

## *1. LETTER TO SIR CLAUDE HILL*

ST. STEPHEN'S COLLEGE,  
DELHI,  
*April 26, 1918*

DEAR SIR CLAUDE HILL,

It was not without considerable pain that I had to decline the honour of serving on any of the Committee that will be appointed at the eventful Conference<sup>1</sup> or speaking to the main resolution<sup>2</sup>.

I feel that the Conference will be largely abortive with the most powerful leaders excluded from it. The absence of Mr. Tilak, Mrs. Besant and Ali Brothers from the Conference deprives it of any real weight.<sup>3</sup> I must confess that not one of us who were present at today's meeting has the influence of these leaders with the masses. Refusal to have them at the Conference shows that there is no real desire to change the attitude hitherto adopted by those who are holding the reins of Government. And without any real alteration in the spirit all your concessions will lose their grace and force and will fail to evoke genuine loyalty from the masses. If I understand the purpose of the Conference aright, you wish to work upon the masses. How to evoke in the Indian the loyalty of the Englishman is the question before the Indian leaders. I submit that it is impossible to do so unless you are prepared to trust the trusted leaders of the people and to do all that such trust means. So far as Ali Brothers are concerned there is no proof of their guilt before the public and they have emphatically repudiated the charge of having corresponded with the enemy. Most Mahomedans think what the Brothers think on the situation.

I feel that for other reasons also I could not effectively serve on

<sup>1</sup> This was the War Conference convened by Lord Chelmsford.

<sup>2</sup> The resolution read as follows: "That this Conference authorizes and requests His Excellency the Viceroy to convey to His Majesty the King-Emperor an expression of India's dutiful and loyal response to his gracious message, and assurance of her determination to continue to do her duty to her utmost capacity in the great crisis through which the Empire is passing."

<sup>3</sup> Tilak had not been invited; but, after an interview with the Viceroy on April 27, Gandhiji wired asking Tilak to attend the Conference. This he declined to do as Government would not rescind the externment order issued against him. Annie Besant, too, had received no invitation, while the Ali Brothers were still in internment.

the Conference. I have just read the Home Mail papers. They deal with the secret Treaties. The revelations make painful reading, I do not know that I could call the Allies' cause to be any longer just if these treaties are truly reported. I do not know what effect the news will produce on the Mahomedans of India. The Government will best serve the Empire if they were boldly to advise His Majesty's Government to recede from the false and immoral position they placed themselves in by these treaties. No one will be more glad than I would be to find that my reading of the papers is totally incorrect.<sup>1</sup>

There will be no domestic peace in India so long as local officials administer affairs as they have been doing in Kaira. I am sure the Viceroy does not wish that the people should not resist injustice and tyranny. I do hope that the contemplated spoliation in Kaira will be stopped at once and the just demand of the Kaira people will be complied with.

I would like to warn the Government against accepting or initiating conscription. I hope it will never flourish on the Indian soil. But, in any case, it ought not to be introduced until all voluntary efforts have been honestly made and failed. You will admit that the leaders have with remarkable self-restraint hushed all the tales of the forcible recruitment that is reported to have gone on hitherto. I venture to think that the danger point has been reached.

Lastly a thorough education in Home Rule has now so widely penetrated the masses that nothing short of very substantial evidence of the near advent of Home Rule will secure the real co-operation of the people.

You will now understand and perhaps appreciate my reluctance

<sup>1</sup> Some light is thrown on the background to these observations of Gandhiji in *Charles Freer Andrews*, p. 132. Gandhiji had asked Andrews to join him on his way to the War Conference. "In the train on his way there Andrews read in the English *New Statesman* an account of the predatory 'secret treaties' unearthed by revolutionaries from the Russian Foreign Office; Great Britain was a signatory of these treaties, notwithstanding her public declarations of the disinterestedness of her fight for freedom. Andrews thrust the papers before Gandhi. 'How can you take part in a war conference while this sort of double-dealing is going on?' he demanded." This was another reason why Gandhiji had initially refused to attend the Conference. Lord Chelmsford, however, in the course of an interview, repudiated the report about the treaties as having emanated from interested quarters and expressed his disbelief that the British Cabinet would enter into a treaty to cede Constantinople to Russia. It was on the basis of this clarification that Gandhiji finally agreed to participate in the Conference.

to speak or to serve on the committees. I can best demonstrate my good wishes by abstaining from the Conference.

Will you please place this letter before the Viceroy at the earliest possible opportunity?

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

## 2. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY

ST. STEPHEN'S COLLEGE,  
DELHI,  
*April 27, 1918*

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

I duly received your wire as also your note of the 19th instant for both of which I thank you.

The development which the situation has since undergone renders the discharge of the [Ali] Brothers more than ever imperative. After considerable hesitation and much deep thought, I have come to the conclusion that I cannot take part in the Conference and serve the cause for which it has been called. My reasons are set forth in my letter to Sir Claude Hill,<sup>1</sup> copy of which I beg to enclose herewith. I do not know whether His Excellency would still like to see me about the Brothers. I am in Delhi up to the 29th, but can naturally prolong my stay if necessary.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

N.A.I.: Home, War (Deposit): October 1918, No. 26

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* the preceding item.

### 3. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY

DELHI,

April 27, 1918

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

In fear and trembling I have decided as a matter of duty to join the Conference. After the interview with His Excellency<sup>1</sup> and subsequently with you, I feel I could not do otherwise.<sup>2</sup>

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

N.A.I.: Home, War (Deposit): October 1918, No. 26

### 4. LETTER TO J.L. MAFFEY

DELHI,

April 28, 1918

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

I would like you please to secure for me His Excellency's permission to deliver my speech at the Conference today in Urdu. I intended to send a translation of it, but I think that I shall speak most effectively by merely speaking the words necessary to support the resolution in question. The answer to my request you will perhaps send per Mr. Andrews.

<sup>1</sup> This took place on April 27.

<sup>2</sup> Gandhiji received the next day the following message from Maffey: "The Viceroy does not believe in your 'fear and trembling'. Nor do I ! His Excellency is very glad indeed to hear that you will join the Conference. I have written to Sir Claude Hill to inform him that you will join the Man Power Committee which meets at 11 a.m."

Earlier Gandhiji had received, according to *Mahadev Desai's Diary*, Vol. IV, the following message from the Viceroy: "Please assure all your friends that I have already done what I possibly could do. The Scheme submitted will not be exactly the Congress-League Scheme, but will substantially be like it. I hope *tomorrow* there will be no bargaining, no huckstering therefore. The whole world—especially all in England—will be watching with anxiousness what happens *tomorrow*, everybody's eyes are fixed on tomorrow and I do hope there will be no huckstering."

Will you please tell me how long you are going to stay in Delhi ?<sup>1</sup>

*Yours sincerely.*

M.K. GANDHI

N.A.I.: Home, War (Deposit): October 1918, No. 26

### 5. *SPEECH AT WAR CONFERENCE*<sup>2</sup>

DELHI,

*April 28, 1918*

I consider myself honoured to find my name among the supporters of this resolution. I realize fully its meaning and I tender my support to it with all my heart.<sup>3</sup>

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2225

<sup>1</sup> To this Gandhiji received the next day the following reply from Maffey: "I now find that in this morning's rush I did not read the end part of your letter and only dealt with the first question—your speech. If I may deal with that, may I say that I know the Viceroy felt very much touched by your presence, by the simple words you said and the way you said them. I am so glad that you see scope for definite work ahead. It is all wanted and you will not regret it. Standing out for rights is not always the best way of getting them. If you can believe in us, fight for us and don't be impatient with us. We leave tonight, but if at any time I can be of service let me know."

<sup>2</sup> This has been extracted from "Letter to G. A. Natesan", 12-5-1918.

<sup>3</sup> Gandhiji has referred to his speech in the Man-Power Committee in his autobiography as follows: "So I attended the Conference. The Viceroy was very keen on my supporting the resolution about recruiting. I asked for permission to speak in Hindi-Hindustani. The Viceroy acceded to my request, but suggested that I should speak also in English. I had no speech to make. I spoke but one sentence to this effect, 'With a full sense of my responsibility, I beg to support the resolution.'" *Vide An Autobiography*, Part V; Ch. XXVII

## 6. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY

DELHI,

*April 29, 1918*

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

It was kind of you in spite of your overwhelming work to reread my letter and find time to answer it.<sup>1</sup>

Pray convey my thanks to His Excellency for his kindly sentiments.

I am preparing two letters<sup>2</sup> for you which will follow you to Simla. I hardly think I shall be ready before you leave. One of them will contain definite suggestions in which you may use my services and the other will simply complete my view on the situation.

My trust in you is not to be easily shaken. I entirely endorse what you say about rights. But I have no business to inflict a long letter on you.

I always feel that I am committing a sin when I write to you.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

N.A.I.: Home, War, Political: October 1918, No. 27

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* footnote to "Letter to J. L. Maffey", 24-4-1918.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 29-4-1918, and "Letter to J. L. Maffey", 30-4-1918.

## 7. LETTER TO VICEROY

DELHI,

April 29, 1918<sup>1</sup>

SIR,

As you are aware, after careful consideration, I felt constrained to convey to Your Excellency that I could not attend the Conference for reasons stated in my letter<sup>2</sup> of the 26th instant. But after the interview you were good enough to grant me, I persuaded myself to join it, —if for no other cause, then certainly out of my great regard for yourself.

One of my reasons for abstention,—and perhaps the strongest,—was that Mr. Tilak, Mrs. Besant, and the brothers Ali, whom I regard as among the most powerful leaders of public opinion, were not invited to the Conference. I still feel that it was a grave blunder not to have asked them, and I respectfully suggest that the blunder might be partially repaired if these leaders were invited to assist the Government by giving it the benefit of their advice at the Provincial Conferences which, I understand, are to follow. I venture to submit that no Government can afford to disregard leaders who represent large masses of the people, as these do, even though they may hold views fundamentally different. At the same time, it gives me pleasure to be able to say that the views of all parties were permitted to be freely expressed at the Committees of the Conference. For my own part, I purposely refrained from stating my views, either at the Committee on which I had the honour of serving—or at the Conference itself. I felt that I could best serve the objects of the Conference by simply tendering my support to the resolutions submitted to it,—and this I have done without any reservation. I hope to translate the spoken word into action as early as the Government can see its way to accept my offer, which I am submitting simultaneously herewith in a separate letter. I recognize that, in the hour of its danger, we must give, —as we have decided to give—ungrudging and unequivocal support to the Empire, of which we aspire, in the near future, to be partners in the

<sup>1</sup> Though drafted on this date, it appears to have been sent to the Viceroy at Simla only the following day, with a covering note addressed to J. L. Maffey; *vide* the following item.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* “Letter to Sir Claude Hill”; 26-4-1918.

same sense as the Dominions overseas. But it is the simple truth that our response is due to the expectation that our goal will be reached all the more speedily on that account—even as the performance of a duty automatically confers a corresponding right. The people are entitled to believe that the imminent reforms alluded to in your speech will embody the main, general principles of the Congress-League Scheme, and I am sure that it is this faith which has enabled many members of the Conference to tender to the Government their whole-hearted co-operation.

If I could make my countrymen retrace their steps, I would make them withdraw all the Congress resolutions, and not whisper “Home Rule” or “Responsible Government” during the pendency of the war. I would make India offer all her able-bodied sons as a sacrifice to the Empire at its critical moment; and I know that India by this very act would become the most favoured partner in the Empire and racial distinctions would become a thing of the past. But practically the whole of educated India has decided to take a less effective course, and it is no longer possible to say that educated India does not exercise any influence on the masses. I have been coming into most intimate touch with the ryots ever since my return from South Africa to India, and I wish to assure you that the desire for Home Rule has widely penetrated them. I was present at the sessions of the last Congress, and I was party to the resolution that full Responsible Government should be granted to British India within a period to be fixed definitely by a Parliamentary Statute. I admit that it is a bold step to take, but I feel sure that nothing less than a definite vision of Home Rule—to be realized in the shortest possible time—will satisfy the Indian people. I know that there are many in India who consider no sacrifice too great in order to achieve the end; and they are wakeful enough to realize that they must be equally prepared to sacrifice themselves for the Empire in which they hope and desire to reach their final status. It follows, then, that we can but accelerate our journey towards the goal by silently and simply devoting ourselves, heart and soul, to the work of delivering the Empire from the threatening danger. It will be national suicide not to recognize this elementary truth. We must perceive that, if we serve to save the Empire, we have in that very act secured Home Rule.

Whilst, therefore, it is clear to me that we should give to the Empire every available man for its defence, I fear that I cannot say



the same thing about financial assistance. My intimate intercourse with the ryots convinces me that India has already donated to the Imperial Exchequer beyond her capacity. I know that, in making this statement, I am voicing the opinion of the vast majority of my countrymen.

The Conference means for me, and I believe for many of us, a definite step in the consecration of our lives to the common cause. But ours is a peculiar position. We are today outside the partnership. Ours is a consecration based on the hope of a better future. I should be untrue to you and to my country if I did not clearly and unequivocally tell you what that hope is. I do not bargain for its fulfilment. But you should know it. Disappointment of the hope means disillusion.

There is one thing I may not omit. You have appealed to us to sink domestic differences. If the appeal involves the toleration of tyranny and wrongdoing on the part of officials, I am powerless to respond. I shall resist organized tyranny to the uttermost. The appeal must be to the officials that they do not ill-treat a single soul, and that they consult and respect popular opinion as never before. In Champaran, by resisting an age-long tyranny, I have shown the ultimate sovereignty of British justice. In Kaira, a population that was cursing the Government now feels that it, and not the Government, is the power when it is prepared to suffer for the truth it represents. It is, therefore, losing its bitterness and is saying to itself that the Government must be a Government for the people, for it tolerates orderly and respectful disobedience where injustice is felt. Thus, Champaran and Kaira affairs are my direct, definite, and special contribution to the war. Ask me to suspend my activities in that direction, and you ask me to suspend my life. If I could popularize the use of soul-force, which is but another name for love-force, in the place of brute force, I know that I could present you with an India that could defy the whole world to do its worst. In season and out of season, therefore, I shall discipline myself to express in my life this eternal law of suffering and present it for acceptance to those who care. And if I take part in any other activity, the motive is to show the matchless superiority of that law.

Lastly, I would like you to ask His Majesty's Ministers to give definite assurances about Mahomedan States. I am sure you know that every Mahomedan is deeply interested in them. As a Hindu, I cannot be indifferent to their cause. Their sorrows must be our sorrows. In

the most scrupulous regard for the right of these States, and for the Muslim sentiment as to places of worship and in your just and timely treatment of the Indian claim to Home Rule, lies the safety of the Empire.

I write this, because I love the English Nation, and I wish to evoke in every Indian the loyalty of the Englishman.

*I remain,*

*Your Excellency's faithful servant,*

M. K. GANDHI

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### 8. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY

NADIAD,

*April 30, 1918<sup>1</sup>*

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

In pursuance of my declaration at the Conference yesterday, I wish respectfully to state that I place my services at the disposal of the authorities to be utilized by them in any manner they choose, save that I personally will not kill or injure anybody, friend or foe.

But it would be better perhaps if I were to state how, in my opinion, my services may be best used.

In the first place, it is necessary in order to make my work effective that I should receive permission to go to Chindwara and see the brothers Ali. I would like to confer with them and ascertain from them their advice as to the objects of the Conference. I have little doubt that they will approve of co-operation. If the Government would accept the request originally made by me, they would instantaneously soothe both Hindus and Mahomedans by releasing the brothers, if only as a war measure, in order to advance the objects of the Conference. I shall be content for the time being with the permission to see them. I merely state that their release would, from the war standpoint, be a more effective act. Of course I shall reserve to myself the right to press for their release in any case.

Further I desire relief regarding the Kaira trouble. Relief will

<sup>1</sup> The letter appears to have been drafted on April 29 but actually sent on this date.

entirely disengage me from that preoccupation which I may not entirely set aside. It will also enable me to fall back for war purposes upon my co-workers in Kaira and it may enable me to get recruits from the district. The problem there is extremely simple. I have suggested that the revenue—now probably less than four lakhs of rupees—be suspended this year, with the proviso that those who can will be put upon their honour and expected to pay revenue voluntarily. I have already offered myself to see that the well-to-do cultivators pay the revenue. If this offer is not acceptable, I have suggested an impartial committee to inquire into the differences between the authorities and the cultivators. I suggest that action in this matter be taken as a war measure. This will obviate the fear of the relief being regarded as a precedent.

Pray understand that my offer is not conditional upon relief in either case. I merely ask for relief in the two cases in furtherance of the common object.

As for my work, I would like, for the time being, to travel about the country and place before the people the desirability of offering their services and ascertain the possibilities of success. I would, if I am to do this, like detailed information as to the areas in which, in the opinion of the experts, work should be done and some instructions as to the nature of it and any further information that they may consider I should possess.

If it is desired that I should personally wait on any of the officials or meet you, I would be prepared to come up to Simla. You may give me as short a notice as you like after the 4th of May. My address would be Nadiad.

I suppose I must give you something of my past record. I was in charge of the Indian Ambulance Corps consisting of 1,100 men during the Boer Campaign and was present at the battles of Colenso, Spionkop and Vaalkranz.<sup>1</sup> I was specially mentioned in General Buller's despatches.<sup>2</sup> I was in charge of a similar corps<sup>3</sup> of 90 Indians at the time of the Zulu Campaign in 1906, and I was specially thanked

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Indian Ambulance Corps in Natal", 14-3-1900, "Indian Ambulance Corps", 18-4-1900,"and Speech at Calcutta Meeting", 19-1-1902.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>3</sup> Indian Stretcher-bearer Corps, *vide* "Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps", Before 19-7-1906..

by the then Government of Natal, Lastly, I raised the Ambulance Corps in London consisting of nearly 100 students on the outbreak of the present war, and I returned to India in 1915 only because I was suffering from a bad attack of pleurisy brought about while I was undergoing the necessary training.<sup>1</sup> On my being restored to health, I offered my services to Lord Hardinge, and it was then felt that I should not be sent out to Mesopotamia or France, but that I should remain in India. I omit reference to renewals of my offer to Provincial authorities.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

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### 9. *LETTER TO J.L. SMAFFEY*

NADIAD,

*April 30, 1918*

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

I would like you please to read the letter to the Viceroy and wire to me at Nadiad whether His Excellency has any reason why it may not be published.<sup>2</sup> It is intended to counteract forces of darkness. I am simply besieged with inquiries as to my position. The people are befogged. Dame rumour is doing all the mischief she can. I want to overtake her. You will forgive me for my apparent impatience.

The other enclosure<sup>3</sup> contains my offer. You will do with it what you like. I would like to do something which Lord Chelmsford would consider to be real war work. I have an idea that, if I became your recruiting agent-in-chief, I might rain men on you. Pardon me for the impertinence.

The Viceroy looked pale yesterday. My whole heart went out to him as I watched him listening to the speeches. My God watch over

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Abdurrahman", 1-10-1914 to "Letter to C. Roberts", 16-10-1914 & "Letter to G.K. Gokhale", 26-11-1914.

<sup>2</sup> On May 2, Maffey telegraphed to Gandhiji: "You may publish letter at your own discretion. No authority for doing so should be quoted."

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* the preceding item.

and protect him and you, his faithful and devoted Secretary. I feel you are more than a secretary to him.

*Yours sincerely,*

M.K. GANDHI

PS. The Reverend Mr. Ireland of St. Stephen's College has kindly offered to deliver this letter into your hands.

M.K.G.

N.A.I.: Home, War (Deposit): October 1918, No. 26

### *10. LETTER TO SIR WILLIAM VINCENT*

*April 30, 1918*

DEAR SIR WILLIAM VINCENT,

I ruffled you on Sunday. But I really came to further the object for which you have overworked yourself. I merely came to tell you that the release of the Brothers Ali was calculated to encourage recruiting. If I did not believe this, it would have been sinful for me to expect you to give me a single minute of your time.

You asked me whether I had brought the authorities a single recruit. I suggest to you that it was not a fair question and one might truly serve the Empire and yet not bring a single recruit.

I hope you will not resent this letter, but accept it as an honest explanation of a visit which you so hastily misunderstood.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### *11. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE<sup>1</sup>*

DELHI,

*April 30 [1918]*

DEAR GURUDEV,

Much as I should like to keep Mr. Andrews with me a little longer, I feel sure that he must leave for Calcutta tonight. I know you want his soothing presence by you whilst you are keeping indifferent health. And you must have him while you need him. We are on the threshold of a mighty change in India. I would like all the pure forces to be physically present in the country during the process of her new

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji sent this letter to Tagore through Andrews, after he heard that the two were to go abroad.

birth. If therefore you would at all find rest anywhere in India, I would ask you and Mr. Andrews to remain in the country and kindly to lend me Mr. Andrews now and then. His guidance at times is most precious to me.

Mr. Ambalal has asked me to say that he will welcome you and your company as his honoured guests in his bungalow at Matheran. The season there ends about the middle of June. Mr. Ambalal is also prepared to secure for you accommodation at Ooty if you so wish. I suggest that it would be better if you come and stay at Matheran for the time being and then decide whether you will pass the rest of the hot season at Ooty.

I do hope you will soon recover from the nervous strain you are suffering from.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2291

## *12. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI*

NADIAD,

*[April-May, 1918]*

CHI. MAGANLAL,

The letter from Limbdi is encouraging. What I advise is that you should, yourself go to Limbdi and, having taught them the work, post someone else, if necessary. I am sure in my mind that you should now stir out. If you feel like it, you may leave Limbdi occasionally for a day or two and go to the Ashram. Ultimately, we can put Mama there, if we find it necessary. It won't be possible to teach everything in a month and you will be able to tell them so, or explain it to them, after going there. I would advise you to get Shivilal to come over to us, offering him, even, something more by way of pay. When you go, you can see his father in Wadhwan and pacify him. Explain to him that the Ashram is not for turning everyone into good-for-nothing mendicants. Give him names and other particulars of persons in the Ashram who are earning. If Shivilal comes over, it will be easier for you to leave the place. I should like you to go to Limbdi, whatever the difficulties. It will be better if you take Ba with you. She will look after your meals and will also do some work among the women.

Santok certainly cannot go now. She will mind the accounts and look after the girls. If you have not sent a spinning-wheel to Anasuyabehn by now, please do so. It is time we started spinning in the Ashram. This can be done only after you have paid a visit to Vijapur and seen the thing for yourself. Is respected Khushalbhai fit enough to join any of the activities? Would he like to? Devbhabhi may also be made to take interest.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From the handwritten original in Gujarati: C. W. 5729. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

### *13. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI*

[ON THE TRAIN,]

*May 1, 1918*

I got your letter in Delhi. What shall I write to you ? Everyone acts according to his nature. The true end of all effort in life is to gain control over the impulses of one's nature; that is dharma. Your faults will be forgotten if you make this effort. Since you are emphatic that you did not commit the theft, I may believe you but the world will not. Bear the world's censure and be more careful in future. You should give up your notion of what the world means. Your world is your employer. Have no fear if you are tried in a court of law. If you take my advice, do not engage a lawyer. Explain everything to the advocate on the other side.

You had in your hand a diamond which you have thrown away, thanks to your rash and impatient nature. You are no child. Not a little have you tasted of the good things of life. If you have had enough Of that, turn back. Don't lose heart. If you are speaking the truth, don't lose your faith in it. There is no God but Truth. One's virtues are no dead matter but are all life. It is a thoughtless and self-willed life you have lived so far. I should like you to bring wisdom and discipline into it.

As things happened, I have done something very big in Delhi.<sup>1</sup> You will find some account of it in the papers. I have no time to write about it. Mahadev will find some time to do so. He was an eyewitness

<sup>1</sup> The reference is obviously to his part in the War Conference.

to it all. He has taken your place, but the wish that it had been you refuses still to die. I would have died broken-hearted if I had no other sons. Even now, if you wish to be an understanding son without displacing anyone who has made himself such to me, your place is assured.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

#### *14. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI*

[BOMBAY,

*May 3, 1918]*

Your “No” had a real value to me. The “Ayes” had no value at all.<sup>1</sup>

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai’s Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

#### *15. SPEECH AT ANTIAJ CONFERENCE, BIJAPUR<sup>2</sup>*

*May 5, 1918*

Before moving the resolution extending support to the Congress-League Scheme and recommending to the Government to recognize the place of *Antyajas*, Gandhiji asked twice:

How many *Antyajas* are present at this meeting?

Finding that there was none, he said, in Hindi:

Why are we wasting our time here, then, keeping awake till this hour of twelve? We are like the parrot endlessly repeating *Narayana*,

<sup>1</sup> At a Bombay meeting, Sastri raised a point of order against moving a resolution on the Kheda Satyagraha on the ground that seven days’ notice of the resolution had not been given. Gandhiji offered, in that case, to withdraw the resolution. All except Sastri said they did not want this to be done; Sastri regretted he could not agree to the resolution. It was dropped.

<sup>2</sup> This was the second Depressed Classes Mission Conference. B. S. Kamat presided.



*Narayana*. I would advise Bhai Shinde<sup>1</sup> to give up calling such conferences and to engage himself in some solid work. We can purge ourselves of the sin of untouchability only through purity of heart. Genuine feeling alone will ensure results, not any unnatural efforts. We pass resolution after resolution for the removal of untouchability, but the result has been nil. To prevent the unanimous passage of the resolution, one gentleman argued that the Conference will serve no practical purpose. I say the same thing.

When I read out the resolution recommending acceptance of the Congress-League Scheme, I had hoped that it would be supported by a member of the *Antyaj* community, but there is none here at all. What is then the point of passing it? What weight will it carry with Mr. Montagu? I cannot move it. This Conference has no right to pass such a resolution and, therefore, we cannot bring it up here. It would be enough if we gave up behaving unnaturally and took to straight forward ways. We don't observe the *varnashram*. The Brahmin has given up his dharma, the Kshatriya and the Vaisya theirs, and we cling to what is no part of our religion. We are not fit for swaraj

What should they who demand swaraj do for the *Antyaj*s? Our friends like Lord Sydenham are bound to put this question to us, and in reply we shall have to hang our heads in shame. He who demands swaraj must give swaraj to others. It is a principle in law that he who seeks justice should render it to others. I would ask you to give up all this play-acting and in all sincerity of heart offer prayers at this midnight hour so that our sinfulness, our hardness of heart, may disappear.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

<sup>1</sup> V. R. Shinde

## 16. REPLY TO GOVERNMENT PRESS NOTE ON KHEDA CRISIS<sup>1</sup>

[AHMEDABAD,]

May 6, 1918

The Government Press Note<sup>2</sup> on the Kaira trouble is remarkable for the sins both of omission and commission. As to the paragraph devoted to Messrs Parikh and Patel's investigations, I wish only to say that, at the interview with His Excellency the Governor, the Commissioner challenged the accuracy of their statements. I immediately suggested the appointment of a committee of inquiry. Surely, it was the most proper thing that the Government could have done, and the whole of the unseemly executions, the removal of the cultivators' milch cattle and their ornaments, the confiscation orders, could have been avoided. Instead, as the Press Note says, they posted a Collector "of long experience". What could he do? The best of officials have to move in a vicious circle. They have to carry out the traditions of a service which has made of prestige a fetish and which considers itself to be almost infallible, and rarely admits its mistakes.

With reference to the investigation by Mr. Devdhar and his co-workers, the Press Note leaves on the reader the impression that the Commissioner had responded to their suggestions. At the interview at which I was present he challenged the report they had submitted to him and said distinctly that, whatever relief he granted would not be granted because of the report, which, he said in substance, was not true in so far as it contained any new things, and was not new in so far as it contained any true statements.

I cannot weary the public with the tragedy in the Matar Taluqa. In certain villages of the Taluqa which are affected; by the irrigation canals, they have a double grievance: (1) the ordinary failure of crops by reason of the excessive rainfall, and (2) the total destruction of crops by reason of overflowing. In the second case, they are entitled to full remission. So far as I am aware, in many cases it has not been granted.

<sup>1</sup> A brief summary of the statement appeared earlier in *New India* on May 6.

<sup>2</sup> This was issued on April 24.

It is not correct to say that the Servants of India Society stopped investigation in the Thasra Taluqa because there was no case for inquiry, but because they deemed it unnecessary, so their report says, as I had decided to inquire into the crops of almost every village.

The Press Note is less than fair in calling my method of inquiry “Utopian”. I do adhere to my contention that, if the cultivators statements may be relied upon, my method cannot but yield absolutely reliable results. Who should know better than the cultivator himself the yield of his crops? I refuse to believe that lakhs of men could conspire to tell an untruth when there was no great gain in view and suffering a certainty. It is impossible for thousands of men to learn by heart figures as to the yield—actual and probable—of even ten crops so that the total in each case would give less than a four-anna crop. I contend that my method contains automatic safeguards against deception. Moreover, I had challenged the official *annawari* alike of *khari* and *rabi* crops. When I did so, the *rabi* crops were still standing. I had, therefore, suggested that they could cut the *rabi* crops and test the yield and thus find the true *annawari*. I had suggested this specially of Vadthal. My argument was that if the cultivators’ *annawari* of such *rabi* crops was found to be correct and the officials’ wrong, it was not improper to infer that the cultivators’ valuations regarding the *khari* crops were also right. My offer was not accepted. I may add that I had asked to be allowed to be present when the Collector visited Vadthal which was taken as a test village. This request was also not accepted.

The Note is misleading inasmuch as it states that, in arriving at my *annawari*, I have not taken into account the *rabi* crops or the cotton crop. I have taken these crops into account. I have simply questioned the logic of the official system. The reason is obvious. If out of a population of one thousand men, only two hundred men grew *rabi* crops, it would be highly unjust to the eight hundred men to force up their *annawari* if without the *rabi* crops their crops showed only four annas or under.

I am surprised at the gross inaccuracies in the paragraph devoted to the crops in Limbasi. In the first instance, I was not present when the official inquiry was made, and in the second instance the wheat, which is valued at Rs. 13,445, included wheat also from two neighbouring villages, so that out of the crops estimated at Rs. 13,445 three assessments had to be paid. And what are Rs. 13,445 in a

population of eighteen hundred men? For the matter of that, I am prepared to admit that the Limbasi people had a rice crop which too gave them as many rupees. At the rate of forty rupees per head per year to feed a man, the Limbasi people would require Rs. 72,000 for their food alone. It may interest the public to know that, according to the official *annawari*, the Limbasi wheat alone should have been worth Rs. 83,021. This figure has been supplied to me by the Collector. To demonstrate the recklessness with which the Press Note has been prepared, I may add that if the Limbasi people are to be believed, the whole of the wheat crop was on the threshing floor. According to their statements, nearly one-third was foreign wheat. The Limbasi wheat, therefore, would be under Rs. 9,000. The official *annawari* is ten annas. Now, according to the actual yield, the wheat *annawari* of Limbasi was eleven annas as against the official ten annas. Moreover, a maund of wheat per *bigha* is required as seed and the Limbasi cultivators had 3,000 (Rs. 3 per maund equals Rs. 9,000) maunds of wheat on 1965 *bighas*; i.e., the wheat crop was a trifle over the seed. Lastly, whilst the crop was under distraint, I had offered to the Collector to go over to Limbasi myself and to have it weighed so that there might be no question of the accuracy or otherwise of the cultivators' statement. But the Collector did not accept my offer. Therefore, I hold that the cultivators' figures must be accepted as true.

Merely to show how hopelessly misleading the Press Note is, I may state that the Gujarat Sabha did not pass a resolution advising passive resistance. Not that it would have shirked it, but I felt myself that passive resistance should not be the subject of a resolution in a Sabha whose constitution was governed by the rule of majority, and so the Gujarat Sabha resolution left it open to individual members to follow their own bent of mind. It is true that most of the active members of the Sabha are engaged in the Kaira trouble.

I must repudiate totally the insinuation that I dissuaded payment by people who wished to pay. The figures given in the Press Note showing the collection in the different talukas, if they prove anything, prove that the hand of the law has hit them hard and that the fears of the *ravaniyas* and the *talatis* have proved too strong for them. When after confiscation and sales under execution the Government show a clean bill and no arrears, will they contend that there was no case for relief or inquiry?

I admit that the suspension is granted as a matter of grace and

not as a matter of right enforceable by law, but the concession is not based on caprice, but is regulated by properly defined rules, and the Government do not contend that if the crops had been under four annas, they could have withheld suspensions. The sole point throughout has been the difference as to *annawari*. If it is true that, in granting concessions, the Government take into account also other circumstances, e.g., in the words of the Press Note, "the general economic situation's, suspension is doubly necessary this year because of the plague and high prices. The Collector told me definitely that he could not take this last into account. He could grant suspension only under the rules which had reference only to crops and nothing else.

I think I have shown enough here to warrant a committee of inquiry and I submit that, as a matter of principle, it would be worth while granting the inquiry even if one cultivator remains with an arrear against him, because there is nothing found to attach and the Government might be reluctant to sell his lands. The people have challenged the accuracy of *talatis* figures. In some cases there are *talatis* themselves ready to come forward to show that they were asked to put up the *annawari* found by them. But if the inquiry is now held to be unnecessary,<sup>1</sup> why do the Government not grant suspension, especially when, admittedly, there is only a small number left to collect from and more especially when, if suspension is granted, well-to-do cultivators are ready to pay.

It is evident now that Government have surrendered the question of principle for which the Commissioner has stood.

The Viceroy has appealed for the sinking of domestic differences. Is the appeal confined only to the *raiya*s or may the officials also yield to the popular will, when the popular demand is not immoral or unjust and thus produce contentment?

If distress means starvation, I admit that the Kaira people are not starving. But if sale of goods to pay assessment or to buy grain for

<sup>1</sup> The Government note said: "The Government regret their inability to accept the pressing request which Mr. Gandhi and others are making for an independent inquiry. The agriculturists really cannot claim to have the land revenue suspended or remitted. They can only ask for relief as a matter of concession; but even if we were to assume that the Government is prepared to appoint such a committee it is clear that such an inquiry can be of little use, for final authority must vest in the Land Revenue Department."

food be an indication of distress, there is enough of it in the District. I am prepared to show that hundreds have paid their assessment either by incurring debts or by selling their trees, cattle or other valuables. The most grievous omission in the Press Note, however, is that of the fact that collections are being made in a vindictive spirit. The cultivators are being taught a lesson for their contumacy so called. They are under threat to lose their lands worth 3 crores of rupees for an assessment of 4 lakhs of rupees. In many cases a quarter of the assessment has been exacted as a penalty. Is there not in the above narrative room for a doubt that the officials may be in the wrong?

*New India*, 9-5-1918

### *17. SPEECH AT BOMBAY PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE*

[BIJAPUR,  
May 6, 1918]<sup>1</sup>

Mahatma Gandhi made a vigorous speech in support of his resolution on the indenture system at the second day's sitting of the Bombay Provincial Conference. Mr. Gandhi moved:

This Conference emphatically urges that nothing short of a complete abolition of the indenture system of recruitment of labour in any form will meet the evils of the system which is a form of slavery which socially and politically debases the labourers and is detrimental to the economic and moral interests of this country.

Mr. Gandhi spoke in Hindi and giving a resume of the indenture system referred to the degrading effects which it had produced on our people in the Colonies. He also described how it had lowered India and Indians in the estimation of the European peoples. He condemned the Inter-Departmental Committee's recommendations on this question and said in an emphatic manner that the system should go once for all and that no reservations whatsoever should be made.

*Young India*, 8-5-1918

<sup>1</sup> The Conference, according to Bombay Secret Abstracts was held from May 5 to 8 at Bijapur. Vithalbhai Patel presided.

## *18. SPEECH AT ANTYAJ CONFERENCE, BIJAPUR*

*May 6, 1918*

I have committed a serious indiscretion. A friend came and said that I was unnecessarily creating a disturbance in Bijapur which is divided into two camps. I did not know the real position. I have not come to throw the apple of discord and to exacerbate the feelings of the parties.

Lokamanya Tilak must be here to guide you and me. I am but a child of three in politics. I have yet to see, to consider, and to learn things. I apologize for creating this disturbance. In common meetings one may explain his views thoroughly freely without being charged with the idea of creating a disturbance. As I propose to put into practice the programme I have mapped out, I should not be anxious to ascertain the feeling running in all parts of India. But as you are all come here with preconceived notions, I cannot discuss my position here. I would like to exchange views and understand your feelings and deciding motives and reach the backs of your minds. But I shall prefer to come here in a calmer atmosphere and shall only then come to steel your hearts when we are not cramped with resolutions before us. I think Mr. Kelkar has taken the most reasonable position and that, at this stage, we must accept the Congress Committee's resolution.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

## *19. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI*

[NADIAD,]

*May 9, 1918*

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I never dreamt that you would so completely misunderstand what I said out of boundless confidence in you. I did expect that, because you are so much attached to me, it would be something of a shock to you to have to go to Champaran. But how could you possibly imagine that, thinking you unworthy, I had found this

<sup>1</sup> This was in reply to Mahadev Desai's letter of May 8, remonstrating against Gandhiji's wish that the former proceed to Champaran.

indirect way of getting rid of you? I thought you were the only person who could come up to my expectations and, therefore, I suggested your going to Champaran. I believed that the work at Badharwa was not beyond the capacity of Durga. Maybe I was wrong in my estimate. At present, I shall only tell you, for your peace of mind, that all your guesses are wrong. It was my respect for the capacity of you both which prompted me to make the suggestion. I have told both Raojibhai and Devdas that I would be hard put to it without your help. You have made yourself indispensable to me. I meant what I wrote to Polak. You have not disappointed me. It is for your efficiency and your character that I have chosen you to help me in my political work and you have not disappointed me. Add to this the fact that you can cook *khichdi*<sup>1</sup> for me, with so much love. More, when we meet.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

## 20. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

[SABARMATI,]

May 11, 1918

MY DEAR ESTHER,

I have your letter. I shall—we shall look forward to your coming to the Ashram during Xmas. The main buildings will then have been ready and the weather will be delightful.

I hope you have read my letter<sup>2</sup> to the Viceroy as also my letter<sup>3</sup> in reply to Mr. Pratt's speech. They contain in the briefest form my views on Government and the philosophy of life, and the one to the Viceroy shows in the vividest form the view I take of the law of love and suffering. Passive Resistance expresses the idea in the crudest form. Indeed, I dislike the phrase as a weapon of the weak. It totally misrepresents the law of love. Love is the epitome of strength. Love flows the freeliest [*sic*] only when there is entire absence of fear. Punishments of the loved ones are like balm to the soul.

Will you not try an absolute fast for your liver? You may drink

<sup>1</sup> Boiled rice with pulses, vegetables, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Vide "Letter to Viceroy", 29-4-1918.

<sup>3</sup> Vide "Letter to *The Bombay Chronicle*", 15-4-1918.



boiled water copiously and, if that is not enough, you may drink orange juice diluted with water. If you feel weak and faint, lie in bed, better still take a cold hip bath, i.e., sit in a tub with your legs and the upper part of the body out of water. It is most invigorating. There is nothing like fasting for liver complaints.

*Yours sincerely*

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

## *21. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN*

SABARMATI,

*May 12 [1918]*<sup>1</sup>

DEAR MR. NATESAN,

Here is my speech<sup>2</sup>.

I consider myself honoured to find my name among the supporters of this resolution. I realize fully its meaning and I tender my support to it with all my heart. I had your note with the Rs. 100. You do not now need any reply to the note!

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2225

## *22. SPEECH AT DHUNDAKUVA*<sup>3</sup>

*May 13, 1918*

Mahatmaji began to address the people by saying that the result of their struggle was a nearly complete, if not a complete, victory inasmuch as Mr. Pratt had not been able to execute his threats and carry out his vow. He divided vows into two classes, viz., divine and devilish. Those vows were divine which could not be broken and should be carried out even at the cost of life, and which could stand resistance. Devilish vows were those that required ever to be resisted. A satyagrahi made it his

<sup>1</sup> The speech was the one Gandhiji made at the Man-Power Committee of the War Conference on April 28, 1918.

<sup>2</sup> The speech was the one Gandhiji made at the Man-Power Committee of the War Conference on April 28, 1918.

<sup>3</sup> A village in Borsad taluka

business to offer his resistance to such vows every time and everywhere. And Mr. Pratt's was such a vow, that is, of the devilish type. Mr. Pratt had always been respected by him (the speaker), and he was no bad officer, but those who were not bad officers sometimes committed serious blunders. Mr. Pratt's object was to punish the agriculturists for their disobedience of Government's authority, but he could not punish them as he chose the devilish means.<sup>1</sup> The whole district was now fired with a spirit that was never in the people before. They had awakened to a sense of their rights. Mahatmaji explained to them that in defending themselves against oppression by passive resistance to it, they had blessed the oppressor also, just as Prahlad by his passive resistance blessed his oppressive father. Had Mr. Pratt been allowed to execute his threat, the whole nation would have raised a cry of horror, and Mr. Pratt would no doubt see some day that he was luckily spared that catastrophe.

Before concluding, he said he could not omit to refer to one painful incident that had been brought to his notice. He had been told that the *mukhi* in Dabhasi was using his evil influence to persuade people to evade the effects of attachments by keeping money easily accessible to attaching officers. It was, Mahatmaji said, incredible that people could be so simply deluded. It was nothing short of voluntary mischief on the people's part, and calculated to spoil the whole movement.

We will respect the officers, but we won't assist them; we will give them food and shelter, but surely we will not voluntarily point out to them the things to be attached. He who believes that he can evade the effects of attachment by keeping ready things for being attached, has missed the whole spirit of the struggle.

The Dabhasi incident, he repeated, had shocked him, and he hoped it would nowhere be repeated. One thing more he would add in conclusion. He had heard that revenue officers had to go without food and water from some places. He would like to suggest that passive resistance did not mean molestation of others, but simple and pure voluntary suffering. He feelingly concluded by observing that there ought not to be a single house or village which belonged to a satyagrahi where there was not the practice of truth in word and deed, where no sweet words were spoken, and where one had to go away without food and shelter.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 16-5-1918*

<sup>1</sup> During the month, Government resorted increasingly to confiscation of land for realization of revenue arrears; but later, forfeiture of land was largely set aside and dues realized through auction of movable property.

### 23. LETTER TO HANUMANTRAO

[KATHLAL,]

May 15, 1918

The *Hindu* comments on Mr. Shastriar's speech<sup>1</sup> are damnable and I think that the best answer to them is not to notice them. Mr. Kasturi Ayyangar<sup>2</sup> is a man who is not to be convinced by any appeal to reason or sense of justice. He has his own notions and he sticks to them with an obstinacy I have rarely seen in any other man. Those who know Mr. Shastriar are not affected by the *Hindu* comments. Those for whom Mr. Kasturi Ayyangar's word is gospel truth will listen to no correction. His (Shastriar's) unapproachable character and his scholarly attainments may be trusted to take care of themselves and to bear down in the end the obsession of his bitterest enemies. I think Mr. Shastriar will give a good account of himself when anyone else is weighed in the balance and found wanting and I think he knows this and he is supremely happy in the consciousness of it. You and I, therefore, have no cause to feel perturbed over the vagaries of Mr. Kasturi Ayyangar or for that matter of anybody else. But all of us have to conspire and, if possible, compel him to look after his body which I hold is not beyond repair.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai:

### 24. LETTER TO DABHOLKAR

May 15, 1918

I have your letter. I am grateful to you for writing to me so frankly. There is not a trace of "policy" in my letter.<sup>3</sup> I wrote what I believe to be true, every word of it. You have summed up my ideas perfectly. I do believe that, if we were to sacrifice ourselves silently in our thousands, swaraj would be ours today. If you could not see how this can be even after reading that letter of mine, it is hardly possible

<sup>1</sup> Delivered at the War Conference

<sup>2</sup> Kasturi Ranga Ayyangar, editor of *The Hindu*

<sup>3</sup> Vide "Letter to J. L. Maffey", 30-4-1918.

for me to explain it in this one. I would, therefore, request you to read that letter repeatedly and to ponder over every word of it till you have understood it. The effort will not go unrewarded. I did not write that letter in a hurry. I took great pains over it and wrote it in perfect sincerity and entirely out of my love for the country. I think my *tapascharya* must be still imperfect if the letter is not clear enough or seems to lend itself to two interpretations. If the country understands my plan and carries it out, I am sure it embraces everything, swaraj and many other things besides. To say that we shall fight [in the war] after swaraj is granted seems, to me at any rate, to betray complete ignorance of the meaning of swaraj. I do not admit that, as a representative of the people, I am in duty bound to place before the public all the letters that I write to the Viceroy. All through my life, there have been a good many, and to my mind important, actions of mine in my representative capacity which have remained, and will ever remain, unknown. My first letter<sup>1</sup> to His Excellency the Viceroy was meant for him alone. I cannot give publicity to the views which I expressed to him as to a gentleman and a friend. To publish the courteous but bitter language used in that letter would be inviting mischief. I have given publicity to such part of my conversation with him as would bear being made public. My second letter relates to what I intend to do and, in comparison to the first one, is not very important.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

## 25. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

May 15, 1918

As for the struggle in Kheda, what shall I say? It is a very big one. No one is prepared to believe that this agitation can be carried on only with two or three thousand rupees by way of travelling and other expenses. I asked them to return the sums, which had been collected, about Rs. 25,000 and I find I have to refuse offers of money from many quarters. If I accept money, the struggle will lose its purity; dishonesty will creep in and the people will fall morally. By not accepting contributions, I have saved myself from all this and have

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 29-4-1918.

been able to keep the fight clean. The whole of India has watched and appreciated this fight. It has been a matter of regret to me that Shastriar has not done so. He will, in course of time. He is a man of noble soul and I have no fears, therefore. I have no doubt whatever that the fight is justified,

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

## 26. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

NADIAD,

*Vaishakh Sud* [On or before *May 16, 1918*]<sup>1</sup>

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I spoke to Panditji at length about you. He said that he would soon send for you and accommodate you somewhere. Will you be ready? He will not give less than Rs. 200/- for a start.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 11269. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

## 27. SPEECH AT SANDESAR<sup>2</sup>

*May 16, 1918*

The plucky people of this village have shown great courage. The remarkable thing about these gatherings is that women attend them in large numbers and listen to the speeches with great interest. It cannot be said of the Kheda struggle that the men and women do not know what they are doing.

The first duty of a satyagrahi is to ascertain whether he is on the side of truth in what he is about and, if he is assured of that, he should fight for it even at the cost of his life. One who is desirous of giving up his life for the sake of truth is ever ready to do so, when there is occasion to fight for truth. In some of our fights carried on in the

<sup>1</sup> It appears from the contents that this letter was written in 1918. *Vaishakh Sud* corresponds to the period covering May 11 to May 25. During this period Gandhiji was in Nadiad on May 11, 12 and 16.

<sup>2</sup> This has been collated with a Gujarati report in *Kheda Satyagraha*.

name of satyagraha, the reason of our failure lies in our not sticking to the truth on all occasions. They cannot be called satyagrahis who talk of truth, but do not translate it into their actions. They know the value of truth and yet, on occasions, they are not on the path of truth. Those who fight for justice must ever be ready to do justice to others. One has to be true in thoughts as well as in acts. All scriptures say that he who wishes to enter the Temple of Justice must become pure himself. Just as we should enter a temple only after taking a bath and with holy thoughts in the mind, so also, it is only a man of a pure mind who can enter the Temple of Justice. It is a divine law that none with a profane mind may enter there. Those who would have justice should deal out justice to others. That is the first duty of a satyagrahi.

At Agas station, Vallabhbhai handed me a note. If what he said in it is true, I am afraid we show no regard for justice. In that note, members of the *Dhed*<sup>1</sup> community had complained that, for four years, the village people had not given them any part of their share [of the produce]. I do not know whether the complaint is justified or not. If it is, the matter should be settled immediately. Since we demand justice for ourselves, I would request you to do justice to others. I was telling someone this morning that the people of Kheda were happy with this struggle because it was an opportunity for them to rise. We are, at the moment, fighting the Administration and believe that God is on our side. We now refuse our free services to Government officers. We tell *Kumbhars*<sup>2</sup>, *Dheds* and *Bhangis* that they need not work so. Even if they offer to pay those who are agreeable may work, others may not. Even if scavengers, potters and barbers are offered the fullest payment, they may or may not serve, as they please; they have a right to decide. If we, too, acknowledge this right of theirs, we shall have qualified ourselves for full swaraj. We may succeed in overthrowing this Government, but, assuming in our arrogance that none dare overthrow us, we shall have taken the tyrant's place ourselves. Some Englishmen tell me that I shall have to regret what I am teaching the people. But I am perfectly clear in my mind about this and I see no error in what I am doing. I am convinced that I have given the right advice to the people so far. What I tell them about their duty to the Government, I would not hesitate to tell one section of the community about its duty to any other. Even if that should cost me my head, I

<sup>1</sup> One of the communities regarded as untouchables

<sup>2</sup> Potters

would not give up truth. As my head is at the disposal of the Government, so also is it at the disposal of the people. When the people abuse their authority over the poor and oppress them, I would advise the poor to resort to satyagraha and not to leave the path of justice. That is the only road to happiness. The weapon that has fallen into your hands is invaluable. No one can stand against it. One who has realized the beauty of it would firmly say that there is no other religion but that of truth. I have already told you that we have won. This struggle is not for the suspension of land revenue only. If it were so, that could have been obtained long ago. In this struggle, there is much more than that. Even Mr. Pratt admits that this struggle is not for suspension of land revenue only, but it involves the interests of thirty crores of people. It is a struggle between the will of the people and the prestige of officials. We must, by now, realize that the authority of Government is nothing before that of the people. No government has ever yet come into existence which could successfully resist the will of the people. When the people are determined to get their rights, they will have them. We do not want to be discourteous and, at the same time, we would not be slaves. A satyagrahi will never forget his manners, nor give up his point; he will not send away a Government officer unfed. He will offer him water, food and accommodation and thus show his nobility. The Government officer has become our guest and, therefore, whether friend or foe, we should treat him with courtesy. He can take away nothing from us against our will. When any of them arrives to execute an order of attachment, it is not for us to place our jewellery and our household utensils before him. If he finds anything of ours and has it attached, we should keep calm and not give way to fear. Justice and truth are to be weighed against money. I would appeal to you to understand all this.

This is a struggle for self-government. We wish that we may get it. But what is the use of that authority in the hands of the weak and the emasculated ? The dead body is unable to make use of the sword in its hand, or of the heap of corn placed before it. So a worthless man is unable to do anything. Such a man has no right to eat. It is said in the *Gita* that he who eats without performing *yajna* is a thief. The meaning of a *yajna* is that the body is for the people, for God. It means that one should sacrifice one's self and give up one's all. That is the real *yajna*. He who eats without performing *mahayajna* is a thief. No authority could ever tyrannize over a nation that has understood this. If the true meaning of this saying could blend with

our blood and flow in our veins, we have nothing else to win. Then we have won everything. Satyagraha is a celestial weapon. That man only can fittingly hold it who possesses manliness and courage. If we all act up to it after having well understood it, it will be said of India that this is not a land of cowards but of thirty crores of gods.

## 28. LETTER TO RAMBHAU GOGATE

SATYAGRAHASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

*Vaishakh Sud 6 [May 17, 1918]*

BHAISHRI RAMBHAU GOGATE,

Kotwal's sister may come now, if she feels like it. But the heat here is so great these days that it will be terrifying to any one who has been living in Indore. I would therefore advise her to come after June 15. The rains will start soon after that and the air will be a little cooler, or humid at any rate. At present, the sky pours down heat and scorching winds are blowing at all hours. When she comes [in June], Ba will be here and she will assuredly have her company. I am writing this letter after consulting Ba. I hope she has made herself familiar with the customary diet here and the routine of life, etc.

*Vandematram from*

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 3614

*The Bombay Chronicle, 21-5-1918*



## 29. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY

ON THE TRAIN,  
May 18, 1918

In full confidence that the request contained in my letter of the 29th<sup>1</sup> will be accepted, I am busy making recruiting preparations. But I shall not commence work before I have your reply.<sup>2</sup>

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

## 30. LETTER TO MAGAGANLAL GANDHI

NEARING AGRA,  
[May 18, 1918]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have made you thoroughly miserable; my intention, however, was to soothe you. Harshness is conquered by gentleness, hatred by love, lethargy by zeal and darkness by light. Your love flows in dribbles; but, as a mere drizzle of rain goes to waste, so, I see, does love oftentimes. It is a heavy downpour of rain which drenches the soil to fullness; likewise, only a profuse shower of love overcomes hatred. Where you go wrong is in expecting justice. Go on doing justice yourself. Love is not love which asks for a return. If one were overflowing with love oneself, where could one store the love others might give? This is the hidden significance of seeing all as one. When Mira felt the stab of love, she was one with God. This is the principle of *advaita* in actual practice. Follow as much of this as you can; keep cheerful at any rate.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5728. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 29-4-1918.

<sup>2</sup> Maffey sent extracts from his correspondence with Gandhiji to Lord Willingdon, Governor of Bombay, and informed Gandhiji of his action. For Gandhiji's correspondence with the Governor of Bombay, *vide* "Letter to J. Crerar", 30-5-1918.

### 31. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

[MOTIHARI,]

May 23, 1918

I did not feel moved when I read of Willie's<sup>1</sup> arrest. I sympathize too with the Viceroy's feelings. Why should he [be] called upon to investigate matters of this nature when there is a deadly war going on? Willie and we should meekly suffer. There is no principle at stake in Willie's case. There is no question of race prejudice and none of public feeling. Some must be content to be imprisoned for their views or actions. What is necessary is to correspond with Willie. He will fight his way to freedom, if he needs it. To be anxious about him is to do him injustice. I feel sure that he is happy where he is. I think that public agitation is unnecessary. If you feel like me, you would write a manly letter to the Viceroy for worrying him. I sometimes feel that many of these Englishmen who go through the terrible strain of war without collapsing must be *yogis*. They would be fit for *moksha* if their *yoga* was employed for a better cause.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### 32. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

MOTIHARI,

[On or before May 24, 1918]<sup>2</sup>

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I have talked to Panditji about you. He asked me about the salary you would expect. I suggested Rs. 300/-. I got the impression that he thought the amount a little too high. So I want to ask you what is the minimum you will accept.

*Bandemataram from.*

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 11270. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

<sup>1</sup> W. W. Pearson

<sup>2</sup> It appears from the contents that this letter was written in 1918 and after the letter written to the addresses from Nadiad on or before May 16; *vide* the preceding item. Gandhiji was in Motihari on May 20, 21, 23 and 24.

### 33. LETTER TO HANUMANTRAO

May 25, 1918

What I want you to do is not to sever your connection with the Society<sup>1</sup>; but remaining in the Society do the Hindi work. I would like Mr. Shastriar to permit you to go to Allahabad, stay there a year and learn Hindi fairly well, then return to Madras and side by side with your other work spread a knowledge of Hindi among the Telugu people. The fact of your having studied Hindi will enlarge the scope of your work and enable you if the occasion arose to work among the masses outside the Madras Presidency. I do not know whether you have noticed it. I have. There is almost an unbridgeable gulf between the Dravidians and all the other Indians. The shortest and the most effective bridge is undoubtedly the Hindi language. English can never take its place. When Hindi becomes the common language among the cultured classes the Hindi vocabulary will soon filter down to the masses. There is something undefinable about Hindi which makes it the easiest language to learn and somehow or other there is a licence taken about Hindi grammar such as I have not known to be taken about any other language. The result is that the learning of Hindi becomes largely a matter of memory only. Hence do I say that for doing national work a knowledge of Hindi is an absolute necessity. What can be better than that a member of the Society should give himself a training in Hindi? Mr. Gokhale once told me that he wanted a knowledge of Hindi to be obligatory on the part of all the members and that he wanted Hindi to be the language spoken at the Society's meetings. He added that the Tamilians and especially Mr. Shastriar presented the greatest difficulty. He was too old to learn it !!!

You seem to think of Satyagrahashram as something apart from the Society. But I do not. During the last days of Mr. Gokhale's life on this earth his wish was that I should open a branch in Gujarat and bring to life a province which appeared to be politically dead. It fills me with pride to know that I have played a humble part in carrying out the programme. It is a matter not of much moment that Satyagrahashram for very sound reasons cannot be recognized as a branch. The work is there. In so far as it is good in my estimation the credit is the Society's, the failures are due to my limitations and need

<sup>1</sup> Servants of India Society

not be shared by the Society. When in the fullness of time, I have got over my limitations, the Ashram will merge in the Society. Till then even if you wanted to come to the Ashram I would not admit you except as a loan from the Society. So you see that in thinking of you as a candidate for learning Hindi I have not even conceived the possibility of your severance from the Society.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### *34. SPEECH AT PATNA*

*May 25, 1918*

Mr. Gandhi returned from Motihari to attend a meeting in Patna City on the 25th ultimo. While in Champaran, he visited the District Magistrate and Sub-Divisional Officer, Bettiah, and then went on and saw his schools at Shikarpur, Madhuban and Dhakka. While at Motihari, he stayed with Babu Gorakh Prasad. Numbers of ryots visited his camp, but most of them were instructed to take their grievances to their local representatives. His visit caused a mild excitement as usual.

The meeting in Patna over which the Hon'ble Mr. Purnendu Narayan Sinha presided was an unusually crowded one, some 8,000 persons attending including over 300 sadhus. It would seem that the people expected a more fiery speech than the one actually delivered, for the enthusiasm evinced at Mr. Gandhi's arrival waned very low as the speech proceeded.

In his opening remarks he referred to the subject of a universal language in India and hoped that within a few years Hindus would learn Persian and Muhammadans would study Sanskrit, so that the two languages might eventually combine. He then went on to say that he had no time to speak to them regarding affairs in Champaran or the disgraceful episode at Shahabad, but he would say that mutual goodwill between Muhammadans and Hindus would not be attained by recourse to the Special Tribunals; that was a question of mutual consultation and arrangement. The main subject of his speech was "Our Present Condition". The time had arrived for Indians to make their choice. Such opportunities only come once in the lifetime of a nation. He was addressing his remarks more specially to the educated classes. India had been called on for another army; already some seven or eight lakhs were serving outside India and another five lakhs were to be recruited this year. These persons were paid by Government and earned their living by military service. India could not be proud of them, and derived no benefit from their existence. The self-government that the people were clamouring for was not the self-government that he had in mind. They must have a self-government army, and for this it was incumbent on them to supply the five lakhs that Government wanted without waiting for Government to recruit

them. The advise he gave them was to raise a republican army, and he called on the people "to go along with him and go wherever the Government directed". (At this stage a fairly large number of people quietly slipped away from the meeting). If they did not provide the men, Government would obtain them somehow or other if necessary by enforcing legal compulsion.

Another matter that he wished to speak to them about was the idea that self-government meant the dismissal of the British from India—this was impossible. All they wanted was to become a great partner in the British Empire. A great leader of India had said, "We are prepared to fight, but on this condition, that you pledge yourself to grant self-government to India." In his opinion, this was not a straight way of obtaining self-government. He advocated that India should provide the men wanted, and impose no conditions—any calamity that overtakes the Empire is one that overtakes India as well. The English race had two outstanding characteristics, they lived in friendship with those who know how to die and those who know how to kill, and they helped those who helped themselves; they would be of one heart with those who claimed their rights at the very first moment they showed their strength and their determination to obtain these rights. Two essentials are necessary in self-government—power over the army and power over the purse, and that is why he repeatedly said that India's ambition to obtain self-government would be blasted if they missed this opportunity of obtaining military training and assisting the Empire, and thereby obtaining self-government. This opportunity would never come again. Only those who are weak are compelled to think of making conditions—the strong impose no conditions.

*Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1918*

### 35. *SPEECH AT KHANDHALI*<sup>1</sup>

[May 27, 1918]

The men and women of Khandhali have shown great pluck and courage. But . . . just as when a river is overflowed we are not able to use the overflowing water and just as it flows away to the sea in vain, so some of your boldness and courage is also wasted away. When a Government official went to attach her property, a woman let loose her buffalo. She has committed a blunder in so doing, so also the Government officer who struck her with his umbrella. But remember that you must not commit such blunders. A true satyagrahi cannot do so. The first thing to do in any struggle of satyagraha is to stick to

<sup>1</sup> After his return from Motihari, Gandhiji visited Khandhali, a village in Matar taluka, and addressed a public meeting on the significance of satyagraha.

truth. If we make a very subtle definition of truth, it includes many things. But because our definition of truth is rather narrow, we are compelled to add a little to it. In this struggle we are not to oppose anybody, we are not to abuse anybody. If the opponent abuses us, we have to tolerate it. If he gives a blow to us with a stick, we have to bear it without giving a blow in return.

Secondly, a satyagrahi has to be fearless. He has only to perform his duty. You know that so long as we stick to truth, we remain absolutely free from fear. You will always get protection if your dealings will be straightforward. When we are in the wrong, we feel very nervous about us. Those gentlemen who have committed the crime<sup>1</sup> have run away from the village. But you have not run away in the struggle of satyagraha. Always stick to truth; never be mischievous. A satyagrahi will always welcome imprisonment or a warrant, if he has committed a crime. Even if he has not committed it, he should welcome it. What if it is not committed and yet it be proved in Court? The Government has authority over this body, not over the soul. The soul can be conquered through love. A satyagrahi understands this and, therefore, whether he has committed a crime or not, he remains fearless. The gentleman who has removed the cattle unlawfully, will, I hope, admit his mistake and boldly say that he will undergo any punishment that may be ordered for him. Only thus shall you be elevated.

It is no theft if we do not allow our goods to go into the hands of Government officers. So long as they have not fallen in their hands, you can take them to another village, you can bury them, you can remove your cattle and take them anywhere you like. But no sooner are they attached, either by a horde of Government officials or by any one of them, we should not even touch them. We are not going to help Government in attachments, we do not protect our cattle for them, but as soon as any Government officer attaches our buffalo, we have no right to take it back. Brothers and sisters, I appeal to you to act accordingly. It is not our business to speak insolently to officers or to let loose our cattle when they come to us.

The Collector told me that the *raiya*s are very gracefully acting in the struggle, but such tricks as are played by some Khandhali people mar the beauty of the struggle. I beg of you not to do so again. Real bravery lies in receiving rather than in giving blows.

<sup>1</sup> This consisted in letting loose the buffaloes attached by revenue officials.

Yesterday, I was reading my *Gita*. Therein I saw that one of the characteristics of a Kshatriya was '*apalayanam*' ! It means that in face of danger a Kshatriya does not fall back, but, on the contrary, sticks to his post. If our Government will not fight with the Germans as it does now, if our soldiers go and stand before them weaponless and will not use explosives and say, "We will die of your blows", then, I am sure our Government will win the war at once. But such an action requires *samskar* and India possesses most of it. The vegetables that grow in India will not grow properly in England. The seeds of *samskar* will flourish in India. Pure bravery lies in the power of endurance. It is real satyagraha. It is mean to run away in face of danger.

Then he appealed to the gentleman who had committed the crime to admit it and to undergo the punishment that the law might inflict on him. He then asked the *raiyats* to act cautiously but courageously and requested them to be hospitable towards Government officers. Finally he said that they had already attained success in their struggle and congratulated them on their great pluck and courage.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 3-6-1918*

### 36. LETTER TO J. KER

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

May 29, 1918

DEAR MR. KER,

I passed yesterday afternoon at Navli. As you may be aware, a boy is being prosecuted under the charge of having devised means of hurting the officials during the performance of their duty. The boy, I am convinced, is utterly innocent. The culprit, I am grieved to say, is a rather important personage, Chaturbhai Patel. He made a clean confession yesterday and gave me authority to disclose the name to you. His excuse is that he was misled into thinking that there would be no attachments on a particular morning but the attachments were there all the same. This excited him and by way of revenge he put stinging nightshade on the quilts that were to be used by the officials. Of course this is no defence at all and I tender my apology for any inconvenience that might have been caused by Chaturbhai's thoughtless action. I believe, as a matter of fact, the officials escaped scot-free and some men of our own party were stung when I came upon the scene, but after the rest of the Navli people joined the struggle, Chaturbhai began to help them. He and the officials are, I am

told, on friendly terms and it is evident that Chaturbhai had planned a practical joke. He is now thoroughly repentant. I suggest withdrawal of prosecution against the boy referred to and I venture to suggest also that no notice be taken of Chaturbhai's action. But if you disagree, Chaturbhai is quite prepared to stand trial. The hearing of the case against the boy is to resume tomorrow.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10690. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

### 37. LETTER TO J. CRERAR

SABARMATI,

*May 30, 1918*

DEAR MR. CRERAR<sup>1</sup>,

I have just received Mr. Maffey's letter in which he refers me to His Excellency the Governor regarding the offer of my services which I made immediately after the Conference at Delhi.<sup>2</sup> From Mr. Maffey's letter I gather that he sent extracts from the correspondence between him and me to His Excellency. Will you kindly let me know His Excellency's wishes regarding my offer and the suggestions made in my letter to Mr. Maffey in so far as they refer to Kaira?<sup>3</sup>

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

India Office Judicial and Public Records: 3412/18

<sup>1</sup> James Crerar, Secretary to the Governor of Bombay

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Letter to J.L. Maffey", 30-4-1918.

<sup>3</sup> Acknowledging this letter, Crerar wrote in his reply of June 1: "His Excellency will cordially welcome your co-operation, which he hopes will be directed more particularly to the encouragement of recruiting in the Northern Division, though there will be a wide field for effort in regard to the development of resources and in other directions. Government are at present engaged in working out a scheme for giving effect to the resolution of the Delhi Conference and these measures will be considered at the Conference to be held in Bombay on June 10th. His Excellency hopes that you will be able to attend the Conference and that he will have an opportunity of seeing you personally."



### 38. LETTER TO MAHATMA MUNSHIRAM

SABARMATI,

*Vaishakh Vad 5 [May 30, 1918]*

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I have your affectionate and moving letter. I am late in answering it for lack of time. [Only the other day] in Delhi I was saying to Chi. Indra, "Has Mahatmaji forgotten me?" Two or three days later I got your letter. I was so happy. The land of the Kheda district ryots that had been attached has been given back. They will have little pecuniary loss now. They have gained much strength from this struggle.

Your letter gives me strength. When funds from work run low, I shall certainly remember you.

I hope you have some relief from your pain. May God keep you.

All the members of the Ashram are looking forward to your visit. We shall all become impatient if you exceed the time limit.

All the Ashramites send you their *namaskars*.

*Yours,*

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2207

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at that time. As suggested in you letter of April 30th to Mr. Maffey, he will be glad, when the organizations which will, it is hoped, result from the Conference, have been set on foot, to indicate in more detail the directions in which you services can be most profitably utilized. As regards the revenue situation in Kaira, His Excellency considers that this, like all other questions of internal administration, must be dealt with separately on its merits, and that there should be no confusion of issues in regard to the great and urgent purposes of the Conference, but a whole-hearted and united effort without distinction of race, class or creed. He feels sure that you will concur in this view and by your example and influence support his endeavour to secure the most complete unanimity and co-operation which the present grave crisis requires."

### 39. LETTER TO J. KER

NADIAD,  
May 31, 1918

DEAR MR. KER,

I observe that my two letters regarding the Navli and Khandli<sup>1</sup> incidents have proved misfires. I have failed in driving home the point I wished to make. I appreciate and accept the legal position you have taken up. The parties are being advised to make the necessary confessions before the court. The case I give below is much simpler than the Navli and the Khandli ones. I worry you with it as I have no desire to take any undue advantage of legal plans or to advise the *ryot* wilfully to disregard lawful orders. Bhula Desai owns among others survey No. 711/1 in Nawagam. This has not been declared forfeited in the notice of forfeiture dated the 31st March, 1918 which refers to 591,596 and others. Since the forfeiture notice and that dated the 20th instant had been issued for the sale of onion crop standing in the field, the sale was advertised for the 29th but it did not take place. The holder had meanwhile pointed out the illegality of the notice and had urged that it might be withdrawn. But the Assistant Collector has passed an order dated the 28th instant to the effect that removal of crop would be treated as theft. The onion crop is ready to be cut and may be seriously damaged if the threatening rain pours down. The law seems to me to be on the holders's side. I am therefore advising him to remove the onion crop. I observe too that another notice of the sale of his fields has been issued in common with the fields belonging to other cultivators of Nawagam.

In the circumstances and in view of the fact mentioned by you that the land is not be forfeited, I hope you will consider my advice to be right and proper.

*Yours sincerely,*

From a copy : C.W. 10692. Courtesy : Chhaganlal Gandhi

<sup>1</sup> The letter regarding Khandli is not traceable.

#### 40. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

May, 1918<sup>1</sup>

CHI. MAGANLAL,

The Government is fighting a war. It is in difficulties. We, that is to say, the people, want swaraj through its co-operation. We cannot have swaraj until we have made ourselves fit for it. One aspect of this fitness is surely that we should share its burdens. Our object in running the Ashram is to strengthen the character of the inmates. Is it not, then, the duty of the Ashram to offer its help? The end of the war will see us better qualified [for swaraj]. I think we young people should go. One of us will stay behind with the children. Let us know, soon, what you think of this.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

PS. If we go, we take others as well.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5731. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

#### 41. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

SABARMATI,

*Vaishakh Vad 7 [June 1, 1918]<sup>2</sup>*

CHI. RAMDAS,

I very much wish to write to you but cannot do so because of much pressure of work. Two letters from you have remained unanswered. I feel sad when writing to you is delayed. Of course we both think of you everyday.

Today, Ba and Devdas are with me. Devdas's health is excellent. He has grown very strong. As the climate there has suited you, the climate here has suited him. Devo teaches and learns, both. He has got the knack now. He has learnt 9 chapters from the *Gita* by heart and

<sup>1</sup> The day on which this letter was written is not known.

<sup>2</sup> As suggested in the source; *Vaishakh Vad 7* in the year 1918 corresponded to June 1.

read many books. He is now going to Madras where he will teach Hindi and learn Tamil. He remains quite cheerful. He has become as neat as you are and washes his clothes, too, almost as clean as you do yours.

Ba also keeps quite well. She has changed her nature and become straightforward and pleasing in her ways.

You did well in expressing your views about Mr. West<sup>1</sup> and also in levelling charges against me the way you have done. I am not displeased but I think your charges are not justified. Mr. West is not proud and he has not left the Press. What Manilal did. . .<sup>2</sup>

I see that you are still not at peace. When you get tired of the place, come over here. But you can do so only if Manilal does not need your help. Remain there as long as it suits you . . .<sup>3</sup> I wish that you return having earned enough and having made your body sufficiently strong.

Miss Schlesin must be very fine. Tell her that I am eagerly waiting for a letter from her. Have you met Mr. Philips? Let me know the names of all the persons whom you have met. Tell me all about what you have learnt and what you feel you have learnt only half as well as you should have liked to do.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

<sup>1</sup> Albert West, Gandhiji's co-worker who looked after *Indian Opinion* on the Phoenix Farm

<sup>2</sup> The rest of the paragraph is illegible.

<sup>3</sup> One sentence here is illegible.

## 42. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY

SABARMATI,  
June 1, 1918

DEAR MR. MAFFEY<sup>1</sup>,

I thank you for your letter of the 21st ultimo which was redirected here from Motihari. I have already placed myself in correspondence with His Excellency Lord Willingdon<sup>2</sup>.

You told me in Delhi that probably in a month's time the brothers Ali might be discharged.<sup>3</sup> It is now a trifle more than a month. Would you please let me know whether I might look forward to their release at an early date?

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Chelmsford Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

## 43. LETTER TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"<sup>4</sup>

SABARMATI,  
June 2, 1918

THE EDITOR  
*THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE*

SIR,

I offer no apology for seeking the hospitality of your columns for the enclosed extracts from *Indian Opinion*. They deal with the well-being of over two lakhs of emigrants from India. Mr. Ahmed Mohammed Cachalia, the esteemed President of the British Indian Association of Johannesburg, has sent from that place the following cablegram regarding one of the matters referred to in the extracts:

Mass meeting, fifth, strongly protested section nineteen Railway Regulations. Resolved cable supporters India. Regulations impose statutory

<sup>1</sup> Private Secretary to the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford

<sup>2</sup> Then Governor of Bombay; *vide* "Letter to J. Crerar", 30-5-1918.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>4</sup> This was published under the caption, "Anti-Indian Legislation in South Africa". The letter appears to have been released generally to the Press.

colour bar in regard to issue of tickets, placing in, and removing from compartments, occupation of place on station platforms, empower minor officials remove without assigning reason. Please make suitable representation appropriate quarters. Community unanimous assert rights unless relief sought granted.

Mr. Cachalia was one of the staunchest workers during the passive resistance campaign that raged for eight years in South Africa. During that campaign, he reduced himself to poverty, and accepted imprisonment for the sake of India's honour. One can, therefore, easily understand what is meant by the words "Community unanimous assert rights unless relief sought granted." It is not a threat, it is the burning cry of distress felt by a community whose self-respect has been injured.

It is evident that the white people of South Africa have not been visibly impressed by the war which is claimed to be waged for the protection of the ryots or weaker or minor nationalities. Their prejudice against colour is not restrained even by the fact that local Indians have raised a volunteer bearer corps which is gallantly serving in East Africa with the column that was taken to East Africa by General Smuts.

The problem is difficult—it is complex. Prejudices cannot be removed by legislation. They will yield only to patient toil and education. But what of the Union Government? It is feeding the prejudice by legalizing it. Indians would have been content if the popular prejudice had been left to work itself out, care being taken to guard against violence on either side. Indians of South Africa could not complain even against a boycott on the part of the whites. It is there already. In social life, they are completely ostracized. They feel the ostracism, but they silently bear it. But the situation alters when the Government steps in and gives legal recognition to the anti-colour campaign. It is impossible for the Indian settlers to submit to an insulting restraint upon their movements. They will not allow booking clerks to decide as to whether they are becomingly dressed. They cannot allow a platform inspector to restrict them to a reserved part of the platform. They will not, as if they were ticket-of-leave men, produce their certificates in order to secure railway tickets.

The pendency of the war cannot be used as an effective shield to cover fresh wrongs and insults. The plucky custodians of India's honour are doing their share in South Africa. We are here bound to help them. Meetings throughout India should inform the

white inhabitants of South Africa that India resents their treatment of her sons. They should call upon the Government of India and the Imperial Government to secure effective protection for our countrymen in South Africa. I hope that Englishmen in India will not be behindhand in lending their valuable support to the movement to redress the wrong.

Mr. Cachalia's cable is silent on the grievance disclosed in the second batch of extracts. It is not less serious. In its effect it is far more deadly. But the community is hoping to right the wrong by an appeal to the highest legal tribunal in the Union. But really the question is above that tribunal. Let me state it in a sentence. A reactionary Attorney-General has obtained a ruling from the Natal Supreme Court to the effect that subjects of 'Native States' are aliens and not British subjects and are, therefore not entitled to its protection so far as appeals under a particular section of the Immigrants' Restriction Act are concerned. Thus, if the local Court's ruling is correct, thousands of Indians settled in South Africa will be deprived of the security of residence in South Africa, for which they fought for eight years and which they thought they had won. At least a quarter of the Indian settlers of South Africa are subjects of the Baroda and Kathiawad States. If any law considers them as aliens, surely it has to be altered. It is an insult to the States and their subjects to treat the latter as aliens.

*Yours, etc.,*

M. K. GANDHI

*The Bombay Chronicle, 7-6-1918; also, Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*

#### **44. LETTER TO SIR GEORGE BARNES**

SABARMATI,  
*June 2, 1918*

DEAR SIR GEORGE BARNES,

I believe matters affecting the status of emigrants to the Colonies fall under your department. If so, I beg to invite your attention to the attached papers.<sup>1</sup>

You will note from the papers that the Union Government is again succumbing to the white prejudice against colour and that what

<sup>1</sup> These are not available.

is claimed to be a war for principles and for the defence of weaker nationalities has produced but little impression upon the whites of South Africa.

The problem, I know, is difficult. Prejudices cannot be removed by legislation. They will yield only to patient toil and education. But what I fear is that the Union Government, instead of holding the scales evenly between conflicting interests, is itself feeding this race prejudice. If my view be correct, it is a question as to how far it can use the protection of the Union Jack in its anti-Imperial course. Might not the Government of India effectively move the Imperial Government to make an energetic protest against this indecent exhibition of pride and race prejudice?

I suppose you are aware that the small Indian colony in South Africa has rendered and is still rendering, as is admitted by all, much useful service during the war. A bearer corps has been serving in East Africa from the time that General Smuts proceeded there.

The papers are divided into two parts. One part deals with the newly framed railway regulations which speak for themselves. It is unthinkable that an Indian should have to confine himself to a reserved portion of a station platform, reserved carriage, a reserved ticket-office, etc., etc., and even then depend for a first or second-class ticket on the caprice of the booking clerk who is authorized to refuse to issue a ticket to an Indian if, in his opinion, the latter is not becomingly dressed.

The second part shows how, by the ill-judged action of the Union Government, Indians, born in Native States and domiciled in South Africa, have been deprived of valuable legal rights. If the Supreme Court's decision is sound, the law is clearly bad and should be altered. If it is unsound, the Union Government should have it set aside by supporting an appeal to the local Privy Council. Thousands of Indians from the Baroda State have settled in South Africa for years. The Government must have known when they resisted the application of the aggrieved party that they ran the risk of endangering the just rights of Indians who are, to all intents and purposes, British subjects.

I do hope you will set the cable in motion and take the necessary steps to undo the wrong referred to in the papers herewith presented.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

N. A. I.: Commerce and Industry: June 1918: No. 5



## 45. LETTER TO J. KER

NADIAD,  
June 3, 1918

DEAR MR. KER,

I thank you for your assurance regarding the Navli and Khandli cases.<sup>1</sup>

As to the Nawagam case, my reading of the law is that forfeiture should be by name. No such order has been passed regarding 311/1. It is a vital point of law. In my opinion the phrase "and others" cannot be availed of to adversely affect large interests.

I had understood the position regarding forfeiture as you have put it in your letter under reply.<sup>2</sup>

I was at Uttarsanda this afternoon. The Mamlatdar has passed orders to the effect that only the well-to-do holders need pay the revenue and the needy ones will have their assessment suspended on their inability being satisfactorily established. This is what I submitted to you at our interview. I have strongly advised the Uttarsanda people who are able to pay at once.<sup>3</sup> It will now be my duty to assist the Government to collect from these cultivators. Could you not pass general orders after the style of the Mamlatdar? It will save your time and ours, to say the least. And the Government will have revenue and the people their honour. I should like to be able to tell H.E. on the 10th<sup>4</sup> that we had settled our domestic differences. Should you see your way to pass such orders, I assume that there would be no *chothai* to be collected.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10694. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

<sup>1</sup> The addressee had written that in the Navli and Khandli cases if the persons were convicted on their own plea of guilty the prosecution would not press for heavy sentences.

<sup>2</sup> The addressee had clarified the position regarding forfeiture by saying: "There is no question of permanently forfeiting, if it can be avoided, valuable holdings for trifling arrears. The lands which have already been forfeited will be given back (i) on payment of the arrears, (ii) on the recovery by distraint or by sale of so much of the holding only as is necessary to recover the whole amount due."

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* "Letter to People of Kheda", 6-6-1918.

<sup>4</sup> At the meeting of the Provincial War Conference at Bombay

#### 46. SPEECH AT UTTARSANDA<sup>1</sup>

June 3, 1918

You have heard the order issued by the Mamlatdar. The order is made as a result of our consultation. A few days back, when I had an interview with the Collectors I had made suggestions to that effect. I told him that if he would act up to my suggestions, the struggle would soon terminate. Such an order has now been issued by the Mamlatdar. It was the first condition of our struggle that the day the assessment dues of the poor were suspended, those who can afford to pay shall at once pay up the revenue. In the beginning, Government was obstinate enough to say that it could not be done. Government said that the assessment that was fixed by them must be paid up at the proper time. The Mamlatdar has issued an order to the effect that those of you who can afford to pay up the assessment should pay it up and those who are really unable to pay will get suspension. Thus the Government will get the revenue; the people will preserve their self-respect and they will also be true to their vow. We must thank the Mamlatdar for this kind order, but how? By understanding the true significance of the order, i.e., by paying up your dues without any hesitation. Those of you who are able to pay the assessment must pay it up today or tomorrow, and you must make a list of those who are not able to pay. You must convince your *Talati* that they are really poor. Then the Mamlatdar will issue an order for the suspension of their revenue. I have to make<sup>2</sup> . . . amongst you. It is this . Do not put down those who are able to pay the assessment as poor. Make a list of those only who, if they paid, would have to borrow money from the *sahukar*<sup>3</sup> at an abnormal rate of interest, or of those who would have to sell their cattle or ornaments. The smaller the list of such persons, the greater will be our credit. The world will laugh at those who are able and who ought to pay according to their vow and yet would not pay. And we must see that we are not thus ridiculed. We must not wish to misuse the

<sup>1</sup> On his return from Bihar, Gandhiji, accompanied by V. J. Patel, visited Uttarsanda, a village three miles distant from Nadiad. The Mamlatdar's order, to the effect that the rich agriculturists of the village should pay up their dues and the poor *khatedars* would be given a suspension of the assessment till the next year, was read out by the *talati*. Gandhiji then addressed the gathering.

<sup>2</sup> Some words are missing here.

<sup>3</sup> Money-lender

order of the Mamlatdar saheb. If you will act according to my advice, I am sure, your vow will be a great gain for you, and you will be respected by others. We must act with a clean conscience. How bitterly did we feel when we were told that the Government was right and that we were wrong? Now the Government say that they leave it to us whether to pay the revenue or not. So our duty is two-fold. Those who are able to pay the revenue must pay it up at once. If they do not pay up, we must bring our influence to bear upon them. And, secondly, you must make a list of the poor *khatedars* and after making it, pay up your assessment. On the 10th June, there is a War Conference in Bombay. And I hope such orders as are given in this village will also be issued in other villages and I shall be able to tell the Governor that our struggle is over.<sup>1</sup>

*The Bombay Chronicle*, 5-6-1918

#### 47. SPEECH AT NAVAGAM

*June 3, 1918*

I am not well and shall not, therefore, speak long. I must say, though, that the people of Navagam and Nayaka have shown great courage and done good work. Some persons at Navali and Khandhali broke all bounds. They set free the buffaloes which had been attached and led them back. They also rubbed the officer's beds with *kavach*. This is not satyagraha but *duragraha*. Our pledge was only to the effect that we would not pay. Officers believe that they have come among us from the heavens. The idea behind our struggle is to make everyone see that being an officer does not mean anything in special. You have had to pay *chothai*, but we shall have to get the amount back; no harm will follow, however, if we do not succeed. The people of Kheda have earned much and learnt much. If you have had to pay *chothai* as a price for all this, it is not much that you have suffered. We were fighting for our pledge. Every effort will be made to see that the *chothai* is refunded. If we remain courteous and truthful, it will be possible to appeal to the Government for its refund. Because people refuse to pay land revenue despite their having to pay *chothai*, they

<sup>1</sup> It appears that Gandhiji wrote to the Collector that, if an order on the lines of that issued by the Mamlatdar could be published and made applicable to the whole district and the *chothai* and other fines withdrawn, the struggle would cease. On the Collector acting on Gandhiji's suggestion, the satyagraha came to an end.

come to be better respected and truth is held in greater honour. The Government seems to have changed its mind about confiscating lands. If it had carried out its idea, it would have utterly disgraced itself and lost people's regard. In view of the people's strength, any attempt at confiscation of lands would have weakened the Government. Naked injustice cannot command much strength.

[From Gujarati]

*Prajabandhu, 9-6-1918*

#### 48. LETTER TO J. KER

NADIAD,  
*June 5, 1918*

DEAR MR. KER,

I thank you for your letter of the 4th inst. As to the Nawagam case, if a mistake has been made, it is mine and I shall tender apology.<sup>1</sup> As I am writing this letter I have a visit from some Nawagam men. They bring me the information that whilst the holder was digging the onion, it was attached and removed by the amlatdar. My first concern is to save this onion and I can only do so if I receive your assistance. I suggest to you apart from the other equities under the settlement that is taking place there is no meaning in attaching the onion and that it be immediately returned to the holder. If there is a criminal or other case to be instituted against Bhulabhai, it will not be affected by the return of the onion. In my humble opinion this onion order is an unwarranted abuse of authority. Any one of the fields was enough to cover the assessment. The land was obviously not for forfeiture. The onion was not sold on the day advertised for sale. The holder did not know where he stood. I still claim that this particular number 711/1 has not been forfeited. On the modalities, I have the clearest conscience. If you did not represent a mighty Government and Bhulabhai was not a simple frightened peasant, apology would become due to him for the vexatious harassment to which he has been subjected. In view of the Mamlatdar's orders I am advising Bhulabhai to stop cutting any more onion. But I do hope that you will be good

<sup>1</sup> The addressee had written that Bhula Desai's field at Nawagam had been forfeited and if the onion crop had been removed it would be for Gandhiji "to decide whether to come and apologize and pay his arrears".

enough to order the return of the onion removed by the Mamlatdar. Everything else can be easily settled afterwards.<sup>1</sup>

From a copy: C.W. 10695. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

#### 49. LETTER TO PEOPLE OF KHEDA<sup>2</sup>

SATYAGRAHA CAMP,  
NADIAD,  
June 6 [1918]

TO  
THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF  
KAIRA DISTRICT

The struggle that the people of the district of Kaira entered upon on the 22nd of March last, has come to an end. The people took the following vow on that day.<sup>3</sup>

The meaning of this vow is that the Government suspending collection of the revenue from the poor, the well-to-do should pay the assessment due from them. The Mamlatdar of Nadiad at Uttarsanda, on the 3rd of June issued such orders, whereupon the people of Uttarsanda, who could afford, were advised to pay up. Payments have already commenced there.

On the foregoing order having been passed at Uttarsanda a letter was addressed to the Collector<sup>4</sup> stating that if orders like the one in Uttarsanda were passed everywhere the struggle would come to an end, and it would be possible to inform His Excellency the Governor on the 10th instant—the day of the sitting of the Provincial War Conference—that the domestic difference in Kaira was settled. The Collector has replied to the effect that the order like the one in Uttarsanda is applicable to the whole district. Thus the people's prayer has at last been granted. The Collector has also stated in reply to a query about *chothai* orders that the orders will not be enforced

<sup>1</sup> For the further development of the case and settlement, *vide* the following item and "Speech at Nadiad", 8-6-1918.

<sup>2</sup> This was used in Gujarati as manifesto jointly by Gandhiji and Vallabbhbai Patel, and the English version was published in *Young India* under the caption, "An End without Grace". It was also published in other English newspapers.

<sup>3</sup> For the text of the pledge, which is not reproduced here, *vide* "The Pledge", 22-3-1918.

<sup>4</sup> This letter is not available.

against those who may voluntarily pay up. Our thanks are due to the Collector for this concession.

We are obliged to say with sorrow that although the struggle has come to an end it is an end without grace. It lacks dignity. The above orders have not been passed either with generosity or with the heart in them. It very much looks as if the orders have been passed with the greatest reluctance. The Collector says:

Orders were issued to all mamlatdars on the 25th April that no pressure should be put on those unable to pay. Their attention was again drawn to these orders in a proper circular issued by me on the 22nd of May and to ensure that proper effect was given to them, the mamlatdars were advised to divide the defaulters in each village into two classes, those who could pay and those who were unable to pay on account of poverty.

If this was so, why were these orders not published to the people? Had they known them on the 25th April what sufferings would they not have been saved from! The expenses that were unnecessarily incurred by the Government in engaging the officials of the district in effecting executions would have been saved. Wherever the assessment was uncollected the people lived with their lives in their hands. They have lived away from their homes to avoid attachments. They have not had even enough food. The women have suffered what they ought not to have. At times, they have been obliged to put up with insults from insolent Circle Inspectors, and to helplessly watch their milch buffaloes being taken away from them. They have paid *chothai* fines and, had they known the foregoing orders, they would have been saved all the miseries. The officials knew that this relief for the poor was the crux of the struggle. The Commissioner would not even look at this difficulty. Many letters were addressed to him but he remained unbending. He said, "Individual relief cannot be granted, it is not the law." Now the Collector says:

The orders of April 25, so far as it [*sic*] related to putting pressure on those who were really unable to pay on account of poverty, were merely a restatement of what are publicly known to be the standing orders of Government on that subject.

If this is really true, the people have suffered deliberately and through sheer obstinacy! At the time of going to Delhi, Mr. Gandhi wrote to the Commissioner requesting him to grant or to issue orders to the above effect so that the good news could be given to His Excellency the Viceroy. The Commissioner gave no heed to the

request.

“We are moved by the sufferings of the people, we perceive our mistake and in order to placate the people we are now prepared to grant individual relief,” the officials could have generously said all this and endeared themselves to the people, but they have obstinately avoided this method (of winning them over). And even now relief has been granted in a niggardly manner involuntarily and without admission of any mistake. It is even claimed that what has now been granted is nothing new. And hence we say that there is little grace in the settlement.<sup>1</sup>

The officials have failed to be popular because of their obstinacy, because of their mistaken belief that they should never admit being in the wrong and because of their having made it a fetish that it should never be said of them that they had yielded to anything like popular agitation. It grieves us to offer this criticism. But we have permitted ourselves to do so as their friends,

But though the official attitude is thus unsatisfactory, our prayer has been granted and it is our duty to accept the concession with thankfulness. Now, there is only 8 per cent of the assessment remaining unpaid. It was a point of honour with us till now to refuse payment. Conditions having materially altered it is a point of honour for a satyagrahi to pay up the assessment. Those who can afford should pay without causing the Government the slightest trouble and thus show that where there is no conflict between the dictates of conscience and those of man-made law, they are second to none in obeying the law of the land. A satyagrahi sometimes appears momentarily to disobey laws and the constituted authority, only to prove in the end his regard for both.

In making a list of those who are unable to pay we should apply a test so rigid that no one can challenge our findings. Those whose incapacity for payment is at all in doubt should consider it their duty to pay. The final decision as to the incapacity for payment will rest with the authorities, but we believe that the judgement of the people will have its full weight.

By their courage the people of Kaira have drawn the attention of the whole of India. During the last six months they have had full taste of the fruits of observing truth, fearlessness, unity, determination and

<sup>1</sup> This paragraph is available only in the English version.

self-sacrifice. We hope that they will still further cultivate these great qualities, will move forward on the path of progress, and shed lustre on the name of the Motherland. It is our firm belief that the people of Kaira have truly served their own cause, as well as the cause of swaraj and the Empire.

May God bless you!

*We remain,*

*Always in your service,*

M. K. GANDHI

VALLABHBHAI J. PATEL

*Young India*, 12-6-1918

### 50. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

NADIAD,  
*June 7 [1918]*<sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR MILLIE,

I was glad to have your letter. I was looking forward to it.

Pearson<sup>2</sup> has written a book which is undoubtedly seditious in the sense that he desires separation, not home rule within the Empire. I have not read the book but this is what I am told. The book is prohibited.<sup>3</sup> There is nothing wrong in Pearson's activity if he believes in it. And it must be conceded that there is nothing wrong in the Government trying to crush the rebellious spirit. P. was in China. This gave the Government an easy way of getting hold of P. They have got him and now he is probably on his way to England where I suppose he will be comparatively free to preach separation. From what I hear, he is quite happy and almost expected the result.

Yes, the letter to the Viceroy cost many an anxious hour. I could not help writing the letter. The story of its creation is worth telling but I have not the time to reproduce it here. When we meet and have leisure you shall have it if it has not become too stale then.

You will see my letter about S.A. You should write to Cachalia.

I wonder why Anasuyabehn has not replied. I shall speak to her. She is by no means so lazy or discourteous.

<sup>1</sup> From the contents; *ibid*

<sup>2</sup> W.W. Pearson

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* "Letter to C.F. Andrews", 23-5-1918.



I am going to Bombay on the 10th instant. I must then see about your trunk. Narandas is there now. He was away in Kathiawad. I will see to the proper labelling and have the carriage prepaid.

I hope you are all keeping well. So the Kaira struggle has ended. You will see my final letter on it.

I have not had practically a single acknowledgement of my many letters. They have evidently been sunk or miscarried. Please pass this on to him. I have not heard from him otherwise either.

With love to you all,

Yours,  
BHAI

[PS.]

Do you know that Manilal is now all alone in Phoenix? Mr. West and Sam are in Durban doing commercial printing. Of course West is helping Manilal. *I.O.* is now truly independent. I understand Manilal is working day and night. West could not do otherwise than what he has done.

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

### 51. LETTER TO J. KER

NADIAD,  
*June 8, 1918*

DEAR MR. KER,

I addressed a big meeting in Nadiad and explained the settlement. The speakers got up one after another and then said that executions and forfeiture orders still continued. I could understand this as your orders might not yet have been passed on to the Mamlatdars. But I trust that you will be good enough to order the stopping of executions, whilst the people are paying, to instruct Mamlatdars not to charge *chothai* when the people make voluntary payments whether there be execution pending or not and to cancel forfeiture orders when voluntary payment is forthcoming. I have asked the cultivators to be very strict in asking for suspension on the ground of poverty. May I ask you to ask the Mamlatdars to be generous in dealing with such cases? In Wadthal three writs have been recently issued for the collection of *chothai* to all intents and

purposes. It is claimed that the first proceeds of a sale were credited in the *chothai* column. Surely this was wrong. If you restore this to the revenue column there is nothing due. Should these executions not be withdrawn?

In three cases in Wadthal forfeiture notices have been issued. Two men are ready to pay the assessment. Should not these orders be cancelled against payment? In the third case the holder is dead. The holder was in strained circumstances. The heir is still less able to pay. I trust that in this case forfeiture will be cancelled and suspension granted on the ground of poverty. I have approached the Mamlatdar regarding these cases. He says he cannot grant relief without your orders.

In Nadiad a holder owed only two annas on account of principal. He tendered the amount and asked for return of his pots which were distrained. The Mamlatdar refused to restore the pots unless *chothai* was paid. The holder has paid the *chothai* under protest and prevented the threatened sale of his pots. Should not *chothai* be refunded in this case?

Orders of forfeiture have been issued in Sinnaj also and payments offered after the date of settlement have not been accepted.

I am going to Bombay for the Conference. I hope to return by the 16th instant. Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel will be at your service meanwhile.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10698. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

## 52. *SPEECH AT NADIAD*<sup>1</sup>

*June 8, 1918*

In the Court of the Collector of Nadiad, acting as District Magistrate, Mr. Mohanlal Pandya and five others from Navagam were charged on June 8, 1918, with the theft of onions from a field.<sup>2</sup> The accused asserted that they honestly believed that there was nothing illegal in their action.

<sup>1</sup> This has been collated with a Gujarati report in *Kheda Satyagraha*.

<sup>2</sup> The field had been declared forfeited by Government order, but Gandhiji had pointed out to the Collector that, as the survey number of the field was not stated in the notice of forfeiture, it could not be regarded as forfeited. He had advised the collection of the onion crop on the field in view of the imminent monsoon. *Vide An Autobiography*, Part V, Ch. XXIV.

Gandhiji too said in his evidence that the sole responsibility for the action lay with him, and it was he who had advised the accused to remove the onions. If it was an offence to have removed them, justice required that the sentence should be passed against him. After the case was over,<sup>1</sup> Mahatmaji addressed a large gathering of people outside the compound of the court. [He said :]

Two feelings are uppermost in my heart just now: one of them fills me with gladness, the other with pain. I am glad because the people of Kaira, true satyagrahis that they are, got this opportunity of going to jail. My doubt whether the agriculturists of Kaira would be ready to go to jail has been removed. I am pained because though British officers are good men generally, some of them show want of generosity and vision. The Collector, having awarded a sentence of imprisonment, is welcome to think of jail as degrading and in the nature of a terrible hardship; it is nothing of the kind to us. In spite of this, the experience that the people have got is, indeed, splendid. So long as we do not learn how to endure jail-sufferings and do not perceive the true meaning and lesson of jail-pilgrimage, we do not understand the real meaning of satyagraha. This is the fittest opportunity for all to understand it and we should feel sorry that we are not so fortunate as our brethren who went to jail. I tried my utmost to go to jail. I said that the responsibility from the beginning to the end was solely mine. Bhulabhai<sup>2</sup> had acted after full consideration. If there is any mistake it is mine, and yet I do not feel I am at all in the wrong. I got the case transferred to the Collector with great effort. This was a test case. I had previously informed the Collector that I was not going to appeal from his judgement; and I am still of the same mind. The Court's finding is unjust and the sentence harsh. One cannot expect a man occupying the chair of a judge to be a satyagrahi, for law does not recognize satyagraha. This is a case in which we are bound to succeed if we go in appeal. We have lost the case not because Vallabhbhai or myself did not cross-examine any witness. Any impartial judge with legal knowledge could say that the facts do not constitute any offence. In spite of that, we are not going to appeal. A satyagrahi cannot do that. For him, the best way is to go to jail. I would have been more glad if the sentence had been even more severe. The Collector has ordered the onions to be confiscated.

<sup>1</sup> Two of the accused were sentenced to ten days' imprisonment and the rest to twenty days' imprisonment each.

<sup>2</sup> The owner of the onion field

If the Government can dare pocket the onions, let them do. But what I want to tell the many Navagam friends present here is that the revenue arrears of Bhulabhai, Rs. 94/-, must be paid up to the Mamlatdar by tomorrow. We have to respect the settlement. I am going to say the same in the district meeting at Nadiad.

This incident may possibly create bitterness but, if we are large-hearted enough to forget it, the Government will ever remain sorry for its breach of promise. The Collector has acted in anger. Punishment was called for, he thought, for their digging up the onions despite his orders to the contrary. If he had quietly thought over the case and studied the law a little more carefully, he would have seen that there was no offence in the act. If we mean to educate the officers, we must act in this manner again and again; and then they will understand that there cannot be any punishment for such a heroic people, that they deserve a loving handshake. If we want to win over officers, we should be honest and courteous in our dealings with them. We may never bow down to blind authority but, if necessary, remove onions and go to jail a thousand times.

My brothers of Navagam, consider this opportunity to be a blessed one. Five friends from your town have gone to jail with a pure and bold heart, and for that we shall all congratulate them. As Mohanlal Pandya is with them, I have no anxiety for the rest. He it was who took the lead in this struggle and this is, therefore, a golden opportunity for him. This is not the first time when I have advised against an appeal. In South Africa, when thousands went to jail, I never appealed. There can be no appeal when we wish to go to jail by way of *tapascharya*. Perhaps the Kaira people have not risen so high. But if they have, I would advise them not to offer any defence and to allow the Court to do what it pleases. There are two or three other cases pending in the district. I advise you not to defend yourselves but to suffer imprisonment. There is so much to be learnt in that; and it is my firm belief that we can advance the country by acting in this manner.

*The Bombay Chronicle*, 12-6-1918

### 53. LETTER TO L. ROBERTSON

BOMBAY,

*June 9, 1918*

L. ROBERTSON, ESQ.  
CHIEF SECRETARY  
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT  
GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DEAR MR. ROBERTSON,

Your telegram No. 4630<sup>1</sup> was received by me at Nadiad only yesterday evening on my return from Kaira. Before I undertake to support the resolution given in your telegram I should like to know more fully about it. I should like also to see the scheme. My address is care of Mr. Rewashankar Jagjiwan, Laburnum Road, Chowpati.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

India Office Judicial and Public Records: 3412/18, also Bombay Government Home Department Special File No. 1788 of 1918

<sup>1</sup> Dated June 7, 1918, it read: "His Excellency would be glad if you would consent to support at Conference 10th instant the following resolution. Begins. This Conference is of opinion that the manpower and resources of this Presidency should be utilized and developed to the fullest possible extent. With this object in view it recommends that a War Purposes Board be appointed consisting of official and non-official members and that the scheme outlined in the memorandum attached to the agenda be approved and adopted. Ends. The Memorandum referred to will be ready tomorrow and will be sent to your Bombay address, which kindly communicate by telegram."

## 54. LETTER TO L. ROBERTSON

BOMBAY,

*June 9, 1918*

DEAR MR. ROBERTSON,

I am sorry I was away when your note<sup>1</sup> was received. I feel that I should not speak to the resolution. I hope therefore that His Excellency will excuse me. I observe that my name is included in the man-power committee. I note that men like Mr. Tilak are not included. I fear that my usefulness will be materially curtailed if I could not have the benefit of his co-operation and that of other Home Rulers of his calibre. It is hopeless to expect a truly national response and a national army, unless the Government are prepared to trust them to do their duty. I should gladly serve on the man-power committee if these leaders are invited to join it. If additions to the committee can be moved, I would be prepared to move that some of these gentlemen may be included in one or more of these committees.

*Yours sincerely,*

India Office Judicial and Public Records: 3412/18; also Bombay Government Home Department Special File No. 1788 of 1918

<sup>1</sup> This was a letter dated June 9, which read: "In reply to your letter of today, I enclose a copy of the Agenda with Memorandum (except the note on recruiting which is in the Press) which explains the scheme. You will see that His Excellency has assumed that you will consent to speak. If you don't wish to do so, would you be so good as to inform me by bearer, so that your name may be deleted from the Agenda." Gandhiji's decision not to address the Conference on June 10 appears to have been taken after an interview with Lokamanya Tilak.

## 55. LETTER TO LORD WILLINGDON

BOMBAY,

June 11, 1918

DEAR LORD WILLINGDON,

I trust you will not misunderstand this note.

I venture to think that your stopping of Messrs Tilak and Kelkar<sup>1</sup> yesterday was a serious blunder.<sup>2</sup> They had been informed on your behalf that they could offer criticism but they could not move an amendment. Your having stopped them will be resented as an insult to a great and growing party in the country. Your action has made the position of workers delicate and difficult and if Mr. Tilak is an enemy of the Government or of the Empire you have undoubtedly strengthened his hands in the pursuit of his course. But if you had allowed him and Mr. Kelkar to have their say, they would have gone away satisfied and it could have been said that you had given fair play to all. Will you not publicly express your regret for the blunder or send for both of them, expressing your regret to them, and invite their co-operation and discuss their viewpoint? You will lose nothing and you will gain greatly in the estimation of the people, enhance your prestige, increase your capacity for securing help from the people and possibly win over the Home Rule party, and also nip in the bud an agitation that is bound to spring up<sup>3</sup> in the country.

I repeat my request that you will not misunderstand this note,

<sup>1</sup> Narasimh Chintaman Kelkar; nationalist leader, associate and biographer of Tilak, and editor of *The Mahratta*, Poona

<sup>2</sup> The incident occurred on June 10 at the Bombay Provincial War Conference, over which Lord Willingdon presided.

<sup>3</sup> Eventually this happened; *vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay", 16-6-1918.

which is prompted by nothing but goodwill.<sup>1</sup>

*I remain,  
Your faithful friend,  
M. K. GANDHI*

India Office Judicial and Public Records: 3412/18

### 56. LETTER TO J. CRERAR

BOMBAY,  
*June 11, 1918*

DEAR MR. CRERAR,

Pray convey my thanks to His Excellency for the frank and full reply to my letter of this morning. I am just leaving for Poona to attend the celebration of the Servants of India Society. I return on Thursday and I would like to avail myself of His Excellency's kind offer to see me. Could you please wire to me at Poona City, care of the Society, the time (afternoon) when I could wait on His Excellency if it is at all convenient for him for that day. Meanwhile, I wish to assure His Excellency that my letter was not intended to suggest even

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji received the following reply from Crerar the same day: "His Excellency desires me to acknowledge your letter of today's date, at the Contents of which he cannot refrain from expressing some surprise and disappointment. While he is always ready to recognize legitimate difference of opinion on public matters, he cannot conceive of two opinions on the propriety of admitting a contentious political discussion on a resolution expressing loyalty to His Majesty the King-Emperor. Still less can he understand that any loyal citizen of the Empire should at this juncture desire to attach conditions to his offers of service. Mr. Tilak and some of his friends attach conditions which they know, and everybody knows, to be impossible of fulfilment by His Excellency's Government. The offer of co-operation on such terms only differs from an open refusal to co-operate by its lack of candour. His Excellency is convinced that on reflection you will recognise that these are the only views he can entertain and on which he is bound to act. His Excellency is the more convinced of this in view of the fact that your own offer of your own offer of your services to the Viceroy, to which he attaches the highest value, was made unconditionally and welcomed by him on that express understanding. He is confident that the different and, as he regards it, the lower view of the responsibilities of a citizen of the Empire which others may entertain will not induce you to modify your own observance of the pledge, which he was so glad to receive from you. I am to add that if you desire to see His Excellency again on this matter, he will be pleased to receive a visit from you."



a possibility of any change of views or alteration in my offer which I am preparing every moment to reduce to practice.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

India Office Judicial and Public Records: 3412/18

57. *LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN*

[Before June 13, 1918]<sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR NATESAN,

I have sent Devdas to learn Tamil. You have only to keep him in your place under your care. You should not show any special favour to him because he is my son. He must earn his food and learn Tamil.

*The Mail*, 2-11-1968

58. *LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN*

BOMBAY,

*June 13 [1918]*

DEAR MR. NATESAN,

Devdas, my son, will be with you ere this reaches you. I am anxious for him to be with you as a member of your family while he is there. If it is inconvenient for you, you will not hesitate to say so. I do not want him to be with a Gujarati family. He should be with a Tamil family. He has to learn Tamil and teach Hindi. I have sent him in response to the Indian Service League. His ultimate goal is Kumbakonam to which I have promised Devdas. But as the Kumbakonam friends are not ready to receive him before July, I thought he should start with the Indian Service League. I have given Devdas Rs. 30/-. He will have about Rs. 15 with him when he reaches there. When he needs any cash will you please let him have it and debit me with same? I know you do not do it. I would like you to make the commencement with Devdas. Your refusal will compel me to send him cash from here. I cannot allow you each time such occasions arise to bear the burden yourself.

*Yours sincerely*

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2227

<sup>1</sup> It appears from the contents that this letter was written before the one to the addressee dated June 13, 1918; *vide* "Letter to G.A. Natesan", 13-6-1918.

## 59. LETTER TO J. KER

NADIAD,  
June 14, 1918

DEAR MR. KER,

I have just returned from Bombay and read your letter of the 10th instant to Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel.

It is clear that your instructions have not yet reached the Mamlatdars and the Talatis, for they have collected *chothai* from those whose goods were distrained but not sold. I assume that in all such cases *chothai* collected would be refunded.

Your decision to collect *chothai* from those against whom forfeiture orders are passed creates a position different from the one taken up by you in your letter of the 4th instant and the impression left by you upon my mind in the course of our conversations. My letter of the 3rd instant says, "Should you see your way to pass such orders, i.e., like those of the Uttarsanda Mamlatdar, I assume that there would be no *chothai* to be collected". You said in reply, "No quarter-fine will of course be levied from those who come forward to pay even now." In the circumstances your letter under reply means a revision of a previous intention. I trust that you will give effect to the original intention. I may add that at the public meeting at Nadiad held on the 8th instant I made the announcement in the terms of the original intention and told the people that the only outstanding question was as to the refund of *chothai* collected before the date of settlement. I said the possibility of success in getting refund lay in their prompt payment of the assessment wherever they were able to pay.

In regard to the 3 Wadthal cases I admit the fact that in one case the villagers succeeded in preventing bidding to the full value of the property distrained. But in the other two they failed in their plan and competitive bidding took place up to the full value of the buffaloes so that the *chothai* in the two cases remained unpaid for natural causes. Your argument that if the bidding had resulted in the whole amount of execution being realized the question of refund would have arisen, applies equally to the other cases in which *chothai* is not to be executed. The distinction can be drawn only where "tricking" can be proved. I respectfully deny that in the third case there was any

tricking. It was part of the game by all legitimate means to prevent the Government from collecting.

As to the forfeiture cases, I thank you for the consideration you propose to show regarding the forfeiture where the original holder has recently died. As to the other two cases they fall under my request for a revision of your orders regarding *chothai*.

As to the case in which *chothai* execution has been levied for the sake of two anna arrears, I am making further inquiries.

Regarding the last paragraph of your letter, I can only say that throughout our conversations and my conversation with the Mamlatadar I spoke of suspension. It is referred to in my letter of the 3rd instant. I have described the order of the Mamlatdar as a suspension order. In your letter of the 4th instant you have not repudiated my interpretation. In fact the Mamlatdar's order is clearly a suspension order made as a result of the conversation between him and me and in my humble opinion it is impossible to revise a decision on which people have already acted. You may be aware that people have commenced voluntary payments all over except in Uttarsanda where we are having some difficulty. There too payment has commenced but not as fully as is possible. I hope therefore that you will be good enough to revise your view regarding the settlement.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10700. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

## *60. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOMBAY*

*June 16, 1918*

It was not without very considerable hesitation that I accepted the invitation to preside over the deliberations of this great and important meeting. We have met in order respectfully to protest against His Excellency Lord Willingdon's conduct in the chair at the War Conference that met in the Town Hall on the 10th instant. I

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji presided over the meeting which was held in the evening at Shantaram Chawl in Girgaon, in the heart of Bombay city, and was attended by some 12,000 people. The meeting was organized as an anti-Willingdon demonstration to protest against the Governor's provocative statements, at the Bombay Provincial War Conference, regarding Home Rule League leaders. The meeting adopted two resolutions. The day was observed as 'Home Rule Day'.

entertain high regard for Lord Willingdon. Of all the Governors in India, probably Lord Willingdon is the most popular. He is known to hold liberal views regarding our aspirations. It is, therefore, difficult for me to contemplate the proceedings of this meeting without sorrow, but I feel that I may not allow personal regard to interfere with the performance of an obvious duty, no matter how painful it may be. The duty is plain. Lord Willingdon convened the Conference, deliberately invited the prominent and leading members of the Home Rule Leagues. They, not wishing to court insult on the one hand, and on the other, desiring to give ample previous notice to His Excellency of their intention to plead their views before the Conference, asked for information about the programme of the Conference. Lord Willingdon had before him the experience of the Delhi Conference<sup>1</sup>. He knew that the Home Rule League members had the first scope given them for discussion during the sittings of the Committees that were then formed. He knew that many members of that Conference had delivered political speeches at its first sitting. With all this knowledge in his possession, now mark what happened at the Conference. In his opening remarks, he delivered a deliberate attack upon the Home Rule Leagues. He accused them of constant obstruction. He was not sure of the sincerity of their support. The Conference platform was hardly the platform for such remarks. If he did not want their co-operation, he ought not to have invited the members of the Home Rule Leagues. If he desired their co-operation, it was hardly the way to tell them beforehand that he did not trust them. He ought to have remembered that Home Rule Leaguers gave material assistance in one way. Their organ, the *Chronicle*, has always urged upon the people to give all the help they can. I venture to suggest to His Excellency that his aspersion upon the Leagues was, at the very least, a tactical blunder. But this was not enough. He wrote in reply to Mr. Kelkar's inquiry as follows:

A certain number of speakers will be invited beforehand to move, second and support the resolutions to be laid before the Conference. After these speakers have concluded their remarks, an open discussion will follow.

The resolutions laid before the Conference will be framed to give effect to the resolutions of the Delhi Conference and will betwo in number, the first in general terms and the second making specific proposals. Formal amendments will not be admitted, but any criticism or suggestions which

<sup>1</sup> The Viceroy's War Conference held in Delhi on April 27-29

speakers may make in the course of discussion will receive careful consideration of Government.

There is no reservation here about political discussion. Mr. Tilak and Mr. Kelkar together with others sent in their names as speakers. In due course, Mr. Tilak rose to speak and hardly had he uttered three sentences, two of which consisted of an absolute declaration of loyalty, when he was stopped on the ground that he was speaking politics on the loyalty resolution. In vain did Mr Tilak protest that the loyalty resolution had an addendum to it which entitled him to offer relevant criticism. Mr. Kelkar followed and he shared the same fate with the result that there was immediately a dramatic withdrawal from the Town Hall led by Mr. Tilak.<sup>1</sup> In my humble opinion, His Excellency, in giving the ruling that he did, committed a grave blunder and did a disservice to the cause which he had come to espouse. He offered a gratuitous insult to Messrs Tilak and Kelkar, and thereby, to a great, powerful organization in the country. It is impossible to ignore or insult Mr. Tilak and his followers. Mr. Tilak is an idol of the people. He wields over thousands of men an unrivalled influence, his word is law to them. I have great differences of opinion with him, but I would be untrue to myself if I failed to acknowledge that his burning love of his country, his immense sacrifices and a resolute advocacy of the popular cause have earned for him a place in the politics of India which no other leader has. The insult offered to him, and through him to the Home Rule Leagues, is, therefore, an insult to the nation at large. Whether, therefore, we differ from him in politics or not, it is the duty of us all, who feel that Lord Willingdon's treatment of Messrs Tilak and Kelkar was wrong, to protest against it. I am prepared to admit that it would have been better if Mr. Tilak had risen to speak to the said resolution. It is my special and personal opinion, not shared perhaps by any one else, that it would have been better still if he had preserved dignified silence; but, in my opinion, he had a right to speak to the loyalty resolution and offer criticism. I must dissent from the view that a loyalty resolution debars a free expression of one's sentiments. That loyalty must indeed, be skindeep which requires a wall of protection against criticism. I hold it to be perfectly consistent with my loyalty to the King to tell him that things are done in his name which ought not to be done. My declaration of loyalty will

<sup>1</sup> Along with Tilak, Gandhiji, Jinnah, B. G. Horniman, then editor of *The Bombay Chronicle*, N. C. Kelkar and R. P. Karandikar left the Conference Hall.

sound all the truer for the warning and I think that among the many services rendered by the Home Rule Leagues, special mention deserves to be made of their having emboldened the people to speak out their minds: and I doubt not that if they but do their duty to the fullest extent, they would place India's loyalty above suspicion. For, with a true Home Ruler it must be an article of faith that the Empire must be saved; for, in its safety lies the fruition of his fondest hopes. Not to help the Empire is to commit national suicide. How can we wish harm to our would-be partner without hurting ourselves?

So, whilst I fully share the opinion of the members of the Home Rule Leagues that we must protect national honour by asking for an expression of regret for His Excellency's *faux pas*, we must, at the same time, redouble our efforts to help the authority in the prosecution of the war. We must not be angered by Lord Willingdon's mistake into taking a false step ourselves. We have too much at stake; we want Home Rule and we want [it] in the quickest time possible, and I wish I could still persuade the country to accept my view that absolutely unconditional and whole-hearted co-operation with the Government on the part of educated India will bring us within sight of our goal as nothing else will. I do not for a single minute share the distrust of my countrymen that, like so many other hopes of ours, this one of swaraj is also doomed to disappointment. Not that the Government here, as also the Imperial Government, have done nothing to shake our trust; only, my trust rests not in their change of policy, but it rests upon the solid foundation of our own struggle. Surely it must be easy for anyone to see that, if we succeed in controlling the development of manpower and resources, we will have attained to an irresistible position and power; for, in my humble plan for the attainment of Home Rule, I aspire to nothing less than a complete control over these two departments. The Government seek our co-operation herein, let us take them at their word. They cannot reject help willingly and honestly offered. Our supplying recruits means in spirit, though not in law, yet a national army instead of a hired army. I have never been able to claim for ourselves any credit for the thousands who have been recruited by the official department. These recruits have gone not as patriots, not for the sake of the country, not for the Empire but for the money and other inducements held out to them. Recruits whom we would raise would be Home Rulers. They would go to fight for the Empire; but they would so fight because they aspire to become partners in it. They would not

consider it with Sir Narayan<sup>1</sup> a humiliation to fight for their hearths and their homes, but they would consider it a perfectly honourable ambition to gain freedom for their country by fighting for the Empire.

I hope that H.E. will see his way to concede to the wishes of this great meeting; but if he fails today, if the Viceroy also fails, I for one shall not despair of H.E. voluntarily apologizing to the Home Rule Leaguers in the near future. For I know they mean to co-operate in the prosecution of war. And when he sees this, he will realize his mistake and, like a gentleman that he is, will offer apology. Difficulties there are, many of the Government's creation. Thus, indifference to popular opinion, their rejection of our advice tendered for the attainment of the common aim, namely gaining of recruits, have made our task well-nigh impossible of fulfilment; but our duty is clear. Undaunted by these and many other difficulties, we should press forward and bear down their indifference to our opinion by demonstrating in practice the harm that they do to the Empire by their persistent defiance of popular will. I, therefore, regard the second resolution, that will be placed before you, not in any sense as so many conditions of our co-operation, but as a statement of the difficulties lying in our path. There are only two ways whereby we can attain our goal, co-operation or obstruction. Under the British Constitution, obstruction is a perfectly legitimate and well-known method for securing rights; but obstruction at a crisis like the one facing the Empire can only end in enraging the Government who are responsible for the conduct of the war; whereas, co-operation will not only disarm their opposition but it will give us a strength and a confidence which cannot but take us to our goal. The occasion for which we have met is a unique one; we are asking a popular Governor to put himself right with us by repenting of his mistakes; we are also providing that, if we fail to get redress, we pledge ourselves not to attend any public meeting over whose deliberations Lord Willingdon may preside in future. This is a serious step, but, I think, warranted by events that have taken place. The justice of our step will be proved by our future conduct, i.e., by disproving H.E.'s charges by a determined effort at co-operation.

I observe that today is the Home Rule Day anniversary. It is, or ought to be, a solemn day for Home Rule Leaguers. Lord Willingdon

<sup>1</sup> Sir Narayan Ganesh Chandavarkar

has presented them with the expression 'Home Rule Leaguers' distinguished from 'Home Rulers'. I cannot conceive the existence of an Indian who is not a Home Ruler; but there are millions like myself who are not Home Rule Leaguers. Although I am not a member of any Home Rule League, I wish to pay on this auspicious day my humble tribute to numerous Home Rule Leaguers whose association I have ever sought in my work and which has been extended to me ungrudgingly. I have found many of them to be capable of any sacrifice for the sake of the Motherland. Some of them, I have noticed, are extremely capable young men, for I am not thinking, in offering my tribute, of the front-rank leaders of the movement. I am simply thinking of the rank and file with whom it has been my privilege to work. I wish to testify to their loyalty to the British Constitution and the British connection, and also testify to their impatience of bureaucratic control. They show an eminent degree of all the virtues and vices of youth. Their language is sometimes strong, sometimes even wild, not parliamentary. They betray excessive zeal. Men of age and experience, we often may find occasions to stand aghast at some of their actions; but their hearts are strong and pure. They have succeeded to a certain extent in clearing the atmosphere of cant and humbug. Their truth has sometimes hurt, but I must say that although, when the Leagues were first established, I looked upon them with scepticism and even doubted their usefulness, a careful examination of their work has convinced me that the Leagues have supplied a felt want. They have put light into the people. They have filled them with hope and courage; and, had the authorities not misunderstood them, I am certain they could have availed themselves of this inexhaustible reservoir of man-power. They need not be told that the members of the Leagues realize their own responsibility, and come forward with it. It was hardly to be expected of high-souled youths who had all along chafed under bureaucratic domination.

It was the duty of the authorities who, being more experienced, should have known better, to have made the Home Rule Leaguers their own. Whatsoever the error may be, let the Home Rule Leaguers, having now realized it, correct it. Let them not lose faith in even the bureaucrats. Want of faith is a betrayal of weakness. Bureaucracy is bad, it is doomed, but all bureaucrats are not bad. Our triumph will be in reforming the bureaucrats. If we need not say "Jo-hukum" and fall down at their feet, we may not shame them or insult them. Let us meet the tricks of the bureaucracy with the greatest frankness and honesty.



That we should return good for evil was not said of angels but of men. The manliest course is never to deviate by a hair's breadth from the straight and narrow path; and Home Rule Leaguers are nothing if they cannot be manly. During the coming year of probation, let the Home Rule Leaguers discharge themselves as efficiently in the work of construction as they have in the work of destruction and they will make this a day for universal celebration throughout the length and breadth of India.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 17-6-1918*

### **61. LETTER TO SHANKARLAL BANKER**

*June 16, 1918*

I have your letter. Of course I would not ask you to leave the League<sup>1</sup> and work with me; on the contrary, I wish that you remain in the League and guide its policy too in the right direction. You are satisfied with the present position. To me, it seems dangerous. If the League refuses to help in recruitment, it will be going against the Bombay resolution.<sup>2</sup> If all the members of the League believed that it was not permissible to anyone to help in recruitment while being in the League, the Bombay resolutions should not have been passed and I should not have been given the chairmanship of the meeting. When the League accepted me, it indicated that any of its members who desired to help in recruitment could do so.

My faith is not merely in the British people, but in human nature as such. Every human being has some truth in him. It is our duty to nurse this. If, in the process, the person concerned plays foul, it is he and not we who will suffer the consequences.

You may be sure people are not so bad as you think.

I will explain this further when we meet. In my view, it is the duty of members of the League all over India to plunge into this work. Simultaneously, you may carry on any agitation that you want to against the misdeeds of the Government. By following this course, you will have served both ends. The Home Rule League will suffer a

<sup>1</sup> The Home Rule League

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* the following item.

serious set-back if it does nothing to help recruitment. . .<sup>1</sup>

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

## *62. CABLE TO BRITISH PRIME MINISTER<sup>2</sup>*

BOMBAY

[After June 16, 1918]

I HAVE THE HONOUR TO COMMUNICATE THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE PUBLIC MEETING OF THE CITIZENS OF BOMBAY HELD ON THE 16TH JUNE UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE BOMBAY BRANCHES OF THE HOME RULE LEAGUES.

### FIRST RESOLUTION

THAT THIS MEETING OF THE CITIZENS OF BOMBAY PROTESTS AGAINST THE PUBLIC INSULT LEVELLED BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY AGAINST THE MEMBERS OF SOME HOME RULE LEAGUES IN GENERAL BY CHALLENGING THE SINCERITY OF THEIR SUPPORT TO THE EMPIRE BY THUS THROWING A DOUBT ON THEIR LOYALTY TO THE CROWN. MORE ESPECIALLY IT CONDEMNS HIS TREATMENT OF THE HOME RULE LEADERS IN INVITING THEM TO THE WAR CONFERENCE, ATTACKING THEM IN HIS OPENING SPEECH AND DENYING THEM AN OPPORTUNITY OF DEFINING THEIR ATTITUDE AND IT CALLS UPON HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR TO WITHDRAW THE ASPERSIONS CAST AGAINST THE HOME RULE LEAGUES AND ITS MEMBERS AND TO EXPRESS HIS REGRET FOR HIS CONDUCT AND FAILING SUCH WITHDRAWAL THIS MEETING APPEALS TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY TO REPUDIATE THE STATEMENT OF THE GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY AND DESIRES TO POINT OUT THAT SUCH PROVOCATIVE LANGUAGE IS CALCULATED TO RAISE A BARRIER IN THE WAY OF THE HEARTY CO-OPERATION TO THE GOVERNMENT AND THAT, UNTIL SUCH AMENDS HAVE BEEN

<sup>1</sup> The omission is in the source.

<sup>2</sup> This communication, embodying the resolutions adopted at the public meeting of June 16, was also sent to the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy.

MADE, MEMBERS OF THE HOME RULE LEAGUES WILL BE UNABLE TO TAKE PART IN ANY MEETING IN FUTURE PRESIDED OVER BY LORD WLLINGDON WITHOUT IN ANY WAY PREVENTING THEM FROM DOING THEIR DUTY TO THEIR COUNTRY AND THE EMPIRE AT THIS CRITICAL JUNCTURE.

#### SECOND RESOLUTION

THAT THIS MEETING IS OF OPINION THAT THE METHODS AND THE MEASURES OF GOVERNMENT FOR UTILIZATION OF MANPOWER AND THE RESOURCES OF INDIA IN WAR ARE NOT SUCH AS TO SECURE THEIR FULLEST POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT IN THAT, FIRST, THERE IS A SPIRIT OF DISTRUST FOR THE PEOPLE RUNNING THROUGHOUT THEIR HANDLING OF THAT GREAT NATIONAL WORK. SECOND, OFFICIALS IN CHARGE OF THE RESPECTIVE DEPARTMENTS FAIL TO SEEK IN SPIRIT OF EQUALITY THE CO-OPERATION OF THE PEOPLE IN PROSECUTION OF THE WAR. THIRD, INTERMINABLE DELAY IS TAKING PLACE IN THE AMENDMENTS OF THE ARMS ACT IN ORDER TO ENABLE THE GENERAL BODY OF PEOPLE TO TAKE AND CARRY ARMS IF THEY SO DESIRE, FOURTH, THE COMMISSION RANKS IN THE INDIAN ARMY ARE NOT YET THROWN OPEN TO THE INDIANS NOR RACIAL BARS AND DISTINCTIONS REMOVED. FIFTH, THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE IMPERIAL WAR CONFERENCE AT DELHI FOR ADMITTING INDIANS TO THE EXISTING MILITARY COLLEGES AND FOR ESTABLISHING NEW COLLEGES FORTHWITH HAVE NOT [BEEN] GIVEN EFFECT TO. THIS MEETING IS OF OPINION THAT THOUGH EVERY LOYAL CITIZEN OF INDIA DESIRES WHOLE-HEARTEDLY TO RESPOND TO THE CALL OF THE PREMIER, IT IS DIFFICULT FOR THE LEADERS TO SECURE FULL AND FREE RESPONSE FROM PEOPLE IN REGARD TO THE MILITARY SERVICES UNLESS THE PRESENT POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA IS CHANGED BY REMOVING THE ABOVE-MENTIONED DEFECTS.

M. K. GANDHI

PRESIDENT OF THE MEETING

*Young India*, 2-10-1918

### 63. *SPEECH AT NADIAD*<sup>1</sup>

*June 17, 1918*

In the course of his speech, Mr. Gandhi observed that it was the first and most important duty of the ryots to assist Government. Full assistance should be given in order to overthrow the Germans. The English were better than the Germans. They had come into close contact with the English and they knew each other well, so it was their first duty to assist the English. Some said that they should help only if they were given Home Rule. He believed they could not preserve the country so long as they had no military traditions. In due course they would get Home Rule. By the mere fact of giving assistance they would get it. Half a million men were required from India for active service during a year, and if they did not come forward to supply these men, Government would themselves enlist them and the army so raised will be called the Government army. But if the men were supplied by them they should be called the national army. The same rules and regulations that were heretofore in force would apply to the men so raised. Home Rule without military power was useless, and this was the best opportunity to get it. They should not, therefore, lose this opportunity. He had had a talk with [Mr.] Tilak, Mrs. Annie Besant, Mr. Madan Mohan Malaviya and Mr. Motilal Nehru in this connection, and they were all of opinion that it was a good idea, but they doubted whether the ryots would accept these views. He had faith in ryots. Many men died of plague and cholera and so it would not be a hard thing to die in the war. He was ready to go to the war if the people would come forward. He was not a member of the Home Rule League. To receive military training was the stepping-stone to acquire Home Rule, and so each and every member of the Home Rule League should join. It was rumoured the Indians were placed in the first row and were killed, but he did not believe this. The English were a fighting race and he did not believe that such a people would remain in the rear and send others to the front. If, however, such a time came he would himself object, and unless he were shot, he would not allow

<sup>1</sup> Forwarding this report to the Government of Bombay, the District Magistrate of Kheda wrote: "On June 17th, Mr. M. K. Gandhi held a small meeting of his more immediate followers at Nadiad in connection with recruitment . . . about 50 persons were present."

all the men to be so killed. Before appealing to the whole country for the national army, he had a mind to appeal first to the Kaira people who had become satyagrahis. Nadiad was an important town in the Kaira District and so he had called them together in private. If they agreed with him, the matter would be taken in hand: so they should think well, and then get themselves enrolled. If he were satisfied, a public meeting would be called in two or three days.

*Bombay Government Records, 1918*

*64. LETTER TO J. KER*

NADIAD,  
*June 18, 1918*

DEAR MR. KER,

I have your letter of the 17th instant in reply to mine of the 14th instant regarding certain points arising from the settlement. As to paragraph 3 of your letter I can only say that the rules of interpretation require that that meaning should be attached to one's language which one's hearer is reasonably entitled to put upon it. Your answer as to *chothai* was clearly in reply to my query and it left no room for doubt either in my mind or Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel's that *chothai* was to be excused in every case in which it was not yet collected. What is more, when one in good faith has already acted upon such interpretation, if the line you propose to adopt is sound, every order would be interpreted not as the readers, according to the natural meaning of words, understand it, but as the issuer has intended his language to mean. Surely you do not ask for any such canon of interpretation.

Similarly for suspension, I feel that you are importing a most dangerous principle of interpretation of orders. Suspension to me could only bear one meaning; 'unauthorized arrears' is not an unfamiliar expression to me. I did not need to approach you for any such concession. It would have been no concession. You would not need time for consideration in issuing order for unauthorized arrears as you said you needed. I brought the Mamlatdar's order to your notice. You confirmed it. It is now open to you to go behind it and claim that the word bears not its natural meaning but a meaning which you now desire to give. After your confirmation of the Mamlatdar's

order, it is irrelevant whether he had authority to issue the order or not. But I would add that I asked him whether he had authority for what he was saying. On his saying he had, I asked him to issue written orders which he did.

I do hope that in the circumstances you will not allow yourself to be in the wrong and let the natural and just view prevail.

*Yours sincerely,*

From a copy: C.W. 10701. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

### *65. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ*

SABARMATI,

*Jeth Sud 10 [June 19, 1918]*

BHAI SHRI JAMNALALJI,

I insisted on paying your man the money for the ticket. If I didn't pay, I wouldn't be able to entrust work again without hesitation.

I looked into the building account after coming here. I have received Rs. 28,000. The expenditure already incurred amounts to Rs. 40,000. The balance has been met from the funds earmarked for the other activities of the Ashram. What I need most at present is money for the construction work. The expenditure will be Rs. one lakh. If you feel like contributing anything, kindly do so.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

This is more important than bearing my travelling expenses.

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand. G. N. 2199

## 66. SPEECH AT NADIAD<sup>1</sup>

*June 21, 1918*

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

I am sorry to see that very few women are present today. What I have to say is meant for both. I have not come here to preach, but to give you what seems to me right advice. This meeting in Nadiad is the first of its kind in Gujarat. It was here that the first meeting for satyagraha was held. We displayed good strength and much capacity for suffering during that struggle. It brought me into close contact with the people. I feel, therefore, that in saying what I have to say to the whole of the country, I should make a start with this place.

We put up a determined fight against the Government, said many harsh and bitter things to it. All this was necessary, but whether or not we had the right to do it, we have now an opportunity to show. There is no room for vindictiveness in satyagraha; I am sure there was none in our struggle. Let us consider whether it is desirable at all in any circumstances that we should associate ourselves with the Government. I have closely watched its shortcomings during our struggle as also on other occasions, and have pointed them out too. I have had, however, no opportunity at all in India to present its better side. From my personal experience of dealings with it, I have learnt this at any rate: that we would do well not to be content with a subordinate position in the Empire. It is a characteristic trait of the British that they would treat people who did so as beasts of burden. We can benefit by our connection with them only if we live as their friends or partners. They will protect the honour of their allies and be loyal to them unto death. As a nation, they have some virtues. They love justice; they have shielded men against oppression. The liberty of the individual is very dear to them. Why, then, should we think of breaking off our connection with them altogether? Everyone needs a friend. Japan, America, England—they are all obliged to maintain friendship with some nation or other. Every country maintains a connection with another with which it is temperamentally allied. India can be no exception to this. We aspire to independence, but on this basis. In this context, the examples of Australia and Canada are

<sup>1</sup> The meeting, which inaugurated Gandhiji's recruitment campaign in Gujarat, was held at Moghul Kotiwadi and was attended by about a thousand people.

generally cited; we demand a status like theirs. They enjoy protection and, likewise, help in the defence effort. That is exactly what we want for ourselves. If we think a status such as this is really worth having, we should do what is necessary to achieve it. If [on the contrary] we believe that our connection with the British is harmful to us, the advice I am giving can be of little use. It may even dishonour us, if followed. If, however, we want to live as equal partners with the British, I think my advice will prove invaluable. India cannot stand on her own feet. If the British left us, we would not be able to defend ourselves. We could not protect ourselves against the criminal tribes or stand against an invading foreign army. If anyone blames the British for this terrible state of affairs, he will be quite right. That nation has many such things to answer for. But our task is to turn their virtues to account for our uplift.

It is the misfortune of India that she is in no position to make progress without outside help. We ought to get rid of this helplessness of ours. It is essential that the country should come to be entrusted with her defence, that she should become capable of defending her people. We shall not be fit for swaraj till we have acquired the capacity to defend ourselves. That India should always have to depend on the British for her defence—this is her helplessness. To remove this is a sacred duty which we should first attend to.

Only equals can be partners. There can be no partnership between the cat and the mouse, between the ant and the elephant. We look upon the British as the elephant and ourselves as the ant. So long as we do not get rid of this idea, swaraj can have no meaning for us. Any stout fellow can successfully intimidate us. If a Pathan were to come here and start hitting out with the lathi, we would all run away. An overbearing Kabuli, entering a compartment already overcrowded, will get the people to vacate their seats and find a seat though none was vacant before; he will go further and occupy the room for four. People feel helpless before him.

With this cowardly fear in us, how can we be the equals of the British? If I see a *Dhed* and ask him to sit by my side and offer him something to eat, he will shake with fear. He will be my equal only when he feels sufficiently strong in himself to have no fear of me. To describe him as my equal [when he lacks such strength] is like adding



insult to injury.<sup>1</sup> We occupy the position of the *Bhangi* in the Empire. Now we have an opportunity to emancipate ourselves from such a state and we can use it in either of two ways—in a spirit of friendliness or that of hostility. If we would follow the latter course, we should not help them with a single man or with a single pie; we should even stop others from helping. We should hope for a defeat of the Allies and fight the British and drive them out. All this, even if desirable, is impossible. Though we, advocates of *swaraj*, may not help the Government, other sections of the country have been helping it. We have no strength to fight the Government, or anyone else for that matter. It has succeeded in securing help from India to the tune of a million men and crores of rupees. Evidently, therefore, if we now propose to push the British out of India in a spirit of hostility and be *Bhangis* no more, it does not seem likely that we shall in the foreseeable future succeed in breaking off the British connection through physical force.

We can, therefore, free ourselves only through a friendly approach. This is not possible unless we render all possible help to the Government at the present juncture. We want to be partners in the Empire. If there were no Empire, with whom would we be partners? Our hopes lie in the survival of the Empire. By all means, let us fight its evils. A brother fights the wrongs done by a brother. If one brother seeks to deprive another of his right, the latter will resist, but will go all out to help the former in time of difficulty and so prove the fact of their being brothers, wiping out, sometimes, even old animosities. There is no reason to believe that we cannot bring about such a result by dealing with the British in the right manner. To be sure, we may fight the iniquities of the Empire. Even today we may do so, if they were to inflict anything afresh. At the same time, we should spare no effort in helping it to meet the danger which threatens it.

Besides, we shall learn military discipline as we help the Empire, gain military experience and acquire the strength to defend ourselves. With that strength, we may even fight the Empire, should it play foul with us. It knows this, and, therefore, it will prove the *bona fides* of the British Government if they permit us to enlist. By raising an army now, we shall be insuring against future eventualities.

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati, phrase literally means: branding one who has already sustained burns.

If the British people have the ability to rule, they do not owe it merely to their physical strength. They have the art [of government], they have skill and foresight, shrewdness and wisdom. They know how to deal with people according to their deserts. They know that, if we help, it will be in expectation of getting swaraj. The difference between their point of view and that of some of us is this: we say we will have swaraj first and then fight; they say they will not be coerced, that swaraj will be ours if we help. They invite us to examine their history. The Boers got swaraj because they could fight the British. When we can do so, they say, we too shall have swaraj.

We can count only on our own military strength. The Indians who are fighting now do not represent our strength but the Government's. If we, who would have swaraj, can train ourselves to be their equals as soldiers, if we renounce the fear of death, we shall be soldiers in a national army. When that happens, there will be no distinction of superior and inferior as between the Government and us.

Mr. Montagu's scheme will be announced shortly.<sup>1</sup> Whether the scheme, if we accept it, goes through or the improvements, if any, desired by us are carried out, will depend on us. If, at this juncture, they hear in England that the whole of India has lined up for enlistment, the House of Commons will rejoice at the news and concede all our reasonable demands. Even if it does not, what then? It is they who will have reason to be sorry afterwards. An India trained for fighting will be able to wrest freedom in a moment. But the Government is not so foolish as all that. The British are a nation of heroes. They will recognize heroism. If we but rouse the heroic spirit which has been slumbering in us, we can have everything today. It is, therefore, my request to everyone of you to give up all hesitation and join up. I have no doubt in my mind that, just now, this should be the first and the last plank in the movement carried on by the Home Rule League.<sup>2</sup>

[From Gujarati]

*Gujarati*, 7-7-1918

<sup>1</sup> The Montagu-Chelmsford Report on Constitutional Reforms was published on July 8, 1918.

<sup>2</sup> According to a despatch in the Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1918, Gandhiji asked at the end that "no report of the meeting need be sent to the Press" until they were able to secure recruits.

## 67. APPEAL FOR ENLISTMENT

NADIAD,  
June 22, 1918

### LEAFLET NO. 1<sup>1</sup>

SISTERS AND BROTHERS OF KHEDA DISTRICT:

You have just emerged successful from a glorious satyagraha campaign. You have, in the course of this struggle, given such evidence of fearlessness, tact and other virtues that I venture to advise and urge you to undertake a still greater campaign.

You have successfully demonstrated how you can resist Government with civility, and how you can retain your self-respect without hurting theirs. I now place before you an opportunity of proving that you bear no hostility to Government despite your having given it a strenuous fight.

You are all lovers of swaraj; some of you are members of the Home Rule League. One meaning of Home Rule is that we should become *partners in the Empire*. Today we are a subject people. We do not enjoy all the rights of Englishmen. We are not today partners in the Empire as are Canada, South Africa and Australia. We are a dependency. We want the rights of Englishmen, and we aspire to be as much partners in the Empire as the Dominions overseas. We look forward to a time when we may aspire to the Viceregal office. To bring about such a state of things we should have the ability to defend ourselves, that is, the ability to bear arms and to use them. As long as we have to look to Englishmen for our defence, as long as we are not free from the fear of the military, so long we cannot be regarded as equal partners with Englishmen. It behoves us, therefore, to learn the use of arms and to acquire the ability to defend ourselves. *If we want to learn the use of arms with the greatest possible despatch, it is our duty to enlist ourselves in the army.*

There can be no friendship between the brave and the effeminate. We are regarded as a cowardly people. If we want to become free from that reproach, we should learn the use of arms.

<sup>1</sup> Probably used by Gandhiji for the text of his address at a meeting, this went into wide circulation in the printed form. An English version was also published, in the Press, but is not available.

Partnership in the Empire is our definite goal. We should suffer to the utmost of our ability and even lay down our lives to defend the Empire. If the Empire perishes, with it perish our cherished aspirations.

*Hence the easiest and the straightest way to win swaraj is to participate in the defence of the Empire.* It is not within our power to give much money. Moreover, it is not money that will win the war. Only an army inexhaustible in number can do it. That army India can supply. If the Empire wins mainly with the help of our army, it is obvious that we would secure the rights we want.

Some will say that, if we do not secure those rights just now, we would be cheated of them afterwards. The strength we employ in defending the Empire now can secure those rights. Rights won by making an opportunity of the Empire's weakness are likely to be lost when the Empire regains its strength. We shall not succeed in becoming partners in the Empire by trying to embarrass it. Embarrassing it in its hour of crisis will not help us to secure the rights which we must win by serving it. To distrust the statesmen of the Empire is to distrust our own strength; it is a sign of our own weakness. We should not depend for our rights on the goodness or the weakness of the statesmen, we should depend on our fitness and our strength.

The Native States are helping the Empire and they are getting their reward. The rich are rendering full financial assistance to the Government and they are likewise getting their reward. The assistance in neither case is rendered conditionally. The sepoys are rendering their services for their salt and for their livelihood. They get their livelihood, and prizes and honours in addition. All these classes are a part of us, but they cannot be regarded as lovers of swaraj, their goal is not swaraj. The help they render is not out of love for the country. If we seek to win swaraj in a spirit of hostility, it may well be that the Imperial statesmen will use these three forces against us and defeat us.

If we want swaraj, it is our duty to help the Empire and we shall undoubtedly get the reward of that help. If our motive is honest, the Government will behave honestly with us. Assuming for a moment that it will not do so, our honesty should make us confident of our success. It is no mark of greatness to be good only with the good. Greatness lies in returning good for evil.

The Government does not give us commissions in the Army, it

does not repeal the Arms Act; it does not open schools for military training. How can we then co-operate with it? These are valid objections.

In not granting reforms in these matters, the Government is committing a serious blunder. The British have many acts of goodness to their credit. For these, God's grace be with them. But the heinous sin perpetrated by the British administrators in the name of their people will, if they do not take care betimes, undo the effect of all these acts of goodness. If the worst happens to India, which God forbid, and she passes into the hands of some other nation, India's piteous cry will make England hang her head in shame before the world, and a curse will descend upon her for having emasculated a nation of thirty crores. I believe the statesmen of England have realized this and have taken the warning, but they are unable to alter all of a sudden the situation created by themselves. Every Englishman upon entering India is trained to despise us, to regard himself as our superior and to keep himself aloof from us. They imbibe these ideas from the very atmosphere in which they move. Those at the higher levels of administration try to free themselves and their subordinates from this atmosphere but their effort does not bear immediate fruit. If there were no crisis for the Empire, we should be fighting against this domineering spirit. But to sit back at this crisis, waiting for commissions, etc., is like cutting off one's nose to spite one's face. It may well be that, while we are waiting for commissions, the opportunity to help the Empire may slip away.

It is my firm belief that even if the Government desires to prevent us from enlisting in the army and rendering other help by refusing us commissions or by delay in granting them, it is our duty to insist upon joining the army.

The Government at present wants half a million men for the army. They will certainly succeed in raising this number somehow. If we supply this number, the credit will be ours, we will be rendering a service and the reports that we often hear of improper methods adopted by recruiting agents will become things of the past. It is no small thing to have the whole work of recruiting in our hands. If the Government have no trust in us, if their intentions are not pure, they would not recruitment through us.

The foregoing argument will show that by enlisting in the army we help the Empire, we qualify ourselves for swaraj, we learn to

defend India and to a certain extent regain our lost manhood.

I admit it is because of my faith in the British people that I can advise as I am doing. I believe that, though this nation has done India much harm, it is to our advantage to retain connection with it. Their virtues seem to me to outweigh their vices. It is painful to remain in subjection to that nation. The British have the great vice of depriving a subject nation of its self-respect, but they have also the virtue of treating their equals with due respect and of loyalty towards them. We have seen that they have many times helped those groaning under the tyranny of others. As their partners, there is much we can receive and much that we can give and our connection with them based on that relationship is likely to benefit the world. If such was not my faith and if I thought it desirable to become absolutely independent of that nation, I would not only not advise co-operation but would on the contrary ask the people to beware, advising them to rebel, and paying the penalty for doing so. We are not in a position today to stand on our own feet unaided and alone. I believe that our good lies in becoming and remaining equal partners in the Empire and I have seen it throughout India that all those who demand swaraj are of the same view. I expect from Kheda and Gujarat not 500 or 700 recruits but thousands. If Gujarat wants to save herself from the reproach of effeminacy, she should be prepared to contribute thousands of sepoys. These must include the educated classes, the *Patidars*, the *Dharalas*, the *Vagharis* and I hope they all will fight side by side as comrades. Unless the educated classes or the *elite* of the community take the lead, it is idle to expect the other classes to come forward. I hope those among the educated classes who are above the prescribed age but who are able-bodied will be eligible to enlist themselves. Their services will be utilized, if not for actual fighting, for related purposes and for looking after the welfare of the sepoys. I hope also that those who have grown-up sons will not hesitate to send them as recruits. To sacrifice sons in the war ought to be a cause not of pain but of pleasure to brave men. Sacrifice of sons at this hour will be a sacrifice for swaraj.

To the women, my request is that they should not be alarmed by this appeal but should welcome it. It contains the key to their protection and their honour.

There are 600 villages in Kheda district. Every village has on an average a population of over 1,000. If every village gave at least

twenty men, Kheda district would be able to raise an army of 12,000 men. The population of the whole district is seven lakhs and this number will then work out at 1.7 per cent, a rate which is lower than the death rate. If we are not prepared to make even this sacrifice for the Empire, for the sake of swaraj, no wonder that we should be regarded unworthy of it. If every village gives at least twenty men, on their return from the war they will be the living bulwarks of their village. If they fall on the battle-field, they will immortalize themselves, their village and their country, and twenty fresh men will follow their example and offer themselves for national defence.

If we mean to do this, we have no time to lose. I desire that the fittest and the strongest in every village should be selected and their names forwarded. I ask this of you, brothers and sisters. To explain things to you and to answer the many questions that may be raised, meetings will be held in important villages. Volunteers will also go round.

Messrs Vallabhbhai Jhaverbhai Patel, Barrister-at-law, Krishnalal Narasilal Desai, M.A.LL.B., Indulal Kanhaiyalal Yagnik, B.A.LL.B., Hariprasad Pitambardas Mehta, Manager of the Hitechchhu Press, Pragji Khandubhai Desai, Mohanlal Kameshwar Pandya, B.Ag., Ganesh Vasudeo Mavlankar, M.A.LL.B., Kalidsas Jashkaran Zaveri, B.A.LL.B., Fulchand Bapuji Shah, Gokuldas B. Talati, B.A.LL.B., Shivabhai Bhailal Patel, B.A.LL.B., Raojibhai Manibhai Patel and others are cooperating.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

## 68. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

[NADIAD,  
Before June 23, 1918]<sup>1</sup>

As for my offer you know that, in my letter to Maffey,<sup>2</sup> I have said I should kill; neither friend nor foe. Regarding those who want to fight but will not, either out of cowardice or spite against the British, what is my duty? Must I not say, "If you can follow my path, so much the better, but if you cannot, you ought to give up cowardice or spite and fight. You cannot teach *ahimsa* to a man who cannot kill. You cannot make a dumb man appreciate the beauty and the merit of silence."<sup>3</sup> Although I know that silence is most excellent, I do not hesitate to take means that would enable the dumb man to regain his speech. I do not believe in any Government, —but Parliamentary Government is perhaps better than capricious rule. I think it will be clear to you that I shall best spread the gospel of *ahimsa*, or *satyagraha* by asking the *himsak* (militant) men to work out their *himsa* in the least offensive manner, and may succeed, in the very act, in making them realize the better worth of *ahimsa*. If I have not made the position clear, you should try if you can to come down.<sup>4</sup>

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

<sup>1</sup> C. F. Andrews replied to this letter on June 23.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Letter to J. L. Maffey", 30 4-1918.

<sup>3</sup> Andrews observed in regard to this point: "I do not see the analogy of the dumb man in your letter. It seems dangerously near the argument that the Indian who has forgotten altogether the blood-lust might be encouraged to learn it again first and then repudiate it afterwards of his own account."

<sup>4</sup> Andrews wrote back: "At the same time I do agree with you entirely that it is a free India choosing her own path which can give the world the highest example of *ahimsa*, not the present subjected India. But even then— cannot you conceive on that very freedom being won by moral force only, not by the creation of a standing army to meet the army of occupation."



69. LETTER TO REV. F. Z. HODGE

[NADIAD,]

June 23, 1918

Pray accept my heartfelt thanks for your kind letter. We do regard ourselves as members of the inner circle in your family. It was a joy always to be able to pass a few hours with you. I am taking the liberty of sending your letter to Babu Brajkishore for its reference to my co-workers as also for the warning that we may not allow the schools to languish. You know that Dr. Deva, before he left, put up a pucca building in Bhitiharwa. I find it most difficult to secure a lady teacher. But I do not despair of finding one. I would so like you to visit the schools now and then. You should ask Babu Gorakhprasad to find you a conveyance.

Devdas is now in Madras conducting a Hindi class for the Tamils.

The Kaira quarrel was settled some time ago. Did you see my letter<sup>1</sup> announcing the settlement? I am now commencing a recruiting campaign.

Please remember us both to Mrs. Hodge. I hope she has entirely regained her former strength.

I trust the boys will have left off their shyness with me when I next meet them. It is my intention to visit Champaran at least once in three months.

*Yours sincerely*

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Letter to People of Kheda", 6-6-1918.

## 70. LETTER TO B. G. HORNIMAN

[NADIAD,]

June 23, 1918

I wonder whether I shall succeed in engaging your pen in behalf of my appeal<sup>1</sup> herewith. I shall value it. I need it. I do feel that we shall truly serve the common cause if we help the Government with sepoys and yet give battle on their wrongdoings. The two can go side by side. The stupidity of administrators makes recruiting difficult. That need not dismay us. We ought to do our best. That is how I read the resolutions of the Protest Meetings.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

## 71. LETTER TO MRS. WEST

[NADIAD,]

June 23, 1918

DEAR MRS. WEST,

I was glad to receive your note. I wish you will not worry about your financial affairs. Albert<sup>2</sup> is a brother to me. Nothing can shake my trust in him. If I despaired of Albert, I should have to despair of the world. I have already written to him.<sup>3</sup> I know that he has done what was best in the circumstances. I am glad, too, that both you and Sam are now able to have suitable education for the children. I wonder if Hilda remembers me. I do not know what has come over Manilal. He had such high regard for all of you and had so much affection showered on him by you all. He has developed a suspicious nature. I still think that he will be soon himself again. I know that your love will turn away his suspicion. I hope you will make advances to him, reason with him, speak to him, and win him over. I cannot bear the idea of Manilal having an evil thought about you.

We are just now building new premises for the Ashram. I wish

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Appeal for Enlistment", 22-6-1948.

<sup>2</sup> Albert H. West

<sup>3</sup> This letter is not available.

you were here to watch the progress of the buildings. The ground is beautifully situated. Maganlal is doing it all. He is doing what Albert was doing there whilst Phoenix was building. For him there is no pleasure outside the Ashram.

With love to you all,

*Yours,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

## 72. LETTER TO SONJA SCHLESIN

[NADIAD,]

*June 23, 1918*

DEAR MISS SCHELSIN<sup>1</sup>,

The long expected letter has come. We have all been looking forward to a letter from you.

Of course, Phoenix is not going to be sold. You can have 5 acres of ground in the centre. I like your dream specially as it includes a visit to India.

It delights me to find you getting tired of the typewriter....<sup>2</sup>

I have not asked Ramdas to become a tailor; not that there is no poetry in tailoring. Ramdas may become a living *Sartor Resartus*. But he is a conscientious boy. He wants to gain all kinds of experiences. If he becomes a poet he will be one not of words and in words, but of actions and in actions. Ramdas is a visionary. And I like visionaries. I hope you will guide him, and befriend him. I wish you would live with Manilal for a while. You could carry on your studies there.

How are the Vogls<sup>3</sup>, the Phillipses<sup>4</sup> and the Dokes<sup>5</sup>? Do you ever

<sup>1</sup> Sonja Schlesin joined Gandhiji as a steno-typist and later played an important role in the satyagraha struggle in South Africa; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", Before 10-1-1908.

<sup>2</sup> Some words are missing here in the source.

<sup>3</sup> Mrs. Vogl conducted classes for Indian women and organized Indian Bazaars in Johannesburg. She, as also her husband, a draper, took keen interest in the cause of Indians in South Africa.

<sup>4</sup> Charles Phillips, congregational minister in the Transvaal

<sup>5</sup> Mrs. J. J. Doke and Olive Doke

meet them? Where is MacIntyre<sup>1</sup>? What do you think of the community? Do you meet Thumbi<sup>2</sup>? What has come over him? These are questions which I should expect discussed in your letters. But something is better than nothing.

My life has become very complex. You must have read at least my important public letters. Now I am entering upon a big recruiting campaign. My work has involved constant railway travelling. I am longing for solitude and rest. They may never be my lot. Mrs. Gandhi has developed remarkably. She has beautifully resigned herself to things she used to fight. But I must [not] describe things. You must see them for yourself.

With love,

*Yours,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### 73. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[NADIAD,]

*June 23, 1918*

I see that you have made a good beginning with the work of teaching. I sent you some instructions yesterday. Take up grammar quite early. They will find it interesting. It will also be well to teach inflections as you start. They should be compared with the Tamil forms. Let me have some idea about the age of those who join and the progress they make.

The first pamphlet on enlistment<sup>3</sup> has been issued here. I send you three copies. It has also been translated into English. Let me know what you think of it after reading it. Lately, I have come to see the principle of non-violence in a somewhat different light, sublime none the less. Simultaneously, I also realize my shortcomings in the matter of self-control. My *tapascharya* is quite inadequate for this task. In this age, we do not get by our experiments one millionth part of the direct experience which they could formerly attain by

<sup>1</sup> An articled clerk with Gandhiji when he was in South Africa

<sup>2</sup> Thambi Naidoo, a passive resister

<sup>3</sup> Vide "Appeal for Enlistment", 22-6-1918.

*tapascharya*. Even if we find in thousands of instances that water is made up of two parts of hydrogen and one part of oxygen, it cannot be said finally that this is its composition. The conclusion is only an inference. If, however, I take two parts of hydrogen and one part of oxygen and combine them to produce water, that would be definitive knowledge. It is knowledge verified in experience. Even if water can be made in any other manner, I have definitely shown with one experiment that it can be made by compounding [hydrogen and oxygen] in this way. We frequently act on inference but come to no harm. In matters of moment, we realize the inadequacy of inference and the supreme worth of direct experience. It is for this reason that observance of *yama-niyama*, etc., is essential. This is the only way to knowledge based on experience.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

#### 74. LETTER TO MOHANDAS NAGJI

[NADIAD,]

*June 23, 1918*

My view about remarriage is that it would be proper for a man or a woman not to marry again after the death of the partner. The basis of Hinduism is self-control. Of course, self-control is enjoined in every religion, but Hinduism has attached to it especial importance. In such a religion, remarriage can be only an exception. These views of mine notwithstanding, so long as the practice of child-marriage continues and so long as men are free to marry as often as they choose, we should not stop a girl, who has become a widow while yet a child, from remarrying if she so desires, but should respect her wishes. I would not, however, put it into the head of even a child widow to remarry, though, if she did marry again, I would not regard her action as sinful.

*Blessings from*

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

## 75. LETTER TO VITHALBHAI PATEL

[NADIAD,]

June 23, 1918

BHAISHRI VITHALBHAI,

I have your letter. I think it is better for persons like you to keep out of the Home Rule [League] and do what service you can. The Home Rule League is in a difficult plight at present. This is not owing to external difficulties; there are many internal problems. They have not been able to decide what line to follow: obstruction or co-operation. Enough has been done by way of the former. It is necessary now to stop it and do something constructive. The League's capacity for service will not grow to its best unless this is done. Join the League by all means, if you want to do so merely that you may be able to guide it towards the path of service. But the members of the League will not welcome your entry if you fight with one and all. It is simple treachery to join any institution with the object of wrecking it. You will also be doing a great service to the country if you but learn the art of safeguarding your health.

How do you like Vallabhbai's new profession? He has become a recruiting sergeant.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

## 76. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

NADIAD,

*Jeth Sud 15 [June 24, 1918]<sup>1</sup>*

REVERED ANASUYABEHN,

Herewith Gordhanbai's<sup>2</sup> letter. Last night a mill worker stopped me and asked: "What have you done for us?" I thought of you then. I was saddened and said to myself, 'Anasuyabehn is forsaking

<sup>1</sup> *Jeth Sud 15* in 1918 corresponded to this date, when Gandhiji was in Nadiad.

<sup>2</sup> Gordhandas Patel, Secretary, Ahmedabad Mill-owners' Association

her dharma.' Could you give up working for mill workers? You have taken on yourself the task of educating them, weaning them from their addictions, reforming them generally and taking them forward in all respects. This is your life's work and can well take up all your time. How can you give it up? You seem to be unmindful of what the arbitration is doing or not doing. You shouldn't be. You must do other things only after taking care of your main activity.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati Original: S.N. 32839

## 77. SPEECH AT AHMEDABAD

*June 24, 1918*

You all know the purpose of this meeting. You also know that Bombay has protested against the insulting behaviour of His Excellency the Governor towards members of the Home Rule League at the War Conference. At the Bombay meeting, too, I was in the chair and, having expressed my views there, I shall not take much of your time. This meeting is for two things: one, to support the action of Bombay and, two, to explain the position to those who do not read newspapers and, since even newspaper reports are often fragmentary and incorrect, to place the facts before newspaper readers as well. This is what today's meeting is for. His Excellency the Governor was faced with the question whether or not to invite Mr. Tilak and other swarajists to the War Conference. Since Mr. Tilak and Mrs. Besant had not been invited to the Delhi Conference, the question was an unusual one for Lord Willingdon and he gave it careful consideration. In the end, he invited them and Mr. Tilak accepted the invitation. The latter enquired whether he would be free to address the Conference and whether any amendments would be in order. He was told in reply that no amendments to the resolutions could be moved but that, after selected speakers had addressed the Conference on the resolutions, he would be free to speak and comment on their views. His Excellency sincerely meant what he said and there was no ambiguity in his words. And so Mr. Tilak and others went to the Conference. But what was their experience there? Before Mr. Tilak had completed his second sentence His Excellency the Governor interrupted him—stopped him from making any criticism. He did not know what Mr. Tilak wished to

say. He knew nothing, of course, about what the speech would be like. And yet, believing that the sentence which Mr. Tilak had commenced with a 'but' would be objectionable, the Governor did not allow him to complete it and stopped him from proceeding further. Not that His Excellency would not have been within his rights in doing so, on some other occasion. It was, however, improper of him to have thus stopped a guest whom he had invited to his place to address a meeting and, in doing so, he has offered a gross insult to Mr. Tilak and the other distinguished guests, in fact to all the people of India. Mr. Tilak is no ordinary man. He is adored by the whole of India. It is really in tolerable that he should have been ordered in this manner to resume his seat. We have assembled here today to demonstrate that the people of Ahmedabad too cannot tolerate this and to support Bombay's action.

In this we are but doing our duty and showing ourselves to be true swarajists. It must be one of the implications of swaraj that any insult to India should be treated as an insult to Indian independence. We have come together today to call the Governor to account for having insulted Indian independence. We should tell him that he has offered us a serious insult and that he should apologize for that. With few exceptions, there is no newspaper in India which has approved of the Governor's action. They have all condemned it. Even *The Pioneer* has done so and said that when the need of the hour is to enlist the co-operation of the people such an incident should not have taken place. It has gone further and advised the Governor to swallow the bitter draught and get on with the work. The object of this meeting in Ahmedabad and the resolutions it is to pass are quite in order. One of the resolutions calls upon the Governor to apologize and says that, should he fail to do so, His Excellency the Viceroy should intervene and express his disapproval of the Governor's action, and further that, unless this is done, Home Rulers will not attend any meeting presided over by Lord Willingdon. We do not wish to extend our displeasure with him to the Empire nor to run away from our present duties. In the second resolution, we point out the difficulties we encounter in helping the Government. Our intention in it is to assert that we wish to help it, but cannot do so fully because there are certain things which need to be done, and which only the Government can do, before we can help. In saying that it cannot afford to ignore the educated classes and that the Indian soldier will not rest satisfied with rights inferior to those enjoyed by the British soldier, we also point to our difficulties and argue that, if we have not been able to help, the



reason lies with the Government itself. Let this cause be removed and we shall then withdraw our charge against it. This is not enough, however. There are certain things we must ourselves do. If we do not, we shall fail in our duty as swarajists. We pray to God to grant us swaraj this very day. But God tells us that we shall get it when we deserve it. If He were to give us all that we pray for, there would be complete chaos in the world. We have to prove our fitness for swaraj. We have ample material with which to silence our enemies, but it is our duty to see our defects as they are. If, being angry with the Government for these defects, we keep thinking of its shortcomings and sit back with folded hands, we shall never come to enjoy swaraj. Travelling all over India, I have gathered that her people want to live, as those of Canada and Australia do, as citizens having equal rights with the Government. We want it to obtain our consent for carrying on the war and only then ask us to contribute men and money. If our intention is not to leave the Empire, it is to our advantage to work with the British as partners. Our first and last duty is to join the Empire in making sacrifices and to make them courageously. It is only thus that we shall succeed in getting swaraj early. Our duty is two-fold: to resist injustice and take the necessary steps to end it and, at the same time, to stand by the Government in its hour of difficulty. If we mind these two duties, we shall have proved our *bona fides*. If we want to disprove the charge against us, we should give it no reason to doubt our loyalty—this is the only real way to punish it. There is another aspect to this resolution, which, too, you should consider. I have had a letter from Mr. Tilak in which he says that, if the Government of India would place the Indian soldier on the same footing as the British soldier, he would be prepared to give 5,000 men in six months and, should he fail, to pay a penalty of Rs. 100/- for every man [short of that figure]. For this purpose, he has also sent me a cheque for Rs. 50,000.<sup>1</sup> I have had talks with Mr. Jinnah and Mrs. Besant, too, on this subject. They have admitted that we should supply the required number of men to the Empire. Mr. Tilak believes that, if we make definite conditions with the Government for helping it, no room would be left for any misunderstanding afterwards and that, therefore, that is the course we should adopt. I hold, on the contrary, that we lose nothing by trusting, and so I have no hesitation in advising people to join up. We shall, by doing so, get what we have been demanding. I

<sup>1</sup> The cheque was returned to Tilak.

believe in trusting people and my advice, therefore, is that we should proceed on the basis of trust. I have attended this meeting to tell you that, if your chanting of the swaraj *mantra* is to be efficacious, you should do your duty. To wipe out the blot on the face of Gujarat, people should take to careers in the army. This is the best way of learning to defect Ahmedabad, should it ever be raided. We do not propose to turn this into a recruitment meeting but, when such a meeting is called, you should not fail in your duty.

[From Gujarati]

*Prajabandhu*, 30-6-1918

### 78. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY

NADIAD,  
*June 25, 1918*

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

I have purposely refrained from acknowledging your letter of the 4th instant, as I was desirous of reporting to you on the several matters referred to in our correspondence or our conversation.

The Kaira affair was settled locally. I have called it a settlement without grace.<sup>1</sup> You might have seen my note upon it. If not, I will not tax you with it. Did I not want to commence recruiting at the earliest moment, I would not have been satisfied with several aspects of the settlement.

I duly attended the Bombay Conference. I did what I could to heal the breach caused by Lord Willingdon's blunder.<sup>2</sup> You may not agree that it was a blunder at all. I still feel that Lord Willingdon could gracefully admit his mistake and I have not hesitated to say as much to him. It has certainly added to my difficulty. That however need not daunt me. I shall persevere.

Ever since my return from Delhi I have been engaged in

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Letter to People of Kheda", 6-6-1918

<sup>2</sup> The reference is to Lord Willingdon's stopping of B. G. Tilak and Kelkar from speaking on the Loyalty Resolution at the Provincial War Conference, Bombay on June 10. B. G. Tilak, Gandhiji, M. A. Jinnah, B. G. Horniman, N. C. Kelkar and R. P. Karandikar left the Conference Hall in protest. For Gandhiji's correspondence and speech in this respect, *vide* "Letter to Lord Willingdon:", 11-6-1918 and "Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay", 16-6-1918..

organizing public opinion in Gujarat in favour of an active, ceaseless recruiting campaign. We on this side do not supply soldiers. I am trying my hardest to remove the blemish. Several private meetings have been held to induce the people to come forward. The campaign was publicly started on the 21st instant. No tangible result can yet be reported. Our workers have now gone over to villages to talk among the people. I am addressing a meeting tomorrow, having been invited thereto by the villagers. In a few days I shall know whether I shall get any response. Anyway no stone will be left unturned by me to obtain recruits in their thousands, Nothing less will satisfy me. My first leaflet<sup>1</sup> you will see in translation in the Press. As a specimen, I enclose a Gujarati copy.

And now for the brothers Ali. I was not thinking of a time limit. But I did gather from you that if I waited for about a month I would probably find them released.<sup>2</sup> Whether I carried with me a false impression or a true one does not much matter. Naturally I shall accept your version of your words in preference to mine. But it is essential that either the necessity for their internment should be judicially or otherwise publicly proved, or they should be discharged. A big agitation has been held in abeyance only on my word that I am trying through your good offices to secure their release. Will you not therefore exert yourself in this matter? In our circles the talk is that the brothers are held up only to satisfy Sir William Vincent<sup>3</sup> and Sir Charles Cleveland. I endeavoured to move the former, but I rubbed him up the wrong way. A mere mention of their names was a red rag. And I completely collapsed. You (the Government) have asked for a calm atmosphere in order to prosecute the War. You are entitled to it so long as you do not ruffle it yourselves. But may I for my "tinpot" recruiting ask for an equally calm atmosphere by either releasing the brothers or furnishing your avowed friends with a proper justification?

*I am,*

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Chelmsford Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

<sup>1</sup> "Appeal for Enlistment", *ibid*, pp. 439-43.

<sup>2</sup> The Ali Brothers were finally released on December 25, 1919, under the amnesty granted by a Royal Proclamation.

<sup>3</sup> Sir William Henry Hoare Vincent, Member (Home), Viceroy's Executive Council

## 79. SPEECH AT RAS

June 26, 1918

Gandhiji began with the assurance that he had not come with the intention of forcing anyone to join the army. As a man trying to practise *ahimsadharma*, he could compel them not by physical force but only by the force of his love, as also by awakening the feelings of patriotism and true self-interest. He was there to advise them to join the army. The same advice he had taken to himself and had tendered his eldest son, who was married and had five children. He continued:

Voluntary recruiting is a key to swaraj and will give us honour and manhood. The honour of women is bound up with it. Today we are unable to protect our women and children even against wild animals. The best way of acquiring the capacity of self-protection is joining the army. Some will ask, 'Why get killed in France?' But there is a meaning in being thus killed. When we send our dear ones to the battle-field, the courage and the strength which they will acquire will transform all the villages. The training we can get today we may never get again.

Mr. Gandhi spoke of *Dharala*, *Vaghris* and *Patidars* in the same breath, as the qualities of Kshatriyas were common to them. He exhorted them to use for the protection of the motherland their valour, which otherwise led to mutual quarrels.

Taking the population of a village at one thousand we should have twenty recruits from each village or two per hundred. What are two in a hundred? How many men do cholera and such other diseases take away every year? These men die unmourned except by their relatives. On the other hand, soldiers' death on the battle-field makes them immortal, if the scriptures are right, and becomes a source of joy and pride to those left behind. From the death of Kshatriyas will be born the guardians of the nation and no Government can withhold arms from such men.

One of their friends was ready to enlist that day, he said, but could not do so for two months on account of debts. Many similar cases might be found. Mr. Gandhi requested the village leaders to inquire into the cases of such men, find out their pecuniary condition and undertake the management of their business and the maintenance of their families. He continued:

You could then inspire young men to enlist. *A national army could be thus created instead of a mercenary one.* There is not a

family in England, rich or poor, which does not mourn the loss of a relative. It has now been decided there to call up men up to the age of 51. If we desire to govern our country and defend it, every young man should join the army.

He expressed the hope that the village people will discuss the matter and resolve to give two men for every hundred.

For years we have been deprived of our fighting capacity. How are we to acquire the use of arms for which our ancestors practised penances and took severe pledges?

Some argue that we would be deprived of arms after the war. Now, there is no power on earth that could, against our will, deprive us of arms after we have once been trained. Government is not foolish or it could not govern. Our mightiest weapon, satyagraha, is always with us. But he cannot be a satyagrahi who is afraid of death. The ability to use physical force is necessary for a true appreciation of satyagraha. He alone can practise ahimsa who knows how to kill, i.e., knows what *himsa* is.

In conclusion, Mr. Gandhi said:

Sisters, you should encourage your husbands and brothers and sons and not to worry them with your objections. If you want them to be true men, send them to the army with your blessings. Don't be anxious about what may happen to them on the battle-field. Your piety will watch over them there. And if they fall, console yourselves with the thought that they have fallen in the discharge of their duty and that they will be yours in your next incarnation.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 2-7-1918*

## 80. SPEECH AT KHEDA<sup>1</sup>

*June 27, 1918*

We generally believe that having to go to jail is a disgrace; anyone who has to do so is all the time nervous with fear when he is inside and keeps counting his days, thinking when he would complete

<sup>1</sup> The meeting was held to welcome satyagrahis released from jail, after serving a term of imprisonment for removing onion crops from fields forfeited to Government for non-payment of land revenue. According to a newspaper report, Gandhiji went on foot from Mehmedabad to Kheda to receive the satyagrahis.

his term there and be able to get out. This is the mental condition of the prisoner who has violated a law of the country and society, but it is different with a satyagrahi. That is why, in this struggle for upholding our self-respect and rights, we advocate jail-going. There is not the least trace of suffering or depression on the faces of those friends here who have been released from jail. The whole of Kheda looks up to them with pride and is celebrating this occasion as a mark of respect for them. To one type of person, going to jail is a matter of disgrace; to another, it is a matter of pride. The former returns from jail a hardened man. While in jail, he resorts to deceit and becomes unruly; our friends on the other hand have sanctified the jail by their presence. Not only did they respect the regulations in jail, but the opportunity which their imprisonment offered, they utilised for calm thinking, took solemn vows to give up tea and smoking and resolved to dedicate their lives to the service of the country. All the time they were in jail, the one constant thought in their minds was what they should do for the country. Thus they used their twenty days in jail in a manner no one had done before them; imprisonment, therefore, is not a matter of disgrace for us, but rather of honour. May we all have to serve such terms of imprisonment. My brothers and sisters, pray for this only so that we may all be able to render the purest service to the country.

This great change in our friends while in jail is solely due to Shri Mohanlal Pandya. His life is evidence of how much but one truthful man among the people can achieve and to what extent he can influence others. I do not wish to give less credit to the other friends, but it cannot be gainsaid that, had it not been for Pandya, the results would not have been so happy.

Jail-going is not the crowning step in satyagraha; it is, in a sense, only the foundation. There is a fundamental difference between going to jail through satyagraha and doing so for some crime.

For instance, if one lands in jail for assaulting anyone while refusing to pay the land revenue, that cannot be called satyagraha. The assault and the imprisonment are both a matter of disgrace. However, a man may sincerely repent for the assault and his term in jail will then be a *prayashchit*, though, even so, it will not be satyagraha.

On this occasion of the return of our friends from jail, let us consider what satyagraha means. He who deliberately takes suffering

on himself is called a satyagrahi. The rule of justice which holds between two brothers holds also between the Government and the people. A satyagrahi cannot please society every time; he has sometimes to incur its displeasure and offer satyagraha against it too. We want to see the principles of satyagraha spread all over India as rapidly as possible. Even if a single part of India, ever so small, were to embrace satyagraha, very great things could be achieved. Many of those who are present here are advocates of swaraj. They should not forsake truth even for a moment. If they do, they will have to go through utter darkness, without so much as a glimpse of the holy sun. It is the duty of a satyagrahi to place the principles of truth fearlessly before the country. He will, in the process, serve the whole world.

My brothers and sisters, I would say to you: If we have decided to dedicate ourselves to satyagraha in all sincerity of heart, we have only one duty: to cling to truth till the last breath. If you are convinced that the country will not suffer because of our insistence on truth, then, with God as witness, resolve that you would not forsake the truth, even if this earth should sink into the bottomless pit. Then alone will you be real lovers of swaraj, will you deserve to wear *genuine badges* of swaraj.

[From Gujarati]

*Kheda Satyagraha*

### 81. SPEECH AT NAVAGAM<sup>1</sup>

*June 27, 1918*

The man who should stand before you today, after having been released from jail, is myself; it was I who advised the onions to be dug up. I told them they could boldly go ahead with the digging, and so they did. The Government stopped them and, not satisfied with that, sent six of these friends to jail. The one who should have been imprisoned was left free and the credit has gone to those who were sent to jail. We have assembled here today from all over the surrounding villages to celebrate the occasion and welcome them back.

Navagam's renown has spread all over Gujarat today. By going

<sup>1</sup> The passive resisters, released and greeted at Kheda, were taken in procession to Navagam, their home village.

to jail our friends here have taken the crowning step in satyagraha. The sisters have also understood that, since we committed no crime, there was no disgrace in having gone to jail. I should like to see this spirit spread over the whole of Kheda district.

We fought the battle of land revenue, but had no chance of going to jail. This, too, we have had now, by God's grace. It does not seem from their faces that they had suffered anything at all. Being happy or otherwise depends on one's mind. What the mind takes to be happiness is happiness and what it takes to be misery is misery. Our friends here felt no pain in having to go to jail, for they were convinced of the need to do so for the sake of the country and their pledge, and they welcomed the sentence of imprisonment. To them the jail was like a palace, and while there, they learned to practise self-control. You should welcome imprisonment in this way, learn self-control in jail, taking vows.

The path of satyagraha is a very hard one but, to the extent that we succeed in following it, we shall be more of men.

This will be a blessed day and our descendants will celebrate it as such if this occasion teaches us to live for the country, to work for her, to die for her.

Had it not been for Mohanlal Pandya, you could not have achieved what you have done. Let us hope that men and women of Navagam will be imbued with the same courage as Mohanlal's, so that they stand in no need of outside help. Navagam has had the advantage of Mohanlal Pandya's experience and also earned the credit which, otherwise, some other place might have had the good fortune to do. I should like you to turn his experience to good account.

[From Gujarati]

*Kheda Satyagraha*

## 82. SPEECH AT KATHLAL<sup>1</sup>

*June 28, 1918*

The longer I am in India, the more I see that some people believe I have set myself up as a guru. I cautioned them against this in South Africa and caution you here again. I know uttering such a

<sup>1</sup> At this meeting an address was presented to Mohanlal Pandya.



caution can itself be a way of seeking honour. Even at the risk of seeming to do so, I shall say that it is not for me to be anyone's guru. I am not fit to be that. Even in South Africa, when there were hallowed occasions like the present one, I had refused the position and do so today once more. I am myself in search of a guru. How can a man, himself in search of a guru, be a guru to anyone else? I had my political guru in Gokhale, but I cannot be one to anybody else because I am still a child in matters of politics. Again, if I agreed to be a guru and accepted someone as my disciple, and the latter did not come up to my expectations or ran away, I would be very much hurt.

I hold that a man should think, not once, but many times before declaring himself anyone's disciple. A disciple proves his discipleship by carrying out any order of the guru the moment it is uttered, much as a paid servant would. Whether or not he has made himself such a servant will be known only when he shows that he has fully carried out the order. The work I have been doing has brought me in the public eye. It has been such as would appeal to the people. If I have shown any skill in this struggle, it has been only in seeing the direction in which the current of popular feeling was flowing and trying to direct it into the right channel with happy results.

I am trying to be a satyagrahi. It is not always that a satyagrahi acts in accordance with popular opinion. He may even have to oppose it. In satyagraha, there can be no room for any falsehood. Everyone is welcome to plunge into it. The lives of us all are full of experiments. If we go on making experiments, we shall always stand to gain something or other from them. Weeds are ever mixed with grass as chaff with grains of wheat. In the same way, every effort has two results. Just as we throw away the chaff and use the wheat, so in life we must embrace the truth and reject falsehood. There are many things I should like to do and I want to do them all, carrying you with me as brothers and sisters. Take me for your elder brother, if you like. I shall be satisfied with that. That is the role I would assign to myself.

All that has been said about Mohanlal Pandya and other friends who went to jail is quite correct. The fear of jail brings tears to our eyes, but these friends went to jail, stayed there and returned, all with smiles on their faces. We cannot, therefore, congratulate them well enough on this occasion. Mohanlal Pandya had his first lesson in satyagraha in this struggle and at the end of it he is found to have passed an advanced examination in it. By honouring him, you have, in

fact, honoured yourselves.

You will have properly understood satyagraha only if, in the wake of the struggle, the village of Kathlal comes to have a new look and has numerous good works to show in future. If we guard the jewel that we have discovered, it will ever, like the *Kalpavriksha*<sup>1</sup>, bear any fruit we would have.

[From Gujarati]

*Kheda Satyagraha*

### 83. FRAGMENT OF LETTER<sup>2</sup>

[NADIAD,]

June 29, 1918

I also do not think that the boy<sup>3</sup> is innocent. If you would please me, see that he has justice in a court.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

### 84. SPEECH AT NADIAD<sup>4</sup>

June 29, 1918

First, let me draw your attention to the lesson of satyagraha taught by some of our sisters here. Some others we cannot see because they are in purdah. I say to them and to those brothers who are responsible for their remaining in purdah that, in a state such as this where half our body is constricted, we cannot work for India. The sisters here who have ignored the arrangement for them to keep behind the purdah and have preferred to sit out in the open in freedom, deserve our congratulations.

I thank you for the address you have presented; but one who is wedded to service cannot accept any kind of honour. Such a person has dedicated his all to Krishna. Consequently, the honour I get can

<sup>1</sup> Mythical tree which fulfilled every wish

<sup>2</sup> Addressee's name is not given in the source.

<sup>3</sup> Harilal, Gandhiji's eldest son, whose speculative dealings seem to have involved some party in a business loss.

<sup>4</sup> This was in reply to an address presented to Gandhiji on the successful outcome of the satyagraha campaign.

only be offered up to Krishna. He who is dedicated to service cannot hanker after honour. The moment he desires honour, he has betrayed his dedication to service. I have often seen that many work for money, many others for honour, and still others for fame. Yearning for money is bad enough, but the desire for honour is worse still. Sometimes a man commits more sins for honour and reputation than he would for the sake of money. It is one thing to maintain self-respect, and quite another to desire honour from either the people or the Government. A man hankering after praise does grave harm not only to himself but also to the people. Praise is a thing which will cloud the judgement of even very great men. If you wish to maintain your self-respect, I request you in all humility not to overload me with honours. The best way to honour me is to accept my advice and act upon it intelligently. Only then will you have honoured me truly. . .<sup>1</sup>

The sagacity of a general lies in his choice of lieutenants. Certain objectives having been decided upon and rules framed, results will be achieved only if the army goes ahead with its work guided by these. If it fails to do so, the general by himself cannot accomplish anything great....<sup>2</sup> Not that I have accomplished anything great....<sup>3</sup> Many people were ready to follow my advice....<sup>4</sup> I wondered who the deputy general should be. My eye fell upon Shri Vallabhbhai. I must admit that the first time I saw him I wondered who that stiff man could be. What could he do! But, as I came in contact with him, I knew that I must have him. Vallabhbhai saw that this work was far more important than his practice and his work in the municipality, of much account though they were. He was flourishing in his profession then, he thought, but things might change any day, his money might be squandered; rather than that his heirs should do this, he would leave them a better legacy. With these thoughts in his mind, he took a plunge. Had I not chanced on Vallabhbhai, what has been achieved would not have been achieved, so happy has been my experience of him.

I feel that the other friends are automatically honoured when honour is rendered to Vallabhbhai and so I do not mention their names. The Chairman actually published a list of awards the way the

<sup>1</sup> Omissions are in the source.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*

Emperor does. I am acting merely as his agent. There are names which do not occur, they cannot occur, in his imperial list. I shall declare these names here. The peace and joy of those who accept the mission of service are beyond description. I have tasted the joys of life to the utmost and I have come to the conclusion that the *atman* has its highest bliss only in dedication to service. As the truest examples of such dedication, I shall mention my friends, the sweepers of Anathashram. The love they have showered on me has been beyond words. Similarly, the children in the orphanage always vied with one another in serving me. I never conversed with them without a little merriment. What shall I offer to them? I do not possess a single pice. They are as my children. The selfless service I have had from them I do not receive even from barristers and advocates.

We have passed through many experiences. Kheda has not had the suffering which is, often, a satyagrahi's portion. It had seemed to me that the struggle might remain incomplete, but these friends here who went to jail saw that it did not. Their short term of imprisonment was not enough for the purpose, though. So sweet is the taste of satyagraha that one who has known it will ask for nothing else. If Kheda has had this experience, it is thanks to its energy and strength, its efficiency. It is entirely because of these that Kheda has achieved good results. It is a mere trifle that we have won on the issue of land revenue, but, as I have often told you, the important gains are fearlessness and the feeling that we are the equals of even the highest officers—in no way inferior to them. I hope this struggle will have made you permanently conscious of your strength to employ satyagraha at any time. Once the flame is kindled, it cannot be extinguished but burns ever more brightly. Let this be the abiding result of satyagraha. If it remains with you, we shall always see satyagraha in some village or other of Kheda. It is my earnest wish that such happy results may ever bless Kheda.

In your address you have said something about giving *gurudakshina*<sup>1</sup> to me. I do not accept the role of a *guru*. If, however, you wish to render me any service, I certainly want it. It will cost you a lot.

For the love showered on me by Kheda, and for the service the volunteers have done me, I pray to God to grant me wisdom and

<sup>1</sup> The disciple's offering to a teacher at the end of his studies

vouchsafe me greater strength in following the ideal of service. Only so can I express my boundless Love. If ever I have spoken bitter words to you, kindly forgive me. I have said nothing in malice but all in the service of the country.

[From Gujarati]

*Kheda Satagraha*

### 85. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING<sup>1</sup>

NADIAD,

*June 30, 1918*

MY DEAR ESTHER,

I had no time to write to you ere this. I wonder if you have read all I have been writing and saying just now. What am I to advise a man to do who wants to kill but is unable owing to his being maimed? Before I can make him feel the virtue of not killing, I must restore to him the arm he has lost. I have always advised young Indians to join the army, but have hitherto refrained from actively asking them to do so, because I did not feel sufficiently interested in the purely political life of the country or in the war itself. But a different and difficult situation faced me in Delhi. I felt at once that I was playing with the greatest problem of life in not tackling the question of joining the army seriously. Either we must renounce the benefits of the State or help it to the best of our ability to prosecute the war. We are not ready to renounce. Indians have a double duty to perform. If they are to preach the mission of peace, they must first prove their ability in war. This is a terrible discovery but it is true. A nation that is unfit to fight cannot from experience prove the virtue of not fighting. I do not infer from this that India must fight. But I do say that India must know how to fight. Ahimsa is the eradication of the desire to injure or to kill. Ahimsa can be practised only towards those that are inferior to you in every way. It follows therefore that to become a full ahimsaist you have to attain absolute perfection. Must we all then first try to become Sandows before we can love perfectly? This seems to be unnecessary. It is enough if we can face the world without flinching. It is personal courage that is an absolute necessity. And some will acquire that

<sup>1</sup> This was in reply to Esther Faering's question: "How can one, who believes firmly and has given his own life for the sake of exercising passive resistance always and everywhere, ask others to join the war and fight?"

courage only after they have been trained to fight. I know I have put the argument most clumsily. I am passing through new experiences. I am struggling to express myself. Some things are still obscure to me. And I am trying to find words for others which are plain to me. I am praying for light and guidance and am acting with the greatest deliberation. Do please write and fight every inch of the ground that to you may appear untenable. That will enable me to find the way.

With love,

*Yours,*

BAPU

[PS.]

Devdas is in Madras now and, if you are in Madras, you should meet him. His address is.... He is taking Hindi classes.

*My Dear Child*, pp. 28-9

### 86. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

NADIAD,

*Jyeshtha Krishna 6 [June 30, 1918]*

DEAR JAMNALALJI,

I have your letter. If you can allow me to use the money set apart for railway expenses for building work,<sup>1</sup> my trouble will be over. I have written to other friends also. Shankarlal Banker has sent Rs. 4,000. Ambalalji is sending Rs. 5,000. This helps towards expenses already incurred. I hope for some help from two other friends also. If you will give the Rs. 25,000 for building work, I can be free from anxiety to a great extent. There is no need to provide for railway expenses. These expenses are met from the normal receipts.

Please do not think that you must give the money because I write. Give it only if you can do so for building work without any reservation.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2839

<sup>1</sup> The Sabarmati Ashram was under construction

## 87. LETTER TO G. K. DEVADHAR

[NADIAD,]  
July 2, 1918

MY DEAR DEVADHAR,

I thank you for sending me your report of the Sewa Sadan work. It is a monument to your industry, nationalism of a constructive type and your love of service. The progress is indeed phenomenal. There is probably nothing quite like it in all India. If you have a lady teacher whom you can spare, I want one, even two, to replace Avantikabai and Anandibai from Champaran.

And now for suggestions. A smattering of English is worse than useless; it is an unnecessary tax on our women. When we cease to make use of English where we ought not to use it, believe me, the Englishmen will talk to us in our own language, as they ought. Lord Chelmsford was quite pleased when I spoke at the Conference<sup>1</sup> in Urdu. By all means teach a select few ladies all the English you can so that they might translate the best English thought to their other sisters. This is what I call economy of languages. I would therefore replace English by Hindi. The latter will liberalize the Deccan woman who like the rest of her sisters, is today parochial and it will add to her usefulness as a national worker.

Harmonium is only a stage removed from the concertina. I should give them the *vina* and the *sita*. These are cheap, national and infinitely superior to the harmonium. Lastly, I would like everyone to learn cotton-spinning and hand-weaving to the exclusion of fancy work. Through the instrumentality of two workers I have got 100 *rentias* working, providing a livelihood for probably 300 women. When India regains her natural calm and quiet dignity, mills will be a thing of the past. We shall then find our Ranis spinning yarn of the finest count as they used to before. I would like you to hasten that day. Believe me we shall soon have a surfeit of these things.

The ordinary tendency is to move with the times. We who must continually elect and select may not always follow the times spirit; we may, we should, anticipate the future. He who runs may see, if he would also think, that the future lies with handicraftsmanship.

<sup>1</sup> The War Conference at Delhi

Anyway, you cannot go wrong by encouraging the women to go in for hand-spinning and weaving. They will be helping to clothe the naked.

I have given you more than you bargained for. Many thanks for giving Amratlal and Kesari Prasad. Tell Mrs. Devadhar I shall expect her to come and stay at the Ashram for a few days.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### 88. *LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI*

[NADIAD,]

*JULY 2, 1918*

I am very glad that you write so very regularly. I also wish to be regular, but you should not wait for my letters. There was no letter from you today. The conversation about Natesan was interesting. Do as suits you best. The work in which you are engaged at present is very important, how very important you may not perhaps realize just now. Generally, such work would be entrusted only to a very intelligent and mature person. Even if that were done, it is doubtful whether enough people will come forward to learn [Hindi] in a place like Madras. If you succeed in getting the people of the province of Madras to accept your gift of Hindi, you will have solved a difficult problem. You will then have joined Madras with other parts of India. This bridge which you have undertaken to build requires greater skill and patience than would be required in building a bridge across the Ganga. The task of making Hindi simple and interesting will exercise all your skill. To succeed in this, you will do well to read, during your leisure hours, books on Hindi, Gujarati, English and Tamil grammars. This might reveal to you some key which will enable you to impart more knowledge with less effort. Teach a large number of derivative words [at the same time as the root word]. That will tax the memory less. I have told you to consider what arrangements can be made for the Hindi-speaking people whom we want to send there to learn Tamil. You should discuss this with Mr. Natesan, Hanumantrao and others. Revashankar Sodha and Chhotam have returned to the Ashram. I welcome this, although it adds to the responsibility. Harilal will pass through by the night train today on his way from Rajkot. We



have had news of the death of . . .<sup>1</sup>’s mother. Write to her from your end. I brought up the matter yesterday and we had a purifying discussion. I call the discussion purifying because everyone gave truthful answers, with the utmost civility and reverence. The question was this: Now . . .<sup>2</sup> will like to go for the customary mourning visit on her mother’s death. This will cost eighty rupees. Can the Ashram afford the expense? Should it agree to bear it? A person who has embraced poverty in the cause of the country and has dedicated himself to service of others can never lose his mother by death, because all women, old enough to be so, are his mothers. The father also does not die because every elder is like a father to him. Service is his wife; can she ever know death? The rest of the world are like brothers and sisters to him. To go on a mourning visit on the death of one’s mother is only a formality. Should money be wasted to follow it out of deference to the world? This was the question discussed. Everyone replied, in all solemnity, that such an expenditure would be unjustified. Santok and Ba were also present. It was unanimously decided, though, that the idea should not be acted upon this time and the matter should be left entirely to the discretion of . . .<sup>3</sup> and . . .<sup>4</sup> behn. Most probably they will go.

Do you read any newspapers there? May I send you any from here?

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

<sup>1</sup> Names have been omitted in the source.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*

## 89. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

[NADIAD,]  
July 2, 1918

BHAISHRI PRANJIVAN,

I have not been able to write to you for some time past. I carry on with the money I get here and do not go out to beg. I am in utmost need of money at present. Construction work is in progress. I have already spent forty thousand rupees on it. Sixty thousand more will be required. I have to provide accommodation for at least a hundred and fifty persons and install sixteen looms. Work on cloth is expanding rapidly. After the Ahmedabad strike, I have come into contact with a number of weavers. About three hundred women have started working the *rentia*. I believe we shall get, before long, about two maunds of handspun yarn every day. These women were unemployed. They are employed now. About thirty weavers outside have also found employment. Some of these are *Dheds*. They used to labour for wages but now they have found an independent vocation. I think this is a very important activity. For it, too, I need more money. I reckon I shall have to invest ten thousand rupees in this. The National School activity is, I think, equally important. It is my impression that even at present the boys of this school compare favourably with other boys at the same stage of education. The qualities of fearlessness, etc., which they have acquired are there for all to see. I can see that the school will require one thousand rupees every month, though just now the expenses are lower. If I were to look after both these activities myself I am sure I could expand them considerably. But I cannot manage that. Even as it is, I find that good progress is being made in both. I have to tax you for a large amount just now and should like you, as a permanent arrangement, to make good any deficit that may remain after contributions from elsewhere have been received. Please give, if you can, what I have asked for, so that my anxieties may end. If you disapprove of my work, I certainly cannot ask you for anything. But do not stint if you think that it is along the right lines.

You must be watching my work of recruitment. Of all my activities, I regard this as the most difficult and the most important. If I succeed in it, genuine swaraj is assured.

Vendemataram from  
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]  
*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

## 90. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[NADIAD,]

July 3, 1918

I think you must get the books there. You would do well to arrange for the other things also to be brought over there. It seems we have abused . . . 's<sup>1</sup> goodness. Because she does not insist, we let things go on. I want you to act now as if you had been served with a twenty-four hour's notice. There is nothing like our serving notice on ourselves.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

## 91. REMARKS ON ENLISTMENT<sup>2</sup>

[NADIAD,]

July 4, 1918

Swaraj means—complete independence in association with Britain. If we can help in this war, instead of her ruling over us we shall have the upper hand. It is essential for us to get military training. I have come across none in India who adheres to non-violence so scrupulously as I do. I am overfull of love. Nobody has noted the wicked things the British have done as well as I have, nor their deeds of goodness. To him who wants to learn the art of fighting, who would know how to kill, I would even teach the use of force. If I fail in the attempt this time, you may conclude that my *tapascharya* is imperfect as yet. He who does not know how to lay down his life without killing others may learn how to die killing.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

<sup>1</sup> The name is omitted in the source

<sup>2</sup> Made in the course of a discussion with visitors

## 92. LETTER TO ANNIE BESANT

[NADIAD,]

July 4, 1918

I search *New India* in vain for an emphatic declaration from you in favour of unconditional recruiting. Surely it must be plain that, if every Home Rule Leaguer became an active recruiting depot, we would ensure the passing of the Congress-League Scheme with only such modifications as we may agree to. I think this is the time when we must give the people [a] lead and not await their opinion. I would like to see you with your old fire growing the stronger in face of opposition. If we supplied recruits, we should dictate terms. But if we wait for the terms, the War may close, India may remain without a real military training and we should be face to face with a military dictatorship. This is taking the most selfish view of the situation and self-interest suggests the course I have ventured to place before the country as the only effective course.

I know you will not consider my letter as a presumption.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

## 93. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

[NADIAD,]

July 4, 1918

DEAR MR. JINNAH,

I do wish you would make an emphatic declaration regarding recruitment. Can you not see that if every Home Rule Leaguer became a potent recruiting agency whilst, at the same time, fighting for constitutional rights, we would ensure the passing of the Congress-League Scheme, with only such modifications (if any) that we may agree to? We would then speak far more effectively than we do today."Seek ye first the Recruiting Office and everything will be added unto you." We must give the lead to the people and not think how the people will take what we say. What I ask for is an emphatic declaration, not a halting one.

I know you will not mind my letter.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

#### 94. *LETTER TO C. S. RANGA IYER*

[NADIAD ,]

*July 4, 1918*

DEAR MR. RANGA IYER<sup>1</sup>,

I thank you for your congratulations.<sup>2</sup> I shall not misunderstand your inability to hold numerous meetings in the villages.<sup>3</sup> I know how difficult the thing is. And yet without our penetration into the villages our Home Rule schemes are of little value. With the people really at our back, we should make our march to our goal irresistibly. That we do not see such a simple truth is the saddest part of the tragedy being enacted in front of us. If you would get out of it, you would, even at the risk of closing your paper, learn Hindi and, then, work among the villages. I know you have laboured valiantly for your paper. But it was labour almost mis-spent. We must give the fruits of our Western learning to our millions, whereas we, circulating ideas among ourselves, describe, like the blindfolded ox, the same circle and mistake it for motion forward.

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

<sup>1</sup> Member, Central Legislative Council; author of *Father India, India in the Crucible*, etc.

<sup>2</sup> On the success of the Kheda Satyagraha

<sup>3</sup> C. S. Ranga Iyer had promised to hold 40 meetings in villages in support of the Kheda Satyagraha.

## 95. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

[NADIAD,]  
July 4, 1918

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I read your letter with great care and interest. You did wisely in writing that letter. I find no immodesty in it. The language is courteous and graced with the spirit of independence and very sweet to me on that account. The letter shows your fearlessness . . .<sup>1</sup>

I was ignorant of some of the things and had a vague idea about the others that you mention. You have given me a clearer picture. I did not know enough to be able to set matters right. I shall be able to do so in the light of what you have said. . .<sup>2</sup>

My being deceived does no harm to us. For instance, your character or your studies have not been affected. If we ourselves stick to our high ideal, no harm results. If one keeps one's house clean, neither the plague nor any other infection can ever enter it. Even if it does, it cannot stay there long. Similarly, as long as we remain pure, the plague of wickedness, even if it should ever infect our family, cannot possess it for long. You must have observed that persons who have come in contact with me had their vices discovered sooner or later.

With your permission, I wish to show your letter to all concerned. They will not be angry with you—they ought not to be. In the Ashram, we want that you and others, should express openly whatever you think at any time. If possible, I shall be in the Ashram for two nights and will return by the morning train on the following day, so that we may have an evening at our disposal.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

<sup>1</sup> Some words are omitted in the source.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

## 96. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

NADIAD ,  
July 5, 1918

DEAR MR. NATESAN,

So Devdas is now receiving at your hands a nurse's affection and care. I am truly sorry for this addition to your burdens. I had hoped that Devdas would not behave quite so indecently as to fall ill. Pray thank Dr. Krishnaswami on my behalf for attending to Devdas. I hope for your sakes that he will soon be himself again. I understand your mother's scruples. If you were strong enough, she would waive them in favour of Devdas and that would be a precedent for the future. You saw how nobly she behaved, over Naicker? You doubted your own ability to carry her with you. It is a habit into which we reformers have fallen— never to think of beginning with our own homes. We now find it difficult to mend ourselves. What was intended to be a letter of thanks has ended in a sermon. Please pardon the offence.

I know you will wire if there is anything serious with Devdas.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2230

## 97. LETTER TO V.S SRINIVASA SASTRI

[NADIAD,]  
July 5, 1918

I do not know what report you have read in the *Chronicle*. There is an official Recruiting Agent who has the effrontery to be my namesake. It may be a glowing report of his which you may have read. So far I have not a single recruit to my credit apart from the co-workers who are all under promise to serve or to find substitutes. The task is most difficult. It is the toughest job I have yet handled in my life. However, it is yet too early to forecast any result.

*Yours sincerely*

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

98. *LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI*

[NADIAD,]  
July 5, 1918

I feel worried. You know our rule. One must not fall sick. Self-restraint is all that is necessary to ensure that one does not. Sufficient exercise and only as much food as one needs: if one keeps in mind these two things, one will never suffer in health.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

99. *LETTER TO MANIBHAI PATEL*

[NADIAD,]  
July 5, 1918

BHAISHRI MANIBHAI<sup>1</sup>,

I have your letter. I can understand your feelings but can offer no help. Time does its work. It will bring you peace.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

100. *LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS*

[NADIAD,]  
July 6, 1918

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letters.<sup>2</sup> I prize them. They give me only partial consolation. My difficulties are deeper than you have put them. All you raise I can answer. I must attempt in this letter to reduce my own to writing. They just now possess me to the exclusion of everything else. All the other things I seem to be doing purely mechanically. This hard thinking has told upon my physical system. I hardly want to talk to anybody. I do not want even to write anything, not even these thoughts of mine. I am therefore falling back upon dictation to see

<sup>1</sup> Father of Raojibhai Patel

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", before 23-6-1918.



whether I can clearly express them. I have not yet reached the bottom of my difficulties, much less have I solved them. The solution is not likely to affect my immediate work. But of the failure I can now say nothing. If my life is spared I must reach the secret somehow.

You say: "Indians as a race did repudiate it, bloodlust, with full consciousness in days gone by and deliberately took their choice to stand on the side of humanity." Is this historically true? I see no sign of it either in the *Mahabharata* or the *Ramayana*, not even in my favourite Tulsidas which is much superior in spirituality to Valmiki<sup>1</sup>. I am not now thinking of these works in their spiritual meanings. The incarnations are described as certainly bloodthirsty, revengeful and merciless to the enemy. They have been credited with having resorted to tricks also for the sake of overcoming the enemy. The battles are described with no less zest than now, and the warriors are equipped with weapons of destruction such as could be possibly conceived by the human imagination. The finest hymn composed by Tulsidas in praise of Rama gives the first place to his ability to strike down the enemy. Then take the Mohamedan period. The Hindus were not less eager than the Mahomedans to fight. They were simply disorganized, physically weakened and torn by internal dissensions. The code of Manu prescribes no such renunciation that you impute to the race. Buddhism, conceived as a doctrine of universal forbearance, signally failed, and, if the legends are true, the great Shankaracharya did not hesitate to use unspeakable cruelty in banishing Buddhism out of India. And he succeeded ! Then the English period. There has been compulsory renunciation of arms but not the desire to kill. Even 'among the Jains the doctrine has signally failed. They have a superstitious horror of blood (shed), but they have as little regard for the life of the enemy as an European. What I mean to say is that they would rejoice equally with anybody on earth over the destruction of the enemy. All then that can be said of India is that individuals have made serious attempts, with greater success than elsewhere, to popularize the doctrine. But there is no warrant for the belief that it has taken deep root among the people.

You say further: "My point is that it has become an unconscious instinct, which can be awakened any time as you yourself have shown." I wish it was true. But I see that I have shown nothing of the kind. When friends told me here that passive resistance was taken up

<sup>1</sup> The author of the original *Ramayana* in Sanskrit

by the people as a weapon of the weak, I laughed at the libel, as I called it then. But they were right and I was wrong. With me alone and a few other co-workers it came out of our strength and was described as satyagraha, but with the majority it was purely and simply passive resistance what they resorted to, because they were too weak to undertake methods of violence. This discovery was forced on me repeatedly in Kaira. The people here, being comparatively freer, talked to me without reserve, and told me plainly that they took up my remedy because they were not strong enough to take up the other, which they undoubtedly held to be far more manly than mine. I fear that the people whether in Champaran or in Kaira would not fearlessly walk to the gallows, or stand a shower of bullets and yet say, in one case, 'we will not pay the revenue', and in the other, 'we will not work for you'. They have it not in them. And I contend that they will not regain the fearless spirit until they have received the training to defend themselves. *Ahimsa* was preached to man when he was in full vigour of life and able to look his adversaries straight in the face. It seems to me that full development of body-force is a *sine qua non* of full appreciation and assimilation of *ahimsa*.

I do agree with you that India with her moral force could hold back from her shores any combination of armies from the West or the East or the North or the South. The question is, how can she cultivate this moral force? Will she have to be strong in body before she can understand even the first principles of this moral force? This is how millions blaspheme the Lord of the Universe every morning before sunrise.

"I am changeless Brahma, not a collection of the five elements—earth, etc.—I am that Brahma whom I recall every morning as the spirit residing in the innermost sanctuary of my heart, by whose grace the whole speech is adorned, and whom the Vedas have described as '*Neti, neti*'."

I say we blaspheme the Lord of the Universe in reciting the above verse because it is a parrot recitation without any consideration of its grand significance. One Indian realizing in himself all that the verse means is enough to repel the mightiest army that can approach the shores of India. But it is not in us today and it will not come until there is an atmosphere of freedom and fearlessness on the soil. How to produce that atmosphere? Not without the majority of the inhabitants feeling that they are well able to protect themselves from the violence

of man or beast. Now I think I can state my difficulty. It is clear that before I can give a child an idea of *moksha*, I must let it grow into full manhood. I must allow it to a certain extent to be even attached to the body, and then when it has understood the body and so the world around it, may I easily demonstrate the transitory nature of the body and the world, and make it *feel* that the body is given not for the indulgence of self but for its liberation. Even so must I wait for instilling into any mind the doctrine of ahimsa, i.e., perfect love, when it has grown to maturity by having its full play through a vigorous body. My difficulty now arises in the practical application of the idea. What is the meaning of having a vigorous body? How far should India have to go in for a training in arms-bearing? Must every individual go through the practice or is it enough that a free atmosphere is created and the people will, without having to bear arms, etc., imbibe the necessary personal courage from their surroundings? I believe that the last is the correct view, and, therefore, I am absolutely right as things are in calling upon every Indian to join the army, always telling him at the same time that he is doing so not for the lust of blood, but for the sake of learning not to fear death. Look at this from Sir Henry Vane. I copy it from Morley's *Recollections* (Vol. II):

Death holds a high place in the policy of great communities of the world.... It is the part of a valiant and generous mind to prefer some thing before life, as things for which a man should not doubt, nor fear to die.... True natural wisdom pursueth the learning and practice old dying well, as the very end of life, and indeed he hath not spent his life ill that hath learnt to die well. It is the chiefest thing and duty of life. The knowledge of dying is the knowledge of liberty, the state of true freedom, the way to fear nothing, to live well, contentedly, and peaceable.... It is a good time to die when to live is rather a burden than a blessing, and there is more ill in life than good.

“When his hour came, Vane’s actual carriage on Tower Hill was as noble and resolute as his words” is Morley’s commentary. There is not a single recruiting speech in which I have not laid the greatest stress upon this part of a warrior’s duty. There is no speech in which I have yet said, “Let us go to kill the Germans.” My refrain is, “Let us go and die for the sake of India and the Empire”, and I feel that, supposing that the response to my call is overwhelming and we all go to France and turn the scales against the Germans, India will then have a claim to be heard and she may then dictate a peace that will last. Suppose further that I have succeeded in raising an army of fearless

men, they fill the trenches and with hearts of love lay down their guns and challenge the Germans to shoot them—their fellow men—I say that even the German heart will melt. I refuse to credit it with exclusive fiendishness. So it comes to this, that under exceptional circumstances, war may have to be resorted to as a necessary evil, even as the body is. If the motive is right, it may be turned to the profit of mankind and that an ahimsaist may not stand aside and look on with indifference but must make his choice and actively co-operate or actively resist.

Your fear about my being engrossed in the political strife and intrigues may be entirely set aside. I have no stomach for them, least at the present moment, had none even in South Africa. I was in the political life because therethrough lay my own liberation. Montagu said, "I am surprised to find you taking part in the political life of the country!" Without a moment's thought I replied, "I am in it because without it I cannot do my religious and social work," and I think the reply will stand good to the end of my life.

You can't complain of my having given you only a scrap of a letter. Instead of a letter, I have inflicted upon you what may almost read like an essay. But it was necessary that you should know what is passing in my mind at the present moment. You may now pronounce your judgement and mercilessly tear my ideas to pieces where you find them to be wrong.

I hope you are getting better and stronger. I need hardly say that we shall all welcome you when you are quite able to undertake a journey.

With love,

MOHAN

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### *101. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING*

NADIAD,  
July 9, 1918

MY DEAR ESTHER,

Of course you were quite right in putting me the question you did. I am looking forward to your reply to my explanation.

I appreciate your preference for country life and country children. They are more innocent and hence more loveable.

Yes, it is your duty to continue your work to the end of your contract. I know the girls<sup>1</sup> will gain by your very contact. And for that matter I don't mind their receiving faulty education.

Devdas has just risen from a sick-bed. I know he will be delighted to meet you. Do please find him out, if he has not found you out. And if you have the time, I would like you to meet him as often as possible.

With love,

*Yours,*

BAPU

*My Dear child, pp. 29-30*

### *102. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH*

[NADIAD,]

*July 9, 1918*

. . . What a proud thing it would be if we recruited and, at the same time, insisted on amendments in the Reform Scheme! . . .

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### *103. LETTER TO DATTATREYA DABHOLKAR*

[NADIAD,

*July 9, 1918]*

CHI. DATTATREYA,

I congratulate you on your standing first in the examination of standard five. I want that you should rank high in character just as you maintain the first place in your studies.

I was happy that you donated the first month's amount of the scholarship of the Ashram. When I go there, I shall explain to those in the Ashram the meaning of your gift. These generous inclinations which your father inculcates in you from this early age are a noble inheritance. See that you nourish them.

*Blessing from*

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

<sup>1</sup> Pupils in the Danish Mission Boarding School, Tirukoilur

## 104. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[NADIAD,]

July 9, 1918

CHI. DEVDAS,

Natesan's telegram today has relieved me of my anxiety in the absence of a letter from you. Find out the exact cause of illness and see that you do not fall ill again. What did the students of Hindi do during your illness? Did any of them continue to come to you? Were there any who continued their study?

I have not had a single recruit so far, so deplorable is the plight of the country.

The telegram you saw there was all a misunderstanding. This occurred because there was a recruiting officer of the Government who was my namesake. My failure so far suggests that people are not ready to follow my advice. They are ready, however, to accept my services in a cause which suits them. This is as it should be. It is through such service that one earns the right to give advice. Three years' service, and that too in different parts of the country, is not enough. Even then, on the question of recruitment I could have done nothing else. I needed the satisfaction of having taken the initiative on an occasion of this kind. My efforts continue. What I have said is about the results achieved so far.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

## 105. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

[NADIAD,]

July 9, 1918

I have your letter. If it was cruel to say what I felt was true, then certainly my letter was cruel. I repeat that the world will most emphatically not consider you innocent. Whatever you may have said

in your sincerity<sup>1</sup>, Narottam Sheth could have had no idea about your speculation. You have followed one wrong thing with another. It was not enough for you that you had lost ten thousand rupees. But there is no use arguing with you. May God give you wisdom. If I have made a mistake, I will set it right. If you think you can point out any, do so even now.

I understand what you say about your enlisting. I made the suggestion at a time when I did not doubt your truthfulness. I do not think I have any interest in it now. I can give you no idea of what my condition has been since I began to doubt your truthfulness.

May God bless you, I pray, and show you the right path.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

#### *106. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI*

[NADIAD,]

*July 9, 1918*

Please do everything necessary so that Shri Khushalbai and Devbhabhi may have peace. I certainly fear that the fact of Prabhudas and others taking their meals there may have unwelcome results. It must be all very painful for Keshu and Radha. Use your judgement and do what you think best.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

#### *107. LETTER TO A CO-WORKER*

[NADIAD,]

*July 10, 1918*

I am in a fright about you. I am wrestling with Harilal as I am doing with you. He writes to say that the remedy I have suggested is cruel. How can I say that he is telling the truth, when I

<sup>1</sup> The original is not clear at this point.

know that he is not? That is the position in which I find myself in relation to you. In your case, too, I see things turning to anger. You are charged with deception. That time you talked about my ideals. And now you write to say that you wasted your time even in going to . . .<sup>1</sup> Again, you have deceived me. You misled . . .<sup>2</sup> too. You put it to him that I should send him to Chinchvad. He told me this. I did not attach any weight to his words. As I remember these things now, I shiver. What shall I say to you? I am not fit to sit in judgement over you. It gives me pain to have to tell you that you have been lying. If a man like you is capable of deceiving and shirking work to this extent, whom else may one trust? If you have not been deceiving, how is it that suddenly I got such an impression? . . .<sup>3</sup> is not at fault. He only happened to be the immediate cause. My suspicion began when you did not remain in . . .<sup>4</sup> but I suppressed it the moment it occurred. I thought you would never act in that manner and dismissed the idea from my mind. But I was not satisfied. That suspicion and the discussion I have had with you come vividly before me. I am in a fright. Save me from this suffering. Establish your innocence fully or repent sincerely and learn to be straightforward. I cannot bear to go on suspecting you. I had built high hopes on you. I had visualized the foremost place for you in the future satyagrahi army of India. All this lies shattered at the moment.

From the Gujarati in the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### 108. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

BOMBAY ,

*Ashadh Sud 6 [July 14, 1918]*

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I could not return [to the Ashram] after seeing Mr. Pratt, for I heard that Jagjivandas had been taken ill and I had to go to Nadiad. At Pratt's, a number of Englishmen surrounded me and started talking very pleasantly. They expressed a desire to go and see the

<sup>1</sup> Omissions are in the source.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*



Ashram. I invited them to come over on Saturday. Most probably, I shall be there. If I can start in time, I may arrive by the afternoon train on that day. Even if I don't, you should expect them. They may be there any time in the evening after five. I have told them that they would see things better if they could stay till prayer time. See that the boys, or the leading ones among them, are taught the English hymns. Sing *Lead Kindly Light*. If they come at five, show them the kitchen, etc., and the food.

I write this letter from Bombay. I came here directly from Karamsad. Tilak Maharaj is here. As it has been suggested to me that I should give out my views on the Reform Scheme only after seeing Tilak Maharaj in Bombay, I am busy seeing people. I shall be back in Nadiad on Wednesday evening. I shall leave here on Tuesday evening but shall be going to Godhra on my way. From there, I shall go to Nadiad the same day.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[PS.]

You must be putting the accounts in order. Get someone to help you in this, if necessary, and do so.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 5732. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

### *109. SPEECH AT KARAMSAD<sup>1</sup>*

*July 14, 1918*

[Gandhiji] said at the outset that he was there to give them an unpalatable dose and he hoped that they would not turn away from it all at once, bearing in mind that one of the principal characteristics of a self-governing and liberty-loving people was to give ear to all counsel and to choose one that appealed to them most. What, he asked them, was the meaning of swarajya?

Our villages are no better than dung-hills; we cannot defend ourselves and our families against robbers or wild beasts; *mukhis* and *rawanias* coerce and oppress us as they will; we have no arms and we do not know the use of arms. Is this swarajya? And yet, this is the natural order throughout India. Imagine the tidiness and the atmosphere of quiet and healthy independence of an English village

<sup>1</sup> This was Gandhiji's third speech in the recruiting campaign delivered in Karamsad, a village in the Anand taluka of Kheda district.

and think how miserably an Indian village compares with it. It is because every Englishman can stand on his legs and can defend his home and his village against any invader that the English village appears so incomparably superior to ours.

The first essential of swarajya is, thus, the power of self-protection. I am fit for swarajya only when I am able to defend myself and to shed my blood for my country, and India could be said to be living only if five lakhs of men lay down their lives for her. A seed must lose itself in earth in order that numerous seeds may spring up from it. Even so, from the ashes of the thousands dying for India, will spring up a living India. We Indians visit temples every morning and evening and pay our obeisance to gods —gods who, we say, descend on earth to protect the weak and succour the oppressed, when virtue subsides and vice prevails. It then ill becomes us to go to these temples, if we have not the spirit and the capacity of self-defence in us. And what verily did our Ramachandra and Krishna do? They modelled heroes out of common clay and equipped them for self-defence. The golden opportunity for acquiring the power of self-defence has come to us and it behoves us to seize it and profit by it. An Empire that has been defending India and of which India aspires to be the equal partner is in great peril and it ill befits India to stand aloof at the hour of its destiny. The argument that a Government that had behaved unsympathetically towards us does not deserve any help is idle, because helping the Government means nothing but helping ourselves. And India too is under grave stress. India would be nowhere without Englishmen. If the British do not win, whom shall we go to for claiming equal partnership? Shall we go to the victorious German, or the Turk or the Afghan for it? We shall have no right to do so; the victorious nation will set its mind on imposing taxes, on repressing, harassing and tyrannising over the vanquished. Only after making its position secure will it listen to our demands, whereas the liberty-loving English will surely yield, when they have seen that we have laid down our lives for them. The thought that our hearths, our homes, our fields and cattle will go to rack and ruin if we all go to the war, need not stop us. Our old men and women will take care of these, as they naturally must, and it will be a great training for them. One feeling and one only should be uppermost in the mind of each of us: No one dare invade my country; if he does, he dare take nothing out of it, excepting my dead body fallen in defence thereof.

Towards the conclusion, he reiterated that enlistment was the surest and the straight way to self-government and he exhorted the brave people of Karamsad, who had acquitted themselves so splendidly during the Kaira campaign, to send at least a hundred men to the war.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 27-7-1918*

### *110. LETTER TO HANUMANTRAO*

*July 17, 1918*

I have been thinking of writing to you for a long time, but my recruiting peregrinations have seriously interfered with my correspondence. Today happens to be an off day, and is being devoted to letter-writing. I thank you most heartily for all you have done and are doing for Devdas. In every one of his letters Devdas has mentioned your affection for him. In his illness, he tells me, you have been a real friend. I shall now select Hindi candidates for Tamil tuition.

I knew that my recruiting campaign was bound to pain friends for a variety of reasons, political as well as religious. But I know that both are wrong in their condemnation. My views have been before the country for a long time. But it is always one's action that matters, rarely one's speech. But I may not therefore summarily dismiss their objections. They are honest in their statement and they criticise out of affection. It is my practice of ahimsa and failure to get our people even to understand the first principles of ahimsa that have led to the discovery that all killing is not *himsa*, that, sometimes, practice of ahimsa may even necessitate killing and that we as a nation have lost the true power of killing. It is clear that he who has lost the power to kill cannot practice non-killing. Ahimsa is a renunciation of the highest type. A weak and an effeminate nation cannot perform this grand act of renunciation, even as a mouse cannot be properly said to renounce the power of killing a cat. It may look terrible but it is true that we must, by a well-sustained, conscious effort, regain this power, and, then, if we can only do so, deliver the world from its travail of *himsa* by a continuous abdication of this power. I cannot describe to you in sufficiently telling language the grief I often used to feel as I watched my failure to carry conviction about ahimsa even to the members of the Ashram. Not that they were unwilling listeners, but I could perceive, as I now think plainly, that they had not the capacity

for apprehending the truth. It was like singing the finest music to ears unturned to any music. But today practically everyone at the Ashram understands it, and is aglow with the expectation that ahimsa is a renunciation out of strength and not out of weakness. It is not possible to make any distinction between organized warfare and individual fighting. There must be an organized opposition and, therefore, even organized bloodshed, say, in the case of bandits. The noblest warrior is he who stands fearless in the face of immense odds. He then feels not the power to kill, but he is supremely triumphant in the knowledge that he has the willingness to die when by taking to his heels he might easily have saved his life. I do believe that we shall have to teach our children the art of self-defence. I see more and more clearly that we shall be unfit for swaraj for generations to come if we do not regain the power of self-defence. This means for me a rearrangement of so many ideas about self-development and India's development. I must not carry the point further than I have done today. You are an earnest seeker. I am most anxious that you should understand this new view of ahimsa. It is not a fall but it is a rise. The measure of love evoked by this discovery is infinitely greater than ever it was before.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### *III. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI<sup>1</sup>*

[NADIAD,]

*July 17, 1918*

DEAR MR. SHASTRIAR,

I am glad you were able to go to Bombay. I think it will be most valiant of you if you can attend the Congress<sup>2</sup>. I must confess I sympathize with the Panditji's attitude if it is truly reported of him.

<sup>1</sup> This was in reply to Sastri's letter which said: "I marvel at Mrs. Besant and Tilak taking a position very near yours and mine after having written as they have done in the Press. I do not like all this talk about abstention from the Congress. I do not understand it."

<sup>2</sup> The special session of the Indian National Congress at Bombay on August 29—September 1, which, it was feared, might create a schism on the issue of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, but actually adopted a policy which commanded wide support.

Indeed, for him it will be one of the boldest acts of his life to refrain from appearing on a Congress platform. What I feel is this. How can I appear in an assembly which I know is to be misled and in which the principal movers do not believe what they say and will *denounce* in the Press the very Resolutions for which they would have voted! I know there is the other side. But, for the moment, I lean towards abstention. I hope you are keeping well.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### *112. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI*

[NADIAD,]

*July 18, 1918*

You have pressed me for my opinion on the Reform Scheme<sup>1</sup> just published. As you know, I did not feel called upon to take an active part in the framing of the Congress-League scheme. I have not taken an all-absorbing interest in controversial politics. I do not pretend that even now I have studied the reform proposals as a keen politician would. I feel, therefore, very great hesitation in expressing my opinion on it. But I recognize the weight of your argument in favour of my expressing such opinion as I can form on the scheme.

In my opinion, then, as an artistic production, the scheme now published is superior to the Congress-League scheme. I further consider that both Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford have been inspired by an honest desire for a due fulfilment of the declaration of the 20th August and for the welfare of India. They have taken great pains over their most difficult and delicate task and I cannot but think that any hasty rejection of their effort will be a misfortune for the country. In my humble opinion, the scheme deserves a sympathetic handling rather than a summary rejection. But it would need to be considerably improved before it is accepted by the reformers. After all, our standard of measurement must be the Congress-League scheme, crude though it is. I think that we should with all the vehemence and skill that we can command press for the incorporation into it of the essentials of our own.

<sup>1</sup> Sastri had invited Gandhiji's views for publication in *The Servant of India*.

I would, therefore, for instance, ask for the rejection of the doctrine of compartments. I very much fear that the dual system in provinces will be fatal to the success of the experiment, and as it may be only success of the experiment that can take us to the next—and I hope the final stage, we cannot be too insistent that the idea of reservation should be dropped. One cannot help noticing an unfortunate suspicion of our intentions regarding the purely British, as distinguished from the purely Indian interest. Hence there is to be seen in the scheme elaborate reservations on behalf of these interests. I think that more than anything else it is necessary to have an honest, frank and straightforward understanding about these interests and for me, personally, this is of much greater importance than any legislative feat that British talent alone or a combination of British and Indian talent may be capable of performing. I would certainly, in as courteous terms as possible but equally emphatic, say that these interests will be held subservient to those of India as a whole and that, therefore, they are certainly in jeopardy in so far as they may be inconsistent with the general advance of India. Thus, if I had my way, I would cut down the military expenditure. I would protect local industries by heavily taxing goods that compete against products of our industries, and I would reduce to a minimum the British element in our services, retaining only those that may be needed for our instruction and guidance. I do not think that they had or have any claims upon our attention save by right of conquest. That claim must clearly go by the board as soon as we are awakened to a consciousness of our national existence and possess the strength to vindicate our right to the restoration of what we have lost. To their credit let it be said that they do not themselves advance any claim by right of conquest. One can readily join in the tribute of praise bestowed upon the Indian Civil Service for their devotion to duty and great organising ability. So far as material reward is concerned, that service has been more than handsomely paid and our gratitude otherwise can be best expressed by assimilating their virtues ourselves.

No scheme of reform can possibly benefit India that does not recognize that the present administration is too heavy and ruinously expensive and for me even law, order and good government would be too dearly purchased if the price to be paid for it is to be the grinding poverty of the masses. The watchword of our reform councils will have to be, not increase of taxation for the growing needs of a growing country, but a decrease of the financial burdens that are

sapping the foundation itself of the organic growth. If this fundamental fact is recognized, there need be no suspicion of our motives and, I think I am perfectly safe in asserting that in every other respect British interests will be as secure in Indian hands as they are in their own. It follows from what I have said above that we must respectfully press for the Congress-League claim for the immediate granting to Indians of 50 per cent of the higher posts in the Civil Service. The above is but an indication of my view on the scheme. It is a considered view so far as it goes, but it does not embody all the improvements that I should suggest for submission to His Majesty's Government. In due course, I take it, we shall endeavour to issue a representative criticism of the scheme. It is, therefore, hardly necessary for me to enter into an exhaustive treatment even if I was capable of doing so.

I cannot, however, conclude my observations without stating what I consider to be the best means of enforcing our opinion, whatever shape it may finally take. I entirely endorse the concluding remarks of the authors of the historic document that thousands of Indian reformers are today studying with avidity."If anything could enter the sense of responsibility under which our recommendations are made, in a matter fraught with consequences so immense, it would be the knowledge that, even as we are bringing our report to an end, far greater issues still hang in the balance upon the battle-field of France. It is there and not in Delhi or Whitehall that the ultimate decision of India's future will be taken." May God grant us, Home Rulers, the wisdom to see this simple truth. The gateway to our freedom is situated on the French soil. No victory worth the name has yet been won without the shedding of blood. If we could but crowd the battle-fields of France with an indomitable army of Home Rulers fighting for victory for the cause of the Allies, it will also be a fight for our own cause. We would then have made out an unanswerable case for the granting of Home Rule not in any distant time or near future but immediately. My advice, therefore, to the country would be, fight unconditionally unto death with the Briton for the victory and agitate simultaneously also unto death, if we must, for the reforms that we deserve. This is the surest method of gaining an honourable victory for ourselves over the strongest opposition of bureaucratic forces and, at the end of it, there would be no ill will left. It may not be impossible to gain our end by sheer obstructive and destructive agitation. But it is easy enough to see that we shall at the same time

reap ill will between the British and the Indian elements, not a particularly cohesive cement for binding would-be partners.

*The Leader*, 24-7-1918

### *113. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ*

NADIAD,

*Ashadh Shukla 10 [July 18, 1918]*

DEAR JAMNALALJI,

I returned from Bombay last night. Being on tour I could not write to you earlier. Your letter has taken a burden off my mind. Bhai Ambalalji has sent Rs. 5,000 and Bhai Shankarlal Banker has given Rs. 4,000. I feel some hesitation in speaking of my wants to friends who do not turn down my requests and yet I cannot help making them. I therefore strongly feel that, when there is any difficulty in conceding my request, it will be a kindness to me not to grant it.

I hope your pain has now completely disappeared.

*Yours,*

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2840

### *114. LETTER TO ANANDSHANKAR DHURVA*

[NADIAD]

*July 18, 1918*

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. How is it that, in all your wide studies, you have not discovered any medicine which would ensure that, no matter if relations died or fell ill, if a window-shutter in a railway compartment crashed on one's hand or if one stumbled while walking,—one would not mind any of these things but be always happy? Can studies, however, relieve the pain in the hand, or is it only a doctor who can help? You need reply only when we meet, after you have recovered. The workers are patient and will wait. If prayers can avail, please pray that your hand may be soon restored to a serviceable condition. Meanwhile, many of them have been receiving not 35 but 50 per cent increase. Ambalalbhai said he had something to whisper



to you. He has already done so to me. But you had better hear it direct from him.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

### 115. LETTER TO JAGJIVANDAS MEHTA

[NADIAD,]

*July 18, 1918*

Got your letter. I was sorry to hear of the theft of your coat and money. It is as if a weak cow should be infested with too many gadflies.<sup>1</sup> There is a thief around here in the Anathashram. The thing has happened twice or thrice before now. Somebody should have warned you but it seems this did not occur to anyone.

Your fever must have left you completely. I could write to Jivraj<sup>2</sup> only today. The letter is enclosed. You may despatch it if you think it proper.

I could, this time, get some idea of the condition of your business. I am not happy about the source of the money with which you have started it. If my advice is of any value, wind up your business this very day, return the money to the person from whom you have borrowed it and secure a job. I am sure you will have no difficulty in getting one. If you would live the simple life, the Ashram is always open to you. I do not press, though. If, however, you want to work for things which the world regards worth striving for, you may, but on your own strength. The longer you take to act in this matter, the more reason you will have for regret afterwards.

Everywhere people bring misery on themselves by their own actions but, the more I look into the net in which your family affairs are caught, the more I realize this to be especially true of you all. I wish you would free yourself from this. Be satisfied with the normal risks which attend an enterprise and do not go in for anything more.

<sup>1</sup> A Gujarati saying, meaning: "Misfortunes never come singly." Mehta had gone to Nadiad to see Gandhiji and had fallen ill while in the Anathashram. His coat, with a purse in it, was stolen.

<sup>2</sup> Jivraj Mehta, Gandhiji's friend and physician

See that your relations with everyone are above reproach. As for father, he goes out of his way to heap misery upon misery on himself. Living a life of religious devotion, why should he have so many desires? Why should you encourage him in them? ....<sup>1</sup> We should be happier than the gods if we respected the voice of conscience as much as we respect public opinion. We don't recognize the happiness at our door-step and go searching for it in all directions. Why do you bother yourself so?

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

### 116. LETTER TO MRS. JAGJIVANDAS MEHTA

NADIAD,  
July 18, 1918

DEAR SISTER,

I could not bear to see your distress but, at the same time, the innocent happiness I noticed in you I saw neither in father<sup>2</sup> nor in Bhai Jagjivandas. This cut me to the quick and I have addressed a letter<sup>3</sup> to Bhai Jagiivandas. You should, both of you, get it by heart, deeply ponder over it and then strive jointly in life. The letter is meant for you both.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

### 117. LETTER TO KOTWAL'S SISTER

NADIAD,  
Ashadh Sud 10 [July 18, 1918]

DEAR SISTER,

I have your postcard. Gogate's did not reach me. It may have been lost because of my wanderings. When I wrote to you, I had not plunged into this arduous war effort. Now, I don't know when

<sup>1</sup> Some words are omitted here in the source.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Mehta's father-in-law

<sup>3</sup> The source does not mention the addressee's name. But from the references to Gogate and Kotwal, the letter appears to have been addressed to the latter's sister; vide "Letter to Rambhau Gogate", 17-5-1918.

I shall rest in the Ashram. If you go to stay there in my absence, you are likely to find things difficult; besides, I think your presence will also embarrass the Ashram inmates. At present, it does not have enough room either. We have not been able to go ahead with construction as fast as I had hoped to. Hence, I hesitate to welcome you. If, however, you can endure the inconveniences there, accept human nature in all its variety and do not think my presence essential even when you are there for the first time, you may go. Discuss the matter with Kotwal if he is there and write to me afterwards. He will explain to you what I have written. I do want you in the Ashram. All that I desire is that you may go there after it has developed such an atmosphere that you will never feel like leaving it.

*Vandematram from*

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: G. N. 3617

### *118. SPEECH AT NADIAD<sup>1</sup>*

*July 18, 1918*

He pointed out how two hundred years of disease had weakened the martial spirit of the people of Gujarat and emphasized the necessity of recognizing this fact as a preliminary to the work of recruitment. While fully appreciating the difficulties before him, he was determined to see them through, as he had recognized since he attended the Delhi War conference that recruiting work was the first duty of an Indian patriot in these times. He had received invitations from many parts of India to go and help them in their recruiting campaign, but he could not do so with a clear conscience when his own people of Gujarat hung back.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 22-7-1918*

### *119. APPEAL FOR ENLISTMENT*

NADIAD,

*July 22, 1918*

LEAFLET NO. 2

It is a month today since the first leaflet<sup>2</sup> was written. During that time my fellow workers and myself have had a good deal of

<sup>1</sup> The meeting was presided over by F. G. Pratt, Commissioner of the Northern Division, and attended by a large number of District officials and leading citizens.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Appeal for Enlistment", 22-6-1918.

experience. We held meetings at Nadiad, Karamsad, Ras, Kathlal, Jambusar and other places and talked with hundreds of men and women.

I take the liberty to put before you the experiences we have had. Barely a hundred men have come forward. I find this to be too small a figure, considering the one month that has gone into it and the travelling it has entailed. When I think of the condition of the people, I feel that it is a wonder that even so many men have come forward. These are men from a class of society which has not seen any fighting, men who have never so much as lifted a stick. So, if we could but rouse the fighting classes, an inexhaustible supply of recruits could be assured.

The shortcomings of the thinking sections are plain on this occasion. I use the word "thinking" in place of "educated". If such men and women were to do their duty, they could influence the classes fitted by nature to join up. My experience goes to testify to a great weakness on the part of the thinking section. Their not taking sufficient interest in national work makes the task of recruitment difficult. Those among them into whose hands this leaflet may find its way should, if they have faith in this work, prepare themselves and inspire the illiterate and ignorant sections for this great task.

But, in the thinking section I have come across persons who have no faith in this. This leaflet is addressed to them. It is my request to them to read it carefully. It is up to the wise man to sketch out the right line of action in the light of existing circumstances. If it is our intention to break off our connection with the British, to be sure we must not go to their help. Very few come out with the opinion that we do want to break this tie. It is plain enough to everyone that even those who are for breaking it just cannot do so at the present moment. Be that as it may, today our salvation lies in helping the British. To help them is to help ourselves. When the interests of the two lie in the same direction, it would be the very height of recklessness for either side to keep thinking of the other's faults and refuse to go to its help. If a raid were to descend on an enemy of ours in the village in which we are living, and if it threatened the whole village, we would forget our enmity and run to the succour of that enemy and beat back the raiders. The same holds true in this war today. To rise against the common danger is not only expediency but our duty as well. Another objection that has been raised is: what kind of a dharma is it to send

the best of our men to the war and get them killed? This way, all those who are working for swaraj may be killed; how would we win swaraj, then? I would have branded this objection as ridiculous had it not been raised by men considered intelligent. It is clear that, if India could boast of only five lakhs of men demanding swaraj, we do not deserve it. But those who raise the objection mean to say that, whatever be the number of such men, the discerning few who carry on an agitation for swaraj number even less than five lakhs. This is true enough. Only, one thing is overlooked. In preparing five lakhs of men who would be willing to fight to death, we shall have made fifty lakhs familiar with "war", "swaraj", etc. We want to train five lakhs of free men. They will be going with open eyes, of their own free will. They will have taken counsel with their friends and relations; so the five lakhs who depart will have left behind them lakhs of other like-minded people. The plain fact is that we have lost the very capacity to fight and our valour has ebbed away. We don't have the strength even to protect our women-folk. Running after so-called dharma, we forgot the claim of karma (duty). We cannot stand up and fight even if there is a raid on our village in broad daylight. That some eight men can pillage a population of a thousand with impunity can happen—in all the world—only in India. Those in the villages are not so weak of body that they cannot beat back a mere eight. But they stand in terrible fear of death."Who would risk his life or limb by going out to fight? Let them loot. Leave it to the Government, whose job it is." So they think and stay at home. If the house of a neighbour is set on fire, if he is dishonoured and his property looted, that is no concern of these philosophers. So long as this philosophy (darkness) has not perished, India will never know genuine peace. That we should have to wait for the arrival of the police or the army before the village becomes safe is an intolerable situation for anyone with self-respect. An instant means of getting out of this predicament is ready at hand. By enlisting in the army, we shall learn the use of weapons, shall have the spirit of patriotism kindled in us and shall be strong enough to defend our villages.

What about our wives and children if we go? Everyone will naturally ask this question. A recruit gets a fixed pay, in addition to food and clothing. The minimum he gets is eighteen rupees and, according to merit, he rises in rank and scale. If he is killed, the Government provides for the maintenance of his wife and children. Those who return from the war get prizes and rewards. It is my view

that, in the final analysis, soldiering is more paying than other professions.

“But such privileges are available only to the British; when do they ever come to us?”—I have heard people say. To them I would say: “It is not likely that an army of five lakhs of intelligent men raised by our efforts would be denied equal rights with the British. If they should be, that would only go to prove the incapacity of those five lakhs and of the leaders. If an army of lakhs were raised, it would be a match for the British army and would win equal rights. The very fact of our having raised an army of five lakhs will ensure the rights.”

“You bid us to go and join the war unconditionally. Another advises us to join on promise of equal rights. A third says we are not bound to go—why bargain away your sleep and go out of your way to suffer sleeplessness? We get confused by these three different counsels. In such a predicament, it seems to us that discretion lies in not venturing beyond our depths.” My modest reply to this is: “Sentiments such as these bespeak a coward. As time passes, different parties will come into being and a variety of opinions come to prevail. You will have to take them all into consideration. I would call it a betrayal of the swaraj to which we are all pledged if we refuse to participate in the war at any rate for the sake of that pledge.”

In laying down conditions for joining the army, there is a danger that the occasion to join may slip past and the scheme for swaraj may be shelved. The security of our nation, as also the certainty of swaraj, lies only in our joining up. All the parties would agree that our enlisting in the army will in no way harm the cause of swaraj. So, even on a comparative view, of the three the one counsel which advocates enlistment seems to me the best. It is my hope that the comrades of Kheda district will be true to the call of duty and give their names to the volunteers or send them directly to the Ashram.

Women will also, I trust, help in this work. I know that some of them dissuade their husbands and sons from enlisting. If they reflect over the matter carefully enough, they will see that it is in their own interests, and certainly in the interests of the nation, that their husbands and sons should be brave men.

*For ever your servant,*

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Dairy, Vol. IV*

## 120. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

BOMBAY,

JULY 22, 1918

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have been debating with myself whether to write to you or not to. Your letter made painful reading. I am today at the Ashram and have just worn the second vest sent by you. I came to know of it only today. It does not fit well. The sleeves are too short. But that matters little. I am wearing it and shall wear it out.

I am quite sure that you must quietly go through your contract even though you may be prohibited from coming to the Ashram or writing to me. You will gain greater strength of will and purpose by the enforced discipline and restraint.

It will be a privilege if you are permitted to write to me and receive letters. Do please tell me what final decision has been arrived at.

I have suspended Civil Disobedience for the time being. You will see my letter to the Press.

With love,

*Yours,*

BAPU

*My Dear Child*, pp. 30-1

## 121. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

NADIAD,

July 22 [1918]

DEAR MILLIE,

The enclosed is just to cheer you. I have been corresponding with Dr. Mehta too. Of course, I do not expect Henry will have to do war work.<sup>1</sup> And if he has, you know that you have no cause for anxiety. I am undergoing a revolution in my outlook upon life. As it

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* also "Fragment of Letter to Ambalal Sarabhai", 17-3-1918.

seems to me some old cobwebs are falling away. But of these when I have more time.<sup>2</sup>

With love,

Yours,  
BHAI

[PS.]

Do write to me please. Devdas is in Madras, do you know? Write to him a line care Natesan. He is teaching Hindi.

From the original : Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

## 122. LETTER TO GOVIND MALAVIYA

[BOMBAY,]  
July 22, 1918

I was very glad to get your letter. We can lay bare our heart to those whom we consider our elders. Such laying bare is necessary. You have done right in writing to me. I do not know what excesses are committed in recruitment. If they are many, it is all the more necessary for me to go in for it.

The Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme is, in my opinion, very good. We can have its shortcomings removed through agitation. Whatever the merits of the Scheme, however, I definitely hold that we should join the war. We do not join it for the good of the British people; we want to go in for recruitment to do service to the country, and with an eye to its interests. What shall I say about the miserable plight of India? I see clearly that India cannot attain real swarajya. I hold that by joining the army we can accomplish two things: we shall become brave and we shall learn something about the handling of arms; and we shall prove our worth by helping those with whom we wish to become partners. Resisting their excesses and sharing their troubles—both these things are worth our doing. I want you to think very calmly on this question. I suggest your sending this letter to Devdas and also discussing the matter with him

Yours sincerely,  
MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

<sup>2</sup> For an extract from this letter, *vide* "Letter to Esther Faering", 22-7-1918.



### 123. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI SHAH

[BOMBAY,]  
July 22, 1918

DEAR PUNJABHAI,

What we have taken as dharma is not dharma. We commit violence on a large scale in the name of non-violence. Fearing to shed blood, we torment people every day and dry up their blood. A *Bania*<sup>1</sup> can never practise non-violence. Dharma does not consist in the outward renunciation practised by some *Shravakas*<sup>2</sup> or in feeding ants. There can be no *moksha* or knowledge of the Self unless one renounces love of body. If you are convinced of this and would discover the true road to *moksha*, I should advise you to identify yourself with the Ashram. See the proposed construction work through and relieve Maganlal for the present. You will need a servant. Engage Parasaram. I think it necessary that Maganlal be relieved. Think over this carefully. Undertake this only if the truth of this is as clear to you as daylight. If it is, you will experience great peace in the Ashram. Otherwise you will tire out soon. You, Fulchand and Maganlal may discuss this among yourselves. But, first, think over it yourself.

*Pious remembrances from*

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

### 124. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

NAVAGAM,  
*Purnima* [July 23, 1918]

DEAR MAHADEV,

The result of your losing your temper was that you could not come, nor could Shivabhai. We two enjoyed walking down to this place. We arrived at 10.15. The people were surprised. The poison which the Circle Inspector has sown here must be dug out. We shall, therefore, stay on here for three or four days. You or Shivabhai may bring over the mail.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

<sup>1</sup> Trader

<sup>2</sup> Followers of Jainism

[PS.]

Inform Anasuyabehn that we are here up to Thursday at any rate.

Bring, or send, postal covers, postcards and plain envelopes.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5790 Courtesy: C. K. Bhatt

### *125. LETTER TO SIR S. SUBRAMANIAM*

[NAVAGAM,]

*July 24, 1918*

DEAR SIR SUBRAMANIAM<sup>1</sup>,

I hope you will not regard this letter as a presumption on my part. I have long felt that your language was unrestrained and not worthy of a *yogi*. Your charges have appeared to me to be in many respects reckless. In my humble opinion you would have rendered much greater service to the country than you have if you had been as scrupulously truthful as you have been frank and fearless. In you an unguarded and uncharitable expression would be an untruth. Your politics are not of the demagogue. They are religious. I beseech you to give the country a pure example of an Indian gentleman. It is in your power to do so.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### *126. LETTER TO VINOBA BHAVE*

[NAVAGAM,]

*July 24, 1918*

I have your thought-provoking letter.

The ideal is of course what you have stated. It is also true that, to achieve it, there should be a Gujarati teacher. But in the absence of such a teacher, it would not be wrong to avail ourselves of a teacher from Maharashtra. Also, I would prefer a Marathi teacher who has character, to a Gujarati who has none. At present it is difficult to find Gujaratis who can teach according to my method. The situation is so

<sup>1</sup> Retired Judge, Madras High Court

pathetic that, without you, Sanskrit teaching will have to stop or be resumed by Kaka<sup>1</sup>. For the present, therefore, you will have to continue teaching it while keeping the ideal in view.

I am eager to enter Maharashtra, but the time is not ripe yet. I am not fit. We don't have the required number of men. May there not be some divine providence in the fact that you, Kaka and Mama have come to work with me? My relations with Deshpande<sup>2</sup>, my faith in the Servants of India Society, my especial admiration for Maharashtra, the great assistance they rendered in Champaran, the arrival of a music expert from Maharashtra, the expected entry, in the near future, of Kotwal's sister, my acquaintance with Narayanrao—all these things suggest that I am likely to do something special in Maharashtra, be it ever so little. However, "if man had his way, none would remain in misery, everyone would kill his enemies and see that only his friends remained." And so, this ambition notwithstanding, who knows what will happen?

I will keep your wishes in mind. I also desire to keep you close to me but I see that it cannot be at present. You are certainly an inmate of the Ashram; there can be no doubt about that.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

### 127. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[NAVAGAM,]

July 24, 1918

CHI. DEVDAS,

This letter brings you extremely distressing news. Bhai Sorabji passed away in Johannesburg after a brief but severe illness. We have, in some measure at least, risen above the fear of death and yet a death such as this cannot but grieve. Everyone had hoped that Sorabji would act as a shield in South Africa and do great things, but this hope now lies shattered. There is gloom in South Africa, as I can gather from the telegrams received from there. God's ways are inscrutable. Karma can never be undone. All action bears fruit, good or bad, and what we call

<sup>1</sup> Kaka Kalelkar

<sup>2</sup> Keshavrao Deshpande, Bar-at-law, founder of Ganganath Bharati Vidyalaya

an accident is not one in fact. It but seems so to us. No one dies before his time. Death, besides, is only the final transformation of the same entity, it is not a total annihilation. The *atman* is immortal. Even the transformation is only of the body. The state changes, not the *atman*. Knowing all this should be enough to console us; whether or no we have digested this knowledge is tested at a moment like the present one. Sorabji has become immortal. All he did was for the glory of his native land. If we but go on doing our duty, his passing away should make no difference to us. When the deaths of dear ones make us more keenly alive to our duty, separation from them causes no pain.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

## 128. LETTER TO BALVANTRAI THAKORE

[NAVAGAM,]

July 24, 1918

Your letter. I see that it will be necessary to agitate for introducing a new section in the Penal Code when we have a Parliament of our own. When two parties know the same Indian language, and one of them writes to the other or talks with him in English, the party so doing will be liable to a minimum of six months' rigorous imprisonment. Let me know what you think of such a section and also, before we gain swaraj, what action should meanwhile be taken against those who commit the offence.

I have understood your view on how military expenditure can be reduced. But swaraj is far away yet. Much will depend upon the situation obtaining at the time we get it.

Cannot we gradually prepare for self-government? To my mind, this is a status which from its very nature can be attained only gradually. A marriage must be preceded by engagement. In England, there is always a long period of courting. Either way, the simile of marriage seems to be inapt. A revolution is a sudden change and such a change never occurs in a peaceful manner. Hence a peaceful revolution is a contradiction in terms. India wants both peace and revolution. How is this possible?

I understand your desire that no public use should be made of your letter. We [both] wish that, after some time, there should be no need to use the word "private".

I am here today for some inquiry in the villages. Having a little time on hand, I permitted myself this banter as well. But something remains yet. As you are still unconvinced that the agitation in Kheda was justified, I invite you, on behalf of the people, to come over here to see things for yourself and have your doubts removed. You are the only person, among those whom I know, whose doubt still persists.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

### 129. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

NAVAGAM,

*Thursday [July 25, 1918]*

CHI. MAGANLAL,

You have been frightened by Raojibhai as he was by me. He read too much into my words.

No, my ideals have not changed. Despite my bitter experiences in India, my conviction remains the same as ever, that we have but little to learn from the West. The evils I have seen here have made no change in my fundamental idea nor has this war. The old idea has developed into something purer. I have certainly not come to feel that we shall have to introduce Western civilization. Nor do I suppose that we shall have to take to drinking and meat-eating. To be sure, I have felt, in all seriousness, that Swaminaryana<sup>1</sup> and Vallabha-charya<sup>2</sup> have robbed us of our manliness. They made the people incapable of self-defence. It was all to the good, of course, that people gave up drinking, smoking, etc; this, however, is not an end in itself, it is only a means. If a smoker happens to be a man of character, his company is worth cultivating. If, on the contrary, a man who has never smoked in his life is an adulterer, he can be of little service. The love taught by

<sup>1</sup> Swami Sahajanand (1781-1833) ; founder of a *Vaishnava* sect of this name

<sup>2</sup> 1473-1531 ; teacher, principally responsible for spreading the *bhakti* cult in Gujarat

Swaminarayana and Vallabh is all sentimentalism. It cannot make one a man of true love. Swaminarayana and Vallabh simply did not reflect over the true nature of non-violence. Non-violence consists in holding in check all impulses in the *chitta*<sup>1</sup>. It comes into play especially in men's relations with one another. There is not even a suggestion of this idea in their writings. Having been born in this degenerate age of ours, they could not remain unaffected by its atmosphere and had, in consequence, quite an undesirable effect on Gujarat. Tukaram and Ramdas had no such effect. The *abhangas* of the former and the *shlokas* of the latter admit ample scope for manly striving. They, too, were *Vaishnavas*. Do not mix up the *Vaishnava* tradition with the teaching of Vallabh and Swaminarayana. Vaishnavism is an age-old truth.

I have come to see, what I did not so clearly before, that there is non-violence in violence. This is the big change which has come about. I had not fully realized the duty of restraining a drunkard from doing evil, of killing a dog in agony or one infected with rabies. In all these instances, violence is in fact non-violence. Violence is a function of the body. *Brahmacharya* consists in refraining from sexual indulgence, but we do not bring up our children to be impotent. They will have observed *brahmacharya* only if, though possessed of the highest virility, they can master the physical urge. In the same way, our offspring must be strong in physique. If they cannot completely renounce the urge to violence, we may permit them to commit violence, to use their strength to fight and thus make them non-violent. Non-violence was taught by a Kshatriya to a Kshatriya.

The difference between the West and the East is what I have explained it to be,<sup>2</sup> and it is a great one. The civilization of the West is based on self-indulgence, ours on self-control. If we commit violence, it will be as a last resort and with a view to 'lokasangraha'<sup>3</sup>. The West will indulge in violence in self-will. My taking part in [the movement for] a Parliament and similar activities is not a new development; it is quite an old thing and is only intended to ensure a check on these bodies. You will see this if you read my article on Mr. Montagu's scheme. I simply cannot bring myself to take interest in the

<sup>1</sup> Mind

<sup>2</sup> Vide "Speech on Indian Civilization", 30-3-1918.

<sup>3</sup> That which promotes the conservation of society; vide *Bhagavad Gita*, III:

movement, but I can spread my ideals by working in it. When I saw that I could continue in it only by sacrificing ideals, I decided to retire from the movement.

I think you have your reply in what I have said. I cannot explain much when I am there for a day and so I have set down the thing in writing. This will enable you to think and ask me questions, if fresh doubts occur to you.

I continue to be in Navagam. I wanted to leave here today, but perhaps I may not be able to do so.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

### *130. LETTER TO RAJIBHAI PATEL*

[NAVAGAM,]

*July 25, 1918*

DEAR RAOJIBHAI,

I did not mind your letter. You may ask any questions you have. And I shall give you a written reply so that you may have something to think over. I know very well that you are doing your whole duty by Manibhai and the boys. That is what reconciles me to separation from you. I think that by living with them you would harm both yourself and them. You will not be serving Vimala's<sup>1</sup> interests by staying in Sojitra and carrying out Manibhai's wishes in all matters. On the contrary, you will be able to serve everybody by staying away and strengthening your character through *tapascharya*. Against Manibhai, you are only offering satyagraha and satyagraha can never be wrong. It is not any ill-will towards Manibhai but your love for him which keeps you away. Mirabai forsook her husband out of her love and so, in his love, did Lord Buddha leave his devoted wife and his parents. What is true for you is also true for Shivabhai. Supposing you return from the war unhurt, may it not be that things will have changed for the better for you, that you will be in a better position then to look after the children? We are not joining the army for the pleasure

<sup>1</sup> Addressee's daughter

of doing so but to seek an end to our agony and that of the country. Even if we commit an error in pursuit of this aim, no harm is done.

You are not likely to get peace by seeing me. While we are engaged in cleaning things up, there is bound to be commotion. We must find peace in the midst of it all. When washing clothes, we strike them but feel happy doing so because we know that this makes them clean.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

### *131. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK*

NADIAD,  
*July 26, 1918*

MY DEAR MILLIE,

Sorabji is no more. A cable has just arrived from Johannesburg giving the sad news. There is nothing striking about this death. Many like Sorabji have died before now. But Sorabji has played such an important part in our lives that his sudden death comes like a rude shock. It is only one's faith in the indestructibility of energy and continuity of effort that reconciles one to activity in life. An event is a shock when we do not understand its purpose and its seasonableness. But is God's plan, I suppose, there is nothing unseasonable and nothing purposeless.<sup>1</sup> Do please write to his wife Kunverbai Sorabji Adajania, Surat.

I hope you received the few lines I sent you the other day at the back of Mr. Hasan Imam's letter.

I am just now at a little village to avenge an insult offered to the villagers by a petty official. In any other place, there would have been bloodshed over such an insult. Here I may end with doing nothing. I return to Nadiad today.

With love to you all,

*Yours,*

BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

<sup>1</sup> The letter up to here appears in "Letter to C.F. Andrews", 29-7-1918.



## 132. THE LATE SORABJI SHAPURJI ADAJANIA

[NADIAD,]  
July 27, 1918

THE EDITOR  
*THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE*

SIR,

One of the best of Indians has just passed away in Johannesburg in the person of Sorabji Shapurji of Adajan, near Surat, at the age of thirty-five. And it is my mournful duty to pay a humble tribute to a fellow-worker. Mr. Sorabji, though known to a select company of friends, was unknown to the Indian public. His work lay in South Africa. He was a prince among passive resisters. He joined their ranks when the struggle in South Africa was at its highest and when it had travelled beyond the confines of the Transvaal. When he joined the struggle, I must confess, I had my doubts about his ability to go through it. But he soon made his mark as a front-rank satyagrahi. Neither he nor I ever expected that he would have to undergo a series of imprisonments amounting in all to over 18 months with hard labour. But he went through it manfully and cheerfully. Mr. Sorabji was a small trader when he took to public life in South Africa. He had a High School education. But such as it was, he made the most effective use of it in the Transvaal. During the struggle, he showed a steadfastness of purpose, probity of character, coolness of temper, courage in the midst of adverse circumstances, such as the best of us do not often show. There were occasions when the stoutest hearts might have broken—Sorabji never wavered.

After the struggle was closed, it was my intention to send to England some one from among a band of young Indians who had proved themselves capable warriors. A friend had offered the needful funds. The choice, for a variety of reasons, fell upon Mr. Sorabji. It was a question, whether having abandoned the life of a student for over eight years, he could take to it again. He was, however, determined. His ambition was to become a barrister and fit himself for fuller service. To England he went. He had come in close touch with Mr. Gokhale when he was in South Africa. He came in closer touch in London. And I knew that Mr. Gokhale had the highest opinion of Mr. Sorabji's worth. He had invited him to become a member of his

Society. The deceased took an active part in all the leading movements among Indians in London. He was for some time Secretary of the London Indian Society. He was the first to join the Indian Ambulance Corps that was formed in London at the inauguration of the war and served at Netley, nursing the sick and the wounded. After being called to the Bar, he proceeded to South Africa, where he intended to practise the profession and return to India after he had given a number of years to South Africa and found a substitute. But alas! fate has willed it otherwise and a career full of promise had to come to an abrupt end. The deceased was only 35 when he died.

In all I have said above, I have hardly described the man in Sorabji. He was faithful to a degree. He was a true Parsee, because he was a true Indian. He knew no distinctions of creed or caste. Love of India was a passion with him, her service an article of faith. He was indeed a rare man. He leaves a young widow to mourn his death. I am sure there are many friends of Sorabji to share her grief.

*Yours, etc.,*

M. K. GANDHI

*The Bombay Chronicle, 29-7-1918*

### *133. LETTER TO SIR WILLIAM VINCENT*

NADIAD,

*July 27, 1918*

To

THE HONOURABLE SIR W. H. VINCENT, KT., K.C.S.I.

I thank you for your letter dated the 22nd instant. I venture to hope that the tribunal will be thoroughly impartial and that it will be appointed in good time. May I expect another letter from you in due course?

N. A. 1.: Home, Political (A): January 1919: Nos. 3-16

### 134. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

NADIAD,

*Ashadh Krishna 4 [July 27, 1918]*

DEAR JAMNALALJI,

Your love makes me feel ashamed. I wish—I ask of God—that I may deserve all that love. I hope that your devotion will ever lead you forward on the path of virtue.

For success in the task of spreading education in Marwar a good organizer is needed.

The work of recruitment is going on very slowly. So far the number may be about 150. No one has yet been sent. I am trying to raise a battalion of Gujaratis.

*Yours,*

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2841

### 135. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

NADIAD, GUJARAT,

*Ashad Vad 5, July 28, 1918*

CHI. RAMDAS,

I received your letter. It is certainly regrettable that you have to leave service again and again. It will be good if you don't make a change now. Umiyashankar was telling me that your accommodation can easily be arranged in his shop. There will be no harm if you go there. You can certainly come to me whenever you want. Go to England if they send you from there. There is nothing wrong in that either. Besides Sorabji<sup>1</sup> is now gone. I cannot forget him. The moment I am idle innumerable recollections of Sorabji flood me.

If it is your wish that you should go to England for studies and then work in South Africa you may do so. The course there is indeed

<sup>1</sup> Sorabji Shapurji Adajania. For Gandhiji's tributes to him, *vide* "The Late Sorabji Shapurji Adajania", 27-7-1918.

tough. If you had been here and if you had agreed, I would have sent you to the War. I have come to realize that this is our paramount duty. A young man must learn self-defence. I have not forgotten the insults inflicted upon you by that Pathan. I had defended you but that gave me no satisfaction. How can you understand ahimsa fully at this tender age? It is possible that some extraordinary young man may acquire the knowledge early and become an ocean of compassion. But generally a young man must know how to defend himself. Ahimsa is the extreme limit of human strength. It is not a quality of weak or cowardly persons. What do they know of ahimsa? Devdas is impatient to get himself recruited for the War, but he is doing such good work in Madras that he cannot be spared from there.<sup>1</sup> I gave the same advice to Harilal. But of course how can he undertake such labours? I shall try for you. But it will be wholly your choice. You may gladly come if you are tired there and if you want to become a soldier. You alone must consider the matter. I would have enticed Manilal too. Only his case is similar to that of Devdas. So he should not be enticed away.

You can get an idea of the situation here from the enclosed pamphlet<sup>2</sup>. From the Ashram Nanubhai, Shankerlal, Surendra, Ramanand and Ramjibhai will come.

You should not fret. You should consider yourself free and do as you want. Only thus will you rise. If you do not know something do not be scared. If you want to learn it you must put in the requisite labour.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Motana Man*, pp. 16-17

<sup>1</sup> Devdas Gandhi was teaching Hindi in Madras.

<sup>2</sup> Presumably "Appeal for Enlistment", Leaflet No. 2 issued on July 22, 1918; vide "Appeal for Enlistment", 22-7-1918.

### 136. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

[NADIAD,]

July 29, 1918

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I must indulge myself again. I begin to perceive a deep meaning behind the Japanese reluctance to listen to the message of a Prophet from a defeated nation.<sup>1</sup> War will be always with us. There seems to be no possibility of the whole human nature becoming transformed. *Moksha* and ahimsa [are] for individuals to attain. Full practice of ahimsa is inconsistent with possession of wealth, land or rearing of children. There is real ahimsa in defending my wife and children even at the risk of striking down the wrongdoer. It is perfect ahimsa not to strike him but intervene to receive his blows. India did neither on the field of Plassey.<sup>2</sup> We were a cowardly mob warring against one another, hungering for the Company's<sup>3</sup> silver and selling our souls for a mess of pottage. And so have we remained more or less—more rather than less—up to today. There was no ahimsa in their miserable performance, notwithstanding examples of personal bravery and later corrections of the exaggerated accounts of those days. Yes the Japanese reluctance was right. I do not know sufficiently what the fathers of old did. They suffered, I expect, not out of their weakness, but out of their strength. The *rishis* of old stipulated that their religious practices were to be protected by the Kshatriyas. Rama protected Vishwamitra from the *rakshasas* disturbing his meditations. He could later on dispense with this protection. I find great difficulties in recruiting but do you know that not one man has yet objected because he would not kill. They object because they fear to die. This unnatural fear of death is ruining the nation. For the moment, I am simply thinking of the Hindus. Total disregard of death in a Mahomedan lad is a wonderful possession.

I have not written a coherent letter today but I have given you

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to Rabindranath Tagore whose speech in Tokyo against Japan's imitating the West was greeted with unbecoming derision.

<sup>2</sup> In 1757 at the battle of Plassey, British forces under Clive gained a decisive victory over the much larger forces of Siraj-ud-Daula because of the treachery of his own chieftain, Mir Ja'far, who had conspired with the British.

<sup>3</sup> East India Company

indications of my mental struggle.

Do you know that Sorabji is dead. He died in Johannesburg. A life full of promise has come to an abrupt end. The ways of God are inscrutable.

With deep love,

*Yours,*

MOHAN

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### *137. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK*

[NADIAD,]

*July 29, 1918*

MY DEAR MILLIE,

Sorabji is no more. A cable has just arrived from Johannesburg giving the sad news. There is nothing striking about this death. Many like Sorabji have died before now. But Sorabji has played such an important part in our lives that his sudden death comes like a rude shock. It is only one's faith in the indestructibility of energy and continuity of effort that reconciles one to activity in life. An event is a shock when we do not understand its purpose and its seasonableness. But in God's plan, I suppose, there is nothing unseasonable and nothing purposeless.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### *138. LETTER TO S.K. RUDRA*

[NADIAD,]

*July 29, 1918*

DEAR MR. RUDRA,

I thank you for letting me share your happiness.<sup>1</sup> Sudhir is a brick. Yes he is doing good work, and so are the other boys each on his own line. It is a result of orderly training.

While you approve of my recruiting campaign, Charlie is fighting it out with me. He thinks it is just likely that I am deluding

<sup>1</sup> His son had been appointed Second Lieutenant and his son-in-law had secured a first class in Natural Science tripos.

myself. He thinks that this activity of mine may injure my service to the cause of ahimsa. I have taken it up to serve that very cause. I know that my responsibility is great. It was equally great when I was supine, feeling that recruiting was not my line. There was a danger of those who put faith in my word becoming or remaining utterly unmanly, falsely believing that it was ahimsa. We must have the ability in the fullest measure to strike and then perceive the inability of brute force and renounce the power. Jesus had the power to consume his enemies to ashes but he refrained and permitted himself to be killed for he so loved, etc.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### *139. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI*

[NADIAD,]

*July 29, 1918*

DEAR MR. SHASTRIAR,

Thakor has just arrived. He tells me you were again down with illness. You need a cruel doctor who would mercilessly order a complete fast and water treatment. But you can expect nothing but licensed murders from that most empirical of professions. Whenever I hear of your illness, I feel like shooting some doctor or other but my ahimsa comes in the way. Happily for you and India I have no parliamentary ambition. Otherwise I should introduce a Bill disqualifying people getting continuously ill from membership.

Here is a cable<sup>1</sup> from Polak. I cannot understand its full significance. But I suppose there is no danger of the scheme<sup>2</sup> being rejected by the country.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

<sup>1</sup> This is not available.

<sup>2</sup> The reference presumably is to the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme.

## 140. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[NADIAD,]

July 29, 1918

In the summer, living in a village appears grand indeed, but it is doubtful whether one would enjoy it in the monsoon. Personally, I think it would be very difficult for me to go to any place I like during the rainy season. My dislike of dirt is increasing, not diminishing. I feel suffocated if the lavatory is the least bit un-clean. Here, I go to an open space to answer the call of nature, carrying a hoe with me. I dig up before passing stools and, when I have finished, I leave the place after covering it with plenty of earth. I have realized that, because of our failure to observe this rule, innumerable diseases are spread, millions of flies bred. Those who are not particularly sensitive to lack of cleanliness are, I find, happy enough in a village. Last evening, two *bhajan*<sup>1</sup> parties came to see me. Their musical instruments must be worth some 5 or 10 rupees. These included drums, cymbals, *kartals*<sup>2</sup> and one single-stringed *tamboor*<sup>3</sup>. With these, they produced music which was all sweetness. All the songs were about Shri Krishna, how he provided Draupadi with an unending sari, ate the dish of greens with Vidur, humbled Duryodhana's pride and so on. All this is put in a language so sweet that it cannot but spread round the spirit of love and devotion. Why all this devotion to Krishna? As far as I can see, it must be because of his heroism and his unfailing solicitude for others. It is because he, with his infinite strength, helped the little Pandava kingdom to victory, destroyed the wicked Kauravas and freed the people from suffering, that he came to be sung of in songs and gained a place among the immortals. He cared nothing for the favour of one so mighty as Duryodhana. He was not tempted by his wealth, but relished Sudama's rice with gusto, such was his simplicity. It is a miracle the poet has wrought in the story of Krishna. There is no doubt that a man of such wisdom did exist. I wish you could read the whole *Mahabharata* in Sanskrit. You will then get a joy that I have missed. My subject was the grandeur of village life but I strayed into the story of Krishna. It was last night's

<sup>1</sup> Devotional Song

<sup>2</sup> Indian musical instruments

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*



music which made me think of it. I found that music even better than ours. It was natural and sweet. It was not very loud. The drum and the other instruments played low. The moon was full. We all sat under a tree. Everyone was in country clothes. The people spread out carpets and sat on them. They were all farmers. After having laboured all day, they were having innocent pleasure, drinking draughts of sweetness from the music of God's name. I said to one of them: "Friend, you are enjoying yourselves thoroughly." He replied: "Well, what else should we do? We prefer to pass our time in *bhajans* and *kirtans* rather than just gossip." These people, being *Baraiya* by caste, would ordinarily be looked upon as uncivilized, but they were not so in the least. They may be called uneducated but, in truth, they were nothing of the sort. I felt that, if the educated classes drew these people closer to themselves and poured new zest into them, one could put them to any task one chose. Their wisdom is boundless. One should only know how to utilize it. We are like the bad carpenter who finds fault with his tools. Well, I have written quite a long letter to you. Pass it on to Manilal after reading it. I do not know when I shall write another like this again. It is morning time, I have some leisure and my brain is brimful of ideas; I have emptied it a little before you. If you, too, can taste from this a measure of the happiness which was mine, I would have, in a real sense, given you a portion of your inheritance. We claim our share from the Government; on the same principle, if I share with you what I possess, I shall be free of my debt.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

### *141. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI*

[NADIAD,]

*July 29, 1918*

BELOVED KASTUR,

I know you are pining to stay with me. I feel, though, that we must go on with our tasks. At present, it is right that you remain where you are. If you but look upon all the children there as your own, quite soon you will cease to feel the absence of the latter. This is the least

one can do as one gets older. As you come to love others and serve them, you will have a joy welling up from within. You should make it a point to visit early in the morning all those who may be sick, and nurse them. Special food should be prepared or kept apart for anyone who needs such food. You should visit the Maharashtrian ladies, amuse their children or take them out for a walk. You should make them feel that they are no strangers. Their health should improve.

You should converse with Nirmala on useful subjects, that is, on religious matters and the like. You may ask her to read out the *Bhagavat* to you. She will even find the thing interesting. If you thus keep yourself busy in the service of others, believe me the mind will always be full of joy. And you must not omit to look after Punjabhai's meals and other requirements.

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

#### 142. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

[NADIAD,]

July 29, 1918

DEAR KISHORELAL,

This letter is meant for you and Shri Narahari. To the extent that Shri Narayanarao's charge that distinctions are made between Maharashtrians and Gujaratis is justified, it is our duty to try to remove the causes. Here is a field for the exercise of non-violence. The first step to take is for you all to come together and examine how much of truth there is in the charge. The Gujarati ladies should try to mix freely with the Maharashtrian ladies. The most important thing is to see that the children make no such distinction. It is not necessary to give exaggerated importance to what I have said; just reflect over it for a moment and do all that may need to be done.

As for prayers, I place this before you for consideration. We should not take the plea of inability so far that, in the end, we find ourselves incapable of doing anything at all. We should do the teaching as well as we can and overcome our shortcomings by gradual effort. Do you think I would use the plea of inability if I was myself required to teach Sanskrit? I know that my Sanskrit is no Sanskrit. But

I would certainly teach it if no other person was available and I would get over my deficiency day by day. It was in this way that Parnell topped them all in his knowledge of the rules of business in the House of Commons. You always think of your weakness and are afraid of doing anything. Would you not be happier if, using all your strength, you disposed of every task that fell to you?

In what manner should the children learn to use their strength? It is a difficult thing to teach them to defend themselves and yet not be overbearing. Till now, we used to teach them not to fight back if anyone beat them. Can we go on doing so now? What will be the effect of such teaching on a child? Will he, in his youth, be a forgiving or a timid man? My powers of thinking fail me. Use yours. This new aspect of non-violence which has revealed itself to me has enmeshed me in no end of problems. I have not found one master-key for all the riddles, but it must be found. Shall we teach our boys to return two blows for one, or tolerate a blow from anyone weaker than themselves but to fight back, should a stronger one attack them, and take the beating that might follow? What should one do if assaulted by a Government official? Should the boy submit to the beating at the moment and then come to us for advice, or should he do what might seem best in the circumstances and take the consequences? These are the problems which face us if we give up the royal road of turning the other cheek. Is the first course the right one because it is easier to take? Or is it that we shall come upon the right path only by treading through a dangerous one? The foot-tracks which go up the Himalayas lead in all directions, sometimes even away from the destination and yet an experienced guide will take us in the end to the summit. One cannot climb the Himalayas in a straight line. Can it be that, in like fashion, the path of non-violence, too, is difficult? May God protect us, may He indeed.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

### 143. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI SHAH

[NADIAD,]

July 29, 1918

DEAR PUNJABHAI,

Your decision is good.<sup>1</sup> All activity inspired by concern for *paramartha*<sup>2</sup> is in fact withdrawal from activity and ensures moksha. *Paramartha* lies in serving others. It requires a supreme effort to withdraw interest from oneself and direct it to others. One should have nothing but pleasure in doing one's best for others in the Ashram. Someone or other is ill there all the time. One should go visiting them during the day or keep the children amused by playing with them. Activity such as this brings no pain and leads to no bickerings. This is the only way to knowledge of the Self. You will realize this soon enough. Make it a daily practice to be for a while with the ailing ones like Bhavarji and others.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

<sup>1</sup> During Maganlal Gandhi's absence, who was at Allahabad, Punjabhai took his place in the Ashram.

<sup>2</sup> *Summum bonum*

#### 144. LETTER TO ABDUL KADIR BAWAZIR

NADIAD,  
*Monday, July 29, [1918]*<sup>1</sup>

BHAISHRI IMAM SAHEB,

Bhai Sorabji is Sorabji Shapurji, who qualified as a barrister. It is very good that you have decided to find some work. I am aware that you have been doing some reading, but for you and me it is not sufficient. Give my regards to Khatib Saheb. *Vandemataram* to Haji Sahab and Fatimabehn.

*Vandemataram from*  
MOHANDAS

BHAISHRI IMAM SAHEB ABDUL KADIR BAWAZIR  
KHATIB SAHEB'S HOUSE  
KAREDIWADI  
BOMBAY—2

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10783. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

#### 145. LETTER KASTURBA GANDHI

[NADIAD,]  
*July 31, 1918*

BELOVED KASTUR,

Your being unhappy makes me unhappy. If it had been possible to bring ladies, I would have brought you. Why should you lose your head because I may have to go out? We have learnt to find our happiness in separation. If God has so willed, we shall meet again and live together. There are many useful things one can do in the Ashram and you are bound to keep happy if you occupy yourself with them.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

<sup>1</sup> Only "July 30" is decipherable in the postmark. From Gandhiji's itinerary covering his stay at Nadiad, it appears that the letter belongs to the year 1918. Monday prior to July 30, 1918 corresponds to July 29.

## 146. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[NADIAD,]

*July 31, 1918*

CHI. MANILAL,

I have had no letter from you recently. Herewith a letter from Sam for you to read and ponder over. Whatever their fault, I am afraid you have been guilty of far too much anger and shown extreme malice. You were free to stand on your rights but should not have forgotten your manners. While insisting on order, you could have spared yourself the anger. None of them has put by any great sum of money, or appropriated any. What is Devibehn's fault? It is too much that Mr. West and Mr. Sam have had to sacrifice their children's education. It seems to me that you have vented on them your anger with me. You do not even visit them. Surely, you should not behave thus. I think you should apologize to them. Do this, however, only if you think that that is the right course, and not because it will please me. Anything you do without giving up your freedom will seem best to me.

I think I have given you many reasons to be angry with me. Please forgive me for this. I have pushed you about a good deal and that has interrupted your regular education. You can, however, forgive me only if you realize that this was inevitable. I have passed my whole life in pursuit of self-knowledge, in discovering where my duty lay. My work has been appreciated because I have acted as I believe. This has saved me from many a pitfall. But, looking at the matter superficially, your interests have suffered from a worldly point of view. Just as I have had to pay for my experiments, so have you and Ba. Ba has understood this and has therefore gained what no other woman has done. You have not understood this fully yet and therefore, harbour anger. I would still say that the service I have rendered to you brothers, no other man in my place would have done. I got you to share in my experiences on the path of dharma. What more can anyone do? Like other parents, I could have allowed you to go the way of the world and shaped my life in my own way. If I had done so, there would have been no bond left between you and me by now and we would have been to each other what Gokibehn is to me, a sister only in name. I could not have acted otherwise than I have

because, in my pursuit of truth, I would have been where I am and you would have wandered off the path. This would not have been for your good. If you think over this patiently, you will be able to get over your anger with me. Consider, there has been a rift between Harilal and me. His life follows a course all its own. A father and son are truly so when both follow a common mode of life, each supporting the other. I can take no interest in Harilal's life and he in mine. The fault is not his. The way he thinks is governed by his past actions. I am not angry with Harilal. But the chain which bound him and me together is broken and the sweetness which should inform the relations of father and son is no more. Such things happen often enough in the world. What is uncommon about me is that I could not draw Harilal after me in my search for dharma and so he kept away. He has, in sheer folly, lost his employer Rs. 30,000, has passed a disgraceful letter to him and is now without employment. As they know that he is my son he is not in jail. You have stayed on in my life, but are discontented. You can't bring yourself to go out of it, and yet do not altogether like being in it. This is why you are not at peace with yourself. If you can somehow manage to be contented, you will also have peace. I have not harmed you intentionally. All I have done I did in the belief that it was for your good. Is not this enough to bring down your anger against me? What I have said will surely not make you more angry. I was only too happy that you told me what you think. All the management must be in your hands now.

You will see my second appeal in connection with recruitment for the war. I have offered the services of five persons from the Ashram. There are others also eager to go, but it is not possible to send them. The five who are to be sent are Ramanandan, Surendra, Thakorlal, Nanubhai and Raojibhai. I shall of course be there. I believe a depot will soon be started here. Had Devdas not been doing the work of Hindi, he too would have joined. He is eager to do so. I have written to Harilal, but he is not likely to go. You are doing important work there; I cannot therefore ask you. Ramdas remains. He can certainly join if he wishes. Ramdas does not feel happy if he has to leave one job and take another. You may ask him.

Nirmala is in the Ashram at present. She has come of her own choice. How long she will stay, one cannot say. She will most probably bring in Gokibehn also.

Khushalbai has come to stay in the Ashram. Chhaganlal and

he live separately. Chhaganlal has joined the national school.

The buildings are still under construction. The weaving shed is ready. It is used for living also. The library and other buildings are yet to be constructed.

I feel the loss of Sorabji very keenly. We have now to begin from the scratch, as it were.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 115. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

### *147. LETTER TO MOHANLAL KHANDERIA*

NADIAD

*Ashadh Vad 8 [July 31, 1918]<sup>1</sup>*

DEAR SHRI MOHANLAL,

I have your letter concerning Kheda district. I have not received the money yet. I will use it for some work I have to do in connection with the war.

I should like you to do something to perpetuate Bhai Sorabji's memory. It will be difficult to get a worker like him. I think it will be best to institute a scholarship and send people to England.

Umiyashankar tells me that you are doing well. I am glad.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: G. N. 6210

<sup>1</sup> The mention of war effort makes it clear that the letter was written in 1918.



## 148. LETTER TO ADA WEST

[NADIAD,]  
July 31, 1918

MY DEAR DEVI,

. . .<sup>1</sup> What a tragedy this death of Sorabji ! I was feeling most comfortable about South Africa and hoping that now that Sorabji was there all would go well. My hopes have come to nothing . . .<sup>2</sup>

I do not know what you all think of my recruiting activity. I am working all the time at it. My argument is briefly this : India has lost the power to strike. She must learn to strike before she can voluntarily renounce the power of striking. She may never renounce. Then she will be as bad as the West, or, better still, the modernists. Today she is neither. The ancients in India knew the art of warfare—the art of killing—and yet reduced the activity to a minimum and taught the world that it is better to refrain than to strike. Today I find that everybody is desirous of killing but most are afraid of doing so or powerless to do so. Whatever is to be the result I feel certain that the power must be restored to India. The result may be carnage. Then India must go through it. Today's condition is intolerable.

Yours,  
BHAJ

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

## 149. SPEECH AT SURAT

August 1, 1918

I have not come to Surat today to make a speech, but went to Adajan to pay my respects and offer condolences to the wife of a personal friend of mine, Mr. Sorabji Shapurji, who was my co-worker in South Africa during the satyagraha campaign and who has, as you must have read in the newspapers, passed away.<sup>3</sup> Being, meanwhile, pressed to make a speech, I have this opportunity today. As you know, swaraj has become a household word all over India. Mr. Montagu's<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Some words are omitted in the source.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* "The Late sorabji Shapurji Adajania", 27-7-1918.

<sup>4</sup> E. S. Montagu (1879-1924); Secretary of State for India, 1917-22 and co-sponsor of Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, published on July 8, 1918.

scheme of political reforms has been published and people differ in their views on it. Newspapers, too, have been expressing themselves on it. The scheme is good in parts but also strange in some ways. I have already expressed my views on it. It is necessary that we press for improvements which we desire in it. If we rest content with whatever is offered to us out of the many things we may have demanded, it would not seem that we were earnest in our demands. My opinion is that in anything that we demand by way of swaraj, we should agitate to get it as a matter of right, staking our very lives on it, and, simultaneously, stand by the Government and help it. In other words, in the war that is going on, we should send our men to France and Mesopotamia. We are not entitled to demand swaraj till we come forward to enlist in the army. It is futile to expect any results when we have not done our duty. It is extremely difficult to mention this in a public speech in Gujarat, especially in Surat, for the citizens of Surat see nothing about which they have to think and come to conclusions. It would seem from the attendance today that they had made up their mind on the subject. The first duty of a people all too eager for swaraj is to listen attentively and courteously to what is said on occasions like the present and accept whatever appeals to them and reject the rest. Till the people have learnt this, they will be unfit not only to enjoy swaraj but even to ask for it. All the 30 crores cannot go and listen to speeches but they may read newspapers and accept from them whatever they think best.

I do not advocate a go-slow policy in asking for swaraj; on the other hand, I am a staunch fighter in its cause. We would have equal rights in the Empire; if so, we should rescue it from the threat to which it is now exposed and then alone shall we be considered fit for them. There is a party which argues that the British Government should first concede our right to swaraj, grant equal rights in the army and in other matters, and then alone should we help it. The party making this demand is not to be dismissed out of hand. But the snag in this argument is that the Empire is not dependent on your help. At present our relationship with it is that of an owner and his slave, or a king and his subjects. It depends upon its own will whether it would change this relationship and make us its partners. Assuming, therefore, that it is inclined to do nothing of the kind, how do you think we are to lay down our terms before it? Some believe that, when its difficulties increase still further, it will accept all our conditions and we shall then come forward to help. But in this we run a great risk. We should rather wish that it never gets into such difficulty. We have got the

opportunity we were looking for to help the Empire and we shall do well to avail ourselves of it fully. I have been travelling all over India these days and I tell you, from what I have seen for myself, that India has altogether lost the capacity to fight. It has not a particle of the courage it should have. If even a tiger should make its appearance in a village, the people would not have the strength to go and kill it and so they petition the Collector to have it killed. Nor do they have the strength to fight back dacoits, should any descend on the village. Can a nation, whose citizens are incapable of self-defence, enjoy swaraj? Swaraj is not for lawyers and doctors but only for those who possess strength of arms. How in a people who are incapable of defending their lives, their women and children, their cattle and their lands, ever enjoy swaraj? This is no time to go into the question of how our people fell on such evil times and who is to blame for this state of affairs; what is necessary is to find a remedy. When the people become physically fit and strong enough to wield the sword, swaraj will be theirs for the asking. How can people who have lost their strength defend their religion? From my experience during the last three months, I know that we are utterly timid. People afraid of even a squirrel had much better think of improving their own condition than of getting swaraj. Here we have an invaluable opportunity for getting back the capacity to fight which we have lost and we should not miss it. If a people who do not know in what direction to look for a fort, do not know how to fire a gun, have no knowledge of the state of fortification on the border,—if they wish to know all this, they should certainly not miss this supreme opportunity which India has of supplying half a million men. We should not believe, either, that in availing ourselves of this opportunity we are helping the Government; we should believe, rather, that we are using it to acquire the strength to fight and get training in doing so. You will regret it afterwards if you miss this priceless opportunity. Mr. Tilak<sup>1</sup> advises us not to take part in the war unconditionally. I have greater reverence for Mr. Tilak than you have; in fact, one cannot show him enough reverence. If, once half a million men had joined, they refused higher posts [to Indians], there would be revolts everywhere and rivers of blood would flow. This is no time to pay attention to what Mr. Tilak says. The very services we render will answer his doubts. The half a million men whom we shall raise will go with love of swaraj in their hearts. When they come back, they are bound to get swaraj. If they have learnt military discipline, half a million others will be roused. And so parents

<sup>1</sup> “Lokamanya” Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920); patriot, politician and scholar.

should be told that, in offering recruits, they show their love for the country. This is what I do. America helps with three hundred thousand [men] every month; if we refuse, that will cost us our rights. I, therefore, entreat you again and again to ponder over what I have said today, for, if this thing [opportunity for military experience] which has offered itself to us slips away from our hands, there will be no possibility of our getting the other [swaraj]. Think over what I have told you and, if the idea appeals to you, come forward for sacrifices. If, however, you lay down terms, following Mr. Tilak, I would take no offence. With these words, I should like to resume my seat.

[From Gujarati]

*Gujarat Mitra and Gujarat Darpan*, 4-8-1918

### 150. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

NADIAD,  
*Ashad Vad 11* [August 2, 1918]<sup>1</sup>

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Try to get *Bhagirathkosh* (Urdu-Hindi Dictionary) by Dina Nath Kaul, Munshi Naval Kishore Press, Lucknow, price as. 12/- and *Complete Urdu Course* by R. C. Bhushan, Longmans Green & Co., price Re. 1/12/. If you are able to get these two books, send them to Devdas by registered post. His address is: C/o Ramji Kalyanji, Sowcarpeth, Madras. Take the money from Chi. Narandas.

*Blessings from*

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

You will have read the other journal.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

<sup>1</sup> The postmark bears the date August 3, 1918. However, *Ashad Vad 11* corresponds to August 2.

## 151. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

NADIAD,  
*August 2 [1918]*<sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR HENRY,

You must have duly received my letters passed on to you through Millie. Among these is a letter from Hassan Imam wherein he says he is going to fulfil his promise to you and that your complaint must have been received before he forwarded some funds and a brief.

I have a letter now from Dr. Mehta who has promised to do his share if it becomes necessary to support Millie through your incarceration. But I do not believe you will ever have to go through the fiery ordeal. If you have, sufficient for me to say that you need have no anxiety about Millie.

But I wish to utter a note of warning about your duty towards Pater. Are you bound to support him in his speculations or in his artificial style of life? Do you not spoil him? And may you do this especially when the funds you receive are largely received by you in your public character? You may not divide the legal profession from your other activities. Have you not renounced the right to earn more than your needs including humble family needs! You are a reformer at home as well as abroad. Your life must influence the family life or it must stand separately as a protest against its orthodoxy and present-day shortcomings. I do not pretend to solve these riddles for you. I merely point out that they exist for you and me and that you may not overlook them.

So, Sorabji is no more. These shocks sometimes so shake me that I do not want to live on this earth. But my faith in the justice of Providence enables me to regain my sanity. I have cabled you about Sorabji. You will have read my tribute in the *Times* and the *Chronicle*.<sup>2</sup> You will have sent me the Will and the policy and all the other papers Sorabji may have left with you. I went over to Surat to meet the widow. Sorabji has left a most lovely daughter.

<sup>1</sup> From the contents; *ibid*

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "The Late Sorabji Shapurji Adajania", 27-7-1918

I have your cable about the scheme.<sup>1</sup> No one will reject it *in toto*. But no one here seems disposed to accept it as it is. There is too much compromise in it. India is not getting what is right but what is expedient. Has the Civil Service any rights? Have the European merchants any rights as against the indigenous population? But they evidently think they have. There must be ceaseless warfare raged against this preposterous claim. I like the scheme as an honest effort. I should not care for it without substantial amendment. I should not weep if it is not passed. I would not be overcautious lest nothing may seemingly be achieved.

What do you say to my recruiting campaign?<sup>2</sup> It is for me religious activity undertaken for the sacred doctrine of ahimsa. I have made the discovery that India has lost the power of fight - not the inclination. She must regain the power and then if she will deliver to a groaning world the doctrine of ahimsa. She must give abundantly out of her strength, not out of her weakness. She may never do it. That to me would mean her effacement. She would lose her individuality and would be like the other nations a worshipper of brute force. This recruiting work is perhaps the hardest task undertaken by me. I may fail to gain recruits. I shall still have given the best political education to the people.

As you know, I am building the Ashram on a new site. The building work is slow.<sup>3</sup> It is so difficult to get men and material.

With love from us all,

*Yours,*

BHAI

From the original : Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

<sup>1</sup> The Montagu-Chelmsford Reform Scheme.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* also "Letter to Mrs. West", 23-6-1918.

152. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

[August 2, 1918]<sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR MILLIE,

Will you please read this and then send to Henry if you approve? I want you carefully to read the paragraph about Pater.

With love,

Yours,

BHAI

From the original : Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

153. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

NADIAD,

*Ashadha Vad 13* [August 4, 1918]<sup>2</sup>

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

On inquiring from Prabhudas, I came to know that Kashi<sup>3</sup> works in the kitchen. I feel that she should be completely free of that work. She can do only light household chores. Truly speaking, stitching, cleaning grains and reading are the right activities for her, that is to say, for keeping her occupied. She should devote as much time as she can to taking slow walks. My advice is that she should completely give up taking medicines and observe control over her diet. It will do her good if she takes only rice *kanji*<sup>4</sup> for the present. I have observed that milk is no good when one is ill. There is nothing better than milk for building up the body on recovery from illness. The diet for illness is fruit juice, green vegetables and things made of wheat but without *ghee*. Wheat *kanji* can be made the same way as the rice *kanji*. Barley water is also good. It is possible to remain fit by taking light food which helps to move bowels. If all this does not help, one should

<sup>1</sup> The foregoing item is an enclosure to this letter.

<sup>2</sup> From *Nadiad* in the date-line; Gandhiji was at Nadiad on *Ashadha Vad 13* only in the year '1918' and it corresponded to August 4.

<sup>3</sup> Wife of the addressee

<sup>4</sup> A kind of sour gruel made by steeping a substance in water and letting the liquor ferment

reconcile to one's state of health instead of trying in vain for cures. My suggestion would certainly do you no harm. On the contrary, it has the maximum potential for doing you good. Medicines hardly help and there is no limit to the harm they cause. A person like Dr. Jivraj Mehta, in spite of having worked under first-rate doctors abroad, has to struggle hard. Thanks to the conditions here and our attachment for the medicines, he earns money and name for himself.

Rubbing tobacco on teeth may do good. *Drakshasav*<sup>1</sup>, if given to Kashi, will certainly help her. It is not a medicine. It is food. It is a diet which acts but slowly. We can experiment with it. It seems Jatashankar Vaidya prepares it hyginically.

Kashi cannot digest solid food. She should for sometime be on liquid diet only.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32895

#### 154. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

*August 6, 1918*

MY DEAR CHARLIE<sup>2</sup>,

I shall be good this time and not accuse you of crimes against the laws of God and man regarding health. But there is no doubt that you need a curator euphemistically called a nurse. And how I should like to occupy that post! If you cannot have a nurselike me, who would make love to you but at the same time enforce strict obedience to doctor's orders, you need a wife who would see that you had your food properly served, you never went out without an abdominal bandage and who would not allow you to overworry yourself about bad news of the sickness of relatives. But marriage is probably too late. And not being able to nurse you myself I can only fret. I can do better if I pray and that is precisely what I am going to do. He must keep you well and free from harm so that you may glorify Him in your strength, if such be His will.

I am quietly settling down to my task as if it was the most

<sup>1</sup> An Ayurvedic medicine for building up strength

<sup>2</sup> 1871-1940; British missionary; co-worker of Tagore and Gandhiji; honoured as "Deenabandhu" (brother of the poor)



natural for me. The side issues do puzzle me but I shall soon cease to think about them. They are not before me for immediate solution. My life has never been fashioned thus. I have always declined to work out to my satisfaction all the possible deductions. I have taken up things as they have come to me and always in trembling and fear. I did not work out the possibilities in Champaran, Kheda or Ahmedabad nor yet when I made an unconditional offer of service in 1914. I fancy that I followed His will and no other and He will lead me "amid the encircling gloom". It delights my heart to know that the Poet<sup>1</sup> is himself teaching the boys. For me it is worth far more than his visit to America and I equally enjoy the idea of your sharing that burden of his. May God bless you both and keep you well.

Do please convey my respects to Baradada<sup>2</sup>.

With love,

*Yours,*

MOHAN

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### 155. LETTER TO O. S. GHATE

*August 6, 1918*

DEAR MR. GHATE<sup>3</sup>,

Please assure Mataji<sup>4</sup> as also our friends that I am leaving no stone unturned to secure a quick but perfectly honourable release. I know everything about Mr. Mahomed Ali's<sup>5</sup> illness. And I wish I could hasten the discharge even on that ground. But I hate making appeals ad *misericordiam*. I take it that in due course they will get copies of my correspondence with Sir Wm. Vincent<sup>6</sup> through Mr.

<sup>1</sup> Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941); awarded Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913; founder of Shantiniketan, now a University

<sup>2</sup> Dwijendranath Tagore; eldest brother of Rabindranath Tagore; he was affectionately called "Borodada".

<sup>3</sup> Counsel for the Ali Brothers

<sup>4</sup> Mother of Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali

<sup>5</sup> Younger brother of Shaukat Ali and editor of the weekly, *The Comrade*. Both the brothers were interned by the Government soon after the outbreak of the First World War.

<sup>6</sup> Home Member, Government of India

Shuaib<sup>1</sup>. Sir Wm. talks of a tribunal of inquiry. I do not want to boycott it. Before throwing the country in a very big agitation I want to give the Government every opportunity of a proper and decent retreat. I hope the Brothers will, if called upon, appear before the committee. Should, however, an agitation become necessary I shall certainly interview the Mataji before embarking upon it. I suppose that is what she desires....<sup>2</sup>

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### 156. LETTER TO DEV

August 6, 1918

DEAR MR. DEV<sup>3</sup>,

I have your resolution<sup>4</sup> about the threatened split. I do think we are overvaluing a mechanical and unnatural unity. If there are two definite parties representing definitely different policies why should they not have their separate and distinct platforms? Each may press its own policy for the country's acceptance. The people can only gain thereby. If one party goes stronger than another, the advent of swaraj will not be retarded. If either is feeble or half-hearted we should suffer and we shall deserve to. The remedy lies in both becoming strong and firm. At the present moment there is too much hypocrisy among us. This corrupts the people. No one will be deceived by a patched-up peace between the different sections.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

<sup>1</sup> Shuaib Qureshi, editor of *New Era*

<sup>2</sup> Words omitted in the source

<sup>3</sup> Brother of Dr. H. S. Dev, secretary, Servants of India Society

<sup>4</sup> Passed at a Dhulia meeting deploring the rift in the Congress

## 157. LETTER TO SANTOK GANDHI

[SURAT,]

August 6, 1918

CHI. SANTOK <sup>1</sup>,

Why should Rukhi<sup>2</sup> fall ill so frequently? I know she is weak from her birth but that only means that we should take all the greater care of her. To bring up children is a great art. It calls for much self-discipline on the part of parents. I should like you to submit yourself to it all if only you can thereby help the children to grow well. I have already told you that you may use turmeric if you think its absence is to blame; you may use it to prepare things specially for Rukhi. If, this way, you succeed in improving her health, we may allow the use of turmeric for others as well. If you can but improve the children's physique, even by introducing anything else besides turmeric, I should like you to do so. My own impression is that Rukhi keeps eating what she cannot digest or more than she can digest. This overloads her stomach and brings on illness. When she has recovered, put her on milk, rice and vegetables and very likely she will be all right. For some time yet she will not be able to digest *roti*<sup>3</sup>. This is my belief; I don't know what your experience has been. Do anything you like. All that I want is that you make her as strong as steel.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

<sup>1</sup> Wife of Maganlal Gandhi

<sup>2</sup> Addressee's daughter

<sup>3</sup> Indian bread

## 158. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

August 6, 1918

BHAISHRI PRANJIVAN<sup>1</sup>,

Today I started reading your article on smallpox. I have still to read some of it. It is quite a long one. You repeat things over and over again. In fact, the article may even be considered beyond the terms of reference. However, you have taken great pains over it, and the article is a valuable document. You have given a very good idea, but could have given a far better one, of the number of children sacrificed through the superstitious insistence on smallpox vaccination. While the Goddess of smallpox has been laid to rest, another, equally terrible, has taken her place. Your article should be published in the form of a book and distributed to municipalities. If you would shorten it for popular consumption or write another in the form of a price of it and permit me to print that, I should like to circulate it. If you write another independent article in Gujarati, a short one, we may print and distribute that one too. I shall finish reading this today or tomorrow but I am putting down this suggestion because I thought it necessary to send it at once.

Send me a few copies right now. I want to give them to some doctors and obtain their opinion on it.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

<sup>1</sup> M.D., Bar-at-Law, and jeweller; his association with Gandhiji began when he received Gandhiji on his arrival in England for the first time as a student. He rendered financial help to Gandhiji in his activities from the days of the Phoenix Settlement till his death in 1933,

## 159. LETTER TO RAMNANDAN

August 6, 1918<sup>1</sup>

CHI. RAMNANDAN<sup>2</sup>,

I have your letter. I can give you money for your journey and debit it to your account. When you join up, I shall send you the money for your journey here if I am able to get it from the authorities. I shall not be able to call you back until the time of your joining up. You heard about what happened in the case of Shyamji. It is improper to impose on the Ashram the burden of your travel expenses. I can understand your aspirations. I feel that those who would keep up family bonds ought not to be admitted to the Ashram. It does not look nice to refuse you, nor does it seem proper to pay you the expenses. That is my dilemma. You alone can help me out of it. If you are agreeable to going on the terms indicated above, please show this letter to Fulchand<sup>3</sup>. He will give you the money for the journey.

[From Hindi]

*Mahadevbhai ki Diary*, Part I

## 160. LETTER TO HANMANTRAO

August 7, 1918

MY DEAR MR. HANMANTRAO<sup>4</sup>,

I am sorry about your health. I know that the greatest desideratum is exercise. And when there is little exercise, the food ought to be low, free from much nitrogen and fat. Wheat, fruit, rice and vegetables—these ensure good health. They may fail to give vigour. The latter when wanted can be acquired by adding pulses including groundnuts. Can you not go to Bangalore or the Nilgiris? If you can but get invigorating climate, you will soon pick up. Baths and mental rest will do something for you but will not give you the

<sup>1</sup> From the entry in the *Diary*

<sup>2</sup> An inmate of Sabarmati Ashram

<sup>3</sup> Fulchand Kasturchand Shah; an inmate of the Ashram in its early days; political and constructive worker of Saurashtra

<sup>4</sup> Member, Servants of India Society

original frame. You ought yet to grow. Devdas<sup>1</sup> tells me you have been very good to him. I know he will miss you when you go away. Take a Hindi book with you, in preference to any other literature. Do write to me after you get the change, wherever it is.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### *161. LETTER TO SHANKARLAL BANKER<sup>2</sup>*

*August 7, 1918*

I have read your telegram to the revered sister<sup>3</sup>. I should not like you to be so concerned about me. It is your love which prompts your words. Whether or not I join will be determined solely by the interests of the country. I am certainly not likely to keep away out of resentment. Will you maintain that I must join even if it is clear to me that I would serve better by not doing so?

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

### *162. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN*

*August 9, 1918*

DEAR MR. NATESAN<sup>4</sup>,

May I thank you for looking after Devdas during his illness and will you please convey my thanks to Dr. Krishnasamy for his great attention to Devdas.

You will not hesitate to criticize my writings and doing[s] when you feel the necessity.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 2231

<sup>1</sup> Devdas Gandhi (1900-56); youngest son of Gandhiji

<sup>2</sup> Came in close contact with Gandhiji during the Ahmedabad textile mill workers' strike; publisher of *Young India*; secretary, All-India Spinners' Association; was convicted with Gandhiji in 1922

<sup>3</sup> Anasuyabehn Sarabhai

<sup>4</sup> Editor, *The Indian Review*, Madras

### 163. LETTER TO G.K DEVADHAR<sup>1</sup>

August 9, 1918

Miss Winterbottom<sup>2</sup> is an old lady of high culture. She takes a prominent part in many ethical movements. But of course Polak<sup>3</sup> will be your guide, friend and philosopher. He will take you to all Englishmen I know politically. Lest he forget, remind him to take you to the polytechnic, Barnardo's Home<sup>4</sup> and allied institutions. Some of these at close quarters, you may not quite like. You will, of course, approach them all with a critical eye. All is not gold that glitters. A safe voyage, pleasant sojourn, and safe return.

I hope Mrs. Devadhar is better.

*Yours sincerely,*

M.K.GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### 164. LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH

[NADIAD,]

August 9, 1918

I wanted your criticism. And you need not have taken so long [to offer it]. Your comments are on the whole just. If I had not started the Ashram such as it is, I would have been able to achieve nothing at all. My hope has been that good men will join it. The lapses in the Ashram prove that even such men are not without their faults and are evidence of its imperfect state. Without Maganlal<sup>5</sup>, the Ashram would never have come to be founded. His shortcomings bespeak mine. When I said that I, too, was a novice, I meant it. The

<sup>1</sup> Member of the Servants of India Society, Poona; succeeded V. S. Srinivasa Sastri as its president

<sup>2</sup> Secretary of the Union of Ethical Societies, London; *vide* "Letter to Miss F. Winterbottom", 13-11-1908.

<sup>3</sup> H.S.L. Polak; friend and co-worker of Gandhiji; editor of *Indian Opinion*; *vide* "Interview to Reuter", 31-1-1908.

<sup>4</sup> Institution for destitute children founded by Thomas John Barnardo (1845-1905) with headquarters in London

<sup>5</sup> Maganlal Gandhi; second son of Khushalchand Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin; sometime manager of the Phoenix Settlement and later of the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati

activities of the Ashram are a recreation for me and my experiments. There is bound to be some breaking of things in the course of an experiment. Out of all this the real thing will emerge. But only he who goes searching for it will secure it. If persons like you continually function as oxygen, the carbonic acid gas<sup>1</sup> can be eliminated. Such gas will always appear and oxygen will always purify it. What is true of the body is true of the universe. Tell Maganlal and the teachers what you have told me and the thing will be on the rails. I should not like you to give way to despair. Your criticism will be fruitful if it results in your taking a determined stand and urges you on to fight for purification. You ought not to allow it to lead you to frustration.

We are not now going to build the library. The school building will take time yet. My intention is to stop after building the hostels. We shall make additions to the loom-house sufficient to accommodate us. It seems to me that we cannot escape having to spend on the teachers. We shall, of course, not invite any more, though I think one or two may be needed. Weaving and agriculture were introduced because we wanted to do constructive work. I am not sorry that we bought all this land. I am worried about the weaving programme. Its accounts must be as clear as light. There should be proper supervision over the work and that is why Maganlal has been asked to go round.

We shall certainly have to start weaving dhotis and saris as well. They are needed. Those who wear them include the poor too. We shall not succeed in making others forget beauty altogether. Not that we are to forget khadi. Our desire, rather, is to seek out every weaver of khadi. The effort may indeed cost us some money.

I have written to you a rambling letter. You stated one side. I have given the other, the ideal. Both are true. One man of character can tilt the balance on the side of virtue. I should like you to acquire that strength of character and use it.

We must, to be sure, correct mistakes where we find them, and wind up what we cannot manage. I did this in South Africa and Charnparan, and will do so here if necessary. Though I have written all this, there is still need for a personal discussion.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji uses the English expression.



## 165. LETTER TO A FRIEND<sup>1</sup>

August 9, 1918<sup>2</sup>

If you read my book<sup>3</sup> again you will find the answers to many of your questions,—what fruits to take, for instance.

The question of the use of oils, etc., is a difficult one. My experience is that not more than half an ounce [of these] should be taken. We do not have olive oil in this country. Sesame oil is good as a substitute but it is not quite as harmless. Dates and peanuts are no doubt hard, but if they are made part of one's diet they can be tolerated. Of almonds very few should be taken. It is not good to eat too many milk products. One can subsist quite well on peanuts taken with guavas, etc. Peanuts are no substitute for almonds. Wheat is fruit in a way. But the word "fruit" is used in a technical sense in my book and is precisely defined. More will be found about vegetables than about fruits in my book. But I see that vegetables are necessary in India. Pulses are difficult to digest. On further experience I have come to the conclusion that the best diet for India is wheat and vegetables. Those who have to do much physical labour may well use pulses too. From a religious point of view what I said about milk still stands. But, from the point of view of health and under Indian conditions, giving up of milk seems an impossibility. It is many years since I gave up milk and I am under a vow never to take it in this life. But I cannot advise others to give up milk so long as I have not a substitute having the qualities of milk. I had hoped that it would be possible to manage on sesame and peanuts, and it is in a way possible, but as compared with milk these are somewhat deficient.

My advice to you is that, if you are in good health, you may take in the normal way wheat, milk, rice, etc., and on *ekadashi*<sup>4</sup> days take such fruits as may be easily available. You should fast when you feel indisposed and have a ten-mile constitutional early in the morning every day. One question is left unanswered. It is quite the right thing to chew sesame seeds, etc., instead of taking the oil. Eating more than two or three tolas of anything containing fat can be harmful. It seems better to eschew salt for two or three months in the

<sup>1</sup> This letter was written in reply to an enquiry about diet.

<sup>2</sup> From the entry in the *Diary*

<sup>3</sup> "General Knowledge about Health", a series of articles which appeared in the Gujarati section of *Indian Opinion* and were later published in the form of a book.

<sup>4</sup> The eleventh day of each. dark and bright fortnight observed with a fast

year than to give it up altogether. I have been watching for the last three days what effects the eating of salt has on my body. If you write after a month or two I shall give you my experience.

*Yours sincerely,*

MOHANDAS

[From Hindi]

*Mahadevbhai ki Diary Part I*

### *166. LETTER TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"*

NADIAD,

*August 10, 1918*

To

THE EDITOR

*THE TIMES OF INDIA*

SIR,

Your report of my recruiting address to a Surat meeting shows how dangerous it is for a public man to deliver anything but a written speech. My experiences of the reporting of my own speeches make my sympathy go out to Mr. Tilak and I certainly think that so long as reporting remains what it is in India, the safest thing is to challenge against them, and to accept their repudiation if they repudiate what is imputed to them. And it is quite likely that Mr. Tilak has been unjustly gagged. I hardly think that his gagging will improve recruiting in Maharashtra. But I know that here in Gujarat my own position becomes difficult. Many people will keep aloof simply as a protest against Mr. Tilak's gag. I hold no brief for him and I differ from his views and have told him that the conditions he requires are assured in the act of recruiting by men like him, and it hastens the grant of responsible government because it inspires confidence in us and gives us a power and strength which we do not possess today. I can only hope that Government will reconsider their decision and remove the gag and thus also remove a serious obstacle in the path of recruiters.

I have, however, digressed from my main theme. I wish to point out that I never said that those who ask for conditions should be "cast out from their party" nor did I lay stress on the help to the Empire. On the contrary, after showing the differences between Mr. Tilak's views and mine on the question of recruiting, I sympathized

with the audience in their dilemma in having to choose between the advice of a great distinguished and self-sacrificing patriot like Mr. Tilak and mine. I told them, however, that in their march towards responsible government, they could no longer be satisfied with the *ipse dixit* of leaders, no matter how great they might be, but that they would continuously have to weigh conflicting opinions and make their choice without in any way diminishing their regard for those leaders whose opinion they felt constrained to reject. And I then told them how it was to their whole interest that they should join the army. Then finally I put my favorite idea before the audience that if they wanted partnership with the British, the most becoming manner of effecting their purpose was to help them during the war. Your correspondent, however, makes the helping of the Empire the central point of my speech. I do not mind it. But I do wish to emphasize the fact that if public men were to be judged in accordance with the newspaper reports of their speeches, in the majority of cases they would make a poor show. Could you, a great journal, not insure the appearance of only accurate reports of public speeches in your columns?

M. K. GANDHI

*The Times of India*, 13-8-1918

### *167. LETTER TO SIR SURENDRANATH BANERJEA*

*August 10, 1918*

DEAR MR. BANERJEA<sup>1</sup>,

I have your telegram redirected from Ahmedabad where I am at present engaged in recruiting. A visit to Calcutta means at least a week simply in going and coming back. If I am to do my work at all satisfactorily, it is impossible for me to absent myself for such a long time, and at the present moment I dare not do so, for I have just heard from the government that they have acceded to my proposal to open a training depot in Gujarat and to form a Gujarat Company. You will agree that I cannot leave this work.

But even if I could have come, I do not know that I could have rendered much assistance. I hold strong, and probably peculiar, views

<sup>1</sup> 1848-1925; one of the founders of the Indian National Congress and president of its Poona session of 1895; member of the Central Legislature

not shared by many of the leaders. I implicitly believed that if we were to devote our attention exclusively to recruiting, we should gain full responsible government in a year's time, if not sooner. And instead of allowing our utterly ignorant countrymen to enlist *volens volens*, we should get an army of Home Rulers who could be willing soldiers with the knowledge that they will be soldiering for the sake of the country. I do, at the same time, believe that we should declare our opinion about the Montagu Chelmsford Scheme in unequivocal terms, we should fix the minimum of our demands and seek to enforce them at all costs. I consider the scheme to be good in its conception. It requires much modification. We should have no difficulty in arriving at a unanimous conclusion. I should like a party in the country that would be simply pledged to these two propositions, helping the Government on the one hand in the prosecution of the war, and enforcing the national demands on the other.

I do not believe that at a critical moment like this we should be satisfied with a patched-up truce between the so-called extremists and the so-called moderates, each giving up a little in favour of the other. I should like a clear enunciation of the policy of each group or party and naturally those who, by the intrinsic merit of their case and ceaseless agitation, make themselves a power in the land will carry the day before the House of Commons.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### 168. LETTER TO PROF. JEVONS<sup>1</sup>

*August 11, 1918*

DEAR PROF. JEVONS<sup>2</sup>,

I have gone through your note. I like it in the main. We should supply as many men as may be needed and this not through the official agency, but by Home Rule organizations. If we do this, we have Home Rule. I do not agree with your financial side. The comparison between England and India is hopelessly misleading.

<sup>1</sup> This is in reply to Prof. Jevons' note on "India's Share in the War", in which he had suggested enhancement of taxes.

<sup>2</sup> Herbert Stanley Jevons (1875-1955); Professor of Political Economy, Allahabad University; founder of *The Indian Journal of Economics*

England can afford. India is poverty-stricken. A few have enriched themselves during the war. But the masses? I have come in the closest touch with them in Kaira and Champaran. They have nothing. In Kaira, the exorbitant demands of the Government have impoverished a people who were once rich and powerful. In Champaran, the Planters have sucked the life-blood out of the people. You talk of a rise in the salt tax and send a shudder through my body. If you knew what is happening to the people owing to the tax, you would say, "Whatever else is done, the tax must go today". It is not the heaviness of it which oppresses, but the monopoly has artificially raised the price of salt and today the poor find it most difficult to procure salt at a reasonable price. To them salt is as necessary as water and air.

As for the publication of the note, I think it need not be. The Reformers have no faith in the Government and they feel that even now there is no honesty in their dealings with the people. It is a curious phenomenon. We do not trust you and yet we want you. It shows a consciousness of the wrongs done to the people but their utter incapacity to remedy them. Enslavement of the nation is thorough. The Englishmen have not deliberately meant it but they could not have done more if they had. I only cling to England because I believe her to be sound at heart and because I believe that India can deliver her mission to the world better through England. If I had not this faith, I so thoroughly detest her act of disarming India, her haughty and exclusive military policy and her sacrifice of India's riches and art on the altar of commercial greed, that I should declare myself a rebel.

I did not want to give you a long letter but my pen would not be checked.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

169. LETTER TO B. G. HORNIMAN<sup>1</sup>

[NADIAD,]

August 12, 1918

I have your peremptory letter. Though it was written on the 8th, it was received yesterday. I suppose we have to put up with these vagaries of the Postal Department during this time of stress. Really I am recruiting mad. I do nothing else, think of nothing else, talk of nothing else and therefore feel ill-fitted to discharge any presidential function, save one on recruiting. Will you not therefore excuse me?

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

170. LETTER TO RASIKMANI<sup>2</sup>

[NADIAD,]

August 12, 1918

I could read your letter to my wife only yesterday and hence the delay in replying. Kindly forgive me. Though we two are independent and have equal rights, we have decided our spheres of work for the sake of convenience. Moreover, at the time of our marriage, my wife was altogether illiterate. I gave her some education with great effort, but, for several reasons, I have not been able to do so to my satisfaction. It is not possible, therefore, for her to accept your proposal. I don't think my wife can read out her speech from the chair. She will certainly not be able to prepare her own speech. She is not at all conversant with your activities and hence cannot say anything extempore either. Very regretfully, therefore, we have both to request you all to excuse us.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, VoL IV*

<sup>1</sup> This was in reply to Horniman's invitation to Gandhiji to become the president of the Humanitarian Conference. Horniman was editor of *The Bombay Chronicle*.

<sup>2</sup> Secretary, Hindu Stri Mandal. The letter was in reply to her invitation to Kasturba Gandhi to preside over the annual function of the Mandal and the Dadabhai Naoroji birthday celebrations.

## 171. LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH

August 12, 1918

BHAISHRI PULCHAND,

We had a very important discussion yesterday. If even one person works patiently to see that my suggestions are acted upon, we should soon have the Ashram in the condition in which you desire to see it, and rightly. At present you are that person. Please hold meetings at once and settle the matter.

I kept my sense up to a quarter to six yesterday and added to my store of health. Then, all a-tremble, I broke the fast and brought great trouble on myself. Nor did I exercise self-restraint in deciding what to eat; I ate *ghens*<sup>1</sup>. If I had taken vegetable soup only, the painful result would certainly not have followed. Today I am too weak to get up or walk. I have almost to crawl to reach the lavatory and I have such griping pain there that I feel like screaming. Though in such pain, I am very happy indeed. I am getting a vivid idea of what well-deserved, immediate punishment can be. I am sure my pain will subside at a quarter to six. If I committed an error in eating, it is no excessive punishment to suffer for 24 hours. And the punishment will be so short because I have fasted today. Don't worry on my account. I believe by tomorrow I shall be completely free from the pain at any rate. If I am not careless in diet, I shall be my normal self in three or four days.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol IV*

<sup>1</sup> A semi-liquid preparation of rice

## 172. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[NADIAD,

On or about *August 14, 1918*]<sup>1</sup>

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I am realizing in my own experience the principle that satyagraha has a universal application. Ba's<sup>2</sup> letter gives the news about my health. Devdas has made a mistake and that must have set all of you worrying. I have been taking stringent measures and, with God's grace, will get over the thing. Today is the third day of a near-fast and because of that the pain is getting less severe.

I know you are not likely to have a moment free. Mind your health in all you do. Have no scruples about taking milk or ghee. Ask anyone to write and describe things to me, and give other news as well. If all the others keep busy in manual work, ask Santok. Even Radha, Keshu or Krishna may write. Or Giridhari, if he gets any time.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5767. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

<sup>1</sup> The letter was written on the third day of the "near-fast" which, in all probability, began when he was taken ill with dysentery on August 12, 1918.

<sup>2</sup> Kasturba Gandhi (1869-1942); Gandhiji's wife



### 173. IMPERIAL CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

August 15, 1918

The following contribution of Mahatma Gandhi sent to Mr. G. A. Natesan for the current issue of *The Indian Review* has been sent to us for publication in advance:

The Imperial Conference Resolution<sup>1</sup> on the status of our countrymen emigrating to the Colonies reads well on the surface but it is highly deceptive. We need not consider it a great achievement that we can pass the same laws against the colonials that they may pass against us. It is like a giant telling a dwarf that the latter is free to give blow for blow. Who is to refuse permission and passports to the colonials desiring to enter India? But Indians, no matter what their attainments are, are constantly being refused permission to enter the Colonies even for temporary periods. South Africa legislation of emigration was purged of the racial taint by the passive resistance

<sup>1</sup> The following is a summary of the proceedings of the Conference cabled by the Secretary of State to the Viceroy "The fifteenth meeting of the Conference was held on July 25th. The first subject discussed was reciprocity of treatment between India and the Dominions. This discussion followed on the resolution passed by the Conference last year, accepting the principle of reciprocity and a further resolution passed to that effect . . . in pursuance of which the Conference agreed as follows: (1) It is the inherent function of the Governments of several communities of the British Commonwealth including India that each should enjoy complete control in the composition of its own population by means of restriction on immigration from any other communities. (2) British citizens domiciled in any British country including India should be admitted into any other British country for visits for the purposes of pleasure or commerce including temporary residence for the purpose of education. The conditions of such visits should be regulated on the principle of reciprocity as follows: (a) The right of the Government of India is recognized to enact laws which shall have the effect of subjecting British citizens domiciled in any other British country to the same conditions in visiting India as those imposed on Indians desiring to visit such country. (b) Such right of visit or temporary residence shall, in each individual case, be embodied in the passport or written permit issued by the country of domicile and subject to *visa* there by an officer appointed by and acting on behalf of the country to be visited. If such a country so desires, such right shall not extend to the visit or temporary residence for labour purpose or to permanent settlement. (3) Indians already permanently domiciled in other British countries should be allowed to bring in their wives and minor children on condition (a) that no more than one wife and her children shall be admitted for each such Indian, and (b) that each individual so admitted shall be certified by the Government of India as being the lawful wife or child of such Indian. The Conference recommends other questions covered by the Memoranda presented to the Conference by the representatives of India."

movement. But the administrative principles still continue and will do so, so long as India remains both in name and substance a dependency.

The agreement arrived at regarding those who are already domiciled practically restates the terms of the Settlement of 1914. If it extends to Canada and Australia, it is a decided gain, for in Canada till recently there was a big agitation owing to the refusal of its Government to admit the wives and children of its Sikh settlers. I may perhaps add that the South African Settlement provides for the protection of those who had plural wives before the Settlement, especially if the latter had at any time entered South Africa. It may be the proper thing in a predominantly Christian country to confine the legality to only one wife. But it is necessary even for that country, in the interest of humanity and for the sake of friendship for members of the same Imperial Federation to which they belong administratively, to allow the admission of plural wives and their progeny.

The above agreement still evades the question of inequality of status in other matters. Thus, the difficulty of obtaining licences throughout South Africa, the prohibition to hold landed property in the Transvaal and the Free State, and virtual prohibition within the Union itself of the entry of Indians into the Free State, the prohibition of Indian children to enter the ordinary Government schools, deprivation of municipal franchise in the Transvaal and the Free State, and practical deprivation of the Union franchise throughout South Africa, barring perhaps the Cape. The resolutions of the Imperial Conference therefore are decidedly an eyewash. There is no change of heart in the Colonies and decidedly no recognition of Imperial obligations regarding India. The Fijian atrocities, to which Mr. Andrews has drawn pointed attention, show what is possible even in the Crown Colonies which are under direct Imperial control.

*New India*, 15-8-1918

## 174. LETTER TO ROBERT HENDERSON<sup>1</sup>

[NADIAD,]

August 17, 1918

DEAR MR. HENDERSON,

I am on my back. I am passing through the severest illness of my life and I was incapable of sending you a letter earlier. I was charmed with your simple, frank, straightforward letter. I thank you for it. I rarely take notice of incorrections [*sic*] in my reported speeches. I have so little opportunity even of reading them, but as this one in the *Times* was, I knew, calculated to do so much mischief, I felt I must correct the inaccuracies. I am glad I did so<sup>2</sup> for it has silenced the evil tongue and provided [me] an opportunity of becoming acquainted with you.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

## 175. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[NADIAD,]

August 17, 1918

CHI. DEVDAS,

My health today is as good as it can be. Still, I shall have to stay in bed. I suffered very much. It was all my fault. It is no exaggeration to say this. The punishment has been commensurate with the fault. Please don't worry about me at all. The nursing leaves nothing to be desired. For every service required, there are ten persons waiting to offer it and everyone showers the utmost love. This naturally puts me in mind of you. However, I have not felt your absence. You serve me best by going on with your work there<sup>3</sup>; and, besides, that is our strict

<sup>1</sup> Regarding this letter Mahadev Desai writes in his Diary: " [Gandhiji] delieed a speech on recruiting at Surat in the begining od th month. Some one sent a report of it to the *Times*. In it there were sentences that gave an impression of being critial of Talik Maharaj. The report was very defective. [Gandhiji] wrote a stiff letter to the *Times* about this. Reading that letter. Mr. Henderson, a civilian from Surat, wrote a letter to Gandhiji Expressing his regret fpr cpmmitting 'a serious mistake'".

<sup>2</sup> Vide "Letter to *The Times of India*", 10-8-1918.

<sup>3</sup> In Madras

rule. We must conscientiously observe the rigid rule that no one can forsake his post even on account of illness. I don't feel that I had lost my peace of mind even for a moment during all this terrible pain. Ba has come down here. Let us hope that in a few days I shall be enjoying better health than I used to and observing the rule of tasteless food more scrupulously.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

### 176. LETTER TO JAMNADAS DWARKADAS

*August 17, 1918*

BHAISHRI JAMNADAS<sup>1</sup>,

Though very anxious to write to you, being in severe pain I could not do so earlier and even today I can only dictate. I am still confined to bed but am sufficiently restored to be able to dictate letters. I am well on the way to recovery and so there is no cause for anxiety.

I was very much distressed to hear of your affair. Untruth does not become truth because of purity of motive. Just as a moneyed man is said to have but one eye for watching things, there is only one path of truth. Likewise, there are many paths of untruth, in the same way that a thief has as many as four eyes, as the saying goes. A person lost in this mazy network of paths is ruined and, if he happens to be a guardian or trustee, he also ruins the person whose interests he is appointed to protect. You will see this borne out by your experience, and that of others, on hundreds of occasions. No one has ever come, or will come, to harm through truth. How can you give up this highway? Why did you?

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

<sup>1</sup> A leading member of the Home Rule League

## 177. LETTER TO ANANDSHANKAR DHURVA

August 17, 1918

BHAISHRI ANANDSHANKARBHAI<sup>1</sup>,

Your worrying on my account bespeaks your love for me. Here is an exact description of what I have been through: On Monday and Tuesday, I suffered unbearable pain, even worse, if I could apply a stronger adjective still. I remained almost unconscious on those two days. I wanted to scream all the time, but controlled the urge with great effort. On Wednesday I felt better comparatively, and since then I have been improving day by day. Movement is still out of the question, thanks to extreme weakness. I shall have to be in bed for some days, but I am hopeful that everything will be all right in the end. The position being this, the question of taking medicine, as suggested by you, does not arise. If you indeed want to know my views on medicine, I shall certainly let you have them some day. Any doctor will admit that it would have been almost impossible to overcome an ailment such as mine in so short a time. What I have said should suffice to reassure you.

I have read your award. The workers were waiting for it as people do for the rains and now they will have peace. I, too, was awaiting it. Although they have been getting 35 per cent, I believed your award would greatly strengthen their position.

I must tell you the cause of my ailment. I have often revolved in my mind, while lying in bed, a line from a *bhajan*<sup>2</sup> we often sing in the Ashram. Shri Krishna says to Uddhav:

Mysterious is the way karma works itself out.

To be sure, we cannot do otherwise than sing to this effect, for our ignorance of many things is boundless, but, in fact, the working of karma is not so mysterious as all that. It is quite straight and simple. We reap as we sow. We get what we deserve. In this illness, I can see my own fault at every step. I must admit that nature had given me many warnings. I paid no heed to them and persisted in my ways, committing one mistake after another. I got punished for the first

<sup>1</sup> 1869-1942; Sanskrit scholar and Gujarati writer; Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the Benares Hindu University

<sup>2</sup> Devotional song

mistake; the punishment for the second was severer still. This went on, the severity of the punishment increasing with every lapse, as was but just. I see most clearly that there is no kindness like nature's. Nature is God and God is love; and every mistake is punished in love. I am learning much through this illness.

*Yours,*  
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]  
*Mahavevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

### *178. LETTER TO GOKULDAS PAREKH<sup>1</sup>*

*August 17, 1918*

DEAR FRIEND,

As your letter written in the month of June was addressed to me c/o the War Conference<sup>2</sup>, I got it only two days ago. You will therefore understand why you did not receive even so much as an acknowledgement from me. Though I got the letter so late, its value is no less to me on that account. I am, naturally, always eager to see you pleased. I see that you are, and think myself fortunate. I have realized from experience that the people of Kheda are strong enough for a good many tasks. I have learnt, and have been learning, much by my public contacts with these men and women. I trust you are well.

*Vandemataram from*  
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]  
*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

<sup>1</sup> Member of the Bombay Legislative Council from the Kaira District

<sup>2</sup> The War Conference held at Bombay on June 10, 1918, under the chairmanship of the Governor, Lord Willingdon

## 179. LETTER TO MANASUKHLAL RAOJIBHAI MEHTA

August 17, 1918

BHAISHRI MANASUKHLAL,

I got your letter today. I am down with serious illness these days. I am confined to bed. Perhaps this will be my deliverance. Treatments continue, my own. The mind is perfectly at peace. The knowledge that I have invited this illness by my own stupidity makes the pain I am going through seem less severe than it is.

I think the present condition of the educated young men is pitiable. If there is anything by which I can rouse this class of people to useful work, I can now do it, but it seems to me that the time is not ripe. That class is now lost in a delusion of its own creation. I am convinced that this delusion<sup>1</sup> would never have come to possess them simply through the policies of Tilak and Besant<sup>2</sup>. Both these not only keep aside moral principles in politics but believe that sometimes that is the right thing to do. "Tit for tat" is a principle which they have deliberately and openly accepted. I don't think I can at present persuade this class which has embraced their policy to accept anything from me, do what I will. Let them adopt—and they will—whatever they can indirectly from my work, my writings and my speeches. If I come forward to give anything, they will reject it, as they well might. The policy of Mrs. Besant and Tilak Maharaj is mistaken, very much so indeed, but their achievement has been simply heroic. Their services it is impossible to measure. It is from them that the young got the message of patriotism. How can they, all so suddenly, disown these gurus? I would never ask them to do so, either. All the same, a time will surely come when the educated will turn away from the policy I have mentioned, though not ceasing to regard the two with reverence, such is my faith in the ancient greatness of India. It is not the Kauravas<sup>3</sup>, but the Pandavas who triumphed in those times and the five

<sup>1</sup> The original is not clear at this point, as indicated by a mark of interrogation in the source.

<sup>2</sup> Annie Besant (1847-1933); president of the Theosophical Society; founder of the Central Hindu College at Benares; president Indian National Congress, 1917

<sup>3</sup> Cousins of the Pandavas—the five sons of Pandu and heroes of the *Mahabharata*. The great war between the Kauravas and the Pandavas forms the central theme of the epic.

men were imagined to be capable of holding their own against those hundreds of thousands. It is inconceivable to me that the youth of such a country will accept the perverted rule of "tit for tat". I shall be patient. For my part, I have been pleading with these two persons, too, but in doing all this I can only follow my own way. Sometimes this seems to bring about great delay but that is inevitable. There are things which are done, ought to be done, only behind the scene. I have decided, this time, not to attend the Congress, and for the reasons shown above. Nor do I intend to attend the Conference of the Moderate party. My absence itself will strike the people. Everyone will begin to ask questions; if necessary, I will state my views then.

I have written a long enough letter. It is not to be published. It is only for you to ponder over.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

### *180. LETTER TO SHANKARLAL BANKER*

*August 17, 1918*

BHAISHRI SHANKARLAL,

I have your letter. My health is not yet restored completely. I am afraid it will take time. The thing has gone deeper than I had thought. You need not worry. I do not have to think about Jamnadas any more. Vithalbhai,<sup>1</sup> according to his lights, thought it good and advised withdrawal of resignation. I suggest that he should keep to the decision to resign, facing the storm that may follow. You will remember what I told you, that I had not advised Jamnadas to stop working altogether, but that he must certainly give up a post of big responsibility. That would be in his own interest and in public interest as well. The Congress will! suffer in no way. Why should we consider the harm we have repeatedly done it before now through our own lapses? What further harm will it suffer now through a straightforward action? If Jamnadas sticks to his decision, his capacity for service will

<sup>1</sup> Vithalbhai J. Patel (1873-1933); elder brother of Vallabhbhai Patel; called to the Bar in 1908; member of the Bombay Legislative Council and the Imperial Legislative Council; the first elected president of Indian Legislative Assembly, 1925-30



increase immensely. Remain firm yourself, and keep him firm. My respectful greetings to your mother.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

### *181. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI*

*August 17, 1918*

CHI. DEVDAS,

I read your two months' report about the Hindi class and was satisfied. You have come to like the work as if you were born for it and proved yourself so fit for it that it has become difficult to replace you. Besides, I cannot imagine that anyone else can do better. May God keep you firm in your determination. Preserve your health, and may you live long so that the Madras Presidency reverberates to the unifying tunes of Hindi, the great gulf which exists at present between the South and the North disappears and the people in the two parts become one. Anyone who brings this about will, through that single achievement, rise to be among the immortals. May you attain that position. You have the capacity for this and should not give it up on any account. Increase your knowledge of Hindi day by day and strengthen your moral character. One who is truthful, chaste, who observes the rule of nonhoarding and is full of compassion and valour will make his power felt in the whole world. Through it, you will be able to draw people towards you. You will then find it easy enough to teach them Hindi. Holding these views, how can I think of sending you to the war? you are as good as in the war, though working there. Do not lose patience. It does not matter in the least that you cannot go to the war. How can I ask the other brothers, either, to do so? Harilal<sup>1</sup> is no more a brother and Manialal<sup>2</sup> cannot come; I have written to Ramdas<sup>3</sup> to come, if he can. If you have not continued the morning prayers and the *sandhya*<sup>4</sup>, start them at once. Be sure they will be a great support to you. Any person or nation that discards without

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji's eldest son, who had separated

<sup>2</sup> Gandhiji's second son, who was in South Africa

<sup>3</sup> Gandhiji's third son

<sup>4</sup> Prayer with a set formula

sufficient reason a practice coming down from a distant past loses something of great value. In this modern age, great oceanic waves are rising above us all; morning and evening *sandhya* is the means whereby we may save ourselves from being submerged by them, if, that is, we understand their significance and follow the practice intelligently.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhani Diary*, Vol. IV

## 182. LETTER TO N. M. SAMARTH

*August 20, 1918*

DEAR MR. SAMARTH<sup>1</sup>,

Many many thanks for your letter. I do believe in the religious treatment and that is what I have applied in the main, but I believe also in nature cure and fasting. Nature cure is hydropathy and enema. The only food I am taking is fruit juices, principally orange juice. I am free to confess that nature cure means to that extent want of faith in the purely religious cure. I have not the courage to keep myself exclusively to the latter when I know that the disease is due to a breach of nature's laws.

I am sorry I cannot be with you tomorrow nor can I give my name to the movement. I wish to hold myself aloof from both the movements, for I hold views which are acceptable to neither party. I feel that at the present moment all the leaders should concentrate their efforts upon recruiting to the exclusion practically of every other activity. I know that the Extremists do not agree with me and I hardly think the Moderates go as far as I go. Whilst I accept the M. C. Scheme<sup>2</sup> in the main, to make it acceptable I should insist upon certain modifications and my insistence would go the length of wrecking the Scheme if the modifications were not accepted after exhausting every means at my disposal. To get the modifications accepted, I should not therefore hesitate to use what has been commonly called passive resistance. The Moderates will not accept this condition. I must

<sup>1</sup> A member of the 1914 Congress Deputation to England

<sup>2</sup> The Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme of Reforms

therefore bide my time patiently and plough my own solitary furrow.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### *183. LETTER TO B. CHAKRAVARTY*

*August 25, 1918*

DEAR MR. CHAKRAVARTY<sup>2</sup>,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I am abstaining from the Congress because I know that I hold views which are not acceptable to the principal leaders. Indeed when I discussed my position with Mrs. Besant, she agreed with me that I should abstain. Nor am I going to attend the Moderates' Conference. I believe that we should render the greatest service to the country by devoting ourselves exclusively to recruiting work. Neither party would be prepared to go the length that I go. Then I would accept principles of the M. C. Scheme and definitely state the minimum of improvements I should require and fight for their attainment unto death. For this, Moderates are certainly not prepared and the Extremists, in so far as they may be prepared, are not in the sense I mean. I therefore feel that I should do nothing at the present moment. So far as the bringing together of the two parties is concerned, I should do nothing by violence and therefore I do not approve of any give and take. These are two definite parties in the country. They should put their programme boldly before the Government and the country and agitate for its acceptance. Then only in my opinion shall we make real headway. Just now we seem to be moving in a vicious circle.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

<sup>1</sup> In reply to Chakravarty's letter in which he had said that Gandhiji's letter to Surendranath Banerjea was being misunderstood and that he should make a statement to say that he was not against the Congress

<sup>2</sup> A Congress leader; chairman of the Reception Committee for the special session of the Congress in Calcutta in 1920

184. LETTER TO B. G. TILAK

[August 25, 1918]<sup>1</sup>

I have your letter. I am grateful to you for your sympathy. How can you not be concerned about my health? God be thanked I am now well. Of course I shall not be able to leave my bed for a few days. There was great pain. It has only now subsided.

I do not propose to attend the Congress or the Moderates' Conference either. I see that my views are different from those of either. I have already told you about them. My view is that if all of us take up the work of recruitment for the war and enlist hundreds of thousands of recruits we can render a very great service to India. I know that Mrs. Besant and you do not share this view. The Moderates also will not take up the work earnestly. This is one thing. My other point is that we accept the substance of the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme, explain clearly the improvements that we wish to be made in it and fight till death to have these improvements accepted. That the Moderates will not accept this is clear enough. Even if Mrs. Besant and you accept it, you will certainly not fight in the way I wish to fight. Mrs. Besant has declared that she is not a satyagrahi. You recognize satyagraha as [only] a weapon of the weak. I do not wish to get caught in this false position. And I do not wish to carry on an agitation in the Congress in opposition to you both. I have unshakable faith in my own formula. And it is my conviction that if my *tapasya*<sup>2</sup> is complete, both Mrs. Besant and you will accept my formula. I can be patient.

That the Moderates and the Extremists should each abandon some minor positions and come together is a thing repugnant to me. There are two wings in the country. I do not believe that it will do any harm to make the positions of both clear to the Government and the people. I do not at all like the attempt to bring together the Extremists and the Moderates. It will do much good if both the parties boldly proclaim their respective positions before the Government and the people. May God help you in your undertaking.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[From Hindi]

*Mahadevbhai ki Diary*, Part I

<sup>1</sup> The letter is given under this date in the *Diary*.

<sup>2</sup> Spiritual discipline

185. LETTER TO P. C. RAY<sup>1</sup>

August 27, 1918

DEAR DR. RAY,

You may have heard of my illness. It was a very serious attack of dysentery. Though I seem to be convalescent, I am utterly prostrate with weakness. I can scarcely move out of my bed or even sit in it for any length of time. The great question is how to build up this broken-up body. I have abstained from milk and its products for a number of years and vowed to do so for life. I therefore need a substitute for milk and butter. Hitherto in my strength, I have found an excellent substitute in groundnuts, walnuts and such other nuts, but fats obtained from all these nuts are too strong for my delicate stomach. I need an exact vegetable substitute for ghee and milk. I have tried *kopra* milk and almond milk before now. The physiological action of these milks is totally different from that of cow's milk. Do you know any vegetable substitutes for ghee or butter and for milk? If you do, kindly name them, or better still, if you can procure them, send them. I am told that up in the north they manufacture ghee out of delicate *mhoura* seed which is not the same as the ordinary ghee but is the same as olive oil. Please enlighten me if you can. It hurts me to think that my only letter of a recent date addressed to you should be of so utterly doleful and selfish character. Forgive me if you can.

*Yours sincerely,*

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

<sup>1</sup> This letter is presumably addressed to Dr. P. C. Ray (1861-1944) the eminent chemist.

## 186. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

AHMEDABAD,  
*Shravan Krishna 7 [August 28, 1918]*

DEAR JAMNALALJI<sup>1</sup>,

I have your letter and draft for Rs. 5,000. No harm has been caused by the delay. Have no anxiety about my health. It is improving day by day. I shall have to be in bed a few days more. I have become very weak.

*Yours,*  
MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]  
*Panchaven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad*

## 187. INDIANS AND THE TRANSVAAL

*August 29, 1918*

Mr. M. K. Gandhi writes to the Press under date 29th August:

Mr. Ahmed Mahomed Kachalia, President of the British Indian Association, Transvaal, cables me to invite the attention of those educated Indians who may desire go to the Transvaal, to the fact that six such men can, for the needs of the local community in the Transvaal, enter that Colony. If there be any such in the Presidency, they should apply to the President, British Indian Association, Transvaal, P.O. Box No. 6522, Johannesburg, stating their educational and other qualifications, age and place of residence, the applications to reach the President on or before the 30th October, 1918.

*The Indian Review*, September, 1918

<sup>1</sup> 1889-1942; whom Gandhiji regarded as his fifth son; Treasurer of the Indian National Congress for a number of years

188. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

August 29, 1918

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have suffered indeed, but no more than I have deserved to. I can trace definitely and directly the causes of this illness. They do me no credit and show how weak I am in spite of all my attempts to overcome those weaknesses. This illness shows me all the more clearly how continuously we break the known laws of nature. There is no temptation so difficult to overcome as that of the palate and it is because it is so difficult that we think so little about it. In my opinion, mastery of the palate means mastery of everything. But of this more later. I am steadily progressing. My peace has never been disturbed. Pray do not have any anxiety about me. I would not have you leave Shantiniketan on any account whatsoever. I think that both you and Gurudev are doing the finest work of your lives. You are now writing real poems. They are living poems. I wish I was in Shantiniketan sitting side by side with the privileged boys listening to Gurudev's discourses and also yours.

*Yours,*

MOHAN

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

## 189. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

[AHMEDABAD,]

August 29, 1918

The news you give about Malaviyaji's<sup>1</sup> efforts for unity has also appeared in the papers. That Panditji would make some such move was expected. But I am afraid all the resolutions will now be half-hearted. A little reflection should convince us that we may demand less but must demand it firmly. The people will rise as, and in the measure that, they are enabled to realize that they are strong enough to secure what they demand. This is not asking for the moon but a very practical proposition.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

## 190. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

August 29, 1918

CHI. DEVDAS,

After long waiting, I got your two letters simultaneously today. My health is improving. There is no cause at all for anxiety. Today it is very good indeed. Never, from first to last, did I lose control over it and never did I worry about the end. While the illness lasted, I was afraid of the pain but the fear of death did not touch me even in my dreams. When, moreover, the pain was extreme, I longed to die and be free from it all. My wanting to remain active while I live is one thing, but I have no desire to live just that I may work. May be I desire *moksha*<sup>2</sup>, but it is not to be had by desiring it. One must be fit for it.

I consider your work so important that you should not leave it even for coming over to see how I am. Rest assured that I am being looked after quite well. I see no possibility now of my going to France; it seems, rather, that I shall not have to go to the front at all. We find the Allies winning every day in the battlefields of France. In this situation, it does not seem likely that they will take us there. We shall know in about a month. Even if I have to go, I cannot hope that it will be to France. Possibly, I may have to go to Mesopotamia.

<sup>1</sup> Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946); founder of the Benares Hindu University; member, Imperial Legislative Council; twice president of the Indian National Congress

<sup>2</sup> Deliverance from phenomenal existence



Anandshankarbhai has written a primer<sup>1</sup> of Hindu religion but it is a book which even the old can read with interest and find instructive. To me it appears to be a unique book. Mahadev<sup>2</sup> reads from it to me every morning. I find it of absorbing interest. You will hardly come across an elementary book like this in any other language. It is the distilled essence of Anandshankarbhai's wide reading and thinking. You should read it over and over again. If you cannot follow any of the episodes, ask [someone] and find out what they mean. I am arranging to have the book sent to you. I see no improvement in your handwriting.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

### *191. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI*

*August 29, 1918*

CHI. HARILAL,

I have your letter. My health is improving. There is no cause for anxiety. I shall have to be in bed for some days more. The nursing leaves nothing to be desired. I cannot imagine even an emperor being better looked after. I was very pleased to learn that you cook your own food and that you enjoy doing so. Maybe you will find this an instructive experience; understand through it the secret of life and, repairing past mistakes, bring light into your life. I wish you do so. I shall be happy if you keep writing regularly.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

<sup>1</sup> In Gujarati entitled *Hindu Dharmani Balpothi*

<sup>2</sup> Mahadev Desai (1892-1942); Gandhiji's secretary for 25 years

## 192. LETTER TO PUNDALIK

AHMEDABAD,  
*Shravan, Janmashtami [August 29, 1918]*

MY DEAR PUNDALIK<sup>1</sup>,

Your letters to Kakaji and to me have given me much satisfaction. It is a very good decision not to leave Bhitiharwa without my advice or permission. I see the Superintendent wants to give trouble. It is right that you have answered him patiently. Do not talk much to anyone. Do go round the village and instruct people in keeping the lanes, houses, etc., clean. Write to me regularly. I shall answer your letters.

At present, of course, I am ill. There is too much weakness. After I have recovered, I intend to go to Champaran if only for a short time. God protect you.

*Yours,*  
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5216

## 193. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

*August 30, 1918*

Your love messages are all before me. They are like a soothing balm. The more I contemplate this illness, the more deeply I realize what love of man to man must be and therefore love of God to man. I see nothing but the beneficent hand of nature and it seems to me that what appears to us on the surface to be violent visitations of nature are in reality nothing but so many acts of love

I do wish you will not worry about me. It would be a calamity if on any account your glorious work of Shantiniketan were to be interrupted. I cannot describe to you what a great delight it is to me to hear about your and Gurudev's work in Shantiniketan and I must tell you that I approach every one of your letters with a shudder, lest anything might have interrupted this noble work of Gurudev's. It would be a great relief to me to find that both of you had finished a

<sup>1</sup> Narayan Tamaji Katagade, a volunteer from Maharashtra, who managed the Bhitiharwa Pathashala in Champaran for some time

full term teaching the boys without interruption and in full possession of your health.

Pray thank Barodada for his blessings which I value and I thank Gurudev for his good wishes. Remember me to Mr. Rudra<sup>1</sup>.

With love of us all,

*Yours,*

MOHAN

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### *194. LETTER TO PUNDALIK*

AHMEDABAD,

*August 30 [1918]*

DEAR MR. PUNDALIK,

As you have been questioned regarding your status, you may use this letter in proof of the fact that you have been sent to Champaran by me to conduct the school at Bhitiharwa and to the work of sanitation and education amongst the people in the surrounding villages or to conduct any other school in Champaran to which I may send you.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5215

### *195. LETTER TO MILLIE POLAK<sup>2</sup>*

*August 31, 1918*

As I am writing this, I am watching the glorious rain descending in torrents before me. It will gladden the hearts of millions of men and women. There was a great dread of a most severe famine overtaking Western India. In the twinkling of an eye, all that fear has gone. It has given place to boundless joy; this rain is a veritable deliverance for millions upon millions of cattle. There is probably no place on earth that is so dependent on rain as India. You will now understand what part this rain must have played in giving me health. I

<sup>1</sup> S. K. Rudra, Principal, St. Stephen's College, Delhi

<sup>2</sup> Millie Graham Polak, wife of H. S. L., Polak; author of *Mr. Gandhi: The Man* (1930)

have suffered agonies—all due to my own follies. The punishment was adequate to the wrong done by me to the body. Through a faulty experiment, I was suffering from dysentery. Whilst I was getting over it, I ate when I should have refrained and that brought on the inevitable crisis. I am so reduced in body that I have now to build anew but there is no cause for anxiety. I am convalescent and regularly taking some nourishment and am daily increasing the quantity and I hope to be able to walk about in ten days' time. You ask me about nursing. Everything that human love can do has been done for me. It was my privilege and my pain to be on the sickbed—privilege to find so much love rained on me, pained that I should need it all through my weakness and folly. This rich experiencing of love makes an added call on such service as I may be capable of rendering to humanity. But service to humanity is service of self and service of self is self-purification. How shall I purify myself? It is the question that has been agitating me throughout my sickness; Pray for me.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

#### 196. *LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS*<sup>1</sup>

*August 31, 1918*

You have given me an agreeable surprise. I never knew that the Gujarati Marwaris' Colony was so strong at Shantiniketan. If all these boys remain there their full time, what a link they must form between Gujarat and Bengal and I have no doubt that if the Poet continues as he has begun, he will hold all the Gujaratis that are there to the end of their time and many more must follow. I do feel tempted to ask: Is there anyone looking after the sanitation of the place? Had water supply been put in order?

For me I think I am getting on. Progress is vexingly slow. The body has almost to be built anew. Naturally it takes time; especially when it has got to be done out [of] ingredients from day to day, and that without milk and its products. But I feel that I should be able to do so. I assure you neither recruiting nor the Congress proceedings in the slightest degree worry me. I cannot say with you that I will not look at the papers about them. On the contrary, I am eagerly

<sup>1</sup> In reply to Andrews' letter saying that there were 70 Gujarati and Marwari students in Shantiniketan and that Tagore looked after them lovingly and welcomed their parents

following the Congress proceedings. But I do not allow them to worry me.

I know Mr. Rudra's anxiety for me. You will tell him all about my health and assure him that the joint prayers of you all cannot fail to give me health and comfort.

With love,

*Yours,*

MOHAN

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai 45.

### *197. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI*

[AHMEDABAD,]

*August 31, 1918*

The reason why I did not attend the Congress was that I sensed an atmosphere of extreme unreality after my talks with Mrs. Besant and Tilak Maharaj. I thought it imperative that, at a great moment like this, instead of indulging in fruitless controversies about the Scheme, we thought out ways and means of getting our demands accepted and employed them. I placed my views on the subject before them and suggested that we had two great weapons. One was that we should go all out to make sacrifices in the war and win the testimony of the Self in us as to our fitness. When the *atman*<sup>1</sup> stands testimony, it gives such inner strength that nothing can withstand it. The second way was that we should make up our minds once for all about what we want and cling to it like fanatics and fight till death to get it accepted. The two leaders rejected both suggestions. I felt, therefore, that it was useless for me to attend the Congress and that, by not going, I could make my view known silently but effectively. It was with this thought that I gave up the idea of attending.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

<sup>1</sup> The Self

198. *LETTER TO KARSANDAS CHITALIA*<sup>1</sup>

*August 31, 1918*

I was sorry to hear of Kesari-prasad's<sup>2</sup> resignation. He was very keen on attending the Congress and had a talk with me too. I told him, though, that he would do well to suppress the desire, if he was not permitted, and obey the instructions that might be issued. But he could not suppress his desire. I am afraid Kesari-prasad felt discontented all the time. The Society<sup>3</sup> afforded no scope for his activities. The prohibition against attending the Congress brought his discontent to a head. The absence of Gujaratis or of any others will certainly not mean an end of this Society. It will remain for ever. A leader of character like Shastriar<sup>4</sup> cannot but attract others like him. If God grants him long life, India will realize his worth by and by. All manner of activities are going on and attracting people, each one according to his inclinations. This has given rise to a kind of purposeless discontent. There is bound to be frustration in the end. A man like Shastriar will come to be remembered then and people in anguish will turn to him and be comforted.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

<sup>1</sup> Associated with Bhagini Samaj, Bombay, and Servants of India Society

<sup>2</sup> Kesari-prasad Manilal Thakore of Ahmedabad; a signatory to the Satyagraha Pledge (1919)

<sup>3</sup> The Servants of India Society

<sup>4</sup> V. S. Srinivasa Sastri (1869-1946); scholar, statesman; president, Servants of India Society, 1915-27

## 199. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

*Shravan Vad 10 [August 31, 1918]<sup>1</sup>*

WITH HUMBLE RESPECTS TO MU. BHAISHRI,

Your letter arrived just a little while ago and I am replying immediately. You have a right to write to me even in bitter words. Who else would write to me in this manner if not you? I also understand your being shocked. But there seems to be some misunderstanding as to the fact of the case. I do not at all desire that kind of change in the society at large. In the Ashram, however, from the beginning, it has been our rule not to observe the *Varnavyavastha*<sup>2</sup> because the position of the Ashram is different from that of the society outside. When you were here on a visit, the same practice was followed. Dudhabhai, his wife and L[akshmi] all three lived with me at Kocharab and had their meals with me. Dudhabhai's wife used to enter the kitchen, too. There was also another *antyaaj*<sup>3</sup> boy. What we are doing at present is not new. I really believed that nobody had any objection to L(akshmi). It was only by chance that I discovered that such objections to her existed, and that too in a manner which was rather amusing. I have said all this to show to you that the present position is not new. That Chi. Kashi looks after that girl is a new position, but in itself, it is not a new practice. Now about the propriety or otherwise of the practice. If I had insisted that the inmates of the Ashram should observe the *Varnadharma*, I would have been guilty of the impropriety you have imputed to me. However, for those who have renounced *Grihasthashram*<sup>4</sup>, who have accepted a particular ideal and observe the rules of self-control, to behave towards the *antyaajas* differently from

<sup>1</sup> The letter was evidently written after an untouchable family, Dudhabhai, his wife and infant daughter Lakshmi, were admitted to the Kocharab Ashram on September 11, 1915 and the Ashram was shifted from Kocharab to the western bank of the Sabarmati in July 1917. *Shravan Vad 10* in 1917 fell on August 12, when Gandhiji was in Bettiah in Bihar; in 1918 on August 31 when Gandhiji was in Ahmedabad; in 1919 and 1920, on August 20 and 9 respectively; on both of which days Gandhiji was in Bombay. The letter was, therefore, presumably written on August 31, 1918.

<sup>2</sup> The traditional Indian social system based on birth and hereditary occupation

<sup>3</sup> Untouchable

<sup>4</sup> The householder's stage of life

the way they behave towards others would be *adharma*<sup>1</sup>, not dharma, violence and not ahimsa, expression not of love but of hatred. In the Ashram kitchen, *Luharas*, *Bhatiyas*, Brahmins, *Khatris*, Rajputs, Mussalmans, *Banias* all have been taking their meals together. You know of course that all these classes of people inter-dine with one another; the whole of India knows it. Nobody has expressed disapproval of the practice. Why, then, should anybody be shocked by it now? If you have not considered the practice such as I have described above a radical one, what objection can there be against an innocent girl L[akshmi] having her meals in our kitchen? It is but proper to respect customary practices as long as they are not contrary to universal principles of morality. If, however, they are contrary to such principle, their violation is the real dharma. I, at any rate, have learnt this from our shastras themselves. Since, therefore, this practice is not new, I beg of you not to consider it as such and feel hurt, and if you consider it to be an old one, regard it as unavoidable and so not feel hurt. Please believe that I have not taken a single step out of self-will or thoughtlessly, but have done what I have done only after the most careful consideration of its moral propriety or otherwise and only because I believed it to be dharma. And, therefore, I wish you to have patience with me. If our caste-men are offended by my step, I will ask their forgiveness, and all of us will patiently suffer their boycott. From you, I ask for a blessing, and it is this: "My own brother is fearlessly doing what he believes to be dharma. O God, help him in that". I do beg this much of you that you should not in the least feel hurt by this step and bear with what you cannot understand. Very often, we simply cannot understand what is dharma and what is *adharma*. Vyasji has with great skill presented numerous instances of such confusion in the *Shantiparva*<sup>2</sup>. When such is the position, what should one do? Only that one should fearlessly go on doing what one's conscience bids one to do and bear the sufferings which follow as a result of doing so.

*Respectful prostration by*

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 33104

<sup>1</sup> The opposite of dharma

<sup>2</sup> Of the *Mahabharata*



## 200. RESOLUTION BY GUJARAT SABHA, AHMEDABAD<sup>1</sup>

[September, 1918]

The Gujarat Sabha, of which Mr. Gandhi is the President, issued some time ago the following translation of a resolution unanimously passed at its general meeting held at Ahmedabad:

In the opinion of the Sabha, the easiest and straightest method of attaining swarajya is to help the Empire in the hour of danger by supplying all available men for fighting and other purposes in connection with the war, and therefore this Sabha resolves that it should with all possible despatch undertake recruiting and for that purpose obtain the necessary sanction, and advises other kindred associations to do likewise. The Sabha authorizes the President and the Secretaries to take all necessary steps with a view to enforcing the foregoing resolution.

*The Indian Review*, September, 1918

## 201. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

*September 3, 1918*

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I am daily getting better. Please have no anxiety for me. Though we do not meet in the body, communion of the spirit is ever there. Just at present I am doing a bit of reading. The book I am reading is a collection of remarkable essays on religion by Prof. Anandshankar Dhruva of the Gujarat College. You have seen him. The essays are pure gold. He is one of the greatest Sanskrit scholars of this Presidency. These essays have given me great comfort and they help me more fully to realize the meaning of communion of the spirit and it is in that deeper and fuller [meaning] that I use the expression regarding ourselves.

As I have said before, I would not have you leave Bolpur on any account whatsoever. Your work is there and nowhere else at the present moment.

Why did you write that wretched introduction of yours to the Hindi book on emigration to the colonies? I have only just glanced at

<sup>1</sup> Presumably drafted by Gandhiji

it and I feel that you have given an undeserved certificate. You do not want to give currency to inaccuracies, fulsome flattery and advertisements. I propose to go through the book carefully and note down for your edification some of the glaring inaccuracies contained in the work. There is really no merit in an author remaining unknown. He does not remain unknown to those who he wishes should know him. The introduction does credit to your heart. You are an Indian and, as Lord Willingdon<sup>1</sup> will say, you are always afraid to say "no". I would far rather that you retained the English characteristics and said "no" when it is "no" which should really be said. I suppose it is sometimes the privilege of love sternly to say "no". I do not want to sermonize, but you must really reform yourself in this matter. Otherwise I must pass on to you all the rascals I meet. You will then settle your accounts with Gurudev and them.

With love to you all,

*Yours,*

MOHAN

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtay: Narayan Desai

## 202. LETTER TO SHANKARLAL BANKER

[AHMEDABAD,]

*September 7, 1918*

I see from your letter to Anasuyabehn<sup>2</sup> that when writing to me you had concealed a great deal about your health. It was not necessary. I wish you would not take undue liberty with the body, putting your trust in medicines. My experience in life has increasingly strengthened me in the idea that one ought not to do so. I took such liberty to please my palate and have been paying the penalty. I believe it is the same story in ninety-nine out of a hundred cases of illness. I admit that this discipline of the body is extremely difficult, but all the same, it is the true end of human effort. It is easier to conquer the entire world than to subdue the enemies in our body. And, therefore, for the man who succeeds in this conquest, the former will be easy

<sup>1</sup> Governor of Bombay, 1913-8; of Madras, 1919-24, and Viceroy, 1931-6

<sup>2</sup> Anasuyabehn Sarabhai, sister of Ambalal Sarabhai; a leading millowner of Ahmedabad; she was on the side of the workers in the dispute between the workers and the millowners.

enough. The self-government which you, I and all others have to attain is in fact this. Need I say more? The point of it all is that you can serve the country only with this body. Your ideals are noble, but the noblest of them would be in vain without the requisite strength of spirit.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

### 203. LETTER TO P. C. RAY

*September 9, 1918*

The milk problem with me is not quite so simple as you have stated it. It is not regard for the calf that in my illness prevents me from taking milk, but I have taken a definite *vow* not to take milk or its products even in illness and I feel that it is better to die than to break a vow knowingly and deliberately taken. Every consequence that I am taking today was before me when I took the vow. I know too that it was most difficult to find a substitute for milk. Can you not refine some of our oils so as to make them easily digestible? You know that the American chemists have done so with cottonseed oil. Cottonseed oil without being refined is not eatable but now people eat it with impunity. I do not say that they have refined it to the extent I want; that is a question of degree.

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

<sup>1</sup> In reply to Dr. Ray's letter in which he had said that, though some of the ingredients of milk were available in other items, there was no good substitute for milk. Dr. Ray, as an old friend, urged Gandhiji to take milk.

## 204. LETTER TO RANCHHODLAL PATWARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

*Monday, Ganesh Chaturthi [September 9, 1918]*

RESPECTED SHRI RANCHHODBHAI<sup>1</sup>,

I have your letter. I am improving. There is much weakness, though, and hence I am confined to bed. There is no reason for worry. Just when my health was returning to normal, I got fever for a few days and that increased the weakness. There is no fever now. I am ashamed of this illness of mine. I thought I would never get a disease like dysentery. I was myself to blame for it. Though I kept well enough, my skin had grown too soft and, though I did not feel handicapped, the calf-muscles were not as hard as they should be. Doctor friends have always told me that I should not go without salt. I thought it was better that the skin should be a little rough, in case I had to go to France or Mesopotamia, and with this idea I started taking salt. This brought on diarrhoea. I should have taken this as a warning that I should stop eating, but I fasted only partially. The result was acute dysentery. In this disease, food is like poison; despite that, I continued to eat. Thus I have had to pay for my lack of self-control.

No doubt, people will have a hard time of it for lack of rains. On this side, there has been some rain at any rate. About Kathiawad I keep inquiring from visitors and also read the news in the papers. I gather from all this that conditions there are much worse than here.

I quite see that you cannot leave the work there and come over here. I shall get hold of a copy of *Pataka* and read the article about untouchables. I want to understand the other side fully and, if I find dharma in it, I shall not hesitate for a moment to give up my view. The arguments I have so far come across are all based on tradition. I have yet to hear an argument based on true dharma. I have taken up the problem of the untouchables purely out of considerations of dharma. It has nothing to do with politics. It certainly has political implications, but I have never looked at it from that point of view. I should also like to add that it is not my intention that tradition should never be

<sup>1</sup> Life-long friend of Gandhiji; served as Dewan in princely States of Western India

respected. The true dharma is unchanging, while tradition may change with time. If we were to follow some of the tenets of *Manusmriti*<sup>1</sup>, there would be moral anarchy. We have quietly discarded them altogether.

*With regards from*

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2793. Courtesy: Patwari

## *205. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI*

[AHMEDABAD,]

*September 9, 1918*

Surely you know that I am against the use of pulses by weak persons. You know my fears about oil as well. All the doctors suggested the use of *mung*<sup>2</sup> and *mung* soup, and oil too. It is difficult, without the use of fats and what they call proteins, to rebuild a body grown weak because of the vow not to take milk. Milk protein and the fat it contains are easily absorbed in the blood stream, but not so the fat in oils. All pulses contain protein, but this protein is impossible [for a weak person] to digest. And yet both [pulses and oil] were consumed, as I said above<sup>3</sup>. I think that was a mistake. Such mistakes are bound to occur while I am searching for a substitute for milk. It is just not possible to carry on without some oil or other. The quantity to be taken will have to be determined. In the process, mistakes are bound to occur, and there will be set-backs, too, occasionally.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

<sup>1</sup> Laws of Manu, the Hindu lawgiver

<sup>2</sup> An Indian pulse

<sup>3</sup> Presumably in the part of the letter not reproduced in the source. According to Mahadev Desai, it described an upset caused by wrong food.

## 206. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

September 9, 1918

It is true that cooking takes some time but I believe that this time is not wasted. It is also generally not true that some more important work could be done during that time. Ninety-five per cent of the people waste more time every day than is taken up in cooking. I am being rather liberal in my estimate in saying ninety-five per cent. You will be surprised in how short a time a person doing his own cooking finishes it when he is very busy. If I give my own example, when I was very busy with studies in England I did not take more than half an hour in the morning and in the evening for cooking. In the morning, I used to prepare porridge, and this took exactly twenty minutes; if I cooked in the evening, I prepared soup. As it did not require stirring, the only time spent was in getting the materials ready. After putting the thing on the fire, I would sit by and read. Occasionally, students come to me from Benares. I ask all of them what they do. Most Brahrnins cook their own food. One of them told me that he only prepared *khichdi*<sup>1</sup> and ate it with milk and pickles. While he was eating the meal, the *bhakhri*<sup>2</sup> would be getting baked. This *bhakhri* he would eat with milk in the evening. In this, he spent three-quarters of an hour in all. This is an extreme case I have cited. I do not want you to be all that particular. This is only to illustrate that it is possible to do one's cooking in a very short time. That student was quite healthy and strong, because *khichdi*, milk or curds and pickles gave him all the nourishment he needed. Anyone who can get good milk or curds will care little for other things. Do not imagine that I write this to suggest that you should always cook yourself. I have said all this only in order that, on occasion, you should not hesitate in the least to do your own cooking and [when you have to do it] be so unhappy, all without reason, that you were wasting your time. Otherwise, when you have mended your ways, I can have no objection to your calling Chanchi<sup>3</sup>, having good things to eat and enjoying life, within limits. Only see that you do not repeat your mistakes. I want you not to be too eager to get rich quickly.

<sup>1</sup> Preparation of rice, pulses, etc., cooked together

<sup>2</sup> A kind of thick bread

<sup>3</sup> Chanchalbehn Gandhi, wife of Gandhiji's eldest son, Harilal

Think of Sorabji's death, of Dr. Jivraj's being on his death-bed, of the passing away of Sir Ratan Tata<sup>1</sup>. When life is so transitory, why all this restlessness? Why this running after money? Get what-ever money you can earn by ordinary but steady efforts. Resolve in mind, though, that you will not forsake the path of truth in pursuit of wealth. Make your mind as firm as you can and then go ahead making money.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

## 207. LETTER TO RANCHHODDAS PATWARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

*Ganesh Chaturthi, Monday [September 9, 1918]<sup>2</sup>*

RESPECTED RANCHHODDBHAI,

I have your letter. My health is gradually improving but I am still to weak and so am confined to bed. There is no cause for worry though. I had quite recovered, but in the meantime I had fever, which increased the weakness. Now there is no fever at all. I feel ashamed of my disease. I had thought I could never have a disease such as dysentery. I am myself responsible for the disease, of course. I had been keeping fairly good health, but my skin had become rather tender. I had been able to manage without salt for a long time; but my legs were still not as sturdy as they should have been. Doctor friends had been constantly telling me to take salt. I may well have to go to France or Mesopotamia in which case it would not do to have a tender skin. So I started the salt experiment. That gave me dysentery. I should have taken the warning and fasted. Yet I fasted only partially. The result was that I developed acute dysentery. Taking food when you are having dysentery is like taking poison. Still I ate. Thus I am suffering the punishment for not observing restraint. People will have to undergo a lot of suffering because of the failure of rains. There has been a little rain this side at least. I ask for news about Kathiawar from

<sup>1</sup> 1871-1918; Parsi philanthropist

<sup>2</sup> The year has been inferred from the reference to Gandhiji's having had a severe attack of dysentery; *vide* "An Autobiography—Part V, Chapter XXVIII" In 1918 *Ganesh Chaturthi* fell on September 9.

the people passing by here. I also get information from the newspapers. From all that I gather that the situation there is even more difficult than it is here.

I can very well understand that you cannot leave the work there and come here. I shall see the *Pataka* for the article on the untouchables and read it. I want to understand fully the opposite point of view. And if I find dharma in it I will not hesitate even for a moment to give up my view. All the arguments I have so far come across proceed from the orthodox doctrine. I have not heard so far a single argument resting on true religion. I have raised the question of untouchability purely from the religious point of view. It has nothing to do with the political problem. It can certainly have political consequences, but I have never had that in view. I also wish to add that I do not intend suggesting that orthodox religion should not be given the slightest recognition. True religion is firm like a rock. Orthodox religion should change with the change in times. If we were to live according to some of the things mentioned in the *Manusmriti*, we should be committing immorality. We have silently abandoned those things.

With regards,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4119

## 208. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU<sup>1</sup>

September 20, 1918

DEAR SISTER,

From the inquiries you have made about me, I know that you know about my humiliation, I mean my illness. I am getting better, but am too weak yet to move about beyond a few minutes' stroll on the verandah. Much as I should like to be with you at Poornea as the men there desire my presence, it is impossible for me to do so. I hope, however, that you are going to behave yourself and deliver your address<sup>2</sup> in Hindi or Urdu, whatever the national language may be called. Let the young men learn through your example the value of cultivating their mother tongue, for to them Hindi or Urdu is not only

<sup>1</sup> 1879-1949; poet, patriot, Congress leader and a close associate of Gandhiji

<sup>2</sup> As president of the Bihar Students' Conference



the national language, but their mother tongue. Do let me have a line.

*Yours,*

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai<sup>55</sup>.

### 209. LETTER TO PUNDALIK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

*Bhadrapad Sud 15 [September 20, 1918]*

BHAISHRI PUNDALIK,

I read all your letters very carefully. All your answers are very good. Such always is the effect of truth. The courage that is called for in putting up with an insult from the Superintendent does not lie in meeting insult with insult.

The Superintendent would not have had to endure in your insults even a hundredth part of what he will have to endure in your forbearance. He in fact wants that you should become excited and give vent to unbecoming speech. Now I answer your questions:

1. If you receive a written notice from the Government to leave the school or Bhitiharwa you should leave the school or Bhitiharwa and telegraph to me.
2. You should answer any questions that the Superintendent may ask in the way you have been doing. Speak the whole truth. There is no harm in telling him all that I write. I have full faith in your truthfulness.

*Yours,*

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5217; also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

## 210. TELEGRAM TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

September 21, 1918

CONSIDER ARTICLE SHOULD NOT BE PUBLISHED.<sup>1</sup> IF  
PUBLISHED ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY OMIT REFERENCES  
ABOUT SPECIAL FITNESS OF GUJARAT. WRITING FULLY.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

## 211. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

[AHMEDABAD,]

September 21, 1918

I have read your letter carefully. I sent you a telegram yesterday and another today. Your idea<sup>2</sup> is excellent but there is no possibility of its being carried out in the present atmosphere. No other province is likely to support it. You must be aware that Bengal has been working hard to such an end. It has even been trying secretly to secure full independence for itself before others. Will there be any in Gujarat who will not try to secure it first for Gujarat? Sarma made the same suggestion as yours, in a slightly different form, in the Central Legislature.<sup>3</sup> It was laughed out by all the members, very improperly, I must admit. Mr. Montagu has attached weight to it but suggested that it was not for the present British administration to make so important a change, that the new Councils which would come into existence could consider it. So much about your proposal.

The arguments you have advanced to establish the superiority of Gujarat can only lead to bitterness. As things stand, it is a controversial idea. Maharashtra will be able to put forward stronger evidence than we can to claim swaraj for itself. Madras will maintain that it had taken to Western modes so completely that no other province could be fitter than it. Gujarat is generally considered a very backward area; and the

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* the following item.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Mehta, taking a hint from a speech of Montagu's, had written an article elaborating the idea of swaraj for Gujarat.

<sup>3</sup> On February 6, 1918, B. N. Sarma moved a resolution in the Imperial Legislative Council recommending the redistribution of provincial areas on a language basis. The resolution was defeated by a large majority; *vide* India in 1917-18.

arguments you use on our side will be used against us. Not that you need be deterred by these arguments on the other side. It is essential, though, to consider whether it would be proper to start this campaign for swaraj in the prevailing atmosphere. Take this into account and write what you think best. I shall be ready to carry out what you say.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

## 212. SPEECH ON "THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS"

September 21, 1918

Commencing readings from *The Pilgrim's Progress* after Ashram prayers :

Now then, friends, look, who was the author of this? One John Bunyan. Do you know who he was? A man with a will, like our Prahlad<sup>1</sup>, he suffered imprisonment for the sake of truth, much as Prahlad submitted to ordeals for its sake; and as our Tilak Maharaj wrote his *Gita Rahasya* in jail, so this Bunyan wrote in jail this story of a pilgrim's journey. Call it a journey or progress or rise, what you will—he wrote that.

Like the commentaries on the *Gita* that we have, *The Pilgrim's Progress* is a commentary on the Bible. No, one cannot describe it even as a commentary. It is, rather an exposition of the most beautiful portions of the Bible. In English, the book is esteemed as a great classic and placed almost on a level with the Bible. And Bunyan has written it in such simple and beautiful language for children to follow that, wherever English is spoken, it is considered a most wonderful book for them. Even more, he says in his preface to the book, as Tulsidas in his *Ramayana*, that in time to come it will be read by one and all. And indeed it is as good as the *Ramayana*. Tulsi's *Ramayana* is a fountain of delight for children while grown-ups go messing around, and so likewise this book is of absorbing interest to children. But, now, let us read a little from the book. Hear what he says :

"As I walked through the wilderness of this world . . . ." In our books, too, life in this world is described as a forest of impenetrable

<sup>1</sup> Prahlad was a devotee of God persecuted by his unbelieving father, the demon king Hiranyakashipu. Gandhiji often spoke of him as an ideal satyagrahi.

darkness, and likewise he has described it as a wilderness. He goes on to say that, in that labyrinthine wilderness of life, all tired, he lighted on a fearful den—tired out, that is, not only with physical fatigue, but also in his *atman*. He had turned over a great many thoughts in his mind, had heard countless things from countless sources, but had failed to come by the truth. So this poor man, all tired in spirit and bewildered, fell asleep in his exhaustion. He slept and dreamt a dream. In this dream, whom did he see, do you think? Do you know, Rukhi, who it was that he saw? A man in rags. Well, then, kiddies, tell me, how was Sudama<sup>1</sup> dressed when he went to Lord Krishna? Had he put on a dhoti with a silken border, or a coat of lace or a jolly flat Maharashtrian puggree and a scarf of brocade? Oh, no ! He was only in rags, and so was this one, too. Here, Rukhi, do you know what Sudama had on? You may not, but I do, for I was born in Porbandar, the home of Sudama. Well, then, which way was Sudama facing? Homewards? Brother dear, he had left his home and was making his way to where the Lord dwelt. Even so, our Pilgrim had turned his face away from home and taken a road that led elsewhere. And, again, what did he carry on his shoulder? See, Rukhi, he had a burden on his back, like the gunny-bag, weighing five maunds, which that labourer used to bring on his back when we were at Kochrab. He used to be all drenched with perspiration and bent so low, how could I ask him to stand erect? This man, here, had a book in his hand. It was none other than the Bible. Tears flowed from his eyes as he read it. Do you know the story of Gopichand? As he sat bathing, his mother stood looking at him from above, tears from her eyes dropping on his body. There was not a cloud to be seen; whence this rain, then? Gopichand looked up and saw that it fell from his mother's eyes. Why had she tears in her eyes? Well, I shall explain that some other time. This good man, too, had tears falling from his eyes. He had set out for the House of God, he was a prince among the lovers of God and hence the tears in his eyes.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

<sup>1</sup> Sudama and Krishna, disciples of the same guru, Sandipani, were friends. Sudama had a large family and was very poor. His wife chided him for his other-worldliness and persuaded him to go to Krishna for help. Yet once in the presence of the Lord, he forgot to ask for help. But when he returned home, he found it transformed by riches.

### 213. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

September 24, 1918

I wish I had sufficient strength in my fingers and my wrists to give you my own hieroglyphics. As it is, I must rest content with the help of a friendly wrist and equally friendly fingers. You know all about the Committee to investigate the Brothers' case. We are creeping, whether the motion is upward or downward I do not know. For a satyagrahi, all motion is upward. If the Government have meant well, it is well for us all. If they have meant ill, by the infallible law of causation it must react upon them and therefore it must go ill with them and not with us, the only condition being that we do not act even as they. It is only because in the vast majority of cases we meet evil by evil that it continues to grow like weeds. Resist not evil is the law of our being. We come into the world with a double nature, that of the brute and man. The latter has continually to gain ascendancy over the former, but this is a digression, and for me a diversion which, however, I do not wish to indulge in this letter. To return to our immediate purpose, I am keeping in close touch with the Brothers through Mr. Ghate.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### 214. LETTER TO NANUBHAI

[AHMEDABAD,]

September 24, 1918

There is no reason to go as far as to conclude that the need for joining up is over. But the signs I see indicate that this will be so. One need not assume that heroism is to be acquired only by fighting in a war. One can do so even while keeping out of it. War is one powerful means, among many others. But, if it is a powerful means, it is also an evil one. We can cultivate manliness in a blameless way. If, through the fight we are carrying on with the body, we can develop the strength for the war which the *atman* must wage against the *anatman*<sup>1</sup>, we shall have acquired manliness.

Vandemataram from  
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV .

<sup>1</sup> Non-self

## 215. LETTER TO KALYANJI MEHTA

ASHRAM,  
*Bhadrapad, Krishna Paksh 4 [September] 24[, 1918]*

DEAR SHRI KALYANJI<sup>1</sup>,

It was like me to have told you that you could certainly send your wife, that she could manage to live on the verandah outside. But I find this does not find favour with anyone else in the Ashram. The womenfolk will have none of it. Everyone believes that she must have some privacy at least; as long as this cannot be assured to your wife, her arrival is likely to displease the other ladies very much. I am now considering if I can find a spot where she could have some privacy. You had better wait till I find one.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2667

## 216. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

*September 24, 1918*

CHI. MATHURADAS,

There has been no letter from you for a long time. There having been no occasion I too have not written to you. I am gradually regaining strength. A season of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, similar to the one held in Indore<sup>2</sup> is to be held in Bombay. I cannot think of anyone there who can work for it. Very few may be interested. Bhai Jamnadas had said that he would shoulder this responsibility. I wrote to him in the matter but he has not answered. So I take it that he may not volunteer his services. Still, you should go to him and find out. Also find out who else are likely to take up the work. A reception committee must be set up at once. The session may be held after December.<sup>3</sup> It is necessary that the preparations for it should start

<sup>1</sup> Kalyanji Vithalbhai Mehta, a Congress leader of Surat District

<sup>2</sup> On March 29, 1918; *vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909.

<sup>3</sup> The session was held in Bombay from April 19 to 21, 1919

from now. I wish you would undertake this work. I shall give the necessary instructions from here. I shall be able to write more after you inform me whether or not you will be willing. Bhai Ram Naresh Tripathi has gone there on behalf of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan (Allahabad). Meet him and write to me what he says and what his views are. His address is: Seth Har Dayal Nevatia, Bombay—2.

*Blessing from*

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

After Babu wrote this letter, he heard from Jamnadas that you had just recovered from a serious illness. How is your health now? Babu wants me to say that if you have not fully recovered, that is, if you have not recovered enough to undergo the strain, you may decline without any hesitation. Why did you not write about your health?

MAHADEV DESAI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

## 217. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI ANOOPCHAND MEHTA

SABARMATI,

*Bhadarva Vad 7 [September 26, 1918]<sup>1</sup>*

DEAR BHAGWANJI,

I am still bed-ridden. I have gained only enough strength to move about a little in the Ashram. Even otherwise there would still be the question of what I would do after coming there. Kathiawar is not out of my thoughts, The only question is about what can be done. I am constantly thinking about it.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5802. Also C.W. 3025. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

<sup>1</sup> It appears from the contents that this letter was written in 1918.

## 218. REPLY TO BIRTHDAY GREETINGS IN THE ASHRAM

October 1, 1918<sup>1</sup>

Am I worthy of the love which you have shown me by all of you coming over here this morning? I don't think I am. As a rule, even outside the Ashram, I do not say anything merely in deference to convention and here surely I would not do so. My words, therefore, are not just a form of good manners. I simply feel in the depth of my soul that I am not worthy of the boundless love you proffer to me. From one who has dedicated himself to the service of others, a great deal may be expected. In comparison, the little that I have done is of no account. You, too, all of you, have dedicated yourselves to service. I enjoin you all to hold back your veneration. It is not in the fitness of things to express it before a person is dead. For, how can we measure the worth of his work before his death, before we have seen it in its entirety? Even after his death, it takes some time to assess it. There is no point, therefore, in our celebrating the birth anniversary of a man before his death.

What more shall I say to you? This morning, before four, I was immersed in thought. Surendra<sup>2</sup> had put a question to me: what was the utmost I expected of him? And of Devdas? Of Chhotalal<sup>3</sup> as well? Instead of telling you what I expect of each one of you individually, let me tell you what I expect from you all. It is that you should observe to perfection our first and last vow, the vow of truth. We must sincerely practise what we believe to be the means of *moksha*. Working accordingly, you should carry out as well as you can the aims with which the Ashram has been established and bring all glory to it. The Ashram will be judged by your actions and your character. It has been established for the service of India and, through it, of one's *atman*. We have many critics. Critics there will always be, but their criticism need not make us nervous, provided we are faithful to our vow of truth, the first and the last of our vows. If we were indulging in hypocrisy and fraud, it would have been a different

<sup>1</sup> The birthday fell on this date according to the Indian calendar.

<sup>2</sup> Surendralal, a member of Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, Ahmedabad. He served as a teacher in Gandhiji's school at Barharwa, Champaran.

<sup>3</sup> Chhotalal, a member of Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati. He was a weaving master and teacher of Hindi in Gandhiji's school at Barharwa, Champaran



matter. But I am sure no one has a doubt that our aim is anything but truth. The Ashram is the sum-total of the character of us all. I wish, therefore, that every one of us has so high a character that the sum-total will be large enough. I keep a constant vigil to observe how far I live up to, or can live up to, the vow and I find many failings in me. I cannot tell whether I shall succeed in getting rid of them in this present life. Whatever shortcomings have developed in you or in the Ashram have come to be there solely because of me. I want you, therefore, to pray to God to free you and me of our failings and grant me success in my mission. I will strive to be worthy of the love you bear me and the veneration you show towards me. I pray to God that He may grant me the necessary strength. May you, too, succeed in doing your duty ! I pray that we, you and I, may be of help to one another. What else shall I say? Your devotion will not fail to have its reward. Go, therefore, and let each of you occupy himself or herself with his or her duty.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

## 219. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

*October 2, 1918*

CHI. HARILAL,

I have a feeling that I am now going. I have very little time left. The body is becoming weaker and weaker. I am not able to eat anything. But my heart is at peace and so I do not find the going at all difficult. I think whatever inheritance I am leaving to you brothers is appropriate. What would you have gained if I had left money? But the inheritance of character which I am leaving to you is invaluable in my view. I wish you to cherish it. Follow the path of religion. I have written a letter to Devdas.<sup>1</sup> Ask for a copy of it. If you think you can apply that letter to yourself, do so.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 11272. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* the following item.

## 220. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM,

*Bhadrapad, October 2, 1918*

DEVIDAS,

I have sent you a telegram today. It must have scared you. I want you not to be scared. I cannot expect you to have that degree of equanimity. My health, instead of improving, is steadily declining. I am not able to take any cereals. Taking only fruit cannot sustain the body and hence it must necessarily succumb. In that event, you must have forbearance and show the strength of a Kshatriya. If you keep me alive in your actions, you will be judged not as having loved the body but as having loved the soul. And then, you will have maintained a pure relationship with me. I have placed great hopes in you. Strengthen your character and follow the path of non-violence. Observe *brahmacharya* as far as possible. Proceed with your studies to the extent necessary and carry on my activities. Help Chi. Maganlal to the utmost. Consider Bhai Mahadev your elder. He will have much to give you. I have sent you the wire to come if you cannot hold yourself. But my advice is: stay where you are. That is the true test of your devotion. What more are you going to gain by coming here? What more service can I have from you? You are already rendering great service to me. But do as you think proper. Send copies of this letter to Manilal and Ramdas. I hope that they too will engage themselves in my work. My body has become like an old garment and that is why it is not at all difficult for me to discard it. I do not wish to acquire the burden of a new garment. But I do not think I have qualified myself to be freed of that burden. But the time is not past yet. That qualification can be acquired even in a moment.

May God bless you.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 11271. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

## 221. LETTER TO GANGABEHN MAJMUNDAR<sup>1</sup>

[AHMEDABAD,]  
October 11, 1918

I read only today the postcard giving the news that you, Kiki and others have fallen ill. I was, however, glad to read that, by the grace of God, you were all improving. The bodies of those who have accepted the way of service should be as strong as steel. There was a time when our forefathers could thus harden their bodies. Today we have become pathetically weak and succumb to the innumerable poisonous germs in the atmosphere. The only way to escape from this, despite our fallen state, is self-control, moderation, call it what you will. It is the opinion of doctors, and they are right, that the body will run least risk if two things are attended to. Even after one feels that one has recovered from an illness, one should take only liquid and bland food easy to digest, and should continue to rest in bed. Many patients, deceived when the fever comes down on the second or third day, resume their work and start eating as usual. This brings on the attack again, and generally it proves fatal. I would, therefore, request you all to remain confined to bed. Write to me every day to give me news of your health. I am still in bed and will have to remain there for many days; but it can be said that my health is improving. The doctors have forbidden even writing letters; but how can I help writing to you? If you are inconvenienced there and want to come over here, by all means do. There are ten sick-beds in the Ashram just now, but the only serious case appears to be that of Shankarlal. Even he seems to have taken a turn for the better today.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV*

<sup>1</sup> An enterprising widow who discovered for Gandhiji the old spinning wheel in Vijapur in the former Baroda State and started a khadi production centre there; *vide An Autobiography*.

222. *LETTER TO THE PRESS : THE LATE A. M.  
KACHALIA*<sup>1</sup>

*October 20, 1918*<sup>2</sup>

TO  
THE EDITOR  
*THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE*

SIR,

It is my mournful duty to bring to public notice another South African Indian whose death has been just cabled to me. He bore the honoured name of Ahmed Mahomed Kachalia. He was for a number of years President of the British Indian Association of the Transvaal. It was during the passive resistance campaign that Mr. Kachalia suddenly leapt to fame and acquired among the Indians of South Africa a prestige unequalled by any other Indian. It was on the 31st day of July 1907, under the shadow of a tree in the holy mosque of Pretoria, that Mr. Kachalia hurled defiance at the might of General Botha and his Government. Mr. Hosken<sup>3</sup> had brought a message from the General to be delivered to the great mass meeting that was held in the mosque compound, to the effect that in resisting the Transvaal Government, the Indians were breaking their heads against a stone. Mr. Kachalia was one of the speakers. As I am dictating these few words of humble tribute, his voice rings in my ears. He said: "In the name of Allah, I wish to state that though my head may be severed from the trunk, I shall never obey the Asiatic Registration Act. I consider it unmanly and dishonourable to subscribe to a law which virtually reduces me to slavery." And he was among the very few who never flinched through those long and weary eight years of untold sufferings. Mr. Kachalia was by no means amongst the least of the sufferers. He felt that as a leader his sacrifice should be striking, and that he should stop at nothing if thereby the honour of this country

<sup>1</sup> Also published in *Prajabandhu*, 27-10-1918, and *The Indian Review*, October, 1918

<sup>2</sup> A. M. Cachalia passed away on this date.

<sup>3</sup> William Hosken, M.L.A. (Transvaal) and ex-president of the Association of Chamber of Commerce of South Africa. He was sympathetic to the cause of British Indians; *vide* "The Transvaal Immigration Bill Debate", 20-7-1907; Johannesburg Letter", 31-12-1907 and ; Before 10-1-1908

might be saved. He reduced himself to poverty. He said goodbye to all the comforts of life to which he was used, and night and day worked for a cause he held sacred. Naturally he acquired a wonderful hold over the Indian community throughout South Africa and his was a name to conjure with amongst them. As may be imagined, there were often disputes among Mahomedans and Hindus and other sections of the community. Mr. Kachalia held the scales even between the conflicting interests and everyone knew that his decisions would be absolutely just and sound. Mr. Kachalia was practically illiterate. He was a self-made man. But his common sense was of the rarest order. It always stood him in good stead and he was able to command the confidence and respect of many Europeans who came in contact with him.

The loss is irreparable and it would be doubly felt by the community, coming as it does, closely after Mr. Sorabji's death.<sup>1</sup> May God Almighty give this noble soul the rest and peace which, I am sure, he fully deserves.

*Yours, etc.,*

M. K. GANDHI

*The Bombay Chronicle, 21-10-1918*

### 223. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

SABARMATI,

AHMEDABAD,

*October 20, 1918*

DEAR MR. SASTRIAR,

Though being on sick-bed, I cannot restrain myself from adding my own humble tribute to your own and other friends' to Dr. Deva's<sup>2</sup> memory. Both the society and the country have lost a true servant. Of all the members of the Society, it was with Dr. Deva that I came in closest touch and the more I knew him the more I loved him. If I may say so, Dr. Deva found fuller scope in Champaran for self-expression. There he was placed amid surroundings which tested all his great qualities including his medical knowledge. He never flinched

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Speech at Surat", 1-8-1918.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Hari Shrikrishna Deva (died October 8, 1918); a Durbar surgeon of Sangli, he joined the Servants of India Society in 1914 and worked with Gandhiji in the Champaran campaign.

and never failed. Though he started his relations with the authorities and the planters with suspicion, he disarmed them at the end of his stay. The Sub-Divisional Officer at Bettiah with whom he came in close contact often told me that he liked Dr. Deva for his selflessness and his devotion to his work. How could he do otherwise? For he was not only medical adviser to the helpless villagers but was his own dispenser. He took medicines to their homes. He attended to their sanitation. He bent his own body to clean the village wells, to fix up the village road. With Messrs Soman and Randive, in place of the burnt down grass-hut, which was used as school at Bhitiharwa, he raised in a few days' time, to the marvel of everybody, a pucca school building and, comparatively delicate though he was in body, he worked side by side with able-bodied villagers who, touched by his enthusiasm, responded to his call for help in building the school which was designed for their sake. What, however, is the pleasantest of all my experiences of Dr. Deva is the tribute Mr. Soman, a B.A., LL.B. of Belgaum, pays to his memory in a letter just received from him. He belongs to the Nationalists' school. He was one of the volunteers in Champaran. He is himself a staunch and true worker. He says in the letter that he approached Dr. Deva with a great deal of suspicion and distrust to his attitude towards the Nationalists, but he adds that "it did not take many days before the suspicion and mistrust gave place to perfect confidence and respect." Indeed they, retaining their own views to the end, became fast friends. Dr. Deva was never a fanatic. He had boundless charity in him, and therefore both had the rare gift of seeing the bright side of his opponent's case. The Society has certainly lost in him a fine collector and advertiser. He was a true man.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

*The Servant of India, 31-10-1918*

## 224. TELEGRAM TO VICEROY<sup>1</sup>

*October 29, 1918*

WHILST THE SABHA YIELDS TO NO ONE IN ITS DESIRE TO HELP THE PROSECUTION OF THE WAR IN EVERY POSSIBLE MANNER AND CONSIDERS THIS TO BE THE DUTY OF INDIA, WHICH ASPIRES TO EQUAL PARTNERSHIP WITH BRITAIN IN THE IMPERIAL FEDERATION, IT IS ITS DELIBERATE AND CONSIDERED OPINION THAT INDIA IS NOT ABLE TO ASSUME ANY FURTHER PECUNIARY BURDENS. IT IS THE CONFIRMED OPINION OF THE SABHA THAT THE DEEP AND EVER-DEEPENING POVERTY OF INDIA IS NOT FULLY REALIZED BY THE OFFICIALS. THE SABHA HAS THEREFORE UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTION PASSED AT THE IMPERIAL COUNCIL MEETING ON 10TH SEPTEMBER, IF CARRIED INTO EFFECT, IS SURE TO TELL HEAVILY UPON INDIA IN THE OPINION OF THE SABHA, THE BEST METHOD OF RECEIVING FURTHER FINANCIAL AID FROM INDIA IS TO DEPEND PURELY UPON NON-STATUTORY VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS. THE SABHA THEREFORE HOPES THAT ITS APPEAL NOT TO ENFORCE THE SAID RESOLUTION WILL RECEIVE FAVOURABLE RESPONSE OF THE GOVERNMENT.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 29-10-1918*

<sup>1</sup> Sent by Gandhiji as president of the Gujarat Sabha

## 225. LETTER TO PUNDALIK

ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
October 29 [1918]

DEAR PUNDALIK,

Your letter was shown to Bapuji. It has not pleased him. He sends you the following message:

One comes across a variety of things in the world, but one is not required to get involved in every one of them. One ought only to concern oneself with things that are part of one's duty. A man who meddles with what is not his job is not prompted by any concern for the right—he is merely conceited. Your duty is only to impart instruction to children and to look after matters of hygiene and sanitation and you may not transgress its limits. Therefore your action in stopping the police and getting the cattle released was not right. It may be that they will not prosecute you for stopping the police, but not prosecuting you will only involve you in further trouble. It is well that you write to me about everything. Continue to write in this manner. But do not ever leave the field of school work to meddle with something else. Your duty is only that and nothing else. It is not right of you to be angry with the Saheb either. I hope you will be very cautious in your behaviour in future.

This is Mahatmaji's message. You will accept it with reverence. He would himself have written, but his hand and fingers have not the strength.

Kaka Saheb<sup>1</sup> is unwell today. It must be influenza.

*Yours,*  
MAHADEV DESAI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5221

<sup>1</sup> Dattatraya Balkrishna Kalelkar was so called in the Ganganath Vidyalaya—a school in Baroda State where he served as a teacher before joining Gandhiji as a co-worker; *vide An Autobiography*.



## 226. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

[AHMEDABAD,]  
October 31, 1918

I got your postcard. There is nothing particular to write about today. I am always thinking how you may come to be at peace with yourself, and remain so. If I could help you by any word of mine and if I knew that word, I would write it at once. I do not know whether you have understood what this world means, but I have the clearest vision of it every moment and I see it exactly as it has been described by the sages, and that so vividly that I feel no interest in it. Activity is inescapable so long as there is this body and, therefore, the only thing that pleases me is to be ever occupied with activity of the utmost purity. It is no exaggeration to say that I experience wave after wave of joy from the practice of self-restraint which such work requires. One will find true happiness in the measure that one understands this and lives accordingly. If this calamity<sup>1</sup> puts you in a frame of mind in which such happiness will be yours, we may even regard it as welcome. If your mind can ever disengage itself from its concerns, ponder over all this. We are all well. Those who were ill are all on the way to recovery—I too am doing well. I take it that you show all the letters to Ba and hence I do not write separately to her.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

## 227. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

THE ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
November 5 [1918]<sup>2</sup>

DEAR GURUDEV,

Charlie left the Ashram yesterday and we are the poorer for his absence. I very much miss his sunny face. You will therefore understand what I mean when I tell you how deeply grateful I feel for

<sup>1</sup> A reference to the recent death of the addressee's wife

<sup>2</sup> During the years 1918 to 1921 it was only in 1918 that Gandhiji was at the Ashram on November 5.

your having allowed him to pass a few days at the Ashram.

I hope you are keeping good health under the heavy strain which the school work in Shantiniketan places upon you.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm of the original. Courtesy: National Archives of India

## 228. *LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI*

*November 5, 1918*

DEAR MR. SHASTRIAR,

I thank you for your note and I fully appreciate and understand the spirit that has prompted it. I assure you that I take the greatest possible care I can of my health. It is no joke for a man who has rarely been laid up in bed to have more than three months' experience of it. And if my sickness is still further prolonged, it will be due to my ignorance or folly, or both. I cannot ascribe any relapse to want of skill or attention of medical friends. They are helpless by reason of what to them are my crankisms. But they have become part of myself and give me the greatest comfort and joy even when I am suffering excruciating pain. Here is an extract about the late Dr. Deva from a letter from the Rev. F. Z. Hodge of Motihari. He is a missionary of exceptional independence and liberal thought. I hope you are keeping well or rather as well as you can under the strain that exacting public work imposes upon you.

*Yours,*

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

## 229. *LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI*

ASHRAM,

*Kartik Sud 2 [November 5, 1918]<sup>1</sup>*

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I hope you are well. I feel I am regaining strength. Do you know Jamnalalji? Once or twice he came to see me at

<sup>1</sup> It appears from the contents that this letter was written after the one to the addressee dated September 24, 1918.

Revashankarbhair's<sup>1</sup> place, and it is my impression that you were present. He will co-operate fully in the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan work. Please see him. We must now start the work immediately. Swami Satyadevji<sup>2</sup> is also there at present and will be there for another two days. He will proceed to Madras on Thursday night. Keep me informed of whatever you may be doing.

*Blessings from*

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

### *230. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO H. S. L. POLAK*

*November 9, 1918*

POLAK

CARE IMMORTAL

BOMBAY

GO AFRICA IF WISH. BUT POSSIBILITY SHIPPING DIFFICULTY  
THERE. UNDESIRABLE HERE BEFORE SPRING. CONSULT FULLY.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 10955. Courtesy: Not known

### *231. MESSAGE ON OPENING SWADESHI STORE<sup>3</sup>*

*November 14, 1918*

Being bed-ridden, I am unable to be present, but my spirit is there, of course. If you have faith in swadeshi goods, it is bound to bear fruit. If our love for the country is sincere, we just cannot use foreign goods. I should like the store to be on a larger scale still. The country will prosper only when the people cultivate the spirit of swadeshi with religious devotion.

[From Gujarati]

*Prajabandhu, 17-11-1918*

<sup>1</sup> Revashankar Jagjivan Jhaveri

<sup>2</sup> Swami Satyadev Parivrajak

<sup>3</sup> Gujarat Swadeshi Store at Ahmedabad

### 232. MESSAGE TO FIRST RAILWAY CONFERENCE

[Before *November 16, 1918*]

I am sorry that, not being well, I am unable to be present. Improvement on railways falls under two heads: one, securing relief from the Government and, two, removing the ignorance of passengers. The key to swaraj lies in self-help.

[From Gujarati]

*Gujarati*, 24-11-1918

### 233. LETTER TO PUNDALIK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
*November 17 [1918]*

DEAR PUNDALIK,

Gandhiji has received your letter. He has also read all your letters to Kaka Saheb. He thinks that you should calmly wait and watch and go on working with your mind unperturbed. Whatever has to be done about you will be done by Babu Brajkishore<sup>2</sup> and Babu Rajendra Prasad<sup>3</sup>. Letters have been written to them from here. You also should see Gorakh Babu<sup>4</sup> and keep both of them informed. It has been decided to put up a strong defence on your behalf. It will not be proper to write to the Government about you just yet.

*Yours,*

MAHADEV DESAI  
(Under Gandhiji's direction)

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5219

<sup>1</sup> Held in Nadiad, along with the Gujarat Political Conference

<sup>2</sup> Prasad, advocate of Darbhanga; member, Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council; active co-worker of Gandhiji in Champaran

<sup>3</sup> 1884-1963; statesman and scholar; chairman Constituent Assembly of India, 1946-9; President of India, 1950-62

<sup>4</sup> Gorakh Prasad (1869-1962); a pleader of Motihari; for some time host of Gandhiji in Champaran

### 234. LETTER TO MAHOMED ALI

THE ASHRAM,

*November 18, 1918*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

It was a perfect delight to receive a letter from you after ages as it were. The letters from you all are evidence of your great affection for me for which I am deeply grateful and if, as some return for it, I could strain the letter of my vow and do what you suggest I should gladly do so. But there is no getting out of the self-imposed restraint. I should be false to God and man and to myself if I disregarded the vow taken after the fullest deliberation and in anticipation of all the consequences that have followed it. All my usefulness will be entirely gone if yielding to so many friends' advice I reconsider my position. I regard this sickness as a time of trial and temptation for me, and what I need is the prayerful support and encouragement of friends. I assure you that within the four corners of the restriction I take every precaution possible in order to preserve the body. Just now a medical friend has appeared on the scene who has undertaken to give me physical strength by massage, ice application and deep breathing. He thinks that in two months' time I shall have put on sufficient flesh and weight to be able to move out and undertake ordinary mental strain. His treatment is rational and natural. What is more, I have confidence in it and with proper dietetic changes I do hope that the friend's prophecy will be fulfilled. I have had the charges against you read to me. I have never read a weaker or flimsier indictment and think that your reply will be decisive, straight and dignified. It is evident to me that the Committee has been appointed to furnish the Government with anescape. Anyway we can now contemplate the findings of the Committee with complete indifference. Your defence is so overwhelmingly strong that if the Committee's finding is hostile an agitation can be raised which will make India resound with indignation over the monstrous injustice under which you have laboured so long and so patiently. I wish I was with you in Chhindwara to assist in drawing up your reply, but that was not to be.

Please give my respects to Amma Saheb. I am pining to meet you all and to meet the children and to come in closer touch with you. As I said at the Lucknow meeting, my interest in your release is quite

selfish. We have a common goal and I want to utilize your services to the uttermost, in order to reach that goal. In the proper solution of the Mahomedan question lies the realization of swaraj. However, of this when we meet, as I hope we shall soon do.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai; also N.A.I.: Home: Political (Deposit): December, 1918: No. 3

### *235. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU*

*November 18, 1918*

DEAR SISTER,

I appreciated your little note. I observe that you have survived the operation. I hope that it will be entirely successful, so that India may for many a year to come continue to hear your songs. For me I do not know when I shall be able to leave this sick-bed of mine. Somehow or other, I cannot put on flesh and gain more strength than I have. I am making a mighty attack. The doctors of course despair in face of the self-imposed restrictions under which I am labouring. I assure you that they have been my greatest consolation during this protracted illness. I have no desire whatsoever to live upon condition of breaking those disciplinary and invigorating restrictions. For me, although they restrict the body somewhat, they free the soul and they give me a consciousness of it which I should not otherwise possess."You can't serve God and Mammon" has a clearer and deeper meaning for me after those vows. I do not infer that they are necessary for all, but they are for me. If I broke them I feel that I should be perfectly worthless. Do let me have an occasional line from you.

*Yours,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

## 236. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

*Kartak Vad 5 [November 23, 1918]<sup>1</sup>*

BHAISHRI HARILAL,

I have your letter and the translation. I am still confined to bed. But I have gone through your corrections. Once again I have to hurt you. If I had been satisfied with your corrections, I would not have been so impudent as to reject the translation after it was printed. But I withheld the publication of your translation only when I was convinced that your translation needed drastic changes. It still retains what appear to me to be mistakes. My complaint is that the translation cannot pass as good Gujarati. This defect remains even after your corrections. Lest I be unfair to you even unwittingly, I placed the translation before the teachers. They went through it carefully and expressed the view that the Gujarati of the translation did not do justice to the original, that it did not convey the strict sense of the original, and the language appeared clumsy. While they were going through the translation, an inmate of the Ashram having only passable familiarity with Gujarati was sitting by. He was not aware of what the teachers were doing. But when he heard the translation, he commented that he was not able to follow the Gujarati language. Under these circumstances it seems only proper not to take the risk of publishing the translation as it is. I had hoped that you would discard your translation and do it afresh. Instead of going over the same translation thrice, if you had laboured as much over a fresh translation, both of us would have been satisfied. But how could you do a fresh translation so long as you do not see the faults that we see in your translation?

I am returning your translation. After I recover, if you can spend a few days at the Ashram, we shall go over the translation together and I shall give my comments. I naturally wish that you should be able to see the faults in it.

I felt sad for a moment when I learnt that your family were afflicted with influenza and there was even a death. But such news is pouring in from everywhere so that now the mind is hardly affected.

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 19990

<sup>1</sup> The year has been inferred from the reference to Gandhiji's illness.

## 237. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

[AHMEDABAD,]  
November 26, 1918

CHI. HARILAL,

I gave you some news about myself yesterday. I give you more today. My health is both good and bad. I feel that the improvement which should have taken place in some respects has not come about. I cannot complain about food now. Everyone says that it would be better for me to go out for some time, and I also think I should. I have been, therefore, thinking of doing so, and am making arrangements. It will be good if you come over before I leave. Whatever you wish to say, you may pour out before me without any hesitation. If you cannot give vent to your feelings before me, before whom else can you do so? I shall be a true friend to you. What would it matter if there should be any difference of opinion between us about any scheme of yours? We shall have a quiet talk. The final decision will rest with you. I fully realize that your state at present is like that of a man dreaming. Your responsibilities have increased, your trials have increased and your temptations will increase likewise. To a man with a family, the fact of being such, that is, having a wife, is a great check. This check over you has disappeared.<sup>1</sup> Two paths branch out from where you stand now. You have to decide which you will take. There is a *bhajan* we often sing in the Ashram; its first line runs: *Nirbalke bala Rama*.<sup>2</sup>

One cannot pray to God for help in a spirit of pride but only if one confesses oneself as helpless. As I lie in bed, every day I realize how insignificant we are, how very full of attachments and aversions, and what evil desires sway us. Often I am filled with shame by the unworthiness of my mind. Many a time I fall into despair because of the attention my body craves and wish that it should perish. From my condition, I can very well judge that of others. I shall give you the full benefit of my experience; you may accept what you can. All this after you come.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

<sup>1</sup> Harilal had lost his wife some time ago.

<sup>2</sup> Refrain of Surdas's famous hymn, "He is the help of the helpless, the strength of the weak."



## 238. REPLIES TO QUESTIONS ON MONTAGU-CHELMSFORD SCHEME

[December, 1918]

In the *Hindustan*, a Gujarati daily published at Bombay, a writer has addressed the following open questions to Mahatma Gandhi:

(1) On behalf of Gujarat you sent a monster petition<sup>1</sup> to Mr. Montagu in which you asked for certain rights for India. Does the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme fall short of those rights or not?

(2) If it does fall short, why is it that you did not attend the special Congress<sup>2</sup> to support the demand for granting these rights?

(3) If you believe that the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme satisfies the Indian public, why did you not attend the Moderate Conference<sup>3</sup>?

To those questions, Mr. Gandhi has sent the following replies:

(1) All the rights asked for in the Congress-League Scheme<sup>4</sup> are *not* conceded in the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme.

(2) I did not attend the Special Congress, because I had differences of opinion on certain principles with the leaders and under such circumstances I thought it improper to place my views from the Congress platform. As I did not want to convey even my dumb acceptance of the matters in dispute, I chose to remain absent.

(3) Just as I had differences of opinion on principles with the Extremist leaders, so I had differences with the Moderate leaders also. And so I thought it proper not to attend their Conference, too.

Here I cannot enter into discussion as to what is my difference of opinion on the principles, because that is a complicated subject. That I am on sick-bed is sufficient reason for my refusing discussion about my personal opinion.

*The Indian Review*, December, 1918 quoting *The New Times*

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Petition to E. S. Montagu", before 13-9-1917.

<sup>2</sup> The special session of the Indian National Congress held at Bombay in August-September, 1918, under the presidency of Syed Hasan Imam

<sup>3</sup> Of November, 1918

<sup>4</sup> Of 1916

239. TELEGRAM TO MILL-HANDS AT MADRAS<sup>1</sup>

[December 2,] 1918

NOT YET OUT OF BED, THOUGH RECOVERING. THEREFORE  
UNABLE TO COME TO MADRAS OR OTHERWISE HELP MILL-  
HANDS.

M. K. GANDHI

*The Bengalee*, 4-12-1918

240. LETTER TO INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS<sup>2</sup>

December 26, 1918

I regret being unable to attend the Congress this time. My health is too poor. I hope delegates from both sides will be there at the Congress. I pray to God that the Congress may succeed in its labours.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Hindi]

*Pratap*, 30-12-1918

<sup>1</sup> This was read out on the evening of December 2 at the meeting of Mill-Hands held under the auspices of the Madras Labour Union Employment Bureau.

<sup>2</sup> Substance of a letter read out at the Delhi session of the Indian National Congress by Madan Mohan Malaviya.

## 241. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

C/O REVASHANKAR JAGJIVAN, LABURNUM ROAD,  
GOREGAUM,  
BOMBAY,  
*December 29 [1918]*<sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR MILLIE,

I can still write with great difficulty. I have to move my pen like a schoolboy. This is there to send X'mas greetings and all good wishes for the next year. I expect you in Bombay before long. I am possibly making a little progress. I have had so many setbacks that I do not now predict anything. I simply wait upon God, making every attempt to get better and then trusting Him to the uttermost.

With love,

*Yours,*

BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

## 242. LETTER TO COLLECTOR OF CHAMPARAN<sup>2</sup>

SABARMATI,  
[1918]

As Mr. Pundalik who is in charge of the school at Bhitiharwa tells me that he is being often questioned about his representative character and his activity, I write this to say that Mr. Pundalik represents me and has been selected by me for the work he is doing on the recommendation of Dr. Deva of the Servants of India Society. He is a voluntary unpaid worker.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G N. 5220

<sup>1</sup> From "Bombay, December 29" in the date-line as also from the reference to Gandhiji's ill-health; *vide* "Telegram to Mill-Hands at Madras", 2-12-1918 to "Letter to Maganlal Mehta", 10-1-1919.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by Mahadev Desai in letter to Pundalik in Hindi which stated: "Your letters continue to come. You should go on working steadfastly. Mahatmaji has sent to the Collector the following letter about you."

## 243. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

MARWAR JUNCTION,  
*Tuesday [1918]*

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I heard that some thieves had attempted to steal things from the room. Someone should be asked to sleep in the verandah. I sent Lallubhai last night. It would be a good arrangement to send him and some others with him. Put away all anxiety and work on with faith and courage.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5714. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

## 244. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

BOMBAY,  
*1918*

MY DEAR ESTHER <sup>1</sup>,

This is my first attempt to write after the relapse.

Though I am not quite clear about your course of duty, I suppose it is as well that you responded to Mr. Andrews' appeal<sup>2</sup>. I myself doubt the utility of your going there. Your letters to follow will make this point clear. I am very, very sorry that you are not at the Ashram, during this long vacation. The enforced separation however brings you closer to the Ashram.

You will be glad to hear that I daily wear the vests made by you. They are a perpetual reminder of your long service. I am feeling better for the last two days but no progress like this can be considered reliable until it lasts a fortnight or so.

More from Mahadev.

With love,

*Yours,*  
BAPU

*My Dear Child, p. 31*

<sup>1</sup> A member of the staff of the Danish Missionary Society in South India. She had visited Sabarmati Ashram as a preparation for her educational work.

<sup>2</sup> That Esther Faering should work at Shantiniketan

## 245. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

*January 6, 1919*

I suppose I must get used to having ups and downs and not feel any the worse for them, because it appears that before I have done with this protracted illness I am likely still to have many ups and downs. Just at the present moment I seem to be all right. The hypodermic injections to which I thought I must reconcile myself are producing the expected results. They are intended to whet my appetite and I must confess that my food today is the envy of a gourmand, both as to quantity and quality. But no one knows when I may have a set-back. I dare say a careful observer could even cast a table and prognosticate the next relapse and the others to follow. I am under the hands of a very eminent doctor. He wants to give 15 injections out of which he has given four. The prospect before me is therefore by no means very pleasant and the needle-pricks are decidedly unpleasant. What are we not prepared to bear in order that we may live?

I observe that the Bishop of Calcutta is dead. It must be a great wrench for you, but I suppose it is well that he is free from pain. So far as my convenience is concerned your having sent Miss Faering to Bolpur was all right. But I did consider your action impulsive. As you assure me that she entirely filled your place I can have nothing more to say. But I felt upon Miss Faering's letter that she could not very well take the higher English classes, or for that matter, even the lower classes at Shantiniketan. I suppose there is nothing insurmountable for one possessing the faith that Miss Faering does abundantly and she has succeeded where thousands would have failed. Has she taken her discharge from the Danish Mission, because you talk of her coming to me after her finishing Bolpur. If she has got her discharge without causing any bad feeling, it is a great thing. I am in Bombay at least up to the 15th. I shall then have to consider the propriety of my going to Colombo. You need not worry about my election as a Congress delegate. I have not come to any final conclusion. When the actuality faces me, I know that the way will be as clear to me as the blue skies. I am, therefore, "careful for nothing". I am not anxious to go as a depute, but I shall not avoid the task if I must perform it. I hope you are doing well.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

## 246. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

[BOMBAY,]

January 9, 1919

My health, like the moon, has its phases; it waxes and it wanes; only it jumps the new moon day. The pain caused by piles has disappeared completely, but I have no appetite and feel weak in the body and to that extent the illness persists.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

## 247. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Wednesday, [After January 9, 1919]<sup>1</sup>

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. It cannot be concluded that because the goat is a restless animal, the person who drinks goat's milk will also become restless.

I am already taking milk twice a day. If I do so three times a day, it will only give me loose motions. Putting soda into curd certainly changes its properties.

I do not have rheumatism at all. But many people have pain in the joints from exhaustion. Such is the case with me. But now the pain is very much reduced. Had it been due to rheumatism it would have become aggravated rather than subsided. The reason why I am writing all this is that you should learn to come to correct conclusions. Many people draw incomplete conclusions. It is like one-sided judgement. Do you understand?

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[PS.]

Ask Reench if he remembers me.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 3728

<sup>1</sup> From the reference to consumption of goat's milk which Gandhiji began from January 9, 1919; *vide* also "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 10-1-1919, "Letter to Narhari Parikh", 21-1-1919 and "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 5-2-1919.

## 248. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[BOMBAY,]

January 10, 1919

These days, I have been thinking so much about all sorts of things that I often feel a strong urge to share some of my thoughts with you all. But, thanks to physical weakness and mental torpor, I can neither write nor dictate. Today I cannot help dictating. In the changes I am making at present, my *atman* bears witness that I am showing no weakness. I am making them with a detached mind and out of my strength, *the main purpose being to satisfy all of you and the other friends*. I simply cannot bear to look at Ba's face. The expression is often like that on the face of a meek cow and gives one the feeling, as a cow occasionally does, that in her own dumb manner she was saying something. I see, too, that there is selfishness in this suffering of hers; even so, her gentleness overpowers me and I feel inclined to relax in all matters in which I possibly may. Only four days ago, she was making herself miserable about milk, and, on the impulse of the moment, asked me why, if I might not take cow's milk, I would not take goat's milk. This went home. When I took the vow, I was not thinking of the goat at all. I knew nothing, then, about the use of goat's milk and it was not a goat's suffering which was so vividly before my mind. My vow related only to cow's milk. I was not thinking about the buffalo either. But taking buffalo's milk would kill my chief aim [in taking the vow]. It was different with goat's milk, and I felt I could relieve friends of much of their concern. I, therefore, decided to take goat's milk. Though, from one point of view, my vow does not retain its full value, now that I know all about goat's milk, it does not lose its value altogether. Be that as it may, I am glad the thing is over and done with, for friends' agony was increasing day by day and Dr. Mehta kept bombarding me with telegrams. There is no difference between cow's milk and goat's milk, if the goat is well looked after. It is even on record that in England the goat's milk is richer than the cow's. The milk from our goats is considered lighter, but this is an advantage rather than otherwise. Be the fact of the matter what it is, I have done all I could. I even let the doctor to inject arsenic, strychnine and iron. If my health does not come round after all this, we certainly cannot say that it will if I give up the vow [restricting me to the use] of no more than five articles [a day]. No one, therefore, has anything now to complain of. We shall have to be patient and watch what effect all these changes have. Though I have allowed myself this

freedom, my conscience does not, for a single moment, cease asking me, "Why all this labour?", "What would you do with life?", "What is it you would so much exert yourself to reform?" When I think of the plight of Germany's Kaiser, I feel as if a great Being were playing with us as we play with cowries. We are infinitely smaller, in relation to the globe on which we move, than the ants moving on a ball are in relation to that ball and like them, ever ignorant, we press forward and get crushed. Despite such thoughts, I have not even a moment's doubt about our duty. We cannot cease wholly from activity and, therefore, everything we do must tend to *paramartha*<sup>1</sup>. A man so active can attain the most perfect peace. In the Ashram, too, we must undertake such activity. Do what you think best in regard to the suggestion you have received about sowing *jowar*, and about weaving. Let me know what you do. And remember that you can engage a servant for the kitchen, if you feel the need.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

## 249. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

*January 10, 1919*

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

So you have been suffering from influenza. To me the marvel is that you can keep so well in spite of incessant wanderings. But I suppose God protects those whom He wants to use as His instruments, especially when they let Him do the guiding without any opposition. I therefore entertain no anxiety on your behalf. I feel certain that you may have all the strength you need for your mission. For me, I am still going through ups and downs. I am not clear, as you seem to be, about the desirability of my going to England, either for the public work I may be able to do, or for the sake of my health. I am, however, gradually feeling my way and taking it step by step.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

<sup>1</sup> The highest good



## 250. LETTER TO SWAMI SATYADEV

BOMBAY,  
January 10, [1919]<sup>1</sup>

‘अव्यवस्थितचित्तस्य प्रसादोऽपि भयंकरः’<sup>2</sup>

SWAMI SATYADEVJI,

I have dictated the above *shloka* with great sorrow. Your letters have startled me. A learned and experienced person like you cannot give up any work after having started it. Devdas is a child. He does not want to leave me till he is absolutely sure about my health. I cannot make him give up this sacred feeling by coercion. Nor do I want to. I firmly believe that whatever my state of health, Devdas should be in Madras. But Devdas does not think so. He believes that so long as there is the slightest doubt about my health, his duty is to be with me. What I can I tell him? Even so, there was much argument with him today and Devdas has agreed that if your reply, which he is awaiting, is not satisfactory, he will leave this place and go to Madras. I shall hope that you will not give up your work in Madras any time. I would like to believe that the letters you have written me are only an expression of your anger. You must give up the anger and be calm. That is my prayer.

My health continues to have ups and downs.<sup>3</sup> There is no cause for worry. I do have the confidence that even if I do not keep perfect health, there cannot be any sudden decline either. I have now agreed to take goat’s milk. Hence there is every chance of my regaining health quickly.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11909

<sup>1</sup> From the reference in the text to Devdas’s work in Madras and to Gandhiji’s agreeing to take goat’s milk, which he started in 1919

<sup>2</sup> ‘Coming from one with a disturbed mind even a boon is frightening.’

<sup>3</sup> Gandhiji had been suffering from piles.

## 251. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

BOMBAY,

*Paush Sud 15 [January 16, 1919]*<sup>1</sup>

CHI. RAMDAS<sup>2</sup>,

After some days I am again trying to write you. I am still unable to write,<sup>3</sup> but I feel like writing to you and so am writing this. You complain about absence of letters from me, but I have been regular in dictating letters to you. There is so much confusion on the steamship that sometimes letters even get lost in transit. Just as some others did not get the letters I wrote to them, you also may not have got them. It is not right, whenever you fail to get a letter from me, to assume that I must have been displeased by something you did or wrote. It is not in my nature to get hurt over such things. Moreover, you have done or said nothing which might have displeased me.

I have no doubt in my mind that Manilal has been working hard, and for the present you should continue to help him. He will be able to raise the level of *I.O.* gradually. If you have confidence in your ability to write on your own, you may do so. Only one thing is required for it, and that is knowledge of facts. If you know anything about agriculture, do write a good article on that subject. Many aspiring writers who have no grasp of the subject they write on, are foolhardy enough to try to write on it and fail in their attempt. If you master an easy subject and begin writing on it, you are sure to succeed. You could have written a vivid account of the passing away of Sheth Cachalia<sup>4</sup>. If you start writing that way, you will get trained and will be able, by and by, to write very well. When Mr. Polak<sup>5</sup> joined me, his writings were dull and too long. After about four months' experience, he was able to write better and by the end of the year, had made excellent progress. Your great misfortune is that you lack

<sup>1</sup> As suggested in the source. Also *vide* "Fragment of Letter to Ramdas Gandhi", 16-1-1919 where the 2nd para of this letter is already reproduced under the same date.

<sup>2</sup> Ramdas was at this time in Natal on the Phoenix Farm with Manilal.

<sup>3</sup> Gandhiji had been ailing for a long time and had to finally undergo an operation for piles on January 20, 1919.

<sup>4</sup> Sheth Ahmed Mohamed Cachalia who had died in South Africa on October 20, 1918

<sup>5</sup> H.S.L. Polak

confidence in your ability. There is no reason at all for you to believe that you have no brains. If only you cultivate interest in reading and writing, you have ability enough to do both.<sup>1</sup>

My health seems to be improving. I have started taking goat's milk<sup>2</sup>. That seems to be doing me much good. I must be daily drinking about four and a half seers of it. Besides drinking milk, I eat some dry fruits and rice twice every day. If I can digest the quantity of milk I am taking, my weight is likely to increase very fast.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

## 252. LETTER TO HARILAL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

*Pause Krishna Chaturdashi [January 20, 1919]<sup>3</sup>*

BHAISHRI,

The tragedy that has befallen you distresses me. We are so eager to live that the moment of death, particularly that of a dear one, always frightens us. I have often felt that it is at such a moment that we are truly tested. Anyone even the least little bit aware of the *atman* is able to understand the nature of death. It is futile to mourn. These thoughts are not new but if someone voices them in times of trouble, they console us. It is with that purpose in mind that I write this.

I wish you not to be distressed at all over the translation. Your translation does not give the impression that you have rushed through it anyhow; but only a few display the love that one should feel for one's mother tongue. I notice in your translation the mistakes that everybody commits. I am sure you will notice them now that I have pointed them out . . .<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately, I noticed the translation after the

<sup>1</sup> This para is already reproduced in "Fragment of Letter to Ramdas Gandhi", 16-1-1919.

<sup>2</sup> Gandhiji started this on January 9, 1919

<sup>3</sup> It appears from the contents that this letter was written after the one preceding it. *Paush Krishna Chaturdashi* corresponded to January 20 in 1919.

<sup>4</sup> Omission as in the source

whole of it had already been printed. I urge you to do the translation afresh instead of revising what you have done. It will not take much time and the translation will be readable.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 19991

### 253. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

[BOMBAY,]

January 21, 1919

BHAISHRI NARAHARI<sup>1</sup>,

It is 12.30 a.m. just now. I got the piles removed yesterday. When I had suffered enough, I was given morphia by injection. I felt drowsy in consequence and fell asleep. I slept from 2 p.m. onwards and have just awakened, at midnight. Hence the mind is calm, and I am not likely to get sleep again for some time. Besides, it is Mahadev's turn to watch, and therefore, feeling inclined to write to you, I am dictating this letter.

Everyone hopes that after the operation I shall be free of piles for good. If that happens, my health is likely to improve very fast. I shall have to remain here for at least a month, and then, before going elsewhere, I shall first visit the Ashram. No one, I beg, should worry about my health.

I was very glad to read your criticism<sup>2</sup> of the freedom I have allowed myself in regard to milk. If any person feels that a friend of his has shown weakness, through illness maybe, or for any other reason, it is his duty to draw the friend's attention to the weakness he has observed. A man is under so strong a temptation to fall, and Nature herself has made it so very easy for him to indulge in self-deception, that even a vigilant person, if he is weak, or if his abstinences lack the genuine spirit of renunciation, is sure to fall. Therefore, as I have said above, friends must keep an eye on one another and I wish that all of you maintain such watch ever so thoroughly. It is in this that our elevation lies, yours and mine. Before making any great change, I invariably consult Mahadev at any rate,

<sup>1</sup> Co-worker of Gandhiji

<sup>2</sup> Which, in the letter to Mahadev Desai, as quoted in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, was: "We are all happy that you have started taking goat's milk. But strength lies in giving up the vow straightaway instead of putting new constructions upon it in this manner and violating it gradually."

but I have always felt that, because of his boundless love for me, he is incapable of noting any shortcomings in me and that, when he does, he condones them. I do not, therefore, get full benefit out of my consultations with him. Had you made your remarks in your letter to me, I would have felt happier. I am sure of this, at any rate, that when friends place the argument on the other side, I understand it very well because I take an entirely detached view. That is why I feel that, whenever we do not think alike, you should all come out with your disagreement immediately. That will not disturb me very much; rather, I shall be free from the unhappy position of having to be my own judge. Personally, I feel convinced that I have fully succeeded in observing my vows with the utmost strictness. I deliberated for twenty-four hours before I commenced taking goat's milk; I would even say that, whenever I have allowed myself any freedom, there have always been strong reasons for doing so. I am not at all anxious to live on and, though more than five months have elapsed since I fell ill, this indifference of mine remains. When I took the vow of not taking milk, I had, or could have, no thought in my mind of any milk other than that of the cow or the buffalo. I had considered the matter very carefully when I took the vow to refrain from milk. I was painfully aware of the ill-treatment of cows and buffaloes<sup>1</sup> and that was the reason for my taking the vow concerning milk. What is my duty in the present circumstances? Should I accept the natural meaning that suggests itself or the one that is drawn out with much hair-splitting? It appears to me that I should allow myself as much freedom as is consistent with a very liberal construction of my vows. I will not admit that, through the freedom I have allowed myself, I am in any way violating my vow, even on the strictest view of it. The medical experiment [of a milkless diet] I was making may indeed receive a great setback, but an experiment in medical science is no affair of the spirit. The ideal of self-control and the spiritual intention behind the renunciation of milk have remained quite unaffected. With the passing of days, friends become more insistent. Dr. Mehta goes on sending telegrams. Thousands of other Indians are extremely agitated over my illness. Though Ba is not always weeping and grieving over my illness, yet I know that her soul is in torment. What should I do under such circumstances? The question can have only one answer. Without detracting ever so little from my vow, I should adopt a liberal attitude

<sup>1</sup> *Vide An Autobiography*, Part V, Ch. XXIX.

wherever possible and allow myself some freedom. I shall stop here today. There are many other arguments, but I have placed only the main one before you. If my argument does not satisfy you, and if you still see weakness in my action, do let me have your criticism. If you do so, moreover, after consulting others, I shall be happy indeed. Even if your criticism appears just to me, for the present I shall continue taking milk. Do not, therefore, hesitate out of fear that I might give it up.

I am very glad that you teach Manibehn<sup>1</sup> with care. If we could place all our women in the forefront, we would produce big results.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. V

## 254. LETTER TO BALI

*January 21, 1919*

CHI. BALI<sup>2</sup>,

I have your letter. My health continues to be so-so. For four days I suffered torments because of piles. Yesterday the doctor operated upon them, so now I shall know whether I get relief. The children are enjoying themselves. The day before yesterday, we allowed them to go with Kumi<sup>3</sup>. We don't allow them to go at night and sleep at her place. There was a letter from Harilal in which he says that the place where the children sleep should not be changed. You both feel very unhappy because I cannot make arrangements for the children as desired by you; all the same, I feel constrained to refuse to send the children over to you, even if I have to be cruel in the process. It is absolutely necessary for them not to have to change the place too often. A tutor has also been engaged to teach them from tomorrow. As a result of the treatment being given to Manu<sup>4</sup>, she is growing fast. And the same about Rami<sup>5</sup>. Under these circumstances, if you consider merely the interests of the children, you will not insist on having them sent over to you. I should like you, instead, once in a month or two, or three at the longest, to go to Sabarmati, stay in the

<sup>1</sup> Addressee's wife

<sup>2</sup> Sister-in-law of Harilal Gandhi

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

<sup>4</sup> Harilal's daughters

<sup>5</sup> Harilal's mother-in-law

Ashram and be happy with the children. That I shall have your company will be an additional advantage. The passing away of both Chhabalbhabhi<sup>1</sup> and Chanchal has been a great blow to you. If it were in any way possible, I would take your suffering on myself and see that you were free from the suffering which you have gone through in your life. You are like a daughter to me and may, therefore, write with the utmost freedom. Do write now and then. Ba sends you her blessings.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. V

## 255. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING<sup>2</sup>

BOMBAY

January 25, 1919

MY DEAR ESTHER,

I shall try to answer your very very pertinent question as fully as possible. A vow is nothing but a fixed resolution to do or abstain from doing a particular thing. During the self-denial week, the members of the Salvation Army take a vow to abstain from taking jam or other eatable for a fixed period. During Lent, the Roman Catholics undergo certain privations. That is also a vow. In each case, the result expected is the same, viz., purification and expression of the soul. By these resolutions, you bring the body under subjection. Body is matter, soul is spirit, and there is internal conflict between matter and spirit. Triumph of matter over the spirit means destruction of the latter. It is common knowledge that [this is] in the same proportion that we indulge the body or mortify the soul. Body or matter has undoubtedly its uses. The spirit can express itself only through matter

<sup>1</sup> In reply to the following letter from Esther Faering: "Do we take a vow in order to help and strengthen our character? Does God require us to take any kind of vows? Can a vow not become fatal? I do ask you Bapu in all reverence because I desire to get more light over this question. I believe that God suffers because you now are suffering, Bapu, although you suffer with joy. But if God is a father, and if God is perfect love, does it not then cause suffering to Him when His children take burden upon them, which they are not asked to carry? If you could explain [to] me the deeper meaning of the vow it might help me in my own life."

<sup>2</sup> Organization for religious philanthropic work founded by William Booth in 1880

or body. But that result can be obtained only when the body is used as an instrument for the uplifting of the soul. The vast majority of the human family do not use the body in that manner. The result is triumph of the body or matter over the spirit or the soul. We who know the soul to be imperishable living in a body which ever changes its substance and is perishable must by making fixed resolutions bring our bodies under such control that finally we may be able to use them for the fullest service of the soul. This idea is fairly clearly brought out in the New Testament. But I have seen it nowhere explained as fully and clearly as in the Hindu scriptures. You will find this law of self-denial written in every page of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. Have you read these two books? If not, you should one of these days read them carefully and with the eye of faith. There is a great deal of fabulous matter about these two books. They are designed for the masses and the authors have deliberately chosen to write them in a manner that would make them acceptable to the people. They have hit upon the easiest method of carrying the truth to the millions, and experience of ages shows that they have been marvellously successful. If I have not made myself sufficiently understood or written convincingly, please tell me so and I shall endeavour again. I have undergone an operation. Today is the sixth day. I do not know whether it is a successful operation. It was performed by an eminent surgeon<sup>1</sup>. He is undoubtedly a very careful man, It would be no fault of his if I have to continue to suffer pain in spite of the operation.

With love,

Ever yours,

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Dalal



## 256. GOKHALE'S MISSION OF SERVICE<sup>1</sup>

[January 27, 1919]

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's work in connection with the issue of indenture reveals his single-minded devotion better than his other activities do. His tour of South Africa<sup>2</sup> and the agitation he subsequently carried on in India give us a very good idea of his ability to identify himself with the work on hand. It is because of this ability of his that I have often said that one could see an underlying religious impulse in all his work.

Let us go over his work in South Africa in some detail. When he announced his intention of paying a visit to South Africa, there was a commotion in the official circles in India. What would happen if a man like Gokhale should be insulted in South Africa? Should he not drop the idea? But there was no one who could muster courage to suggest this to him. While yet in England, Gokhale had a foretaste of what he might expect in South Africa. He asked for a ticket but the officials of the *Union Castle* company would not oblige. The report reached India Office. The latter issued preemptory instructions to Sir Owen Tudor, manager of the company, that Gokhale should be treated with the respect due to his status. In the event, Gokhale was able to go on the ship like an honoured guest. He told me, when describing the incident: "I was not very particular about respect to me as an individual, but the honour of my nation is dear to me as my very life and, since I was going on this occasion in my public capacity, I felt that any insult to me would be an insult to India, and hence I tried to secure for me facilities in keeping with my status." The wiser for this incident, India Office had seen to it through the Colonial Office that Gokhale should also be properly received in South Africa and the Union Government had made advance arrangements for the purpose. They kept a saloon ready for him and also provided a cook to accompany him on his tour. An officer was detailed to look after him. The Indian community, on its part, had made arrangements to accord him more than royal honours. Gokhale accepted the Union Government's hospitality only in Pretoria, capital of the Union. Everywhere else, he

<sup>1</sup> The original has, literally, *mantra* of service.

<sup>2</sup> Gokhale visited South Africa in October-November, 1912.

was the guest of the Indian community. The moment he arrived in Cape Town, he took up a careful study of the South African issue. Even the general information on the subject with which he arrived in Cape Town was of no mean order, but that was not enough to satisfy him. During his four weeks' stay in South Africa, he went so deep into the question of Indians there, that everyone who met him was surprised by the vastness of his knowledge. When he was to meet Generals Botha and Smuts, so numerous were the notes he wanted to be prepared that I wondered why he would take all that trouble. He was in indifferent health all the time and needed the utmost care. Despite this, he would keep awake working till midnight, and get up again at four o'clock in the morning and ask for papers. In the result, the meeting he had with Generals Botha and Smuts led ultimately to the satyagraha campaign for the repeal of the £3 tax on the indentured labourers. This tax had been imposed, since 1893, on the labourers whose indenture had expired and on their wives and children. If any labourer did not wish to pay the tax, he was obliged under the law to return to India. This reduced the Indians who had been trapped into indenture, rather, into slavery, to a miserable plight. A man who had given up everything and gone over to South Africa with his entire family, what could he do on returning? Here he would have nothing but starvation to face. How, on the other hand, could he remain in indenture for a life-time? When free men around him earned as much as £4 or 5 or 10 a month, how could he be content with 14 or 15s? If he wanted to remain free, he would have, assuming that he had one son and one daughter, to pay £12 every year by way of tax, including the tax on his wife. How could he pay this exorbitant tax? The Indian community had been fighting against this tax from the very beginning. There had been repercussions in India too. But the tax had yet to be repealed then. Along with many other things, Gokhale was to demand repeal of this tax. He had been boiling over as if this tax on his poor brethren were a tax on himself. He brought into play the entire strength of his spirit when he met General Botha. So strong was the impression that his words created on Generals Botha and Smuts that they yielded and gave him a promise to repeal the tax during the ensuing session of the Parliament. Gokhale announced the news to me with great joy. These two Ministers had given other promises as well. As, however, we are considering only the question of indenture, I restrict myself here to this part of his meeting with the Union Government. The Parliament commenced its sittings. Gokhale

had left South Africa by then and the Indians there discovered that the £3 tax was not to be repealed. To be sure, General Smuts had made a lukewarm effort to bring round the Natal members; in my judgement, however, he had not done all that he should have. The Indian community informed the Union Government that the latter had bound itself before Gokhale to repeal the tax and that therefore if the tax was not repealed, it would be included among the issues on which they had been offering satyagraha since 1906. At the same time, Gokhale was informed telegraphically. He approved of this step. The Union Government ignored the warning given by the Indian community. Everyone knows what followed. 40,000 indentured Indians started satyagraha, went on strike and endured hardships past all bearing. Quite a few of them were killed. Ultimately, however, the promise given to Gokhale was fulfilled and the tax was repealed.<sup>1</sup>

[From Gujarati]

*Dharmatma Gokhale*

## 257. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

[BOMBAY,]

January 27, 1919

I have followed your letter<sup>2</sup> read out to me. I very much like your writing frankly. I am replying, expecting that you will write further. My vow, in its broadest sense, can only mean what you say it does. And so, the day I resolved to take goat's milk, I remarked that the zest with which I kept up the vow would be no more. I cannot experiment with milkless diet any more, nor can I pride myself upon not taking any food of animal origin. All the same, even after following your letter, I don't feel that my vow has been violated. It appears to me that the restricted meaning of my vow is as I have given it. When I took the vow, goat's milk was not in my mind at all. *And I would even go so far as to maintain that the fact of big loopholes having been left in both my vows is evidence of their utter sincerity.* As

<sup>1</sup> By the Indians' Relief Act of 1914.

<sup>2</sup> As quoted in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, it read: "To be sure, the freedom you have taken interprets the vow in the most liberal spirit, but in the process the vow is preserved only in its letter. If we put milk on level with meat, goat's milk is as much so as cow's milk."

for the vow [restricting me to only] five articles [during a single day], going to any foreign country, as it turns out, will release me from it; in regard to the vow concerning milk, the goat has proved a mother to me. There are many instances in our scriptures of vows having been kept, though interpreted in a restricted sense. I understand the significance of these instances better now. It is to be preferred that a person placed as I am should be known to have kept a vow of his in its literal meaning, at any rate, rather than to have violated it all-together. I believe I shall be able to keep myself going on goat's milk. However, there are those who say, and there will be many more to say it, that I shall not regain complete strength without taking cow's milk. I shall certainly not, for that reason, take cow's milk. Nor, again, am I likely to get goat's milk at every place. Thus, even in the literal observance of the vow, some inconvenience will be there. At the moment, however, the question I am putting before you and me is not that of convenience or inconvenience. We have only to consider whether my vow can bear the restricted meaning I am giving it. If it can, it is my duty in this difficult situation to accept such meaning, relieve my friends and save my body. Personally, I feel that so long as a person sees no error or sin in his vow, he is not free to violate it on anyone's account. If once it is allowed that a vow may be broken, no vows will ever be kept and they will lose all their significance. Even so, I don't see any harm in placing upon a vow every sense it will bear and using the fact to one's advantage. It is not self-deception when people persuade themselves that they have kept the *ekadashi*, using rock salt in place of common salt on that day. Common salt is of course forbidden; but anyone who, finding it impossible to do without the savour which salt imparts to food, substitutes any one of the other available salts and keeps the *ekadashi* that way, has yet exercised a sort of self-control. One day he may give up even rock salt.

I shall not make this reply any longer. Think over what I have said and, if there is anything to write, do when you have the time.

We shall all learn something by this exchange of letters and, if I have been making a mistake, I shall know what it is.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. V

## 258. LETTER TO REVASHANKAR SODHA<sup>1</sup>

January 27, 1919

I have your letter. I like your desire to acquire knowledge. I wish to respect it, too, but at the moment I shall have to restrain it. The desire for knowledge has sometimes to be renounced. Personally, I feel my inadequacy in Sanskrit, and my eagerness to study Marathi, Bengali and Tamil is more than I can describe. And yet I have had to check my greedy desire, thanks to the tasks which fell to my lot one after another. I often wish to give Chi. Devdas ever so much knowledge. He has a gift for learning and I am confident that he would turn his learning to good account. Even so, I have stopped his studies because the work he is doing, teaching Hindi to our brethren in Madras, is more important. Take the case of Chi. Magan-lal himself. His deficiency in the matter of education has no limit. I think we would all admit that, if he could study further he would make excellent use of his knowledge. I often realize his lack of adequate education. Despite this, ever since he joined me, I have had to employ him on other tasks and therefore I could not let him study further. I could recount many more instances, but I have given enough to satisfy you. Just at present we have so many things to be done through the Ashram that we must set every available person to work. And so I think that, for the present, you must attend, with single-minded devotion, to whatever work is entrusted to you and give full satisfaction in it. I shall always keep in mind the question of your studies and, when I feel that the time has come for it, I shall not let the opportunity go. If this reply does not satisfy you, write to me whatever you would. I want to take work from you after satisfying you.

Take good care of your health. My health, it seems, is improving. When the doctor's treatment here is over, I intend to visit the Ashram before going elsewhere. But that may well take a month. Hence you may write to me whatever you want to. Do not put it off, thinking that we shall talk things over when we meet. You must write with the utmost freedom.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V*

<sup>1</sup> Son of Ratanshi Mulji Sodha, an ardent satyagrahi who suffered imprisonment during the campaign in South Africa

## 259. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO VITHALBHAI PATEL

[BOMBAY,]

January 28, 1919

. . Considering all this commotion among the Hindus, do you still think that your Bill<sup>1</sup> will be useful to the community? I should like you to come over and discuss this.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. V

## 260. LETTER TO SYED HUSSAIN<sup>2</sup>

January 30, 1919

In wishing you success in your new enterprise, I would like to say how I hope your writings would be worthy of the title you have chosen for your journal; and may I further hope that to a robust independence you will add an equal measure of self-restraint and the strictest adherence to truth? Too often in our journals as in others do we get fiction instead of fact and declamation in place of sober reasoning. You would make *The Independent*<sup>3</sup> a power in the land and a means of education for the people by avoiding the errors I have drawn attention to.

*Yours sincerely,*

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

## 261. LETTER TO O. S. GHATE

January 30, 1919

I was glad to receive your letter although it is a doleful one. I was wondering why I did not hear from you. My eye is fixed on Ali Brothers. I am simply waiting for the result of the Government inquiry. Nothing should be done until the Report of that Committee

<sup>1</sup> Inter-caste Marriage Bill; vide "Letter to *The Indian Social Reformer*", 26-2-1919.

<sup>2</sup> In reply to the following telegram from Syed Hussain on 29-1-1919: "*Independent* appearing fifth Feb[ruar]y. Kindly send autographed message for publication first issue."

<sup>3</sup> English daily from Allahabad

has been presented to the Government. Is the inquiry over? If as a result of the inquiry the Brothers are not released, the time for action will have arrived. The responsibility [of] taking such action as will be necessary I know rests on my shoulders and if I am at all well I shall not allow a single moment to pass in taking action and from the present state of my health I have every reason to hope that within a month's time I should be able to take up this work if it becomes necessary. My medical adviser expects me to take fully three months' rest outside India after he discharges me. But for the sake of this work, I should certainly forgo the three months' rest. I agree with you that the new Bill<sup>1</sup> for the preservation of internal tranquillity is damnable and no stone may be left unturned by us to kill the measure. But I strongly feel that because of its very severity it will never become law. I think that all the Indian members of the Imperial Council will strenuously oppose it. But all this is no reason for the country not taking up vigorous agitation. I am myself preparing to do my humble share in it. I am watching its course. There is no fear of its immediately becoming law. There will therefore be ample time to direct and develop the strongest possible agitation. In any event, I would like the Brothers to keep absolutely clear of the agitation until they have gained their full freedom. I shall hope that they will take no action without consultation with me.

*Yours sincerely,*

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

## 262. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

BOMBAY,

[Last week of *January, 1919*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I always have your letters read out. There are ups and downs in my health. If I don't leave this place, it is because I get better facilities here. Don't be worried on my account.

All the deficiencies in the Ashram will end when farm-work prospers, whether with hired labour or that of the Ashram inmates and the atmosphere is loud with weaving. If Gulbadan and Kamla do not work well, it is necessary to have a talk with them and tell them so

<sup>1</sup> The Rowlatt Bill

plainly. If you experience any difficulty about flour, you may get the wheat cleaned and take it to a mill for grinding. At present, we are in a position to keep the vow of swadeshi in respect of cloth. If necessary, you may pay to get the wheat cleaned.

It is surprising that Rukhi is ill so often. You ought to do a bit of research and set her health right.

Parvati should be asked to have plenty of water and take deep breaths. How does Prabhudas keep? What is the physical instructor doing? Have you resumed any construction work? How is the school running? Who are the visitors to the Ashram? What work does Mama do? And Chhotalal?

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5769. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

### *263. SUMMARY OF LETTER TO SHANKARLAL BANKER*

*[Before February 2, 1919]*

Under the joint auspices of the Bombay branches of the Home Rule League, a public meeting was held on February 2, 1919, at Shantaram's Chawl, Bombay, to protest against the introduction of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill and the Criminal Law Emergency Powers Bill, Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya presiding. A letter from Gandhiji addressed to Mr. Shankarlal Banker, Secretary of the Home Rule League, was read out to the meeting by Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas.

In the course of his letter, he felt that the Rowlatt Committee<sup>1</sup> Report afforded not the slightest warrant for the proposed Bills, and that it was their duty to educate public opinion to oppose the Bills with patience and firm determination. If the Rowlatt Bills were passed into law, the Reforms, whatever their value, would be absolutely worthless. It was absurd to find on one side the enlargement of the powers of the public and, on the other, to put unbearable restraints on their powers. If he were not ill, he would surely have done his share in the agitation against the Bills.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 4-2-1919*

<sup>1</sup> Appointed by the Government of India in 1917 with Justice Rowlatt of the Supreme Court of Judicature in England as president, to investigate and report on the sedition movement in India. Its recommendations were published in 1918 soon after the publication of the Montford Reforms, and favoured the enactment of special measures after the Defence of India Act had ceased to operate.



## 264. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[BOMBAY,]

February 2, 1919

CHI. DEVDAS,

I expected a letter from you today, but did not get any. I have felt no little sorrow in parting from you, but I saw that your interest and your duty required that you should go. And therefore I hardened myself against the pain [of separation], born of my attachment, and urged you to leave at any cost. When your task in Madras is over, I shall satisfy your desire for studies. But believe me, the experience you have gained, very few must have. Our whole life must be, as it were, a student's life. If you take this as the guiding principle of your life, you will never be too old for studies....<sup>1</sup> Write regularly and be regular in your prayers.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. V

## 265. TALK WITH CHANDRASHANKAR PANDYA<sup>2</sup>

BOMBAY,

February 2, 1919

Why should a handful of people hurt the feelings of the largest section of society? If the vast majority of Hindus prefer certain restraints in regard to marriage, it is the duty of individuals, if they wish to continue to be part of Hindu society, to respect the wishes of the majority.

[From Gujarati]

*Samalochak*, February 1919

<sup>1</sup> Some words are omitted here in the source.

<sup>2</sup> Extracted from a write-up by Chandrashankar Pandya. Gandhiji was speaking in the context of Namdev Patel's bill concerning Hindu marriage.

## 266. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

BOMBAY,

*Basant Panchami*, [February 5]<sup>1</sup> 1919

DEAR NARAHARI,

I have your letter. Even though we are meeting on Monday, I am writing to you so that you can do some more thinking. According to you, giving a literal meaning to a vow amounts to special pleading. I do not agree, because I am not aware of any special pleading at all. I gave it the meaning that with the utmost humility and purity of mind I thought it bore. Moreover, I also feel that our too strict adherence to the words of the scriptures was not entirely special pleading, but an admission of the fact that men are strong as well as weak. For a man of strength, the literal meaning as well as the implied meaning was kept. For a man given to weakness, the literal meaning was considered sufficient, and the significance of vows was retained. One cannot find fault with this by saying that hypocrites would stand to gain by this. The scriptures were written with such people in view. Any loophole in a vow indicates the uniqueness and completeness of the vow. Mere abstention from milk<sup>2</sup> does not serve the purpose for which the vow had been taken. One must either prove that one can live without milk or find a substitute for milk. And I shall continue my efforts to find a substitute for milk.<sup>3</sup> Even if I die in my search without succeeding it will not matter; because, if I am fated to be born again, I shall re-enter the world with the same desires with which I die. In writing all this, I am trying to show that under some circumstances, even if we give up the implied meaning of a vow and stick only to the literal meaning, we will have followed the vow perfectly. The basis is the same. Those who follow both the literal and the implied meaning of a vow would no doubt occupy a higher place. Those who follow the literal meaning will have to be content with being at the ground

<sup>1</sup> The source has "January". However, in 1919, *Basant Panchami* fell on February 5.

<sup>2</sup> Gandhiji had taken a vow at the Tolstoy Farm in 1912 to abstain from milk and milk products; *vide* "An Autobiography—Part IV, chapter XXX".

<sup>3</sup> After the very serious attack of dysentery in August, Gandhiji was not able to recover his strength. He had been writing to friends to find a substitute for milk. *Vide* "Letter to P.C. Ray", 27-8-1918 and "Letter to Narahari Parikh", 27-1-1919.

level. But a person living at Matheran can take full advantage of the place even if he lives in a hut. Similarly a person following the literal meaning can find the strength which comes from the observance of a vow. Consider all this, and when there is leisure, cross-examine me fully without any hesitation. It is possible that wittingly or unwittingly I am being partial to the step I have taken. It is up to my colleagues to save me from this fault. Maybe I have been wrong about something still I shall be making fewer mistakes than others. But I know that that very knowledge can give me a terrible blow. It is up to all of you to save me from that, I have dictated this letter while eating and while giving a sitting for a bust. There will be no time even to revise it. If there is anything that is not clear, ask me when I come.

*Blessings from*

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11912

## 267. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

BOMBAY,

*Vasant Panchami [February 5, 1919]*

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Mahadev left last evening. In his absence, I dictate to Chi. Mathuradas<sup>1</sup> I hope to arrive there on Monday morning. The experiment of 7 lbs. of milk turned out to be a bit more than I could stand. I swallowed the lot as a dose of medicine. No harm was done, though. Today, therefore, I shall take about six pounds. For the first time after coming here, I walked today for about an hour and a quarter at a stretch. I went to Malabar Hill. Nothing untoward happened. I have come to know a few things about the Ashram through Bhai Mavji. But very soon I shall see things for myself; so I won't ask any more questions, nor, for the same reason, say anything on the subject here. Mahadev will also be there on Wednesday. He will bring along Durgabehn<sup>2</sup>. He has seen to it that I depend entirely on him. He has come to be my hands and feet, and my brain as well, so that without him I feel like one who has lost the use of legs and speech. The more I know him, the more I see his virtues. And he is as learned

<sup>1</sup> Trikumji, Gandhiji's nephew

<sup>2</sup> Wife of Mahadev Desai

as virtuous. I am pleased, therefore, more than I can say.

*Blessings from*

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI<sup>1</sup>

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 5723. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

*268. LETTER TO ANASUYABHEN SARABHAI*

BOMBAY,

*Basant Panchami [February 5, 1919]<sup>2</sup>*

PUJYA ANASUYABEHN,

Bhai Mahadev went away to Dehan yesterday. So I am dictating this letter to my nephew Chi. Mathuradas. I have decided to go to the Ashram by the Gujarat Mail on Sunday after having a talk with Dr. Dalal. God willing, I shall reach there on Monday morning. I shall need two cars or carriages because Harilal's children too will be accompanying me. Bhai Mahadev will reach the Ashram with Durgabehn on Wednesday. A goat or goats costing Rs. 40/- and yielding seven seers of milk will be needed or that much milk will be needed. I have written about it to Maganlal as well. Here there is talk of the mill-workers' strike in the air again. But in my view, our field is only Ahmedabad for the present. If we can handle it well, it will easily lead to concrete results elsewhere. I have not been able to forget even for a moment that we have not been able to take possession even of the land with the sacred tree. If God wills it, some day we shall take possession of it. We shall talk more when we meet.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11577

<sup>1</sup> The signature is in Mathuradas Trikumji's hand.

<sup>2</sup> From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 5-2-1919.

## 269. LETTER TO SWAMI SATYADEV

BOMBAY,

*Thursday, Magh Sud 6 [February 6, 1919]*

DEAR SWAMIJI<sup>1</sup>,

I have your letter. You are right in saying that you could not be satisfied with a message sent through Devdas. The only reason for not writing a letter was my laziness. Please forgive me. I had told Devdas that if you did not feel satisfied I would certainly send a written reply. You may make all the appropriate arrangements for teaching Hindi in the Madras Presidency. You may tour the whole Presidency. You may establish schools in different places. You may select teachers of your choice for these schools. You may not do the teaching yourself, but you must inspect the schools from time to time. When schools have been opened throughout the Presidency to your satisfaction and when you can say with certainty that these schools can run independently of you, you may leave the Madras Presidency. You may spend up to Rs. 10,000 on this undertaking. The responsibility for sending you the money is mine. You will not have anything to do with the Sahitya Committee<sup>2</sup> at Prayag. But I want to ask for all the expenses from Prayag. If there are difficulties in the way I will make some other arrangement. Now I think I have answered all your questions. You will tell me if there is anything left out. I have written to Devdas a long letter about Surendra. At the moment he is suffering from a mental affliction. He has become enamoured of the English-style schools. It seems necessary to get him out of the spell. You may be able to calm him. If you like his idea, please explain it to me.

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 6438

<sup>1</sup> Swami Satyadev Parivrajak

<sup>2</sup> Hindi Sahitya Sammelan or its executive committee

## 270. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

*February 6, 1919*

From the experience of these two days I find that when I recite the verses in solitude, it has greater effect for my peace of mind. I want you to have the same joy which I find in reciting Sanskrit verses. Just as we cannot do without food and sleep, so also we cannot do without what is food for the soul—the morning and evening prayers. Let us understand and follow this. . . .<sup>1</sup> We cannot respect the wishes of a person uttered while he is half asleep or when he is under the influence of drink or drug. We serve him by refusing his wishes. In the same way, we must not bow to the wishes of a man who is a prey to attachment. I think Surendra is in such a state of mind at present. It is my duty to shake him out of it, even if I have to administer him a shock for the purpose. I know that the experience will be painful to him for a while but, when he is ultimately free from his attachment, he will understand why I restrained him and see that it was for his good. My plan, in the last analysis, respects everyone's freedom, for always what I say is entirely by way of advice. When my associates take up any activity which does not appeal to me, they may expect no encouragement from me but they can do as they wish. If you have followed what I have said and appreciate it, have a talk with Surendra and console him.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 6425

## 271. LETTER TO BHIMJIBHAI NARANJI NAYAK

*February 7, 1919*

I have your letter. If you send a reply to this letter address it to Sabarmati. I write this from Bombay. The teachers' salaries are undoubtedly low. But I do not know if you have taken the steps that ought to be taken before launching satyagraha. It is necessary moreover to know whether those who wish to experiment with Satyagraha have the requisite strength. It is better not to start a satyagraha thoughtlessly and without the strength for it than to abandon it in the middle out of cowardice and give it a bad name. I cannot find anything special or meritorious in teaching without a

<sup>1</sup> Omission as in the source

salary. Teachers do not teach for the sake of teaching but for earning a livelihood. If they do not get a salary at all or are inadequately paid, they can give up their jobs without bothering about what would become of the pupils. Normally a month's notice should be given before quitting service for starting a satyagraha or for any other reason. If I take up only your two questions then I feel certain that you should tender your resignation after giving due notice. In a satyagraha of this kind, the result hoped for cannot be achieved without unity. Perhaps it would be better for you not to resign if a majority of the teachers are not of one mind. But before giving any positive opinion on the subject, I should know many more things. Before taking any step it would be better if as many of the teachers as possible could see me at the Ashram.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 6426

## 272. *LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA*

BOMBAY,

*Saturday, Magh Sud 8 [February 8, 1919]*

DEAR BROTHER,

I read all the speeches on the Rowlatt Bills today. I was much distressed. The Viceroy's speech is disappointing. Under the circumstances, I hope, at any rate, that all the Indian members will leave the Select Committee or, if necessary, even the Council, and launch a countrywide agitation. You and other members have said that if the Rowlatt Bills are passed a massive agitation would be launched the like of which has not been seen in India. Mr. Lowndes<sup>1</sup> said that the Government were not afraid of the agitation that is going on. He is right. Even if you held a hundred thousand meetings all over India what difference would it make? I am not yet fully decided but I feel that when the Government bring in an obnoxious law the people will be entitled to defy their other laws as well. If we do not now show the strength of the people, even the reforms we are to get will be useless. In my opinion you should all make it clear to the Government that so long as the Rowlatt Bills are there you will pay no taxes and will advise the people also not to pay them. I know that to give such advice is to assume a great responsibility. But unless we do something really big

<sup>1</sup> Sir George Lowndes, Law Member, Government of India

they will not feel any respect for us. And we cannot hope to get anything from people who do not respect us. What the Viceroy has said about the Civil Service and about British trade does not seem right to me. The power of the Civil Service must be drastically curtailed. And it is certain that the protection the British are giving to their trade will not be available to it after India becomes independent. Today they enjoy far more rights than we do.

Tomorrow I go to the Ashram. Kindly send your reply there.

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 6439

### 273. *LETTER FO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI*

BOMBAY,  
*February 9, 1919*

DEAR MR. SASTRIAR,

I have just read your forcible speech on the Rowlatt Bills. This is none too strong. The Bills coupled with the Viceroy's, Sir William Vincent's and Sir George Lowndes' speeches have stirred me to the very depths; and though I have not left my bed still, I feel I can no longer watch the progress of the Bills lying in the bed. To me, the Bills are the aggravated symptoms of the deep-seated disease. They are a striking demonstration of the determination of the Civil Service to retain its grip of our necks. There is not the slightest desire to give up an iota of its unlimited powers and if the Civil Service is to retain its iron rule over us and if the British commerce is to enjoy its present unholy and privileged position, I feel that the Reforms will not be worth having. I consider the Bills to be an open challenge to us. If we succumb we are done for. If we may prove our word that the Government will see an agitation such that they have never witnessed before, we shall have proved our capacity for resistance to autocracy or tyrannical rule. When petitions [and] resolutions of gigantic mass meetings fail, there are but two courses open—the ordinary rough and ready course is an armed rebellion, and the second is civil disobedience to all the laws of the land or to a selection of them. If the Bills were but a stray example of lapse of righteousness and justice, I should not mind them but when they are clearly an evidence of a determined policy of repression, civil disobedience seems to be a duty imposed upon every lover of personal and public liberty. I wrote



yesterday to Panditji<sup>1</sup> suggesting on the part of all the Indian members or so many of them as would do so resignation of their positions on the Select Committee and a resignation of their positions even on the Council, if they would take the latter step also. I think their resignations will shake the Government's confidence in its ability to disregard public sentiment, and will be an education of great value to the people. For myself if the Bills were to be proceeded with, I feel I can no longer render peaceful obedience to the laws of a power that is capable of such a piece of devilish legislation as these two Bills, and I would not hesitate to invite those who think with me to join me in the struggle. It is possible that you will not see eye to eye with me in the position I wish to take up. But I know that you would not like me to stifle what may be to me the voice of conscience. Naturally I would like to secure the approbation of the very few friends whose advice I value. If, therefore, you have the time, I would like you to drop me a line telling me what you think about my contemplated step. I want to give this assurance that I shall do nothing in haste and I shall do nothing without giving a previous confidential warning couched in as gentle language as I can command.

I hope you will keep sound health during the very critical times that are ahead of us.

From a photostat: S.N. 6433

#### 274. *FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO PRAGJI DESAI*

[BOMBAY ,

*February 9, 1919]*

. . . In putting a thing firmly one seems harsh sometimes, on a superficial view. In truth, however, the purest kindness consists in such firmness. A doctor operating upon a patient with trembling hands will have, ultimately, inflicted more pain on him; the one who makes a clean job of the work may seem at first to cause pain but in the end his action will have brought relief.

The Rowlatt Bills have agitated me very much. It seems I shall have to fight the greatest battle of my life. I have been discussing

<sup>1</sup> Madan Mohan Malaviya

<sup>2</sup> Pragji Khandubhai Desai, a satyagrahi in the South African campaign; often contributed to *Indian Opinion* in Gujarati

things. I shall be able to come to a decision in two or three days. The work in which you are engaged is also, as you say, a kind of fight. I have not the least doubt that upright business is an effort well worth making. It requires a full measure of truthfulness, fortitude, firmness, patient endurance, capacity to forgive, compassion and contentment. Any business man who displays these virtues is bound to rise to the top.

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 6427

### 275. *LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER*

ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

*Tuesday, Maha Sud 11 [February 11, 1919]*<sup>1</sup>

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I did not write to you yesterday because there was nothing definite to write. We were to meet today at 7 p.m. and we met. Ambalalbhai, Vallabhbai, Bachubhai, etc., were present. The discussion was quite good. Ultimately, signatures were given for the following Pledge.<sup>2</sup> Ambalalbhai, Bachubhai, etc., asked for 48 hours to consider. Bhai Subedar was also present. But he left a little early because it was time for his train. It appears that there will be at least as many more signatures coming. I think I shall be sending the letter to the Viceroy today. I have kept the draft of the letter ready. But my mind is still undecided about sending it.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I have just read that the law<sup>3</sup> will be valid for three years. Now the struggle seems to me necessary.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32736

<sup>1</sup> From the contents of the letter it is evident that this was written in 1919.

<sup>2</sup> The Satyagraha Pledge; *vide* "The Satyagraha Pledge", 24-2-1919.

<sup>3</sup> Criminal Law (Emergency Powers) Bill No. 2 of 1919

276. *LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI*

AHMEDABAD,

*Maha Sud 12 [February 11, 1919]<sup>1</sup>*

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your two letters. My swelling had begun even while I was there. It is still there, but it is very much reduced. Otherwise my health is all right. You will have taken the money from Revash-ankarbhai. You will have paid one rupee to Bhai Karsandas Chitalia. The signatures were obtained for the following pledge about the struggle. Bill No. 2 would be in force only for three years after the compromise. Let us see how India reacts to this news.

*Blessings from*

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

277. *LETTER TO SIR WILLIAM VINCENT*

ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

*February 12, 1919*

I observe that the Committee appointed to investigate the cases of Messrs Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali has completed its deliberations. I wonder whether the Government have now arrived at any decision over this case.

N. A. I.: Home: Political—A: July 1919: No. I & K. W.

<sup>1</sup> From the contents this letter appears to have been written in 1919.

## 278. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,

*Maha Sud 13 [February 12, 1919]<sup>1</sup>*

CHI. MATHURADAS,

My health had suffered some upset even while I was there.

I had started having some swelling, which persists. I must say it is somewhat reduced.

I hope you are getting on with the work for the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. There is no reply from Prof. Karve<sup>2</sup> yet. I have even sent him a telegram. It is surprising that he does not answer. I am now doubtful about the struggle continuing.

*Blessings from*

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

## 279. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

[BOMBAY,]

*Thursday [February 13, 1919]<sup>3</sup>*

BHAISHRI NARAHARI,

I have sent you today an article by the poet<sup>4</sup>. It is worth serious study. I think our endeavour is to attain the ideal he has set forth. The future pattern of education in India will depend upon the efforts we make during the next ten years. All of you should ponder over that article. My impression is that the poet does little to put his own ideal into practice.

I will be there on Sunday and leave the same day.

<sup>1</sup> It appears from the contents that this letter was written in 1919.

<sup>2</sup> Dhondu Keshav Karve (1858-1962); social reformer and pioneer educationist

<sup>3</sup> Mahadev Desai's visit to Bijolia took place about the second week of February.

<sup>4</sup> Rabindranath Tagore. The reference is presumably to his essay, "The Centre of Indian Culture".

Pay attention to the handwriting of every pupil. I hope you are making every effort to get up early.

I very much liked the second part of *D. S.*<sup>1</sup> for its content. The art described therein will vanish, all of it.

I am getting acquainted here with an expert musician.

*Vandemataram from*

BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev has not yet returned from Bijolia<sup>2</sup>.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 6416

## 280. LETTER TO O. S. GHATE

*February 16, 1919*

I have your valuable letter. I had telegraphed<sup>3</sup> to you saying that I had already written to the Home Member inquiring about Government's decision. I passed that information on to Mrs. Shuaib some time ago and thought that in due course it would filter down to you and to our friends. At that time, Mr. Desai was not by me and I restricted my correspondence as much as possible. At the time I wrote to Mr. Shuaib, I said also that in the event of an unfavourable reply, the fight must commence. I [was] then under the belief that my health would in a way permit of my undertaking that activity. Unfortunately it has become like a pendulum swinging to and fro and just at the present moment there is again a set-back and the doctors tell me that I dare not undertake any exertion for three months. I am, however, trying to speed recovery and I still hope that by the time I receive the reply from Delhi I shall be ready for work.

Your letter gives me a greater insight into the Rowlatt Bills. I detest them entirely and for me the Reforms will be useless if the measures are passed. I am carefully watching the progress of events in

<sup>1</sup> Probably a reference to *Dalpat Sar*, a selection of poems by Dalpatram, edited by Narahari Parikh

<sup>2</sup> A small principality in the State of Mewar, now part of Rajasthan. Mahadev Desai was specially deputed by Gandhiji to inquire into the people's grievances in Bijolia. Gandhiji had at one stage agreed to lead a satyagraha movement there for redressing the grievances of the people.

<sup>3</sup> The telegram is not available.

the country and I feel sure that the Brothers need not yet take any steps about them. It is heart-rending three domestic losses they have suffered. There is hardly a family left in India that has not lost some dear ones. One's feelings almost become blunt when the same news comes from anywhere with merciless regularity.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### 281. ADDRESS TO ASHRAM INMATES

*February 17, 1919*

The inmates are satisfied with nothing in the Ashram. The reason? Dissatisfaction over Maganlal's ideas and conduct, over his manner of speaking and over a certain partiality in his actions. Lack of faith in the Ashram on the part of others, those in the school. What is my position in these circumstances?

I must place before you some strict principles. I have not invited the ladies, but they, too, feel disgusted, and are thinking of leaving. I have told them that they will not get anywhere else what they have gained here. You may remain in the Ashram only if you think you can put up with all that life here means. So think well before you decide to remain or leave. Why do you stick on here despite your dissatisfaction? Surely, none of you is too weak to leave. It is, then, out of your love for me and blind attachment to me.

The first principle, then, which emerges is that to be attached to a person apart from his work is blind attachment. I knew persons in South Africa who were blindly attached to me. I made it clear to them that, if they found Phoenix<sup>1</sup>, which was my creation, of no worth, then I, too, had none. If they lacked faith in my creation, then, naturally, they were bound to lose faith in me as well. I am a good judge of men but I cannot prove this to you just now. Nevertheless, if you have no faith in the Ashram, if you are dissatisfied with it, you had better leave it. Only those of you may remain who have joined it to give

<sup>1</sup> The Phoenix Settlement near Durban founded by Gandhiji in association with his co-workers and European friends in 1904. It sought to put into practice the essential teachings of Ruskin and Tolstoy and to assist in the removal of the grievances of Indians in South Africa. *Indian Opinion* was also published from Phoenix.

something or to point out to Gandhi his follies and errors. But I find none such. All of you have come here to give and to receive. It is from the whole lot of us that the worth of the Ashram will be judged. We cannot measure a man's worth independently of his work.

In South Africa, my best creation was Phoenix. Without it, there would have been no satyagraha in that country. Without the Ashram here, satyagraha will be impossible in India. I may be making a mistake in this; if so, I ought to be deserted. I am going to ask the country not to judge me by either Champaran or Kheda but only by the Ashram. If you find lack of order in this place, and blindness of ignorance, then you will find the same in all my work. I am the founder inmate of the Ashram and it runs so long as I am faithful to its ideals. If I find that I cannot hold anyone here, I will undertake a searching examination of myself and will try to make a sacrifice which will be of the purest. Do not attribute greatness to me for other works of mine; judge me only by the Ashram. One of my creations here in the Ashram is Maganlal. If I have found from experience five million shortcomings in Maganlal, I have found ten million virtues in him. Beside him, Polak is a mere child; the blows that Maganlal has endured, Polak has not. Maganlal has offered all his work as sacrifice, not for my sake but for the sake of an ideal. It is not for me he is slaving; he is wedded to an ideal. Once he was ready to bid good-bye, and leave me.

It boils down to this, that I cannot run the Ashram after sending away Maganlal. If I send him away, I would be the only one left in the Ashram. For the tasks we have undertaken, Maganlal, too, is fully needed. I have yet to see a better man than he. To be sure, he is short-tempered, has his imperfections, but on the whole he is a fine man. As for his honesty, I have no doubt. You must take it as proved that I am bad to the extent that Maganlal is bad.

Just as, if I quarrelled with my brother or parents, I would not go out to complain about it to others, so also, we should not take to outsiders our complaints against anyone in the institution where we are members. The moment one begins to suspect or dislike another, one should leave him. When, following this course, he has left the entire world, he will find himself all alone; and will then commit suicide, or, realizing his own imperfections, get rid of his dislikes. One should not only not speak ill, before others, of the institution in which one stays, but one should not think ill of it even in one's mind. The

moment such a thought occurs, one should banish it. There should be joy in the Ashram, especially when I am out. If you think of me as an elder, you should conduct yourselves worthily, mindful of my instructions. Now that I am here, you may take some freedom and do as you please, but once I am out, you should allow yourselves no freedom. If there is no harmony here in my absence, something is lacking in me and, therefore, you should leave me.

If I removed the causes of discontent in the Ashram, it would be to bring peace to Maganlal; or rather, not for his peace but for the sake of the country, because I have offered Maganlal as a sacrifice to the country.

You may persuade me to give up either the Ashram or Maganlal. I shall not send him away so long as I have not come to feel that he goes about setting one against another. To measure a man's worth, the world has no other yardstick than his work. As the work, so the man. This very charge was levelled by an intimate friend of mine, Mr. Kitchin<sup>1</sup>. However, the fine, systematic work which Maganlal has done, none else has.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. V

## 282. MESSAGE ON GOKHALE ANNIVERSARY

*February 19, 1919*

I had looked forward to attending today's meeting, but for reasons of health I am not able to do so. Even so, my spirit is there. The meeting will have been to some purpose only if it helps us to take a step forward in public service. Make an earnest appeal to the people to buy copies of the book<sup>2</sup> which is being published today or, if anyone cannot afford to do so, to borrow a copy from someone else and read it.

[From Gujarati]

*Prajabandhu*, 23-2-1919

<sup>1</sup> Herbert Kitchin, a theosophist who edited *Indian Opinion* after the death of Manasukhlal Nazar. He lived with Gandhiji for a time and worked with him during the Boer War.

<sup>2</sup> A Gujarati translation of Gokhale's speeches



### 283. *LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY*

SABARMATI,

*February 20, 1919*

As I am not still quite out of the wood regarding my health and as, if am to obey doctors' orders, I must not undertake any activity requiring considerable exertion, I thought I would refrain from such activity till I was better. But the events that have recently happened impel me to submit the following for His Excellency's consideration:

I feel tempted to write about the Rowlatt Bills, but I am checking myself for the moment and awaiting the course of the Bills and the agitation about them in the country. I wish to confine myself today to a matter that specially interests me—the case of the Brothers Ali.

You will recall that I made a submission about them on the New Year's day of 1917<sup>1</sup>. Though the Viceroy may not feel inclined to interfere in the matter, he should know the present position from the popular standpoint.

After the exchange of the final letters between us, I entered into correspondence with Sir William Vincent. The result was that a Committee to advise the Government about the Brothers was appointed. This Committee has duly reported to the Government but so far as I am aware, although nearly two months have elapsed after the submission of the Committee's Report, the Government's decision has not yet been pronounced. I wrote to Sir William Vincent about it on the 12th instant. I have been informed on behalf of the Brothers that from the manner in which they are being treated in the matter of their requests for visits to certain places for urgent business and other circumstances, they infer that the decision is likely to be adverse to them. I have read most of the correspondence between the Brothers and the Committee. I have read the communication embodying the charges against them. I have read their reply. I must assume that the memorandum of charges supplied to the Brothers was exhaustive. The impression left upon my mind is that the Brothers have been interned and subjected to numerous hardships without the slightest justification. The charges in my humble opinion did not warrant

<sup>1</sup> Private secretary to the Viceroy

<sup>2</sup> This is obviously slip for "1918".

action under the Defence of India Act. I submit that under a free Government they would hold in it a prominent position instead of being treated as a danger to it. They are brave, perfectly straightforward, they are out-spoken, God-fearing, and able men, commanding the respect alike of the Mahomedans and the Hindus. It would be difficult to find throughout India better specimens of joint Hindu and Mahomedan culture. In a position which to them is exasperating, they have evinced wonderful self-restraint and patience. Their very virtues seem to have been regarded as an offence. They deserved a better treatment.

I must disclose one fact to Lord Chelmsford although it hurts my sense of modesty. They have ever since the meeting of the Muslim League at Calcutta in the December of 1917 implicitly accepted the advice I tendered to them, and so have the leading Mahomedans, who would, but for my advice, gladly have carried on a powerful and embarrassing agitation long ere this. I advised them that if relief was not granted, satyagraha—I abhor the expression “passive resistance”, as it very incompletely expresses the grand truth conveyed by the easily understood Sanskrit word “satya-graha”—should be resorted to. I assured them that I was in communication with the Government about the Brothers’ release. As a satyagrahi, I told them that before engaging in a public agitation about it, we should know the Government side of the question, and we should exhaust all milder remedies and be able to demonstrate to the satisfaction of impartial observers the untenability of the Government position before embarking on satyagraha in which, once it is undertaken, there is no turning back. I feel thankful to the Brothers and to the gentlemen, with whom it has been a privilege to be associated, that they have abided by my advice, though the delay has almost reached a dangerous point. I do must earnestly trust that the Government will by releasing the Brothers prevent a powerful agitation in the country.

I shall anxiously await your reply.

I hope that you are enjoying the best of health and it would so please me to learn from you that Lord Chelmsford is keeping good health in spite of the great strain under which, I know, he is working.

With kind regards,

N. A. I.: Home Political—A: July 1919: No. 1 & K.W.

## 284. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR<sup>1</sup>

*February 23, 1919*

I appreciate your letter<sup>2</sup> and it makes me feel like running down to Madras immediately. I have been thinking of going there for a long time. The delicate state of my health has come in the way, as it still does. But unless the campaign starts immediately or unless I am obliged to go to Lucknow regarding the Brothers Ali, I would certainly take earliest opportunity of visiting Madras. I do feel that unless the Bills are radically altered in the Select Committee, resistance of a most stubborn character ought to be offered. I detest the Bills not so much for their deadliness as for their being the surest symptom of deep-seated disease from which the Government of India must be free if we are to enjoy a real measure of freedom under the Reforms. I hope to write to you again very soon. We are having a conference of the Gujaratis tomorrow to consider the question of satyagraha. Passive resistance poorly expresses the meaning conveyed by satyagraha.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

## 285. LETTER TO SONJA SCHLESIN<sup>3</sup>

*February 23, 1919*

It was so good of you to give me credit if only for once for being business-like. My own opinion of myself is that I am the most business-like man upon the earth and, so long as no one can disillusion me, I shall continue to derive pleasure from the belief and to have a stray certificate from you only adds to the pleasure. I present you another illustration of my business-likeness. I know I would wound your vanity, self-esteem, glorious womanliness, whatever you like to call it, by making friend my carrier instead of a bank, for

<sup>1</sup> 1852-1943; a leading lawyer and active Congressman; presided over the Nagpur Congress session, 1920

<sup>2</sup> This was dated February 19, and marked Private and urged Gandhiji to visit a few important centres in southern India.

<sup>3</sup> A Jewish girl, steno-typist and Gandhiji's private secretary for many years in South Africa; made herself useful to *Indian Opinion*; was ardently interested in the Indian cause

this very simple purpose of lending you money. Had I taken your impractical advice, it would have taken me much longer to send you the money because you must know that I am living in India where we do things in a fairly leisurely manner befitting the climate and the surroundings. Here bankers are not the servants of their clients but their masters except when the clients happen to belong to the ruling race and probably it would have cost you £15 to send £50. You with your poetic instinct set no value on money, whereas I, a simple prosaic business-like man, realize that it requires £150 to finish the education of someone. Therefore, if I spend away £15, I waste one-tenth of that sum if I can avoid having to spend it. Q.E.D.

You shall certainly treat what you have received as a loan. I believe I have already told Mr. Rustomji<sup>1</sup> as much but I cannot swear as I cannot keep copies of my correspondence as a rule and I shall accept repayment whenever you choose to send it, with compound interest if you will, provided that you do not borrow to pay me. You will infer from what has preceded that my health is better. I am still bed-ridden. My head is supposed to be weak and I may not undertake any great exertion. But the feel is all right and I am cheerful.

Devibehn<sup>2</sup> writes to me regularly and tells me that you rarely [do so]. That is not how people treat their goddesses, or had women the privilege of acting different?

Yes, Harilal has been sorely stricken. Chanchi was far superior to me. I did not specially write to you as I felt my cable to Ramdas in reply to his was enough for all. At the time, moreover, I was too ill to think of writing to anybody. All Harilal's children are here and are playing about me while I am dictating this letter.

Passive resistance is on the topics regarding certain legislation that the Government of India are passing through the Council. The war council meets tomorrow at the Ashram. You may depend upon it that it won't be a bad copy of similar councils in which you were both an actor (or actress?) and a fairly intelligent spectatress. You won't therefore need from me a description of the council meeting.

I am surprised at your remark about Ashrams here prohibiting the entry of women. It betrays your lack of interest in the Ashram. We

<sup>1</sup> Parsi Rustomjee, Indian merchant of Natal; took prominent part in Gandhiji's satyagraha campaign in South Africa.

<sup>2</sup> Ada West, sister of Gandhiji's friend and co-worker, A. H. West

have so many women here at the Ashram. We are educating them all, including three girls. The latter are no doubt our own girls. But that is not our limitation. It is due to the disinclination of the people to send their girls under the conditions that we impose. It will delight your heart to see the transformation that the women undergo here after a few days' stay. The *purdah* and all other unnatural restraints fall away as if by magic. I know you will hug most them when you come here. Only you will have to revive your knowledge of Gujarati.

Imam Saheb is today here, and naturally also his daughter and his wife.

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

## 286. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[AHMEDABAD,]

February 23, 1919

I got your letters. Give no assurance to anyone without taking thought, lest you should become guilty of breach of promise. Harilal used to write a very bad hand; he saw to it that it improved. Three of the brothers, at last, have acquired a beautiful handwriting. But your hand goes from bad to worse. It was with the utmost difficulty that Mahadev could decipher the Hindi letter you wrote on behalf of Swamiji. I could not read it at all. Bad handwriting is a serious defect. A good hand is an accomplishment. By writing a bad hand, we place a heavy burden on our friends and elders and harm our work. You know well enough that I cannot easily read a letter written in a muddled hand. I would urge you, therefore, to improve your handwriting.

I keep well. I take four pounds of unboiled milk during the day, spread over four meals. Two goats are being maintained. I have had practically nothing except milk for seven days. Today Dr. Ice<sup>1</sup> recommended seven raisins with every meal. I cannot move about as yet. Dr. Ice believes, though, that I shall be up and moving in a few days. We are thinking of giving him a third name, Dudhabhai [Brother Milk], as these days he has gone milk-crazy. He believes that milk is the best of all foods. So I told him that he should take only

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Kelkar; so named because of his faith in ice-treatment

milk all his life. He is taking it, for the present at any rate. Let us see what happens hereafter.

I hope to be there by the end of March.

A meeting of satyagraha warriors is to take place in the Ashram on Monday. The final decision will be reached after considering what weapons each has and how much of ammunition. If you have read Shamalbhatt's<sup>1</sup> description of Ravana's war council, Mahadevbhai will not have to recount Monday's history.

Manu<sup>2</sup> has been stealing fat from all and sundry in the Ashram, except from me, so that she looks like the largest water melon in the Ashram. When there is an occasion for installing Ganapati, an elephant's trunk should be secured and stuck on her face, and she would indeed look quite a beauty. Her radiance is ever growing brighter, with the result that she has become everyone's doll. Rasik<sup>3</sup> [one full of zest] often demonstrates his zestfulness by employing the stick. Kanti<sup>4</sup> is growing calmer. Rami's health continues so-so. Ba's time is taken up in ministering to them all. I notice that she even finds the thing irksome and, in consequence, her temper is often snappy, and just as the potter, when angry, twists the ears of his donkey, his wife, I infer, must be doing the same to the donkey's master. After this jesting, I shall give something serious to balance it.

"It is my firm belief that every Indian ought to know well his mother tongue and Hindi-Urdu, which is without doubt the only common medium of expression between lacs of Indians belonging to different Provinces. There can be no self-expression without this necessary equipment."<sup>5</sup>

This is a translation of what you have sent. Give this in Tamil as the motto: *Karka Kasadara Karpavai*.<sup>6</sup> Beneath this, give the Hindi equivalent, which Swamiji will provide, of "Drop by drop fills the lake", and beneath it still, give in English: "Constant dropping wears

<sup>1</sup> Popular 18th century Gujarati poet; author of several narrative, religious and didactic works

<sup>2</sup> Daughter of Harilal

<sup>3</sup> Harilal's son

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*

<sup>5</sup> This passage is in English, followed by a translation in Gujarati.

<sup>6</sup> What you learn, learn faultlessly [and then act up to it].

away stones". The Tamil saying occurs on the first page of Pope's<sup>1</sup> book. Find its equivalent in Telugu and give that too.

If you send your Primer here for our comments before printing it, Kaka and the others will go through it. And also, if you send the proofs, while it is being printed, they will be able to examine the design of the motto, etc., from the artistic point of view. You need not send them if you are in a great hurry over the thing.

Surendra used to make the same comments about the school here as he has done about the one there. Often, at first sight, a thing makes a certain impression on a straightforward man, and this is natural. Miss Molteno<sup>2</sup> described Phoenix as heaven upon earth. Had she stayed longer there, I am sure she would have changed her opinion. At first sight, Bean thought Phoenix was the best thing he had ever seen. After a few months' stay there, he could not imagine an institution anywhere as bad as Phoenix.

Enough for today.<sup>3</sup>

Probably this too will go all right as a saying:

"Rasiklal Harilal Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi,

Had a goat in his keeping;

The goat would not be milked

And Gandhi would not stop his weeping."<sup>4</sup>

—Rasik, Poet of Poets

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. V

<sup>1</sup> G. U. Pope (1820-1908); missionary in South India, lecturer in Tamil and Telugu at Oxford, 1884-96; author of several works on Tamil

<sup>2</sup> A European co-worker of Gandhiji in South Africa

<sup>3</sup> Up to this point, the letter was dictated. What follows was added by Gandhiji in his own hand.

<sup>4</sup> In Gujarati, the stanza rhymes aabb.

## 287. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

February 23, 1919

To

THE MOST WORTHY FIRM OF SATYAGRAHIS <sup>1</sup>

Just as I was about to start this letter, I had to hold a court. The accused was Rasik, and the complainant an innocent dog. The latter declared by his wailing that he had been assaulted by som-eone. I discovered that the guilty party was Rasik. The accused admitted his guilt and confessed previous offences as well. I thought of Lord Krishna and Shishupal. Shri Krishnachandra had forgiven a hundred<sup>2</sup> offences, of the latter. And so the court had compassion and forgave the accused, Rasik, five offences, warning him at the same time that, if he repeated the offence again, it would not be forgiven and that he would be made to realize, in his own person, the dog's suffering when stoned.

As I write this, Kantilal is holding the inkstand. He and Ramibehn read the letter as I proceed and correct me. The accused, too, is here, meekly standing by the bed. Manubai interrupts now and then to give us the benefit of her laughter. And now she has started crying, wanting to climb up the bed. The scene reminds me of your childhood, of that of Jadibehn and others.

Though I am confined to bed, you will see from the foregoing that my health can pass as good.

Satyagraha is in the air here. Mahadev will write to you about it all—or I, if I can.

Blessings from  
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. V

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji used this expression jocularly for Harilal and some of his friends who went to jail with him in South Africa.

<sup>2</sup> Ninety-nine, according to the *Mahabharata*



## 288. *THE SATYAGRAHA PLEDGE*<sup>1</sup>

AHMEDABAD,

*February 24, 1919*

Being conscientiously of opinion that the Bills known as the Indian Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill No. I of 1919 and the Criminal Law (Emergency Powers) Bill No. II of 1919 are unjust, subversive of the principle of liberty and justice, and destructive of the elementary rights of individuals on which the safety of the community as a whole and the State itself is based, we solemnly affirm that, in the event of these Bills becoming law and until they are withdrawn, we shall refuse civilly to obey these laws and such other laws as a Committee<sup>2</sup> to be hereafter appointed may think fit and we further affirm that in this struggle we will faithfully follow truth and refrain from violence to life, person or property.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI,

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM SABARMATI

VALLABHBHAI J. PATEL, BAR-AT-LAW,

AHMEDABAD

CHANDULAL MANILAL DESAI, L.D.S.,

AHMEDABAD

KESARIPRASAD MANILAL THAKOOR,

AHMEDABAD

(BEHN) ANASUYABAI SARABHAI,

SECRETARY, WOMEN'S BRANCH OF THE

HOME RULE LEAGUE, AHMEDABAD AND

OTHERS

*New India*, 3-3-1919

<sup>1</sup> The pledge was drafted on 24-2-1919 and signed by those present at a meeting held at Sabarmati Ashram.

<sup>2</sup> For laws selected by this Committee for disobeying *vide* "Statement on Laws for Civil Disobedience", 7-4-1919.

## 289. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

AHMEDABAD,  
*February 24, 1919*

EVER SINCE PUBLICATION ROWLATT BILLS HAVE BEEN CONSIDERING MY POSITION REGARDING THEM. HAVE BEEN CONFERRING WITH FRIENDS. IN MY OPINION BAD IN THEMSELVES BILLS ARE BUT SYMPTOM OF DEEP-SEATED DISEASE AMONG THE RULING CLASS, COMING AS THEY DO ON EVEN REFORMS BILLS AUGUR ILL FOR THEIR SUCCESS. THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH ME IN PUBLIC WORK AND OTHER FRIENDS MET TODAY AND AFTER THE GREATEST DELIBERATION HAVE DECIDED TO OFFER SATYAGRAHA AND COMMIT CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE OF SUCH LAWS AS COMMITTEE TO BE FORMED FROM OURSELVES MAY DECIDE. AFTER SIR GEORGE LOWNDES' SPEECH IT IS NECESSARY TO DEMONSTRATE TO GOVERNMENT THAT EVEN A GOVERNMENT THE MOST AUTOCRATIC FINALLY OWES ITS POWER TO THE WILL OF THE GOVERNED. WITHOUT RECOGNITION OF THIS PRINCIPLE AND CONSEQUENTLY WITHDRAWAL BILLS MANY OF US CONSIDER REFORMS VALUELESS. I WISH TO MAKE AN HUMBLE BUT STRONG APPEAL TO HIS EXCELLENCY TO RECONSIDER GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO PROCEED WITH BILLS, AND RELUCTANTLY ADD THAT IN EVENT OF UNFAVOURABLE REPLY THE PLEDGE MUST BE PUBLISHED AND THE SIGNATORIES MUST INVITE ADDITIONS. I AM AWARE OF SERIOUSNESS OF THE PROPOSED STEP. IT IS, HOWEVER, MUCH BETTER THAT PEOPLE SAY OPENLY WHAT THEY THINK IN THEIR HEARTS AND WITHOUT FEAR OF CONSEQUENCES ENFORCE THE DICTATES OF EXPECT EARLY THEIR OWN CONSCIENCE. MAY I EXPECT EARLY REPLY?

N. A. I.: Home: Political—A: March 1919: No 250; also from a photostat: S.N. 6434

## 290. TELEGRAM TO VICEROY<sup>1</sup>

[After February 24, 1919]<sup>2</sup>

THE GUJARAT SABHA EMPHATICALLY PROTESTS AGAINST  
THE INTRODUCTION OF BILLS NOS. 1 AND 2 OF  
1919. THE BILLS ARE REPRESSIVE AND RETROGRADE  
AND ARE SUBVERSIVE OF THE ELEMENTARY RIGHTS  
OF CITIZENSHIP, LEAVING INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY AT THE  
MERCY OF THE EXECUTIVE. THE SABHA EARNESTLY  
URGES UPON GOVERNMENT TO ABANDON THE BILLS IN  
THE INTERESTS OF THE EMPIRE AND THE PEACEFUL  
CONSTITUTIONAL PROGRESS OF INDIA.

*Gujarat Sabhano San Unneesso Unneeso Varshik Report*

## 291. ON SATYAGRAHA

[February 25, 1919]<sup>3</sup>

For dealing with a crisis, everyone has a choice between two forces—physical force and soul-force or satyagraha. India's civilization can be saved only through satyagraha.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 6436

## 292. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA<sup>4</sup>

[February 25, 1919]

NO HEART NO CONFIDENCE IN DEPUTATION. ROWLATT  
BILLS BLOCK ALL PROGRESS.

GANDHI

*The Leader, 27-2-1919*

<sup>1</sup> Presumably this was drafted by Gandhiji as President on the Gujarat Sabha.

<sup>2</sup> The Satyagraha Pledge regarding the Rowlatt Bills was drafted and signed at the Ashram on February 24, 1919.

<sup>3</sup> Found on the same sheet as the "Telegram to C. F. Andrews", 25-2-1919

<sup>4</sup> This was in reply to an inquiry as to when Gandhiji would start for England as a member of the Congress deputation. *New India* 26-2-1919, published this telegram beginning: "Have no confidence...." Both *New India* and *The Leader* received the news from Delhi under date 25-2-1919.

### 293. TELEGRAM TO C. F. ANDREWS

*February 25, 1919*

HAVE	BEEN	IRRESISTIBLY	DRIVEN	ADOPT	SATYA-
GRAHA	ROWLATT	BILLS.	FIFTY	MEN	WOMEN
SIGN					
PLEDGE		BEFORE	PUBLISHING	WIRED	VICEROY
GIVEN	PRAYERFUL	CONSIDERATION.	WISH	YOU	WERE
HERE	YESTERDAY.	SENDING	PAPERS	AFTER	PERUSAL.
WIRE	OPINION	GURUDEO'S	BLESSING	IF	POSSIBLE.

From a photostat: S.N. 6436

### 294. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

*February 25, 1919*

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have telegraphed to you today. I could not write the letter that I contemplated doing when I sent my first wire. I have been passing through perfect agony, doctors telling me that I should not undertake any exertion, the voice within me telling me that I must speak out on the Rowlatt Bills and the Viceregal pronouncement. Conflicting views pressed themselves on me and I did not know what to do. Many friends have looked to me for guidance. How could I desert them? We met yesterday at the Ashram. It was a good meeting. The desire was to take the plunge even if we were only a few. The last word rested with me. I felt that the cause was true. Was I to forsake them? I could not do so and remain true to myself. You know the result. The papers herewith will give you fuller information. God only knows how I felt the need of your presence whilst the soul was in travail. I am now quite at peace with myself. The telegram to the Viceroy eased me considerably. He has the warning. He can stop what bids fare to become a mighty conflagration. If it comes, and if the satyagrahis remain true to their Pledge, it can but purify the atmosphere and bring in real swaraj. Have you noticed an unconscious betrayal of the true nature of modern civilization in Mr. Wilson's<sup>1</sup> speech explaining the League of Nations' covenant?<sup>2</sup> You will remember his saying that if

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924); 28th President of the United States of America

<sup>2</sup> At the Paris Peace Conference; *vide* "Speech on Satyagraha, Madras", 20-3-1919.

the moral pressure to be exerted against a recalcitrant party failed, the members of the League would not hesitate to use the last remedy, viz., brute force.

The Pledge is a sufficient answer to the doctrine of force.

But this does not close the chapter. I have received a long cablegram<sup>1</sup> from Mr. Aswat. The situation for the Indians in the Union is very serious indeed. The lesson of the late struggle is practically lost upon them. If we here can render no help, Indians in the Union will be reduced to an absolutely servile state. If they through their weakness cannot offer satyagraha, we must all call upon the Government to redress the grievance and to offer satyagraha if they proclaim their helplessness. You cannot have hostile interests in the same partnership. I have written to the Government and I am sending a Press letter today.

There is still a third chapter. The committee that was appointed to advise the Government upon the case of the Brothers Ali reported two months ago. I have read the papers. There is nothing in the charge to warrant their detention. If they are still not released, there would be a third case for satyagraha for me.

I am bearing the burden rightly enough because the last two have caused no struggle with my conscience. If the main struggle starts, I may tuck on to it the last two and thus complete the trinity.

I shall eagerly await your telegraphic opinion and then a detailed written opinion to follow. You will not wonder when I tell you that the women at the Ashram have all voluntarily signed the Pledge. . .

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

## 295. *LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN*<sup>2</sup>

*February 25, 1919*

I send you copies of the Satyagraha Pledge and the wire sent by me to the Viceroy. I know you regard the Bills with the horror that I do. But you may not agree with me as to the remedy to be applied. I hope, however, that you will not summarily dismiss the Pledge from your mind. If you do not provide the rising generation with an

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Letter to the Press on South African Situation", 25-2-1919.

<sup>2</sup> Editor of *The Indian Social Reformer*, Bombay

effective remedy against the excesses of authority, you will let loose the powers of vengeance and the doctrines of the Little Bengal Cult of violence will spread with a rapidity which all will deplore. Repression answers only so long as you can overawe people. But even cowards have been known to exhibit extraordinary courage under equally extraordinary stress. In offering the remedy of self-suffering which is one meaning of satyagraha, I follow the spirit of our civilization and present the young portion with a remedy of which he need never despair.

The papers are to be treated as confidential. After the receipt of a reply from the Viceroy, I may be able to authorize publication. The wire to the Viceroy is not to be published at all. I have supplied you with a copy because I entertain much regard for your opinion. Will you please share this letter with Sir Narayan<sup>1</sup>?

You will presently see my letter to the Press on the South African situation. There perhaps there will be agreement between you and me that if the Government proclaim their helplessness, we must offer satyagraha and prevent the impending ruin of the countrymen in South Africa.

*Yours, etc.,*

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

## 296. *LETTER TO SIR STANLEY REED*<sup>2</sup>

*February 25, 1919*

It is not without some hesitation that I am sending the enclosed papers to you. But I feel that the right course for me to adopt is not to withhold them from you. Probably you will totally disagree with me as to my opinion of the Bills as also the method proposed to be adopted for securing redress. I will not argue about the matter because I can carry the argument no further than I have done in my telegram to the Viceroy.

All the papers are confidential.

I shall value your frank opinion in the matter.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

<sup>1</sup> Sir N G. Chandavarkar, social reformer and judge of the Bombay High Court; presided over the Congress session at Lahore in 1900

<sup>2</sup> Editor, *The Times of India*

## 297. LETTER TO SIR DINSHAW WACHHA<sup>1</sup>

[AHMEDABAD,]  
February 25, 1919

I told Shankarlal Banker yesterday to show you the Satyagraha Pledge and also the letter to His Excellency the Viceroy. You must have seen both. How can I ask you to join this struggle ? But I certainly ask for your blessings. I shall do nothing in haste. The Pledge will be published only after the Viceroy's reply is received. I think the growing generation will not be satisfied with petitions, etc. We must give them something effective. Satyagraha is the only way, it seems to me, to stop terrorism. From this point of view, I am justified in seeking your help.

How shall I thank you for your unfailing solicitude for my health? I am better now. The heart is still weak, though. Perhaps this struggle will act as a tonic and my health will come round by itself.

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. V

## 298. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI ASHRAM,  
Maha Vad 10 [February 25, 1919]<sup>2</sup>

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I have a letter from Anandanand<sup>3</sup> also. This is in answer to both. There is no time to write separately to each.

There is no reason to assume that Panditji will not come.

Anandanand has suggested two good names for the standing Committee. Please have them nominated.

I have written again to Prof. Karve. I shall write to you again after I hear from him.

We shall be in a position to take a decision about the resolutions

<sup>1</sup> 1844-1936; prominent Parsi politician; president of the Indian National Congress, 1901; member, Viceroy's Council

<sup>2</sup> Inferred from the reference to "the foundation of the struggle" having been laid the previous day.

<sup>3</sup> Swami Anand

only after you get the drafts from Purushottam Dasji.

The foundation of the struggle was laid yesterday. In my view, it is a good beginning. I am sending you the documents. Treat them as confidential. I shall let you know what the Viceroy's reply is. Now that I am preoccupied with this matter the burden of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan rests on the two of you. All you can have from me is advice.

It would be a good idea to invite essays in English, Hindi or any other language, from persons considered qualified on the need for Hindi to be made the national language. The essays should be invited on behalf of the Secretary. Prepare a list of the persons whom you approach and send it to me.

*Blessings from*

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I am well but still weak in spirit. I hope I shall be going there in two or three days.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

*299. LETTER TO THE PRESS OF SOUTH  
AFRICAN SITUATION*<sup>1</sup>

[AHMEDABAD,

*February 25, 1919]*

TO  
THE EDITOR  
*THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE*  
BOMBAY

SIR,

The cable received by me from Mr. Aswat, Chairman of the Transvaal British Indian Association, and given below, shows that a revival of satyagraha with all the attendant sufferings is imminent in

<sup>1</sup> This was published under the caption "Ill-treatment of Indians in South Africa" in *The Bombay Chronicle*. *The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 28-2-1919 and *New India*, 27-2-1919 also published it.



South Africa, unless the danger that threatens to overwhelm the Indians of the Transvaal is averted by prompt and effective action by the Government of India, and if necessary, by the public also.<sup>1</sup> The situation warrants a repetition of Lord Hardinge's action<sup>2</sup>, and the immediate despatch to South Africa of a mission consisting of, say, a distinguished civilian, and an equally distinguished Indian publicist.

What is the situation? The Precious and Base Metals Act referred to in the cable affects the gold area of the Transvaal in the largest part of its Indian population. Krugersdorp is an important town near Johannesburg, and contains many Indian merchants, some of them owning stock probably worth 3 lakhs of rupees. If no relief is provided, it means ruin for the merchants and for those residing in the whole of the gold area. The goal of the Union Government seems to be, as has been openly declared by several Union statesmen, to reduce its Indian settlers to the position of hewers of wood and drawers of water. It is possible that the Court's interpretation is correct. If so, the Act itself must be changed and the Indian community must be saved, not merely because of their status as British subjects, but also because of the Passive Resistance Settlement of 1914, which protects vested or existing rights.

<sup>1</sup> The cable requested: "Legal proceedings under Precious Base Metals Act, 1908 resulted against Indian Merchants: Long-standing Krugersdorp area affect judgment. Virtual ruination mercantile community throughout Witwatersrand. Transvaal Ordinance 9, 1912, Relief Act and other laws affecting Indian community rigorously enforced object being elimination Indian trade benefit European competitors British community emphatically protest against cruel and reactionary policy. Significant that action taken almost simultaneously with Armistice. Community subject such policy poor mark appreciation under Indian sacrifices for Empire during war. Community earnestly appeals for protection meanwhile endeavouring get matter veriflicated before Bar assembly Capetown. Please help every possible way. Colonel Shaw maintains being present when Hon. Gokhale and self made voluntary statement to Smuts that persons outside Union even on urgent matters need not be admitted on temporary or visiting permits provided those within Union are treated fairly. One Mohammed Essak, Durban died leaving estate forty thousand relatives. Mauritius Interior refuses temporary permits for administration purpose notwithstanding any deposit. Government started policy based on late Hon. Gokhale's statement. Kindly clear up point. Government object harass Indian every possible way. Community in great distress unless matters improve reluctantly resist, maintenance self-respect, honour motherland, advise."

<sup>2</sup> Sir Benjamin Robertson was deputed by the Viceroy to represent the Government of India in the negotiations with the South African Government on the Indian question preceding the Gandhi-Smuts settlement of 1914.

The judgment is a direct attack upon Indian liberty in pursuance of the policy referred to by me. The Government want further to harass the community throughout the Union by refusing facilities for conservation of its present Indian population. They cannot remain in it, if they may not receive occasional visitors, if, on the death of a propertied man, his trusted relatives may not enter the Union in order to administer his affairs. I can understand the dominant community in South Africa not wishing to have an unlimited influx of people alien to them in civilization. But it is impossible to understand a policy of ruthless extermination, side by side, with a profession of loyalty to a common Empire. Moreover, this refusal to issue temporary permits is a breach of the Settlement. It has been all along understood that temporary permits would be granted, whenever the necessity arose. Surely nobody could question it in the late Mr. Mahommed Essak's case quoted by Mr. Aswat in his cablegram. The reference to the late Mr. Gokhale in this connection is a libel on a sacred name. After the termination of the interview, Mr. Gokhale came directly to the hotel where we were staying. I had the privilege of being his secretary and he related to me the whole of the conversation between ministers and himself and there was not a word about his having consented to the stoppage of temporary permits under any circumstances whatsoever. He had no authority to enter into any agreement. He went only to learn and to plead. Your readers will recall that at the historic meeting held in Bombay upon his return from South Africa, he declared publicly that he had no authority to negotiate a settlement and that he had agreed to nothing. As representing the Indian community, I was party to the Settlement of 1914. If any such agreement had been made, surely it would at least have formed part of the many discussions between General Smuts and myself. It is worthy of note that General Smuts is not now in South Africa. If he was asked, I doubt not that he would repudiate Colonel Shaw's allegation.

The cablegram adds that there are many other harassments going on throughout the Union. We are supposed to be on the eve of embarkation upon Reforms that are to eventuate in the near future in full Responsible Government. What answer has India to give to Mr. Aswat's pathetic appeal? The hundred thousand Indians of the Union have a right to look up to the Government of India and the people for the protection of their elementary rights.

*Yours, etc.,*

M. K. . GANDHI

*The Bombay Chronicle, 27-2-1919*

### 300. SUMMARY OF ROWLATT BILLS

[Before *February 26, 1919*]<sup>1</sup>

These Bills have come to be known as the Black Bills. A strong agitation has been going on against them all over India and the Bills have been felt to be so oppressive that satyagraha has been started against them. Several men and women have taken the Satyagraha Pledge. A body known as the Satyagraha Sabha has been formed and the people in general have also been advised to take this Pledge. The pledge commits the satyagrahi to sacrifice his all for his honour. People who take such an extreme Pledge and those advising them to do so must have strong reasons for acting as they do. The satyagrahis have declared in their Pledge that these Bills are unjust, that they are subversive of the principle of the liberty of the subject and destructive of the elementary rights of an individual. It is necessary to prove to the people the propriety of these adjectives and the evidence must be in the Bills themselves—so that [they may see how] submission to laws which deserve such epithets is forfeiting one's humanity and accepting slavery, and those who form such an impression after going through the summary below owe it as a duty to sign the Satyagraha Pledge. It is a summary of the Bills, with those Sections omitted which are irrelevant for the purpose of our criticism and whose omission does no injustice to the Government, and with those Sections printed in black type which we have felt to be especially oppressive. Both the Bills are before the Legislature and have been named in the *Gazette* Bill No. 1 and Bill No. 2 of 1919. Bill No. 2, as its preamble suggests, goes further than the ordinary criminal law. This second Bill seems to us to be the more dangerous of the two and a summary of it is therefore given first.

#### SUMMARY OF BILL NO. 2 OF 1919

The object of the Bill is to make provision that the ordinary criminal law should be supplemented and emergency powers should be exercisable by the Government for the purpose of dealing with dangerous situations.

The Government has obtained the previous approval of the Secretary of State-in-Council in England for enacting this law.

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* reference in the following item.

Section 1. This Bill may be called The Criminal Law Emergency Powers Bill.

It extends to the whole of India.

#### SOME NOTEWORTHY SECTIONS

[Section 3.] If the Governor-General-in-Council is satisfied that offences of a certain character<sup>1</sup> are prevalent in the whole or any part of India and that, in the interest of public safety, it is necessary to provide for speedy trial of such offences, he may, by notification in the *Gazette [of India]*, bring this Act into force in the area specified in the notification.

Section 4. Where the Local Government is of opinion that any person should be tried in accordance with the provisions of this Act, it may order any officer of the Government to prefer a written information to the Chief Justice against that person.

Such order may be made in respect of any [scheduled] offence *even if such offence was committed before the issue of the notification in the Gazette bringing the Act into force in a particular area.*

The information shall state the offence charged and, so far as known, the name, place of residence, and the time and place when and where the offence is alleged to have been committed and all particulars within the knowledge of the prosecuting officer so that the accused might know the offence he is charged with.

The Chief Justice may by order require any information to be amended so as to supply further particulars and such information or amended information shall be served upon the accused.

Section 5 provides that, upon such information being served, the Chief Justice shall nominate three of the High Court Judges for the trial of the information.

Section 6. The court may sit at such place or places in the Province as it may consider desirable, though the Governor-General in-Council has the power, by a notification, to order the transfer of the trial to any other place if considered necessary in the interest of justice.

Section 9. After the charge is framed, the accused shall be entitled to ask for an adjournment for a period not exceeding ten days. Section 10 provides that the court is bound to arrange for the

<sup>1</sup> In the Bill "Scheduled Offences"

evidence of each witness to be recorded only in summary.

Comment : Even a layman will readily see that recording only the summary of evidence can lead to serious miscarriage of justice. No judge can know in advance, before all the witnesses have been examined, what weight to attach to which part of evidence.

Section 11. The court, if it is of opinion that such a course is necessary in the public interest or for the protection of a witness, may prohibit or restrict the publication or disclosure of its proceedings or any part thereof.

Section 12. No questions shall be put by the court to the accused until the close of the case for the prosecution. Thereafter, and before the accused enters on his defence, the court shall inform the accused that he is entitled, if he so desires, to give evidence on oath on his own behalf, and shall at the same time inform him that if he does so he will be liable to cross-examination.

If the accused states that he desired to give evidence on oath, the court may put any question to him the reply to which may prove his guilt.

Section 14 provides that in the event of any difference of opinion among the members of the court, the opinion of the majority shall prevail.

Section 15. If in the course of the trial, the accused is discovered to have committed any offences other than the one he is charged with, he may be charged with and convicted of these as well.

Section 17. The judgment of the court shall be final and conclusive and no High Court shall have authority to revise any order or sentence of the court.

## PART II

Section 20. If the Governor-General-in-Council is satisfied that movements which, in his opinion, are likely to lead to the commission of offences against the State are being promoted in the whole or any part of India, he may, by a notification, bring the provisions of this Part into effect in the area specified in it.

Section 21. Where, in the opinion of the Local Government, there are reasonable grounds for believing that any person is or has been actively concerned in any movement of the nature referred to above, it may give all or any of the following directions: That such person

(a) shall execute a bond for good conduct for a period not exceeding one year;

(b) shall remain or reside in any area specified in the order;

(c) shall notify his residence and any change of residence as ordered;

(d) shall abstain from any act which, in the opinion of the Local Government, is calculated to disturb the public peace or is prejudicial to the public safety;

(e) shall report himself to such police officer and at such periods as may be specified in the order.

Comment: Under this Section, an order of this kind may be passed against any person merely on suspicion and without a trial.

Section 23. Any officer [authorized by the Government] may use all means reasonably necessary to enforce compliance with an order as above.

Section 24. An order issued under Section 21 above shall continue in force for a period of one month only.

Section 25. When the Local Government makes an order as above, such Government shall, as soon as may be, forward to the investigating authority to be constituted under this Act a concise statement in writing setting forth all particulars relevant to the order and the grounds for making it.

The investigating authority shall then hold an inquiry *in camera*, summon the person in question at some stage in its proceedings and hear any explanation he may have to offer, provided that the investigating authority shall not disclose to the person any fact the communication of which might endanger the public safety or the safety of any individual, and provided further *that neither the Local Government nor the person in question shall be entitled to be represented at such inquiry by a pleader.*

The inquiry shall be conducted in such manner as the investigating authority considers best suited to elicit the facts of the case *and, in making the inquiry, such authority shall not be bound to observe the rules of the law of evidence.*

On completion of the inquiry, the investigating authority shall report its conclusions to the Local Government.

If the investigating authority has not completed the inquiry within the period for which the duration of the order is limited the

Local Government may extend the period on a recommendation to that effect by the investigating authority.

Section 26. On receipt of the report of the investigating authority, the Local Government may discharge the order made by it or may make any other order which it is authorized to make; any order so made shall recite the conclusions of the investigating authority and a copy of the order shall be furnished to the person in question.

No order made by the Local Government shall continue in force for more than one year, provided that, on the expiry of the order, it may make another order if it is satisfied that such a course is necessary in the interests of public safety.

No order made as herein provided shall continue in force for more than a year from the date on which it was made, though on the expiry of such an order the Local Government may renew it for a further period of one year. An order may also be discharged at any time by the Local Government, or altered or substituted by any other order without reference to the investigating authority mentioned above.

Comment: This means that the Local Government may issue any order at its discretion and that even the nominal investigating authority will serve no useful purpose.

Section 27. Any person who fails to comply with an order as above shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months, or with fine which may extend to a thousand rupees, or with both.

Section 29. The investigating authority shall consist of three persons of whom one shall be a person having held a judicial office not inferior to that of a District and Sessions Judge and one shall be a person not in the service of the Government.

Section 30. The Local Government shall appoint Visiting Committees to interview the persons under restraint at specified periods and shall by rules prescribe the functions of such committees.

### PART III

Section 32. If the Governor-General-in-Council is satisfied that in the whole or any part of India offences of a certain character are prevalent to such an extent as to endanger the public safety, he may, by notification in the *Gazette*, bring this Part into force in the area

specified therein.

Section 33. Where, in the opinion of the Local Government, any person has been or is concerned in such area in any offence of that kind, it may make in respect of such person any order authorized in Part II and may further order (a) the arrest of any such person without warrant; (b) the confinement of any such person in such place and under such conditions and restrictions as it may specify; (c) the search of any place specified in the order which, in the opinion of the Local Government has been, is being or is about to be used by any such person in such a manner as to endanger the public safety. The arrest of such a person may be effected at any place where he may be found by any police officer or any other officer to whom the order may be directed.

An order for confinement of a person or the search of a place may be carried out by any officer to whom it may be directed and such officer may use all reasonable means for enforcing the same. The person so arrested may, pending further orders, be committed in custody by the arresting officer for a period not exceeding fifteen days.

An officer executing an order for the search of any place may seize and dispose of anything found in such place, which he has reason to believe is being used or is likely to be used for any purpose prejudicial to the public safety.

Section 36. Where an order has been made under Section 33, the provisions of Sections 22 to 26 shall apply in the same way as if the order were an order made under Section 21.

Comment: See comment on Sections 22 to 26.

Section 37. Any person who fails to comply with any order made under the provisions of Part III shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year or with fine, or with both.

#### PARTS IV AND V

On the expiration of the Defence of India Act, every person who was held prisoner under Section 37 [at the time of the expiration of the Act] and who has in the opinion of the Local Government been concerned in any scheduled offence, and every person who is [on such expiration] in confinement in accordance with the provisions of the Bengal State Prisoners Regulation, 1818, shall be deemed to be in



prison under [the provisions of] Part III above.

No order under this Act shall be called in question in any court, and no suit or prosecution or other legal proceedings shall lie against any person for anything which is in good faith done or intended to be done under this Act. All powers given by this Act shall be in addition to any other powers conferred by or under any enactment.

BILL NO. 1 OF 1919

The object of this Bill is to amend the Indian Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code so as to put effective curbs on activities dangerous to the State. It creates a new offence, as under:

Any person found in possession of a seditious document or intending to publish or circulate such document will, unless he proves that it was in his possession for a lawful purpose, be punishable with imprisonment extending to a period of two years or with fine, or with both.

In this Section, a seditious document is defined as a document containing any writing or sign inciting violence against the Crown or its Government or against officers or any class of officers or any individual officer in the service of the Government, or inciting anyone to wage war against the Crown or to assemble weapons with the intention of waging such war.

Comment: This means that, if any book or paper believed to be seditious is found in the pocket of an innocent youth ignorant of its contents, he would be taken to be guilty unless he proves that he was carrying it for a lawful purpose. This new offence alters one of the fundamental principles of British justice inasmuch as, instead of the prosecution having to prove the guilt of the accused, it is the latter who will have to establish his innocence. If I am charged with anything, how can I prove that I am not guilty? This can only mean that I shall be in jail.

When trying offences against the State mentioned in the Indian Penal Code, the court is free to order, if it thinks fit, that the accused, even after he has served the sentence of imprisonment passed on him, should execute a bond of good conduct for two years thereafter. Any person who, having been served with a restraint order, under the provisions of this Bill, to report, subsequent to his release, his place of residence and any change therein, may be directed by the Local

Government by an order in writing to abide by any of the following conditions:

- (a) the person in question must not enter or reside or stop in any specified area;
- (b) he should confine himself to a particular part of British India;
- (c) he must not address any public meeting called to discuss issues which might lead to breach of the peace or public excitement or to circulate any written or printed information relating to such issues or to extend support to any political matter.

Comment: This means that, even after a person has suffered enough for an alleged offence, he may not expect to be free from harassment by the Government.

#### ALTERATIONS MADE BY SELECT COMMITTEE<sup>1</sup>

Its report was published on March 1. We list below the important changes which follow from the part of the report which has received the approval of a majority. It has not been signed by the Hon'ble Pandit Malaviya, the Hon'ble Vithalbhai Patel and the Hon'ble Mr. Kharparde. The Hon'ble Mr. Surendranath Banerjea, the Hon'ble Mr. Shastriar and the Hon'ble Mr. M. Shafi have appended a minute of dissent in which they have suggested several important changes.

The Committee points out that, though it has made a few changes in Bill No. 2, it has hesitated to alter its basic principles. If at all, they can be altered only by the Imperial Legislative Council.

The Bill, in its original form, was intended to be a permanent measure; the Committee has recommended that it be limited to three years.

The Bill, in its original form, applied to any type of scheduled offence. The Select Committee has recommended that it should apply only to the offences of waging war and inciting rebellion against the State.

Section 9 of the draft Bill enabled the accused to ask for an adjournment of ten days; this has now been changed to 14 days.

Under Section 10, the Judge was required to record a summary of the evidence. Now the evidence will have to be recorded in full

<sup>1</sup> What follows was evidently added after March 1.

either by the Judge or by a clerk appointed by him.

Section 12 will be so amended that, if the accused declines to tender evidence himself, the advocate for the prosecution will not be permitted to comment on the fact.

Under Section 21, the Government is authorized to demand a bond of good conduct without showing any reason. Now it will be required to state the reason and make out a case.

Under Section 23, the officer was authorized to use any means. Now, he will not be able to employ unreasonable force.

Section 25 lays down what may be adduced against the accused. In the draft Bill it appeared to give freedom to the Government to adduce any facts it chose. This will now be amended so that the Government will be able to adduce only such facts as are relevant to the case.

Under Section 26, the accused could be detained for a period extending to three years. Now the Government will have power to do so for a period extending to two years and the case will have to be referred to the investigating authority on every occasion.

Section 33 seemed to imply that the accused could even be confined with the ordinary criminals. It is now made clear that he will have to be kept apart.

In Section 34, the period for which the accused could be held in custody without orders from the Government has been fixed at seven days.

In Section 40, the period of one month has been reduced to 21 days.

Comment: It must be admitted that the alterations suggested by the Select Committee do effect some improvements in the original Bill but they leave the basic principle of the Bill untouched, and the Bill can be used to harass people so much that, as the Hon'ble Mr. Shastriar has pointed out, even the members of the new Councils with enlarged powers which are to come into being will tremble while making any comments and be able to avail themselves of their nominal freedom only by turning themselves flatterers. If this is true as regards members of the Legislature, what will be the condition of the defenceless, ignorant people? It is the duty of every thinking Indian to save the people from this danger, a duty one can discharge only by offering satyagraha.

[From Gujarati]

*Gujarati*, 9-3-1919

### 301. INSTRUCTIONS TO VOLUNTEERS

February 26, 1919<sup>1</sup>

The following instructions to satyagraha volunteers have been issued by the Committee of the Sabha to be strictly followed in taking signatures.

#### SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Volunteers shall read and explain the Satyagraha Pledge to every intending signatory before taking his signature to the vow. The Pledge is in three parts: The first lays down the objects of the Pledge. It declares that the signatories are of opinion that the Rowlatt Bills are “unjust, subversive of the principle of liberty and justice, and destructive of the elementary rights of individuals”. In order to be able to make this statement one must fully understand the Rowlatt Bills, hence it is the duty of the volunteers to explain the Bills clearly to the intending signatory.

The vow forms the second part of the Pledge. Here the signatory solemnly affirms that he will refuse civilly to disobey certain laws. Volunteers must explain to the signatory the full significance of the word “civilly”. For instance, to break moral laws is not civil disobedience. Nor is it civil disobedience to be discourteous to officials with whom one may have to deal, while disobeying laws. On the other hand the possession and distribution to the public of literature proscribed by Government and which one sincerely believes to be harmless, would be civil disobedience. Volunteers must explain to the would-be signatory with the help of such illustrations the full significance of the Pledge.

Volunteers must explain to every intending signatory that he must be prepared to bear every kind of suffering and to sacrifice, if necessary, both his person and property. He should also be made to understand that he must be prepared to carry on the struggle single-handed even if left alone. The volunteer must accept the signature only after satisfying himself that the signatory is prepared to take all these risks.

The third part of the Pledge declares that the satyagrahi will during the struggle, fearlessly adhere to truth and *ahimsa* for instance

<sup>1</sup> *Vide Mahadevbhaini Diary.*

he must not misrepresent anything or hurt anybody's feelings. Volunteers must urge upon people necessity of fully realizing the grave responsibility of adhering to truth and *ahimsa* before signing the Pledge. Volunteers must not speak of things they do not understand and must not hold out false hopes to anybody. If they find themselves unable to explain anything, they must consult the Committee or refer the would-be signatory to it. Ahimsa includes *advesha*. Volunteers therefore must never resort to unfair criticism of the movement. If in performing their duties they are obstructed by the police or others, they must not lose their temper but must courteously explain to those opposing them, their (volunteers') duty and their determination under any circumstances to perform the same.

#### GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Every volunteer taking signatures has to remember that a single intelligent recruit to satyagraha is worth a hundred signatories who have not realized their responsibility. Volunteers must therefore never aim at merely increasing the number of signatories.
2. The volunteer shall have to carefully read and understand the summary<sup>1</sup> of the Rowlatt Bills published by the Sabha<sup>2</sup> and must explain the same to such would-be signatories as have not read the Bills or the summary.
3. In explaining the Pledge the volunteer must lay due emphasis upon the fact that the real strength, the true test of the satyagraha, lies in his capacity to bear pain and must warn the signatory that resort to satyagraha may lead to loss of personal liberty and property and ask him to sign the Pledge only if he is prepared for these sacrifices. If the volunteer is then convinced that the would-be signatory has made up his mind he will take his signature.
4. Volunteers must not accept the signatures of persons under 18 and students. And even in the case of those over 18 he must make sure that the signatory has decided after careful consideration. Volunteers must not induce persons to sign, upon whose earnings their families are solely dependent for their maintenance.
5. After taking the signature, the volunteer must himself take down the designation and full address of the signatory in neat and legible

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* the preceding item.

<sup>2</sup> The words "published by the Sabha" do not occur in the Gujarati version of the instructions in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*.

handwriting. If the signature is not legible the volunteer should copy it down neatly. He must note the date on which the signature is taken.

6. The volunteer must attest every signature.

*The Bombay Chronicle 12-3-1919; also Young India, 12-3-1919*

### 302. LETTER TO THE PRESS ON SATYAGRAHA PLEDGE

[February 26, 1919]<sup>1</sup>

I enclose herewith the Satyagraha Pledge regarding the Rowlatt Bills. The step taken is probably the most momentous in the history of India. I give my assurance that it has not been hastily taken. Personally I have passed many a sleepless night over it. I have weighed the consequences of the act. I have endeavoured duly to appreciate Government's position. But I have been unable to find any justification for the extraordinary Bills. I have read the Rowlatt Committee's Report. I have gone through its narrative with admiration. Its reading has driven me to conclusions just the opposite of the Committee's. I should conclude from the Report that secret violence is confined to isolated and very small parts of India, and to a microscopic body of people. The existence of such men is truly a danger to society. But the passing of the Bills designed to affect the whole of India and its people arms the Government with powers, out of all proportion to the situation sought to be dealt with, is a greater danger and the Committee utterly ignore the historical fact that the millions in India are by nature the gentlest on earth.

Now look at the setting of the Bills. Their introduction is accompanied by certain assurances given by the Viceroy regarding the Civil Service and the British commercial interests. Many of us are filled with the greatest misgivings about the Viceregal utterance. I frankly confess I do not understand its full scope and intention. If it means that the Civil Service and the British commercial interests are to be held superior to those of India and its political and commercial requirements, no Indian can accept the doctrine. It can but end in a fratricidal struggle within the Empire. Reforms may or may not come. The need of the moment is a proper and just understanding upon this vital issue. No tinkering with it will produce real satisfaction. Let the great Civil Service Corporation understand that it can remain in India

<sup>1</sup> *Vide Mahadevbhai ki Diary, Part I.*

only as its trustee and servant not in name but in deed and let the British commercial houses understand that they can remain in India only to supplement her requirements and not to destroy indigenous art, trade and manufacture, and you have two measures to replace the Rowlatt Bills. They, I promise, will successfully deal with any conspiracy against the State. Sir George Lowndes simply added fuel to the fire when he flouted public opinion. He has forgotten his Indian history or he would have known that the Government he represents has before now surrendered its own considered opinion to the force of public opinion.

It will be now easy to see why I consider the Bills to be an unmistakable symptom of a deep-seated disease in the governing body. It needs, therefore, to be drastically treated. Subterranean violence will be the remedy applied by impetuous hot-headed youths who will have grown impatient of the spirit underlying the Bills and the circumstances attending their introduction. The Bills must intensify the hatred and ill-will against the State of which the deeds of violence are undoubtedly an evidence. The Indian covenanters by their determination to undergo every form of suffering make an irresistible appeal for justice to the Government towards which they bear no ill will and provide to the believers in the efficacy of violence as a means of securing redress of grievances with an infallible remedy, and withal a remedy that blesses those that use it and also those against whom it is used. If the covenanters know the use of this remedy, I fear no ill from it. I have no business to doubt their ability. They must ascertain whether the disease is sufficiently great to justify the strong remedy, and whether all milder ones have been tried. They have convinced themselves that the disease is serious enough, and that milder measures have utterly failed. The rest lies in the lap of the gods.

*I am,*

*Yours,*

From a photostat: S.N. 6440; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 1-3-1919

### 303. LETTER TO “THE INDIAN SOCIAL REFORMER”

THE ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
February 26, 1919

TO

THE EDITOR

*THE INDIAN SOCIAL REFORMER*

SIR,

I have read the paragraph in your issue of the 23rd instant<sup>1</sup> about the Patel Marriage Bill. I have never yet given an interview to anybody on the Bill, and the views attributed to me represent but a partial truth. Being laid up in bed, I had not taxed myself about the Bill, but having been asked by several people to express my opinion, I began to study the Bill, and as is my wont, I tried first to understand the author's position. The Hon. Mr. Patel told me there was no occasion for me to be in a hurry to form my views, as the Bill was not likely to come up for discussion before September, and in order to help me to study the Bill, he sent Mr. Daftari to me. Mr. Daftari has supplied me with a long and exhaustive memorandum on the subject. I have not yet been able to study it, and with the present programme of work before me, I do not know when I shall be able to study the memorandum which requires looking up old law cases. My position,

<sup>1</sup> In this issue, *The Indian Social Reformer* had quoted from a despatch of the Ahmedabad correspondent of *The Bombay Chronicle* in which the correspondent had written: “He (Mr. Gandhi) sees no objection in inter-marriages among the sub-castes of the Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra communities. There would, he held, be an infusion of fresh vigour among the present degenerate Rajputs if inter-marriages were frequent among the Rajputs, *Bhatias, Lohanas and Patidars*. There can conceivably be nothing wrong if inter-marriages among the *Modh and Srimali Bania* communities were the rule rather than the exception, but-on no account should the existing (*sic*) fourfold division be broken through. It is desirable to weld together the four main castes comprising twenty crores of Hindus, by neutralizing the centrifugal tendencies at present separating the various sub-castes in any main caste. Mr. Gandhi said, subject to the above modification, the Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya had promised his whole-hearted support when the Inter-Caste Marriage Bill would be referred to the Select Committee in the Imperial Legislative Council. In conclusion, Mahatma Gandhi pointed out how a wide chasm yawned between the Brahmin and the *Dhed* and warned the ardent advocates of marriage reform against short cuts to progress.”



so far as I can state it, without the aforementioned study, is this: In my opinion, the question specially as between Brahmins and *Dheds*<sup>1</sup> does not arise in this connection at all. *Dheds* stand in the same relation to Brahmins as Kshatriyas, Vaishyas or Shoodras. Their peculiar disability is not affected either one way or the other by the Bill. If the Bill constitutes an attack upon *Varnashram*, as a believer in *Varnashram-dharma*, I should oppose it. I am told by orthodox friends that it does constitute such an attack. I am told by the supporters of the Bill that not only does it not interfere with *Varnashram*, but it merely seeks to restore the pre-British state of Hindu Law, which was wrongly interpreted by judges, who being ignorant of it, were guided by biassed or corrupt Pandits. Both sides have very able lawyers. Without deciding one way or the other, I have suggested that the effect of the Bill should be restricted to inter-marriages among sub-castes. This might satisfy the most ardent reformer at least as a first step, and would enable men like the Hon. Pandit Malaviya to support it.

*I am,*

*Yours, etc.,*

M. K. GANDHI

*The Indian Social Reformer, 2-3-1919*

### 304. LETTER TO THE PRESS ON NATIONAL SCHOOL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

*Magh Krishna Ekadashi, Samvat 1975 [February 26, 1919]*

TO

THE EDITOR

SIR,

I am sure your readers know that a National School is being conducted in the Satyagraha Ashram for the past two years. Further admissions have been stopped, mainly because the teachers on the staff of the school wish to prepare and equip themselves fully for the requirements of the National School curriculum and because their number is not large enough. Just now the School needs at least five additional teachers. All teaching is done through Gujarati. Hence, even persons who possess a high proficiency only in Gujarati will serve the purpose. Since, however, higher education is given entirely

<sup>1</sup> An untouchable caste

through English, the need for men with proficiency in English will remain till such time as we have teachers who can impart higher education through Gujarati. Even so, the teachers at present on the staff being well-equipped in English, the School can take on men with high proficiency in Gujarati; in fact, it wants to encourage such men.

A few words about the School: It has three graduates [on its staff], with one music expert and an equally competent Sanskrit scholar. The Ashram and the School are situated on a beautiful spot on the banks of the Sabarmati. Quarters have been built for teachers here. They are paid enough to keep them above want. Two of the teachers draw no salary, since they do not need any, and, of the remaining three, the highest salary drawn by any one is Rs. 75. The School is in a position to pay up to this maximum to a competent teacher. In my view, anyone who works in this School will be taking part in an experiment which seems small enough at present but which, as time passes, will produce ever bigger results. If the experiment fails, it will not be for lack of effort. I trust that those who love the profession of teaching and who, though making their living through teaching, are interested primarily in teaching for itself and only incidentally as a means of livelihood will come forward to help this School.

Candidates must necessarily be in a fit state of health, for they are to learn as well as teach. They must know the fundamentals of agriculture, on which 80 per cent of India's population depends for its livelihood, and also of weaving, which used to be a means of living for hundreds of thousands of people. A knowledge of Hindi, too, is essential for those who undertake to work for national education. In my humble opinion, even from the point of view of their long-range economic interests, young men fresh from college will also do well to plunge into this experiment of national education. They will stand to lose nothing, and may possibly gain in some ways.

MOHANDAS K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 6430

### 305. TELEGRAM TO SYED HUSSAIN <sup>1</sup>

March 2, 1919

PLEDGE SHOULD BE SIGNED PRESENT FORM. IT GIVES  
WIDEST LATITUDE ANY DEFINITION LAWS COULD  
RESTRICT SCOPE PREVIOUS DEFINITION THEREFORE  
IMPOSSIBLE. COMMITTEE APPOINTED IN ORDER GUARD  
AGAINST HASTY INDIVIDUAL ACTION. LAWS FOR  
DISOBEDIENCE WILL BE MENTIONED TIME TO TIME  
AS PROGRESS CAMPAIGN MAY DEMAND. YOUR COM-  
MITTEE MAY EITHER BE PART OF COMMITTEE  
HERE WHICH MAY BE CALLED CENTRAL COMMIT-  
TEE OR YOU MAY FORM YOUR INDEPENDENT  
COMMITTEE. GANDHI LEAVING FOR DELHI TO-  
MORROW. SOME ONE MAY MEET HIM THERE IF  
NECESSARY.

From a photostat: S.N. 6441

### 306. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI<sup>2</sup>

[ DELHI,

On or after *March 5, 1919*]<sup>3</sup>

I have not been able to write to you after the struggle commenced. I have simply had no time since then. You are probably thinking hard about the struggle, and may be wanting to join it too. But it is necessary that you go on with your task of teaching Hindi.

I have seen the Viceroy. The talk was extremely cordial and friendly. I got the impression that both of us understand each other but neither succeeded in convincing the other. An Englishman will not be argued into yielding; he yields only under compulsion of events. He is not worried about the result, and bears what he must. Knowing that events will take their course, he remains unconcerned and goes his way resolutely. He is very much in love with the strength

<sup>1</sup> Sent on behalf of Gandhiji

<sup>2</sup> The name of the addressee is inferred from the reference to Hindi teaching. Devdas had been in charge of this work in Madras.

<sup>3</sup> Satyagraha started in February 1919. Gandhiji met the Viceroy on March 5, 1919.

of his body and with armed might, is even proud of them a great deal. He readily yields to such strength and respects it. However, he recognizes moral force and, voluntarily or involuntarily, perhaps even against his will, yields to it. It is this moral force we are employing and, if it is genuinely moral, we shall win.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 6458

### *307. SPEECH OF ROWLATT BILLS, DELHI*

*March 7, 1919*

Mr. Gandhi was prevented from delivering his address owing to weakness, but he asked Mr. Mahadev Desai to read it out for him. He did not think there was any necessity for him to comment on the Bills, which were the subject of severe criticism in the Press, but he would say something about the remedy of the disease appearing in the form of the Rowlatt Bills. The remedy was the satyagraha movement already launched in Bombay. Many well-known men and women had signed the Pledge. Satyagraha was a harmless, but unfailing remedy. It presupposed a superior sort of courage in those who adopted it— not the courage of the fighter. The soldier was undoubtedly ever ready to die, but he also wanted to kill the enemy. A satyagrahi was ever ready to endure suffering and ever lays down his life to demonstrate to the world the integrity of his purpose and the justice of his demands. His weapon was faith in God and he lived and worked in faith. In his faith, there was no room for killing or violence and none for untruth. It was the only weapon with which India could be rid of the Bills. He did not admit the Government's position that these Bills were necessary to cope with anarchy. He was convinced that they would bring more anarchy in their train. Certain acts of the Government were bound to be disliked by the people and redress was sought in the usual way by holding protest meetings and petitioning the Government, failing which, like the raw youths of Bengal, they resorted to violence and violence was disastrous to the country. The Bills themselves had arisen out of violence. The only alternative was satyagraha or civil disobedience of the laws of the Government and enduring all the sufferings such disobedience might entail. By satyagraha alone could India be rid of violence and her patient suffering was bound to bend the mightiest power. He hoped and prayed that by the aid of this spiritual weapon, India might demonstrate to the world the supreme difference between the Eastern and the Western civilizations and concluded with warning the people against hasty steps. No one should sign the Pledge without fully realizing the significance of the Rowlatt Bills or the Satyagraha Vow with all the suffering it might entail.

*The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-3-1919*

308. *LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI*

[DELHI,]

*March 8, 1919*

I am leaving this evening for Allahabad and I proceed thence to Bombay. Had I been in a fit state, I should certainly have waited on most of the signatories to the manifesto<sup>1</sup> against the satyagarha movement inaugurated against the Rowlatt Bills. I had hoped yesterday, as I was calling on Sir James Dubouley<sup>2</sup>, to come down to you after leaving Sir James, but the interview lasted beyond 6 o'clock, and as I did not wish to miss my last meal, I hurried to Mr. Rudra's. I wanted to tell you yesterday, which I now do, that you would please tell the signatories that it was my desire to explain my position fully to them, more fully than I could through the Press, and that for the reasons above stated I could not do so. I wish to add—though it is perhaps superfluous—that my regard for those of the signatories whom I have the privilege of knowing is not affected in the slightest degree by the manifesto. It is my misfortune that I have failed to secure the concurrence of those whose opinion I value. Nevertheless, I am not without hope that as the struggle develops, they will see the brighter side of it and think with me that nothing but an energizing activity which satyagraha certainly is could have prevented the ambitious and high-spirited youths of the country from seeking questionable activities for want of a better.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6446

<sup>1</sup> Issued on March 2, by Sir D. E. Wachha, Sir Surendranath Banerjea, V. S. Srinivasa Sastri and other Moderate leaders

<sup>2</sup> Home Secretary, Government of India

### 309. SPEECH ON SATYAGRAHA, LUCKNOW

*March 11, 1919*

A public meeting of the supporters of the satyagraha movement inaugurated by Mr. Gandhi was held this morning at 8.30 in the Rifahaam Hall to hear Mr. Gandhi....

Then Mr. Gandhi, who was in too weak a condition of health to deliver a speech, in a few words explained the basic principles of satyagraha, and asked the audience to abstain from crying shame, as such behaviour went against satyagraha. Besides, all people could not reasonably be expected to join or approve of the movement. . . .

. . . Altogether eleven people including the Chairman took the Pledge.

. . .

*The Leader, 13-3-1919*

### 310. TELEGRAM TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

IN THE TRAIN FROM LUCKNOW,

*March 11, 1919*

SO FAR AS ABLE GAUGE PUBLIC OPINION DURING  
WANDERINGS, I STATE IT IS INTENSELY STRONG.  
BEING UNUSED TO SACRIFICE THEMSELVES FOR  
PUBLIC GOOD, THEY MAY SEEM TO REMAIN IN-  
ACTIVE, BUT THE CUP OF BITTERNESS WILL BE  
FILLED TO THE BRIM IF THE BILLS ARE PER-  
SISTED IN. I HOPE THAT THOUGH WE DIFFER  
AS TO THE METHODS OF OPPOSING, I HOPE YOU  
WILL DULY VOICE PUBLIC OPINION BY OPPOSING  
PASSAGE OF THE BILLS.

From a photostat: S.N. 6451

### 311. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY<sup>1</sup>

CARE PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU,  
ALLAHABAD,  
*March 11, 1919*

EVEN AT THIS ELEVENTH HOUR I RESPECTFULLY  
ASK HIS EXCELLENCY AND HIS GOVERNMENT TO  
PAUSE AND CONSIDER BEFORE PASSING ROWLATT  
BILLS. WHETHER JUSTIFIED OR NOT THERE IS NO  
MISTAKING THE STRENGTH OF PUBLIC OPINION  
ON THE MEASURES. I AM SURE GOVERNMENT DO  
NOT INTEND INTENSIFYING EXISTING BITTERNESS.  
GOVERNMENT WILL RISK NOTHING BY DELAY,  
BUT BY EXPRESSLY BOWING TO PUBLIC OPINION  
WILL SMOOTH DOWN FEELING AND ENHANCE REAL  
PRESTIGE. I AM PROCEEDING TO BOMBAY TO-MORROW  
BY JUBBULPORE MAIL.

N. A. I.: Home: Political—A: March 1919: No. 250

### 312. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY

IN THE TRAIN FROM LUCKNOW,  
*March 11, 1919*

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

Here is copy of a telegram I have just sent to you. I do not wish to add anything to it, except a very personal word. All the time that satyagraha was going on in South Africa, I had the privilege of addressing General Smuts through his P.S., Mr. Lane. As the struggle developed, Mr. Lane veritably became the angel of peace between the Government as represented by Gen. Smuts and aliens as represented by me. Without his unfailing good nature and courtesy, probably the satisfactory result which was arrived at might not have been possible. May I hope for similar services from you? For as in South Africa, so in India, I shall ever have to worry you if the struggle is unfortunately prolonged, and I shall seize every occasion to bring Government and

<sup>1</sup> The letter as received and preserved in the National Archives of India bears the date line—Allahabad, March 12, 1919.

those I may represent, closer together.

I shall [be] in Bombay on the 13th instant, whilst Sabarmati (Ahmedabad) remains my permanent address. Letters addressed Laburnum [Road], Chowpati, Bombay, will reach me a day earlier for the time being.

I need hardly say that I had a prolonged interview with Mr. Shastriar. But in this business, there is a difference of ideals between him and me, and I could discover no meeting-ground between us.

I hope, Lord Chelmsford is free from fever now and that all its effects have disappeared.

Such a personal note should have been written in my own hand. But my recent sickness has left me disabled in more ways than one. My hand shakes as I write and it soon gets fatigued. I am therefore obliged to fall back upon dictation even for most intimate correspondence.<sup>1</sup>

*Yours sincerely,*

From a photostat: S.N. 6449

### *313. SPEECH ON SATYAGRAHA, ALLAHABAD*

*March 11, 1919*

I am sorry that I am unable to speak to you myself. It is utterly impossible for my voice to reach the farthest end of this meeting. I have therefore to content myself with writing a few lines to be read for me.

It behoves everyone who wishes to take the Satyagraha Pledge to seriously consider all its factors before taking it. It is necessary to understand the principles of satyagraha, to understand the main features of the Bills known as the Rowlatt Bills and to be satisfied that they are so objectionable as to warrant the very powerful remedy of satyagraha being applied and finally to be convinced of one's ability to undergo every form of bodily suffering so that the soul may be set free and be under no fear from any human being or institution. Once in it there is no looking back. Therefore, there is no conception of defeat in satyagraha. A satyagrahi fights even unto death. It is thus

<sup>1</sup> The last paragraph is in Gandhiji's hand.

<sup>2</sup> This was read in English by the chairman, Syed Hussain, and in Hindi by Gandhiji's secretary, Mahadev Desai.



not an easy thing for everybody to enter upon it.

It therefore behoves a satyagrahi to be tolerant of those who do not join him. In reading reports of satyagraha meetings I often notice that ridicule is poured upon those who do not join our movement. This is entirely against the spirit of the Pledge. In satyagraha we expect to win over our opponents by self-suffering i.e., by love. The process whereby we hope to reach our goal is by so conducting ourselves as gradually and in an unperceived manner to disarm all opposition. Opponents as a rule expect irritation even violence from one another when both parties are equally matched. But when satyagraha comes into play the expectation is transformed into agreeable surprise in the mind of the party towards whom satyagraha is addressed till at last he relents and recalls the act which necessitated satyagraha. I venture to promise that if we act up to our Pledge day after day, the atmosphere around us will be purified and those who differ from us from honest motives, as I verily believe they do, will perceive that their alarm was unjustified. The violationists wherever they may be, will realize that they have in satyagraha a far more potent instrument for achieving reform than violence whether secret or open, and that it gives them enough work for their inexhaustible energy. And the Government will have no case left in defence of their measures, if as a result of our activity the cult of violence is notably on the wane if it has not entirely died out. I hope therefore that at satyagraha meetings we shall have no cries of shame, and no language betraying irritation or impatience either against the Government or our countrymen who differ from us and some of whom have for years been devoting themselves to the country's cause according to the best of their ability.

*The Leader*, 13-3-1919

### 314. SATYAGRAHA SABHA RULES

The following are the draft rules of the Satyagraha Sabha.

#### CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTORY

1. This association shall be called the Satyagraha Sabha.
2. Its head office shall be situated in Bombay.
3. Its objects are to oppose until they are withdrawn the Bills

<sup>1</sup> Presumably drafted by Gandhiji

- popularly known as Rowlatt Bills (Acts I & II of 1919), by,
- (i) resort to satyagraha in terms of the Pledge<sup>1</sup> which is attached as Schedule A hereto and all other lawful means not inconsistent with satyagrahis.
  4. The work of the Sabha shall be carried on by means of voluntary contributions from Members and non-Members.
  5. Any person qualified under Rule 6 can become a Member of the Sabha.

#### CHAPTER II : CONSTITUTION

6. Any person who has signed the Satyagraha Pledge (Schedule A hereto), who has attained the age of 18 years and who is not a student in some school or college and who has been attested by a Member of the Sabha, duly authorized thereto by the Executive Committee, is entitled to become a Member of the Sabha.
7. The Sabha shall have an elected President, Vice-Presidents not exceeding three, three Hon. Secretaries two Hon. Treasurers.
8. The President of the Sabha shall be the ex-officio Chairman of the Executive Committee which shall appoint its own Vice-Chairman.
9. The Executive Committee shall consist of not more than 50 Members including a Chairman and Vice-Chairman not exceeding three. The office-bearers of the Sabha shall be ex-officio Members of the Executive Committee.
10. The Hon. Secretaries of the Sabha shall be the ex-officio Secretaries of the Executive Committee.

#### CHAPTER III : POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

11. The Executive Committee shall be in charge of all the Books and records of the Sabha; it shall stand possessed of all its funds.
12. The Executive Committee shall have the power to consider and decide from time to time what steps should be taken to give effect to the Pledge (Schedule A)<sup>2</sup>.
13. The Executive Committee shall have the powers to do each and everything necessary to effect the objects of the Sabha.
14. The Executive Committee may recognize and start Branches of

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "The Satyagraha Pledge", 24-2-1919.

<sup>2</sup> *The Bombay Chronicle*, 28-3-1919 here adds: "and shall be the Committee referred to in the Pledge".

the Sabha in the whole of the Bombay Presidency and may co-operate with the Satyagraha Societies and Associations in other parts of India having similar objects.

15. The Executive Committee shall meet at least once a week<sup>1</sup> and shall do so more often if the Hon. Secretaries call an urgent meeting. Special meeting of the Committee shall also be called on a requisition signed by 3 or more Members of the Committee specifying the object of the special meeting.

16. The Executive Committee may without assigning any reason by a 2/3rd majority of the total number of its Members expel any Member of the Sabha.

17. The quorum of meeting of the Executive Committee shall be 8 and at meetings of the General Body of Members 25.

18. The foregoing rules shall be subject to such alterations and additions as may be made from time to time by the Executive Committee and ratified by the Sabha.

19. A general meeting of the Members of the Sabha shall be held at least once a month or at any time at the instance of the Executive Committee or on requisition to the Honorary Secretaries which is signed by not less than ten Members provided that not less than 3 days' [notice is given].

*Young India*, 12-3-1919; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 28-3-1919

### 315. TELEGRAM TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

ALLAHABAD,  
March 12, 1919

C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR  
SALEM

AM DELIGHTED OVER YOUR DOINGS. HOPE REACH  
MADRAS END MONTH. ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY PASS FEW  
DAYS BOMBAY. JUST LEAVING FOR BOMBAY.

GANDHI

From the original: C. Vijayaraghavachariar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

<sup>1</sup> *The Bombay Chronicle* here has: "at not less than three days' notice.", omitting the rest of Rule 15.

### 316. LETTER TO SIR JAMES DUBOULAY

March 12, 1919

With reference to the Ali Brothers, I should like to say just one word. After the interview with you,<sup>1</sup> I have seen Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb of Lucknow whose disciples the Brothers are. And I must state that by still longer detaining the Brothers, the Government would be adding injustice to injustice. I do not know the art of Government and what I have seen of it throughout the world makes me look upon it not with any favour. But it does seem curious that the Government should ignore what is patent to everybody outside it, viz., the increasing intensity of the smouldering fire which they are simply hiding under the ashes called repression. And is it good Government to imprison ability, honesty, and religious conviction ? I do wish I could convince you of the necessity of setting the Brothers free, and you in your turn could convince the Government.

I am leaving for Bombay today. My permanent address is Sabarmati, Ahmedabad, but for some days my address will be Laburnum Road, Gamdevi, Bombay.

N. A. I.: Home: Political—A: July 1919: No. 1 & K.W.

### 317. CABLE TO H. S. L. POLAK

BOMBAY,<sup>2</sup>

March 12, 1919<sup>3</sup>

TO  
HENRY POLAK  
[LONDON]

—LCO KALOPH<sup>4</sup> STRAND LN—

ROWLATT	BILLS	PASSING.	NINETY	WELL-KNOWN	MEN	WOMEN
DECLARE	CIVIL	DISOBEDIENCE	LAWS	THEIR	COMMITTEE	
SELECTS.	STEP	TAKEN	DELIBERATION.	NOTICE	VICEROY.	
VICEREGAL	ASSURANCES	CIVIL	SERVICE	BRITISH	COMMERCE	

<sup>1</sup> On March 7 at Delhi; *vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 8-3-1919.

<sup>2</sup> As in the source

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

<sup>4</sup> Telegraphic address of H. S. L. Polak, anagram (H. Polak = KALOPH)

ALARMING.	REQUIRE	CLEAR	ENUNCIATION.	HOPE	YOU
MOVING	TRANSVAAL	INDIAN	SITUATION.		

GANDHI

From the original cablegram: C.W. 1117. Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

### 318. *SPEECH ON ROWLATT BILLS, BOMBAY*

*March 14, 1919*

At the Bombay meeting against the Rowlatt Bills on 14th March, 1919, Mr. Gandhi's speech which was in Gujarati was read out by his secretary.

I am sorry that owing to my illness, I am unable to speak to you myself and have to have my remarks read to you. You will be glad to know that Sannayasi Shraddhanandji is gracing the audience today by his presence. He is better known to us as Mahatma Munshiramji, the Governor of Gurukul. His joining our army is a source of strength to us. Many of you have perhaps been keenly following the proceedings of the Viceregal Council. Bill No. 2 is being steamrolled by means of the official majority of the Government and in the teeth of the unanimous opposition from the non-official members. I deem it to be an insult to the latter, and through them to the whole of India. Satyagraha has become necessary as much to ensure respect for duly expressed public opinion, as to have the mischievous Bills withdrawn. Grave responsibility rests upon the shoulders of the satyagrahis though, as I have so often said, there is no such thing as defeat in satyagraha, it does not mean that victory can be achieved without satyagrahis to fight for it, i.e., to suffer for it. The use of this matchless force is comparatively a novelty. It is not the same thing as passive resistance which has been conceived to be a weapon that can be wielded most effectively only by the strongest-minded, and you may depend upon it that six hundred men and women who in this Presidency have signed the Pledge are more than enough for our purpose, if they have strong wills and invincible faith in their mission, and that [it] is in the power of truth to conquer untruth which satyagrahis believe the Bills represent. I use the word "untruth" in its widest sense. We may expect often to be told—as we have been told already by Sir William Vincent—that the Government will not yield to any threat of passive resistance. Satyagraha is not a threat, it is a fact; and even such a mighty Government as the Government of India will have to yield if we are true to our Pledge. For, the Pledge is not a

small thing. It means a change of heart. It is an attempt to introduce the religious spirit into politics. We may no longer believe in the doctrine of tit for tat; we may not meet hatred by hatred, violence by violence, evil by evil; but we have to make a continuous and persistent effort to return good for evil. It is of no consequence that I give utterance to these sentiments. Every satyagrahi has to live up to them. It is a difficult task, but with the help of God, nothing is impossible. (Loud cheers.)

*Mahatma Gandhi: His Life, Writings & Speeches*, pp. 341-2

### 319. TELEGRAM TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

GRANT ROAD,  
March 15, 1919

VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR  
SALEM

REACHING MADRAS TUESDAY MORNING. PLEASE AVOID  
ALL PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS.<sup>1</sup> HEALTH TOO WEAK  
FOR THEM.

GANDHI

From the original: C. Vijayaraghavachariar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

### 320. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

LABURNUM ROAD,  
GAMDEVI,  
BOMBAY,  
*Fagan Sud 15 [March 16, 1919]*

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your letter. Don't at all expect a long letter from me these days. Santok will soon be there and you will have some relief. Moreover, she will be returning successful from Rajkot and will therefore be more cheerful. Mahatma Munshiram will leave Surat by the evening train on the 19th and arrive in Ahmedabad the next

<sup>1</sup> In protest against the Rowlatt Bills; *vide* "Speech on Satyagraha, Madras", 20-3-1919.

morning. The train reaches there at six. He will of course stay in the Ashram. He will be there on the 20th and the 21st. For these two days, you, or someone else whom he knows, should attend on him. Accompany him wherever he goes. Take him to the place in Ahmedabad where good work on the handloom is being done. In any case, acquaint him with all the activities of the Ashram. It is necessary that he should have a separate session with the teachers and understand everything. Drench him with love. He will attend the annual function of the workers on the 20th evening, will address a public meeting on the 21st and leave for Ajmer or Surat the same evening. Arrangements for a car will be made by Anasuyabehn. In case she forgets, do so yourself. Take him by car from Ahmedabad to the Ashram. Give him a sample of Ashram cloth as a gift. When he leaves . . . on you ....<sup>1</sup>

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5773. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

### *321. SPEECH ON SATYAGRAHA, MADRAS<sup>2</sup>*

*March 18, 1919*

You will forgive me for saying the few words that I want to say just now sitting in the chair. I am under strict medical orders not to exert myself, having got a weak heart. I am, therefore, compelled to have some assistance and to get my remarks read to you. I wish to say one word to you. Beware before you sign the Pledge. But if you do, you will see to it that you shall never undo the Pledge you have signed. May God help you and me in carrying out the Pledge.

[Mahadev Desai, after a few words of introduction, read out the following message:]

I regret that owing to heart-weakness, I am unable to speak to you personally. You have no doubt attended many meetings, but those that you have been attending of late are different from the others in that at the meetings to which I have referred some immediate tangible action, some immediate definite sacrifice has been demanded of you for the purpose of averting a serious calamity that has overtaken us in the shape of what are known as the Rowlatt Bills. One of them, Bill No. 1, has undergone material alterations and its further

<sup>1</sup> The rest of the letter is not available.

<sup>2</sup> The meeting was held at Triplicane Beach S. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar presided.

consideration has been postponed. In spite, however, of the alteration, it is mischievous enough to demand opposition. The second Bill has probably at this very moment been finally passed by that Council, for in reality you can hardly call the Bill as having been passed by that august body when all its non-official members unanimously and in strong language opposed it. The Bills require to be resisted not only because they are in themselves bad, but also because Government, who are responsible for their introduction, have seen fit practically to ignore public opinion and some of its members have made it a boast that they can so ignore that opinion. So far, it is common cause between the different schools of thought in the country. I have, however, after much prayerful consideration, and after very careful examination of the Government's standpoint, pledged myself to offer satyagraha against the Bills, and invited all men and women who think and feel with me to do likewise. Some of our countrymen, including those who are among the best of the leaders, have uttered a note of warning, and even gone so far as to say that this satyagraha movement is against the best interests of the country. I have naturally the highest regard for them and their opinion. I have worked under some of them. I was a babe when Sir Dinshaw Wachha and Babu Surendranath Banerjea were among the accepted leaders of public opinion in India. Mr. Sastriar is a politician who has dedicated his all to the country's cause. His sincerity, his probity are all his own. He will yield to no one in the love of the country. There is a sacred and indissoluble tie binding me to him. My upbringing draws me to the signatories of the two Manifestoes<sup>1</sup>. It is not, therefore, without the greatest grief and much searching of heart that I have to place myself in opposition to their wishes. But there are times when you have to obey a call which is the highest of all, i.e., the voice of conscience, even though such obedience may cost many a bitter tear, nay, even more, separation from friends, from family, from the State to which you may belong, from all that you have held as dear as life itself. For, this obedience is the law of our being. I have no further and other defence to offer for my conduct. My regard for the signatories to the Manifesto remains undiminished, and my faith in the efficiency of satyagraha is so great that I feel that if those who have taken the Pledge will be true to it, we

<sup>1</sup> Issued by Sir D. E. Wachha, Sir Surendranath Banerjea, V. S. Srinivasa Sastriar and other Moderate leaders on March 2, and by the Madras Moderates on March 18.



shall be able to show to them that they will find when we have come to the end of this struggle that there was no cause for alarm or misgivings. There is, I know, resentment felt, even by some satyagrahis over the Manifestoes. I would warn satyagrahis that such resentment is against the spirit of satyagraha. I would personally welcome an honest expression of difference of opinion from any quarter and more so from friends because it puts us on our guard. There is too much recrimination, innuendo and insinuation in our public life, and if the satyagraha movement purges it of this grave defect, as it ought to, it will be a very desirable by-product. I wish further to suggest to satyagrahis that any resentment of the two Manifestoes would be but a sign of weakness on our part. Every movement, and satyagraha most of all, must depend upon its own inherent strength, but not upon the weakness or silence of its critics.

Let us, therefore, see wherein lies the strength of satyagraha. As the name implies, it is in an insistence on truth which dynamically expressed means love; and by the law of love we are required not to return hatred for hatred, violence for violence but to return good for evil. As Shrimati Sarojini Devi told you yesterday, the strength lies in a definite recognition of the true religious spirit and action corresponding to it, and when once you introduce the religious element in politics, you revolutionize the whole of your political outlook. You achieve reform then not by imposing suffering on those who resist it, but by taking the suffering upon yourselves and so in this movement we hope by the intensity of our sufferings to affect and alter the Government's resolution not to withdraw these objectionable Bills. It has, however, been suggested that the Government will leave the handful of satyagrahis severely alone and not make martyrs of them. But there is here, in my humble opinion, bad logic and an unwarranted assumption of fact. If satyagrahis are left alone, they have won a complete victory, because they will have succeeded in disregarding the Rowlatt Bills and even other laws of the country and in having thus shown that civil disobedience of a Government is held perfectly harmless. I regard the statement as an unwarranted assumption of fact, because it contemplates the restriction of the movement only to a handful of men and women. My experience of satyagraha leads me to believe that it is such a potent force that, once set in motion, it ever spreads till at last it becomes a dominant factor in the community in which it is brought into play, and if it so spreads, no Government can neglect it. Either it must yield to it or imprison the workers in the

movement. But I have no desire to argue. As the English proverb says, the proof of the pudding lies in the eating. The movement for better or for worse has been launched. We shall be judged not by our words, but solely by our deeds. It is, therefore, not enough that we sign the Pledge. Our signing it is but an earnest of our determination to act up to it, and if all who sign the Pledge act according to it, I make bold to promise that we shall bring about the withdrawal of the two Bills and neither the Government nor our critics will have a word to say against us. The cause is great, the remedy is equally great; let us prove worthy of them both.

*Mahatma Gandhi: His Life, Writings & Speeches*, pp. 343-7

### 322. SPEECH AT MADRAS LABOUR UNION

*March 19, 1919*

I am very pleased to meet you this evening. I should have loved to speak to you in Tamil, but unfortunately, all my attempts to learn Tamil have so far failed. You will please therefore forgive me for my inability to address you in your mother tongue. As I look at the faces before me, I see that many of them resemble those that I was used to see in South Africa. I have worked with them, I have lived with them, I have eaten with them, and company with you puts me in mind of the days I have spent with them.

You know that money cannot do without labour nor labour do without money. Part of what your masters earn with your labour is distributed to you. You thus enjoy a position of privilege. But there are also responsibilities attaching to it and I shall tell you some of them.

First and foremost, you should be truthful, for a man without truth is, like a base coin, worthless, and in order that truth may shine in you, you should be educated. I see that Mr. Wadia has very kindly provided you with a library and a reading room and I have no doubt that if you expressed your desire to him, he could find you teachers also. No man is too old to learn and if you will learn and study what ought to be studied, you will become better men. You will then better know your rights as well as your duties. You can either waste your time and money by devoting both to drinking and gambling or you

<sup>1</sup> This speech was translated into Tamil by Dandapani Pillay. B. P. Wadia was in the chair.

can use both usefully in educating yourselves and your children. I hope you will remember the few words I have spoken this evening and try to act according to what I have said. I thank you for giving me the opportunity of meeting you. May God bless you and yours and may you become citizens of India.

From a photostat: S.N. 6462

### 323. *SPEECH ON SATYAGRAHA, MADRAS*<sup>1</sup>

*March 20, 1919*

This afternoon I propose to deal with that of the objections that have been raised against satyagraha. After saying that it was a matter of regret that men like myself “should have embarked on this movement”, Sir William Vincent, in winding up the debate on Bill No. 2, said:

. . . they could only hope that it (i.e., satyagraha) would not materialize. Mr. Gandhi might exercise great self-restraint in action, but there would be other young hot-headed men who might be led into violence which could not but end in disaster. Yielding to this threat, however, would be tantamount to complete abolition of the authority of the Governor-General - in-Council.

If Sir William’s fear as to violence is realized, it would undoubtedly be a disaster. It is for every satyagrahi to guard against that danger. I entertain no such fear because our creed requires us to eschew all violence and to resort to truth and self-suffering as the only weapons in our armoury. Indeed, the satyagraha movement is, among other things, an invitation to those who believe in the efficacy of violence for redress of grievances to join our ranks and honestly to follow our methods. I have suggested elsewhere what the Rowlatt Bills are intended to do and what, I verily believe, they are bound to fail in achieving, exactly what the satyagraha movement is pre-eminently

<sup>1</sup> At a meeting on Triplicane Beach, with C. Vijayaraghavachari in the chair. This was read by Mahadev Desai due to Gandhiji’s ill-health.

The following resolution was put from the chair and passed unanimously:

“In view of the unanimous opposition of India to Rowlatt Bills and the fact that not a single non-official member voted with the Government for the passing of the Bill, this public meeting appeals to H.E. the Viceroy to withhold his assent to the Act for the signification of His Majesty’s pleasure under Section 68 of the Government of India Act.”

capable of achieving. By demonstrating to the party of violence the infallible power of Satyagraha and by giving them ample scope for inexhaustible energy, we hope to wean that party from the suicidal method of violence. What can be more potent than an absolute statement accompanied by corresponding action presented in the clearest terms possible that violence is never necessary for the purpose of securing reforms. Sir William says that the movement has great potentialities of evil. The Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya is said to have retorted, "and also of good". I would venture to improve upon the retort by saying "only of good". It constitutes an attempt to revolutionize politics and to restore moral force to its original station. After all, the Government do not believe in an entire avoidance of violence, i.e., physical force. The message of the West which the Government of India, I presume, represent, is succinctly put by President Wilson in his speech delivered to the Peace Conference at the time of introducing the League of Nations Covenant:

Armed force is in the background in this programme, but it is in the background, and if the moral force of the world will not suffice physical force of the world, shall.

We hope to reverse the process, and by our action show that physical force is nothing compared to the moral force, and that moral force never fails. It is my firm belief that this is the fundamental difference between the modern civilization and the ancient, of which India, fallen though it is, I venture to claim is a living representative. We, her educated children, seem to have lost faith in the supremacy of moral force; we shall have made a priceless contribution to the British Empire and we shall, without fail, obtain the reforms we desire and to which we may be entitled. Entertaining such views, it is not difficult for me to answer Sir William's second fear as to the complete abolition of the authority of the Governor-General-in-Council. This movement is undoubtedly designed effectively to prove to the Government that its authority is finally dependent upon the will of the people and not upon force of arms, especially when that will is expressed in terms of satyagraha. To yield to a clear moral force cannot but enhance the prestige and dignity of the yielder.

It is to such a movement that every man and woman in this great country is invited, but a movement that is intended to produce far-reaching results, and which depended for success on the purity and the capacity for the self-suffering of those who are engaged in it, can

only be joined after a searching and prayerful self-examination. I may not too often give the warning I have given at satyagraha meetings, that everyone should think a thousand times before coming to it, but having come to it he must remain in it, cost what it may. A friend came to me yesterday and told me that he did not know that it meant all that was explained at a gathering of a few satyagrahi friends and wanted to withdraw. I told him that he could certainly do so if he had signed without understanding the full consequences of the Pledge, and I would ask everyone who did not understand the Pledge as it has been explained at various meetings, to copy this example. It is not numbers so much as quality that we want. Let me, therefore, note down the qualities required of a satyagrahi. He must follow truth at any cost and in all circumstances. He must take a continuous effort to love his opponents. He must be prepared to go through every form of suffering, whether imposed upon him by the Government which he is civilly resisting for the time being, or by those who may differ from him. This movement is thus a process of purification and penance. Believe me that if we go through it in the right spirit, all the fears expressed by the Government and some of our friends will be proved to be groundless and we will not only see the Rowlatt Bills withdrawn, but the country will recognize in satyagraha a powerful and religious weapon for securing reforms and redress of legitimate grievances.

*New India, 21-3-1919*

### ***324. SPEECH AT TRAMWAYMEN'S MEETING, MADRAS***

*March 21, 1919*

This morning at 8 a.m. about 150 strikers had assembled at No. 2, St. George's Cathedral Road, to see Mahatma Gandhi and to take his advice. Mr. Gandhi spoke in English and his speech was translated to the strikers in Tamil by Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar.

Mr. Gandhi first of all asked one of them whether he was not tired of the strike and how long he could prolong it. He replied that he was not and that he could stand for 10 or 15 days more. Questioned again as to what he would do if the strike be prolonged beyond that period, he replied that he would like to remain like that even for 10 days afterwards.

Mr. Gandhi then spoke as follows:

I have heard something about your strike. I know on the surface what your demands are. But I have not deeply gone into the whole

matter. Nor do I know the Company's side of the question. I therefore cannot say whether your demands are absolutely just or not. But, assuming that your demands are just, I am sure that you are quite justified in declaring a strike. Whenever a body of workmen take their legitimate grievances before their employers and the employers do not listen to them, the only clean weapon in their hands is a strike. So, for a good and successful strike, the first thing essential is that the cause should be good and just. The second thing is that the strikers should never resort to violence. That is to say, you may not hurt your employers nor may you hurt those who do not join you in the strike. And you should always, no matter what difficulties you have to suffer, stick to truth. And in going through the strike, you must be prepared always to suffer whatever difficulties you may have to go through, even deprivations. That strike is a religious strike and is always bound to be successful. I hope that your strike is of that character. I am simply filled with delight that you are all acting in such perfect co-operation that not a single employee here is at present working. I am also delighted that you are conducting yourselves in a most orderly manner. And having gone so far, I hope you will continue your strike till your demands are granted. I would like you to bear this in mind that your demands should be reduced to writing, that every one of you should know what those demands are and when the time for a settlement comes, not to increase your demands. If you increase your demands from time to time or change them, you will place yourselves in the wrong. If an arbitration is suggested, through men in whom you can place perfect reliance, I would advise you to agree to the arbitration, because the arbitrators will be able to say to you, to the Company and to the world, whether your demands are just or not. Lastly, granting that your demands are just, that you are fulfilling the conditions that I have laid down, what are you to do when the strike is prolonged is a fair question. I know that all of you do not possess money enough to go out with an indefinitely prolonged strike. You are workers and able-bodied men and I would advise you not to rely for your bread and butter on public support. It is beneath the dignity of a man who has got strength of arms and legs to depend for his bread and butter upon public support. I would therefore advise you to seek some work which all of you can do of a temporary nature. No honest work is dishonourable for any man on this earth. If I were you, I would do spade work indefinitely. I have not got the time to tell you the history of a recent strike in Ahmedabad where the people

continued their strike for 23 days. You will ask some friend what that strike was. But this I want to tell you about that strike, that the men earning Rs. 40 per month did not mind doing spade work, taking earth and carrying it on their heads in baskets from one place to another. So they were able to support themselves with four annas a day. The result was that 10,000 men who were engaged in it were entirely successful. I hope that your demands are just. I hope that you will behave in the manner that I have ventured to advise you. In that case, you may depend upon it you shall have success. I thank you very much for having come here all the way to see me. May God bless you.

*The Hindu*, 21-3-1919

### 325. LETTER TO THE PRESS ON SATYAGRAHA MOVEMENT

MADRAS,

*March 23, 1919*

Satyagraha, as I have endeavoured to explain at several meetings, is essentially a religious movement. It is a process of purification and penance. It seeks to secure reforms or redress of grievances by self-suffering. I therefore venture to suggest that the second Sunday after the publication of the Viceregal assent to Bill No. 2 of 1919 (i.e., 6th April) may be observed as a day of humiliation and prayer. As there must be an effective public demonstration in keeping with the character of the observance, I beg to advise as follows:

(i) A twenty-four hours' fast counting from the last meal on the preceding night should be observed by all adults, unless prevented from so doing by consideration of religion or health. The fast is not to be regarded, in any shape or form, in the nature of a hunger-strike, or as designed to put any pressure upon the Government. It is to be regarded, for the satyagrahis, as the necessary discipline to fit them for civil disobedience, contemplated in their Pledge, and for all others, as some slight token of the intensity of their wounded feelings.

(ii) All work, except such as may be necessary in the public interest, should be suspended for the day. Markets and other business

<sup>1</sup> This was also published in *The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 25-3-1919, as released by the Associated Press of India.

places should be closed. Employees who are required to work even on Sundays may only suspend work after obtaining previous leave.

I do not hesitate to recommend these two suggestions for adoption by public servants. For though it is unquestionably the right thing for them not to take part in political discussions and gatherings, in my opinion they have an undoubted right to express upon vital matters their feelings in the very limited manner herein suggested.

(iii) Public meetings should be held on that day in all parts of India, not excluding villages, at which resolutions praying for the withdrawal of the two measures should be passed.

If my advice is deemed worthy of acceptance, the responsibility will lie, in the first instance, on the various Satyagraha Associations for undertaking the necessary work of organization, but all other associations will, I hope, join hands in making this demonstration a success.

M. K. GANDHI

*The Hindu*, 24-3-1919; also a photostat: S. N. 6469

### 326. LETTER TO ANNIE BESANT

2, CATHEDRAL STREET,

[MADRAS,]

March 23, 1919

DEAR MRS. BESANT,

There appeared in yesterday's *New India* a letter signed by <sup>1</sup>. The correspondent has given some information about the proceedings of a private meeting of satyagrahis. May I say, for future guidance, that the proceedings of the Sabha or its Com-mittee are to be regarded as private unless when publication is offici-ally authorised? I am sure that you will respect the Committee's wish.<sup>2</sup>

From a photostat: S.N. 6464

<sup>1</sup> This space is blank in the source.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Besant replied : "Certainly, I took the letter as ordinary news from one of your people."



### 327. LETTER TO SIR S. SUBRAMANIA IYER<sup>1</sup>

March 23, 1919

I am extremely grateful for your candid note<sup>2</sup>. I shall certainly respect your wishes. I can't misunderstand and I am sure that the friends who are associated with me in this work will not do so either.

Will you please tell Mrs. Besant, this movement is not a party movement, and those who belong to particular parties after joining the movement cease to be party men? She will find, as the movement progresses, that satyagrahis will endeavour to purge themselves of acrimony and other such delinquencies. I entirely agree with you that however much we may differ from her, no Indian can help feeling grateful to her for her wonderful services to India.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6466

### 328. NOTES TAKEN DOWN BY MAHADEV DESAI

[MADRAS,

March 23, 1919]<sup>3</sup>

Met together to discuss future work.

What has Bombay done: Committee. Publication of important literature. Closing of the markets.

Political statutes may be taken first.

- i. Printing & publishing of clean prohibited literature.
- ii. Issue of a written newspaper without licence.

I have deliberately asked the Bombay Committee [not] to put anything more than this before the public. I don't think it is wise to put a complete programme, just yet, without knowing what turn events take. I have other laws as L. R. Law, Salt Act and Revenue Law in my programme.

<sup>1</sup> Retired Judge of the Madras High Court; honorary president of the All-India Home Rule League and an old Congressman; he renounced his knighthood in protest against the arrest of Annie Besant and her co-workers in 1917 and addressed a letter to President Wilson. He drafted and signed a pledge the same year advocating passive resistance against the repressive laws; *vide The History of the Indian National Congress* by B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, "Deputation to Natal Premier", 29-6-1894.

<sup>2</sup> Declining the offer of vice-presidentship of the Satyagraha Sabha

<sup>3</sup> These Notes are on the reverse of the letter appearing as the preceding item.

The best course is each Province to have its separate independent organization and for all those different organizations to co-operate. Difficulties of an All-India Central Committee.

Difficulties of meeting together.

Question of representation.

I would certainly suggest that every one of us who guide the people would be the first to go and for that purpose you can stop your paper.

Satyagrahis must reside within the area of operations.

The occupation of the satyagrahi shall occupy a secondary place. Conceive ourselves an army not of destruction but of construction or if necessary, of self-destruction and all the rules that apply to that army apply to our Sabha.

MAHADEV H. DESAI

Certain this Presidency till Wednesday<sup>1</sup>, probably Sunday<sup>2</sup>.

From a photostat: S.N. 6467

### 329. *SPEECH ON SATYAGRAHA MOVEMENT, TANJORE*<sup>3</sup>

*March 24, 1919*

The acceptance, by the country, of the new criminal laws was a degradation, a humiliation. When a nation felt that any particular legislation was a national degradation, they had a clear duty to discharge. In the countries of the West, when the governors did a wrong, there ensued bloodshed. In India, on the other hand, the people instinctively abhorred the doctrine of violence. Therefore, they had to find out by what other means they could enforce their will upon the Government. They had found that speeches at public meetings and the resolutions of the Legislative Councils had been of no avail. The official majority had rejected the national will expressed through the elected members. In such circumstances, by what other means could they impose their will on the Government ? He suggested that what Prahlad did towards his father, Hiranyakashyapu, should be done by them towards the Government. Hiranyakashyapu issued a command to his son which conflicted with his conscience. The voice of a disciplined conscience was the voice of the divine; and any man who refused to listen to that voice degraded human dignity. The conscience

<sup>1</sup> 26th March

<sup>2</sup> 30th March

<sup>3</sup> At an open air meeting held at Besant Lodge. V. P. Madhava Rao presided

of the speaker told him that they should act even as Prahlad acted against his father's order; and if their conscience also told the same thing, they should do the same. Prahlad disobeyed his father's command without any irreverence or ill will or disaffection for him. He continued to love his father as he was still disobeying his order, and the very love he bore his father made him point out to him his wrong which he dutifully resisted under the dictates of his conscience. This was what was called civil disobedience or satyagraha, which mean the force of truth, the force of soul. If they accepted satyagraha, they rejected the doctrine of physical violence. He hoped that they who were the descendants of Prahlad would not send him away empty-handed. He had just then received a telegram that the Viceroy had given his consent to Bill No. 2. They could not better begin the use of soul-force than by adopting some rigorous measures of discipline. He had suggested in a letter to the Press that the second Sunday, after the Viceroy had given his consent to the Bills, which would be the 6th April, should be observed as a day of fast by all adults, men and women, who could fast. That was not to be mixed up with the hunger-strikes in England known in connection with the movement for suffrage for women. It was merely an expression of grief, an act of self-denial, a process of purification. It trained the satyagrahi to begin and carry on his civil disobedience. On that day, they should suspend all transaction of business. He had even ventured to suggest that public servants also could participate in the general fast. He entirely conceded the doctrine that Government servants should not take part in politics, but, it did not mean the suppression of their conscience and their freedom to share in national grief or national joy. In organizing public meetings or in making speeches thereat, they should employ the most respectful and dignified language in speaking of the Government and of their laws. In becoming language, they should appeal to the Viceroy and to the Secretary of State to withdraw the new laws in question. In taking the Pledge, they should understand that they were to do no harm to life or to property, but work in peace and goodwill to all. Satyagraha would do what this legislation could not do, namely, rid the country of violence. He hoped they would decide to accept it; and accepting it, never to retrace their steps from the vow after it had once been taken. They need not sign the Pledge at the meeting but might take time to consider the matter calmly, not once or twice but fifty times, whether, in view of what was expected of them, they possessed the capacity for it, for the discipline and the sacrifice that it required of them. They should remember that it was a sacred vow and that no Indian could break it with impunity. If they disapproved of it now, they would ere long find cause to regret that they did not join the movement. If, from weakness or from any other cause, they could not advance to the centre of the fight, they might, at least, remain at the circumference and along many of its lines help it in various ways. He hoped that God had given them sufficient strength and wisdom to take the vow and conscientiously discharge their duties at this critical moment in the fortunes of their

country.

The Chairman said that satyagraha, practised rigorously as taught by Gandhiji, was a straight road to swaraj.

Mr. Gandhi's speech was rendered into Tamil by Dr. T. S. S. Rajan of Trichinopoly who is accompanying him through his tour in South India.

About fifty signed the Pledge at the meeting, the larger half of the signatories being some of the Mahomedans, merchants of Rajagiri, and it is confidently expected that the ranks of the satyagraha army in the Tanjore district would swell to huge numbers.

*The Hindu*, 26-3-1919

### 330. TELEGRAM TO SATYAGRAHA SABHA, BOMBAY

TEPPAKULAM,  
TRICHY,  
[March 25, 1919]

HAVE SUGGESTED SUNDAY WEEK FOR FASTING SUSPENSION  
WORK AND PUBLIC MEETINGS. PRAYING WITHDRAWAL  
ROWLATT LEGISLATION. HOPE COMMITTEE APPROVES WILL  
ADOPT ADVICE WE COMMENCE BREACH OF LAWS  
MONDAY AFTER OBSERVANCE MUCH WORK HERE TODAY  
TRICHY. TOMORROW MADURA. THURSDAY TUTICORIN  
SATURDAY NAGAPATAN REACHING THERE WEDNESDAY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6476

### 331. TELEGRAM<sup>1</sup>

[March 25, 1919]

FORGIVE INABILITY REPLY. OVERWHELMED WITH WORK  
WRITING TODAY.

From a photostat: S.N. 6476

<sup>1</sup> The telegram was presumably addressed to O. S. Ghatge *vide* the following item.

### 332. LETTER TO O. S. GHATE

TRICHINOPOLY,  
[March 25, 1919]

DEAR MR. GHATE,

I am very sorry I have not been able to reply to your letter earlier than now. Upon reaching Madras, I was so much immersed in satyagraha work that I could not attend to any correspondence at all. I am ashamed of myself that I have taken so long to reply to your important letter. You will forgive me for this delay. What happened between Sir James Duboulay and myself was briefly this: He said the Government were not able to come to any decision, they were considering it. He would not let me see the Committee's Report, but he himself was not satisfied with it. At the end of the interview, I could see that our friends were being kept under internment for the very qualities I have described in my letter. As you are aware, I was in Lucknow and after the conversation there, as also with the friends in Delhi, I have come to the conclusion that you should not fog people and confuse the issue by resorting to separate satyagraha for the release of the Brothers. The present movement impliedly includes this question also and I propose to refer to it at a later stage of the struggle. I am still not without hope that they may be released. Do not think that their proposals to withdraw from India for the time being or actual withdrawal would be helpful. When the time comes, if it ever does, my strong advice would be that they should disregard the internment orders and invite imprisonment. But that they will do with me. If their step is decided, I would go over to Chhindwara myself, so that they would break the law together with me. But now that the movement about the Rowlatt legislation is going on, we should be doubly patient about our friends. Do not think that the correspondence between Government and myself can be published. It is in the nature of a personal correspondence. When I have publicly to refer to the question, I shall bring out all the facts, but without some equally important consideration, that correspondence should, I think, not be published. The Brothers may write whatever they choose about the religious question. But I would like their representation to be free from argument or hatred. A colourless representation purely setting forth facts will be infinitely stronger than an argumentative representation. I take it that our friends know all about the discussion I had with Bari Saheb.

*Yours sincerely,*

From a photostat: S.N. 6478

333. *SPEECH ON SATYAGRAHA MOVEMENT,  
TRICHINOPOLY*<sup>1</sup>

*March 25, 1919*

FRIENDS,

You will forgive me for not standing to speak to you. I am physically too weak to do so. You will also forgive me for speaking to you not in Tamil, but in English. It will give me some pleasure if I were to talk to you in Hindi, but it is a misfortune that you have not yet taken to the study of the national language. As you are aware, the opportunity is now offered to you of studying that language free of charge, and I hope that as many of you as you can will take advantage of the opportunity thus offered. However, I am on a different mission today.

I was yesterday in Tanjore. I ventured to extend to the community of Tanjore an invitation which I wish to extend to you also; but before I do so, I wish to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the beautiful address, the beautiful casket and the Tamil address that have been presented to me. As I do not accept any costly presents, the beautiful casket will go to the trust that has been formed which contains all the costly presents that I have ever received in my life, and there, converted into money, it will be used for some national purpose or other.

You say in the English address that there was a demonstration in the Transvaal or South Africa of the triumph of the spirit over matter. Your own belief in the triumph of the spirit over matter will be shortly put to the test. My invitation to you will ensure that test. You know the Rowlatt Bills perhaps as much as I do. I need not explain them. You all want them to be withdrawn. The Indian councillors in the Imperial Council tried their best to have this legislation withdrawn. They failed. The Bills are bad, but this flouting of the unanimous voice of the Indian members is worse and it is for you and for me, whose representatives those councillors are, to right this double wrong. How can it be righted? When the governors of a country do a great wrong to the people whom they govern, history teaches us that they have resorted to violence, sometimes with apparent success, often they have

<sup>1</sup> At a public meeting. Dr. T. S. S. Rajan rendered this speech into Tamil, sentence by sentence.

been defeated; but violence can only result in violence, as darkness added to darkness really deepens it. The doctrine of violence is of the earth, earthy, merely material, and can be no guide for a human being who at all believes in the existence of the soul. If, as I am sure you will reject the doctrine of violence, you have to consider other means for seeking redress, and that, as I would translate, would mean *shatham prati satyam*<sup>1</sup>. You have an instance given of it in the name mentioned this evening, i.e., of Prahlad. But some of you may be inclined to think that after all Prahlad is not a historical personage. That story may be a mere fable. I therefore propose to give you this evening a living instance, living in the sense that it has happened within recent memory. The authoress is dead. The name of the heroine is Valliamma<sup>2</sup>. She was born in South Africa of Indian parents. She in common with many of our countrywomen in South Africa, joined the satyagraha struggle that was raging there and that raged there for over eight years. She had a faith so absolute in the triumph of the spirit over matter that you and I are not privileged to possess. She knew nothing of the intricacies of the laws that we resisted in that country. It was enough for her that thousands of her countrymen and countrywomen were suffering for something she did not know, but she knew, she realized instinctively that out of the travail of the soul is a nation born and so she voluntarily suffered the hardships of a South African prisoner. She was 18 years old. In a weakly body she held a spirit that was indomitable. She got daily typhoid fever, whilst she was in jail. Her friends in the prison suggested that she should pay the fine to pay which she had the option, but she resolutely declined to pay the fine. She preferred to die in the prison, but she did not die. She was discharged in an ailing condition. She was discharged after she had completed the full term of her imprisonment. Then a few days after her discharge she died, mourned by the whole of the Indian community of South Africa as a heroine and martyr. Before she entered the prison gates, she was a poor girl unknown to fame. Today she has risen to [be] one of the very best of her nation. I have come here to invite you to follow the example of that beautiful girl, Valliamma, in order that you may successfully resist this Rowlatt

<sup>1</sup> Truth against a rogue. The original Sanskrit phrase is *shatham prati shaathyam*, roguery against a rogue.

<sup>2</sup> Valliamma R. Munuswami Mudaliar. She succumbed to fever on February 22, 1914, within a few days of her release from prison.

legislation, and I promise that, if you will approach the question with even a little of the faith of Valliamma, you will see that in a very short time these Bills are destroyed.

The Bills have violated the national conscience, and resistance to those commands which are in violation of one's conscience is a sacred privilege and a beauty, and it is not this law or this command of the governor that we resist, but it is our duty, it is open to us to resist all his commands which are not moral commands, and when we respectfully disobey wrongful things of these governors, we serve not only them but the whole nation. I have been asked wherever I have gone what law, what other laws, shall we disobey. The only answer I am able to give you today is that it is open to us to disobey all the laws which do not involve any moral sanction. That being so, it is totally unnecessary for you to know what laws we shall disobey. The aim of a satyagrahi is to invite upon his own devoted head all the suffering that he is capable of undertaking. Those of you, therefore, who disapprove of the Rowlatt legislation and who have faith in the efficacy of satyagraha, I have come to invite in order that you might sign this Pledge, but I will ask you to consider a thousand times before signing the Pledge. It is no discredit to you that you do not sign the Pledge, either because you do not disapprove of the legislation or you have not got the strength and the will, and it is not open to any satyagrahi to resent your refraining from signing the Pledge. But if you once sign the Pledge, remember that even as that poor girl Valliamma in spite of her illness underwent the full term of her imprisonment, even so shall you never detract from the Pledge.

You might have seen from today's papers received here that I have addressed to the Press a letter embodying some suggestions. I will, however, repeat them this evening. My first suggestion is, that on Sunday week, i.e., 6th day of April, we shall all observe a 24 hours' fast. It is a fitting preliminary for satyagrahis before they commence civil disobedience of the laws. For all others, it will be an expression of their deep grief over the wrong committed by the Government. I have regarded this movement as a purely religious movement and fast is an ancient institution amongst us. You will not mistake it for a hunger-strike (Laughter.) nor will you consider it as designed for exerting any pressure upon the Government. It is a measure of self-discipline, it will be an expression of the anguish of the soul, and when the soul is anguished, nobody could resist. I hope that all adults will take up the



task unless they are prevented from doing so by ill-health or religious conviction. I have also suggested that on that Sunday all work should be suspended, all markets and all business places should be closed. Apart from the spiritual value of these two acts, they will form an education of first-class value for the masses. I have ventured to include in my suggestions even public servants, because I think that we have to credit them with conscience as also their independence and ability and privilege to associate themselves with wrongs which the nation may want to resent. It is right that they should not take part in political meetings and political discussions, but their individual conscience must have full and free play. My third suggestion in which public servants may not take part is that on that day, we should visit every hamlet, if we can, and hold meetings and pass resolutions asking the Secretary of State for India to veto this legislation. I would not ask you to resort to these public meetings and resolutions, but for one reason, and the reason is that behind these meetings and resolutions lies the force of satyagraha to enforce the national will. In these three suggestions, whether you are satyagrahis or not, so long as you disapprove of the Rowlatt legislation, all can join and I hope that there will be such a response throughout the length and breadth of India as would convince the Government that we are alive to what is going on in our midst.

I thank you for the very great patience with which you have given me this hearing. A thousand thanks are due to you for the various ways in which you are showering your affection upon me, but I ask you with all the emphasis at my command to translate this personal affection into real action, and I venture to promise to you that all who join this movement, I have not the slightest doubt, will come out of it all the purer for it. Finally, please remember that if those in this great audience who are satyagrahis wish to convert others to their creed, the best way of doing so is not to bear the slightest ill will against them, but to conquer them by their sweetness, gentleness and a spirit of love. I thank you once more.

*The Hindu*, 27-3-1919

### 334. *SPEECH ON SATYAGRAHA MOVEMENT, MADURA*

*March 26, 1919*

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

You will pardon me for not standing up whilst I speak to you, because I am too weak to do so. I owe you a thousand apologies also for my inability to speak to you in Tamil. But I cannot entirely acquit you of blame in that I have to speak to you in the English language. If those of you who have received a liberal education had recognized that Hindi and Hindi alone could become the national language of India, you would have learnt it at any cost before this. But it is never too late to mend our mistake. You have in your midst today—only in Madras and a few other places—an opportunity offered to you of learning Hindi. It is probably the easiest language to learn in the world. I know something of the Tamil language; it is most beautiful and musical; but its grammar is most difficult to master, whereas the grammar of Hindi is merely a child's work. I hope, therefore, that you will all avail yourselves of the opportunity that is before you. But I cannot detain you on the topic of Hindi and I must hasten on to my subject.

I have come here after visiting Tanjore and Trichinopoly, as you know, to extend to you an invitation which I have already extended in those two places. I have come to ask you to sign the Satyagraha Pledge. You know its contents; it is designed to offer resistance to the Rowlatt legislation. It is not necessary for me to describe the effect of the legislation. The public Press and our orators have been before you and you have gathered from them the contents of that legislation and also its far-reaching effects. It is enough for me to say that the legislation is of such a character that no self-respecting nation can accept it. It is calculated to degrade the nation against whom it is brought into operation. It was carried in the teeth of unanimous opposition on our behalf. The Government have committed a double wrong and it is your duty, it is my duty and that of every man and woman in this country, to undo the wrong by every legitimate means in his or her power. We have exhausted all the orthodox measures in order to gain the end. We have passed resolutions; we have petitioned and our representatives in the Imperial Legislative Council have endeavoured their best to secure a withdrawal of this legislation and all our attempts have failed. And yet we must somehow or other undo

this wrong because it is like poison corroding the whole of the body politic. When the national conscience is hurt, people whose conscience is hurt either seek redress through methods of violence or through methods which I have described as satyagraha. I consider that methods of violence prove in the end to be of absolute failure. They are moreover wholly unsuited to the genius of our people. Methods of violence are not consistent with human dignity. It is no answer to say that this day Europe is saturated with the belief in brute force. True *paurusha*, true bravery, consists in driving out the brute in us and then only can you give freest play to your conscience. The other force which I have in various places described as satyagraha, soul-force or love-force, is best illustrated in the story of Prahlad. Prahlad, as you know, offered respectful disobedience to the laws and orders of his own father. He did not resort to violence; but he had unquenchable belief in what he was doing. He obeyed a higher call in disobeying the orders of his father. And in applying satyagraha to this movement, we shall be only copying the brilliant and eternal insistence of Prahlad. But we are living today in a world of unbelief. We are sceptical about our past records and many of you may be inclined to consider the story of Prahlad to be a mere fable. I therefore propose to give to you this evening two instances that have happened practically before your eyes. The one instance I related last evening and that was of a beautiful Tamil girl called Valliamma, eighteen years old, who died as a satyagrahi. She had joined the satyagraha movement in South Africa which lasted for eight years. She was arrested and imprisoned during the struggle. In her prison, she got typhoid fever and died of it. It was she and her fellow-satyagrahis who secured the relief that you all are aware of in South Africa. There was a lad of about the same age as Valliamma's whose name was *Nagappan*<sup>1</sup> and who suffered imprisonment in the same struggle. He did not reason why he should join the struggle. He had an instinctive faith in its righteousness. He instinctively believed that the remedy adopted was the only true and effective remedy.

The climate of South Africa is not so beneficent as the climate of the Indian plains. The South African winter is inclement and it was

<sup>1</sup> Sammy Nagappen, a satyagrahi, who was sentenced on June 21, 1909 to be imprisoned for 10 days with hard labour, was discharged from a Transvaal prison on June 30 in a dying condition. He died on July. 6, 1909; *vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909

winter time when Nagappan was imprisoned. He was exposed to the inclemencies of the weather because he was put under a tent life. As a prisoner, he was made to work with the spade. He had the option of paying fine at any time he might have chosen. He would not pay the fine. He believed that the gateway to liberty lay through the prison door and he died of cold and fever contracted during his prison life. Nagappan was an uneducated lad born of indentured parents. But he had a brave heart. And I have come this afternoon to ask everyone of you, man and woman, if you disapprove of the Rowlatt legislation to copy the examples not of Prahlad but of Valliamma and Nagappan. There is, however, one other condition; it is not enough that you disapprove of the Rowlatt legislation. You must have also faith in the efficacy of this remedy and ability to undergo the suffering that it may involve. But I am sure you will agree with me that no nation has as yet become great without having undergone suffering, whether it is through inflicting violence on others or whether it is by way of satyagraha. Satyagraha is essentially a religious force. Unless we have faith in the inviolable and immutable force of the spirit, we shall not be able to carry the struggle to a successful end. The fault then would be not of the movement or the force I have ventured to describe; but it would lie in our own imperfection. I ask you all, therefore, to approach the question with a careful consideration. But after having once signed the Pledge, you will appreciate the great obligation that you will have taken on your shoulders and you will not flinch. It follows from the Satyagraha Pledge that those who take the Pledge will not treat with any disrespect those who will not be able to take the Pledge. They may refrain from signing the Pledge either because they do not disapprove of the Bills or they do not believe in the struggle or they are too weak. As time passes, we hope even to win them over to the movement. You may have seen the letter I have addressed to the Press. In it I have suggested that we should observe Sunday week as a day of humiliation and prayer and I have made three suggestions. I have suggested fasting, total abstention of work including markets and business places and holding meetings all over India to pass resolutions. The proposed fast is not a hunger strike but it is an act of self-denial. In these suggestions all, whether satyagrahis or not, can participate. And I do hope that in this holy city of Madurai the whole of the population will participate in this sacred observance. I have up to now simply described the nature of the movement of satyagraha. I would draw your attention to one other effect that is likely to follow

from this movement. The Government contend that this Rowlatt legislation will rid the country finally of the anarchical movement. As I have said elsewhere, it will do nothing of the kind. But I venture to suggest to you that this movement of satyagraha, offering as it does something to provide for the inexhaustible energy of the members of the school of anarchism, will alter their very nature and bring them to this cleaner method of obtaining redress of grievances. In these circumstances, I trust the movement should command the respect and support of all. I thank you all for the very great patience with which you have listened to my remarks. I hope you will ponder well over what is going on today in this country and do what you may conceive to be your duty. I pray to God that He may give you the wisdom to see your way. Once again I thank you.

*The Hindu, 29-3-1919*

### *335. SPEECH ON SATYAGRAHA MOVEMENT, TUTICORIN*

*March 28, 1919*

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

You will forgive me for not speaking to you standing, as I am too weak to do so. Forgive me also for not being able to speak to you in Tamil. When you have learnt the lingua franca, the national language of India, that is Hindi, I shall have much pleasure in addressing you in Hindi. And it is open to all of you to avail yourselves of the opportunity now offered in Madras and other places of learning Hindi. Until you do so, you really shut yourself out from the rest of India. I thank you very much for presenting this address to me. I have come to you this evening to extend to you an invitation. This is almost the southernmost part of India. And I have been forcibly struck throughout my progress from Madras down here by the religious sentiment and the religious element predominant in these parts. This southern part of India is filled with temples in a manner in which no other part of India is. Untold wealth has been spent upon these marvels of architecture. And they demonstrate to me as nothing else does that we are a people deeply religious and that the people of India will be best appealed to by religion. I have come to say to you a religious sentiment. Many of us think that in the political life, we need not bring the religious element at all. Some even go so far as to say that politics should have nothing to do with religion. Our past shows that we have rejected that doctrine, and we have always touched every

form of activity with the religious spirit. You all know or ought to know what the Rowlatt legislation is. I therefore do not propose to occupy your time by going into the history of that legislation. It is common cause throughout the length and breadth of India that that legislation, if it remains on the Statute-book will disgrace the whole nation. We have asked our rulers not to continue that legislation. But they have absolutely disregarded the petition. They have therefore inflicted a double wrong on the whole nation. We have seen that all our meetings, all our resolutions and all the speeches of our councillors in the Imperial Legislative Council have proved to be of practically no avail. In these circumstances, what should we do? As I have already said, we must somehow or other get this legislation removed. There are two ways and only two ways open to us. One is the modern or the Western method of violence upon the wrongdoers. I hold that India will reject that proposition. The vast masses of India have never been taught by our religious preceptors to resort to violence. The other method is the method known to us of old. And that is of not giving obedience to the wrongful things of the rulers but to suffer the consequences. The way of so suffering is satyagraha. It is the wave of Prahlad. And it is, I respectfully venture to suggest to you, the only way open to us. In it there is no defeat; for, we continue the battle till we die or till we obtain victory. But today we are moved by the spirit of scepticism. And many of us may reject the story of Prahlad as a fable.

I, therefore, propose to give you as briefly as I can the story of modern historical satyagrahis. I have only singled out the names of those who have died. Three of them were Tamilians and one a Mahomedan from the Bombay Presidency. One of the Tamilians was a beautiful girl called Valliamma, eighteen years old. She was born in South Africa, as were the other two lads whose names I shall presently mention to you. She was sent to jail, she caught typhoid fever and she declined to be released. It was through the typhoid fever that she died while she was in jail.<sup>1</sup> The other two were aged 18 and 17 and they died after their discharge from their prisons. They were all born of indentured parents. They did not receive the liberal education that many of us have. They had only a hazy notion of the story of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*.. There were in South Africa no

<sup>1</sup> She died after release; *vide* "Speech on Satyagraha Movement, Trichinopoly," 25-3-1919.

religious teachers to instil into their minds the indomitable deeds of Prahlad. But today they find their names engraved among the heroes and heroines of South Africa. The name of the fourth was Ahmed Mahomed Kachalia. He was the bravest among the brave. He was one of the truest men I have known. He was a merchant of very substantial means. When this satyagraha battle was raging in South Africa, he was in the midst of the fight. He was the President of the British Indian Association in the Transvaal. He not only went to jail but he was reduced to the utmost poverty. He sacrificed every earthly possession for the sake of his own honour ever and that of his motherland. He knew the force of satyagraha. He died only a few months ago mourned by the whole of South Africa. He, too, in the commonly accepted sense of the word, was an illiterate man but he had a fund of common sense which you would not see in ordinary people. And he saw with an unerring instinct that the way to liberty lay not through violence but through self-suffering. I have no doubt that what was possible for Valliamma, Nagappan, Narayansami<sup>1</sup> and Ahmed Mahomed is possible for every one of you today. I ask you in the name of these modern satyagrahis to follow in their foot-steps, sign the Satyagraha Pledge and repeal the legislation. The taking of the Pledge is a sacred act undertaken in the name of the Almighty. Whilst therefore I invite every man and woman to sign the Pledge, I beseech them also to consider it deeply and a number of times before signing it. But if you do decide to sign the Pledge, you will see to it like Valliamma and Ahmed Mahomed to observe it at the sacrifice of your lives. The satyagrahi when he signs the Pledge changes his very nature. He relies solely upon the truth which is another word for love. Before he signs the Pledge, he might get irritated against those who differ from him but not so afterwards. After all, we expect everyone to come over to us as the struggle progresses. We shall succeed in doing so if we are not bitter against them but are perfectly loving and respectful. You will have seen in the papers that I have made three definite suggestions in order to start my campaign. The adoption of my suggestions will also mark the religious character of the movement. The first suggestion is that on the 6th of April, which is a

<sup>1</sup> A Tamil satyagrahi, who was deported to India from Transvaal, was not allowed to disembark at several ports on return and died on October 16, 1910 after remaining on board for nearly two months; *vide* "Letter to the Press", 17-10-1910 & "Narayansamy", 22-10-1910.

Sunday, we should observe a fast. The second suggestion is that we should all suspend our ordinary business that day. Those who are employed, if they are called upon even to work on Sundays, should cease work after receiving due permission. The two suggestions are of universal application and take in also public servants. The third suggestion is to hold in every hamlet of India public meetings, protesting against the Rowlatt legislation and asking the Secretary of State for India to repeal that legislation. All the suggestions are designed by way of self-denial, self-discipline and education. In the fast we expect our women, our servants and everyone to join us. If you accept my humble suggestions, I hope you will carry them out in the spirit in which I have made them. You have kindly refrained from applauding, whistling or making a noisy demonstration while I have been speaking, out of regard for my health. I ask you to transfer that regard to all satyagrahis. If you will not divert your attention by applauding or crying “Shame, shame!” or “Hear, hear!”, you will concentrate better on the topic before you. You will not also disturb the thought of the person speaking. I would even go so far as to suggest that in all our meetings, whether of satyagrahis or otherwise, there should not be this new-fangled demonstration. But whether you accept my advice as of universal application or no, I hope that you will accept it so far as satyagraha meetings are concerned. The only weapon before us is to rely upon truth and self-sacrifice. I hope you will always rely upon that and that alone. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for giving me such a patient hearing. And I pray to God that He will give you strength to carry on the mission that we have undertaken.

*The Hindu, 2-4-1919*

### **336. SPEECH ON CAPITAL AND LABOUR AND ROWLATT BILLS, NAGAPATAM**

*March 29, 1919*

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I must once more ask forgiveness that I cannot speak standing being too weak to do so. I am sorry also that I cannot address you in beautiful Tamil. I am sorry that the majority of you do not know Hindi, to enable me to speak in the national language. I thank you for the beautiful address presented to me this afternoon and my thanks would have been still more warm if your address had been written in



Tamil. You may have given me an English or Hindi translation or I would certainly have had the address translated for me. I do hope that when the next occasion arises, no matter who the visitor may be, you will recognize the dignity of your own mother tongue.

#### CAPITAL AND LABOUR

I have come here principally on the invitation of the labourers' Union. I understand, too, that the majority of this meeting are labourers. The others therefore will forgive me whilst I say a few words specially addressed to the labourers. Practically the whole of my life has been passed among labourers. I know something about labour problems. I hope I fully realize the dignity of labour. I hope, too, that those who are guiding the great labour movement in this important War will enable the labourers to appreciate the dignity of labour. Labourers are not the least important among the citizens of India. Indeed, if we include the peasantry, they form by far the vast majority. It is but a truism when I say that the future of India and for that matter of any country depends more upon the masses than upon the classes. It is therefore necessary that the labourers should recognize their own status in society. And it is necessary also that the classes who are instructors of the masses should recognize their obligations towards the masses. Also, in our own system we see many defects and it is my firm conviction that our system will not allow of the struggle for existence that is going on in the West between labour and capital. In the West, practically capital and labour are at opposite interest [*sic*]. Each distrusts the other. It was not so in ancient India, and I am glad the leaders of the labour movement here had not introduced the Western form of agitation between capital and labour. They would teach the labourers that they are in no way slaves of capital and they should hold themselves [*erect*]. There is only one occasion to be given in asking the labourers [*sic*] to understand and recognize that they, after all, are the predominant power and the predominant partners and they should recognize their strength. They should know that labour without capital is entirely useless. [They should also know that] large organizations in India would be utterly impossible without adequate capital. They should therefore recognize their obligations to capital. The labourers are going to play an important part in the future. Taking India, it is not enough that they regulate their own [Unions] in a satisfactory manner. They must therefore look beyond the concerns of their Unions. They should

understand that they are after all part of the larger wholes<sup>1</sup>. It adds to their dignity when they understand that they are members and citizens of the Empire and if they only do so they will also tend to understand the national activities.

#### ROWLATT BILLS

Of one such activity, I propose to give a brief description the afternoon. You may know that the Government have just now embarked upon a piece of legislation which I hold and the country holds to be most hurtful to the nation. It is the duty of everyone of us whether we belong to the classes, whether we are men or women, to understand this legislation that may be passed by the rulers. I hope therefore that the leaders will go amongst the masses and inform them of what this legislation is. It is but natural and necessary that the hurtful legislation should be removed. We have therefore to so act as to enable us to secure the removal of this legislation. We have held meetings all over India, we have passed resolutions and have appealed to the Viceroy to remove this legislation; but all these appeals have fallen upon deaf ears. Our governors have therefore done a double wrong, in that they are making a piece of harmful legislation and they have flouted public opinion. When people are hurt and become angry and do not believe in God, they take up arms and fight with the wrongdoers. That is the doctrine of violence. As a whole, India has not adopted that doctrine. India has therefore believed in the absolute triumph of hope [*sic*]. India has believed in God and His righteousness and therefore in our hour of trial we have depended upon God. It is part of our duty to disobey the wrongdoer when he inflicts unjust things upon us, But we must resist them in the manner Prahlad resisted [by suffering] the penalty for disobedience. So should we do in the present instance, with measures contrary to the method of violence. This is called satyagraha.

It is the doctrine of self-suffering in which there is therefore no defeat. Our countrymen in South Africa, where they were labouring, copied these examples with the results you probably know. In that movement all joined hands but the majority were the common people. There were two beautiful boys and one beautiful girl in South Africa who lost their lives for the cause of national honour. You should know their sacred names, which will be remembered from day to day so

<sup>1</sup> The source has "homes".

long as this struggle lasts and even after. The girl's name is Valliamma, the boys' names are Nagappan and Narayansami. They were all about 15 years old and they were drawn from the labouring classes. They did not receive liberal education nor had they read of the deeds of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*—Indian blood flowed through their veins. The law of suffering was engraved upon their hearts and I ask everyone present here to copy the example of these two heroes and heroine. If you and I are in suffering, if our properties are taken away from us, no matter, for we preserve our dignity and national honour. You will learn more of this struggle from the leaders here. As this is purely a religious struggle we propose to make a beginning next Sunday week, the 6th day of April. I have suggested that all men, women, labourers and moneyed men and everyone who has Indian blood in him should fast for 24 hours from the last night's meal. We begin our civil disobedience and it is a purely religious movement. This fast is not a show but a sincere prayer to the Almighty that we may receive proper strength and proper wisdom in going through these struggles. I have also suggested that we should stop all business and work for that day. I hope that our merchant friends will fall in with this plan. If there are any labourers who are called upon to work on Sundays, they will cease work only if they receive permission from their masters. It is not part of civil disobedience that we should disobey our employers' just orders. We should hold meetings on that day and [reports of the] proceedings should be sent to the Viceroy and the Secretary of State to remove this objectionable legislation. It will not be an idle prayer but it is by the force of satyagraha and I assure you that if many of us approach this struggle in a proper and becoming spirit, we can have the legislation destroyed in a short space of time.

#### CONCLUSION

I thank you sincerely for inviting me to Nagapatam. I thank you also for giving me a patient hearing. I cannot find sufficient words to describe the great affection that has been showered upon me throughout the Madras Presidency. I learnt in South Africa to have boundless faith in the Indians. More than any other part of India, you have preserved the national traditions in a superior manner. You have preserved most decidedly the outward form. You have also great faith in divinity. When I look at you, my mind reminds me of our great

*rishis*<sup>1</sup>. I am sure they could not have lived simpler lives, but one thing is simple [*sic*]. You have to infuse into the form, that you have so beautifully preserved, the spirit of the *rishis*. Then you will be a power in the land and you will preserve the dignity of the nation and realize her future destiny. I hope that God will give you sufficient strength for this,

*The Hindu*, 3-4-1919

### 337. MESSAGE TO MADRAS MEETING

*March 30, 1919*

DEAR MR. RANGASWAMI<sup>2</sup>,

I am sorry that I shall not be with you for this evening's meeting, as I must take the train for Bezwada in order to keep my engagement with our Andhra friends. But before my departure, I would like to reduce to writing my impressions of the tour through the southern part of the Presidency, which I have just completed, and to answer some criticism and some doubts that have been offered by friends.

I have visited Tanojre, Trichinopoly, Madura, Tuticorin and Nagapatam; and taking the lowest estimate, the people addressed must have been not less than thirty thousand. Those who have a right to give us warnings, to express misgivings and who have just as great a love of the motherland as we claim to have feared the danger that, however well-meaning we may be, and however anxious we may be to avoid violence, the people who may join the movement under an enthusiastic impulse may not be able to exercise sufficient self-control and break out into violence, resulting in needless loss of life and, what is more, injury to the national cause. After embarking upon the movement, I began addressing meetings with Delhi. I passed then through Lucknow, Allahabad and Bombay to Madras. My experience of all these meetings shows that the advent of satyagraha has already altered the spirit of those who attend the satyagraha meetings. In Lucknow, upon an innocent remark by the Chairman as to the manifestoes signed by some of the members of the Imperial Legislative Council disapproving of our movement, the audience cried out

<sup>1</sup> Sages

<sup>2</sup> K. V. Rangaswami Iyengar, chairman of the public meeting held on the Triplicane Beach under the auspices of the Madras Satyagraha Sabha

“Shame, shame!” I drew their attention to the fact that satyagrahis and those who attend satyagraha meetings should not use such expressions and that the speeches at our meetings ought not to be punctuated with either marks of disapproval or of approval. The audience immediately understood the spirit of my remarks and never afterwards made any demonstration of their opinion. In the towns of this Presidency as elsewhere, whilst it is true that the large crowds have refrained from any noisy demonstration out of regard for my health, they have fully understood the necessity of refraining from it on the higher ground. The leaders in the movement have also fully understood the necessity for self-restraint. These experiences of mine fill me with the greatest hope for the future. I never had any apprehension of the danger our friends fear; and the various meetings I have described confirm my optimism. But I would venture further to state that every precaution that is humanly possible is being and will be taken to avert any such danger. It is for that reason that our Pledge commits the signatories to the breach of those laws that may be selected for the purpose by a committee of satyagrahis<sup>1</sup>; and I am glad that our Sind friends have understood their Pledge, and obeyed the prohibition of the Hyderabad Commissioner of Police to hold their inoffensive procession, for it is no part of the present movement to break all the laws of the land the breach of which is not inconsistent with the Pledge. A satyagrahi is nothing if not instinctively law-abiding, and it is his law-abiding nature which exacts from him implicit obedience of the highest law, i.e., the voice of conscience, which overrides all other laws. His civil disobedience even of certain laws only is only seeming disobedience. Every law gives the subject an option, either to obey the primary sanction or the secondary; and I venture to suggest that the satyagrahi by inviting the secondary sanction obeys the law. He does not act like the ordinary offender who not only commits a breach of the laws of the land, whether good or bad, but wishes to avoid the consequences of that breach. It will seem therefore that everything that prudence may dictate has been done to avoid any untoward results.

Some friends have said, “We understand your breach of the Rowlatt legislation, but as a satyagrahi there is nothing for you in it to break. How can you however break the other laws which you have hitherto obeyed, and which may also be good?” So far as the good

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* “Statement on Laws for Civil Disobedience”, 7-4-1919,

laws are concerned, i.e., laws which lay down moral principles, the satyagrahi may not break them, and their breach is not contemplated under the Pledge. But the other laws are neither good nor bad, moral nor immoral. They may be useful, or may even be harmful. These laws one obeys for the supposed good government of the country. Such laws are laws framed for purposes of revenue, or political laws creating statutory offences. These laws enable the Government to continue its power. When therefore a Government goes wrong to the extent of hurting the national fibre itself, as does the Rowlatt legislation, it becomes the right of the subject, indeed it is his duty, to withdraw his obedience to such laws, to the extent it may be required to bend the Government to the national will.

A doubt has been expressed during my tour, and by friends who have written to me, as to the validity in terms of satyagraha of the entrustment of the selection of the laws for breach to a committee. For, it is argued that it amounts to a surrender of one's conscience to leave such selection to others. This doubt betrays a misunderstanding of the Pledge. A signatory to the Pledge undertakes, so far as he is concerned, to break if necessary all the laws which it would be lawful for a satyagrahi to break. It is not, however, obligatory on him to break all such laws. He can therefore perfectly conscientiously leave the selection of the laws to be broken to the judgment of those who are experts in the matter and who in their turn are necessarily subject to the limitations imposed by the Pledge. The worst that can happen to any signatory is that the selection may not be exhaustive enough for him.

I have been told that I am diverting the attention of the country from the one and only thing that matters, viz., the forthcoming Reforms. In my opinion, the Rowlatt legislation, in spite of the amendments which, as the Select Committee very properly says, do not affect its principles, blocks the way to progress, and therefore the attainment of substantial reforms. To my mind, the first thing needful is to secure a frank and full recognition of the principle that public opinion properly expressed shall be respected by the Government. I am no believer in the doctrine that the same power can at the same time trust and distrust, grant liberty and repress it. I have a right to interpret the coming Reforms by the light that the Rowlatt legislation throws upon them; and I make bold to promise that if we do not gather sufficient force to remove from our path this great obstacle in

the shape of the Rowlatt legislation, we shall find the Reforms to be a whitened sepulchre.

Yet another objection to answer. Some friends have argued, "Your satyagraha movement only accentuates the fear we have of the onrush of Bolshevism." The fact, however, is that if anything can possibly prevent this calamity descending upon our country, it is satyagraha. Bolshevism is the necessary result of modern materialistic civilization. Its insensate worship of matter has given rise to a school which has been brought up to look upon material advancement as the goal and which has lost all touch with the finer things of life. Self-indulgence is the Bolshevist creed, self-restraint is the satyagraha creed. If I can but induce the nation to accept satyagraha if only as a predominant factor in life, whether social or political, we need have no fear of the Bolshevist propaganda. In asking the nation to accept satyagraha, I am asking for the introduction in reality of nothing new. I have coined a new word for an ancient law that has hitherto mainly governed our lives, and I do prophesy that if we disobey the law of the final supremacy of the spirit over matter, of truth and love over brute force, in a few years' time we shall have Bolshevism rampant in this land, which was once so holy.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6483

### 338. *LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS*

SECUNDERABAD,

*April 1, 1919*

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I am dictating a letter to you, it seems, after ages, and I might not have been able even now, but for an accident that has befallen us. We left Bezwada early this morning, hoping to catch the Bombay Mail at Wadi Junction. Our train reached Secunderabad too late for the special train which it joins in order to take the train at [*sic*] Wadi Junction. And so we have to bake here for 24 hours. Secunderabad is like an oven, but the vexatious delay has its amenities. (I do not know that I have used the word amenities to correctly express what I mean. Can it mean "relieving features" ?) It is no small thing to me to be able to give you what I hope will turn out to be a love letter.

You fill me with grief by the news about Gurudev's health. What is the matter with him? I do hope, he is much better now. I reach Bombay on Thursday morning, i.e., the 3rd instant. I hope to pass the month practically up to the 22nd instant between Bombay and Ahmedabad and I wish we could meet during that time. Meanwhile, I must try to explain to you what I mean by the Pledge. It somewhat surprises me that you have missed its obvious meaning. The signatory undertakes to break, if necessary, all the laws that may not enunciate eternal verities. But as a check upon individual extravagance, he surrenders his judgment to that of experts as to the selection of such breakable laws and the order in which they are to be broken. That surely is not a matter of conscience. If the committee which is bound by the same Pledge that binds the individual satyagrahi commits an error and selects laws whose breach will be inconsistent with satyagraha, naturally, the individual signatory who conscientiously thinks so refrains from breaking such a law. In all satyagraha organizations, this final liberty is understood. Is not my meaning clear? The entrustment of selection to the committee is the happiest part of the Pledge. But for that there would have been confusion worse confounded. Take the Sindh incident. There the Police Commissioner prohibits an innocent procession. The satyagrahis obey because they are bound by the Pledge not to commit disobedience except where authorized by the committee. Their first impulse would be to disregard the prohibition and the consequences of such hasty disregard might be most serious. In South Africa, they surrendered to my judgment as to the selection of the laws and the time of breaking them. Here the committee was thought of at my instance. But of every such committee, I am the President. I hope, you find time to read the cuttings I have been sending you. I must now end this letter as visitors are waiting to see me.

I am most anxious to publish something from Gurudev and something from you if both of you can give it.

With love,

*Yours,*

From a photostat: S.N. 6489



### 339. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

SECUNDERABAD,  
*April 1, 1919*

MY DEAR CHILD,

My hand is still too shaky for steady and continuous writing. But I feel I must make the attempt to give you something in my own hand. I was so sorry I did not see you at the station<sup>1</sup>. I felt keenly for you and poor Mahadev. Both of you are sensitive, almost cast in the same mould. I was shuddering as I looked through the window when the train steamed out. I felt that he would run so madly to catch the train that he might drop down from sheer exhaustion. I was glad to see him at Bezwada.

I hope you wrote to the Collector as you had agreed you would. Please let me know whether he said anything in reply.

Please tell the girls<sup>2</sup> I am going to make daily use of the blanket sheet they have sent me. But I expect them soon to be able to weave hand-spun cotton and spin it themselves. The music of the spinning-wheel is superior to any I know; for it is the music that finally clothes the naked. Even when the machines will be rusting from disuse (for man will some day be sick unto death of the maddening speed of the machines), posterity will still require clothing and hand-spun yarn will be the fashion. I am asking Maganlal to send you some hand-spun yarn.

Our train was late and we missed the connection here. So we have an idle day. This enables me to write to you.

I wish you could introduce Hindi in your school. You may consult the Superintendent about it. Have you read my plea for Hindi ?

With deep love,

*Yours,*

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

<sup>1</sup> In Madras

<sup>2</sup> Of the Danish Mission Boarding School, where the addressee was working

### 340. TELEGRAM TO S. KASTURI RANGA IYENGAR

[BOMBAY,  
April 3, 1919]

KASTURI RANGA IYENGAR<sup>1</sup>

[THE] HINDU

MADRAS

JUST ARRIVED<sup>2</sup> HAVING MISSED CONNECTION AT  
SECUNDERABAD. CONSIDERING PROPOSAL REG. MEETING<sup>3</sup>  
DELHI. HOPE DELHI TRAGEDY<sup>4</sup> WILL MAKE SATYAGRAHIS  
STEEL THEIR HEARTS AND WAVERERS RECONSIDER THEIR  
POSITION. I HAVE NOT A SHADOW OF DOUBT THAT  
BY REMAINING TRUE TO OUR PLEDGE WE SHALL NOT  
ONLY SECURE WITHDRAWAL ROWLATT LEGISLATION BUT  
WE SHALL KILL SPIRIT OF TERRORISM LYING BEHIND.  
HOPE SPEECHES SUNDAY<sup>5</sup> WILL BE FREE FROM ANGER  
OR UNWORTHY PASSION. CAUSE TOO GREAT AND SACRED  
TO BE DAMAGED BY EXHIBITION PASSION. WE HAVE  
NO RIGHT CRY OUT AGAINST SUFFERINGS SELF-INVITED.  
UNDOUBTEDLY THERE SHOULD BE NO COERGION FOR  
SUSPENSION BUSINESS OR FAST. YOU MAY PUBLISH THIS.

From a photostat: S.N. 6496

### 341. TELEGRAM TO SWAMI SHRADDHANAND

April 3, 1919

SANNYASI SWAMI SHRADDHANANDJI

ARYA SAMAJ

DELHI

JUST ARRIVED FROM MADRAS TOUR. READ SCRAPPY  
ACCOUNTS TRAGEDY YESTERDAY TRAIN. READ ALSO YOUR  
SPIRITED STATEMENT PRESS. FEEL PROUD OF IT.  
TENDER MY CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU AND PEOPLE

<sup>1</sup> Editor of *The Hindu* and vice-president of Satyagraha Sabha, Madras

<sup>2</sup> *New India* here has "here from Bezwada".

<sup>3</sup> *New India* here has "All-India Satyagraha Conference in Delhi".

<sup>4</sup> Firing by the police on March 30

<sup>5</sup> April 6

OF DELHI FOR EXEMPLARY PATIENCE IN OPPOSING  
ROWLATT LEGISLATION. WE ARE RESISTING SPIRIT OF  
TERRORISM LYING BEHIND. NO EASY TASK. WE MAY  
HAVE TO GIVE MUCH MORE SUCH INNOCENT BLOOD  
AS DELHI GAVE SUNDAY LAST. FOR SATYAGRAHIS IT  
IS A FURTHER CALL TO SACRIFICE THEMSELVES TO THE  
UTTERMOST. PLEASE WIRE IF POSSIBLE EXACT NUMBER  
HINDU MOHAMMEDAN DEATHS TO DATE AND WOUNDED.  
IT WILL BE UNNECESSARY FOR DELHI TO FAST AGAIN  
NEXT SUNDAY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6494; also *The Hindu*, 5-4-1919

### *342. TELEGRAM TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI*

*April 3, 1919*

HON. SRINIVASA SHASTRIAR  
ROYAPPETTA  
MADRAS

DOES NOT DELHI TRAGEDY MAKE IT INCUMBENT ON  
YOU OTHER FRIENDS SPEAK OUT NO UNCERTAIN TERMS?  
HOPE DIFFERENCE OF OPINION ABOUT SATYAGRAHA DOES  
NOT MEAN DIFFERENCE OF OPINION ON METHODS USED  
BY DELHI POLICE. IN OPPOSING ROWLATT LEGISLATION  
WE ARE FIGHTING SPIRIT TERRORISM LYING BEHIND.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6493

### *343. TELEGRAM TO DR. M. A. ANSARI*

*April 3, 1919*

TO  
DR. ANSARI<sup>1</sup>  
DELHI

JUST RETURNED FROM TOUR READ LETTER. YOU SHALL  
CERTAINLY GO ENGLAND. PLEASE WIRE DATE DEPARTURE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6497

<sup>1</sup> 1880-1936; physician, president, Indian National Congress, 1927

344. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

*April 3, 1919*

AM HERE<sup>1</sup> AT LEAST WEEK.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6498

345. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

LABURNUM ROAD,

BOMBAY,

[On or after *April 3, 1919*]

HON. PANDIT MALAVIYAJI

BHARATI BHAWAN

ALLAHABAD

IN VIEW OF WHAT APPEARS TO BE SLAUGHTER OF INNOCENTS AT DELHI, IN MY OPINION YOU CANNOT REMAIN SILENT ON IT WHETHER YOU JOIN THE MOVEMENT OR NOT, I HOPE YOU AND ALL LEADERS WILL SPEAK OUT WHAT YOU FEEL IN NO UNCERTAIN TERMS. IN OPPOSING ROWLATT LEGISLATION, SATYAGRAHIS ARE RESISTING THE SPIRIT OF TERRORISM THAT LIES BEHIND IT. THE BLOOD OF THE INNOCENTS HAS LAID A HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY UPON SATYAGRAHIS AND I DOUBT NOT THAT THEY WILL GIVE A GOOD ACCOUNT OF THEMSELVES. PLEASE SHARE THIS WITH PANDIT NEHRU<sup>2</sup> AND OTHER FRIENDS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6495

<sup>1</sup> In Bombay

<sup>2</sup> Motilal Nehru

### 346. LETTER TO THE PRESS ON DELHI TRAGEDY<sup>1</sup>

BOMBAY,  
April 3, 1919

To  
THE EDITOR  
*THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE*  
BOMBAY

SIR,

I venture to seek the hospitality of your columns to make a few remarks on the Delhi tragedy. It is alleged against the Delhi people who were assembled at the Delhi railway station, 1. that some of them were trying to coerce the sweetmeat- sellers into closing their stalls;

2. that some of them were forcibly preventing people from boarding tram-cars and other vehicles;

3. that some of them threw brickbats;

4. that the whole crowd that marched to the station demanded the release of the men who are said to be the coercers and who were for that reason arrested at the instance of the railway authorities;

5. that the crowd declined to disperse, when the Magistrate gave the order to disperse.

I have read Sannyasi Swami Shraddhanandji's account of the tragedy. I am bound to accept it as true, unless it is authoritatively proved to be otherwise, and his account seems to me to deny allegations, 1, 2 and 3. But assuming the truth of all the allegations, it does appear to me that the local authorities in Delhi have made use of a Nasmyth hammer to crush a fly. On their action however, in firing on the crowd, I shall seek another opportunity of saying more.

My purpose in writing this letter is merely to issue a note of warning to all satyagrahis. I would therefore like to observe that the conduct described in allegations 1 to 4, if true, would be inconsistent with the Satyagraha Pledge. The conduct described in allegation 5 can be consistent with the Pledge, but if the allegation is true, the conduct was premature, because the committee contemplated in the Pledge has

<sup>1</sup> This was released through the Associated Press of India and published also in *New India*, 4-4-1919 and *The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 5-4-1919.

not decided upon the disobedience of order that may be issued by Magistrates under the Riot Act. I am anxious to make it as clear as I can that in this movement, no pressure can be put upon people who do not wish to accept our suggestions and advice. The movement being essentially one to secure the greatest freedom for all, satyagrahis cannot forcibly demand the release of those who might be arrested, whether justly or unjustly. The essence of the Pledge is to invite imprisonment and until the committee decides upon the breach of the Riot Act, it is the duty of satyagrahis to obey, without making the slightest ado, magisterial order to disperse, etc., and thus to demonstrate their law-abiding nature. I hope that next Sunday at satyagraha meetings, all speeches will be free from passion, anger or resentment. The movement depends for its success entirely upon perfect self-possession, self-restraint, absolute adherence to truth and an unlimited capacity for self-suffering.

Before closing this letter, I would add that in opposing the Rowlatt legislation, the satyagrahis are resisting the spirit of terrorism which lies behind it and of which it is a most glaring symptom. The Delhi tragedy imposes an added responsibility upon satyagrahis of steeling their hearts and going on with their struggle until the Rowlatt legislation is withdrawn.

*Yours, etc.,*

M. K. GANDHI

*The Bombay Chronicle, 4-4-1919*

### *347. LETTER TO DR. M. B. VELKAR*

*April 3, 1919*

DEAR DR. VELKAR<sup>1</sup>,

I thank you and Mr. Mandlik<sup>2</sup> for your candid note. I thought that at the preliminary meeting we had in Bombay, I explained the meaning of satyagraha as fully as I could. I remember having stated that satyagraha was an attempt to introduce the religious element in

<sup>1</sup> Dr. M. B. Velkar, secretary of the Indian Home Rule League, Bombay, and a member of the executive committee of the Satyagraha Sabha

<sup>2</sup> R. N. Mandlik, a member of the executive committee, Satyagraha Sabha, Bombay

politics. But I appreciate your position and if you do not believe in the prison door being the gateway to liberty, I am sure you cannot remain in the movement. It is not my opinion of today but I expressed it years ago in the booklet, *Indian Home Rule*<sup>1</sup>, that boycott was totally inconsistent with satyagraha. Satyagraha in the political field is an extension of the law that governs the members of a family. But it is impossible for me to argue out the pros and cons in the course of a letter. If you will care to call, I shall be pleased to discuss the question with you. In any case, you will let me know your final decision.

*Yours sincerely,*

From a photostat: S.N. 6492

### 348. *BLACK SUNDAY*<sup>2</sup>

GREAT POPULAR DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE BLACK ACT

The following is the programme of the demonstrations which have been arranged for Sunday next:

SUNDAY, 6TH APRIL, 1919

SEA BATH 7 A.M.—8 A.M. CHOWPATTY

PROCESSION 8.15—10 A.M.:

Chowpatty Sea Face	Girgaum Back Road
Sandhurst Bridge	C. P. Tank Road
Sandhurst Road	Madhav Baug

3.30—LADIES' MEETING,

CHINA BAUG,

Mrs. Jayakar Presiding.

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mahatma Gandhi: Speakers,

6.30—MASS MEETING—FRENCH BRIDGE

\* \* \*

IF YOU VALUE YOUR FREEDOM, YOU WILL JOIN

*The Bombay Chronicle*, 4-4-1919

<sup>1</sup> *Hind Swaraj* published in January 1910; vide "Hind Swaraj", 22-11-1909.

<sup>2</sup> Presumably drafted by Gandhiji

### 349. DIRECTIONS TO DEMONSTRATORS

*April 5, 1919*

We have received the following communication from the secretaries of the Satyagraha Sabha:

It should be remembered that tomorrow is a day of humiliation and prayer and also of mourning by reason of the Delhi tragedy. It is therefore absolutely necessary that when the demonstrators go out to bathe and form the procession there will be no noise, no talking, amongst themselves, but that they will march in absolute silence and disperse likewise.

At all the meetings that may be held there should be no demonstration made by cheers, applause, or cries of approval or disapproval or of any other character. The behaviour of the mourners should be worthy of the occasion.

The demonstrators should carry out the instructions that might be given to them by volunteers.

No pressure of any kind whatever should be put upon those who do not fast or suspend work and all those who may not desire to participate in the national mourning and demonstrations should be left absolutely undisturbed.

It is the duty of the demonstrators to obey and carry out all police instructions as it is as yet no part of the movement to offer civil disobedience against police orders that may be given in connection with demonstrations, processions organized by Satyagraha Associations.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 5-4-1919*



*350. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD*

[BOMBAY,]

*April 5, 1919*

TO

RAJENDRA PRASAD

PATNA

THANKS YOUR DECISION RELIEVES ME, WHAT ABOUT  
HAQ<sup>1</sup> BRIJKISHORE<sup>2</sup> AND COMPANY?

From a photostat: S.N. 6503

*351. TELEGRAM TO SWAMI SHRADDHANAND*

[BOMBAY,]

*April 5, 1919*

TO

SHRADDHANANDJI

DELHI

YOUR WIRE<sup>3</sup> RECEIVED. PRAY WIRE WHETHER  
DEPENDANTS OF DECEASED AND SERIOUSLY WOUNDE  
REQUIRE SUPPORT. IF THEY DO, WHETHER YOU HAVE  
COLLECTED ENOUGH FOR THEM.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N.6502

<sup>1</sup> Mazharul Haque (1866-1930); nationalist leader of Bihar; one of the founders and, later, president of the Muslim League; supported Gandhiji during Champaran and non-co-operation movements

<sup>2</sup> Brajkishore Prasad

<sup>3</sup> In reply to Gandhiji's telegram of April 3. It gave an account of the happenings in Delhi.

### 352. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

[BOMBAY,]  
April 5, 1919

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

For 24 hours I was sad beyond measure over the Delhi tragedy.

I am now happy beyond measure over it. The blood spilt at Delhi was innocent. It is possible that the satyagrahis in Delhi made mistakes. But on the whole, they have covered themselves with glory. There can be no redemption without sacrifice. And it fills me with a glow to find that full measure was given even on the first day and that too at the very seat of the power of Satan. I want to share this happiness with you if you can take it.

I hope you received my letter answering your doubts. I have filed an appeal against you and here is a copy<sup>1</sup> thereof. You can do what you like [with] it. But I must have Gurudev's opinion.

With deep love,

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### 353. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

[BOMBAY,]  
April 5, 1919

DEAR GURUDEV,

This is an appeal to you against our mutual friend, Charlie Andrews. I have been pleading with him for a message from you for publication in the national struggle which, though in form it is only directed against a single piece of legislation, is in reality a struggle for liberty worthy of a self-respecting nation. I have waited long and patiently. Charlie's description of your illness made me hesitate to write to you personally. Your health is a national treasure and Charlie's devotion to you is superhuman. It is divine and I know that if he could help it he would not allow a single person, whether by writing or his presence, to disturb your quiet and rest. I have respected this lofty desire of his to protect you from all harm. But I find that

<sup>1</sup> Vide the following item.

you are lecturing in Benares. I have, therefore, in the light of this fact corrected Charlie's description of your health which somewhat alarmed me and I venture to ask you for a message from you—a message of hope and inspiration for those who have to go through the fire. I do it because you were good enough to send me your blessings when I embarked upon the struggle. The forces arrayed against me are, as you know, enormous. I do not dread them, for I have an unquenchable belief that they are supporting untruth and that if we have sufficient faith in truth<sup>1</sup>, it will enable us to overpower the former. But all forces work through human agency. I am therefore anxious to gather round this mighty struggle the ennobling assistance of those who approve it. I will not be happy until I have received your considered opinion<sup>2</sup> on this endeavour to purify the political life of the country. If you have seen anything to alter your first opinion of it, I hope you will not hesitate to make it known. I value even adverse opinions from friends, for though they may not make me change my course, they serve the purpose of so many lighthouses to give out warnings of dangers lying in the stormy paths of life. Charlie's friendship has been to me on this account an invaluable treasure, because he does not hesitate to share with me even his unconsidered notes of dissent. This I count a great privilege. May I ask you to extend at this critical moment the same privilege that Charlie has?

I hope that you are keeping well and that you have thoroughly recuperated after your fatiguing journey through the Madras Presidency.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

<sup>1</sup> The source has "it".

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* Appendix "Rabindranath Tagore's Letter to Gandhiji", 12-4-1919

### 354. MESSAGE TO MADRAS<sup>1</sup>

[BOMBAY,]  
*April 6, 1919*

I DO HOPE THAT PRESIDENCY THAT PRODUCED  
BEAUTIFUL VALLIAMMA, NAGAPPAN, NARAYANSAMI AND SO  
MANY OTHERS OF YOUR PRESIDENCY WITH WHOM I  
WAS PRIVILEGED TO WORK IN SOUTH AFRICA WILL  
NOT QUAIL IN PRESENCE OF SACRIFICE DEMANDED OF  
US ALL. I FEEL CONVINCED THAT REFORMS WILL BE  
OF NO AVAIL UNLESS OUR WOULD-BE PARTNERS  
RESPECT US AND WE KNOW THAT THEY ONLY RESPECT  
THOSE WHO ARE CAPABLE OF SACRIFICE FOR IDEALS  
AS THEMSELVES. SEE HOW UNSTINTINGLY THEY POURED  
OUT TREASURE AND BLOOD DURING THE WAR. OURS  
IS A NOBLER CAUSE AND OUR MEANS INFINITELY  
SUPERIOR IN THAT WE EVER REFRAIN FROM SHEDDING  
BLOOD OTHER THAN OUR OWN.

From a photostat: S.N. 6500

### 355. TELEGRAM TO SWAMI SHRADDHANAND

[BOMBAY,]  
*April 6, 1919*

To  
SHRADDHANANDJI  
DELHI

HOPE LEAVE TUESDAY<sup>2</sup> FOR DELHI. WILL THAT DO ?

From a photostat: S.N. 6504

<sup>1</sup> This was in reply to the following telegram from Madras: "Pray telegraph message for satyagraha day. Arranging translation vernaculars here —Rangasamy." S.N. 6500.

<sup>2</sup> April 8

### 356. LETTER TO B. G. HORNIMAN

[BOMBAY,]  
April 6, 1919

DEAR HORNIMAN,

The accompanying is a great letter<sup>1</sup>. You know Dwijendrababu. He is the eldest brother of Sir R. Tagore and is leading, like his father the late Devendranath Tagore, practically the life of a sannyasi. I think he is over eighty years old. The letter therefore is, I think, worth reproducing. I would even suggest a photoprint of the letter. But the object of my writing this is not merely to send the enclosed to you. It is to ask you, if I may, to dip your pen in the ink of love for tomorrow's leading article in the *Chronicle*. I know I have now come to know you enough to know that you are quite capable of writing such an article and, if you will accept my suggestion, I would like you also to make it a signed leader.

*Yours sincerely,*

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

<sup>1</sup> It ran :

March 31, 1919

MY MOST REVERED FRIEND MR. GANDHI,

I wish with all my heart that you will go on, unflinchingly, with your work of helping our misguided people to overcome Evil by Good. At times, it seems to me that the penance and fastings, etc., which you enjoin [on] me are not quite the things that are necessary and therefore may be dispensed with. But on the second thought I find that we are not competent to judge the matter aright from our standpoint. You are deriving your inspiration from such a high source, that instead of calling in question the appropriateness of your sayings and doings, we ought to thankfully recognise in them the fatherly call of Providence full of divine wisdom and power.

May the Almighty and All-merciful God be your shield and strength in this awful crisis.

*Your affectionate old*

BORODADA DWIJENDRANATH TAGORE

### 357. *SPEECH AT CHOWPATTY, BOMBAY*

*April 6, 1919*

Bombay presented the sight of a city in mourning on the occasion of the day of national humiliation, prayers and sorrow at the passing of the Rowlatt Bills. . .and kept the twenty-four hours' fast.

#### SEA BATH AND PRAYERS AT CHOWPATTY

Long before the sun had- rises, the Back Bay foreshore was humming and throbbing with life, for it was full of people. From an early hour in the morning, people had come to Chowpatty to bathe in the sea....It was a Black Sunday, and the day's programme had to begin with a sea bath....

Mr. M. K. Gandhi was one of the first arrivals at Chowpatty with several volunteers, and by 6.30 a.m., or earlier he had taken his seat on one of the stone benches with about a hundred satyagrahis around him....As the day advanced people kept pouring in on the seashore. Every new arrival took his bath in the sea first and then came and sat round Mr. Gandhi. In this manner the crowd swelled and swelled until it became one huge mass of people. Mr. Gandhi, as the time for the meeting on Chowpatty sands neared, moved in that direction, where he was shortly joined by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas, Mr. Horniman and others. There were also about twenty-five ladies. It was a splendid sight at this time, for the whole Sandhurst Bridge swarmed with people and there must have been approximately one-and-a-half lakhs of people.... All communities were represented there— Mahomedans, Hindus, Parsis, etc., and one Englishman. Mahomedans joined the main body of the people at Chowpatty in strong numbers....At exactly eight o'clock, Mr. Gandhi made his speech. As he was too ill, the speech was read for him by Mr. Jamnadas.

#### MR. GANDHI'S EXHORTATION TO TAKE SWADESHI VOW

Mr. Gandhi in the beginning said those who wanted to take the swadeshi vow could do so on the *Ramnavmi* day<sup>1</sup> after taking their bath early in the morning. But this particular meeting was not the proper occasion for that; if there were any people there who wanted to take the vow, they were welcome to do that. There was a world of difference between boycott and swadeshi, for boycott was a sort of punishment, while the swadeshi *vrat*<sup>2</sup> was a religious duty. If they wanted to take the swadeshi vow they should do so with due and deliberate consideration. He himself was one of the staunchest swadeshists and perhaps the strictest, but if the people wanted to move in

<sup>1</sup> April 9

<sup>2</sup> Vow

the matter they should do so only after careful consideration of all points. On *Ramnavmi*, they could all of them, if they so desired, take the swadeshi vow. This was repeated by Mr. Jamnadas, sentence by sentence, as Mr. Gandhi instructed him. Mr. Jamnadas then read the speech of Mr. Gandhi.

Mr. Gandhi in his speech said:

I am anxious to say as little as possible on this occasion, which is perhaps the most solemn of our lives for most of us. And I know that this great demonstration could be made more eloquent if we could do away with speeches. But it is impossible to ignore the tragedy that was enacted at the capital of India last Sunday.

We have before us two authoritative versions of the episode. Swami Shraddhanandji's on behalf of the people and that of the Government on behalf of the local authorities. The two do not tally. They differ as to some of the main particulars. An impartial observer will regard both as party statements. I, being of the popular party, shall, therefore, for the purposes of my criticism, assume the truth of the official narrative; but there are remarkable gaps in it, amounting to an evasion of some of the charges brought against the local authorities by Sannyasi Shraddhanandji. It should be remembered that the Sannyasi's statement was first on the field. The Sannyasi appeared on the scene immediately after the first firing. He says, "I went to some Europeans, of whom one was Mr. Currie, City Magistrate, and asked them to tell me the true facts. They treated me with indifference, Mr. Currie actually turning his back upon me. I told him that I was taking the people away to the meeting ground, although early, and he ought not to threaten people by making a display of military and machine-guns."

In my humble opinion, it was the duty of the Government to deal with this charge. Mr. Currie must have, or ought to have, known the Sannyasi. He is not a young man unknown to fame. He occupies a recognized status in the Indian world and it was common knowledge at the time the occurrence took place that he was one of the principal leaders in the satyagraha movement in Delhi. Did Mr. Currie ignore the Sannyasi? The Sannyasi has described in graphic language the threat used by the Gurkhas. Were rifles pointed at him and was he insolently told *Tum ko chhed denge*<sup>1</sup>? Did a Gurkha brandish

<sup>1</sup> "We shall pierce you"

before him his naked *kukri*<sup>1</sup> right and left? It would appear that had the authorities endeavoured to regulate the crowd through its natural leaders, there need have been no display or use of military force. But the authorities last Sunday simply followed out the traditional policy of ignoring leaders and of overawing the people. Assuming every one of the statements in the official communique to be correct, as I have remarked in my letter to the Press, there was no warrant for firing on innocent people. At the worst, what was it that the men could have done ? It is clear that the men were absolutely unarmed. An Indian crowd is the easiest in the world to disperse. In any other place but India, the police would have been deemed sufficient to meet an emergency of the Delhi type and then, too, they would have been armed with nothing more than batons.

#### AN INCIDENT AT DURBAN

I remember an occasion when a mob of 6,000 Europeans, who had been previously inflamed by their leaders, tried to lynch one who, I believe, had given no cause for it. After a hot pursuit by the lynchers, he found shelter in a friend's house, which was also the latter's shop. Towards evening, the crowd in a determined manner marched to the house, and demanded delivery of the victim of their wrath on pain of burning down the shop. Lives of nearly twenty men, women and children were at stake. Goods worth £20,000 might have been destroyed. Here, if at any time, the use of the military would have been justified. But the Superintendent of Police would not summon any such aid. He alone with his dozen constables scattered amongst the crowd, defended the lives and property that were in danger, and after three hours' contending with the crowd, he succeeded in stealing the victim through the crowd to the police station, and finally in dispersing the lynchers. This happened on the 13th day of January, 1897, in Durban.<sup>2</sup> Unlike the Durban crowd, the Delhi crowd was without a mind of its own. It threatened to do nothing beyond, as alleged in the communique, refusing to disperse.

The authorities could have without the aid of the military surely succeeded in guarding the station, and could then have left the crowd to its own resources. But unfortunately, almost throughout India, it has

<sup>1</sup> Curved knife

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies" and *An Autobiography*, Part III, Ch. III.



become customary to summon the military on the slightest pretext. I have, however, no desire to labour this question any further. It is enough for us to know that no harm was done to anybody by any action of the crowd and, that on this occasion the crowd was neither overawed nor infuriated. It covered itself with glory by remaining firm and self-possessed and by holding a meeting said to have been attended by 40,000 men almost immediately after the deadly fire. It was truly an event of which, when time has done its work, India will be proud. All honour to Sannyasi Shraddhanandji and Hakimji Ajmal Khan<sup>1</sup> for their effective and brave leadership. During the last few days, I have often stated that I have no fear of any excesses or violence breaking out among people who may take part in the struggle. The doings in Delhi only confirm my optimism. However, I never contemplated that those who are our associates would not have our own blood spilt, though I do confess that I was totally unprepared for the “stern measures” of the Delhi authorities. But to satyagrahis, they must be welcome. The sterner they are, the better. They have undertaken to suffer even unto death. We have therefore no right to complain of those measures directed against us.

#### NO NATION HAS RISEN WITHOUT SACRIFICE

I have a telegram from Shraddhanandji saying that four Mahomedan and five Hindu corpses have up to now been traced and dealt with according to the rites prescribed by the respective religions and that about 20 are believed to be missing and 13 badly wounded cases are receiving attention in the hospital. This is not a bad beginning. No country has ever risen, no nation has ever been made without sacrifice, and we are trying an experiment of building up ourselves by self-sacrifice without resorting to violence in any shape or form. This is satyagraha. From the pure satyagraha standard, our case in Delhi is weak in one respect. The crowd undoubtedly demanded the release of the men who were arrested at the instance of the station authorities and declined to disperse until they were given up. Both these acts were wrong. It was wrong to demand the release of the arrested men. It is arrest and imprisonment that we seek by civil disobedience. It therefore ill becomes us to resent either. And it was wrong not to disperse. In this movement, it is open to satyagrahis to

<sup>1</sup> 1865-1927; physician and politician; president, Indian National Congress, 1921

disobey only those laws<sup>1</sup> which are selected for the purpose by the committee contemplated in the Pledge. When we have acquired habits of discipline, self-control, qualities of leadership and obedience, we shall be better able to offer collective civil disobedience, but untill we have developed these qualities, I have advised that we should select for disobedience only such laws as can be disobeyed by individuals. It is, therefore, necessary for us till we are sufficiently disciplined and till the spirit of satyagraha has permeated large bodies of men and women to obey all regulations regarding processions and gatherings. Whilst we disobey certain selected laws, it is incumbent on us to show our law-abiding character by respecting all other laws. And then when we have reached the necessary standard of knowledge and discipline, we shall find that machine-guns and all other weapons, even the plague of aeroplanes, will cease to afflict us.

#### A SACRED DUTY

It now requires for me to place before you for your acceptance two resolutions. The first is a sacred duty. In it we express our deep sympathy with those who have lost their dear ones and congratulate the Delhi people and the organizers of the demonstration upon their exemplary self-restraint. A wire has been sent to Shraddhanandji inquiring about the financial circumstances of the bereaved families and inquiring whether, in the event of pecuniary help being necessary, Delhi is able to cope with it. The least that we owe to the memory of our deceased brethren is that we should support their dependants to the required extent and I have no doubt that the rich people of Bombay will not fail if called upon for the purpose to put their hands into their pockets.

#### A SIMPLE PRAYER

The second resolution is a simple prayer to the Secretary of State for India that he will be pleased to advise His Majesty the King-Emperor to disallow the Revolutionary and Anarchical Crimes Act and an equally simple prayer to H.E. the Viceroy that he will be pleased to withdraw Rowlatt Bill No. 1. This prayer will go forward weighted with the blood of the innocents of Delhi and the promise that we shall continue to suffer by civil disobedience till the hearts of the rulers are softened and till they accept the principle that they may not violate enlightened and unanimously expressed public opinion

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Statement on Laws for Civil Disobedience", 7-4-1919.

even as they have done in the case of the Rowlatt legislation.

#### RESOLUTIONS

The following two resolutions were then passed amidst silence:

I. This meeting of the inhabitants of Bombay tenders its congratulations to the inhabitants of Delhi for showing exemplary self-restraint under circumstances the most trying and to Sannyasi Swami Shree Shraddhanandji and to Hakimji Ajmal Khan for their admirable leadership and offers its respectful condolences to the families of those innocent men who were killed by the firing ordered by the local authorities.

II. This meeting of the inhabitants of Bombay respectfully requests the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for India to advise H.M. the King-Emperor to veto the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act of 1919, inasmuch as apart from its being intrinsically bad and totally uncalled for, it was passed in defiance of unanimously expressed public opinion; and this meeting respectfully requests the Viceroy to withdraw the Criminal Law Amendments Bill No. 1 of 1919.

After the speech was over, Mr. Gandhi announced that they would form a procession and go over to the Madhav Baug Temple and offer their prayers there. Mrs. Naidu, who was ill, would return home in a car.

A procession was then formed and without the least exaggeration it could be stated that from the seashore to Madhav Baug it was a solid mass of humanity, gathering strength on its way. The houses on both sides were crowded with women and men and children.

The volunteers formed themselves into a cordon round the leaders, for the crush was too much, and slowly marched towards Madhav Baug. Mr. Horniman, who was ill, could only walk with some difficulty and was in a weak condition of health. It took considerable time to reach Madhav Baug on account of the huge crowd. At Madhav Baug itself, the people distributed themselves all over the place and the compound was completely filled. Mr. Gandhi came there and, after offering prayers, requested the crowd to disperse quietly which they did.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 7-4-1919*

### 358. *SPEECH ON HINDU-MUSLIM FRIENDSHIP, BOMBAY*

*April 6, 1919*

After the prayers were over at Madhav Baug, Jamnadas Dwarkadas announced that their Mahomedan brethren were holding a meeting at Grant Road and he asked those present to proceed there to show their friendship towards their great sister-community.... No less than five thousand Mahomedans were present at the meeting, which was held on the open space in front of the Mosque, and the vast concourse of

Mahomedans got up and cordially received their Hindu brethren... Mahatma Gandhi, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas and other leaders were taken to the balcony of the Mosque and accommodated there amid scenes of utmost enthusiasm...

Mahatma Gandhi also dwelt on the unique spectacle of the meeting. He appealed to his Mahomedan brethren to join the satyagraha movement in large numbers. He said satyagraha was like a banyan tree, the roots and branches of which went deep into the ground and in course of time it became such a mighty tree that nobody on earth could uproot it. Satyagraha was the essence of human life and conduct, and he was sure that the movement would unite the two great communities of India as nothing else could do. Hindus and Mahomedans should treat each other as their own brothers. The Hindus must sympathize with the Mahomedans in their troubles and the Mahomedans should feel the same pain as their Hindu brethren did in their troubles. They should by every means in their power strengthen their friendship and reduce to a nullity any cause of difference of opinion among them. He, however, did not think that the fraternization which they witnessed there that morning and that which had taken place at Delhi the other day meant that the Mahomedans and Hindus all over the country had fraternized. In order to cement the bond of friendship which now existed, he suggested that they would in the near future meet at a mosque or some other place of worship or any other place and take a vow of eternal friendship. He concluded by thanking the Mahomedans for the opportunity they had given the Hindus that morning of meeting them and showing them their friendship.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 7-4-1919*

### 359. SPEECH AT LADIES' PROTEST MEETING, BOMBAY

*April 6, 1919*

Mahatma Gandhi, addressing the meeting, said he had intended to speak before them at some length, but he was sorry he was not able to do so as he had just received an urgent message calling him on some very important business. He had just heard that some untoward incident had occurred near the Market.<sup>2</sup> The police seemed to have made some mistake or possibly the people had committed the mistake; but before leaving the meeting, he would appeal to the women of India to co-operate with the men in the constitutional fight which they were waging against the Rowlatt legislation. Just as a man, with one half of his body inactive, could not do anything properly, so the Indian body would not be able to do its work properly if one half of it, namely, the women, remained inactive, and so he would appeal to his sisters of India to join the satyagraha movement in large numbers.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 7-4-1919*

<sup>1</sup> Ladies of all classes and communities held a meeting at the China Baug to record their emphatic protest against the Rowlatt legislation. Mrs. Jayakar presided.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoolla", 8-4-1919.

### 360. "SATYAGRAHI" : I

BOMBAY,  
April 7, 1919

The following are the contents of the *Satyagrahi*, the unregistered newspaper, which Mahatma Gandhi issued on Monday in defiance of the Indian Press Act:

(Please read, copy and circulate among friends; and also request them to copy and circulate this paper)

No. 1 Price: one pice

#### SATYAGRAHI

(Editor: Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Laburnum Road, Gamdevi, Bombay)

Published every Monday at 10 a.m.

Bombay, 7th April, 1919

#### NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS

This paper has not been registered according to law. So there can be no annual subscription. Nor can it be guaranteed that the paper will be published without interruption. The editor is liable at any moment to be arrested by the Government and it is impossible to ensure continuity of publication until India is in the happy position of supplying editors enough to take the place of those arrested. We shall leave no stone unturned to secure a ceaseless succession of editors.

It is not our intention to break for all time the law governing publication of newspapers. This paper will, therefore, exist so long only as the Rowlatt legislation is not withdrawn.

#### OUR CREDENTIALS

Our credentials are best supplied by answering the question, What will the *Satyagrahi* do ? *Satyagrahi* has come into being for the sake of ensuring withdrawal of the Rowlatt legislation. Its business, therefore, is to show the people ways of bringing about such withdrawal in accordance with the principles of satyagraha. The Satyagraha Pledge requires the signatories to court imprisonment by offering civil disobedience by committing a civil breach of certain laws. This publication can, therefore, show the best remedy in one way and that is by committing civil disobedience in the very act of publishing this journal. In other forms of public activity, the speaker is not

obliged to act as he preaches. The object is to draw attention to this contradiction as a fault. It is a method of doing public work. The method of satyagraha is unique. In its example alone is precept. Therefore, whatever are suggested herein will be those that have been tested by personal experience, and remedies thus tested will be like well-tried medicine more valuable than new. We hope therefore that our readers will not hesitate to adopt our advice based as it will be on experience.

#### NEWS

Yesterday many great events took place; but none was as great as that owing to the ceaseless efforts of satyagrahis the mill-hands celebrated the National Day by working in their respective mills as they were unable to get permission of their employers.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 9-4-1919*

### 361. INSTRUCTIONS TO SATYAGRAHIS<sup>1</sup>

[BOMBAY,  
April 7, 1919]

We are now in a position to expect to be arrested any moment, It is, therefore, necessary to bear in mind that, if anyone is arrested, he should without causing any difficulty allow himself to be arrested and, if summoned to appear before a court, he should do so. No defence should be offered and no pleaders engaged in the matter. If a fine is imposed with the alternative of imprisonment, imprisonment should be accepted. If only a fine is imposed, it ought not to be paid but that his property, if he has any, should be allowed to be sold. There should be no demonstration of grief or otherwise made by the remaining satyagrahis by reason of the arrest and imprisonment of their comrade. It cannot be too often repeated that we court imprisonment and we may not complain of it when we actually receive it. When once imprisoned, it is our duty to conform to all prison regulations, as prison reform is no part of our campaign at the present moment. A satyagrahi may not resort to surreptitious practices, of which ordinary prisoners are often found to be guilty. All a satyagrahi does can only and must be done openly.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 9-4 1919*

<sup>1</sup> Issued as a leaflet along with *Satyagrahi*, 7-4-1919

### 362. STATEMENT ON LAWS FOR CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

[April 7, 1919]

The following statement has been issued by the Satyagraha Sabha:

The committee contemplated by the Satyagraha Pledge has advised that for the time being laws regarding prohibited literature and registration of newspapers may be civilly disobeyed.

With reference to prohibited literature, the committee has selected the following prohibited works<sup>1</sup> for dissemination:

*Hind Swarajya* by M. K. Gandhi.

*Sarvodaya* or *Universal Dawn* by M. K. Gandhi (being a paraphrase of *Unto This Last*).

*The Story of a Satyagrahi* by M. K. Gandhi (being a paraphrase of the *Defence and Death of Socrates* by Plato).

*The Life and Address of Mustafa Kamal Pasha* (printed at the International Printing Press).

In making this selection, the community has been guided by the following considerations:

(1) To cause as little disturbance as possible among the governors and the governed;

(2) Until satyagrahis have become seasoned, disciplined and capable of handling delicately organized movements, to select such laws only as can be disobeyed individually;

(3) To select, as a first step, laws that have evoked popular disapproval and that from the satyagraha standpoint, are the most open to attack;

(4) To select laws whose civil breach would constitute an education for the people, showing them a clear way out of the difficulties that lie in the path of honest men desiring to do public work;

(5) Regarding prohibited literature, to select such books and pamphlets as are not inconsistent with satyagraha, and which are, therefore, of a clean type and which do not, either directly or indirectly, approve of or encourage violence.

<sup>1</sup> These publications were proscribed by the Bombay Government in March 1910 for containing "seditious" matter; *vide* "Our Publications", 7-5-1910.

## HOW TO COMMIT CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

Satyagrahis should receive copies of prohibited literature for distribution. A limited number of copies can be had from the secretaries of the Satyagraha Sabha. Satyagrahis should, so far as possible, write their names and addresses as sellers, so that they may be traced easily when wanted by Government for prosecution. Naturally there can be no question of secret sale of this literature. At the same time there should be no forwardness, either, in distributing it.

It is open to satyagrahis to form small groups of men and women to whom they may read this class of literature. The object in selected prohibited literature is not merely to commit a civil breach of the law regarding it, but it is also to supply people with clean literature of a high moral value. It is expected that the Government will confiscate such literature. Satyagraha is and has to be as independent of finance as possible. When, therefore, copies are confiscated, satyagrahis are required to make copies of prohibited literature themselves or by securing the assistance of willing friends and to make use of it until it is confiscated by giving readings to the people from it. It is stated that such readings would amount to dissemination of prohibited literature. When whole copies are exhausted by dissemination or confiscation, satyagrahis may continue civil disobedience by writing out and distributing extracts from accessible books.

Regarding civil breach of the law governing the publication of newspapers, the idea is to publish in every satyagraha centre a written newspaper, without registering it. It need not occupy more than one side of half a foolscap. When such a newspaper is edited, it will be found how difficult it is to fill up half a sheet. It is a well-known fact that a vast majority of newspapers contain much padding. Further, it cannot be denied that newspaper articles written under the terror of the very strict newspaper law have a double meaning<sup>1</sup>. A satyagrahi, for whom punishments provided by law have lost all terror, can give only in an unregistered newspaper his thoughts and opinions unhampered by any other consideration than that of his own conscience. His newspaper, therefore, if otherwise well edited, can become a most powerful vehicle for transmitting pure ideas in a concise manner, and there need be no fear of inability to circulate a handwritten newspaper; for it will be the duty of those who may receive the first copies to recopy till at last the process of multiplication is made to cover, if necessary, the whole of the masses of India. And it must not be

<sup>1</sup> For Gandhiji's views on the mission of a newspaper, *vide* "Newspapers", before 14-11-1917.



forgotten that we have in India the tradition of imparting instruction by oral teaching.

M. K. GANDHI  
PRESIDENT,  
SATYAGRAHA SABHA  
D. D. SATHYE  
UMAR SOBANI  
SHANKARLAL GHELABHAI<sup>1</sup>  
SECRETARIES

*The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-4-1919

*363. TELEGRAM TO DR. SATYAPAL*

[BOMBAY,]  
*April 7, 1919*

TO  
DR. SATYAPAL<sup>2</sup>  
DELHI

REACHING      DELHI      WEDNESDAY<sup>3</sup>      PUNJAB      MAIL.      PLEASE  
MEET.

From a photostat: S.N. 6508

*364. TELEGRAM TO S. K. RUDRA*

[BOMBAY,]  
*April 7, 1919*

TO  
RUDRA  
ST. STEPHEN'S COLLEGE  
DELHI

REACHING      THERE      WEDNESDAY      PUNJAB MAIL.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6508

<sup>1</sup> Banker

<sup>2</sup> Medical practitioner and a Congress leader of Punjab

<sup>3</sup> April 9

### 365. LETTER TO F. C. GRIFFITH

LABURNUM ROAD,  
GAMDEVI,  
BOMBAY,  
*April 7, 1919*

DEAR MR. GRIFFITH<sup>1</sup>,

May I send you a copy of the unregistered newspaper issued today by me as its Editor?

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the original letter in Mahadev Desai's hand: Bombay Government Records—C. P. File No. 2001/H/19

### 366. THE SWADESHI VOW-I

*[April 8, 1919]<sup>2</sup>*

Although the desire for swadeshi animating a large number of people at the present moment is worthy of all praise, it seems to me that they have not fully realized the difficulty in the way of its observance. Vows are always taken only in respect of matters otherwise difficult of accomplishment. When after a series of efforts we fail in doing certain things, by taking a vow to do them we draw a cordon round ourselves, from which we may never be free and thus we avoid failures. Anything less than such inflexible determination cannot be called a vow. It is not a pledge or vow when we say we shall so far as possible do certain acts. If by saying that we shall so far as we can only use swadeshi articles, we can be deemed to have taken the swadeshi vow, then from the Viceroy down to the labouring man very few people would be found who could not be considered to have taken the pledge, but we want to go outside this circle and aim at a much higher goal. And there is as much difference between the act

<sup>1</sup> Commissioner of Police, Bombay

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* the Associated Press of India report dated Bombay, April 8, which read: "Mr. M. K. Gandhi has left for Delhi. In his absence the ceremony of taking swadeshi vow which was fixed for today has been postponed. Mr. Gandhi before his departure left a message for those desiring to take the vow explaining the difference between swadeshi and boycott."

contemplated by us and the acts above described as there is between a right angle and all other angles. And if we decide to take the swadeshi vow in this spirit, it is clear that it is well nigh impossible to take an all-comprehensive vow.

After having given deep consideration to the matter for a number of years, it is sufficiently demonstrated to me that we can take the full swadeshi vow only in respect of our clothing, whether made of cotton, silk or wool. Even in observing this vow, we shall have to face many difficulties in the initial stages and that is only proper. By patronizing foreign cloth we have committed a deep sin. We have condoned an occupation which in point of importance is second only to agriculture, and we are face to face with a total disruption of a calling to which Kabir was born and which he adorned. One meaning of the swadeshi vow suggested by me is that in taking it we desire to do penance for our sins, that we desire to resuscitate the almost lost art of hand-weaving, and that we are determined to save our Hindustan crores of rupees which go out of it annually in exchange for the cloth we receive. Such high results cannot be attained without difficulties; there must be obstacles in the way. Things easily obtained are practically of no value, but however difficult of observance that pledge may be, some day or other there is no escape from it if we want our country to rise to its full height. And we shall then accomplish the vow when we shall deem it a religious duty to use only that cloth which is entirely produced in the country and refrain from using any other.

#### A HASTY GENERALIZATION

Friends tell me that at the present moment we have not enough swadeshi cloth to supply our wants and that the existing mills are too few for the purpose. This appears to me to be a hasty generalization. We can hardly expect such good fortune as to have thirty crores of covenanters for swadeshi. A hardened optimist dare not expect more than a few lakhs and I anticipate no difficulty in providing them with swadeshi cloth, but where there is a question of religion there is no room for thoughts of difficulties. The general climate of India is such that we require very little clothing. It is an exaggeration to say that three-fourths of the middle class population use much unnecessary clothing. Moreover, when many men take the vow, there would be set up many spinning wheels and handlooms. India can produce innumerable weavers. They are merely awaiting encouragement. Mainly two

things are needful, viz., self-denial and honesty. It is self-evident that the covenanter must possess these two qualities, but in order to enable people to observe such a great vow comparatively easily, our merchants also will need to be blessed with these qualities. An honest and self-denying merchant will spin his yarn only from Indian cotton and confine weaving only to such cotton. He will only use those dyes which are made in India. When a man desires to do a thing he cultivates the necessary ability to remove difficulties in his path.

#### DESTROY ALL FOREIGN CLOTHING

It is not enough that we manage if necessary with as little clothing as possible, but for a full observance it is further necessary to destroy all foreign clothing in our possession. If we are satisfied that we erred in making use of foreign cloth, that we have done an immense injury to India, that we have all but destroyed the race of weavers, cloth stained with such sin is only fit to be destroyed. In this connection, it is necessary to understand the distinction between swadeshi and boycott. Swadeshi is a religious conception. It is the natural duty imposed upon every man. The well-being of people depends upon it and the swadeshi vow cannot be taken in a punitive or revengeful spirit. The swadeshi vow is not derived from any extraneous happening, whereas boycott is a purely worldly and political weapon. It is rooted in ill will and a desire for punishment, and I can see nothing but harm in the end for a nation that resorts to boycott. One who wishes to be a satyagrahi forever cannot participate in any boycott movement and a perpetual satyagraha is impossible without swadeshi. This is the meaning I have understood to be given to boycott. It has been suggested that we should boycott British goods till the Rowlatt legislation is withdrawn and that the boycott should terminate with the removal of that legislation. In such a scheme of boycott, it is open to us to take Japanese or other foreign goods even though they may be rotten. If I must use foreign goods, having political relations with England, I would only take English goods and consider such conduct to be proper.

In proclaiming a boycott of British goods, we expose ourselves to the charge of desiring to punish the English but we have no quarrel with them; our quarrel is with the governors. And, according to the law of satyagraha, we may not harbour any ill will even against the rulers, and as we may harbour no ill will, I cannot see the propriety of resorting to boycott.

## THE SWADESHI PLEDGE

For a complete observance of the restricted swadeshi vow suggested above, I would advise the following text: "With God as my witness, I solemnly declare that from today I shall confine myself, for my personal requirements, to the use of cloth, manufactured in India from Indian cotton, silk and wool; and I shall altogether abstain from using foreign cloth, and I shall destroy all foreign cloth in my possession."

I hope that many men and women will be ready to take this vow, and the public taking of the pledge will be desirable only if many men and women are ready for it. Even a few men and women may publicly take the pledge, but in order to make swadeshi a national movement, it is necessary that many should join it. Those who approve of the proposed movement should, in my opinion, lose no time in taking effective steps to begin it. It is necessary to interview merchants. At the same time, there need be no undue haste. The foundation of swadeshi should be well and truly laid. This is the right time for it as I have found that when a purifying movement like satyagraha is going on allied activities have an easy chance of success.

*The Bombay Chronicle*, 17-4-1919; also *New India*, 19-4-1919

### 367. THE SWADESHI VOW-II

[April 8, 1919]

The following is the text of the swadeshi vow:

"With God as my witness, I solemnly declare that from today I shall confine myself, for my personal requirements, to the use of cloth manufactured in India from Indian cotton, silk or wool and I shall altogether abstain from using foreign cloth, and I shall destroy all foreign cloth in my possession."

For a proper observance of the pledge, it is really necessary to use only hand-woven cloth made out of hand-spun yarn. Imported yarn, even though spun out of Indian cotton and woven in India, is not swadeshi cloth. We shall reach perfection only when our cotton is spun in India on indigenous spinning-wheels and yarn so spun is woven on similarly made handlooms. But requirements of the foregoing pledge are met, if we all only use cloth woven by means of imported machinery from yarn spun from Indian cotton by means of similar machinery.

I may add that covenanters to the restricted swadeshi referred to here will not rest satisfied with swadeshi clothing only. They will extend the vow to all other things as far as possible.

#### ENGLISH-OWNED MILLS

I am told that there are in India English-owned mills which do not admit Indian share-holders. If this information be true, I would consider cloth manufactured in such mills to be foreign cloth. Moreover, such cloth bears the taint of ill will. However well made such cloth may be, it should be avoided. The majority do not give thought to such matters. All cannot be expected to consider whether their actions promote or retard the welfare of their country, but it behoves those, who are learned, those who are thoughtful, whose intellects are trained or who are desirous of serving their country, to test every action of theirs, whether public or private, in the manner aforesaid, and when ideals which appear to be of national importance and which have been tested by practical experience should be placed before the people as has been said in the Divine Song, "the multitude will copy the actions of the enlightened". Even thoughtful men and women have not hitherto generally carried on the above-mentioned self-examination. The nation has therefore suffered by reason of this neglect. In my opinion, such self-examination is only possible where there is religious perception.

Thousands of men believe that by using cloth woven in Indian mills, they comply with the requirements of the swadeshi vow. The fact is that most fine cloth is made of foreign cotton spun outside. Therefore the only satisfaction to be derived from the use of such cloth is that it is woven in India. Even on handlooms for very fine cloth only foreign yarn is used. The use of such cloth does not amount to an observance of swadeshi. To say so is simple self-deception. Satyagraha, i.e., insistence on truth is necessary even in swadeshi. When men will say, "we shall confine ourselves to pure swadeshi cloth, even though we may have to remain satisfied with a mere loin cloth", and when women will resolutely say, "we shall observe pure swadeshi even though we may have to restrict ourselves to clothing just enough to satisfy the sense of modesty", then shall we be successful in the observance of the great swadeshi vow. If a few thousand men and women were to take the swadeshi vow in this spirit, others will try to imitate them so far as possible. They will then begin to examine their wardrobes in the light of swadeshi. Those who are

not attached to pleasures and personal adornment, I venture to say, can give a great impetus to swadeshi.

#### KEY TO ECONOMIC SALVATION

Generally speaking, there are very few villages in India without weavers. From time immemorial, we have had village farmers and village weavers, as we have village carpenters, shoemakers, blacksmiths, etc., but our farmers have become poverty-stricken and our weavers have patronage only from the poor classes. By supplying them with Indian cloth spun in India, we can obtain the cloth we may need. For the time being it may be coarse, but by constant endeavours, we can get our weavers to weave out of fine yarn and so doing we shall raise our weavers to a better status, and if we would go a step still further, we can easily cross the sea of difficulties lying in our path. We can easily teach our women and our children to spin and weave cotton, and what can be purer than cloth woven in our own home? I tell it from my experience that acting in this way we shall be saved from many a hardship, we shall be ridding ourselves of many an unnecessary need, and our life will be one song of joy and beauty. I always hear divine voices telling me in my ears that such life was a matter of fact once in India, but even if such an India be the idle dream of the poet, it does not matter. Is it not necessary to create such an India now, does not our *purushartha* lie therein ? I have been travelling throughout India. I cannot bear the heart-rending cry of the poor. The young and old all tell me, "We cannot get cheap cloth, we have not the means wherewith to purchase dear cloth. Everything is dear—provisions, cloth and all. What are we to do?" And they heave a sigh of despair. It is my duty to give these men a satisfactory reply. It is the duty of every servant of the country but I am unable to give a satisfactory reply. It should be intolerable for all thinking Indians that our raw materials should be exported to Europe and that we have to pay heavy prices therefor. The first and the last remedy for this is swadeshi. We are not bound to sell our cotton to anybody and when Hindustan rings with the echoes of swadeshi, no producer of cotton will sell it for its being manufactured in foreign countries. When swadeshi pervades the country, everyone will be set a-thinking why cotton should not be refined and spun and woven in the place where it is produced, and when the swadeshi *mantra* resounds in every ear, millions of men will have in their hands the key to the economic salvation of India. Training for this does not require hundreds of years. When the

religious sense is awakened, people's thoughts undergo a revolution in a single moment. Only selfless sacrifice is the *sine qua non*. The spirit of sacrifice pervades the Indian atmosphere at the present moment. If we fail to preach swadeshi at this supreme moment, we shall have to wring our hands in despair. I beseech every Hindu, Mussulman, Sikh, Parsi, Christian and Jew, who believes that he belongs to this country, to take the swadeshi vow and to ask others also to do likewise. It is my humble belief that if we cannot do even this little for our country, we are born in it in vain. Those who think deep will see that such swadeshi contains pure economics. I hope that every man and woman will give serious thought to my humble suggestion. Imitation of English economics will spell our ruin.

*The Bombay Chronicle*, 18-4-1919; also *New India*, 22-4-1919

### 368. THE VOW OF HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

*April 8, 1919<sup>1</sup>*

The following is a free translation, approved by Mr. Gandhi, of his leaflet<sup>2</sup> on Hindu-Muslim unity:

In the huge mass meeting of Hindus and Mahomedans held in the Sonapur Masjid compound on Sunday, the 6th April, the day of humiliation and prayer, a vow of Hindu-Muslim unity was proposed to be taken as in the case of swadeshi proposed at the Chowpatty meeting and I had to utter a note of warning on both the occasions. At times in a fit of joyous passion we are spurred on to certain courses of action for which we have afterwards to repent. A vow is a purely religious act which cannot be taken in a fit of passion. It can be taken only with a mind purified and composed and with God as witness. Most of what I have said whilst writing about the swadeshi vow applies here. Acts which are not possible by ordinary self-denial become possible with the aid of vows which require extraordinary self-denial. It is hence believed that vows can only uplift us. If the Hindu and Muslim communities could be united in one bond of mutual friendship, and if each could act towards the other even as children of the same mother, it would be a consummation devoutely to be wished.

<sup>1</sup> *Vide Mahadevbhaini Diary.*

<sup>2</sup> This appears to be Satyagraha Leaflet No. 2.



But before this unity becomes a reality, both the communities will have to give up a good deal, and will have to make radical changes in ideas held heretofore. Members of one community when talking about those of the other at times indulge in terms so vulgar that they but acerbate the relations between the two. In Hindu society we do not hesitate to indulge in unbecoming language when talking of the Mahomedans and *vice versa*. Many believe that an ingrained and ineradicable animosity exists between the Hindus and Mahomedans. In many places we see that each community harbours distrust against the other. Each fears the other. It is an undoubted fact that this anomalous and wretched state of things is improving day by day. The Time-Spirit is ceaselessly working on unchecked, and willy-nilly we have to live together. But the object of taking a vow is speedily to bring about, by the power of self-denial, a state of things which can only be expected to come in the fulness of time. How is this possible? Meetings should be called of Hindus—I mean the orthodox Hindus—where this question should be seriously considered. The standing complaint of the Hindus against the Mussulmans is that the latter are beef-eaters and that they purposely sacrifice cows on the *Bakr-i-Id* day. Now it is impossible to unite the Hindus and Mahomedans so long as the Hindus do not hesitate to kill their Mahomedan brethren in order to protect a cow. For I think it is futile to expect that our violence will ever compel the Mahomedans to refrain from cow-slaughter. I do not believe the efforts of our cow-protection societies have availed in the least to lessen the number of cows killed every day. I have had no reason to believe so. I believe myself to be an orthodox Hindu and it is my conviction that no one who scrupulously practises the Hindu religion may kill a cow-killer to protect a cow. There is one and only one means open to a Hindu to protect a cow and that is that he should offer himself a sacrifice if he cannot stand its slaughter. Even if a very few enlightened Hindus thus sacrificed themselves, I have no doubt that our Mussulman brethren would abandon cow-slaughter. But this is satyagraha; this is equity; even as, if I want my brother to redress a grievance, I must do so by taking upon my head a certain amount of sacrifice and not by inflicting injury on him. I may not demand it as of right. My only right against my brother is that I can offer myself a sacrifice.

It is only when the Hindus are inspired with a feeling of pure love of this type that Hindu-Muslim unity can be expected. As with

the Hindus, so with the Mussulmans. The leaders among the latter should meet together and consider their duty towards the Hindus. When both are inspired by a spirit of sacrifice, when both try to do their duty towards one another instead of pressing their rights, then and then only would the long-standing differences between the two communities cease. Each must respect the other's religion, must refrain from even secretly thinking ill of the other. We must politely dissuade members of both the communities from indulging in bad language against one another. Only a serious endeavour in this direction can remove the estrangement between us. Our vow would have value only when masses of Hindus and Mussulmans join in the endeavour. I think I have now made sufficiently clear the seriousness and magnitude of this vow. I hope that on this auspicious occasion and surely the occasion must be auspicious when a wave of satyagraha is sweeping over the whole country—we could all take this vow of unity. For this it is further necessary that leading Hindus and Mahomedans should meet together and seriously consider the question and then pass a unanimous resolution at a public meeting. This consummation will certainly be reached if our present efforts are vigorously continued. I think the vow may be taken individually even now and I expect that numerous people will do so every day. My warnings have reference to the taking of the vow publicly by masses of men. If it is taken by the masses, it should, in my humble opinion, be as follows:

“With God as witness we Hindus and Mahomedans declare that we shall behave towards one another as children of the same parents, that we shall have no differences, that the sorrows of each shall be the sorrows of the other and that each shall help the other in removing them. We shall respect each other's religion and religious feelings and shall not-stand in the way of our respective religious practices. We shall always refrain from violence to each other in the name of religion.”

*Young India* 7-5-1919

### 369. TELEGRAM TO C. R. DAS

[BOMBAY,]  
April 8, 1919

TO

C. R. DAS<sup>1</sup>

CALCUTTA

MOVEMENTS                  DEPENDENT                  ON                  EXTERNAL                  CIRCUMSTANCES.  
SHALL      TRY      ATTEND      FIFTEENTH      INSTANT.      NEWSPAPERS  
REPORT      SUNDAY      DEMONSTRATORS      AFTER      SOME      PRO-  
VOCATION      RUSHED      TOWARDS      BRISTOL      HOTEL      THREW  
STONES      SMASHED      WINDOWPANES,      TOWARDS      EVENING  
KOMTOLLA      MOB      RESCUED      ORIYA      ACCUSED      FROM  
CUSTODY      CONSTABLES,      SEVERELY      ASSAULTED      POLICE.  
PLEASE      WIRE      EXACT      SITUATION.      NEED      HARDLY      POINT  
OUT IN      SATYAGRAHA      THERE NEVER IS      DANGER FROM OUTSIDE,  
DANGER      ALWAYS      FROM      DEPARTURE FROM TRUTH AND NON-  
VIOLENCE      UNDER      CIRCUMSTANCES      MOST TEMPTING AND PROVOKING  
WILL      DAMN      MOVEMENT      IF      WE      CANNOT      RESTRAIN      CROWDS  
AND      TILL      WE      CAN,      WE      ARE      BOUND      REFRAIN  
PROCESSION      LARGE      GATHERINGS      ENTERTAIN      ABSO-  
LUTE      CONVICTION      SMALLEST      BODY      OF      TRUE      SATYA-  
GRAHIS      WILL      ACHIEVE      VICTORY.      SATYAGRAHA      ADMITS  
OF      NO      COMPROMISE      WITH      ITSELF.      PRAY      REPLY  
EXPRESS.<sup>2</sup>

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 6509

<sup>1</sup> Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das (1870-1925); president of the Gaya Congress, 1922; founded the Swarajya Party in 1923

<sup>2</sup> C. R. Das replied: "Newspapers report misleading. Satyagraha Sunday passed off here quietly and peacefully. All shops and markets closed; business suspended. After prayer and fasting public meeting of over two lacs at the maidan. Processions orderly, crowd dispersed peacefully. All local newspapers friendly and hostile declare demonstration peaceful and orderly. Bristol Hotel incident grossly exaggerated. After meeting dispersed from maidan, refuse matters and brick pieces were thrown by some European from Bristol Hotel upon a *sankirtan* party returning home whereat some got excited whom others restrained falling at their feet. Even Anglo-Indian papers have treated the incident as negligible and trivial. Alleged incident of rescuing prisoners is unauthenticated and unconnected with our demonstration."

### 370. TELEGRAM TO SWAMI SHRADDHANAND

April 8, 1919

REACHING TOMORROW EVENING. PLEASE KEEP MY ARRIVAL  
STRICTLY PRIVATE; CAN BEAR NO PUBLIC DEMONSTRATION.

*Evidence Taken before the Disorders inquiry Committee, Vol. I, p. 191*

### 371. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

[BOMBAY,]

April 8, 1919

TO  
RAJENDRABABU  
PATNA

REACHING DELHI TOMORROW. SHALL WIRE FURTHER PRO-  
GRAMME THENCE.

From a photostat: S.N. 6501

### 372. LETTER TO F. C. GRIFFITH

BOMBAY,

April 8, 1919

DEAR MR. GRIFFITH,

I have now before me statements from the principal men who took part in the impromptu procession. I enclose herewith a copy of their statement<sup>1</sup>. You will observe from it:

- (1) That they emphatically deny the truth of the allegation regarding the holding up of tram-cars.
- (2) That they deny that the crowd either declined to disperse or threatened to march past Mr. Harker. On the contrary, they implicitly and promptly obeyed his directions.
- (3) That they assert that the recruits with their bamboo-sticks and armed police fell upon the crowd without any cause being given therefor and that they desisted only upon being restrained by

<sup>1</sup> Not included here

Mr. Harker.

Of the men who were injured during the charge alleged above, I have seen two who have fair-sized bruises on their heads. One of them I saw on Sunday in his own house and the other was produced before me yesterday morning at my residence. If the crowd, as you seem to think, was composed mainly of *badmashes*<sup>1</sup>, it does seem remarkable that they should have dispersed without any retaliation whatsoever and, if it was composed of respectable middle-class men, as I am inclined to think it was, it is hard to believe that they would ever have held up the tram-cars in the manner you described the alleged holding up to me.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6510

### *373. LETTER TO SIR IBRAHIM RAHIMTOOLLA*

[BOMBAY

*April 8, 1919]*

DEAR SIR IBRAHIM RAHIMTOOLLA<sup>2</sup>,

I think we can say things passed off wonderfully well on Sunday. There was a mixed Hindu-Muslim procession near Crawford Market. Some members of the procession were assaulted and they sustained injuries. The incident was nothing serious, I believe; all the same, that no one in the procession was at fault, though the Police Commissioner says that the men had disregarded the Deputy Commissioner's order. The respectable gentlemen who told me of the incident absolve the processionists of all blame. I send you a copy of my letter to Mr. Griffith, and also copies of the statements I have taken from the leading men and which have accompanied my letter to Mr. Griffith; you will be able to see from them that, if these gentlemen are right in their facts, the police certainly are to blame somewhat.

I am leaving for Delhi today. It will be some time before I return from there, so that, if you want any further information, I can supply it only on my return. My only object in writing this letter and taking statements from the leading men is to see that people are not

<sup>1</sup> Bad characters

<sup>2</sup> Member, Governor's Executive Council, Bombay

blamed when there is not the slightest reason for complaint against them and that we do not have the thief turning round on the watchman, as they say.

If you want, you may show this letter to His Excellency the Governor. I beg you to excuse me for this trouble.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 6507

### 374. TELEGRAM TO O. S. GHATE

*April 9, 1919*

TO

O. S. GRATE

CHHINDWARA

TOO OVERWHELMED WITH WORK TO WRITE. PROCEEDING  
DELHI SENDING THEREFROM IMPORTANT LETTER WITH  
DETAILED OPINION.

From a photostat: S.N. 6511

### 375. LETTER TO IMAM ABDUL KADIR BAWAZEER

*Wednesday morning, [ April 9, 1919 ]<sup>1</sup>*

DEAR IMAM SAHEB,

I shall be going to jail today. I have kept awake all night. Now it is three o'clock in the morning. But how can I help writing to you? If the reason for my imprisonment is not given in the press, ask me to write. You do not have to come now.

I have neglected Fatima. Andrews continues to take the strain. I have found a very good young man here. His age is twenty-two years. His physique is good. He was a teacher. He is participating in the struggle here. Hence he is jobless. He is poor. Right now I am very much impressed by him. He has no father. His mother is not the kind who would interfere. So, if he agrees, it would be as if I had come here just to see him. Still I shall investigate more. He will be in

<sup>1</sup> From the reference to Gandhiji's arrest; he was arrested on April 9, 1919 while on his way to Delhi from Bombay, for defying the order of the Punjab Government banning his entry into Punjab; *vide* also "Message to Countrymen", 9-4-1919.

frequent touch with me<sup>1</sup>.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I find I have mislaid your address. So I am sending [the letter] at the Jumma Masjid.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 10785. Courtesy : Ghulam Rasool Qureshi

### 376. MESSAGE TO COUNTRYMEN

*April 9, 1919*

Mr. Desai, Secretary to Mahatma Gandhi, writes:

Mahatma Gandhi on his way to Delhi was served with an order at Kosi not to enter the Punjab, not to enter Delhi and restrict himself to Bombay. The officer serving the order treated him most politely assuring him that it would be his most painful duty to arrest him if he elected to disobey, but that there would be no ill will between them. Mr. Gandhi smilingly said, he must elect to disobey as it was his duty and that the officer ought also to do what was his duty. In the few minutes that were left to us, he dictated the following message, laying special emphasis on his oral message to me, as in the written message that none should resent his arrest or do anything tainted with untruth or violence which were sure to damn the sacred cause.

The message reads:<sup>1</sup>

TO

MY COUNTRYMEN

It is a matter of the highest satisfaction to me, as I hope to you, that I have received an order from the Punjab Government not to enter that province and another from the Delhi Government not to enter Delhi, while an order<sup>2</sup> of the Government of India, served on me

<sup>1</sup> Fatima Bibi was married to Saiyad Hussain Miya Uraizee on April 26, 1920; vide "Invitation to Wedding", 20-4-1920

<sup>1</sup> Up to this the report is from *The Leader*, 12-4-1919

<sup>2</sup> The order dated Lahore, April 9, 1919, read: "WHEREAS in the opinion of the Local Government, there are reasonable grounds for believing that Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, son of, \_\_\_\_\_, resident of village Rajkot, Kathiawar, in the Bombay Presidency, has acted in a manner prejudicial to the public safety, the Lieutenant-Governor, with the previous sanction of the Governor-General-

immediately after, restricts me to Bombay. I had no hesitation in saying to the officer who served the order on me that I was bound in virtue of my Pledge to disregard it which I have done and I shall presently find myself a free man, my body being taken by them into their custody. It was galling to me to remain free whilst the Rowlatt legislation disfigured the Statute-book. My arrest makes me free. It now remains for you to do your duty which is clearly stated in the Satyagraha Pledge. Follow it and you will find it will be your *Kamadhenu*<sup>1</sup>.

I hope there will be no resentment about my arrest. I have received what I was seeking, either withdrawal of the Rowlatt legislation or imprisonment. The departure from truth by a hair's breadth or violence committed against anybody, whether Englishman or Indian, will surely damn the great cause the satyagrahis are handling. I hope the Hindu-Muslim unity, which seems now to have taken a firm hold of the people, will become a reality and I feel convinced that it will only be a reality if the suggestions I have ventured to make in my communication to the Press are carried out. The responsibility of the Hindus in the matter is greater than that of the Mahomedans, they being in the minority, and I hope they will discharge their responsibility in a manner worthy of their country. I have also made certain suggestions regarding the proposed swadeshi vow. Now, I commend them to your serious attention and you will find that, as your ideas of satyagraha become matured, Hindu-Muslim unity becomes part of satyagraha.

Finally, it is my firm belief that we shall obtain salvation only through suffering and not by reforms dropping on us from England, no matter how unstintingly they might be granted. The English are a great nation, but the weaker also go to the wall if they come in contact with them. When they are themselves courageous, they have borne untold sufferings, and they only respond to courage and suffering, and partnership with them is only possible after we have developed

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in-Council, is pleased hereby to direct that the said Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi shall forthwith return to Bombay and, until further orders, reside within the limits of the Bombay Presidency.

*By order of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab,*

Ashghar Ali,  
Additional Secretary"

<sup>1</sup> Mythical cow yielding whatever is wished for



indomitable courage and a faculty for unlimited suffering. There is a fundamental difference between their civilization and ours. They believe in the doctrine of violence or brute force as the final arbiter. My reading of our civilization is that we are expected to believe in soul-force or moral force as the final arbiter and this is satyagraha. We are groaning under the sufferings which we would avoid if we could, because we have swerved from the path laid down for us by our ancient civilization.

I hope that Hindus, Mahomedans, Sikhs, Parsees, Christians, Jews and all who are born in India or who have made India their land of adoption will fully participate in these national observances and I hope, too, that women will take therein as full a share as men.

*The Hindu*, 10-4-1919

### *377. REPLY TO RESTRAINT ORDER<sup>1</sup>*

*April 10, 1919*

I regret to have to say that I shall be unable to comply with the foregoing order.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6513

### *378. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING*

ON THE WAY TO BOMBAY UNDER ARREST,

*April 10, 1919*

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your bank note. I only hope you will not deny yourself the necessities of life. I am handing the note to the Ashram. Is that right?

I received last night on my way to Delhi an order not to enter the Punjab. I disobeyed it there and then and I was arrested. I received two further orders—one not to enter the Province of Delhi and the other to confine myself to Bombay. They are now taking me to Bombay. If they set me free I shall immediately disobey the order of

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji wrote this reply in his own hand on the order itself. For text of the order, *vide* footnote 2, p. 207.

confinement. I am perhaps the happiest man on earth today. I have during these two months experienced boundless love. And now I find myself arrested although I bear no ill will to anybody and although I am the one man who can today preserve the peace in India as no other man can. My imprisonment therefore will show the wrongdoer in his nakedness. And he can do me no harm for my spirit remains calm and unruffled.

You will rejoice that you have a friend to whom God has given the power to love even those who call themselves his enemies and to rejoice in sufferings. I say this because I do not want you to grieve over the impending imprisonment. The officer in charge of me is very kind and attentive.

More from Mahadev if he remains free for any length of time.

With love,

*Yours ever,*

BAPU

[PS.]

Did you receive my letter written in Bezwada or some place<sup>1</sup> on my way to Bombay from Madras?

BAPU

*My Dear Child*, p. 34

### 379. TELEGRAM TO SWAMI SHRADDHANAND

*April 11, 1919*

JUST ARRIVED AND DISCHARGED FROM CUSTODY<sup>2</sup>. . . . WILL  
INFORM LATER. REGRET LOSS LIFE SOME PLACES. ABSOLUTELY  
NECESSARY PEOPLE RESTRAIN THEMSELVES AND AVOID VIO-  
LENCE. PLEASE REPORT THIS LAHORE, AMRITSAR, ETC.

GANDHI

*Punjab Unrest-Before and After*, p. 104

<sup>1</sup> Secunderabad, *vide* "Letter to Esther Faering" 1-4-1919.

<sup>2</sup> At Bombay

### 380. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET: NO. 3

April 11, 1919

#### MAHATMA GANDHI'S WARNING TO SATYAGRAHIS AND SYMPATHIZERS

On Friday evening the 12th day<sup>2</sup> of April, 1919, on the Chawpati sea beach, Mahatma Gandhi sounded the following note of warning to satyagrahis and sympathizers assembled in a mass meeting:

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

This is not the moment for me to enter into the near past. I must refer to what has just happened. As you see I have been set free by the Government. The two days' detention was no detention for me. It was like heavenly bliss. The officials in charge of me were all attention and all kindness to me. Whatever I needed was supplied to me, and I was afforded greater comforts than I am used to when free. I have not been able to understand so much excitement and disturbance that followed my detention. It is not satyagraha. It is worse than *duragraha*<sup>3</sup>.

*Those who join satyagraha demonstration are bound at all hazards to refrain from violence*, not to throw stones or in any way whatsoever to injure anybody. But in Bombay, we have been throwing stones. We have obstructed tram-cars by putting obstacles in the way. This is not satyagraha.

We have demanded the release of about 50 men who have been arrested for committing deeds of violence. Our duty is quietly to submit to being arrested. *It is a breach of religion or duty to endeavour to secure the release of those who have committed deeds of violence*. We are not therefore justified on any grounds whatsoever for demanding the release of those who have been arrested.

I have been asked whether a satyagrahi is liable for the results that follow from that movement. I have replied that they are. I therefore wish to suggest that if we cannot conduct this movement without the slightest violence from our side, the movement might have

<sup>1</sup> The original has "Satyagraha Series". For Satyagraha Leaflet No. 1, *vide* "Satyagraha Leaflet No. 1", March 1919 and for No. 2 *vide* "The Vow of Hindu-Muslim Unity", 8-4-1919.

<sup>2</sup> Obviously a slip for 11th, which was a Friday.

<sup>3</sup> Opposite of satyagraha

to be abandoned or it may be necessary to give it a different and still more restricted shape. *The time may come for me to offer satyagraha against ourselves.*

I would not deem it a disgrace that we die. I shall be pained to hear of the death of a satyagrahi. But I shall consider it to be a proper sacrifice given for the sake of the struggle. But if those who are not satyagrahis, who have not joined the movement, who are even against it, receive any injury at all, every satyagrahi will be responsible for that sinful injury. My responsibility will be a million times heavier. I have embarked upon the struggle with a due sense of such responsibility.

I have even just heard that some Englishmen have been injured. Some may have died from such injuries. If so, it would be a great blot upon satyagraha. For me Englishmen too are our brethren. We can have nothing against them. And for me sins such as I have described are simply unbearable.

But I know how to offer satyagraha against ourselves as against the rulers. *What kind of satyagraha can I offer against ourselves on such occasions? What penance can I do for such sins? The satyagraha and the penance I can conceive can only be one and that is for me to fast and if need be by so doing to give up this body and thus to prove the truth of satyagraha.*

I appealed to you that you will all quietly disperse, keep the peace and even refrain from acts that may in any way bring disgrace upon the people of Bombay.

We need not consider the conduct of the police, nor is this the occasion for such consideration. We are beholden to H.E. the Governor and the police for the entire absence of rifle fire, or gunfire. But the one thing to be remembered is that *we should learn how to observe perfect peace and how to undergo intelligent suffering. Without this there is no satyagraha.*

SATYAGRAHA SABHA,  
APOLLO STREET

The Hindustan Press, Fort, Bombay

From the printed original preserved in Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Delhi.  
Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

### 381. TALK TO MAHOMEDANS, BOMBAY

*April 11, 1919*

On Friday a number of Mahomedans called at Mr. Gandhi's place in connection with the arrests that had been made that day. Mahatma Gandhi, explaining to them the true meaning of satyagraha, said if they were arrested whilst practising *duragraha*, they deserved no sympathy, and if they were arrested whilst offering satyagraha, they should consider it their duty to go to jail; so that neither way would anybody be justified in demanding the release of those who had been arrested. The Mahatma then dwelt upon the supreme necessity of Hindu-Muslim unity.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 14-4-1919*

### 382. INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING SATYAGRAHA

*[April 12, 1919]*

In order that satyagraha may have full play and a chance of permeating the masses, in my humble opinion, the following instructions should be STRICTLY obeyed. Some of the items may require change later. The rest are inviolable principles of satyagraha.

No processions.

No organized demonstrations.

No hartals on any account whatsoever without previous instructions of the committee.

All police orders to be implicitly obeyed.

No violence.

No stone-throwing.

No obstruction of tram-cars or traffic.

No pressure to be exercised against anyone.

#### AT PUBLIC MEETINGS

No clapping of hands.

No demonstrations of approval or disapproval.

No cries of "Shame!".

No cheers.

Perfect stillness.

Perfect obedience to instructions of volunteers or management.

MOHANDAS K. GANDHI

*The Bombay Chronicle, 14-4-1919*

### 383. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

*April 12, 1919*

In an interview given to Press representatives, Mahatma Gandhi is reported to have said that he had as yet come to no definite decision as to whether or not he would go to Delhi. He once again appealed to the public to conduct the struggle against the Rowlatt Bills in a spirit of true satyagraha and to refrain from any acts of violence. They should all sympathize with those who might be arrested whilst carrying on the satyagraha struggle but they should not demand their release, for it was the duty of true satyagrahis to go to jail. He had absolutely no sympathy whatever with those who were *duragrahis*. They must be punished for their misdeeds and they could claim no sympathy from the public. He added he firmly believed that if they conducted their struggle in the true spirit of satyagraha, without any acts of violence, the Rowlatt Bills would quickly disappear from the Statute-book. Considering all circumstances, the satyagraha movement might have to be given a different and still more restricted shape. The satyagraha struggle must be conducted in a quiet and peaceful manner and in the true spirit of satyagraha. He concluded with another earnest appeal to the public to behave in a peaceful manner and refrain from any acts of violence.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 14-4-1919*

### 384. SPEECH AT MEETING OF CLOTH MERCHANTS, BOMBAY

*April 12, 1919*

Mahatma Gandhi was deeply affected by the news of the disturbances that broke out in some parts of the country last week. Before starting for Ahmedabad, he attended a meeting of cloth merchants which was called at his instance, when he made an earnest appeal to the public to refrain from acts of violence. He added he had been greatly distressed by the news of the disturbances. His arrest would in no way have stopped the satyagraha work and people should not have created disturbances. Even if he proceeded to Delhi and was arrested a second time, there should be no disturbance. People should be prepared to suffer in the true spirit of satyagraha. Even if a strike occurred anywhere, no coercion should be used towards those who did not wish to join in it. Their attitude should be one of goodwill towards all men.

At Mr. Gandhi's suggestion a committee of leading men was appointed to raise a body of volunteers to assist in the preservation of order at the cloth market and the surrounding locality.

Mahatma Gandhi next visited several other associations where also he emphasized the supreme necessity of conducting the struggle against the Rowlatt Bills in the true spirit of satyagraha. He also attended a meeting held at the Marwari Chamber where he was deeply moved and actually broke down on hearing the news of the disturbance at Ahmedabad, and he went without food the next day. The same night he was to have addressed a meeting at the Morarji Gokuldas Hall, which however he was not able to do as he left Bombay for Ahmedabad. In his absence Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas laid before the meeting the suggestions which Mr. Gandhi was to have made about conducting the struggle in a peaceful and orderly manner.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 15-4-1919*

### 385. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF AHMEDABAD

*April 13, 1919*

Bai Anasuya Behn and I have arrived in Ahmedabad this morning. Bai Anasuya Behn was never arrested. I also was absolutely free on Friday, and went to Bombay. During the time I was in custody, I suffered no kind of trouble, my condition was such as if I was enjoying heavenly happiness. After getting free, I became extremely sorry on hearing of the occurrences at Ahmedabad. Behn's heart bled. We both felt exceedingly ashamed. Now, we both have come to meet you. It is necessary to say a couple of words; therefore, I don't wish to say anything now. I also wish, as all of you must be wishing, that martial law should be instantly removed. It is in our own hands to get it removed. I want to show the key with which this can be done. Those who can do so should come to the Ashram at 4 p.m. on Monday. While coming take the routes where there are no military pickets. Do not come in groups of more than two or three persons. Obey whatever orders the police give you. It is my request that you do not shout or make any kind of noise on the road, and if you will all preserve silence at the Ashram, I shall be able to explain all that I wish to explain. It is extremely desirable that all shopkeepers should open their shops and all mill-hands resume their work. In conclusion, I wish to say that I am so sure about satyagraha that, if the mistakes which have been committed here and at other places had not been committed, the Rowlatt Bill would have been cancelled today. May God give you all good understanding and peace.

*Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. II (1885-1920), pp. 763, 766-7*

### 386. "SATYAGRAHI": II<sup>1</sup>

April 14, 1919

No. 2 Price: 1 pice

(EDITOR: MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI,  
LABURNUM ROAD, GAMDEVI, BOMBAY.)

#### SELF-EXAMINATION

Satyagraha has made unexpectedly rapid progress in course of one short week. But it is necessary to consider whether the movement is progressing in the right direction or not. Several very regrettable and untoward incidents have occurred.

It has been brought home to satyagrahis that satyagraha is not an easy weapon to handle. Satyagrahis have been often asked if they are not responsible for the varied consequences of this struggle. We have always answered this inquiry in the affirmative. Satyagrahis will always follow truth, and will not by thought, word or deed hurt anybody. They will carry on the struggle with such self-restraint and discipline as will enable them to acquire firm control over the people whose sympathy and co-operation they desire and have already been successful in winning in such an appreciable degree. The experience of the last week has clearly shown that satyagrahis are not yet in a position to control the masses. The true spirit of satyagraha has not yet permeated the people with the result that they are not yet able to express their feelings in a manner worthy of satyagraha. This undoubtedly casts a slur upon satyagraha.

All the same the satyagrahi will not be discouraged. It is only when the Rowlatt legislation is withdrawn or when he has sacrificed himself at the altar of truth that he will rest. He will learn from his daily experience during the struggle, educate the people, explain to them in public and in private the secret of satyagraha. He will make it clear to them what priceless happiness can be found in suffering in refraining from returning evil for evil, in adhering to truth, in

<sup>1</sup> Further issues did not come out due to the suspension of satyagraha, *vide The Bombay Chronicle*, 22-4-1919, which read: "We have been informed by the Satyagraha Sabha that as civil disobedience has been temporarily suspended the publication of the weekly *Satyagrahi* will be discontinued and the unlicensed printing press will also be closed during the suspension period."



sacrificing himself. He will capture their hearts with love and will show them how to conquer our enemies by love. The path of a satyagrahi is beset with insurmountable difficulties. But in true satyagraha there is neither disappointment nor defeat. As truth is all-powerful, satyagraha can never be defeated. India is a vast country and the ancient law of satyagraha appears new to our countrymen, but this cannot deter us. Satyagrahis will work day and night to educate the people and will show to them that true satyagraha can be our *Kamdhenu*. If he is not heeded, he will plead with the people, will offer satyagraha even to them, by fasting to death and so will induce his countrymen to join in the crusade, which must end in victory.

#### NEWS

##### MAHATMA GANDHI

Mahatma Gandhi was arrested on his way to Delhi for refusing to obey the orders prohibiting him from entering the Punjab and Delhi, and was escorted back to Bombay, where he was set free. He has now gone to Ahmedabad.

##### PUNJAB DEPORTATIONS

Serious disturbances have occurred at Lahore and Amritsar owing to the deportation of Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal.

##### THE MOVEMENT IN BOMBAY

The sale of proscribed literature is proceeding in Bombay. The Mahomedans are beginning to be interested in the movement.

A new press called the Satyagraha Press has been established where this paper will henceforth be printed.

##### SATYAGRAHA IN BIHAR

The Hon. Mazharul Haque and Mr. Hassan Imam, the president of the special session of the Congress in Bombay, have signed the Satyagraha Pledge.

##### RESIGNATION FROM THE IMPERIAL COUNCIL

The Hon. Mr. B. N. Shukul the representative of the landholders of C. P., has resigned from the Imperial Council as a protest against the Rowlatt Bill.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 15-4-1919*

### 387. LETTER TO G. E. CHATFIELD

ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
*April 14 [1919]*

DEAR MR. CHATFIELD<sup>1</sup>,

I heard from many lips yesterday that one or two women were killed in the course of the day by the military and some men also were killed, all without just cause. Will you please give me the true facts? I am most anxious, and I know you share the anxiety, that there should be no untoward incidents today.

*Yours sincerely,*

From a photostat: S.N. 6531

### 388. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY

THE ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
*April 14, 1919*

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

You will not consider that I was discourteous in not sending even an acknowledgment of your last letter. The fact is that I have treasured that letter as worthy of you and the friendship that I hope will ever exist between us, no matter what differences of opinion and standpoint there may be between us. I did not wish to send you a mere acknowledgment, I wanted to reach a decided stage before writing to you again, and I have also reached more than a decided stage, and in the place I have made my abode I find utter lawlessness bordering almost on Bolshevism. Englishmen and women have found it necessary to leave their bungalows and to confine themselves to a few well-guarded houses. It is a matter of the deepest humiliation and regret for me. I see that I over-calculated the measure of permeation of satyagraha amongst the people. I underrated the power of hatred and ill will. My faith in satyagraha remains undiminished, but I am only a poor creature just as liable to err as any other. I am correcting the error. I have somewhat retraced my steps for the time being. Until

<sup>1</sup> Collector of Ahmedabad

I feel convinced that my co-workers can regulate and restrain crowds, and keep them peaceful, I promise to refrain from seeking to enter Delhi or the other parts of the Punjab. My satyagraha, therefore, will, at the present moment, be directed against my own countrymen. I do want, however, to say that it was a grievous blunder of the Government of India to have served those orders on me. Surely they knew me too well to make such a mistake. I could not disregard my Pledge and I was not going to Delhi or to the Punjab to create any disturbance. Wherever I have gone, my presence has had a demonstrably restraining and soothing influence. I was going to Delhi, Lahore and Amritsar—to the latter places, if certain conditions of mine had been fulfilled—for the purpose of insuring peace, and though the events at Amritsar are, so far as I can see, unconnected with satyagraha and my arrest, I feel sure that had I been able to proceed to these places, the awful occurrences could have been avoided, and I think there would be perfect agreement with me when I say that the mad incendiarism that has taken place in Ahmedabad would have never occurred, if the orders had not been served upon me. I venture to suggest therefore that the orders may be withdrawn. Rightly or wrongly, I seem to command, at the present moment, in an excessive degree the respect and affection of the people all over India. The non-withdrawal of the orders would be resented by them. In order that the resentment may not grow by reason of any avoidable action of mine, I have even refrained from describing them and the manner in which they were served. I have even not corrected the inaccuracies that have appeared in the Press—inaccuracies which are designed to make light of my arrest.

So much for the orders. I know you will accept my assurance when I tell you that ever since my being brought to Bombay, and liberated there, I have done nothing but assist in securing order, first in Bombay and secondly in Ahmedabad. Even as I am dictating this letter, visitors are pouring in at the Ashram at my invitation. I hope to send you, if not with this letter, under separate cover, by the next post the text<sup>1</sup> of my address to the Bombay meeting and to the meeting to be held here today.

I would like, too, to place before you my reading of the situation. The ferment among the Mahomedans is too great to be checked for ever. It may burst like a torrent at any moment and behind the

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Satyagraha Leaflet No. 3", 11-4-1919.

present disturbances are to be traced the results of extreme dissatisfaction. It is not confined to classes, but it most decidedly permeates the masses. I venture to submit that it will be a most disastrous thing if the questions affecting Islam are not settled by the League of Nations in accordance with enlightened Mahomedan opinion, and I suggest that the Brothers Ali may be invited to give their opinion. You cannot do better than having the Brothers in London to give the Home Government the benefit of their advice. They are amongst the honestest of Mahomedans. They are independent and able. It is their opinion and that of such Mahomedans which will count in the end with the vast masses of the Mahomedan population. I have not hesitated to tell the Mahomedans, whom I meet, that rather than harbour discontent, ill will and finally hatred, and depend upon methods of violence, it behoves them to depend on the peaceful and royal way of satyagraha. My reliance upon satyagraha is so great that I do not despair of securing its acceptance by all the classes and communities of India on the one hand, and Government on the other. For to me it is the rule of life to which to subscribe, more or less, consciously or unconsciously, often even against our will.

Lastly, the Rowlatt legislation has passed the stage of controversy on merits. In my opinion, everything happening in India today points to the desirability of the withdrawal of that legislation, and the Government will only enhance its prestige by definitely announcing its withdrawal out of regard for Indian opinion so definitely expressed. I felt that I should pass these thoughts on to you. You will do what you like with them.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6534

### *389. SPEECH AT MASS MEETING, AHMEDABAD<sup>1</sup>*

*April 14, 1919*

BROTHERS,

I mean to address myself mainly to you. Brothers, the events that have happened in the course of the last few days have been most

<sup>1</sup> At Gandhiji's Ashram, Sabarmati. Copies of the speech in Gujarati were distributed in thousands.

disgraceful to Ahmedabad, and as all these things have happened in my name, I am ashamed of them, and those who have been responsible for them have thereby not honored me but disgraced me. A rapier run through my body could hardly have pained me more. I have said times without number that satyagraha admits of no violence, no pillage, no incendiarism; and still in the name of satyagraha, we burnt down buildings, forcibly captured weapons, extorted money, stopped trains, cut off telegraph wires, killed innocent people and plundered shops and private houses. If deeds such as these could save me from the prison-house or the scaffold, I should not like to be so saved. I do wish to say in all earnestness that violence has not secured my discharge. A most brutal rumour was set afloat that Anasuya Bai was arrested. The crowds were infuriated all the more, and disturbance increased. You have thereby disgraced Anasuya Bai and, under the cloak of her arrest, heinous deeds have been done.

These deeds have not benefited the people in any way. They have done nothing but harm. The buildings burnt down were public property and they will naturally be rebuilt at our expense. The loss due to the shops remaining closed is also our loss. The terrorism prevailing in the city due to martial law is also the result of this violence. It has been said that many innocent lives have been lost as a result of the operation of martial law. If this is a fact, then for that, too, the deeds described above are responsible. It will be seen that the events that have happened have done nothing but harm to us. Moreover, they have most seriously damaged the satyagraha movement. Had an entirely peaceful agitation followed my arrest, the Rowlatt Act would have been out or on the point of being out of the Statute-book today. It should not be a matter for surprise if the withdrawal of the Act is now delayed. When I was released on Friday, my plan was to start for Delhi again on Saturday to seek re-arrest, and that would have been an accession of strength to the movement. Now, instead of going to Delhi, it remains to me to offer satyagraha against our people, and as it is my determination to offer satyagraha even unto death for securing the withdrawal of the Rowlatt legislation, I think the occasion has arrived when I should offer satyagraha against ourselves for the violence that has occurred. And I shall do so at the sacrifice of my body, so long as we do not keep perfect peace and cease from violence to person and property. How can I seek imprisonment unless I have absolute confidence that we shall no longer be guilty of such errors? Those desirous of joining the

satyagraha movement or of helping it must entirely abstain from violence. They may not resort to violence even on my being re-arrested or on some such events happening. Englishmen and women have been compelled to leave their homes and confine themselves to places of protection in Shahi Baug, because their trust in our harmlessness has received a rude shock. A little thinking should convince us that this is a matter of humiliation for us all. The sooner this state of things stops, the better for us. They are our brethren and it is our duty to inspire them with the belief that their persons are as sacred to us as our own and this is what we call *abhayadan*<sup>1</sup>, the first requisite of true religion. Satyagraha without this is *duragraha*.

There are two distinct duties now before us. One is that we should firmly resolve upon refraining from all violence, and the other is that we should repent and do penance for our sins. So long as we do not repent and do not realize our errors and make an open confession of them, we shall not truly change our course. The first step is that those of us who have captured weapons should surrender them. To show that we are really patient, we will contribute each of us not less than eight annas towards helping the families of those who have been killed by our acts. Though no amount of money contribution can altogether undo the results of the furious deeds of the past few days, our contribution will be a slight token of our repentance. I hope and pray that no one will evade this contribution on the plea that he has had no part in those wicked acts. For if such as those who were no party to these deeds had all courageously and bravely gone forward to put down the lawlessness, the mob would have been checked in their career and would have immediately realized the wickedness of their doings. I venture to say that if, instead of giving money to the mob out of fear, we had rushed out to protect buildings and to save the innocent without fear of death, we could have succeeded in so doing. Unless we have this sort of courage, mischief-makers will always try to intimidate us into participating in their misdeeds. Fear of death makes us devoid both of valour and religion. For, want of valour is want of religious faith. And having done little to stop the violence, we have been all participators in the sins that have been committed. And we ought, therefore, to contribute our mite as a mark of our repentance. Each group can collect its own contributions and send them on to me through its collectors. I would also advise, if it is possible for you, to

<sup>1</sup> Assurance of safety

observe a twenty-four hours' fast in slight expiation of these sins. This fast should be observed in private and there is no need for crowds to go to the bathing ghats.

I have thus far drawn attention to what appears to be your duty. I must now consider my own. My responsibility is a million times greater than yours. I have placed satyagraha before people for their acceptance, and I have lived in your midst for four years. I have also given some contribution to the special service of Ahmedabad. Its citizens are not quite unfamiliar with my views.

It is alleged that I have, without proper consideration, persuaded thousands to join the movement. That allegation is, I admit, true to a certain extent, but to a certain extent only. It is open to anybody to say that but for the satyagraha campaign, there would not have been this violence. For this, I have already done a penance, to my mind an unendurable one, namely, that I have had to postpone my visit to Delhi to seek re-arrest and I have also been obliged to suggest a temporary restriction of satyagraha to a limited field. This has been more painful to me than a wound, but this penance is not enough, and I have, therefore, decided to fast for three days, i.e., 72 hours. I hope my fast will pain no one. I believe a seventy-two hours' fast is easier for me than a twenty-four hours' fast for you. And I have imposed on me a discipline which I can bear. If you really feel pity for the suffering that will be caused to me, I request that that pity should always restrain you from ever again being party to the criminal acts of which I have complained. Take it from me that we are not going to win swarajya or benefit our country in the least by violence and terrorism. I am of opinion that if we have to wade through violence to obtain swarajya and if a redress of grievances were to be only possible by means of ill will for and slaughter of Englishmen, I, for one, would do without that swarajya and without a redress of those grievances. For me life would not be worth living if Ahmedabad continues to countenance violence in the name of truth. The poet has called Gujarat *garvi* (great and glorious) Gujarat. Ahmedabad, its capital, is the residence of many religious Hindus and Mahomedans. Deeds of public violence in a city like this are like an ocean being on fire. Who can quench that fire ? I can only offer myself as a sacrifice to be burnt in that fire, and I therefore ask you all to help in the attainment of the result that I desire out of my fast. May the love that lured you into unworthy acts awaken you to a sense of the reality, and if that

love does continue to animate you, beware that I may not have to fast myself to death.

It seems that the deeds I have complained of have been done in an organized manner. There seems to be a definite design about them, and I am sure that there must be some educated and clever man or men behind them. They may be educated, but their education has not enlightened them. You have been misled into doing these deeds by such people. I advise you never to be so misguided, and I would ask them seriously to reconsider their views. To them and you I commend my book *Hind Swaraj* which, as I understand, may be printed and published without infringing the law thereby.

Among the mill-hands, the spinners have been on strike for some days. I advise them to resume work immediately and to ask for increase if they want any, only after resuming work, and in a reasonable manner. To resort to the use of force to get any increase is suicidal. I would specially advise all mill-hands to altogether eschew violence. It is [in] their interest to do so and I remind them of the promises made to do so and I remind them of the promises made to Anasuya Bai and me that they would ever refrain from violence. I hope that all will now resume work.

*The Bombay Chronicle*, 17-4-1919; also *Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, pp. 473-8

### 390. LETTER TO G. E. CHATFIELD

THE ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
April 15, 1919

DEAR MR. CHATFIELD,

Would you please give me the name and address of the sergeant who was murdered during the tragic occurrences. I understand that there was only one English death. If there are any other English casualties, I should like to know them and the names and addresses of their families. As you are aware, I asked yesterday for contributions towards maintenance of the bereaved families and I know that the contributors desire to tender pecuniary assistance to the families of Englishmen who might have died or become seriously disabled during mob-rule.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6535



### 391. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY

SABARMATI,  
*April 15, 1919*

I beg to send herewith, as promised yesterday, copies of my speech in Bombay and Ahmedabad. They are both translations from the vernacular, either done by me or by others under my supervision. I also send a copy of my letter of yesterday—all these by registered post as many letters have been found to have gone astray of late.

N. A. I.: Home: Political—A: May 1919: Nos. 455-72

### 392. LETTER TO SIR IBRAHIM RAHIMTOOLLA

THE ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
*April 15, 1919*

DEAR SIR IBRAHIM RAHIMTOOLLA,

Contrary to my wont, I write this letter to you in English, as I would like you to submit it to His Excellency for perusal and consideration. As you may know, I arrived in Ahmedabad, accompanied by Anasuya Behn on Sunday. There was a very largely attended meeting yesterday at the Satyagraha Ashram, although it is far away from the city. It is estimated that 10 to 15 thousand people must have attended. There is once more perfect quiet in Ahmedabad, and although I have to say it of myself, I do wish to state that the sudden quiet is due largely, if not entirely, to the soothing effect produced by the presence of Anasuya Behn and myself. I enclose herewith copy of my speech in Gujarati and its English translation prepared under my supervision. In response to my invitation, money has begun to pour in, and thousands have observed the fast. I have already written<sup>1</sup> to the Collec-tor, enquiring about the names and addresses of the families of Englishmen who have lost their lives or have been disabled during mob-rule. Happily, I understand that these cases are not more than 2 or 3. My main purpose, however, in writing this letter is to suggest that no further punitive measures may be taken, and that no prosecutions be undertaken in respect of the tragedy. Any arrest and trials would

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Letter to G.E. Chatfield", 15-4-1919.

simply cause another ferment. In my humble opinion, it would be most impolitic and unwise to select a few individuals as scapegoats, when a whole mob has taken the law in its own hands. I performed today the painful duty of visiting the army of wounded men, including little children, in the Civil Hospital. I understand that at least 22 have died of the wounds, but probably the real number of those who died during martial law will never be known, for I am told that some dead bodies were actually cremated in the *poles*<sup>1</sup> of Ahmedabad. I simply wish to urge that sufficiently stern punishment has been already dealt out to Ahmedabad.

I ask the Government to believe me when I say that the ebullition was in no way due to satyagraha. It was due to causes which came into being before the satyagraha movement was inaugurated and to the grave blunder in arresting me whilst I was on my way to Delhi, and on a most pacific mission. I do not know within the whole of my public experience a single occasion where my presence has had anything but a soothing effect on the elements of disturbance. My arrest gave a handle to all discontented forces to gather together and those who were sincerely mourning over my arrest out of personal affection for me involuntarily found themselves drawn into the lawless proceedings. I wish also to state that almost every known satyagrahi was simply assisting at the peril of his life in taming the mad fury of the mob. It was due to their work that probably the mob did not indulge in further excesses, though what has happened is bad enough. I may be mistaken in my last deduction, but there is no mistake about the fact, that satyagrahis did their utmost best to prevent the tragedy. But we are yet a handful. Time may show that neither India nor the world can have anything better than satyagraha as a restraining force and a force ranged on the side of law and order. Civil disobedience alone can inspire sincere and manly obedience. My duty as a satyagrahi at the present moment is to refrain from doing anything that may add fuel to the fire. I have therefore restrained myself from giving what I hold is a true analysis of the tragedy enacted in Ahmedabad. I wish to say nothing of the events in the other parts of India. The other causes referred to by me are three in number. First and foremost is the profound dissatisfaction of the Mahomedans over what they fear would be the settlement of Islamic questions at the time of the Peace. I venture to speak of this with some authority because I

<sup>1</sup> Residential streets

have taken great pains to ascertain Mahomedan feelings. I have moved among Mahomedans high and low practically throughout India, and I have deemed it my duty as a Hindu to understand their position and to share their sorrows. The second cause is the fear—vague, I know—that the Reforms that are to come will be only in name. And the third cause is bitter resentment over the passing of the Rowlatt legislation in violent defiance of unanimously expressed-public opinion.

I admit that there has been often great exaggeration indulged in by indifferent, ignorant and irresponsible speakers, but as an experienced public man of over 25 years' standing, I know that exaggerations will not cause ebullitions such as we have witnessed in Ahmedabad, unless there is a substantial grievance behind them.

I felt that it was due to the Government that I should submit for their consideration the state of things that has come to my knowledge. I cannot conclude this letter without expressing my gratitude for the absolute absence of firing in Bombay on Friday last.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6534

### *393. LETTER TO SIR STANLEY REED*

THE ASHRAM,

*April 15, 1919*

DEAR SIR STANLEY READ

According to my usual custom, the time has come for me to place before you things, which, in the interests of public peace, I do not wish to ventilate in the Press. The atmosphere is so surcharged with distrust, disaffection and ill will, that I do not want to add to the forces of evil by saying anything which may even remotely produce that result, and which it is not obligatory on me to say in public.

Though it is a small matter, may I correct the statement of your informant that I was not arrested in reality? This is what exactly happened: An officer boarded the train<sup>1</sup> at Palwal, and, laying his hands on me, said, "Mr. Gandhi, I arrest you". I was then immedi-

<sup>1</sup> On the night of April 9-10

ately handed to an Indian sepoy—I suppose he was that—and I was taken by the arm and marched out of the train. I was guarded by four sepoys on four sides of the cot, on which I lay in Palwal on the station platform. I was brought to the platform out of the waiting-room at my request, and I was sharply pulled up as I passed one of the guards probably two feet from him to clear my throat. I was taken to Muttra during the night, and a guard was put in my compartment, which was a second-class compartment. We had to wait at Muttra for another train. Early in the morning, I was again put in the second-class compartment, in which accompanied by the guard, I travelled to Sawai Madhopur. There we waited for the mail train, and on its arrival Mr. Bowring of Lahore took charge of me, put me in a first-class compartment with him, but in that carriage too a guard was kept during whole of the night whilst both he and I were sleeping. I do not wish to complain of what happened to me. I am simply stating the naked facts to demonstrate that I was under arrest. I would have declined to begin the return journey had I not been arrested, as I did actually mention to the officer, who served the first order upon me. There are some other incidents which I wish to omit. But nothing that I have said is intended to qualify or detract from the public acknowledgement of the extreme personal courtesy that was extended to me by the three officers, who were concerned with the service of the orders, the arrest and the deportation.

I hastened to Ahmedabad in company with Anasuya Behn in order that the people may be calmed and in all humility I may say that the effect of our arrival on the populace was electrical. I placed myself unreservedly at the service of the authorities. You will have observed that I spoke at the Monday meeting with the utmost caution. I would like you to go through my speech sent to you for publication. I deliberately refrained from narrating the acts done by the military under martial law. I doubt not that there was much avoidable loss of life. I have seen the wounded at the Civil Hospital. I spoke to every one of them. All of them gave me frank statements. Many admitted that they were part of large crowds, not crowds that had any evil designs, but crowds of men, who had hardly realized what the law was. They could not immediately upon its being proclaimed have informed themselves of the conditions. I know that although eager crowds gathered round me to listen to my speech, and although I had printed 25 thousand copies, it has not reached all. How then could the martial law notices indifferently distributed amongst a sullen

population inform vast bodies of men ? These crowds, therefore, did gather. I understand that they were fired at after due notice being given to them, but you will agree with me when I say that they could not all understand the notice to disperse. In the hospital, I saw a few little children 10 or 11 years old. I asked them what they were doing, and they said they had gone out to play. A husband and wife were shot in their own house. The wife died of the wounds. The husband who described the affair does not say that they were deliberately aimed at, but that the bullets whizzed through the house and struck them. Some of them told me that they were alone. The rule was that if ten people collected together, they could be fired at. In one case, I was told, a man, who wanted to be extra-cautious, first asked the permission to pass the pickets, he got it and he passed the pickets with his friends, and as soon as they had proceeded a few paces, they received bullet wounds. The one who asked for permission dropped down dead, and the other is in danger of losing his life. The wound is so serious. The view I have taken of this is that the people of Ahmedabad have no right to complain of these sad occurrences, after the ruthlessness with which the mob destroyed the property, hacked to pieces Sergeant Fraser, and committed many other excesses. It is highly likely that the English lads—I call them lads, because they looked like lads—who were posted as pickets during martial law, had arrived on the scene with the knowledge that a wicked plot was hatched in order to kill the force that was sent from Bombay, of which these lads were members. I refer to the derailing near Nadiad, and in their fury to wreak vengeance upon the Ahmedabad people without any nice or exact discrimination, they may have been too free with their rifles. I describe this shooting in order to show that the people have been sufficiently punished, and there should be no further punitive measures taken and no prosecutions undertaken.

I shall now turn to the causes of this upheaval. I have talked to over a hundred people myself, my associates of the Satyagraha Ashram and my co-workers living in the city have each talked to as many, if not more, and I find that satyagraha had nothing to do with the excesses, that is to say, that it was not the alleged inculcation of the spirit of disobedience which let loose the fury of the mob. During the seven weeks that the satyagraha campaign has been going on, there was not a word uttered to encourage ill will against a single Englishman, and I can state positively that whenever I addressed the people, the audience addressed by me became sobered, and there was

an appreciable change in their attitude towards the English, as also towards those Indian leaders whose policy they disliked. My chief work, however, is done through private conversation with people who visit me wherever I go. I have noticed the vehemence of feelings against British administration, and have noticed too that it was transferred to the administrators themselves. After a searching cross-examination, I found that they admitted their mistake and I can recall many conversions of people, who came in to express their curses, and went away, if not [with] blessings on their lips, with no unfriendliness towards the British. I found mental lawlessness existing everywhere, and it was with the greatest difficulty that I was able to drive home the necessity for restraining this habit of continuous disparagement of law and order, and to replace it by a disciplined and conscientious disobedience, whose effect was to be confined to self-suffering and not to involve any destruction of the life or property of their lawgivers or anyone else. The lawless spirit then was already there. There was not much time given to the spirit of satyagraha, i.e., the spirit of self-restraint, to have its effect upon the people, when the Government of India criminally blundered in serving these orders upon me and in arresting me. Nor were the forces of discontent weak. Here they are: (1) Every Mahomedan is filled with bitterness over questions affecting Islam, and every Mahomedan thoroughly distrusts England in this matter. The association of all classes of Mahomedans with the Hindus is significant, and the upheavals, wherever they have taken place, have, as is perfectly apparent, strong Mahomedan backing. (2) The people have been taught to distrust Reforms in anticipation. The masses are no longer inert. They have a general understanding of the situation. (3) The alarm produced by the Rowlatt legislation and deep resentment over utter defiance of public opinion. I freely admit that there has been much ignorant and even in some cases wilful exaggeration of the effects of the Rowlatt legislation. But after you account for all, there is a residue left, which in my opinion makes Rowlatt legislation impossible of acceptance. I wonder if it has ever struck you that the amendment of the Preamble is of little consequence. As Sir William Vincent very perfectly pointed out, the spirit of the legislation was that it should have operation only in cases where anarchical crime was found to exist. The whole question turns upon, who is to be the judge? The judge is to be the Executive Government, and is not this the procedure which the Executive has always followed in forming its judgments on these matters? A petty

official of the C.I.D. submits a report stating the existence of anarchical crime to his superior officer, who endorses the report. The chief of the C.I.D. then handles it and he will be an exceptionally bold Home Member who will challenge a report from the chief of the C.I.D. He will naturally therefore advise notification of the application of the Act to the area of anarchical disturbance so called. Nobody has questioned the drastic character of the legislation. But I must not labour this point and make the letter long. These causes were bound sooner or later to bring about furious deeds of violence, and I can only say that satyagraha has served as a check, no matter how slight, upon them. It is clear that the tragedy at Ahmedabad and Viramgam could have been absolutely avoided had I not been served with those orders and subsequently arrested. The vast demonstrations took place not because it was the satyagraha movement that was in jeopardy but because it was I who was arrested. Such is the blind affection of the people towards me.

My suggestions therefore would be that the Government should recognize satyagraha as an estimable weapon in the armoury of reformer; they should seek the assistance of Messrs Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali, who, so far as I am aware, are able, equally upright and well informed, and solve the Islamic question to the entire satisfaction of the intelligent Mahomedan population. There should be some assuring declaration about the Reforms, and the Rowlatt legislation should be withdrawn. Until these things are done, I apprehend there will be no peace in India. The feeling in India today is like a barometer, sensitive to the slightest atmospheric pressure or change in the political field. If you at all accept my suggestions, I know you will do all you can to secure their adoption in your own special way. I may add. that I have passed on most of these suggestions to the Viceroy, and those that can be locally handled to the Governor of Bombay.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6534

### 394. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET NO. 4

[April 16, 1919]<sup>2</sup>

MY SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

I could not speak to you at length in my address at the Satyagrahashram on Monday last; but I wish to place my thoughts before the public through a few leaflets. Let me first render accounts. I had received till yesterday Rs. 770 towards the fund suggested by me. I request that there should be no delay with regard to this fund, and that none in Ahmedabad should be found wanting in his duty. This fund has had its origin in the idea of penance, but its public utility is no less than its penitential value. I visited the Civil Hospital yesterday in company with Behn Anasuya and Mr. Krishnalal Desai<sup>3</sup>, and spoke to all the patients there. I see that we shall have to get pecuniary help to the families of the many of the wounded. I learnt on the spot that 22 of the men brought there had died of the wounds. There is no doubt, there have been many more deaths. A clear duty, therefore, lies upon us, as citizens, to find out the families of the deceased and to give them what help we can. I have been asked as to who will be the beneficiaries of these moneys. I am afraid that we could not compensate those who have sustained loss of property; we can render some little help only to the families of the dead and wounded. These include two or three Englishmen (now ascertained to be one); our first duty is to render help to their families, since we are responsible for their deaths. We had no excuse whatsoever for killing them. They have been killed simply out of animosity. If we do really repent for what we have done, it is our duty to aid their families. That is the least penance we can do. I have been able to see that most of our brethren, too, who have died were altogether innocent. I saw amongst the wounded several boys of 10 or 11. Our next duty is to help all these. A man from Viramgam came to me complaining that he had lost two of his brothers. Very likely many more such cases will be forthcoming. If Viramgam also pays its quota to the fund, we might be able to extend our help to them. If it fails, I am afraid, we shall not be able to render that assistance.

<sup>1</sup> The original has "Satyagraha Series".

<sup>2</sup> *Vide Mahadevbhaini Diary.*

<sup>3</sup> High Court *vakil*, Ahmedabad



Some of us believe that we can obtain our rights by such acts of terrorization, violence and arson. Satyagraha, on the contrary, holds that the rights so obtained should be rejected. I admit that of the two parties using brute force, the one possessing more of it than the other apparently gains its ends. My 40 years' experience tells me that objects so attained do not permanently benefit the winner. There may well be two opinions on this point. But there can be no difference of opinion on the fact that so far as brute force is concerned, we are no match for the Government. Our physical force is as nought before theirs. I would dare say, therefore, that those who advise us to use physical force are sadly mistaken, and we should never listen to their advice. Expediency tells us that there is one and only one recourse for us and that is satyagraha or *dharmabal* (i.e., spirit-force). Now *dharmabal* can spring only from suffering. Oppressing, harassing, or assaulting others cannot add to our spiritual strength. The events in Ahmedabad would have been impossible, had we but a true sense of dharma. It is one of our duties to prevent mischief. If the men and women of Ahmedabad could be brave, all mischief would cease. It is obviously a far greater thing to overcome mischief by spirit-force, than to do so by brute force. We have seen that violent outbreaks have not benefited us at all. I have already said that they had nothing to do with my release. The outbreaks commenced on the 10th. The decision to release me in Bombay was arrived at on the 9th. It cannot therefore have been in any way the result of those outbreaks. Moreover, those who have faith in satyagraha should be the last men to resort to violence to secure my release.

Let us now consider what further loss we have sustained. I reminded you on Monday that the offices which were burnt down belonged to ourselves. But we have an indirect ownership therein, and the fact that the expenses of re-building them may perhaps not fall directly on us may make us indifferent to the mischief done. The loss to our commerce by the closing of the Telegraph Office may also fail to affect us. But consider the consequences of burning down the University Examination Pandal. I understand that it was erected by a contractor, it was his property and was worth about Rs. 18,000. Who will compensate the contractor ? Can we imagine the soreness of his feelings ? Surely the incendiaries must never have thought of making up for the loss. I am informed that there were many ornaments deposited in the District Court Treasury as being matter of dispute in Civil cases and otherwise. Some estimate their value at Rs. 50,000,

while others value them at a higher figure still. We know nothing about the owners of these ornaments. They have lost them for good. Government may not compensate them; and even if they do, it will be from our money. The poor innocent people, who have thus lost their ornaments, will not perhaps so much as approach the Government to demand them. Where was the justice of our ferreting out from Rao Bahadur Bulakhidas' house all the things therein and making a bonfire of them? I have been told the Rao Bahadur's career has been far from good; that he harasses the people. Granting that this is so, may we, therefore, burn the property of such officers? If people were thus to take the law into their own hands, there would be an end of peace and public safety and a perpetual reign of terror would prevail. If any and every person, aggrieved by an officer's conduct were to be regarded as within his rights to violate the person and property of that officer, no officer would be safe. A country, where such a state of affairs prevails, is not considered to be civilized, and the people there live in constant fear. Consider the hideous barbarity of burning alive the *Aval Karkun* of Viramgam. What offense had he committed? Or, if he had committed any, why had we not the courage to obtain his dismissal? Sergeant Fraser, an innocent Englishman who had sought refuge in an Indian house, was marched out of the house and hacked to pieces. What can India gain out of such a piece of brutality? One direct result we have already had, and that is, the bitterness of feeling between the English and ourselves has been augmented, and several innocent lives have been lost. The only result to obtain rights through association and co-operation with such hooligans can be that if such attempts succeed, the rights so obtained could be enjoyed only on conditions imposed by the hooligans. Rights so obtained are not rights at all, they are rather the signs of our enslavement. The events of Ahmedabad and Viramgam are no indication of our heroism; they do not in any way prove our manliness; they have simply disgraced us; our movement has received a set-back; satyagraha has had to be restricted. In giving you this bare picture, my purpose is to show how thousands of people, who disliked such violence, put up with it as helpless and powerless creatures. It indicates that at this moment, we do not possess the true force of dharma and truth. It is therefore that I have said that there is no salvation for India except through satyagraha. I shall endeavour as best as I can to explain what this satyagraha is in later leaflets, which I entreat my sisters and brothers to carefully read and understand and ponder upon and carry out the

suggestions made therein.

M. K. GANDHI

Printed by M. N. Kulkarni at the Karnatak Printing Press, 434, Thakurdwar, Bombay and published by S. G. Banker, 72, Apollo Street, Fort, Bombay.

From the printed original preserved in Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Delhi.  
Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

*395. LETTER TO G. E. CHATFIELD*

ASHRAM,  
April 16, 1919

DEAR MR. CHATFIELD,

I thank you for your note. I recognize the force of what you say in the last paragraph<sup>1</sup> of it, and shall give effect to your wish.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 6542

*396. LETTER TO G. E. CHATFIELD*

THE ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
April 16, 1919

DEAR MR. CHATFIELD,

I understand that in Shahpur there are some *badmashes* who have looted during the tragic events and who were even now worrying the life out of the peaceful residents in that neighborhood. The latter have to keep awake during the night for fear of the *badmashes* making their deprecation. Will it be possible to post a few police there?

Though the Government, if I understood Mr. Pratt<sup>2</sup> rightly, neither invite my services nor desire it even if rendered uninvited, as I said to Mr. Pratt, I must continue to render to the State what service I

<sup>1</sup> The last paragraph of the note dated 16-4-1919 read: "If anybody has any complaint to make, as I gather from another note of yours, will you please direct them to me direct? I am too busy to listen to any but direct complaints, at least in cases where people are able to make them."

<sup>2</sup> F. G. Pratt, Commissioner, Northern Division, Bombay Presidency

can according to my lights. In order more fully to popularize the ideas set forth in my speech to the meeting, I am having it read to small parties of men and women in *poles* and inviting remarks from the people if they wish to make them.

*Yours sincerely,*

From a photostat: S.N. 6543

397. *LETTER TO F. G. PRATT*

THE ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
*April 16, 1919*

DEAR MR. PRATT,

I thank you for your note. My movements at the present moment are that I leave Ahmedabad for Bombay tomorrow in connection with the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan meetings that are to be held on the 19th, 20th and 21st. instant. I hope to return on the 22nd, at the outside on the 23rd. If I return on the 23rd, it is my intention to halt at Nadiad for about 2 hours. After my return, I want to continue organizing work in Ahmedabad along the lines I have informed Mr. Chatfield of. I am anxious that the people should become saturated with the absolutely peaceful nature of satyagraha before I commence what might be termed the "offensive". If you have any wish to express in connection with my programme, I do hope you will not hesitate to let me know, even confidentially if necessary, and I need hardly say that I shall endeavour to carry it out so far as possible. Even though the Government may not desire my co-operation, as a satyagrahi it will be my duty to do acts of co-operation and assist in restoring order and removing lust for violence.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 6540

### 398. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET NO. 5

[April 17, 1919]<sup>2</sup>

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF MAHATMA GANDHI'S WRITINGS

There are two poems published and being distributed entitled “Mahatma Gandhino Satyagraha” and “Mahatma Gandhina Udgar.” They bear the signature of Labhshanker Harjiwandas Dihorkar. The ideas expressed in these verses are not mine. Some of them are poisonous, calculated to promote ill will and excite passions. They are, therefore, opposed to satyagraha. I therefore advise all brothers and sisters not to accept anything as written by me unless it is signed by me. The present times are so critical that one cannot be too cautious about anything lest one might be led astray.

My writings cannot be poisonous, they must be free from anger, for it is my special religious conviction that we cannot truly attain our goal by promoting ill will against the rulers or anyone else. There can be no room for untruth in my writings, because it is my unshakable belief that there is no religion other than truth and because I am capable of rejecting aught obtained at the cost of truth. My writings cannot but be free from hatred towards any individual because it is my firm belief that it is love that sustains the earth. There only is life where there is love. Life without love is death. Love is the reverse of the coin of which the obverse is truth. It is my firm faith and it is my experience of forty years that we can conquer the world by truth and love. I believe that we can remedy the mistakes of our rulers by means of truth and love and my writings can therefore have no incitement to violence to person or property. It is obviously not possible for me to read everything that is written or printed in, my name and I would therefore ask everyone to apply the above mentioned test to all that purports to be published in my name and I further wish and pray that everyone should reject anything that has the slightest trace of untruth, disaffection, hatred, violence and the like. I do not know the author of the poems mentioned above, but should he see this leaflet I advise him that it is necessary for him before attributing any words or statements to anyone to show them to him and obtain his permission to publish

<sup>1</sup> The original has “Satyagraha Series”.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide Mahadevbhaini Diary.*

them as his. This is the least that prudence and self-restraint demand.

M. K. GANDHI

Printed by M. N. Kulkarni at the Karnatak Printing Press, 434, Thakurdwar, Bombay and published by S. G. Banker, 72, Apollo Street, Fort, Bombay.

From the printed original preserved in Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Delhi.  
Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

### 399. *LETTER TO SWAMI SHRADDHANAND*

THE ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
*April 17, 1919*

DEAR SHRADDHANANDJI,

I write this in English as Mr. Shuaib desires that I should do so for the sake of the company before which it is to be read. The questions<sup>1</sup> to which I am required to reply may be before you. I shall, therefore, only refer to the numbers.

To question No. 1, my answer is—non-satyagrahis who join satyagraha demonstrations must for the occasion subscribe to the rules of satyagraha. They are, therefore, bound to refrain from retaliation under the gravest provocation. For the occasion in which non-satyagrahis participate, there can be no distinction between satyagrahis and non-satyagrahis. Non-satyagrahis can only join if they give an undertaking that, for the particular occasion on which we seek their association, they will subscribe to our doctrine. I, therefore, hold that we are just as responsible for the action of non-satyagrahis when they act with us as we are for our own. I think it will be evident to you that without this understanding, satyagraha can easily be smothered by non-satyagraha. You cannot have a combination of non-compatibles without an explosion.

My answer to question No. 2 is really to be inferred from the foregoing. I think we must apply to ourselves the ordinary rule of law more strictly because we are satyagrahis. That a man is to be presumed to have intended the consequences that can reasonably be proved to have followed from his conduct. I think that I at least

<sup>1</sup> Based on Satyagraha Leaflet No. 3; *vide* "Questions on Satyagraha", Before 17-4-1919.

should have foreseen some of the consequences, specially in view of the gravest warnings that were given to me by friends whose advice I have always sought and valued. But I confess that I am dense. I am not joking. So many friends have told me that I am incapable of profiting by other people's experiences and that in every case I want to go through the fire myself and learn only after bitter experience. There is exaggeration in this charge, but there is also a substance of truth in it. This denseness in me is at once a weakness and a strength. I could not have remained a satyagrahi had I not cultivated the quality of stubborn resistance and such resistance can only come from experience and, not from inference. Pursuit of truth is any day a dangerous occupation. It is much more so when you are working as we have to work in an atmosphere surcharged with untruth and all the weakness that follow from it. You will now understand why I consider that we are responsible for the happenings in Delhi and Bombay not very serious from our standpoint, and the very serious and discreditable events in Ahmedabad and Viramgam. I acquit ourselves of all blame so far as the happenings in the Punjab outside Delhi are concerned. They would have taken place without satyagraha, if Drs. Satyapal and Kitchlew had been arrested on any other occasion. I would, however, add that the events in the Punjab give us an indication as to our future course.

My answer to question No. 3 is also involved in the answer to No. 1. My answers are really inherent in the movement. Satyagraha means all I have said and nothing less. Without the conditions I have spoken of, it is impossible to ensure success.

Answer to No. 4: Did you get the full text of my speech? You will see there the meaning of what I have said as to the possible abandonment. The movement can never be abandoned in the sense you have understood it. But our satyagraha may have to take, as it has already taken in Ahmedabad, such a turn that in popular language it will mean an abandonment. But we shall never be guilty of suicide—moral or political—because here we have already begun what you have advised. We have as yet not even postponed the breaking of all the laws selected by the committee, but my seeking re-arrest by trying to enter Delhi has been postponed. We are now giving instruction in satyagraha in a most active form, of course, openly, both in Bombay and Ahmedabad, and the workers are hoping that they will be able to

bring the masses in a disciplined control in a short time. It may be necessary from what I have heard today to go a step further and suspend breach of all laws until we are sure of an atmosphere in which we can work. I hope to issue a statement for publication as soon as I reach Bombay. That would be tomorrow (Friday). There is one item of serious news from Bombay. Mr. Jamnadas writes to say that at a meeting of Mahomedan friends which I was to address, but which I could not as I was suddenly called away to Ahmedabad, he gathered that the Mahomedan friends conceived satyagraha merely as a weapon of the weak. They said that immediately they got the opportunity, they would certainly not refrain from violence. This to my mind is a dangerous attitude. Talking in terms of politics and not of satyagraha, it seems to me that no movement of violence can possibly succeed here so as to restore to Islam what it is entitled to, whereas real satyagraha, if it permeates the masses, can do so in a day. Such is my unshakable conviction.

No. 5: I think the question is variously answered in the foregoing paragraphs.

A letter was posted to you yesterday, giving full replies to the one received from you yesterday. I may sum up the advice tendered in that letter. Suspend civil disobedience until, in the opinion of your committee, the time has arrived for offering it, and work incessantly amongst the population and by all acts of service inspire them with faith in satyagraha.

From a photostat: S. N. 6546

#### *400. SPEECH AT PREPARATORY MEETING FOR HINDI CONFERENCE, BOMBAY*

[Before April 18, 1919]

Consistently with the object of our meeting today, I must speak in Hindi. On this occasion, however, I deliberately avoid using it because I want to explain its importance to you and that I shall do in Gujarati. I think I can explain the reasons better thus. The satyagraha now going on in India covers the issue of the Hindi language.

<sup>1</sup> Ninth Hindi Literary Conference; Gandhiji was in the chair but owing to his indifferent health the speech was read out on his behalf from a prepared text. The report purports to reproduce only its more important portions.



Satyagraha is essentially a fight for truth and, if we have regard for truth, we shall have to admit that Hindi is the only language we can use as a national language. There is no other regional language with equal claims.

We should pause and think what Hindi means. I don't think the Sanskritized language they use is Hindi; it is an artificial product. Nor is Persianized Urdu Hindi. The language we want to adopt as our national language is a mixture of Hindi and Urdu. It is the language spoken, by and large, in Bihar, Delhi and the Punjab. The two languages came to be treated as rivals of each other when the idea spread that Hindus and Muslims were not one people and there developed ill will between the two. Some would regard that alone as Hindi which was full of Sanskrit words, and the Muslims would accept that alone as Urdu which used Persian and Arabic words. But the language spoken by the average Hindu or Muslim is not of this kind. Wherever we go and hear Hindus and Muslims speak, we find them, whether Hindus or Muslims, using Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic words, not going out of their way to avoid any. When we have accepted this mixed language, we, Hindus and Muslims, shall have been cleansed in our hearts. This language I speak of is understood by Muslims everywhere in North and South India, though they also know the regional language. Look at the map again and [you will find that], except for a small part, Madras, the Hindus in the rest of India also understand it. If we go further and think of the various regions separately, Hindi is spoken in all the provinces except Maharashtra, Gujarat, Bengal and Sind. Even in these other provinces, including Gujarat, maulvis<sup>1</sup> and Hindu preachers have spread both the languages. You will hardly find anyone not familiar with the *Tulsi Ramayana*. You may call the languages Hindi and Urdu, if you like; both have the same grammar. If there is any language in India which can become its national language, it is Hindi-Urdu. No one should conclude from this that he may neglect his own, the regional language. For national purposes, we should select a language which can be used in all provinces. And so our educated classes at any rate should pick up the Hindi-Urdu mixture which I have recommended. I am aware, in all humility, that some eminent men of learning in this country believe that in English we have the language we need. No language in the position of English is known to have become a

<sup>1</sup> Muslim preachers

national language, for it has no affinity with any of the Indian languages. A national language must be easy for everyone to learn. Were it not that we are a subject people, we would readily admit the need for such a common language. Even as it is, despite the millions of rupees spent in teaching English, only a handful of people succeed in learning it and, from among these, those who acquire a command over it are fewer still.

The effort we have to make in learning this language is, I believe, a drain on our intellectual powers.

The issue has an intimate bearing on the progress of India. A nation which has despised its own language pays for doing so with the loss of its nationhood. Most of us are in this plight. India is the one country in the world in which parents would rather not speak to their children in their own language....<sup>1</sup> I bear English no grudge. I even feel that, for certain purposes, some of us will have to learn English. One should learn it and be an interpreter to the rest. I admit that such people should know English well enough. However, we should have Hindi as the national language to serve other purposes, for use in courts and the central legislature. The nation will stand to suffer by the use of any other language for such purposes. All our labour [in other spheres] will be in vain till we recognize this truth. Hence I said last year<sup>2</sup> that it would have been better if the Hindi Conference had been held in Bombay. We see that this has been done. The Conference is to be held on the 18th, 19th and 20th.<sup>3</sup> The presidentship of the Conference has been accepted by Pandit Malaviya and you should, therefore, help the Conference.<sup>4</sup> The secretaries have said that it will cost Rs. 10,000. By contributing something towards this cost, you will have helped the Conference. This is help of inferior kind. The best help will be for those who are present here to pick up this language soon. This can be done if you spend one hour every night, with a teacher to help you. I shall not take more time. I hope you will think

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati report is defective at this point. The Hindi report of the speech here has: “. . . would write to their children in English, rather than in their own language”.

<sup>2</sup> Probably at the 8th session of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan at Indore on 29-3-1918, over which Gandhiji presided.

<sup>3</sup> The Hindi report says: “. . . on the 19th, the 20th and the 21st.”

<sup>4</sup> The Hindi report adds: “Shri Swami Shankaracharya of Karavir Peeth has been kind enough to accept the chairmanship of the Reception Committee.”

over my views, and, if you find them right, act upon them. We often find among us, and elsewhere, too, that we hear and approve but do not follow up with action. It is to our benefit to act upon anything which has appealed to us. We ensure our progress by doing so.

[From Gujarati]

*Gujarati*, 20-4-1919

#### 401. TELEGRAM TO G. A. NATESAN<sup>1</sup>

BOMBAY,  
*April 18, 1919*

DECIDED	SUSPEND	CIVIL	DISOBEDIENCE	TEMPORARILY
OWING	CRITICAL	SITUATION	THAT	HAS DEVELOPED
REALLY	OPERATIVE	PART	MOVEMENT	NAMELY PREACH-
ING	PRACTICE	OF	TRUTH	NON-VIOLENCE
YOU	WILL	BE GLAD	READ MY	PRESS STATEMENT.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2232

#### 402. PRESS STATEMENT ON SUSPENSION OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE<sup>2</sup>

BOMBAY,  
*April 18, 1919*

It is not without sorrow that I feel compelled to advise the temporary suspension of civil disobedience. I give this advice not because I have less faith now in its efficacy, but because I have, if possible, greater faith than before. It is my perception of the law of satyagraha which impels me to suggest the suspension. I am sorry, when I embarked upon a mass movement, I underrated the forces of evil and I must now pause and consider how best to meet the situation. But whilst doing so, I wish to say that from a careful examination of

<sup>1</sup> In reply to Natesan's telegram of 14th April, urging suspension of civil disobedience because of breaking out of riots. A copy of this reply telegram was also sent to C. Rajagopalachari, who was secretary, Satyagraha Sabha, Madras; *vide The Hindu*, 19-4-1919.

<sup>2</sup> Gandhiji addressed this as a letter to the secretaries of the Satyagraha Sabha, Bombay, and released it to the Press, *vide* the preceding item.

the tragedy at Ahmedabad and Viramgam, I am convinced that satyagraha had nothing to do with the violence of the mob and that many swarmed round the banner of mischief raised by the mob, largely because of their affection for Anasuyabai and myself. Had the Government in an unwise manner not prevented me from entering Delhi and so compelled me to disobey their order, I feel certain that Ahmedabad and Viramgam would have remained free from the horrors of the past week. In other words, satyagraha has neither been the cause nor the occasion of the upheaval. If anything, the presence of satyagraha has acted as a check even so slight upon the previously existing lawless elements. As regards events in the Punjab, it is admitted that they are unconnected with the satyagraha movement.

#### SOUTH AFRICAN PARALLEL

In the course of the satyagraha struggle in South Africa, several thousands of indentured Indians had struck work. This was a satyagraha strike and therefore entirely peaceful and voluntary. Whilst the strike was going on, a strike of European miners, railway employees, etc., was declared. Overtures were made to me to make common cause with the European strikers. As a satyagrahi, I did not require a moment's consideration to decline to do so. I went further and for fear of our strike being classed with the strike of Europeans in which methods of violence and use of arms found a prominent place, ours was suspended and satyagraha from that moment came to be recognized by the Europeans of South Africa as an honourable and honest movement—in the words of General Smuts, a constitutional movement. I can do no less at the present critical moment. I would be untrue to satyagraha, if I allowed it by any action of mine to be used as an occasion for feeding violence for embittering relations between the English and the Indians. Our satyagraha must therefore now consist in ceaselessly helping the authorities in all the ways available to us as satyagrahis to restore order and to curb lawlessness. We can turn the tragedies going on before us to good account if we could but succeed in gaining the adherence of the masses to the fundamental principles of satyagraha. Satyagraha is like a banyan tree with innumerable branches. Civil disobedience is one such branch, *satya* (truth) and ahimsa (non-violence) together make the parent trunk from which all innumerable branches shoot out. We have found by bitter experience that whilst in an atmosphere of lawlessness, civil disobedience found ready acceptance. *Satya* and ahimsa, from which

alone civil disobedience can worthily spring, have commanded little or no respect. Ours then is a Herculean task, but we may not shirk it. We must fearlessly spread the doctrine of *satya* and *ahimsa* and then, and not till then, shall we be able to undertake mass satyagraha.

#### ROWLATT LAWS

My attitude towards the Rowlatt legislation remains unchanged. Indeed, I do feel that the Rowlatt legislation is one of the many causes of the present unrest. But in a surcharged atmosphere, I must refrain from examining these causes. The main and only purpose of this letter is to advise all satyagrahis to temporarily suspend civil disobedience, to give Government effective co-operation in restoring order and by preaching and practice to gain adherence to the fundamental principles mentioned above.

*The Hindu*, 21-4-1919

#### 403. SPEECH AT HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN, BOMBAY

*April 19, 1919*

I propose Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya as president of this Sammelan. Who in India today does not know Malaviyaji? He is a great leader of India. He has rendered great service to his country. In the service of the national language also he is in the forefront. I feel that there is no one who has that power of service which he commands. This is the first session of the Sammelan outside North India. The task of presiding at this session should be entrusted to Malaviyaji. This will guarantee the success of our work.

[From Hindi]

*Ninth Hindi Sahitya Sammelan Report, Part I*

#### 404. SPEECH AT HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN, BOMBAY

*April 20, 1919*

The activities of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan are many and varied. The chief one consists in disseminating literature, conducting examinations in Hindi literature, awarding degrees and spreading Hindi in North India and outside it. All this work requires money. In the last session at Indore a sum of nearly Rs. 30,000 was collected. I hope Bombay too will take part in this great effort. There are many

very rich men in Bombay. I hope our brethren in Bombay will join in this national effort.

[From Hindi]

*Ninth Hindi Sahitya Sammelan Report, Part I*

#### 405. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

BOMBAY,  
*April 21, 1919*

JUST READ ASSOCIATED PRESS WIRE DATED 19TH  
SAYING PERSONS ARRESTED FOR DISOBEYING ORDERS  
ISSUED UNDER MARTIAL LAW ARE BEING WHIPPED  
IN PUBLIC STREETS. UNDERSTAND ORDERS HAVE  
REFERENCE TO OPENING SHOPS. IF PRESS WIRE  
CORRECT, RESPECTFULLY SUBMIT THAT SUCH WHIP-  
PING WOULD ROUSE GRAVEST INDIGNATION. HOPE  
THERE IS SOME EXPLANATION THAT WOULD REMOVE  
ALL CAUSE FOR ANXIETY AND IN ANY CAUSE I  
WOULD LIKE TO BE ASSURED THAT NO AUTHO-  
RITY HAS BEEN GIVEN TO GENERAL OFFICER  
COMMANDING, MARTIAL LAW OPERATIONS, TO WHIP  
PEOPLE PUBLICLY OR PRIVATELY FOR OFFENCE  
DESCRIBED ABOVE.

N.A.I.: Home: Political (Deposit): May—1919: No. 4

#### 406. LETTER TO G. E. CHATFIELD

*April 21, 1919*

DEAR MR. CHATFIELD,

A friend has just drawn my attention to the fact that the mill-hands will be doubly hit by the levy. They have already been made to pay from their wages. Now, as I understand, they will be made to pay through the water rate. For every little tenement is liable to pay if the occupant draws more than Rs. 7 per month. Thus, almost all the mill-hands will have to contribute to the levy twice over. Probably you have not considered this point. You have the power of exemption. Could you not exempt the mill-hands from the double levy if the view submitted by me is correct?

*Yours sincerely,*

From a photostat: S.N. 6555

*407. LETTER TO GILLESPI*

THE ASHRAM,  
*April 22, 1919*

DEAR MR. GILLESPI<sup>1</sup>,

I arrived here yesterday and received your kind letter. You will see that I anticipated the advice given by you. I take it you have read the manifesto declaring temporary suspension of civil disobedience. I shall esteem your advice and criticism, whenever you may find it to be necessary. I do not know whether you have read the two articles I have written on swadeshi. Some of us wish to take the final step and I would certainly like English friends to associate with the movement and encourage it. In my opinion, no country can live honourably without swadeshi.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 6558

*408. LETTER TO G. E. CHATFIELD*

THE ASHRAM,  
*April 24, 1919*

DEAR MR. CHATFIELD,

I have just discovered my failure to pass on definite instructions as to sending the leaflets<sup>2</sup> published after my speech of the 14th. I send you copies herewith for your perusal.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. G.

From a photostat: S. N. 6563

<sup>1</sup> Of Ahmedabad

<sup>2</sup> Nos. 4 & 5

409. LETTER TO F. G. PRATT

[SABARMATI,  
*April 24, 1919*]<sup>1</sup>

DEAR MR. PRATT,

Through some bungling on my part, I see that copies of the last three leaflets were not delivered to you. I know you will excuse me for the unintentional omission. Probably you have already seen them. I send you a few copies herewith of each of the leaflets. I am going to Bombay today hoping to return on Monday. I stop at Nadiad for a few hours on my way to Bombay.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6563

410. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET NO. 6

[*April 25, 1919*]<sup>3</sup>

SATYAGRAHA : ITS SIGNIFICANCE

In the first leaflet<sup>4</sup>, I hinted that I would consider the meaning of satyagraha in a later number of this series. I feel that the time has now arrived to examine the meaning of satyagraha. The word was newly coined some years ago, but the principle which it denotes is as ancient as time. This is the literal meaning of satyagraha—insistence on truth, and force derivable from such insistence. In the present movement, we are making use of satyagraha as a force: that is to say, in order to cure the evil in the shape of the Rowlatt legislation, we have been making use of the force generated by satyagraha, that is, insistence on truth. One of the axioms of religion is, there is no religion other than truth. Another is, religion is love. And as there can be only one religion, it follows that truth is love and love is truth. We shall find too, on further reflection, that conduct based on truth is impossible without love.

<sup>1</sup> The similarity of the contents of this letter and of "Letter to G. E. Chatfield", 24-4-1919 suggests that both were written on the same day.

<sup>2</sup> The original has: "Satyagraha Leaflet Series".

<sup>3</sup> According to *The Indian Review*, the date of issue of this leaflet is April 25.

<sup>4</sup> *Vide* Leaflet No. 4.



Truth-force then is love-force. We cannot remedy evil by harbouring ill will against the evil-doer. This is not difficult of comprehension. It is easy enough to understand. In thousands of our acts, the propelling power is truth or love. The relations between father and son, husband and wife, indeed our family relations are largely guided by truth or love. And we therefore consciously or unconsciously apply satyagraha in regulating these relations.

If we were to cast a retrospective glance over our past life, we would find that out of a thousand of our acts affecting our families, in nine hundred and ninety-nine we were dominated by truth, that in our deeds, it is not right to say we generally resort to untruth or ill will. It is only where a conflict of interests arises, then arise the progeny of untruth, viz., anger, ill will, etc., and then we see nothing but poison in our midst. A little hard thinking will show us that the standard that we apply to the regulation of domestic relations is the standard that should be applied to regulate the relations between rulers and the ruled, and between man and man. Those men and women who do not recognize the domestic tie are considered to be very like brutes or barbarous, even though they in form have the human body. They have never known the law of satyagraha. Those who recognize the domestic tie and its obligations have to a certain extent gone beyond that brute stage. But if challenged, they would say “what do we care though the whole universe may perish so long as we guard the family interest?” The measure of their satyagraha, therefore, is less than that of a drop in the ocean.

When men and women have gone a stage further, they would extend the law of love, i.e., satyagraha, from the family to the village. A still further stage away from the brute life is reached when the law of satyagraha is applied to provincial life, and the people inhabiting a province regulate their relations by love rather than by hatred. And when as in Hindustan we recognize the law of satyagraha as a binding force even between province and province and the millions of Hindustan treat one another as brothers and sisters, we have advanced a stage further still from the brute nature.

In modern times, in no part of the earth have the people gone beyond the nation stage in the application of satyagraha. In reality, however, there need be no reason for the clashing of interest between nation and nation, thus arresting the operation of the great law. If we were not in the habit generally of giving no thought to our

daily conduct, if we did not accept local custom and habit as matters of course, as we accept the current coin, we would immediately perceive that to the extent that we bear ill will towards other nations or show disregard at all for life, to that extent we disregard the law of satyagraha or love, and to that extent we are still not free from the brute nature. But there is no religion apart from that which enables us entirely to rid ourselves of the brute nature. All religious sects and divisions, all churches and temples, are useful only so long as they serve as a means towards enabling us to recognize the universality of satyagraha. In India we have been trained from ages past in this teaching and hence it is that we are taught to consider the whole universe as one family. I do wish to submit as a matter of experience that it is not only possible to live the full national life, by rendering obedience to the law of satyagraha, but that the fullness of national life is impossible without satyagraha, i.e., without a life of true religion. That nation which wars against another has to an extent disregarded the great law of life. I shall never abandon the faith I have that India is capable of delivering this truth to the whole world, and I wish that all Indians, men and women, whether they are Hindus or Mahomedans, Parsis, Christians or Jews will share with me this unquenchable faith.

M. K. GANDHI

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From the printed original preserved in Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Delhi.  
Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

#### *411. SPEECH AT BOMBAY*

*April 25, 1919*

People should do nothing contrary to the spirit of satyagraha. We have all to take a lesson from the incidents in Ahmedabad. What was the result of the riots there? About 250 persons were wounded and more than 50 killed. For this, I do not blame the Government. We ourselves are to blame. I want you all to learn this lesson. The satyagraha has not stopped. It has been merely suspended and will be resumed only when I am sure that people have understood its real meaning.

[From Gujarati]

*Gujarati*, 4-5-1919

#### 412. LETTER TO CHANDRASHANKAR PANDYA

April 26, 1919

I was very happy indeed to read your letter, as I was anxious to know how you were keeping. What is this ailment of yours, from which you have still not recovered? There is an institution in Agra giving Kuhne baths. I have heard Pandit Hridayanath Kunzru praise it very much. Since you are there, you may perhaps benefit if you go in for a few of these baths.

I am returning your poem for being revised. I see from it your deep affection for me, but I expect something better from you, specially as you are ill. Substitute another word for “black” to describe the law; you may call it “harsh”, if you like. “Black” is suggestive of anger. One’s language, too, must be worthy of satyagraha. The sentiment expressed in “Trusting the British wholly” is out of place in a description of satyagraha. We did nothing wrong in trusting the British; our fault lay in having no faith in ourselves. God helps those alone who help themselves, and so too the British. Can they be better than God? To bear invisible blows is the satyagrahi’s *mantra*, though he does so in order that his suffering may end. In composing a poem on satyagraha, I would bring in no comparison with the Liberals and others. I am sending you my latest leaflet. Go through it and, if the Goddess Saraswati inspires you with verses conveying the boundless power of truth and nonviolence, as also the difference between civil disobedience and ignorant, arrogant disobedience, if you can compose such verses, I should like you to do so.

Going again through your letter, I find that you had feared there might be satyagraha against your poem too. The fear has virtually come true. Don’t mind, though. How can the poor satyagrahi help? My hands do not give me full service, else I would have written this letter myself. You need be in no hurry to send me another poem. Write only when your health permits. How much time did it take Keats to write the immortal line “A thing of beauty is a joy for ever” ?

[From Gujarati]

*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. V

### 413. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET NO. 7

[April 26, 1919]<sup>1</sup>

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

With great sorrow and equal pleasure I have to inform you that the Government have today<sup>2</sup> removed Mr. Horniman from Bombay and he has been placed on board a steamer bound for England. Mr. Horniman is a very brave and generous English-man. He has given us the *mantra* of liberty, he has fearlessly exposed wrong wherever he has seen it and thus been an ornament to the race to which he belongs, and rendered it a great service. Every Indian knows his services to India. I am sorry for the event because a brave satyagrahi has been deported while I retain my physical liberty. I am glad because Mr. Horniman has been given the occasion of fulfilling his Pledge.

The publication of the *Chronicle* will for the time being be discontinued, because the Directors have wisely decided not to accede to the improper demands of the Government. In reality, however, the continuance of the *Chronicle* without Mr. Horniman would be like an attempt to sustain a body when the soul has departed.

The condition I have described is truly serious. Satyagraha is on the anvil. At the same time, this is a fine opportunity for demonstrating its purity and its invincibility. It will rest with satyagrahis and other inhabitants of India to take advantage of the opportunity. I can fully appreciate the deep wound that will be caused to every satyagrahi by the separation of a dear comrade. The nation will certainly feel hurt to find that the one who presented it with a daily draught of liberty is no more in its midst. At a time like this satyagrahis and others will, in my opinion, demonstrate their true affection for Mr. Horniman only by remaining perfectly calm. It will be sheer thoughtlessness to break the peace. Modern civilization challenges the ancient. Satyagraha now going on is based upon the teachings of the ancient civilization and if India accepts satyagraha the superiority of the ancient civilization will be indicated. The world will see modern civilization in its nakedness and there is no doubt that its votaries will retrace their steps.

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Mahadevbhaini Diary.

<sup>2</sup> The deportation of B. G. Horniman took place on April 26, 1919.

The following are the practical suggestions I venture to place before you. There should be no stoppage of business anywhere in Hindustan, there should be no large public meeting of protests, no processions, no violence of any kind whatsoever and every effort should be made to stop any tendency thereto. I ask satyagrahis and the sympathizers not to lose faith in the efficacy of satyagraha and firmly to believe that the Satyagraha Pledge will be carried in its entirety.

More later.

M. K. GANDHI

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From the printed original preserved in Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Delhi.  
Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

#### *414. SPEECH AT MEETING OF MARWARIS, BOMBAY<sup>1</sup>*

*April 27, 1919*

I regret that I could not be punctual in attending this meeting. I was however engaged in our own work. (Note: He was engaged in an interview with me)<sup>2</sup>. When I received the information which led me to come to Bombay, I did not know that brother Horniman would be deported. I have realized that we have not fully grasped the principles of satyagraha. If we had not known this defect, we would have done something different about brother Horniman. So I must advise you that in spite of the separation from a great servant of the public like brother Horniman we should do nothing which would harm anyone.

We cannot close the shops or suspend business, because that would mean risk of disturbances. Disturbances are not part of satyagraha. The foundation of satyagraha is based on truth and non-violence. He who abides by truth and does not wish to harm anybody can be called a satyagrahi. You know how we are going to resort to satyagraha against the Rowlatt Act. We have declared that we will not submit to the Rowlatt Act and that we will civilly disobey other laws. That civil disobedience of law can only be practised by one who

<sup>1</sup> At Nar Narayan temple, Kalbadevi Road, at 5.30 p.m. The speech was read by Jamnadas Dwarkadas as Gandhiji was unable to stand up and address the meeting.

<sup>2</sup> This seems to be an addition by the police officer.

adheres to truth and non-violence. Without that civil disobedience is foolish and could not help us to achieve anything for the public good.

The aim of satyagraha at present is to place before the public the principles of truth and non-violence as far as possible, and when we are sure that these principles have been grasped, we will again break the law civilly.<sup>1</sup> Every man and woman who takes this vow must understand that truth and non-violence are to be adhered to in this struggle. We have to disobey the law civilly as Prahlad did. Like Prahlad also we must not depart from truth. Without these two things civil disobedience of law is irreligious. As will be seen from the manifesto issued by me about Horniman, our struggle is concerned with modern civilization. The history of the world speaks of the time spent by the nations in the development of physical force. We have observed this in Europe.<sup>2</sup>

I would put it to Hindus and others that they should not sink to the condition of modern Europe. Yet I have observed that India is inclined towards that condition. Otherwise we would not have seen the outrages that we have seen.

I have my duty to point out, without going into the merits or demerits of these outrages, that through outrages and disturbances [we] will never achieve any good for India. From the study of other religions I have learnt that the man who depends on physical force spreads irreligion, and he who depends on soul-force understands the true religion. So sisters and brothers bear in mind what has been said about this movement and help the cause.<sup>3</sup> From this it need not be supposed that what I have said will take years and years to fulfil. It is only necessary to understand that we should not take part in disturbances when the movement progresses.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1919, pp. 339-40; also *Gujarati*, 4-5-1919

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati report of the speech adds here: "For this reason, this leaflet has placed another pledge before the public, called the sympathizers' pledge."

<sup>2</sup> According to the Gujarati report: "The history of the world speaks of no nation which has spent all its time in the development of physical force. We see this being done only in present-day Europe."

<sup>3</sup> The Gujarati report adds here: "If it were to make a practical suggestion, I would say that, if you approve of the principles I have placed before you, give as much of your time as you can for propagating them. If you do, they will be with the people soon enough."

#### 415. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET NO. 8

BOMBAY,  
*April 28,<sup>2</sup> 1919*

It is a good omen for satyagraha that Bombay has preserved peace in spite of the unendurable separation of Mr. Horniman from us. I hope that it will be preserved whenever our other friends are arrested and even if I am arrested. The Government are entitled to arrest those whom they suspect. Moreover in our movement we consider it the proper thing to be arrested and imprisoned, when before our conscience we are found guiltless. How can we therefore be angry when any satyagrahi is arrested? We ought to know that the sooner innocent men are arrested, the sooner will this struggle end. I have heard some people say that in satyagraha also the end is achieved by violence. They argue that when satyagrahis are arrested, people become excited, resort to violence and thus get their demands acceded to. I held this to be a dreadful superstition. The reverse is the truth. By the arrest of satyagrahis, violence ensued in Ahmedabad and we have experienced the results of that violence. The people there are cowed down. Gujarat which never had the military in its midst has had an experience of it. It is my firm conviction that the victory of satyagraha is attainable only by adherence to truth, avoidance of violence and by suffering. My experience in South Africa, Champaran, Kaira and other places fully bears out the truth of my statement. So long as we do not appreciate this truth, we are in no way fitted for satyagraha. The question arises: "What then ought we to do? Are we to sit with folded hands in spite of Mr. Horniman's deportation?" I reply that the observance of perfect calm is itself a demonstration of our grief over the separation, and of our intense activity along satyagraha lines and by maintaining<sup>3</sup> the same calmness of spirit we shall be better able to reach our goal and to welcome back our friend. When Hindustan [is] accustomed in the course of this struggle to rely only upon truth and non-violence, we shall be able to begin civil disobedience. Some say that it will take years before India recognizes the supremacy of truth and non-violence and therefore it must take years to bring this

<sup>1</sup> The original has "Satyagraha Series Leaflet".

<sup>2</sup> April 27 in Mahadevbhaini Diary.

<sup>3</sup> The source has "containing".

struggle to a successful end. I would content myself with saying that when once the forces of truth and ahimsa are set in motion, the speed as they move becomes so accelerated that they take no time in permeating millions. For what is needful is to produce an impression of truth and non-violence upon their hearts and to infect them with faith in the efficacy of these two forces. [If] the satyagrahis are true, it need not take longer than a month or two to bring about this result.

I venture to tender the following advice in order that as suggested above truth and non-violence may permeate the masses with an ever-increasing velocity. Great movements all the world over depend for their success largely upon the mercantile class. Bombay is a great emporium of trade in Hindustan, indeed in the world. With what rapidity would the force of truth move if the merchants of Bombay were to avoid untruth and all the faults flowing from it even though introduction of truth in their business may mean smaller profits or even loss. What greater honour can we pay to Mr. Horniman than by adopting honesty as our watchword in our mercantile transactions? The foundation of our success rests in truth and if it pervades mercantile affairs it will be a plaything to pull down the other citadels of untruth. Feel convinced that it is not difficult for those merchants of Bombay who have regard for Mr. Horniman to act according to the advice tendered by me that if we can impress the Government with the truth in us and by strictly observing the principle of non-violence assure them of their harmlessness, it may not be necessary for us to resume civil disobedience.

M. K. GANDHI

From the printed original preserved in Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Delhi.  
Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

#### *416. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET NO. 9*

BOMBAY,  
*April 28, 1919*<sup>2</sup>

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Friends have been incessantly telling me, a strong feeling prevails that some way ought to be found to give expression to

<sup>1</sup> The original has "Satyagraha Series Leaflet".

<sup>2</sup> This leaflet was printed on the reverse of Leaflet No. 8.



popular feeling in the matter of Mr. Horniman's deportation. The desire is quite natural. But as I have already observed, the fact that we have preserved peace is itself an eloquent demonstration of our feelings. It is my special opinion that such preservation of peace is only possible where satyagraha is going on. I believe that the authorities have also been amazed at the profound peace prevailing throughout the city. And no wonder. The Government know that popular feeling regarding Mr. Horniman runs high. In order that a demonstration of this feeling may not run in undesirable channels, the Government have made elaborate military dispositions. But it is highly creditable to Bombay that the military have had to remain idle. It is a worthy achievement for satyagraha. I have no doubt that if people could thus restrain themselves on all occasions, the nation would occupy a much higher status. No one need assume that we have not been taking or that we shall no longer take measures for getting Mr. Horniman back in our midst. Of all measures, the present calmness is the greatest. Yet I suggest that those who are keen on suspension of business may devote a day's profits to some public activity. But the chief thing I am desirous of in this leaflet is the following: The agitation hitherto adopted in this country is as different from satyagraha as the North Pole is from the South. An appreciation of this fact will of itself remove many of our perplexities. We have seen that there is a difference between satyagraha meetings and others. Satyagraha is based upon religion. In it only truth, calmness, serenity, patience, fearlessness, etc., should alone be seen. A satyagraha strike must differ from the others. I have already quoted an occasion when a satyagraha strike had to be suspended when a different strike was declared. What we expect to attain by acclamations in ordinary movements, we often gain by silence in satyagraha. The human voice can never reach the distance that is covered by the still small voice of conscience. Instances to show the unique character of satyagraha can easily be multiplied and we ought not to be surprised to see things not going in the orthodox fashion. And I therefore beseech all not to be agitated because they see no outward demonstration over Mr. Horniman's deportation. I ask them to be patient and to have full faith that by going along the path of satyagraha, we shall meet our brother all the sooner for it.

M. K. GANDHI

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Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

417. TELEGRAM TO PUNDALIK

BOMBAY,  
April 28, 1919

TO  
PUNDALIK  
C/O GORAKHPRASAD  
MOTIHARI

ACT AND SPEAK ABSOLUTELY PEACEFULLY WITHOUT  
FLINCHING FROM TRUTH.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5222

418. LETTER TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"

BOMBAY,  
April 28, 1919

TO  
THE EDITOR  
THE TIMES OF INDIA  
SIR,

With reference to my address to the meeting held at Ahmedabad on Monday, the 14th instant, I observe that my remarks therein about the organized manner of violence have been misunderstood and have been applied to the deeds of violence committed elsewhere. My reference, however, was only to the violence of Ahmedabad. This is the language of the translation of the original address which was in Gujarati.

It seems that the deeds I have complained of (i.e., deeds of violence in Ahmedabad) have been done in an organized manner. There seems to be a definite design about them and I am sure that there must be some educated and clever men behind them.

My statement is too definite to apply to violence in any other part of India. I simply could not refer to other parts as I had then, and in fact even now, no knowledge about them save what one can gather from newspaper scraps. Indeed my remarks did not extend even to Viramgam as I then knew so little about its violence.

M. K. GANDHI

*The Times of India*, 30-4-1919

#### 419. LETTER TO J. CRERAR

BOMBAY,  
April 29, 1919

DEAR MR. CRERAR<sup>1</sup>,

It is perhaps due to Government and to my co-workers in the city that I should place before H. E. the very difficult situation that has arisen out of Mr. Horniman's deportation and the suspension of the publication of *The Bombay Chronicle* by reason of the censorship orders. In my humble opinion, Mr. Horniman's deportation is totally unjustifiable and the censorship orders quite unnecessary after his deportation. Fuel has been added to the fire by the order of forfeiture of security. And all this when civil disobedience has been totally suspended ! Herculean efforts are being made by satyagrahis to help in every way they can to restore peace. I might be permitted to say that but for the incessant labours of the satyagrahis, excited demonstrations would certainly have taken place in spite of the military precaution. Complaints ever increasing in volume have been hourly coming to me against my advice not to have any demonstrations regarding the deportation. I do not know that the Satyagraha Sabha will be able altogether to prevent some demonstration. I would therefore respectfully suggest that a statement may be made reassuring the public that the deportation orders will be withdrawn at an early date and that censorship and forfeiture orders may be altogether recalled. I understand that the government are about to effect further arrests in Bombay of noted satyagrahis. I hope that my information is not true. From a public standpoint, any further arrests during the suspension of civil disobedience will be a calamity. I believe that all my efforts to restrain the pent-up fury of the people will be vain, nor shall I be able to hold myself or the movement responsible (morally or otherwise) for any untoward results that may follow any such arrest.

Mrs. Naidu has received a communication from Sind informing her of the state of things there. The arrests that have been made in Karachi seem to have produced a profound impression on the public mind there.

In the interests of peace, I plead for forbearance during suspension of civil disobedience.

*Yours sincerely,*

From a photostat: S.N. 6574

<sup>1</sup> Secretary to the Government of Bombay, Judicial Department

420. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET NO. 10

BOMBAY,  
April 30, 1919

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

I have two letters from Mr. Horniman which I expect you must all be anxious to read. The one addressed to me reads:

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

They are taking me away at last. I have been rushed off without notice. This is only to say *au revoir* and to ask your blessings. God speed you in your work for the Indian people.

I shall do what I can wherever I am.

*Ever yours affectionately,*

B. G. HORNIMAN

That to Mr. Jamnadas is as follows:

MY DEAR JAMNADAS,

I hope whatever happens, Bombay will remain quiet.

I don't know whether this letter will reach you, but if it does, give my love to everybody. In the meanwhile, I shall work for India wherever I may be.

*Ever yours,*

B. G. HORNIMAN

Both these letters were written by him from s.s. *Takada*. Further news is that his health is all right, that he is being well looked after and that the officers have treated him with all courtesy. The order of deportation means that Mr. Horniman will be absolutely free on reaching England, that there will no restrictions whatsoever on his liberty, and as he is resolved to work for India, wherever he is, it is likely that he will render great service to India while in England. This, however, is but a poor consolation for the people. They would be satisfied only if the order of deportation is withdrawn, and we cannot sit still till we find him back in our midst. We know how we can get him back in our midst. The first and the foremost thing is to observe self-restraint and to learn to keep peace. If we break the peace, we

<sup>1</sup> The original has "Satyagraha Series Leaflet".

shall only be delaying Mr Horniman's return and paining him.

M. K. GANDHI

Printed by M. N. Kulkarni at the Karnatak Printing Press, 434, Thakurdwar, Bombay and published by S. G. Banker, 72, Apollo Street, Fort, Bombay.

From the printed original preserved in Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Delhi.  
Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

#### *421. LETTER TO SIR STANLEY REED*

LABURNUM ROAD,  
BOMBAY ,  
*April 30, 1919*

DEAR SIR STANLEY REED,

I enclose herewith form of the swadeshi pledge. I am anxious, if I can, to secure English supporters. I am the more so at the present moment in order to emphasize in a concrete manner the fact that swadeshi is being taken up not in any spirit of antagonism or retaliation, but that it is being taken up as a matter of necessity for the well-being of India. I would be delighted if you could see your way to sign the pledge, and if you approve of it, I would like you to secure further English signatures.<sup>1</sup>

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 6575

#### *422. LETTER TO N. P. COWIE*

LABURNUM ROAD,  
GAMDEVI,  
BOMBAY,  
*April 30, 1919*

DEAR MR. COWIE<sup>2</sup>,

I beg to enclose herewith for His Excellency's perusal form of the swadeshi pledge which is now ready for issuing. I would esteem it as an event of great significance if His Excellency could see his way to sign the pledge unless his official position precludes him from doing

<sup>1</sup> For Reed's reply, *vide* Appendix "Sir Stanley Reed's Letter to Gandhiji", 2-5-1919.

<sup>2</sup> Private Secretary to the Governor of Bombay

so. His Excellency's endorsement of swadeshi would at once emphasize the fact that the swadeshi vow is not being taken up in any spirit of hostility, but that it is a long-deferred recognition of an economic necessity.

*Yours sincerely,*

From a photostat: S.N. 6576

### *423. LETTER TO SIND SATYAGRAHIS*

BOMBAY,

*April 30, 1919*

DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I have heard and read about what is going on in Sind. I see that some arrests have been made. If the arrests have been made by reason of satyagraha, nothing can be better or more welcome for satyagrahis than such arrests and satyagrahis so arrested will, if convicted, cheerfully go to prison and those who remain behind will share in their sufferings by observing perfect peace and calmness. If they are arrested for doing anything in violation of satyagraha, i.e., for breach of laws which have also moral sanction, and are proved guilty of them by an impartial tribunal, they will deserve the punishment that may be awarded against them. In either event, therefore, we can have no cause for complaint. I understand, however, that many people are excited over these arrests. To these, I would say that they have not understood the law of satyagraha. We want to employ only truth in all that we say and do. We undertake to refrain from injury to any person or property while acting in accordance with the principles of truth and non-violence. If we find ourselves in trouble those who associate with us have little reason to complain or grumble. The essence of satyagraha is that we never resort to any violence even though there may be great provocation. The struggle is lost the moment we do any violence whatsoever. I, therefore, hope that no matter what prosecutions take place, all will remain quiet and calm.

From a photostat: S.N. 6577

#### 424. *LETTER TO KER*

[April, 1919]<sup>1</sup>

DEAR MR. KER<sup>2</sup>,

I had hoped to be able to be in Nadiad on Monday, but the critical situation here has detained me in Bombay. Some of the friends from Nadiad have been here and they tell me that those who were involved in the cutting of telegraph wires are ready to make a full confession but they want me to be in Nadiad at the time they do so. I do not know when I shall be free to go over there. I hope, however, that there will be no difficulty about complying with the wishes of the people concerned.

From a photostat: G.N. 8227

<sup>1</sup> From the circumstances referred to in the letter, it appears to have been written in April, 1919.

<sup>2</sup> Collector of Kaira

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I

#### *RAB INDRA NATH TAGORE'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI*

SHANTI NIKETAN,

*April 12, 1919*

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

Power in all its forms is irrational,—it is like the horse that drags the carriage blindfolded. The moral element in it is only represented in the man who drives the horse. Passive resistance is a force which is not necessarily moral in itself; it can be used against truth as well as for it. the danger inherent in all force grows stronger when it is likely to gain success, for then it becomes temptation.

I know your teaching is to fight against evil by the help of the good. But such a fight is for heroes and not for men led by impulses of the moment. Evil on one side naturally begets evil on the other, injustice leading to violence and insult to vengefulness. Unfortunately such a force has already been started, and either through panic or through wrath our authorities have shown us the claws whose sure effect is to drive some of us into the secret path of resentment and others into utter demoralization. In this crisis you, as a great leader of men, have stood among us to proclaim your faith in the ideal which you know to be that of India, the ideal which is both against the cowardliness of hidden revenge and the cowed submissiveness of the terror-stricken. You have said, as Lord Buddha has done in his time and for all time to come,—

*Akkodhena jine kodham, asadhum sadhuna jine,—*” Conquer anger by the power of non-anger and evil by the power of good”.

This power of good must prove its truth and strength by its fearlessness, by its refusal to accept any imposition which depends for its success upon its power to produce frightfulness and is not ashamed to use its machines of destruction to terrorize a population completely disarmed. We must know that moral conquest does not consist in success, that failure does not deprive it of its dignity and worth. Those who believe in spiritual life know that to stand against wrong which has overwhelming material power behind it is victory itself,—it is the victory of the active faith in the ideal in the teeth of evident defeat.

I have always felt, and said accordingly, that the great gift of freedom can never come to a people through charity. We must win it before we can own it. And India's opportunity for winning it will come to her when she can prove that she is



morally superior to the people who rule her by their right of conquest. She must willingly accept her penance of suffering—the suffering which is the crown of the great. Armed with her utter faith in goodness she must stand unabashed before the arrogance that scoffs at the power of spirit.

And you have come to your motherland in the time of her need to remind her of her mission to lead her in the true path of conquest, to purge her present day politics of its feebleness which imagines that it has gained its purpose when it struts in the borrowed feathers of diplomatic dishonesty.

This is why I pray most fervently that nothing that tends to weaken our spiritual freedom may intrude into your marching line, that martyrdom for the cause of truth may never degenerate into fanaticism for mere verbal forms descending into the self-deception that hides itself behind sacred names.

With these few words for an introduction allow me to offer the following as a poet's contribution to your noble work:

## I

Let me hold my head high in this faith that thou art our shelter, that all fear is mean distrust of these.

Fear of man ? But what man is there in this world, what king, King of kings, who is thy rival, who has hold of me for all time and in all time and in all truth?

What power is there in this world to rob me of my freedom ? For do not thy arms reach the captive through the dungeon-walls, bringing unfettered release to the soul?

And must I cling to this body in fear of death, as a miser to his barren treasure? Has not this spirit of mine the eternal call to thy feast of everlasting life?

Let me know that all pain and death are shadows of the moment; that the dark force which sweeps between me and thy truth is but the mist before the sunrise; that thou alone art mine for ever and greater than all pride of strength that dares to mock my manhood with its menace.

## II

Give me the supreme courage of love, this is my prayer,—the courage to spare, to do, to suffer at thy will, to leave all thing or be by alone.

Give me the supreme faith of love, this is my prayer,—the faith of the life in death, of the victory in defeat, of the power hidden in the frailness of beauty, of the dignity of pain that accepts hurt, but disdains to return it.

*Very sincerely yours,*

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

From a photos tat: G.N. 4583

## APPENDIX II

### *SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET NO. 1*

*March 1919*

EXTRACTS FROM THE DUTY OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE BY HENRY THOREAU  
(SCHOOLMASTER OF MASSACHUSETTS) DATED 1849

I heartily the motto: "That government is best which governs least"; and I should like to see it acted up to more rapidly and systematically. Carried out, it finally amounts to this, which also I believe: "That government is best which governs not at all"; and when men are prepared for it, that will be the kind of government which they will have. Government is at best but an expedient but most governments are Dually, and all governments are sometimes, in-expedient. The objections which have been brought against a standing army, and they are many and weighty and deserve to prevail, may also at last be brought against a standing government. The standing army is only an arm of the standing government. The government itself, which is only the mode which the people have chosen to execute their will, is equally liable to be abused and perverted . . . .

Must the citizen ever for a moment, or in the least degree, resign his conscience to the legislator? Why has every man a conscience, then? I think that we should be men first and subject afterwards. It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law, so much as for the right. The only obligation which I have a right to assume is to do at any time what I think right. It is truly enough said that a corporation has no conscience; but a corporation of conscientious men is a corporation with a conscience. Law never made men a whit more just; and, by means of their respect for it, even the well-disposed are daily made the agents of injustice. A common and natural result of an undue respect for law is that you may see a file of soldiers: colonel, captain, corporal, privates, powder-monkeys, and all, marching in admirable order over hill and dale to the wars, against their wills, aye, against their common sense and consciences, which make it very steep marching indeed, and produces a palpitation of the heart. They have no doubt that it is a damnable business in which they are concerned; they are all peaceably inclined. Now, what are they? Men at all? or small movable forts ammagazing, at the service of some unscrupulous man in power? . . . .

The mass of men serve the State thus, not as men mainly but as machines, with their bodies.

They are the standing army, and the militia, gaolers, constables, *posse comitatus*, etc. In most cases there is no free exercise whatever of the judgment or of the moral sense: but they put themselves on a level with wood and earth and stones; and wooden men can perhaps be manufactured that will serve the purpose as well. Such

command no more respect than men of straw or a lump of dirt. They have the same sort of worth only as horses and dogs. Yet such as these even are commonly esteemed good citizens. Others—as most legislators, politicians, lawyers, ministers and office-holders serve the State chiefly with their heads; and as they rarely make any moral distinctions they are as likely to serve the devil, without intending it, as God. A very few—as heroes, patriots, martyrs, reformers in the great sense and men — serve the State with their consciences also, and so necessarily resist it for the most part; and they are commonly treated as enemies by it.

\* \* \*

All men recognize the right of revolution; that is, the right to refuse allegiance to, and to resist, the government, when its tyranny or its inefficiency are great and unendurable.

\* \* \*

All machines have their friction; and possibly this does enough good to counterbalance the evil. At any rate, it is a great evil to make a stir about it. But when the friction comes to have its machine, and oppression and robbery are organized, I say, let us not have such a machine any longer.

What is the price current of an honest man and patriot today? They hesitate, and they regret, and sometimes they petition; but they do nothing in earnest and with effect. They will wait, well disposed for others to remedy the evil, that they may no longer have it to regret. At most, they give only a cheap vote, and a feeble countenance and Godspeed, to the right, as it goes by them. There are nine hundred and ninety-nine patrons of virtue to one virtuous man. But it is easier to deal with the real possessor of a thing than with the temporary guardian of it...

Even voting for the right is doing nothing for it. It is only expressing to men feebly your desire that it should prevail. A wise man will not leave the right to the mercy of chance.

O for a man who is a man, and, as my neighbour says, has a bone in his back which you cannot pass your hand through! Our statistics are at fault: the population has been returned too large. How many men are there to a square thousand miles in this country? Hardly one . . .

\* \* \*

Action from principle, the perception and the performance of right, changes things and relations; it is essentially revolutionary, and does not consist wholly with anything which was. It not only divides states and churches; it divides families; ay, it divides the *individual*, separating the diabolical in him from the divine.

Unjust laws exist; shall we be content to obey them, or shall we endeavour to amend them, and obey them until we have succeeded, or shall we transgress them at once?

\* \* \*

They think that, if they should resist, the remedy would be worse than the evil. But it is the fault of the government itself that the remedy is worse than the evil. It makes it worse. Why is it not more apt to anticipate and provide for reform ?

Why does it cry and resist before it is hurt? Why does it not encourage its citizens to be on the alert to point out its faults and do better than it would have them? Why does it always crucify Christ, and excommunicate Coper-nicus and Luther, and pronounce Washington and Franklin rebels?

\* \* \*

If the injustice is part of the necessary friction of the machine of government, let it go, let it go; perchance it will wear smooth—certainly the machine will wear out. If the injustice has a spring, or a pulley, or a rope or a crank, exclusively for itself, then perhaps you may consider whether the remedy will not be worse than the evil; but if it is of such a nature that it requires you to be the agent of injustice to another, then, I say, break the law.

As for adopting the ways which the State has provided for remedying the evil, I know not of such ways. They take too much time, and a man's life will be gone. I have other affairs to attend to. I came into this world, not chiefly to make this a good place to live in, but to live in it, be it good or bad. A man has not everything to do, but something; and because he cannot do *everything* it is not necessary that he should do *something* wrong. It is not my business to be petitioning the Governor or the Legislature any more than it is theirs to petition me: and if they should not hear my petition, what should I do then? But in this case the State has provided no way: its very Constitution is the evil. This may seem to be harsh and stubborn and unconciliatory; but it is to treat with the utmost kindness and consideration the only spirit that can appreciate or deserves it. So is all change for the better, like birth and death, which convulse the body.

\* \* \*

I meet this American Government, or its representative, the State Government, directly, and face to face, once a year—no more—in the person of its tax-gatherer; this is the only mode in which a man situated as I am necessarily meets it; and it then says distinctly, "Recognize me"; and the simplest, the most effectual, and, in the present posture of affairs, the indispensablest mode of treating with it on this head, of expressing your little satisfaction with and love for it, is to deny it then.

I know this well, that if one thousand, if one hundred, if ten men whom I could name,—if *ten honest men only*—aye, if *one honest man is* (were to be) locked up in the country gaol therefor, it would be the abolition of slavery in America. For it matters not how small the beginning may seem to be; what is once well done is done

for ever....

Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison. The proper place today, the only place which (Massachusetts) has provided for her freer and less desponding spirits, is in her prisons, to be put out and locked out of the State by her own act, as they have already put themselves out by their principles. It is there that the fugitive slave, and the Mexican prisoner on parole, and the Indian come to plead the wrongs of his race, should find them, on that separate but more free and honourable ground, where the State places those who are not *with* her but against her—the only house in a slave State in which a free man can abide with honour. If any think that their influence would be lost there, and their voices no longer affect the ear of the State that they would not be as an enemy within its walls, they do not know by how much truth is stronger than error nor how much more eloquently and effectively he can combat injustice who has experienced a little in his own person....

If a thousand men were not to pay their tax bills this year that would not be a violent and bloody measure, as it would be to pay them and enable the State to commit violence and shed innocent blood. This is, in fact, the definition of a peaceable Revolution, if any such is possible. If the tax-gatherer or any other public officer asks me as one has done: "But what shall I do", my answer: "if you really wish to do anything resign your office." When the subject has refused allegiance and the officer has resigned his office, then the Revolution is accomplished. But even suppose blood should flow. Is there not, a sort of bloodshed when the conscience is wounded ? Through this wound a man's real manhood and immortality flow out and he bleeds to an everlasting death. I see this blood flowing now.

I have contemplated the imprisonment of the offender rather than the seizure of his goods, though both will serve the same purpose,—because they who assert the purest right, and consequently are most dangerous to a corrupt state, commonly have not spent much time in accumulating property....

I have paid no poll-tax for six years. I was put into a gaol once on this account for one night; and as I stood considering the walls of solid stones, two or three feet thick, the door of wood and iron, a foot thick, and the iron grating which strained the light, I could not help being struck with the foolishness of that institution which treated me as if I were men flesh and blood and bones, to be locked up. I wondered that it should have concluded at length that this was the best use it could put me to, and had never thought to avail itself of my services in some way. I saw that, if there was a wall of stone between me and my townsmen, there was a still more difficult one to climb or break through before they could get to be as free as I was. I did not for a moment feel confined, and the walls seemed a great waste of stone and mortar. I felt as if I alone of all my townsmen had paid my tax. They plainly

did not know how to treat me, but behaved like persons who are underbred. In every threat and in every compliment there was blunder; for they thought that my chief desire was to stand on the other side of that stone wall. I could not but smile to see how industriously they locked the door on my meditations, which followed them out again without let or hindrance and *they* were really all that was dangerous. As they could not reach me, they had resolved to punish my body; just as boys, if they cannot come at some person against whom they have a spite, will abuse his dog. I saw that the state was half-witted, that it was timid as a lone woman with her silver spoons, and that it did not know its friends from its foes, and I lost all my remaining respect for it, and pitied it.

\* \* \*

It is for no particular item in the tax bill that I refuse to pay it. I simply wish to refuse allegiance to the State, to withdraw and stand aloof from it effectually. I do not care to trace the courses of my dollar, if I could, till it buys a man or a musket to shoot with—the dollar is innocent—but I am concerned to trace the effects of my allegiance. In fact, I quietly declare war with the State, after my fashion, though I will still make what use and get what advantage of her I can, as is usual in such cases.

If others pay the tax which is demanded of me from a sympathy with the State, they do but what they have already done in their own case, or rather they abet injustice to a greater extent than the State requires. If they pay the tax from a mistaken interest in the individual taxed, to save his property, or prevent his going to gaol, it is because they have not considered wisely how far they let their private feelings interfere with the public good.

This, then is my position at present. But one cannot be too much on his guard in such a case, lest his action be biased by obstinacy or an undue regard for the opinions of men. Let him see that he does only what belongs to himself and to the hour.

\* \* \*

They who know of no purer sources of truth, who have traced up its stream no higher, stand, and wisely stand, by the Bible, and Constitution, and drink at it there with reverence and humility; but they who behold where it comes trickling into this lake or that pool, gird up their loins once more, and continue their pilgrimage towards its fountainhead.

\* \* \*

The authority of Government, even such as I am willing to submit to—for I will cheerfully obey those who know and can do better than I, and in many things even those who neither know nor can do well,—is still an impure one: to be strictly

just, it must have the sanction and consent of the governed. It can have no pure right over my person and property, but what I concede to it. The progress from an absolute to a limited monarchy, from a limited monarchy to a democracy, is a progress towards a true respect for the individual. Even the Chinese philosopher was wise enough to regard the individual as the basis of the empire. Is a democracy, such as we know it, the last improvement possible in Government? Is it not possible to take a step further towards recognizing and organizing the rights of man ? There will never be a really free and enlightened State until the State comes to recognize the individual as a higher and independent power, from which all its own power and authority are derived, and treats him accordingly. I please myself with imagining a State at last which can afford to be just to all men, and to treat the individual with respect as a neighbour; which even would not think it inconsistent with its own repose if a few were to live aloof from it, not meddling with it, nor embraced by it, who fulfilled all the duties of neighbours and fellow-men. A state which bore this kind of fruit, and suffered it to drop off as fast as it ripened would prepare the way for a still more perfect and glorious state, which also I have imagined, but not yet anywhere seen.

N. A. I.: Home: Political—B: February 1920: No. 373

### APPENDIX III

#### *QUESTIONS ON SATYAGRAHA*

[Before April 17, 1919]<sup>1</sup>

SIR,

We fail to understand fully some points in the statement that has been recently published in your name and would feel obliged if you would kindly elucidate them to us.

(1) In your statement you say “Those who *join* the satyagraha *demonstration* are bound at all hazards to refrain from violence, not to throw stones or *in any way whatsoever*, to injure anybody.” We should like to know if in those who “join the satyagraha demonstration” you include the non-satyagrahi sympathizers of the satyagrahis ? If so, as is evident, are they bound to act as satyagrahis even when violence is started by the other side ? We should not be understood to be advocating or even tolerating the use of violence by our sympathizers. What we should like to be explained is whether there should or should not be any difference between a satyagrahi and a non-satyagrahi when provocation comes from the side opposite. Non-satyagrahis may not begin violence and much though we should wish to see them exercise perfect restraint at the provocation or violence received at the hands of

<sup>1</sup> Vide “Satyagraha Leaflet No- 3”, 11-4-1919.

the authorities. At any rate how can satyagrahis be held responsible for the feelings of a non-satyagrahi under the circumstances ? There should be a difference between the responsibilities of the two. Your statement does not contemplate any.

(2) Further on you say “I have been asked whether a satyagrahi is liable for the results that follow from the movement. I have replied that they are.” What we should be explained in this connection is what results can be said to follow from the satyagraha. Will the unlawful or even violent conduct on the part of non-satyagrahis sympathizing with us or opposing us due to the tactlessness, offensive attitude or violence of authorities or the aggressive attitude of our opponents unattended by any retaliation on our part constitute “results” contemplated to “follow from the movement”? If so the question arises: is it reasonable to hold the satyagrahis responsible for the results of the actions of the authorities against unprovoking non-satyagrahis or for the results of the actions of the opponents of satyagraha to themselves?

(3) Proceeding further you say “If we cannot conduct this movement without the slightest violence *on our side*....” Does our include non-satyagrahi sympathizers of satyagrahis ? If so, questions put in Nos. (1) and (2) arise {again. Further, does “from our side” include unsatyagrahi conduct on the part of non-satyagrahi in consequence of circumstances mentioned in Nos. (1) and (2) ?

(4) In continuation of No. (3) you suggest “the movement might have to be abandoned”. We should like to lay special emphasis and all possible force on this as to us it will mean complete suicide—moral and political to leave the movement at this stage. We could and did contemplate all this at the start and real remedy in our opinion is not to drop the movement but postpone the breaking of laws for sometime and in the mean time educate and train the public to conduct the satyagraha movement properly.

(5) “But if those who are not . . . sinful injury” Nos. (1), (2) and (3) apply with equal force to this also and it appears hart to visit the sins of the opponent of satyagraha on the heads of the satyagrahis.

From a photos tat: S.N. 6546



## APPENDIX IV

### SIR STANLEY REED'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

*Apropos* of the Swadeshi movement, the following letter addressed to Mr. Gandhi, by Sir Stanley Reed on the eve of his departure to England, will be of interest. (The italics are ours).

BOMBAY,  
2nd May 1919

MY DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Your letter of April 30th. It would be to me the greatest possible pleasure to co-operate whole-heartedly with you in any of your work, but on the swadeshi issue I should like to explain my position.

I have been from the day of my arrival in India, a convinced and strong supporter of everything connected with the swadeshi movement. Long before the Congress and the political leaders generally took more than a lukewarm interest in the industrial movement, I used such influence as I possessed to press in season and out of season the importance of our industrial and commercial movement. *The Times of India* has fought consistently against the cotton excise duties, and also for fiscal freedom for India. Such time as I can spare from my newspaper work is devoted to the furtherance of Indian enterprise; *personally, I never buy anything which is made outside India if it can be purchased in India. I wear a good deal more swadeshi clothing than many of Indian friends.*

But I am convinced that the commercial and industrial future of India can be secured only if it is mainly on an economic basis. We have to make the demand for Indian goods because they are the best at the money. To do that, we have to persuade the educated classes that commerce and industry are just as patriotic and dignified as the professions and politics. *We have to press for the highest standard of commercial morality in India.*

I am confident of the future. Apart from the great stirring in India, we have the natural protection which accrues from command of most of the raw materials of manufacture on the spot. If we can keep alive the present educated interest in industrial development and if we can coax into circulation the rupees which now go into the ground, I am convinced that our shady progress is assured.

Perhaps I am mistaking your ideal, that ideal is to prevent the increase of the factory system and to conserve and develop the cottage industries of the country. With that ideal I am in most complete sympathy. *None can survey factory conditions, either here or in the West, and be anything but dismayed at their ugliness.* But here

again I am convinced that true time solution is the organization of the cottage industries on a co-operative basis with cheap capital and co-operative distribution. It has been my privilege to assist in some small measure in this work as one of the original directors of the Central Co-operative Bank.

If, therefore, I cannot take the Swadeshi [Vow], I know that you will accept my assurance that it is not because I lack sympathy with the swadeshi movement, for my sympathy with and interest in it are acute. But I must work for it in my own way and if the *handloom weavers want any assistance in the way of capital, my best efforts will be used to secure it.*

*Yours very sincerely,*

STANLEY REED

*Young India.* 11-6-1919

#### APPENDIX V

#### *NOT E BY DIST RICT MA GISTR ATE, AHM EDABA D, ON INT ERVIE W WIT H GAN DHII ,*

*[After May 11, 1919]*

Mr. Gandhi states that he has not forbidden the members of his Ashram to give evidence as regards identification of rioters. Such as have asked his advice have been advised by him to follow their own conscience; but that his opinion was that those who entirely followed the rule of the Ashram could not consistently give evidence incriminating others. He had also warned them of the risk each one ran of incurring the penalty of the law for refusing to give evidence. He does not consider this a rule of life which everyone would be justified in adopting; it is only justified on those who whilst refusing to give evidence would strain every nerve honestly to induce the guilty to make full confession before the authorities, and who on principle refrain from invoking the assistance of the law in their own cases. This view of Mr. Gandhi's is of long standing—in fact, goes back to a period before 1897 when he first put it into practice in a manner which became known to the public (in South Africa).

Mr. Gandhi has therefore not passed any order as regards the giving of evidence. Nor is the refusal to give evidence a fundamental rule of the Ashram. Supposing a member were to give evidence, he would not be turned out. He would not even reason with him. It is a matter which is left entirely to the conscience of the individual and Mr. Gandhi himself arrived at this point of view after considerable mental struggle and effort (i e., before 1897). It was one of the reasons why he threw over his practice as a Barrister in 1908. Apart from the delicacy of the question (which is one for the individual's conscience), Mr. Gandhi realizes the danger of indiscriminate acceptance of this view by those who have not attained the complete

discipline of satyagraha.

Mr. Gandhi expressly states that his opinion in this case is in no way due to any feeling of delicacy in the sense that he was directly or indirectly responsible for the fury of the mob. It is due to a general principle, the corollary of the doctrine of ahimsa. His desire is that the guilty should be punished but that they should undergo their punishment voluntarily.

Mr. Gandhi admits that this principle leads to the result that there is one rule for himself and his followers and another for the rest of the world, but accepts this as inevitable.

N. A. I: Home: Political—A: August 1919: Nos. 261-72 & K. W.