceroy read out a letter which he had received that morning from Mr. Gandhi. He stated that throughout this letter Mr. Gandhi had completely misinterpreted what he had said at his meeting two days previously. In fact, he had told Mr. Gandhi that he was finding increasing difficulty in helping to get matters connected with Partition settled. He had pointed out that it was for Congress not a question of fair play to

[1] *Vide* p. 217.
[2] *Vide* p. 225.

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ensure that the various issues were settled speedily, but of sheer expediency. If Congress took the line that they were not going to help, Mr. Jinnah would point out to the world at large the Congress's acceptance of the Statement of 3rd June had not been honest. He had told Mr. Gandhi that it would be very foolish of Congress to give Mr. Jinnah any excuse for not being ready to take over power on 15th August. He had assured Mr. Gandhi that he intended in any event to hand over power on that date, but had explained that Congress would be put in a very poor position in the eyes of the world if they made it difficult for Mr. Jinnah to take over. Mr. Gandhi had stated that the words "fair play" did not exist in any Hindustani dialect. He (The Viceroy) had reiterated that he was not expecting or demanding fair play; all that he was requesting was a degree of common sense so that Congress would not put themselves in the position of wrecking an agreement which had been honourably reached.

His Excellency the Viceroy directed P. S. V. to draft, for his approval, a reply to Mr. Gandhi's letter.

From a copy: India Office Library and Records

APPENDIX X

LORD MOUNTBATTEN'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI[1]

July 9, 1947

I think and hope that I have satisfactorily cleared up the misunderstanding referred to in his letter of the 27/28th June, 1947. I told him that my sole object up to 15th August was to ensure a peaceful and efficient transfer of power to the two Dominions in accordance with the will of the people of India and their respective future Governments. He next raised with me the fear which he had expressed consistently in his recent post-prayer meetings that the British would leave a legacy of war, and that the partitioned armies would be left in a state in which there was every likelihood that they would be used for making war on each other.

2. I told him that of course I shared his view that nothing should be left undone which would ensure the removal of the threat of war between two neighbouring members of the British Commonwealth.

3. I told him in confidence that Lord Ismay was this day seeing the British Chiefs of Staff to discuss the future Commonwealth defence arrangements with particular reference to India. While I could not prophesy what would be the outcome of those discussions, I hoped that they would result in defence discussions between the United Kingdom, Pakistan and India taking place after the 15th August and before 31st March.

[1] *Vide* p. 306.

4. I pointed out that the institution of the Joint Defence Council, which would last until at least that date, would remove all risk of war before that date, and that this gave us eight months in which to arrange some form of agreement which would reduce the chances of the two countries fighting each other.

5. I pointed out that the greatest guarantee for the future peace of the Indian Sub-Continent lay in both nations remaining members of the British Commonwealth. He reproved me for using the word 'nations' and invited me to use States or Countries instead.

6. I further pointed out that so long as Pakistan and India remained within the Commonwealth, there was no reason why a Commonwealth Conference should not be called to Delhi since this was the most central capital in the whole Commonwealth, and at such a meeting arrangements could be discussed which would ensure other members of the Commonwealth devising means to prevent Pakistan and India from making war on each other.

7. We next discussed the question of the Indian States. He asked me to do everything in my power to ensure that the British did not leave a legacy of Balkanization and disruption on the 15th August by encouraging the States to declare their independence, or by leaving the arrangements between the States and the Dominions of India and Pakistan in a state of chaos.

8. He further went on and said that H. E. H.'s decision about Berar returning to the Nizam was a crime.

9. I told him that I had already invited H. E. H.'s representatives to meet me on the 11th to discuss the questions of Berar and Secunderabad. I told him that on the 25th July all States including Hyderabad would send representatives to discuss the stand-still agreement, and I hoped also the terms under which they would join one or the other dominion.

10. I told him that since Pandit Nehru had authorized me to negotiate in the first instance alone with the States' representatives on the basis of their being granted full membership of the dominion on adhering only to the three Central subjects mentioned in the Cabinet Mission Plan, I felt very hopeful of being able to bring in almost every State including even Travancore.

11. I made it a condition however that no leaders must make any more threatening or provocative speeches.

12. I told Mr. Gandhi "You always talk about wooing people, and yet in the case of the States you threaten. Would you woo a girl you wanted to marry with a stick and expect her to accept?" He laughed and admitted the truth of this statement, and said he would make no statements that would embarrass my negotiations.

From a photostat: C. W. 11032. Lord Mountbatten Papers. Courtesy: Broadlands Archives Trust

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APPENDIX XI

LORD MOUNTBATTEN'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI[1]

July 29, 1947

I explained that I had called this meeting to consider Pandit Nehru's projected visit to Kashmir. I recalled the history of this affair from the time I arrived, and said that Pandit Nehru had from the very beginning repeatedly expressed to me his strong desire to visit Kashmir which I understood was based on the incidents that occurred there during the visit of the Cabinet Mission last year. I expressed sincere sympathy with Pandit Nehru's mental distress at having been unable to keep his promise to visit his friends in Kashmir and endeavour to effect the release of Sheikh Abdulla.

I reminded the meeting that it had been agreed that Mr. Gandhi should visit Kashmir in place of Pandit Nehru if this was generally thought to be a better solution: and I took the full blame for having delayed this visit by offering to go myself to Kashmir. I repeated my regret at having been unable to discuss the release of Sheikh Abdulla with the Maharaja on the last day of my visit owing to His Highness's indisposition. I admitted having asked Mr. Gandhi to wait until the arrival of the Prime Minister of Kashmir, Pandit Kak. But I said I was at a loss to understand how, consequent on Pandit Kak's visit to both Mr. Gandhi and Pandit Nehru to ask neither of them to go, the result should have been that Pandit Nehru wished to go instead of Mr. Gandhi.

Whatever Pandit Nehru's personal emotions might be, I felt I should be failing in my duty if I did not point out that this was hardly the time for the Vice-President of the Interim Government and the Prime Minister of the Dominion Government which was to take over power in 17 days, to leave the capital on what really amounted to almost private business; at all events on a visit which it would be extremely difficult to explain away to world opinion.

I also pointed out that a visit by any Congress leaders could not fail to be badly received in the world Press just at the time it was known that Kashmir had the choice of Pakistan or India before its Ruler; but that this effect would be somewhat mitigated if Mr. Gandhi went on account of the religious aura that surrounded him, whereas if Pandit Nehru went it would be regarded as a piece of straightforward political lobbying.

Mr. Gandhi agreed with what I had said, and stated that although at Mr. Kak's request he had agreed not to go, if I seriously regarded Pandit

[1] *Vide* p. 460. Jawaharlal Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel also were present.

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Nehru's proposed visit as objectionable, he would himself be prepared once more to take his place.

Sardar Patel gave it as his view that neither of them should go, but that in view of Pandit Nehru's great mental distress if his mission in Kashmir were to remain unfulfilled, he agreed that one of them must go. He very bluntly remarked: "It is a choice between two evils and I consider that Gandhiji's visit would be the lesser evil."

Pandit Nehru held forth at some length about his mental distress and defended his visit on the grounds that (A) nothing would be more natural than that Congress should send a high-level emissary to lay before the Government of Kashmir the advantages of joining the Dominion of India, and (B) that it was well known that he was over-worked, that he would like to go away for three or four days' rest somewhere in any case, and that Kashmir would be a delightful place in which to have a brief holiday. The fact that he might be engaged on local work would be a sufficient change of occupation to give him the necessary rest.

The rest of us each argued in turn with Pandit Nehru and finally Mr. Gandhi specifically renewed his offer to go provided Pandit Nehru would accept that offer, which he urged him to do since Sardar Patel and I, who were the two "outside" members of the party, were so strongly in favour of Gandhi's going.

Finally it was agreed that Mr. Gandhi should leave on the following night train *via* Rawalpindi and that I would send telegrams to the Resident in Kashmir and the Governor of the Punjab.[1]

From a photostat: C. W. 11033. Lord Mountbatten Papers. Courtesy: Broadlands Archives Trust

[1] The note signed "M. of B." bears a marginal noting against the last paragraph which reads: "Necessary action already taken".

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CHRONOLOGY

(*May 25, 1947 to July 31, 1947*)

May 25 : Gandhiji returned to New Delhi after visits to Calcutta and Patna.

May 26 : In New Delhi.

May 27 : Had discussion with Jayaprakash Narayan and co-workers. Called on Acting Viceroy Colville. Addressed prayer meeting.

May 28 : Received Chinese Ambassador who was accompanied by Jawaharlal Nehru; at prayer meeting answered questions.

May 29 : Addressed prayer meeting.

May 30 : Addressed prayer meeting.

May 31 : Addressed prayer meeting.

June 1 : Addressed prayer meeting.

June 2 : Met Viceroy along with other Congress and League leaders. Sought removal of the Governor of North-West Frontier Province. Attended Congress Working Committee meeting. In speech, which was read out at prayer meeting, expressed hope of a scavenger girl becoming first President of India.

June 3 : In letter, advised relatives to allow use of ancestral home for national purpose; at Congress Working Committee meeting, advised Socialists to serve party ungrudgingly; addressed prayer meeting.

June 4 : Spoke at Congress Working Committee meeting; met Viceroy; informed prayer meeting that Congress had accepted partition as last resort.

June 5 : In letter, deplored race for power; explained meaning of independence to students; at prayer meeting, announced death of D. D. Kosambi.

June 6 : At 4.30 p.m., met Viceroy; addressed prayer meeting.

June 7 : Addressed prayer meeting.

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June 8 : In letter, advised Sarat Chandra Bose to give up struggle for United Bengal.

June 9 : Addressed prayer meeting.

June 10 : Addressed prayer meeting.

June 11 : Addressed prayer meeting.

June 12 : Attended meeting of the Congress Working Committee. Addressed prayer meeting.

June 13 : In letter to Lord Mountbatten, suggested that Jinnah be invited to Frontier Province before holding referendum; at prayer meeting, deplored Travancore State decision to stay "independent" of Constituent Assembly.

June 14 : Spoke at A. I. C. C. meeting; addressed prayer meeting.

June 15 : In the afternoon, received Travancore State delegation; at prayer meeting, talked about future of Princes.

June 16 : In the morning, received Purushottamdas Tandon. Addressed prayer meeting.

June 17 : Met Viceroy; also Jinnah; addressed prayer meeting.

June 18 : Accompanied by Abdul Ghaffar Khan, continued discussion with Jinnah; addressed prayer meeting.

June 19 : Addressed prayer meeting.

June 20 : Addressed prayer meeting.

June 21 : At Hardwar. Visited refugee camp.

June 22 : In Delhi. Spoke to women working in refugee camps; addressed prayer meeting.

June 23 : Addressed prayer meeting.

June 24 : Addressed prayer meeting.

June 25 : Addressed prayer meeting.

June 26 : Met Viceroy; addressed prayer meeting.

June 27 : In letter, requested Lord Mountbatten to expedite action on Jawaharlal Nehru's visit to Kashmir; addressed prayer meeting.

June 28 : At prayer meeting, spoke on rights and duties.

June 29 : At prayer meeting, continued talk on rights and duties.

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June 30 : In telegram to Sivashanmugham Pillai, expressed joy on temple-entry in Rameswaram; in speech, which was read out at prayer meeting, said that "temple-entry should be followed up by true internal reform in temples".

July 1 : Accompanied by Jawaharlal Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel, met Viceroy; noted down his comments on Indian Independence Bill; addressed prayer meeting.

July 2 : Spoke at Delhi Provincial Political Conference presided over by Jayaprakash Narayan; addressed prayer meeting.

July 3 : Addressed Prayer meeting.

July 4 : In letter, expressed disbelief in civil marriages; addressed prayer meeting.

July 5 : Received Lady Mountbatten; advised Abdul Ghaffar Khan that he and his people should boycott referendum.

July 6 : Addressed prayer meeting.

July 7 : In speech which was read out at prayer meeting, wanted Congress-League understanding without Viceroy's intervention.

July 8 : Had discussion with Sushila Nayyar and Aruna Asaf Ali; was interviewed by deputation from Quetta; also by V. K. Krishna Menon; addressed prayer meeting.

July 9 : Met Viceroy, addressed prayer meeting.

July 10 : Felicitated Princess Elizabeth and Philip Mountbatten on their engagement; was interviewed by Arthur Moore; also by Winkleman; addressed prayer meeting.

July 11 : Addressed prayer meeting.

July 12 : At prayer meeting, explained reason for making Lord Mountbatten Governor-General of India, while Pakistan preferred Jinnah.

July 13 : Addressed prayer meeting.

July 14 : Addressed prayer meeting.

July 15 : Addressed prayer meeting.

July 16 : In a letter, informed Viceroy he intended to visit Kashmir as private citizen; at prayer meeting, spoke on language issue.

July 17 : In discussion with visitors, stressed need for cultivating non-violence of the brave.

July 18 : Felicitated the Mountbattens on silver jubilee of their wedding.

July 19 : In letter to Viceroy, expressed readiness to postpone Kashmir visit; gave interview to Naga delegation.

July 20 : In speech at prayer meeting, said that condition in country did not warrant rejoicing on August 15, Independence Day.

July 21 : In speech read out at prayer meeting said that August 15 "will be a day of prayer and introspection".

July 22 : Had talks with refugee students and foreigners.

July 23 : Addressed prayer meeting.

July 24 : In letter to Vallabhbhai Patel, expressed fear of closure of weekly publications *Harijan*, *Harijanbandhu* and *Harijan Sevak*.

July 27 : In message, exhorted army officers to learn the art of using sickle and plough instead of guns.

July 28 : In letter to Jivanji D. Desai, reiterated apprehension about continuing *Harijan*.

July 31 : Left for Kashmir; at Rawalpindi, gave interview to President, Punjab Student Christian League.

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25	*Footnote 2, line 3	drawing the	drawing up the
196	*Paragraph 3, line 4	bound	to be deleted
280	*Paragraph 2, lines 6 and 7	Macaulay	Macauliff

*Due correction made.

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